

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF STATUTE.—BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.—EDUCATION, &c.

We deem it our duty to invite the earnest attention of our readers to that portion of the proceedings of the Provincial Association, inserted in another place, authorizing the formation of a Committee, for the important purposes of drafting new bills for the government of the Association, and the other Agricultural Societies in the province; and also to address the legislature on the propriety of establishing a Board of Agriculture, and an Agricultural Chair in the University of Toronto, in connection with an illustrative or experimental farm. The propositions originated, we believe, with the honourable Adam Fergusson, than whom no one is better qualified, from his long experience and social position, for aiding their practical realisation, and this meeting responded to them, with the most perfect cordiality. Differences of opinion there may be relative to details in the carrying out of these important objects; but upon the great and vital question itself, that the time has fully arrived in this country when patriotism and intelligence should enter into an indissoluble combination for the noble object of stimulating Canadian enterprise and industry, and of developing our immense agricultural resources, there can, we think, be but one opinion among those capable of comprehending the subject. That something must speedily be done in the direction indicated by the resolution referred to, cannot for a moment be doubted; unless the people of this country will remain content in a *stationary* position, engrossed with their own petty and most injurious party jealousies, while the rest of the world is rapidly marching onwards. The people of the United States have been, for a considerable time, awaking to a consciousness of the paramount claims of agriculture, and they are now giving palpable evidence of the sincerity and depth of their convictions, in disseminating agricultural knowledge, and in aiding discovery by original investigations, by the establishing of experimental farms, and endowing agricultural chairs and lectureships, in many of their public seats of learning. The same has been done in the British Isles, and in most of the countries of Europe, where agriculture is esteemed of national importance. And in these days of unrestricted competition, that people who neglect the duty of instructing the masses in the principles of the arts they practice, must necessarily be left behind in the race of competition. The united province of Canada, and we may add the whole of British America, possesses many great advantages; nature has dispensed her bounties on many large areas of this portion of the earth's surface with no niggard hand. The genial climate and extensive virgin soils of the Upper Province, equal in natural fertility to the richest lands of the mother country; the wide spread water power and manufacturing capabilities of every considerable section of these extensive regions, and withal our unrivalled lake and river navigation to the Atlantic, that mighty ocean which bears on its bosom by far the largest portion of the world's commerce; with

all these immense natural advantages does it not become our sacred duty to improve and apply them under the guidance of intelligence and public spirit; and to cultivate among ourselves a generous, confiding and conciliatory disposition? The great improvements which have already been made under many disadvantages, in some sections of the country—quite equal, we believe, to what have been accomplished, under similar circumstances, in the United States—indicate, most unmistakably, the untold blessings which are in store for Canada, whenever an enlightened, united and vigorous national feeling shall have supplanted the distrust and jealousy engendered by the antipathies of races, party strife and clamour. In the working out of an improved and better state of things, we regard the diffusion of sound knowledge, in its widest acceptation, as an essential preliminary condition; and, therefore, every effort that is put forth for raising the moral and intellectual standard of the producing masses of the people, has a strong claim for support upon every good citizen.

We have almost unconsciously been led into these remarks, under the impression with which we commenced, of the desirableness of introducing agricultural instruction both into our colleges and schools; and we have no doubt that the Directors of the Provincial Association will be sustained in their efforts to accomplish this purpose, by the intelligent and high-feeling portion of the people. The Chief Superintendent of Schools, and the Board of Education for this section of the Province, have already shown that they are not insensible to the claims of agriculture to occupy a place in the general routine of education.

We ought, perhaps, to say that in the Board of Agriculture, which it is proposed to establish, it is not intended to render the members thereof any pecuniary remuneration for their services by the Government. The main duties of such a board will be to collect and disseminate information, and generally to watch over the agricultural interest of the country; similar to what is done by a chamber of commerce, or board of trade, for commercial objects. We think the two might, in this country, be of mutual service to each other; and very frequently render useful aid to the government.

In reference to the proposed new statutes, for the government of the Provincial Association and Agricultural Societies, the Committee will be happy to receive the opinions or suggestions of parties interested in the subject. The attention of the officers of Agricultural Societies is particularly requested to the matter, and it is hoped that they will put themselves, without further notice, in communication with the Secretary of the Association, without delay, in order that the committee, before drafting the bills, may have the advantage of the advice and be made acquainted with the wishes and opinions, of competent parties interested in the subject, residing in different sections of the Province. As the Provincial Association will offer a larger sum of money for premiums this year than heretofore, it is hoped that the Agricultural Societies of the Province will, as heretofore, render a liberal support.