

should be properly expended. The reports and accounts of the Agricultural Societies, which are printed, show that the small amounts received as subsidies by each Society, are, as a rule, expended in accordance with the spirit of the Act. Much improvement in the administration of the Societies' funds is noticeable, the principal attention being given to the provision of thorough-bred stock, and improvement in the class of cattle, which really furnish the farmers' livelihood, and which therefore should be as good as can be got. The funds are also used to provide the best seeds, thus securing a better return for the labor of cultivation. Service of bulls is always paid for, and seeds are distributed at cost and charges.

In the past improved implements for use in the bounds of the Society were not uncommonly purchased, but of late private enterprise has provided these and with satisfactory results. It has been asserted that the days of usefulness of Agricultural Societies had passed, that they had fulfilled their mission and should now be replaced by more effective machinery. That the farmers themselves do not hold this view is proved by the vitality of the Societies, which, numbering 88 in 1883, have increased to 92 in 1884, and the membership has risen from 4910 in 1883 to 5064 in 1884, and, now that they rightly recognise the methods by which they may best advance the agricultural industry, their usefulness promises to increase as the circle of their influence widens.

The total number of Societies, as remarked, is 92, being four in excess of the number in existence last year. There is an increase in the number in the Counties of Colchester, Cumberland, Guysborough, Inverness, Hants, Lunenburg, Queen's, Shelburne, Victoria and Yarmouth, and a decrease in the number of Societies in Annapolis, Cape Breton, Digby, King's, Pictou and Richmond. In the other Counties the number remains as before. There is an increase in the total number of members to the extent of 154, and in the total amount of subscriptions to the extent of \$872.00, and a consequent increase in the amount of Legislative grant for which the Societies have qualified, to the extent of \$287.00,—the total amount of grants to Societies this year being in excess of that of any previous year, viz., \$6835.00.

The arrangement for dividing the Exhibition Grant amongst the five Agricultural Districts into which the Province is divided is not found to give general satisfaction. The prizes offered at District Exhibitions are necessarily too small to induce owners at a distance to send in their stock, &c., for exhibition, as the expense of transport and maintenance at a distance from home, and deterioration and risk of injury, are con-

siderable, consequently these exhibitions not unnaturally become County Exhibitions only, and for these the amount of Prize List is large.

It would seem better to revert to the former practice of an annual Provincial Exhibition in a different part of the Province every year. The local Exhibitions are of great value in educating the whole community in ideas of excellence, and interesting them in the work of Exhibitions, but these should work with and as feeders for a Provincial Exhibition, and not be substituted for it, and Agricultural Societies might well follow the example of Yarmouth and combine to hold County Exhibitions annually, and these, properly managed, with suitable grounds, would soon become self-supporting, or might well rely upon municipal assistance.

As already stated, and shown in the Societies' reports, the farmers are yearly becoming more alive to the interests of agricultural progress,—there is a decided desire amongst them to improve their breeds of cattle, sheep and pigs, to feed them better, to raise better crops, and generally to make themselves acquainted with the newest and most approved methods of cultivation.

To this is to be ascribed the agitation for agricultural education—for an institution where the principles of agriculture may be theoretically taught, and then worked out in practice before the pupils, who would thus know how to work a farm and why they should follow the prescribed rules.

The pressing necessity of agriculture is not merely what is commonly called a stock farm, for our own breeders can already furnish the stock, and private enterprise should rather be stimulated than repressed by government competition, but rather a model farm, where the best breeds should undoubtedly be kept, where the best known processes of cultivation and feeding should be practiced, and where all kinds of crops should be tested as to their suitability to our climate and markets, and this should be associated with an educational institution where the coming generation should be enabled to become scientific cultivators of the soil.

Such is the most pressing need of the agricultural profession, and which, sooner or later, must be provided. Meantime it would much benefit the present generation if a capable and practical lecturer on agricultural science and practice could be employed to visit our Agricultural Districts, and the interest created and stimulus given would lead to such an improvement in cultivation, and such increased returns, as would give ample return for the outlay.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. WINBURN LAURIE.

Oakfield, March 4th, 1885.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

As indicated in previous Reports, one of the most important duties of the Board is to maintain in vigor and efficiency the County and District Agricultural Societies, upon which devolves the work of introducing and carrying out improvements in their several districts. The funds of Societies are used for the purchase of thorough-bred animals, and maintaining the same under suitable regulations for the use of members; in some cases for the holding of local Exhibitions; and for the introduction of improved varieties of seeds and implements, which, however, are required to be furnished the members at cost and charges, except in special cases, where the Board shall consider it in the public interest to allow Societies to expend a portion of their funds for such articles. The Board receives the Accounts and Reports of Societies, and ascertains, before granting certificates to entitle them to participate in the Provincial grant, that they have complied with the provisions of the Act. The Annual Reports, Accounts, and also the attested returns of paid membership of the several Agricultural Societies that have applied for participation in the grant for the year 1884, have been examined with care, and the statement which follows (pp. 29-36) shows the results of the examination. The names of the societies are given in a classified form, and, in each case, are also stated (1), the number of members; (2), the amount of attested subscriptions; (3), the proportion of grant to which the Society will be entitled, and (4), the names of the principal officers for the year responsible for the management of the Society's affairs.

THE STOCK REGISTER.

A few years ago the Board took into consideration the subject of Registration of Thoroughbred Stock, and, after full enquiry and deliberation, determined to form a New Register for the Province under rules more definite than those previously in use. The work of preparing this register has been tedious, largely owing to applications tendered for the registry of animals not qualified and the extensive enquiries and correspondence to which such applications necessarily led. The Board are, however, able to report that the Register is now so near completion that entries of duly qualified animals can be made with regularity and dispatch, which was impracticable whilst numerous disputed applications were being dealt with. Much inconvenience is still experienced, however, from the want of a printed Herd Book, and the Board hope that the Government and Legislature will be pleased to take into consideration the propriety of supplying this great want. It is but right, in this