

where they occur. And we have likewise upon occasion had an exhibition of a provincial character, attended by a fuller measure of success than might have been expected under the circumstances of the country.—Yet the Agricultural Fair as an established institution is practically unknown amongst us, and its peculiar advantages to a commercial country are but very imperfectly understood. There is much truth in the remark made by a member of the House of Assembly the other day that we had been so long without exhibitions that he would almost be ashamed to see the attempt made; a similar feeling naturally influences the minds of a large portion of our people.

The Agricultural Act passed two years ago having contemplated the holding of occasional exhibitions, the Board of Agriculture at one of its earliest meetings took the matter into consideration. It was at first proposed to hold an exhibition during the year 1866, but after mature deliberation both the Board and the Agricultural Committee of the House of Assembly agreed to defer it till 1867. Notwithstanding the announcements that have been published to that effect it is said, that very little, if any, preparation has been made by our farmers and the subject has as yet scarcely entered into the thoughts of our commercial men and the general community. Meantime our Province is called upon to take part in an exhibition of a different character—the Paris Exhibition of next year, and that, it is expected, will well-nigh exhaust for one season the energies of our exhibitors and the available resources at their command. Under all the circumstances it is thought desirable by the Board of Agriculture that the proposed Exhibition should be definitely arranged for the autumn of 1868, and the Government and Legislature have been requested to make such provision, by resolution or otherwise, as may be necessary to ensure the setting aside of a sufficient grant for the purpose during that year. This view is participated in by the Agricultural Committee of the House, and the government has agreed to the requisite provision. The exhibition is then a settled fact, the necessary arrangements may be proceeded with, and farmers and manufacturers will have full confidence in the affair being carried out to completion, without further delay.

In order that the Exhibition may be successful it is necessary that suitable buildings should be erected, not only for the comfort of the public, but likewise for the protection of the valuable animals that may be expected. The past experience of Canada has shown that without permanent buildings a satisfactory system of Exhibitions cannot be carried out. These buildings may be in the form of Crystal Palaces, Glass Barns or Wooden Sheds, according to circumstances; but without them we cannot hope to do more for agriculture than to get up a little sporadic excitement and a great camp meeting of cattle two or three times in a century. What the interests of agriculture require is a well-understood system of Exhibitions in which the whole farmers of the Province have an interest, in which they can all take part, and which they can all look forward to and prepare for at stated and well-known intervals.

If we can offer, in addition to high prizes,

good accommodation to the farmers' cattle while they are at the exhibition, where they may rest and recruit, and the probability of a profitable sale after the exhibition is done, they will not fear to bring animals a long distance by ship or rail or road; and as our railway system becomes gradually extended, the feasibility and practical benefits of the Agricultural Exhibition will become more and more apparent.

May we beg our correspondents to give this important subject free ventilation through our columns? We shall return to it again, but should be glad meantime to have a full and candid expression of the opinions of the farmers throughout the Province, and especially of the officers of the various agricultural societies.

Board of Agriculture.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

To the Hon. Chas. Tupper, M. D., Proc. Sec'y:

HALIFAX, MARCH, 1866.

Sir:—We have the honor to submit, for the information of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislature, a Report of the proceedings of the Board of Agriculture for the past year.

The matter that first engaged the attention of the Board, on its formation under the new Act in 1864, was the organization of County and District Agricultural Societies throughout the Province. Last session it was reported that 37 Societies had been formed in 15 Counties, and that 34 of these Societies had qualified for participation in the Legislative grant for 1864. The Board has continued its efforts in the organization and adjustment of Societies, and the Secretary spent some time in visiting the Societies in Pictou County last autumn. From the Return submitted herewith showing, in detail, the present condition of the various Agricultural Societies of the Province, it will be observed that the total number of Societies is 48, being an increase of 11 Societies during the year.

The number of Counties containing Societies is 18, so that every county in the Province now contains at least one Society.

The present total number of members of Agricultural Societies, (actually attested) is 2198, as compared with 1744 last year, showing an increase of 354 members. The total amount of subscriptions paid by such members is \$2384, being an increase on the amount of the year of \$525. The total amount of grants to Societies is \$3314, being an increase of \$304.

It is provided by the Act that the grants to Societies shall be apportioned to them in rateable proportion to the subscriptions of their members actually

paid during the year, at the rate of \$2, of grant for \$1 subscribed, but under the limitation that no society shall draw more than \$200, and that the whole societies of one County shall not collectively draw more than \$240. We have now had two years' experience of the practical working of this system, and the results have been upon the whole satisfactory. There is one feature of the system, however, that requires to be well understood to prevent disappointment to the members of societies. So long as there are few societies in a county, the amount (\$240) appropriated to the county will be sufficient to provide \$2 for every dollar subscribed, but so soon as the collective subscriptions of all the societies in the county exceed \$120, then the grant-rate is necessarily diminished. In 1864 when there were fewer societies than now the average sum appropriated to each society was \$83; but during the past year the average was reduced to \$69. Thus the societies in one county raise upwards of \$300 by subscription, and those of another county raise less than half that sum, yet both counties receive an equal grant of \$240. The society in one county with few members receives \$2 for every dollar subscribed, whilst a society in the other county receives less than one dollar for every dollar subscribed. Some complaints have been received from parties who had organized societies on the faith of receiving \$2 as a matter of course in return for one subscribed, and cases of apparent inequality may arise; but no real hardship has been experienced, and the restriction of the sum assignable to counties appears to be generally regarded as a just and necessary one.

The annual reports received from the various agricultural societies afford ample evidence of activity and zeal, and (what is of far greater importance) a general desire on the part of members to devote the funds at their disposal to the legitimate objects contemplated by the Act for Encouragement of Agriculture. Agricultural Exhibitions and Ploughing Matches have been held by some of the societies; but most of them have devoted their funds to the purchase of improved breeds of stock, in accordance with the expressed views of the Board that the improvement of stock should be the chief aim of societies under the present circumstances of the country.

In last years' report to the Legislature, the Board pointed out the propriety of taking energetic steps for maintaining and improving the breeds of horses and cattle, by the importation of pure bred animals from England. The committee on Agriculture of last session reported favorably upon this recommendation, and suggested that whilst the horses should be selected in England, the horned cattle might probably be obtained in the sister