

SKETCH OF A GREAT CO-OPERATIVE,  
**AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY,**  
 PROPOSED FOR THE  
**WESTERN DISTRICT.**

It has appeared to a gentleman lately settled in the District rather extraordinary, that, notwithstanding the liberal encouragement given by Government to the formation of *Agricultural Societies*, the greater part of the *Western District*—undeniably surpassing most, and inferior to no section of the Province in climate and soil, and consequently capable of yielding, by proper management, vegetable and animal productions of the most superior kinds—should still, apparently, remain insensible to the great public and private benefits derivable from so desirable and valuable an Institution. Imagining that the attempt may have hitherto been accidentally overlooked, for want of some one on the spot, volunteering to furnish a *preliminary* outline, for the public to canvass and decide upon, he humbly ventures to invite the attention of his friends and neighbours to so interesting a *Desideratum*, with an earnest view to the more rapid improvement of the country of his adoption; and he would fain entertain a hope that so important and attractive an object requires only to be hinted at, to ensure being at once successfully agitated and speedily brought to maturity.

Influenced by these feelings, he takes the liberty, with all deference to others, who may be far better qualified for such an undertaking, to submit to the candid consideration of all those who may feel interested—and who is there, that, in a purely agricultural country like *Canada*, is not deeply interested, in the advancement of *agriculture*—the propriety of establishing, with as little further delay as possible, upon an *extensive co-operative basis*, an *Association* having for its joint objects the improvement of all *Agricultural and Horticultural Productions*, and the amelioration of *Live Stock*, and *Earning implements of every description*, throughout the District, and which he would therefore suggest, should be appropriately denominated, “**THE WESTERN DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.**”

Without presuming to enter into particulars, with regard to *how* such an Association should be constituted in all its parts, the writer of this humble appeal may perhaps be permitted to offer, for free investigation, a passing suggestion or two, as to what *might* be the *ground-work* of an Institution of the kind—pregnant as such must be with incalculable general benefit to the country at large, as well as with great *direct* advantage and pleasing recreation to every individual landholder and inhabitant of the District.

He would therefore, for instance, at once propose that the Society in contemplation should invite the *Lieutenant Governor* to become its immediate *Patron*, and that its office bearers should consist of at least *two* Presidents (besides *honorary* presidents to be hereafter noticed) *six* Vice Presidents, a Treasurer, and a Secretary, and a committee of at least 20 members, with power to add to their number if deemed advisable, and of whom a Vice President and four members might be a quorum; that the representatives of the District in both Houses of Parliament for the time being, should be *ex-officio* honorary Presidents; that the Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Secretaries, of all Agricultural Societies in the Province, and even in Lower Canada, (and why not many talented friends and patrons of agriculture in Britain) should also be elected *Honorary* members; and that the society might be beneficially divided into three classes, into which all landholders and residents within the District would be eligible to be enrolled, at their own discretion, on the following terms.

1st. An annual subscription of £1, with an entrance fee of 5 shillings currency, might constitute a member of the 1st. or *general class*, including both Agriculture and Horticulture.

2nd. A similar subscription of 10 shillings currency, with an entrance of two shillings and sixpence, might constitute a member of the 2nd or *Agricultural class*.

3rd. An annual subscription of 5 shillings currency, with an entrance of two shillings and sixpence, might constitute a member of the 3rd or *Horticultural class*—which might very properly be confined to small Farmers, and Cottagers, or holders of town lots, whose income may not be supposed to exceed £50 per annum, and who might therefore be expected to be more immediately interested in the improvement of Garden productions, such as *Fruits, Flowers, and Vegetables*.

4th. In addition to the above, a donation of £10, independent of a first subscription and entrance, might constitute the donor a *Vice President* for life, and a similar donation of £5, with first subscription and entrance, might entitle the giver to be ranked as a member for life, &c.

The above rough outline not being presumed to be at all worthy of *general* adoption, but simply offered, with all frankness, as *something tangible*, for deliberate examination by all those who feel interested in so laudable and useful an Association as that contemplated, it may in the same spirit be further suggested that a public meeting should be called at the court house at Sandwich, on some convenient day—say this day month—for the purpose of giving a *real* instead of an *ideal* birth to “*The Western District Agricultural and Horticultural Society*,” and that, in the mean time, the different townships should be, by some means, invited either to send delegates to that meeting, or to express, through an authorized medium, their concurrence in the general outline of the objects proposed, and their readiness to leave to that meeting the election of a managing committee, and the adoption of such general rules as may be deemed most likely to ensure the permanent well-being and advancement of the Society, whether connected with the regulation of its internal economy, the management of its pecuniary resources, the adjustment of the number and amount of *Prizes* to be awarded for the best show of cattle, as well as of grain, and other crops, (not forgetting that valuable exclusive staple of the Western District, *Tobacco*), together with the premiums to be given for the best exhibition of choice fruits and flowers, the successful introduction of new and useful vegetable Productions, or the invention or adoption of improved agricultural implements, machinery, &c. &c.

To the above it may be proper to add, that there might be at least *two* general meetings of the Society during the year, *besides the great Annual one*; the first, or Spring meeting, to be held in some convenient central situation, as early in the season as would be favourable to the exhibition of prize Flowers, and the promulgation of the other objects of competition among the members, for the Season; and the second, for general conveniency, to take place at *Sandwich*, during the annual assize-week, (or oftener should the Legislature decide on the assizes being held every 6 months;) but the last, or *Great Annual Meeting, and Prize Stock Fair*, for the adjudication of prizes of every description, &c. &c., to be held alternately at Sandwich, Chatham, and Amherstburg, about the latter end of October, when, after settling the usual annual routine business, connected with the auditing of accounts, adopting of improved rules and regulations, and electing office-bearers for the following year, members of ability and experience might be invited to deliver a Lecture or Address, on any of the highly interesting subjects within the fertile and diversified scope of the objects of the Society.

*Sandwich, January 24, 1837.*