



Township Societies.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—Having felt somewhat interested in the war of words that has been going on for some time past between the advocates of Township and County Societies, and some ideas occurring to my mind in connection therewith that appear to have been overlooked by our zealous friends, I venture to trespass on your valuable space for the purpose of making a few remarks on the subject. No reasonable person will for a moment pretend to deny that the country has been greatly benefited by our Agricultural Societies. That they have greatly contributed to our present prosperity as an agricultural country, must be evident to every one. They have awakened a spirit of enquiry and emulation in the breast of thousands, whose minds have become more enlightened as to the nature of their calling, and who have thus been stirred up to greater diligence in the prosecution of their business. They have done very much to elevate the calling of the farming community, not only in their own estimation, but also in the estimation of others, who were wont to look on the life of the farmer as one of constant toil and drudgery. They too have seen what wonders may be accomplished even in farming operations by the application of a limited amount of skill and capital, combined with industry and perseverance. Our agricultural exhibitions have enkindled in the hearts of many a feeling of honest pride and heartfelt satisfaction with their position in life, which should be felt by all who thus see gathered together the fruits of their luxurious fields, their richly laden orchards and their growing flocks and herds, while they have the happy assurance that with every returning season their substance is increasing, and that, with the blessing of Providence, they are above want and free from the fear of the fluctuations of merchandize or the embarrassments of trade. Doubtless but few will be inclined to dispute the fact of our having derived very great benefits from the existence of many of our Agricultural Societies, both Township and County. But while we admit all this, we may at the same time very properly enquire if all the good has been accomplished that might have been done. The above are, no doubt, very good reasons for keeping up our exhibitions to a certain extent. But is there not a possibility of carrying the thing too far? It is evident that a spirit of jealousy exists between the County and Township Societies; in some localities they are in direct opposition to each other. Now what is the cause of this, and where is the remedy for the evil? The cause of this opposition, it is clearly evident, arises from the holding of so many exhibitions; it is admitted by all that there are far too many. And if so, much valuable time and means are yearly expended that could be put to other purposes. It is doubtless a great mistake to suppose that all the good has been done that could be accomplished, when the annual revenue is given away by awarding prizes at shows. Much good might still be accomplished by introducing new kinds of seed, and thorough-bred stock, and encouraging a better system of farming; and here is a vast field of usefulness open to the Township Societies, which they can enter and work without coming in contact with the County Societies. In many parts of the country one show in a County would be quite sufficient. Especially is this the case in many of the newer sections of the country, where many small and weak societies have frittered away their means in the getting up of a few small paltry shows, where, perhaps, little or nothing could be shown worth the looking at; and after a few years the novelty of the thing has passed away, the people have become dissatisfied, and cease to take any interest in the affairs of the Society. To remedy this evil, our County friends proposed to swallow up a number of their

weaker neighbours, or starve them gradually to death by curtailing the Government grant. This I believe to be a wrong policy. Would it not be better to assist and encourage the formation of Township Societies, and induce them to occupy a different field of operations from the County Societies? Let them expend their means in introducing new varieties of seeds and improved stock. The introduction of improved stock is evidently the proper work for a Township Agricultural Society, as it is not every neighbourhood that can boast of a private individual of sufficient means and liberality to engage in this expensive business. And again, many are willing to incur the first cost of purchasing a good animal, but they think it useless to commence improving unless they see their way clear to keep up their standard of excellence, and they are aware that to do so requires frequent renewals at a great expense. But when an Agricultural Society engages in this business, and purchases a number of animals, they have a great advantage over a private individual in their not being under the necessity of sacrificing an expensive animal after two or three years' service; by moving them from place to place as often as required, their services are retained by the Society for a number of years. We see among merchants, manufacturers, and in almost every other kind of business, the great advantage of combining the skill and capital of numbers in order to carry on more successfully the business in which they may be engaged. And why should farmers be indifferent to the advantage of acting on the same principle in the carrying on of their operations? In our Township Societies we have the machinery all complete, and in no possible way could it be used to better advantage than in improving the live stock in a township. In conclusion allow me to add, that much as the wealth and prosperity of any country may depend on its commerce and manufactures, still we must look to agriculture as the true source and foundation of all national progress.

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Queries concerning the Agricultural Bill.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—May I ask to have a few questions answered through your columns? They refer to "An Act for the Encouragement of Agriculture, Horticulture, Arts, and Manufactures," passed by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, with the name of the Hon. John Carling attached to it.

As a rule, I think that Acts of Parliament are worded very carefully, so that it is next to impossible for any one, with average intelligence, to mistake the meaning intended to be conveyed; but, in the Act referred to, I fear there is room at least for a doubt as to its intention, so far as regards Township Societies. For instance, Sec. 42 says that "A Township Agricultural Society may be organized in each Township in Ontario, in which there was not one already organized at the date of the passing of this Act, or in any two or more such Townships together, wherever a sufficient number of persons, not less than fifty, become members by signing a declaration," &c., &c. Now, I do not think it is clearly expressed by the above quotation, whether this section has any reference to Township Societies which were organized before the date of the passing of this Act; for the words "in which there was not one already organized at the date of the passing of this Act," may be intended to prevent a Society being organized at the same time, or in opposition to such existing Society.

I also wish to know if it is necessary in future that all Societies, whether old or new, shall have at least fifty members?

Section 46, Proviso No. 1, says:—"But no grant shall be made unless One Hundred Dollars be first subscribed and paid to the Treasurer of the County Society, and to the Treasurers of the Township Societies within its limits."

I should like to know if the Commissioner of Agriculture means that each Treasurer of the Township Societies must receive one hundred dollars, to entitle the County Society to receive the Government Grant, or does he mean that all the Treasurers of the Township Societies must receive, at least, one hundred dollars in the aggregate?

From Section 48, sub-section 3, it would appear that only new Members, having paid the Membership

Subscription before the 1st of January, shall have the right of voting at the election of the office-bearers, and upon business applying solely to such year, as "all persons whose names are recorded on the books of any such Society, as legal members thereof, under this Act, shall have the right of voting on all other questions submitted to such annual meetings."

The above, in part recited section, does not tell me what I desire to know, which is—if it is necessary that any person, to be entitled to a vote at the annual meeting, must pay his subscription before the 1st of January, and if all members must so pay their subscriptions, or only new ones.

You will very much oblige me by answering these questions, for in a legal matter of this kind there should be no guess-work. I doubt not but there are some other backwoods Secretaries who will be glad to get a comprehensible version of this part of the Act.

A SECRETARY.

Note by Ed. C. F.—By the date of a private note accompanying the above communication, it would appear as though it had been sent some time since, but it has only now come into our hands.

In reference to the first enquiry, it is quite evident, and indeed is clearly expressed in sub-section 1, "That there shall not be more than one such Society in any Township." The section plainly declares that, if no Society already exists, one may be organized, under certain conditions. If such Society has already been established, it is recognized, and while it remains, another is inadmissible. With regard to the number of members mentioned in the conditions, it is meant, that at the first organization there must be at least fifty members. The provision does not affect the number of members of existing Societies, or of newly-formed ones subsequent to their organization.

In reference to Section 46, the meaning is—that the aggregate amount subscribed to the County and Township Societies must be at least \$100, and not that any one Society must have that amount.

The interpretation of sub-section 3, in Section 48, seems also perfectly plain—namely, that to entitle any person, whether new member or old, to vote in the election of office-bearers, for the year next ensuing—that is to vote prospectively—he must pay his subscription in advance; but on all other matters, affecting the business of the past year, any member, legally recorded on the books, is entitled to a vote. No distinction is made in regard to old or new members.

We trust we have been sufficiently explicit to enable our correspondent, and others in like difficulties, to comprehend the scope of the provisions in question.

While on this subject, we take the opportunity of rectifying the number of the chapter which appears on the title page of most copies of the Act. This is set down as chapter twenty-three, but in consequence of a different arrangement having been made since the Act was printed, it now stands as chapter twenty-nine.

A Dilemma

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I am very much interested in the question of killing the Canada thistle. A recent writer on the subject, in your journal, has gone fully into the question; yet I think it is very hard for any man to come to a definite conclusion, when there is such flat contradiction. He says that summer fallowing is the best mode of propagating the Canada thistle. Now, if we turn to the CANADA FARMER of November 1st, 1866, page 322, we find an article, taken from the *Western Rural*, in which the writer says he had purchased twenty-seven acres of land, and twenty acres of it was in wheat, and nine loads of it was nearly all thistles. He summer fallowed it next year, and sowed it in wheat, and when he harvested it, you could bind all the thistles from the twenty acres in one bundle. Now, I should like to know what "Publicola" would make of that. The fact is, I have a farm of fifty acres rented, and it