

we come to consider the whole field of live animals, of different conditions, ages and classes, and their products and by-products, one can easily see how far-reaching and intricate are the ramifications, and how great the undertaking the Livestock Inspection Service has assumed.

#### OUR MARITIME LETTER.

##### THE EXHIBITION QUESTION HERE.

We have had a surfeit of exhibition in Prince Edward Island lately. A reversion to the county fair has been made, after an interval of about a decade, and these shows—three in all, for we are only a Province of three counties—are just now over. We have visited all of them, and examined the exhibits carefully, indeed; we have judged the fruits and roots and grains at two of them, and can speak on the matter before us with some claims to a knowledge of the facts involved. Those exhibitions were held at Georgetown, the shire town of King's County; at Summerside, in Prince County, and, of course, at Charlottetown, for Queen's County. That at Charlottetown was something more than a county fair, too; it was intended to serve the county purpose, and also to be thrown open to the whole Province; indeed, to all Maritime Canada.

The weather could not be called propitious for gatherings of the sort. As a matter of fact, the whole season, from early cropping-time, has been exceedingly wet, and it is still keeping up its record amazingly. It has been unusually cold and backward, too, thus lending itself but poorly to the early maturing and perfecting of field products, for show purposes, at least, and leaving the animals of the country in but poor condition for the ring. In any system, then, this would be a poor year for fall fairs.

Reviving those county shows, the Provincial Government has split up the main grant to the general exhibition, which has for years been held at Charlottetown, giving to King's \$1,000 for prizes, and to Prince \$1,500. The Queen's, or General Fair, gets \$3,000. This latter got \$4,000 last year from the Province and \$10,000 from the Federal grant of \$50,000 given the Dominion exhibitions yearly. From a \$14,000 to a \$4,000 exhibition is certainly quite a transition. Still, the company, which has erected buildings and otherwise qualified to receive grants, declares that it made no money last year from the bigger transaction; not as much, proportionately, as comes from the ordinary fair under favorable patronage.

There is always this question of patronage, as vital to the success of any fair, good, bad or indifferent. The people contribute much to the making of the enterprise by their attendance. Excellent exhibits, without the crowd to admire or criticise, are all the more of a vexation. The two combined make for what is considered the acme of success in exhibitions. The fact that at this writing half or nearly half the field crops are still ungarnered, and that to save them from destruction requires persistent vigilance, will easily persuade anyone that the rural community is not this year in a position to patronize these institutions with even the same degree of generosity as in others that are gone.

The King's County Fair, at Georgetown, on the 3rd inst., was the smallest and poorest-patronized fair of the series. The departments were restricted, and, even then, not a single one of them could be called full. Still, there were many indications of individual excellence observable all through the various classes. Prince County followed next day with its fair; and the showing, whilst leaving much to be desired, was decidedly better, not so much, perhaps, in the animal exhibits as in those products which filled the trim new exhibition building within the gates. The Queen's, or Provincial, Fair is over to-day (Oct. 10th). It opened in a downpour of rain on the 8th, and a temperature which certainly was calculated to completely remove the exhibition fever from the blood of our youth, even where the promise of good horse-racing is all-captivating. Whilst open to the entire Province—indeed, to all the Maritime Provinces—it is smaller than for many years, and far below the standard in the quality of its exhibits. From without, there was practically nothing shown, a prime bunch of beef cattle by Chas. Archibald, of Truro, and some two or three entries of fruit from Woodstock and the Valley being alone observable. But outside the county itself there was nothing, or little or nothing, some score of entries only being taken out in the other two counties.

The question, therefore, arises, "Is the Government justified in encouraging in a small island like this these local or county shows, as against one Provincial fair at Charlottetown?" This question we heard on all sides when we attended these fairs, and we got so many and such complete answers in reply that it might as well not

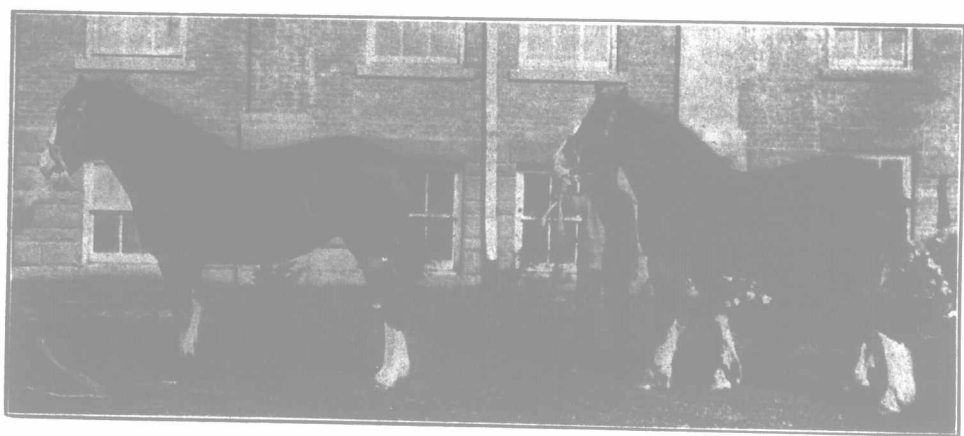
be asked. Of course, the central exhibition company and the capital itself, generally, were expected to heavily discount the usefulness of the smaller institutions. But it is the farmer who rules supremely in this agricultural community, and what has he to say? Under proper management, and systematized properly, the outlying constituency declared very strongly for the local institution, no matter its limitations. The present system of total independence was not favored, but some sort of an interdependence, we thought, which would enforce a uniform standard for the judges, whilst it succeeded in exciting a healthy emulation where nothing but local motive could operate. With such co-operation on the part of the different organizations, better and more numerous showings would result, and, what seemed highly desirable, the county fairs would prove great feeders to the Provincial one at Charlottetown. Whatever may be said for or against this presentment of the case, it seemed plain to us that, for the present, at least, the county institutions would be maintained and perfected. The Government, which supplies the money, then, should take some effective supervision, and at any cost maintain the highest standard of excellence. This year's work has impaired that standard, undoubtedly.

A. E. BURKE.

#### A HOTHOUSE EDUCATION.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

There is no man I hold in more grateful remembrance than my teacher whilst attending the public school. As the years have rolled by, I appreciate his thoroughness and painstaking efforts on behalf of his pupils. Although it was my privilege later to attend High School, yet I consider the best of my education was obtained at the rural school. And my classmates have nearly all attained prominence in after-life. The basis of their success was, without a doubt, laid at the rural school. Can such an education be obtained at the public school's to-day? Go into almost any rural school, and what do we find?



Pair of Clydesdale Fillies.

Purchased by the Government of Nova Scotia in Scotland, and sold at public auction, to be used for breeding purposes in the Province. Photo taken at Agricultural College Farm, Truro, N. S.

Simply a lot of children, probably none over 13 or 14 years old. No matter how clever such young students may be, the mind is too immature at such an early age to receive an education of sufficient character to do them through life. Why are there not older students in our public schools? There are many causes. I believe it is the desire of the great majority of parents that their children should receive a better education than many have had themselves. Many parents think their children are receiving a good education, basing their estimate of the progress of the children on their standing in class or examinations. Parents naturally having in remembrance their own school days, when few, indeed, reached the fourth class, consider that, as their children are in this class, they must be well educated; and if the children pass the entrance examination for High School, then their education is complete. Indeed, no matter how young they may be, they are not wanted at the public school of to-day. In spite of what your correspondent, Mr. Darling, says, it is recognized by many thinking men that the education of the children at the public schools is very incomplete, and much has been appearing in the public press on the subject. In referring to an editorial in one of our daily papers, on educational matters, the editor says, in conclusion, "There is always this to look forward to: When the worst comes, there is likely to be a change for the better."

The children and students of to-day will soon be the men and women of the country. Their standing will largely depend on the education they receive. Since a large percentage (Mr. Darling says 99 per cent.) must be satisfied with the education they receive at the public school, how necessary to make this education as complete and complete as possible! Since the public school is

the school of the masses, these schools should receive great attention. The whole aim of the public school would, however, seem to be how many students can be forced along to pass the entrance examination for the High Schools. The education is not a natural developing of the mind. It is rather of a hothouse growth—a forced training to pass examinations. I am glad Mr. Darling talked so plainly about examinations. Too much reliance is placed by parents on the standing of their children at examinations. I think often the students who fail to pass the entrance examination for High School are the most fortunate, as then they will get the benefit of another term, possibly, and that would mean more thoroughness. Now, I have had two children pass the entrance examination. They were practically forced out of the public school, there being no class for them. Now, I want my children to have a better education than they had when they passed that examination. I do not consider that a child of thirteen can possibly have, and I know they do not have, what can be called an education fit for any walk in life. It so happens that I am just as close to a High School as to the public school; but 99 per cent. of farmers are not so situated, and it is in the interest of the 99 per cent. of parents and the 99 per cent. of rural students, that I and many others want to see the public school more efficient. I do not consider that the fault lies with the teachers. Many causes are at work. I believe the first thing is to give the parents to understand that their children are not getting the education they think they are. They should attend school longer. At 17, 18, 19 or 20 years of age a student's mind will be more mature, and he will really get greater benefit at school in four or five months than in a whole year at 12 or 13 years of age. The parents must be the guides as to what is best for the young people. Too many are realizing, at manhood and womanhood, that they ceased going to school too soon, and several that I know have, even after being married, taken a course at a business college. In fact, the pooriness of the education received at the public schools is making

good opportunities for business colleges. In the majority of schools enough pay is not offered. I have known trustees to say, "Well, there are only young children attending school now, and a very high-class teacher is not needed." In other schools, with well-qualified teachers, there are hardly any children over twelve years old. The school of the masses needs reorganizing all through. Larger salaries should be paid. Teachers should have higher qualifications, and they should be older than many are. It is all very well for some of them to make the teaching profession a stepping-stone to a higher education, but when it works out that our children are being made stepping-stones for them to go up higher, then the matter is serious. Children should be kept at school until a mature age. Every inducement should be given to those who have been in the highest class or passed the High School entrance examination, to continue at school at least in the winter months. We should have less false pride amongst the young people, and they should not be ashamed to attend school at 17 or 18 years of age, or older. Where are the majority of the young people of this age getting their education? Most of them are not getting any education at all. If the age of the public-school scholars continues to lower, there will be more need for nurses than teachers. No doubt this has a good deal to do with the disappearance of the male teacher. To get back to a saner position will take the best efforts of parents, trustees and teachers.

Oxford Co., Ont.

GEO. RICE.

The weather conditions in October, so far, have been singularly favorable for farmers in most districts, the frequent rains and the absence of severe frosts having greatly improved the pastures, resulting in an increased flow of milk and a saving of the feed stored for winter. Fall wheat has also been given a good start, while fall plowing has been easy on the teams and more rapidly accomplished than is usual. Meantime, prices for nearly all farm products have ruled high.