

REPORT OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

FOR 1855-6.

around the Nether country. It is at such times indeed, that we learn how much property and how many lives depend upon the strength of these same ocean bulwarks. It is fearfully interesting to walk at the foot of one of the great dykes, and to hear the heavy waves beating like so many battering-rams against the outer side of the mud wall, and to know by the noise that the ocean is already some twenty feet above the head. The dykes are sometimes forty feet high, and their foundation, which is generally of clay, is from 120 to 150 feet in width. The dyke itself is composed of clay if not entirely, at least on the outside; and the interior is filled with a mixture of earth, clay, and sand. The face of the dyke is thatched, as it were with willow twigs, interlaced into a kind of wicker work, the interstices of which are filled with puddled clay. This wicker-work lasts but a few years; so that it requires to be repeatedly renewed, a number of willows have to be grown in Holland for the purpose. The base of the dyke is generally protected by masonry, and strengthened by large heaps of stones and rows of piles; while the summit is mostly planted with trees, because their roots are found to bind the soil firmly together.—*Mayfield's Rhine.*

AN HOTEL SLEEPING-PLACE IN THE FAR WEST.

WE were surrounded by thirty or forty snoring men in every variety of costume; for the process of turning in in the west consists simply of kicking off shoes of moccasins; while here and there previous claims were being somewhat querulously discussed; and at the further end of the loft an eager party were leaning over a table, on which stood a bottle with a tallow candle placed in it playing faro, a game they had imported with them from California; for some of our bed-fellows had taken a turn at the diggings, and, with their lank hair, unkempt beards, and rugged features, lit up with an unusual excitement by the interest of the game, they formed a group whose aspect was by no means reassuring to four quiet Cockneys.—Moreover, men were continually swarming up posts to roost upon fragile platforms over our heads, and slipping rapidly and unexpectedly down them again. The creaking of these are not so ominous, as stout parties rolled uneasily in their sleep upon very thin planks, placed so far apart that, by looking up, we could see their forms between them, and lay in no small terror of being deluged with a cataract of tobacco juice; and there was a wrangling kept up in the land office for a long time.—*Oliphant's The Far West.*

THE TEMPLE AT POLLAN-AURA.

Two circular terraces each of some twenty feet in height, rising one upon the other, with a width of fifty feet, and a diameter at the base of about 250, form the step-like platform upon which the Dagoba; stands. These are ascended by broad flights of steps, each terrace forming a circular promenade around the Dagoba; the whole having the appearance of white marble, being covered with polished stucco, ornamented with figures in bas-relief. The Dagoba is a solid mass of brickwork in the shape of a dome, which rises from the upper terrace.—The whole is covered with polished stucco, and surmounted by a gilded spire standing upon a square pedestal of stucco, highly ornamented with large figures, also in bas-relief; this pedestal is a cube of about thirty feet, supporting the tall gilded spire, which is surmounted by a golden umbrella. Around the base of the Dagoba on the upper terrace are eight small entrances with highly ornamented exteriors.—These are the doors to eight similar chambers of about twelve feet square, in each of which is a small altar and carved golden idol.

BORNEO.

THE only striking features in the animal world are hornbills, which are very abundant and take the place of the toucans of Brazil, though I believe they have no real affinity with them, and the immense flights of fruit-eating bats which frequently pass over us. They extend as far as the eye can reach, and continue passing for hours. By counting and estimation I calculated that at least 30,000 passed one evening while we could see them, and they continued on, some time after dark. The species is, probably, the Pteropus alis; its expanded wings are near five feet across, and it flies with great ease and rapidity. Fruit seems so scarce in these jungles that it is a mystery where they find enough to supply such a vast multitude.

How to Celebrate a Victory.—Within six hours after the news of the fall of Sebastopol, says the "Montreal Pilot," the Mayor of Fredericton, New Brunswick, liberated every prisoner confined in the goal over whom he had any control.

A Hint to All.—An idler, meeting with one of the strolling organ-players, was inclined to engage in conversation with him, and asked him, "What part in the grand drama of life do you perform?" "I mind my own business was the brief and pointed reply.

Oh!—When is the weather most like a jug? When it's very muggy.

A Hint to the Fair Sex.—The best illustration of a woman in a hurry is undoubtedly a lady in a bustle.

In submitting a Report of their proceedings for the past year, the retiring Board of the Northumberland Agricultural Society feel it to be their first and chiefest duty to express their gratitude to a gracious God for the beautiful harvest, with which He has been pleased to crown the year that is past, and reward the labour of the husbandman. Nor has the goodness of God in this respect, been confined to this County, or Province, or even to this Continent—it has extended over the greater part of the habitable globe.

In the United States and Canada, notwithstanding the unaccountably high price of breadstuffs, the return of Wheat is acknowledged to be the largest ever produced.

In this County it is believed by many to exceed by one third the return of any former year.

A finer season than the past could not have been desired. Warm weather, with genial showers, prevailed all summer. Owing, however, to the severe frosts of the preceding fall while the fields were bare, and more than all the intense heat and drought of the two summers before the last, which in many places withered or wholly destroyed the grass roots, the quantity of Hay cut on upland or cultivated land fell considerably short of what might have been expected. This deficiency, however, was in a great measure compensated for by the heavy crops of grass which grew on meadow or marsh land in every section of the County.

WHEAT, OATS, and all kinds of cereal grains, were a heavy crop.

POTATOES, TURNIPS, and root crops generally, were large and of excellent quality. Two cases shall be selected as illustrative of this fact, not because these surpass others which might be instanced, but because they have come under the immediate notice of the Board.

In a field in rear of his residence, at Bushville, the Honorable Thomas H. Peters produced 198 bushels of excellent Turnips on an area of ground, only 60 yards, by 17 yards, which is equal to about 930 bushels per acre.

Mr Alexander Jessamine raised two hundred and twenty-five barrels of fine Potatoes on his farm near Douglatown, from ten barrels planting; this is equal to about 244 returns.

In a few localities, indeed, a slight frost which occurred about the beginning of September, checked the growth of some fields; but upon the whole, the return was as great, if not greater, than has ever been produced in this County.

The most important, and perhaps the most difficult subject which has claimed the attention of the retiring Board, has been the supply of Lime.

Notwithstanding much ignorance of agriculture as a science, the properties of lime, as a fertilizer, and the different effects which it produces when applied to different soils, are now pretty well understood and appreciated. The large majority of our Farmers have, therefore, become desirous that your Society should be instrumental in assisting them to obtain something like a sufficient supply of this article annually, at a reasonable price. Aware of this increasing desire for lime, the Board of 1853 turned their attention to the subject, and at a small sacrifice of the Society's Funds they supplied about 1500 barrels for farming purposes, at the low rate of 1s. 6d. per barrel. While it was admitted by the Board in 1853 that the mode of procuring and distributing this lime, was capable of improvement; it is very evident, that the mode then made was in the right direction; for ever since that time a growing desire to obtain lime has become more and more apparent, and a keener interest in the proceedings of your Society is everywhere manifested. The truth is that unless lime and other enriching, and sustaining substances be applied to our already much exhausted soils, they will not long be worth cropping. Impressed with the truth and importance of these assertions, the present Board used every means in their power to gratify the wishes of our farming population. They first placed the sum of Fifty Pounds at the disposal of a Committee for the purchase of limestone, if to be obtained during the summer months, on anything like reasonable terms; but as there appeared little likelihood of limestone being procured, they appropriated the sum of Seventy-five pounds for the purchase in England, of bone dust and guano; two-thirds of the sum to be expended in guano, and one-third in bone dust. It was found that the limestone could not be procured at any price, but the bone dust and guano (imported for the Society by W. J. Fraser, Esq.,) arrived in the ship Faside, from the Clyde, in good time for spring application. These articles were sold at public auction, on Tuesday, the 29th May last, and realized nearly remunerative prices; the bone dust selling at rates varying from 3s. 7d. to 4s. per bushel, and the guano from 19s. 6d. to 21s. 9d. per bag.

So far as the Board are aware, the bone dust, as a fertilizer, and the guano, as a stimulant, amply verified the expectations of those who purchased them. This was so far good, but it was far from equivalent to the large quantity of lime, so eagerly asked for by the farmers of the County, and imperatively required by their lands. In order to be of general utility, all articles purchased with the Society's money, should be procured in such abundance, as to meet the wants of at least the Members of the Society; because it is only fair, that all who have actually contributed to the purchase of such articles, should have an equal chance of sharing in the advantages to be derived from them. This they cannot have, if the quantity exposed for sale be not about equal to the demand for it; besides, upon that quantity, will mainly depend the price at which the articles will sell, and this price should never be exorbitant, or it must defeat the benevolent object contemplated by the Society.

The retiring Board, would respectfully suggest, that a portion of the Society's funds could not be more beneficially appropriated—nor could any act of your Society be more highly appreciated by the farming community, nor tend more to the advancement of agriculture, than the purchase, and judicious disposal, of an ample supply of Lime for the next season.

REAPING MACHINE.

On the 29th of January, 1853, the Board of Directors placed a sum of money at the disposal of a Committee, for the purpose of importing such implements of husbandry as the Committee might deem best calculated to aid the Agricultural operations of the County. This Committee—consisting of three intelligent and zealous Members of the Board—were fully alive to the delicacy and importance of the duty imposed, yet they incurred the responsibility of importing from Boston one of Hussey's Reaping Machines, being perhaps the first imported into this Province. The vessel in which the Machine was shipped, was stranded on her passage to this place; and in consequence of injury then sustained, a part of the Machine had to be re-shipped at Boston, and forwarded by another vessel. The delay thus occasioned, and circumstances which have since occurred (to which it is unnecessary further to refer) frustrated the sale of the Machine till the 28th day of August last, when it was sold at Public Auction for six ten

Pounds—the President of the Society, J. M. Johnston, Esq. being the purchaser. This machine, whose qualifications had been rigidly tested, previous to its purchase in Boston, and from which, the Society expected that others would be constructed, is capable, with two steady, strong horses and two men, of performing the work of about forty men, and with equal, if not greater perfection, when the ground is any thing like level. When the high price of labour, the shortness of the season, and the changeable character of our weather are duly considered, it must be obvious, that any improvement, by which so large an amount of labour can be saved, and the crop of an average farm be secured in a few days, must prove of incalculable value to all who may be able or willing to avail themselves of its services.

AND TO NEEDY FARMERS.

Owing to a series of bad crops, and the great scarcity of oats, wheat and potatoes, great fears were entertained last spring, that many poor but deserving farmers would be unable to obtain seed, to put into their land already prepared to receive it, and as everything depended on assistance being rendered immediately to such persons, a meeting of the Board was convened for Tuesday, the 10th May, at which it was resolved to appropriate one hundred pounds of the Society's funds to procure Seed for such destitute farmers. This sum was placed (equally) in the hands of Committees, hereinafter named, to be expended as they might deem best; it being understood that notes of hand, with security (when practicable) should be taken by the several Committees, payable on or before the first day of November. The money was placed in the hands of J. M. Johnston, Esq., with authority to purchase oats and potatoes in this or some neighbouring market; half the sum to be applied to each, and the articles to be placed in some convenient store, ready for delivery to the order of the several Committees, agreeably to the terms of appropriation. The following statement shows the districts to which assistance was rendered; the Committees to whom the Seeds were intrusted for disposal, the sum granted to each district, and the amount expended.

DISTRICTS.	COMMITTEES.	SUMS GRANTED.	SUMS EXPENDED.
Chatham, Glencig and Hardwick.	J. M. Johnson, B. Stapleton.	£ 40 0 0	£ 40 4 0
Nelson.	R. Sutton, R. Crocker.	20 0 0	5 8 8
Above Ft. Cove, Below do, Newcastle.	P. Mitchell, D. Witherall.	6 13 4	2 2 0
	A. Jessamine, J. Porter.	13 6 8	1 0 0
North Esk,	P. Mitchell, D. Witherall	20 0 0	2 3 0
		100 0 0	50 18 3

By the above statement it appears that of the Hundred Pounds appropriated by the Society and placed in the hands of Mr Johnston, only £50 18 3 were expended. This arose from the difficulty of obtaining Oats and Potatoes, and the exorbitant price paid for what could be obtained. It is gratifying to know, however, that Providence has been graciously pleased to cause the seeds thus supplied, to yield the recipients a plentiful return. By this benevolent act, several deserving farmers have been assisted during a trying emergency, yet the funds of the Society will suffer but little.

PLOUGHING MATCH.

At a meeting of the Board, held on the 27th January last, it was resolved, that, instead of confining the arrangements for next Ploughing Match, to only one class of ploughmen as heretofore. There should be for 1855 a first and second class.

Class 1st, to be open to native ploughmen only.  
Class 2nd, to be open to all, save such as had won the first prize for two years.

The Ploughing Match came off in Dr. Pallen's large lay field, in the rear of his new dwelling house, in Chatham, on Thursday the 9th of October last.

The weather was all that could be desired. The ground, with the exception of a few subsoil stones, which tried the temper of the Ploughmen as well as of their plough-shares, was in excellent order, and so admirably adapted to the purpose for which it was selected, as to reflect great credit on the skill and discrimination of the Committee who made choice of it. The work, on the whole, was never surpassed, if ever equalled, in this County, nor would it have done discredit to the first Agricultural Ploughing-match, in the old or new world.

The judges were Messrs. Anthony Jackson, Adam McLean, and George Scott; their award was as follows:

1st Class, one prize (only) Archibald Campbell, Napan,	£3 0 0
2nd Class, 1st prize. Chas. Blakely, do	1 5 0
2nd do Wm. McKnight, do	1 2 6
3rd do Robert Wilson, do	1 0 0
4th do Wm. Brown, do	0 17 6

The two remaining prizes offered by the Society were not competed for. The three pound prize was nobly contested by four of our best native Ploughmen, and so nearly matched were the youthful competitors, that the greatest diversity of opinion prevailed among the spectators, if not among the judges, as to whom the prize should be awarded. It is to be presumed, that in their struggle for the mastery, the Ploughmen were actuated by the love of merit, rather than the love of money; and if so, the honors of the contest being nearly equally shared by all—not the slightest mortification need be felt by any.

Only four ploughmen appeared to compete for the six second class prizes; but the work performed by these four young men, elicited the unqualified admiration of all who witnessed it.

There was a large and respectable assemblage of spectators, who appeared to take a lively interest in the operations of the day. Upon the whole, it may be said, that the Ploughing Match of 1855, was the most interesting and successful effort of your Society in that respect which has taken place for many years past.

CATTLE SHOW.

The Cattle Show took place on the same day, as the Ploughing Match, and in a neighbouring field.

The display of Horses, Horned Cattle, &c.—particularly of Bulls—was an improvement on any exhibition of the sort, which has taken place for some years past, both as regards number and appearance.—Yet considering the many excellent horses and fine cattle, with which this county abounds, it is surprising that a greater number of our farmers have not felt both their interest and duty to countenance such exhibitions. Emulation is confessedly the grand incentive to improvement in all the occupations of life, and most certainly it is not less so, with reference to Agriculture than to other occupations.

The Judges of Cattle, &c. were Dr. Pallen, and Messrs. Bartholomew Stapleton and Jackson Flemming. The following is their Award.

Best Bull, 3 years old, Michael Searl,	£1 10 0
Second best, John Porter,	1 0 0
Best Bull, 2 years old, Jas. Dir on, Napan,	1 5 0
2nd best, John Russel, Newcastle,	0 15 0
Best Heifer, 2 years old, G. Johnston,	1 0 0