

Board until recently, when, by its order, it was paid over into the hands of the Treasurer of the Horticultural and Mechanical Association of London, as a legitimate application of its original intention,—and your Board not only feels great pleasure in the commencement of a kindred institution, but most heartily wishes it every success in the race of improvement.

It is with pleasure your Board has to state, that the influence of this Society has not only been seen, but is being felt, throughout these united counties. Several of the townships have formed Societies of their own, in connection with the parent institution, and with their active machinery at work have shown that a separate, and yet harmonious emulation amongst them, has produced the happiest results.

During the last year two more townships have organized Societies in localities, where your Board did not anticipate so warm a feeling in the general cause, and from the inspection of the subscription lists furnished, it is evidently shown they do not intend to be last in the race of general improvement.

As the present age is preeminently one of practical benefit, where facts, figures, and material prosperity, stand out in bold relief with the sentimentalism of the last century, and seems destined, in a happy combination with the cultivation of the human mind, to elevate the great mass of society, in the enjoyment of material comfort, and the refinements of civilization, your Board cannot but congratulate the farmers of Middlesex and Elgin on the advance which they have made in these essential elements of improvement in rural life, as will be more fully seen by a reference to the different schedules now submitted.

In schedule No. 1, as reported by the Secretary, it will be seen that the names of thirteen subscribers are reported which are not accounted for by the Treasurer; the supposed discrepancy arises from that number not having paid their subscriptions at the time the Treasurer closed his account. But taking the lesser number of 146, as an index to the interest taken by the united counties in this Society, in addition to the large number of 813 subscribers in the different township societies, it must strike the most casual observer that the interest in the Societies' welfare is rapidly on the increase. In schedule No. 2 it will be seen that your Board has paid the large sum of £561 9s. 4½d. for Premiums and Township Grants, including a few smaller items for expenses, leaving a balance of £82 19s. 1d. in the Treasurer's hands.

In schedule No. 3 will be found a statement of the different sums of money received and paid to the respective Township Societies.

In concluding its report, your Board feels it would be wanting in its duty, were it not to state the proud satisfaction on which it dwells, while reflecting on the past and present position of the agricultural interests in the united counties of Middlesex and Elgin.

Scarcely thirty years ago the ground on which we stand was a wilderness, traversed by the panther and the bear, and now is to be seen a city in embryo, containing upwards of 7,000 inhabitants, with a surrounding country fast rising to be the most populous in western Canada. At that period the Indian almost alone trod the desert stealthily in search of his game: now the sound of the axe, the driving of the plough, and the busy hum of industry generally, is heard and meets the eye at every turn. It has often been said that the peninsula on which we stand is the garden of Canada; and how truly! The results of the last year's agricultural industry will show.

By the Enumerator's return for the past year, we have a statement which must not only astonish and stimulate, but captivate. The products and personal property of the agriculturists of the county of Middlesex, amounts in value (and that within what the markets at this time realize) to the enormous sum of £614,856, and upwards. If such has been its progress for the last generation, what may not be expected in the next? And more especially so while we witness the fast spreading conviction, entwining itself with the feelings and habits of the people of this country, that their own and country's welfare depend upon the permanent success which agriculture can command: and that other and minor interests will advance or recede in proportion with it, as enlightened and patriotic, or selfish and contracted legislation may direct. And it is in the opinion of this Board a matter of deep regret, that its action should be again disturbed by Legislation, the effects and influence of which have yet to be tested by another year's probation. But your Board would fain hope that the results may not only show a continued prosperity, but especially to this Society, over which it has had the honor to preside; and that its members may have the proud satisfaction of pointing to the united counties of Middlesex and Elgin as the garden—and the most productive and prosperous garden—in United Canada.

All of which is most respectfully submitted.

THOMAS C. DIXON,
Chairman of the Board of Directors.