

THE GLEANER:

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Old Series.]

NEC ARANEARUM SANE TEXTUS IDEO MELIOR. QUIA EX SE FILA GIGNUNT, NEC NOSTER VILIOR QUIA EX ALIENIS LIBANUS UT APES.

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Agricultural Journal.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY FOR 1853-4.

A large proportion of the matter contained in the Reports of most of the County Agricultural Societies of this Province, has been supplied by Branch Societies, or persons well qualified to furnish information on Agricultural Subjects, but the Reports of the Northumberland Agricultural Society have hitherto contained little beyond a bare narrative of the yearly proceedings of your Society, and such other remarks as each retiring Board of Directors may have ventured to submit.

This circumstance, while it has no doubt devolved a heavier duty on Directors, has materially lessened the amount of information which your Society would have furnished, had Branch Societies and intelligent individuals contributed their quota to these Reports.

Impressed with the importance of what has been said, the Board would respectfully suggest, that their successors in office endeavour to procure from qualified persons of this community, Essays on subjects connected with the practice and science of Agriculture, and that these Essays, or such of them as may meet the approbation of the Board, be included in the Annual Report of the Society and form part thereof.

The first words of the Report of your Society for 1852-3 were these, "It is a remarkable circumstance and one which seems to be becoming yearly more and more apparent, that the seasons in this Province—at least in this part of the Province—are to be characterised by extremes." Another has been added to the many proofs which recent years afford of the correctness of this opinion. The last Summer was exceedingly dry and hot, no rain capable of moistening the roots of plants fell, till the middle of August, when it came too late to benefit the grass or recruit the grain crops, consequently, every kind of grain or grass crop has proved defective.

HAY, was not the fourth, nor fodder of any kind, half an average crop, this is greatly to be lamented, as nothing tends so materially to retard the success of the poor Farmer as the reduction in his stock of cattle, and to this an extreme dearth of fodder inevitably leads. By reducing the number of his live stock the Farmer of necessity reduces his manure heap, deranges his adopted rotation of cropping, and is ultimately compelled to part with his scanty means, in order to replace that portion of his stock which a lack of fodder had compelled him to sell off, instead of applying these means to the improvement or enlargement of his Farm. A few of our merchants and others, foreseeing that a bad crop and an increased consumption, would be followed by a scarcity of fodder, prudently imported a considerable quantity of Hay from other places, so that it is to be hoped the price will not be so very great as to tempt any of our Farmers to part with fodder intended for the support of their full stock. If they do this it will prove them to be "penny wise and pound foolish" sort of Farmers indeed.

POTATOES AND OTHER ROOT CROPS, suffered but little, compared with the Grain and Grass Crops. Indeed if the Potatoe Crop was lessened numerically by the draught of Summer, this was amply compensated for, by the great size and excellent quality of the Potatoe. The average return in this County, cannot have been less than 250 to 300 bushels per acre, a fact which of itself proves the superiority of our soil and its skilful cultivation.

TURNIPS that were sown late in the season, became an excellent crop, while those sown early were a complete failure, owing to the dry weather.

The operations of your Society, during the past year, shall be respectfully submitted, under the following classifications:

- 1st. A Sketch of the ordinary routine business of the Society for the year.
- 2nd. Remarks on the purchase of Apple Trees—their desirability—and directions for their removal, culture, &c.
- 3rd. The Annual Ploughing Match, and Cattle Show, with Remarks relating thereto.
- 4th. The Importation of Entire Horses, and Observations regarding the Legislative Grant made for that purpose, &c.
- 5th. The General Annual Exhibition of the Society which took place on the 9th instant, and a few closing Observations.

1st. A Sketch of the routine business of last year.

The first meeting of each Board of Directors is invariably the largest, most interesting and important of the year. At this Meeting schemes best calculated to promote the objects of your Society are devised, discussed, and ultimately handed over to Committees, to be carried into operation. The first meeting of the Reporting Board, took place in Chatham, on Saturday the 29th January, 1853; at this Meeting all the Members of the Board were present, except four, or say, of 18 Members, 14 were present. Considering the inclement season of the year, and the remote distances from Chatham at which most of the Directors reside, this circumstance is of itself ample evidence of the assiduity with which the retiring Directors have applied themselves to the business of your Society.

It having been decided that a Ploughing Match and Cattle Show should take place at Chatham, on Tuesday, the 4th October, and a Committee of the Board having revised the scale of prizes for the Cattle Show, it was resolved that

the General Exhibition of the Society take place—not on the day of the Annual Meeting as heretofore—but on the Monday before the second Tuesday in January, or say nine days prior to the Annual Meeting. This change was rendered necessary owing to the fact, that too great an amount of business devolved on the day of the Annual Meeting; the latter part of which—the more important part—had consequently to be hurried through in a clumsy and confused manner. At a Meeting of the Board which took place on the 23rd of January, 1851, nearly three years ago, a Resolution, worded as follows, was submitted by John M. Johnson, Esq., and carried unanimously.

"Whereas, The mode hitherto adapted by the Society of giving premiums on articles of Domestic Manufacture, the produce of the Dairy, Grains, Seeds, &c., has not excited that interest, emulation, and competition, which it ought to have done, nor given that impetus and publicity to its proceedings, and the importance of encouraging the productions of this County which is its great object to promote.

"Resolved, That instead of giving premiums hereafter, the Society offer prizes for the purchase of the articles exhibited, and pay for them in cash, so soon as they are declared worthy, and then offer the same for sale by auction on account of the Society, in such lots as may be deemed best calculated to promote the objects which it has in view."

While acting under the Resolution just quoted, the Society paid the Exhibitor the value of the article exhibited, and also the prize to which such article would have been entitled under the former system. The move by which the Board of 1851 were induced to adopt this measure, was simply that of distributing the choicest Seed Grains over the County; but a trial of two years proved it to be so greatly at variance with the views of our farming population, that the present Board deemed it best to cancel it, and revert to the old system of paying prizes according to the quality and importance of the article.

At the same Meeting, a sum was placed at the disposal of a Committee, for the purpose of importing such implements or articles of husbandry, as the Committee might deem most likely to aid the Agricultural operations of the County.—This Committee consisted of three of the most active and zealous Members of the Board, who fully alive to the importance of the trust reposed in them, incurred the responsibility of importing from Boston, one of Hussey's Reaping Machines, being the first imported into this County, if not the first introduced into the Province. This wonder-working Machine (from which others may be easily constructed) is capable with two or three men and a pair of horses, of performing the work of forty men, and with equal precision.—When the high price of labour, and the changeable nature of our weather are taken into consideration, it will be evident that any improvement, by which a large amount of manual labour will be saved, and the crop of an ordinary Farm cut down almost in a day, must prove of incalculable value to all who can avail themselves of it. This Committee, therefore, merit the thanks, not only of this Society, but of the community at large for having procured such a money saving machine (time and labour are both money) at a period when its services are so much required, and when circumstances render these services doubly valuable. Its cost including duty, freight, and expences, £42 3 3 Currency.

At a meeting held on the 29th January, a Committee was appointed to inspect Flett's *Fulling and Carding Mills*, and report to the Board, whether the machinery and management of these Mills are such as was anticipated by the Society, and further, that the Committee report such other information as they may be able to collect respecting the propriety or impropriety of affording aid to Mills of a similar kind in other parts of the County.

A meeting of the Board was convened on Thursday, the 3rd March, in order to afford the President of the Society an opportunity to submit a Circular issued by the New Brunswick Society, with reference to the Great Exhibitions to take place at N. York and Dublin. This Circular set forth the intentions of the New Brunswick Society respecting these Exhibitions; and urged the propriety of every County in this Province making as respectable a display of its productions on these occasions, as possible. After a lengthy discussion, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"Whereas, The weather in this County last summer was unusually dry and hot, till the month of August, and the Grain crop consequently lighter than ordinarily. And whereas, owing to this circumstance, the Wheat and other Grains sent from it to the Provincial Exhibition, were not so heavy as Grains grown in sections of the Province, where the weather was favorable. Therefore,

"Resolved, 1st That in view of these considerations, this Society deems it needless to forward to the New Brunswick Society any of the Grains of this County, for competition at the Exhibitions to take place at New York and Dublin.

"Resolved, 2nd. That John M. Johnson and the Secretary be a Committee to procure Minerals and valuable earthy substances of this County, with the view of forwarding such to the New Brunswick Society, for competition at the New York Exhibition; and further Resolved, that said Committee prolong their service, in order to secure Minerals and other valuable earthy substances to be retained as the property of the Society, for inspection hereafter by men of science, and others from a distance, who may visit this place, and that £10 be placed at the disposal of the Committee to defray any expense that may be necessarily incurred, in carrying out the wishes of the Board.

2nd. The Purchase of Apple Trees—their Transplantation—Culture, &c.

At their meeting of the 29th January, the Board appointed a Committee of three Persons to procure for Spring planting 350 young Apple Trees, say 100 for Newcastle district, 100 for Douglstown, and 150 for Chatham, Napan, and adjoining settlements. Having discovered that Apple Trees, best suited to the climate and soil of this County, could be purchased in abundance at the orchard of Mr Wm. Sharp, Woodstock, the Committee wrote to Mr Sharp, requesting him to state the number and different species of Apple Trees which he could furnish, and all other particulars. To this request Mr Sharp replied, "he was happy to learn that your Society seriously intended trying fruit trees in Northumberland. He believed it to be a move in the right direction, and if he should be favored with an order, would do all in his power to render the experiment successful. Mr Sharp named the kind of Trees he could supply—said they were five years old, and had been grafted from one to four years.—They had all been transplanted and root pruned, when young and with ordinary care could not fail to grow. The price he adds is 1s. each, from which I do not vary, but as I feel interested in having the Trees introduced by your Society, will make a reduction of 20 per cent. I can furnish Trees or grafts of nearly all kinds cultivated in America and in large quantities. The Committee instructed Mr Sharp to put up 350 Trees, naming from a list furnished by himself, the particular kinds they preferred; and made arrangements through George Kerr, Esq., (one of their number then at Fredericton), to have them conveyed to this place. The day on which they arrived here the portion of them intended for Chatham and the adjoining settlements were sold by public auction, and realized remunerative prices; and on the following day the remaining lots were disposed of in the same way at Douglstown and Newcastle.

A season less favourable than the last for the transplantation of Fruit Trees could hardly have occurred, yet so far as the Board are aware, not one of the 350 trees imported by your Society has failed to take root in our soil.

Every Homestead, therefore, in Northumberland should have its Orchard. The happiness which rational being naturally enjoy in view of the waving foliage and laden trees of a fine Orchard, should, of itself, be enough to induce every Farmer, to plant, prune, and cultivate Fruit Trees; besides, nothing has a finer tendency to regale the senses, enliven the mind, and invigorate the body, than the influence of a sylvan prospect, or sweet scenery. But there is a motive of a more persuasive nature, which the Board imagine, cannot fail to induce our Farmers and others to plant Orchards. It is this, Apple Trees even when grafted and root pruned cost but little cash, yet they yield annually a much larger return when reduced to pounds shillings and pence, than any other crop that could be grown on the same extent of ground; and it is now no longer a question of doubt, as to whether this county be capable of growing apples or not—for apples of excellent quality, and in richest abundance, grow yearly in the gardens and orchards of some of the members of this society.

The following directions for transplanting, cultivating and pruning Apple Trees derived from Directions given by Mr. Sharp, and other sources may be found useful.

TRANSPLANTING.—Take care that every root and fibre be placed in contact with the soil. That the Tree stand about the same depth in the orchard that it stands before being transplanted. That the shoots of one year's growth in all parts of the tree be shortened; or cut back one-half or two-thirds the length. That the manuring substances be completely mixed with the soil, in which the tree is planted, and if possible that the orchard be upland, resting upon a hard dry subsoil; see that the soil contains at all times a sufficiency of those substances which compose the ashes of the tree, and enough of organic or vegetable matter, to keep the surface free and loose and prevent its forming a hard crust after rains. That the soil covering the roots of the trees be frequently stirred and nothing be allowed to grow whose roots would interfere with the roots of the tree. If the land be in grass, the holes for the trees must be dug 4 or 5 feet wide, and about 8 or 10 inches deep; but a better way is to plough the land in stripes about 4 feet wide, and 2 rods between the rows, planting the tree one rod apart in the rows. These stripes must be kept cultivated with potatoes, or some low hard crop for five years. In filling the earth around the tree pack in the fine earth with the hand, so that every root may be closely imbedded in the soil, and no hollow space be left among the roots. Use about half a bushel of old rotten manure, and half a peck or six quarts of ashes to each tree. Tread the earth moderately on the roots, but use no water in transplanting trees; all the limbs must be shortened when the tree is transplanted.

CULTIVATION.—This is very simple says Mr Sharp, and costs but a trifle even for a large orchard, yet without it, failure is certain. It consists in giving each tree three good hoeings, as far as the branches extend, per annum, for five year. In throwing up a cone of earth around each tree in the fall, and spreading it in the spring of each year, and in giving each tree every second year half a peck or six quarts of unleached ashes and one bushel of muck or other vegetable matter. This cultivation (upon the large scale) will cost about eight shillings and four pence per acre or one penny tending per tree, per annum, when eighty trees are planted to the acre.

PRUNING.—Very little is required. If the leading shoot doubles, lop off one of the contending branches, cut all limbs