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Agricultural Journal.

REPORT OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY FOR 1852-3.

It is a remarkable circumstance, and one which seems to be becoming more and more apparent, that the seasons in this Province—or at least in this part of the Province—are characterised by extremes. Of almost every Winter it may be said it was extremely cold, or extremely mild; and of almost every Spring or Fall it may be said, it was extremely hot or cold, or dry or wet.

The last Summer in this County was characterised by one of these extremes. Till the month of August the weather was intensely dry and hot. Owing to this circumstance the crop was far short of what it would otherwise have been, or of what it was in the neighbouring Districts, where rain fell plentifully.

This long drought and intense heat, told on every kind of crop; but more seriously on the Grass crop, which has proved to be only about half an average one. Nevertheless we have good cause to be grateful. The lack of Fodder may have compelled some of our Farmers to kill off a few of their live Stock, peradventure their supply of Provender might not suffice to feed their usual number; but better times and brighter prospects, will enable them, without inconvenience, to replace the wanting number in the Spring.

WHEAT was nearly an average crop, but it is one of so precarious a nature, and subject to so many casualties, that some of our Farmers prudently enough turned their attention almost exclusively, to the growth of Oats, Barley, and Root Crops. Statistics furnished by Professor Johnstone and others, prove that the yield in this Province, of Potatoes, Turnips, and other Root Crops, far exceeds that of Canada or the Northern States. The following table, extracted from Professor Johnstone's Report on the Province, may serve to illustrate this fact.

Average returns of Turnips and Potatoes in this County, Canada and United States:
Northumberland.—Turnips 550 bushels per acre, Potatoes 206 bushels per acre.
Canada West.—Potatoes 84 bushels per acre.
State of New York.—Turnips 88 bushels per acre, Potatoes 90 bushels per acre.
Ohio.—Potatoes 69 bushels per acre.

OATS, although the Straw was greatly stunted by the drought, was a fair return. It is decidedly our surest and most productive crop. The Meal manufactured from it is proved to be equal in quality to any that is imported, and in flavour and freshness, much superior. OAT MEAL is an article of food, which is acknowledged to be favourable to muscular strength, health and longevity. It is now used, not only in Scotland, but in almost every civilised Country in the World, and it has sold in this market for some time past at 5s. to 7s. 6d. a barrel, higher than Quebec fine flour; so that the Farmers who substituted Oats for Wheat, will be amply recompensed for their enterprise.

BARLEY answers our soil well. It is a crop which seldom fails, and is perhaps as productive as any that is sown by the Farmer. It arrives at maturity in a shorter space of time, than either Wheat or Oats, and as an article of food either used alone or mixed with Flour, is wholesome and good. HULLED BARLEY imported for family use, has annually cost this County a large sum of money which might have been saved by hulling the necessary quantity here. TURNIPS, CARROTS, and other Roots, when skilfully cultivated—grow to a great size in this County; and yield as we have seen a much greater return than in Canada or the Northern States. Of this fact, the heavy crops raised by Peter Mitchell, and John Porter, Esqrs.; Messrs. Collins Nevans, William Falconer, P. Whiney, John Johnson, (Douglasfield), and many others, that may not have come under the notice of the Board—afford ample proof.—580 Bushels per acre of the former, and 1000 Bushels per acre of the latter being about their average return. In a letter to his Father, written since his late visit to this place, his Honor Judge Peters, of Prince Edward Island, states that on 3/4 of an acre of ground, he produced 636 Bushels of Carrots; these carrots he had sold at 2s. per Bushel (of 56lbs. weight), and pocketed £53 13s. This large return serves as an exposition of two facts which are already pretty well known, viz., that as a man of science and practical agriculturalist, Judge Peters, ranks deservedly high; and that the soil of Prince Edward Island is of the richest and most prolific quality—but from the fact that so high a price as 2s. per bushel (of 56lbs.) was obtained for Carrots at such a season of the year, may it not be inferred, that as a whole, the agriculture of the Island, notwithstanding the excellence of its soil, and recent rapid improvement, is like our own, far short of what it had need to be.

The retiring Board of Directors held their first meeting at Newcastle on Tuesday the 3rd of February last: there was a full attendance of members. A good deal of business connected with the operations of the Society for the past year was transacted, and during an agreeable discussion of some four hours duration, much useful and interesting information was elicited.

At this meeting the Board Resolved unanimously, that the sum of £15 be offered to such person as will construct and put in effective operation the most approved horse power Threshing Machine, most suitable to the wants and circumstances of the Farmers of the County that shall be erected and

put into operation to a purchaser at a price not exceeding £15. The Machine to be erected in operation by the 1st day of October next, in the Parish of Newcastle or Chatham.

The Committee appointed by the Society to inspect and report on Threshing Mills, have this day reported on two Machines, which they were lately called upon to examine, the one constructed by Mr James Murray of Newcastle, the other by Mr John Rennie of Douglstown; but as the former of these Machines has been disposed of, and sent out of the County; and as neither of them was completed within the time prescribed, the Board decided unanimously that the premium of £15, cannot be awarded to either applicant. But in order to secure to this County a Machine so simple, yet superior in construction, as that invented by Mr Murray, and inspected by the Committee of this Society, the Board have this day entered into arrangements with Mr Murray, to erect a Machine of the very same kind as the other, by the first day of June next, which he will sell to any Resident of this County, at a price not exceeding Fifteen Pounds currency.

And should Mr Murray fail to complete this Machine, by the first of June, in accordance with the Resolution passed by this Board, a premium of £15 will be paid to any person who shall make and put in efficient operation, by the first of October following, a Threshing Machine that can and will be sold for a sum not exceeding £15; the same to be kept in this county for at least two years, and the premium to be awarded on the certificate of the Committee appointed in January last.

During last fall Mr Richard Blake, of Chatham, constructed a portable THRASHING MACHINE, which has been in constant operation since that time. It is said, that this Machine will do as much work per day, with one Horse, as the Machine imported by the Society from Boston will accomplish with two Horses. Such instances of native talent and ingenuity afford pleasing proof of our having no need to send our Money to the United States, Britain, or anywhere else, to obtain labour-saving, or any other kind of Machines. Our Mechanics need nothing but patronage to enable them to provide us with Home-made Manufactures of every description as efficient and cheap, as any that can be imported.

If further proof of this be wanting, it may be found in the success which crowned the competition of our Mechanics and others, at the Great Provincial Exhibition.

THE CART, the PLOUGH, and the HARROW, exhibited by Mr Alexander Jessamine of Douglstown; the Tobacco Manufactured by Messrs McLaughlans, Chatham; the Mineral Paints of James Watt; the Ornamental Writings of Mr Michael Flinn, Schoolmaster, and of Miss Mary Dixon, Daughter of Mr John Dixon, (opposite Chatham); the several articles of agriculture and domestic use, manufactured by Mr Roderick McKenzie, Newcastle; the Grains of Mr John Wyse, Douglstown; the BUTTER of Mr Daniel Baldwin, Douglasfield; the PRESERVED SALMON of Wm. J. Fraser, Esquire, Chatham; the ENGINE LOES of Mr George Letson, Saddler; and lastly, though firstly in point of importance, the splendid COUNTERPANE, and still more splendid HEARTH RUG of Miss E. Letson, Chatham. In a word, almost every article forwarded to the Exhibition from this County, secured a prize, or was honored by special notice, or special reward.

Twenty Pounds were placed by the Board at their first meeting, at the disposal of a Committee, for the purpose "of encouraging by bounties or otherwise the introduction or manufacture of Labour-saving Machines."

Twenty Pounds were placed at the disposal of a committee for the purpose of importing an improved Breed of Sheep, and Fifty Pounds were placed at the disposal of a committee for the purpose of importing an improved Breed of Cattle. The only part of these appropriations which has been expended is £6 6s 6d, paid to Francis Ferguson, Esquire, of Bathurst, for two Sheep, and two Berkshire Pigs. These Animals, though of the purest breeds, only realized after deducting freight, keeping, &c., the sum of £11 7s 0d. This circumstance is only to be accounted for by the fact, that it is next to impossible to preserve any breed of Sheep or Pigs pure in this County, owing to the lax way in which the Regulations of the Sessions are enforced.

A letter received by the President of your Society from the Corresponding Secretary of the New Brunswick Society, Fredericton, communicating information relative to the Great Provincial Exhibition, having been submitted, and the subject of the Exhibition fully discussed, it was

Resolved 1.—That the Board of this Society highly approve of the proposed Exhibition and Provincial Fair to be held in Fredericton, in October next, under the auspices of the New Brunswick Society, and that such steps be taken by this Board as are necessary to co-operate with the New Brunswick Society, and have the productions of our County properly represented at such Fair.

Resolved 2.—That the sum of Thirty Pounds be granted from the funds of this Society to the New Brunswick Society, to defray the expense of transmitting articles to the Exhibition and toward its general funds. It being understood that the Provincial Committee, placed at the disposal of the Local Committee for this County, the necessary funds to defray the expenses that such Local Committee may incur in collecting and forwarding such articles.

The transmission of the articles from this County to the Exhibition &c., cost about £26, this sum if added to the expense of advertising in the Gleaner, would far exceed the £30 granted by your society, but the latter item has not been claimed from the funds of the Exhibition.

PLOUGHING MATCH AND CATTLE SHOW.
The ANNUAL PLOUGHING MATCH AND CATTLE SHOW of

your Society, came off at Newcastle, on Thursday the 7th October last. The weather was dry and pleasant; and the occasion was honored by the presence of a large and respectable concourse of spectators, among whom the Board had the pleasure of seeing His Honor Judge Peters, of Prince Edward Island. Judge Peters appeared to take a lively interest in all the movements of the day, and in his accustomed kind and condescending manner, took occasion to impart to Members of the Board and others, information which may prove of great benefit to the Agricultural interests of this County. The display of Cattle was tolerably good, but the turn out of horses, sheep and pigs, was shamefully small and disreputable. There were eleven Ploughs on the ground, and the Plough Men acquitted themselves well; the Field, though perhaps the best to be obtained in the neighbourhood, was but ill adapted to such a purpose, the surface of it being uneven and somewhat disfigured by large stones, nevertheless the work was well done, and elicited the praise of all present.

The Judges of Ploughing, were Messrs. James Dawson, James Rust and David Steel.

AWARD OF PRIZES.		
1st Prize	to James Johnston,	Napan, £1 10 0
2nd "	James Gray,	Do., 1 7 6
3rd "	Wm. Searl,	Do., 1 5 0
4th "	Russell,	Newcastle, 1 2 0
5th "	James McNight,	Napan, 1 0 0
6th "	Richard Coulteri,	Newcastle, 0 17 6
7th "	David Stohart,	Douglstown 0 15 0
8th "	J. Shannahan,	Nelson, 0 12 6
9th "	Andrew Eilen,	Do., 0 10 0
10th "	James Watt,	Newcastle, 0 7 6
£9 7 6		

While on the subject of the Ploughing Match it may not be amiss to advert for a moment to the "bad luck" which attended our Ploughmen at the late Provincial Exhibition. Before proceeding however to do this, the Board would be allowed, in the name of the Society, to congratulate the New Brunswick Society, the Executive Committee, and all who took part in the Provincial Exhibition, on the success which has crowned their praiseworthy exertions, and they desire it may be distinctly understood, that if any censure be implied in the following remarks regarding the Ploughing Match, it is not meant to have the slightest application to the New Brunswick Society, or the Executive Committee. On the contrary the Board gratefully appreciate the zeal, perseverance, and impartiality, displayed by all connected with the organization of that important and patriotic enterprise.

Our Ploughing had been pronounced by Professor Johnstone, Hon. Mr Brown, and many other competent judges, to be decidedly the best in the Province. Owing to this circumstance, it was of course with no ordinary astonishment, and regret, that the news was received by telegraph, that our Ploughmen had failed to merit any of the Prizes at the Provincial Ploughing Match.

If the Reader of this Report, will however be pleased to attend to the following particulars, they may discover the cause of this alleged failure.

The two great pre-requisites for every Ploughing Match are 1st—A Good Field; that is, a field whose evenness of surface, culture, and soil, are the same over the whole ground to be ploughed.

2nd—Well qualified and impartial Judges or Jurors. That the comparative skill of competitors may be fairly tested, surely nothing can be more necessary at a Ploughing Match, than a fair field for competition.

The idea should never have been entertained for a moment, that Men, Horses, and Ploughs, would be sent at great expense, from the most remote parts of the Province to decide on casting lots, which should be proclaimed to the world as the best Ploughmen in the Province of New Brunswick; because it does not always happen that the luckiest fellow at casting lots is always the best ploughman. Yet, strange as it may appear, this was pretty nearly, (though no doubt unavoidably) the case, at the late Exhibition, for the moment that George Scott drew his ticket and knew his ground, he and all present, knew that his chance of No. 1 Prize, like Othello's occupation—was gone. Thus the man selected to represent the North Ploughmen of this County, was virtually cut out of the list of competitors; and our hopes of success were transferred to Galloway, our only remaining representative.

That the Judges (or the majority of them) erred in awarding the prizes as they did, will appear plain to every unprejudiced mind from a consideration of the following facts:— "What every body says must be true." This may be a somewhat trite, but it is nevertheless a pretty true sort of adage. Now every body from this quarter who has examined the Ploughing done at the Exhibition, pronounce the furrows drawn by Galloway, to have been exactly to the prescribed gauge,—straight as an arrow, and set at the precise angle of 45°; while those of Gilbert Ross, to whom the first prize was awarded, were crooked—wider than the gauge—and laid flatly over, instead of being set up at the proper angle; so that Galloway—a native Ploughman and badly prepared for the occasion—was in their opinion, and in the opinion of every well qualified and disinterested person, who witnessed the Match, fairly entitled to the first Prize.

With these particulars before us, a question naturally suggests itself and one not easily answered. Suppose from some cause unknown, the Judges to have been unconscious of the superiority of Galloway's work, and suppose they were