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Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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REPORT OF THE Northumberland Agricultural Society, for 1850--51.

In submitting a Report of their proceedings for the year that is past, the retiring Board of the Northumberland Agricultural Society, esteem it as their first and chiefest duty to record their gratitude to the "Giver of all good," for the abundant Harvest with which it has pleased Him to reward the labours of the husbandman, and grant a plentiful supply of food for man and beast.

With the exception of the Potatoe, so long the victim of disease, the Crop of 1850, not only in this Province, but over all Europe and America, has been a good and plentiful one! Wheat in this County has yielded a large return, and the samples this day exhibited, distinctly prove, that in point of weight, the article is superior to any hitherto raised in this county. Oats almost invariably do well in this quarter: they are our staple crop, and last season the yield was not much inferior to that of any former year. Hay was an average crop; and Turnips, Carrots, &c., where properly cultivated, were unusually large, and of excellent quality.

Years of scarcity, like the visits of Angels, "are few and far between," and are no doubt sent to teach us lessons of humility and gratitude, and our utter dependence on the Lord of Harvests. Heartrending were the details of suffering and death, which reached us, of late years, from various parts of the earth, occasioned by famine; yet it has continued to be proverbially true of us, that, if in Northumberland, we cannot boast of many rich, we cannot complain of many poor men. Although too much indolence and extravagance have prevailed, who will assert that there has ever been much, if any, positive suffering in this County, either from the want of food, or the want of clothing? Yet, strange to say, this is denounced by many of its inhabitants, as the country from which the poor man should hasten away, that he may find plenty in lands steeped in penury and oppressed by pauperism.

There is a prevailing opinion among us, which has had a strong tendency to produce aversion to this Province, and to which the Board feel it their duty to refer. It is this: it is asserted, that while the neighbouring States have been "going a-head" in the way of improvements, at Railway speed, we have been standing still. Now, it is well to reflect, that in the pursuit of prosperity, whether by whole communities or individuals, the goal is less frequently reached by the swift, than by the cautious and persevering competitor. Besides, it is not true that this Province has been standing still, while the neighboring States have been advancing. Only sixty or seventy years have elapsed, since the earliest settlement of New Brunswick; and its present population does not exceed 250,000 souls, or little more than a second rate town in England. Now let any candid observer, capable of understanding the subject, take a survey of the present condition of the country; its Roads, Bridges, Schools, Churches, Colleges, and numerous public institutions; and let him take into account the time employed, in the production of these improvements, the public revenues as the means by which these have been effected, and the small amount of our population, and he will at once express his surprise, not at the tardiness, but the rapidity of our past progression.

It is not contended, however, that we have kept pace with our neighbours "beyond the border," or that we might not have been in a more advanced condition had we employed the ordinary means, which Providence had placed within our reach. But then, the question at once suggests itself, why have we not kept pace with the neighbouring States? which is to blame, the capabilities of the country, or the conduct of its inhabitants? That this is owing to the latter, and not the former cause, the Board shall devote a subsequent part of this Report to make manifest.

But then it may be asked, how is it, that the population of the Province is only 250,000, if it can be shown that it is capable of sustaining a much greater number of inhabitants. Is it because in countries overloaded in population, such as Great Britain and Ireland, they had discovered that our land is only adapted to the growth of the Forest Tree, not the productions of the cultivated field, and that therefore it should continue the abode of the aborigine, not the home of civilized men? No! it is simply because in these, and similarly circumstanced countries, they know nothing about New Brunswick, or its capabilities, and therefore care nothing about either. To this subject also, should time and space

permit, the Board intend to return by-and-by.

Before discussing the two topics to which they have referred, viz: the Agricultural capabilities of Northumberland, as compared with other countries, and its present condition and prospects, the Board beg to claim the attention of the Society, to a concise but truthful narrative of their procedure, while in office. For the sake of brevity, they will pass over the more minute and ordinary details, and refer only to the leading and more interesting points.

They held their first meeting at Newcastle on Tuesday, the 29th January, being only a few days after their election to office. At this meeting the preliminary or initiatory arrangements of the year were completed. The list of Prizes this day awarded, was strictly scrutinized and materially amended; and it was Resolved, "that a premium of fifty pounds be offered to any person who would erect a Carding, Fulling, and Dressing Machine in the Parish of Chatham or Newcastle, the same to be completed by the end of the year."

The second meeting of the Board took place on Thursday the 14th March, when there was, as before, a full attendance, and the deliberations lasted the greater part of the day. Three persons were appointed a Committee to prepare Rules and Regulations for the guidance of parties who might be disposed to compete for the Premium offered by this Society, for the erection of the Carding, Fulling, and Dressing Machine referred to at last meeting, with such additions thereto as the Committee may deem necessary. It was also resolved that the quantities of Clover Seed on hand, be disposed of at the rate of sevenpence per pound, and the Wheat at sixteen shillings per bag; and that a Committee be chosen to obtain information as to what labour-saving machines it would be most advisable to import from the United States, or elsewhere, as Models for our Mechanics, and that said Committee report at next meeting of the Board.

On Thursday, the 11th April, the third meeting of your Committee took place at Newcastle, when the persons appointed at the previous meeting, to prepare Rules and Regulations for the erection of a Fulling, Carding, and Dressing Machine, submitted their Report, together with an elaborate, highly interesting, and well digested communication, prepared by William J. Berton, Esq., of St. John; in which he describes most minutely, the cost, qualification, construction, advantages and disadvantages of such mills, in the United States. For this information, so ably and generously supplied, the Board forthwith unanimously adopted, the following Resolution: "Resolved, That this Board desire to tender to William J. Berton, Esq., of St. John, their best thanks, through George Keir, Esq., for the very valuable Report, on the subject of Machinery and its cost, with which he has so kindly supplied this Society." At this meeting a letter was read from the Secretary of the lately formed Blackville, Blissfield, and Ludlow Agricultural Society, expressing a desire to partake in the services, and to share in the cost, of the "Cleveland Bay" Horse, belonging to Mr McMonagle, of Sussex Vale. A Committee was appointed to arrange with Mr McMonagle for the use of his horse for this County, during the season; the Society undertaking to insure 60 mares, at 25s. each, or to make up the deficiency.

Mr McMonagle having acceded to the terms prescribed by the Board, the Horse arrived at Chatham about the 20th May, and remained in the County till the beginning of August. "Cleveland Bay"—although one or two slight blemishes have been attributed to him—has been pronounced by the most competent Judges, to be decidedly the most perfect and stoutest animal of the kind that has ever visited this section of the Province; and the Board are sanguine in their belief, that although the sum realized for his services be very much less than that guaranteed to Mr McMonagle, yet the advantages accruing to the County by an improved breed of Horse, will amply compensate for the loss sustained in money.

The Cattle Show and Ploughing Match of your Society took place on Thursday the 10th day of October last, being a week later than the day contemplated by the Rules of the Society. This postponement was rendered necessary owing to the severity of the weather on the proper day. A lay Park, the property of the Hon. Alexander Rankin, and in rear of his residence at Douglastown, had been selected by a Sub-committee of the Society as the field on which the Ploughing Match was to take place. This Park, however, although in all other respects better adapted to the purpose, was deemed too small to accommodate the number of Ploughmen that were expected. The Committee, therefore, had no alternative, than to fix upon a lay field of Mr John Wyse's, situated about midway between the front and rear of his

farm, which extends back the whole length of the lot. The day was exceedingly favorable, and the number of spectators large and respectable; but the ground was not only uneven on the surface, but crumby in substance, and bedded with small subsoil stones—thus rendering it about as difficult for the Judges to determine the quality of the work, as it was for the Ploughmen to perform that work, as they would otherwise have done.

The Cattle Show was, as in former years, but a poor affair. The animals exhibited being miserable in point of number, and meagre in point of size, appearance and breed. Of four prizes offered by the Society for the best and second best two and three years old Bulls, only one was awarded, which was to a two year old Bull, of Mr Nevin's, of the Ayrshire breed; and of the eight prizes open to competition for Sheep, only six were claimed; thus clearly manifesting an unaccountable indifference, on the part of Farmers, to their personal interests, and an unpardonable apathy towards the interests of the Society, of which they are members. Judges of the Ploughing Match—Messrs. John Rust, John Ellis, and Colin Nevin.

The Prizes were awarded as follows:—

Prize	No.	To	Amount
1.	To Alex. Dick, son of Mr A. Dick, Napan,	£1 17 6	
2.	John Scott, Douglastown,	1 15 0	
3.	James Orr, Farmer, Napan,	1 12 6	
4.	James Galloway, son of Mr J. Galloway, Napan,	1 10 0	
5.	James Johnstone, son of Mr G. Johnston, do.,	1 7 6	
6.	James Coultard, son of Mr R. Coultard, Newcastle,	1 5 0	

On the report of the Judges being handed to the Board, a lengthy and somewhat stormy debate took place, as to whether three of the Ploughmen, who had not strictly complied with the prescribed size of the furrow, yet were otherwise justly entitled to the three latter premiums, should or should not be paid their respective prizes. The discussion, however, resulted in favor of the Ploughmen, by a very small majority. This circumstance is noticed in this Report, in order that it may serve as a warning to these, and all other Ploughmen, on like occasions, to be more careful for the time to come.

The Judges of the Cattle Show were Messrs. Thomas Vanstone, James Keir, and Wm. Stothard, and the Prizes were awarded as follows:—

83.	Best Bull, 2 year old, C. Nevin, Newcastle,	£1 0 0
15.	Best Heifer, 2 year do., W. Loch, Newcastle (presented as a donation to the Society by Mr L.),	1 0 0
57.	2nd best do., 2 year do., W. Hay,	0 10 0
65.	Best do., 1 year do., G. Johnston, Napan,	0 15 0
9.	2nd best do., 1 year do., R. Coultard, Newcastle,	0 7 6
34.	Best Ram, 2 year do., Do. Do.,	0 15 0
69.	2nd best do., 2 year do., Michael Searle, Napan,	0 7 6
71.	Best do., 1 year do., Geo. Johnston, do.,	0 10 0
96.	Best Ewe, 2 year do., J. Creighton, Napan,	0 10 0
40.	Best do., 1 year do., G. Johnston, do.,	0 10 0
13.	2nd best do., 1 year do., Chas. Marshall, Douglastown,	0 5 0
17.	2nd best Boar, 1 year do., Jas. Grinnan, do.,	0 7 6
32.	Best Sow, 1 year do., J. Wyse, do.,	0 10 0
7.	2nd best do., 1 year do., J. Porter, do.,	0 5 0
80.	Best Entire Horse, 4 years old, D. Elkin, Napan,	3 0 0
27.	2nd best do., 3 year old, John Rennie, Newcastle,	2 0 0
55.	Best Gelding or Mare, 3 year do., A. & J. Davidson, Oak Point,	1 10 0
41.	2nd best do., 3 year do., W. Perley, Chatham,	0 15 0
6.	Best do. do., 2 year do., William Falconer, Douglastown,	1 0 0
2.	2nd best do., 2 year do., James Gray, Napan,	0 10 0

The Board now proceed to redeem their promise, made in an early part of this Report, respecting the Agricultural capabilities of this County.

In their Annual Report of last year, the predecessors of the present Board, stated, that in an Agricultural point of view, the capabilities of this County, are unknown and unappreciated. "What effect," say they, "the forthcoming Report of Professor Johnston may have in the way of opening our eyes to the capabilities of our soil, and directing attention to the discovery and cultivation of the numerous Resources of the country, your

Committee have no means of predicting. This, however, they do know, for it has been fully verified, viz: that the soil of this County is good—its situation advantageous—its climate healthy, and its resources abundant.

The Report of Professor Johnston, to which the former Board referred, has since been published, and now proves in the clearest and most satisfactory manner, that the soil of Northumberland, its situation, climate and resources, are just what they were represented by that Board.

With the Report of Professor Johnston before them, the Board proceed to show, 1st—That the Agricultural capabilities of the whole Province, are equal, if not superior, to those of the neighboring Provinces; and not inferior to those of the neighboring States of the Union, and, 2nd—That Northumberland, in this respect, is superior to some, and inferior to few, if any, of the other Counties of the Province.

Here, however, it may be necessary to remark, that Professor Johnston, both as a writer and Lecturer on Scientific Agriculture, is confessedly the most cautious, clearest and most trustworthy of the day. His opinions on all points connected with his profession, are esteemed all over Europe and America, as the highest authority, we therefore, it may be presumed, are perfectly safe in adopting his opinions, and conveying them as truths to others. Speaking of the Productions of the Soil of New Brunswick, Professor Johnston says—"The irresistible conclusion appears to be, that looking only at what the soils under existing circumstances and methods of culture are said to produce, the Province of New Brunswick is greatly superior as a Farming country to the State of New York." See page 73, and at page 77 he adds—"on the whole, therefore, I think the result of this comparison of the actual productiveness of the soil of New Brunswick, with that of other parts of North America, ought to be very satisfactory to the inhabitants of this Province, and is deserving of their serious consideration; so far as my knowledge of the intermediate country goes, I am induced to believe that the Agricultural capabilities of New York are at least equal to any of the North Eastern States. If New Brunswick exceed New York in productiveness, it ought also to exceed all the States of New England, and if it will in this respect bear a favorable comparison even with Ohio and Upper Canada. It becomes doubtful how far on the whole the other Western States are superior to it. At all events there appears to me to be sufficient reason, until more satisfactory information is obtained, for the Agricultural population of New Brunswick to remain contented with the capabilities of the soil they possess, and to give themselves up strenuously to the development of its latent resources, rather than to forsake it for other parts of Northern or Western America, which appear incapable of yielding larger crops than they can easily reap at home."

Such, then, in a few words, is Professor Johnston's deliberate and recorded opinion of the Agricultural capabilities of this Province. Let us now discover to what rank this County, as an integral part thereof, is entitled. We have seen that Professor Johnston has pronounced New Brunswick, as a whole, to be superior as a Farming Country, to the State of New York, or any of the other Northern States. Let us now see how high Northumberland stands among its sister Counties. The Board notice, first—The actual productiveness of Northumberland. The average produce, per imperial acre, reaped in the State of New York, Canada, New Brunswick, and Northumberland, is as follows:—

	State of N. York	Canada	New Brunswick	Northumberland
Wheat	14 bush.	12½ bus.	17½ bus.	18½ bus.
Barley	16 do.	7½ do.	27 do.	29 3-4 "
Oats	26 do.	24½ do.	33 do.	31 3-4 "
Potatoes	90 do.	84 do.	204 do.	206 "
Hay			1½ tons.	2 tons.

2nd—The comparative Weight of Grains for the whole Province, and this County are put down by Professor Johnston as follows:—

	Whole Province.	Northumberland.
Wheat,	60 11-16ths per bus.	62 lbs per bus.
Barley,	50 lbs. per bus.	53 lbs.
Oats,	33 lbs.	37 lbs. (much below the weight.)

3rd—Average prices obtained for Produce, in the whole Province; and in this County are as follows:—

	Whole Province.	Northumberland.
Wheat,	7s. 6d. per bushel.	7s. 6d. per bushel.
Barley,	4s. 2½d. "	5s. 3d. "
Oats,	2s. "	2s. 1d. "
Potatoes,	1s. 11d. "	1s. 10d. "

4th—The comparative length of Season, as ascertained by the average date of the closing