

REPORT ON HON. JOHN CARLING'S LETTER TO THE COUNCIL.

A Committee, consisting of the Chairman, Dr. Beatty, and Mr. White, submitted a report in reply to a communication from the Minister of Agriculture, which appeared in our April issue. This report, which after some discussion was adopted in full, is as follows :

"Your Committee to whom was referred the letter of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture of the 22nd February, beg to report.

In reference to the letter of the Minister of Agriculture, addressed to the President of this Council under date of 22nd February last, the following considerations are respectfully submitted :—

1st. The meeting of the Agricultural Association exhibits a constant and most gratifying evidence of progress in the increase of entries and prizes offered from the year of the first Exhibition, 1846, when the entries were 1,150, and prizes offered \$1,600, to the Exhibition of 1869, when the entries were 7,649, and prizes offered \$13,248.

2nd. The improvement in the quality and variety of articles exhibited, whether in the department of Agriculture, Horticulture, Mechanics, or Arts, has been quite as marked and gratifying as has been the increase in quantity.

3rd. The observations of the members of the Council made during frequent visits to the Annual Exhibitions of New York and other States, and the acknowledgments of distinguished Americans visiting our Exhibition, freely and impartially given, warrant the assertion that the Annual Exhibitions of Ontario not only stand in the very first rank, but really excel any and every other of the same mixed character on the continent.

4th. The successful establishment of the Veterinary College, under the charge of Andrew Smith, V. S., of Edinburgh, and the number of qualified Veterinary Surgeons now annually sent out from the College, supplying a most important desideratum to the agricultural community, is confidently referred to as further evidence of the successful management of the Association.

5th. The working expenses of the Association, which the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture asserts 'seem to be very large,' have been very materially increased under the operation of the system adopted under the present Agricultural Act, increasing the number of the elective members of the Council from eight to twelve; and the practice of elective members, residents of the respective districts they represent, while beneficial to the interests of the Association, and satisfactory to the public, the travelling and incidental expenses are very considerably increased, when compared with the system and practice under the former Act. For the past year, also, the working expenses were very largely increased by the large sum the Council were obliged to expend in preparing the necessary accommodation at London for the Annual Exhibition, amounting to about \$3,350.

6th. The expenses under the head of 'Miscellaneous,' specially referred to, can scarcely create surprise, when some of the items are examined, to wit: \$2,000 of the amount was a sum paid to Prof. Buckland, for three years' services as Lecturer for the Association, which had been appropriated to

him and should have been paid by the late Treasurer more than two years ago: \$163.65 discount paid upon silver received for entrance to the Exhibition: \$135 paid for the Lieut.-Governor's bill as Visitor to the London Exhibition: are all extraordinary payments, and deducted from the miscellaneous aggregate of \$3,467.79, leaves but \$1,169.14 to be fairly charged under that head.

Circumstances connected with the former Council and Board of Agriculture, and the operation of the first year under the present Act, made it necessary to hold a larger number of meetings of the Council than ordinary, and perhaps double the number which will be required for the present year, and this will very materially reduce the working expenses of the Council.

7th. An Agricultural Library, to be of general benefit, must be so located as to be easy of access to agricultural men; and it is submitted that there can be no comparison in this respect, as between the rooms in the Parliament Buildings, proposed by the Minister of Agriculture, and the commodious premises now owned and occupied by the Council of the Association, the latter being the most central location in the city.

8th. Instead, therefore, of the plan suggested by the Minister of Agriculture, it is now proposed that the Agricultural Library should be united to the 'Valuable Library of Books relating to Agriculture and Arts,' collected by the late Board of Arts and Manufactures when forming an active part of the Agricultural Association, and which, in all fairness, should have been handed over to this Association; to locate the united libraries in the Agricultural Hall, which contains one of the finest rooms for a library and museum in the city; establish a public library, open to the public every day in the week, and at least three evenings of the week until 10 p. m.; the present messenger having charge of and being accountable for the proper care of the Library. This plan would involve but little extra expense, and a moderate appropriation from the annual grant would provide for continuous improvement by the addition of suitable works and periodicals as issued.

9th. A most important element in the successful management of the Association is, that it has been entirely free from political influences; to the people has been left the conduct and location and control of the Annual Exhibition, aided and fostered by annual grants of money by the Parliament, but in no way influenced or interfered with by the Government of the day; and it is submitted that this element of success must be entirely destroyed by the plan of management suggested by the Minister of Agriculture, and the expense—the plea used—could be but slightly if at all diminished, except, indeed, that the Government should assume the entire control, and dispense with the services of the Council, in which case it would no longer be an institution of the people, but a creature of the Government.

The members of the Committee are convinced, and this expression of opinion is unanimous, that it is of the utmost importance to the continued success of the Association that it should preserve its autonomy in the future as in the past, independent of and unaffected by whatever shade of politics may mark the existing Government.

So far as the Committee are aware, the change proposed by the Minister of Agriculture has not