

correct, and ordered to be sent to the Legislature with relative vouchers, in the usual manner; as also a classified abstracts of receipts and expenditure.

The Annual Report of the Board was submitted in draft. Agricultural Societies have increased in number and in strength, and a larger amount of money has been expended by them in the purchase of thorough-bred stock, new varieties of agricultural plants, and implement-inventions, than during any previous year. Their wants are still, however, imperfectly satisfied, and the necessity of very frequent importations of live stock of thoroughly pure blood, and of the very best kinds that can be obtained, becomes more and more evident. The proceedings of these Societies show that at no former time has there been so much genuine interest evinced in the improvement of Stock. Since the Returns were prepared several applications for new Societies have been received, one through the Hon. Robert Robertson, Commissioner of Mines, from fifty-three farmers at Cape Negro, in Shelburne County, who have all paid in their subscriptions; another from the same County, presented by Thomas Johnston, Esq., M. P. P., a third from the farmers of the northern part of Halifax County, bordering on Colchester and Hants, presented by Henry Yeomans, Esq., and a fourth from Hon. E. P. Flynn, from Arichat, Cape Breton; whilst in other counties similar movements are being made. New Societies, that have not forwarded their applications for organization are requested to do so before the March meeting.

The information contained in the report of the result of Wheat Culture is very satisfactory, the Fyfe wheat distributed by the Board having been eminently successful. The Norway and especially the Surprise Oats are highly valued; the latter is a most beautiful Oat, and has given an enormous yield in suitable soils.

It was arranged to hold the half yearly meeting of the Board on Wednesday, 22nd March, at 10 o'clock, A. M., when the members from the various Rural Districts of the Province are expected to be present.

The efforts of the Board to introduce Hemp Culture have not been so successful as could be wished. This is attributed partly to the imperfect preparation and manuring of the soil, and partly to the want of suitable mills for preparing the fibre, the erection of which would have involved more expenditure than the Board was in a position to make. It is hoped, however, that those who have cultivated Hemp during the past season will continue the experiment, which may be more successful next season, from the experience gained during the past.

Communications.

OAKFIELD, March 4, 1871.

SIR.—I think that there can be no dispute that our most pressing need is now the improvement of Stock. This seems to bring all other improvements in its train. When the farmer has valuable stock, he will not neglect them, but takes more pains to house them properly in winter; when he has stock that thrive fast, he does not try with how little food he can bring them through the winter; but instead of grudging them every lock of hay, he is willing to supply them with what they will eat, as he knows they will compensate him in their more rapid growth.

Again, instead of selling almost all the calves and then selling off as much hay as possible, as is still to far too great an extent the case, the farmer will raise the calves, seeing his advantage in selling beef instead of veal; and the hay being consumed at home will make manure which will serve to enrich, and make more productive, the uplands.

Nothing is more striking about the older settlements of the Province, than the quantity of old cleared upland which is mown the summer through—as long as it would produce hay—hay was cut—then it was turned off to pasture, and being pronounced run out, it was left for cattle to range over, and for the bushes to start up in and gradually to over-run. It is actually our misfortune that we are too much favored. We are blessed with splendid dyke lands and intervalles, and on these the farmer depends to maintain his stock and the farm.

Let us look at England, there the farmer has to live by his uplands; necessity has taught him to find the means of doing so, and of growing rich, and that, in spite of rent and taxes, which amount greatly to more than the fee simple of Nova Scotia. The Aberdeenshire farmer, who has to deal with a climate very like ours, who is 500 miles away from his market, London, who pays nearly as much for his labour, and who pays 8 to 10 per cent. on the value of his farm in rent and taxes, has brought farming to such a pitch, that men like Mr. McCombie can fatten and send to market 300 head of cattle every year, and they have attained such political influence in the country, that Mr. McCombie himself was returned as M. P. for the County by the tenant farmer's interest. *These are upland farmers.*

To produce good crops on upland, requires both skill and labour; these will not be applied without a prospect of proper returns, and whilst the man who makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, has been called the benefactor of his kind, I hold that none

the less so, is the man who can make two lbs. of beef out of the same food which formerly made one; I look upon stock simply as meat manufactories, our aim must be to make the greatest quantity of the manufactured article out of the smallest quantity of the raw materials; and further, to turn the young stock as early as possible into food, that is into money. If double the weight of meat can be made in the same time, on a fixed quantity of food, or if the same weight can be made in half the time on the same quantity, I think it is plain that we sell our produce of forage for double the amount we otherwise should. The present quantity of forage raised in the Province will thereby provide for double the number of animals that are now kept; that is, one of the most important items of wealth in the Province will be doubled, and to obtain this result it is simply necessary to improve judiciously our breed of stock.

Unfortunately we have not the capitalists that other countries, and even other parts of our own Dominion, can boast of among our farmers. Few are able to spare the time and money to attend the Annual Exhibitions, and to select and import pure bred stock.

The farming class, although the most numerous in the Province, is as a body poor. Young men from its ranks are constantly recruiting the population of the towns. Elsewhere, these men, when they have made their money in commerce &c., purchase an estate in the country to which they retire either occasionally or entirely, and making a hobby of it, spend their income in improving stock and trying experiments by which the professional farmer benefits. In this Province, I am sorry to say, that except to a small extent on the Halifax Peninsula, hardly a single such instance has occurred. Farming is looked down upon, instead of being looked up to as the noblest occupation, and specially the recreation of the rich.

I mention this to show why the farmers are not in a position to benefit themselves as they might; it therefore becomes the duty of Government to take the matter in hand, and benefit the farmers and through them the whole Province. The Board of Agriculture, acting under the auspices of Government, have from time to time imported pure bred stock, and already a marked improvement is manifest in stock and in the interest farmers take in their occupation, as shown in the reports of the different societies. Several Exhibitions have also been held, a strong proof of the increased interest. Of late the funds at the disposal of the Board have not warranted any extensive importations. The few animals brought into Nova Scotia last autumn commanded good prices, and proved the demand that exists for good stock.

With the surplus now in the Treasury