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EDITORIAL

Representatives of the press frequently complain of the length of time taken up in our conventions and exhibitions, but Illinois has undertaken to give a lesson in patience. At Champaign, Illinois, the state horticultural convention will be in session from December 8th to 18th; the International live-stock show of Chicago will be open for two weeks previous to December 10, and the National Dairy show from December 2nd to 10th, also at Chicago in the state of Illinois.

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John D. Rockefeller says The Standard Oil Co., divided some six hundred million dollars in dividends, and established a rest of three hundred millions on a capitalization of sixty-seven millions, yet the business is very hazardous. There might be some connection between this statement and the adulterated oil that is being sold in so many parts of America.

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Last year the agricultural college of North Dakota registered, including short course students, 1000 in attendance at lectures. Saskatchewan should take notice of this condition of affairs.

Suggestions on Judging Farms

One of the competitors in the good farms competition held throughout Manitoba last summer paid a visit to us last week and asked us to protest, on his behalf, against the manner in which the farms in his district were judged. He insists that the really important points about different farms were not given the consideration that they should have received, while improvements that did not contribute much to the general utility of the farm were given undue consideration. Fences and elaborate buildings, for instance, add immensely to the convenience and appearance of a farm, but, he contends, they are not so essential to the farmer's success as thorough, intelligent, crop producing cultivation.

Our visitor was willing to admit that in all matters of judgment there is room for differences of opinion, but contended that had the judges or one of them at least, been an experienced, practical farmer—the farmer who considers elaborate appearances of lesser importance than strong vital crops, well kept summer fallows, a system of crop rotation, and management that makes for the permanency of fertility—some of the farms would have had a lower score.

This work of judging the relative excellence of farms is something about which most people will admit they have something to learn. We have not yet established standards that are generally agreed to be correct. Practically all of our good farmers differ in their personal opinions as to what a first class farm should be and what it should look like, for proof of which notice the difference in the two best and best kept farms in any district. No doubt the managing director of agricultural societies would be glad to receive suggestions as to how these good farming competitions should be judged and might also accept nominations for judges at future competitions.

Stomach Plate for Defence

The British government has announced that it will endeavor to relieve the misery of the unemployed in England by engaging more men in the army, having more battle-ships built, and also by charity.

Well, so far as giving men something to do relieves poverty, the plan is in the right direction, but, and this is an important condition of industrial economy, employment is of no avail unless the product of the labor so employed contributes to the necessities and comforts of humanity at large. What would we think of a man who spent the returns from his crop in buying rusty cannons to disfigure his front yard, or who employed men to watch lest his neighbor slipped over and fired his barns? Wealth so misused would not only be wasted itself, but it would leave nothing to pay for the work of cultivating the land for next year's crop and for taking it off. Nothing would be added to the food supply, rather, it would be reduced and it would be impossible to obtain clothing and other necessities. Here we have the spectacle of England—the nation starving and suffering, while at the same time she is spending sacks of gold on luxuries of a fleet and army. What good will armies and fleets be when the men who are expected to compose and operate them are skeletons? The best defence any country can erect is a population of well-fed contented men. "An army moves on its stomach" said Napoleon. Every year England wastes on her armaments and "booze" half the wealth she makes. People are taxed into the army and drive themselves into poverty through drink to such an extent that others are kept poor supporting them and an idle, wasteful aristocracy. Artificial and temporary means can never cure these economic ills. Waste must be eliminated and able-bodied men and women put to work on the soil where they will be producers of their own food, not merely surplus cogs in the wheels of distribution of wealth, nor idlers consuming children's food.

England pays men to look after her idlers in the army; how much better would it be if she engaged men to teach her poor how to farm. There is a glaring example in all this for Canada and other young nations who are being urged to strengthen their defences.

Farmers at Ottawa

A short time ago we remarked in these columns that nominations at political conventions generally went to the men who could make the most stirring appeal to the emotions of the meeting and pointed out that if the profession of farming was ever to be represented in parliament by men engaged in it, farmers would have to better qualify as platform attractions. In view of these remarks it is interesting to look over the members who have been elected to our present parliament from the agricultural provinces. Ontario out of a total of 86 members elected 7 farmers, Manitoba returned 2 farmers out of 10 candidates, Saskatchewan's one opposition member represents the farming interests of that great province, and of the seven Albertan members two are farmers.

In Manitoba the total population in 1906, the year of our last census, was 405,829 out of

which there were 36,141 farmers, in the same year Saskatchewan had 313,734 of total population, of which 55,971 were farmers and Alberta had out of a total population of 215,698, 30,286 farmers. All three provinces had a total population of 935,251 of which 122,398 were farmers, leaving 812,853 people of all ages, sexes, and professions, including the farmers' own families.

If we allow an average of 4 persons to each farmer's family we have a total of 489,592 people living on farms, more than half the total population. To represent this 50 per cent. of the total population the Western provinces elected farmers to make up 17 per cent. of their total representation, thus doing about twice as well as Ontario did when she elected 7 members out of 86.

Figures are not available to show the total valuation of the property held by the 122,398 farmers in the three Western provinces but it would be a conservative estimate to put it at \$2,000,000,000. Why cannot our agricultural societies and other farmers' organizations train men for public life? If agricultural colleges in all the provinces will make farmers better able to get nominations and win elections, let us have more farmers' colleges, but above all let us have unanimous opinions, logical argument, and fluent orators. The farms need orators as badly as they need improved machinery or the agricultural press.

Misplaced Generosity

The great mass of the public who consume the manufactured products of the tariff-protected manufacturers of the United States are learning these days why a high tariff is so beneficial to the country and who pays for the benefit. Brokers in Liverpool can sell American wholesalers certain goods made in the States cheaper than they can be bought direct from the factories, for the American tariff allows American-made goods that are returned from a foreign country to enter duty free. In some cases this saving of duty amounts to more than the cost of transportation across the Atlantic twice. The consumer, of course, pays for the upbuilding of the great industries and the private fortunes for which high tariff America is well-known. This simply means that in addition to paying for the labor employed and a legitimate interest on money invested, the consuming public cheerfully pays a little more for the privilege of having a moneyed class. He may not think the few dollars extra he pays for the articles he wants is any serious handicap, he probably does not, for the average man in America is better off than the average man of any other country, but those extra dollars represent the expenditure of days of labor and could not this time be more profitably spent than in the building up of the private fortunes of others? Truly the average man is more generous and kind—rather, we should say wasteful—than he thinks, also he is not as much of a statesman as he thinks, or he would make himself felt on voting day.

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A singular thing occurred recently in connection with the shipment of grain. Two cars of exactly the same number, but belonging to different companies were shipped from the same station, on the same day, over the same road, but the shipping bills did not give the initials of the company owning each car, consequently the ownership of the grain could not be determined without much enquiry.