

The Farmer's Advocate

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EDITORIAL.

Farmers in Office.

A writer in a recent issue of the Prairie Farmer has the following to say of farmers who become affected with the office craze:

"The man who gets to running for office habitually is not fit for much of anything else after a while. We have had two close neighbors who were once comparatively well fixed, and who, through this terrible office disease, are now out of farms, and also out of office. A good farm, well taken care of, beats any county office all to pieces, and it may be kept as long as you live if you will stay by it and take care of it. I would rather see a young man working for a farm any time than for an office."

We in Canada can quite agree with the statement, "a good farm well managed beats any county office," but then there is no reason why a successful farmer should not become a useful public official at the same time. In fact, many such can be pointed to in this country. Numerous practical and thorough agriculturists pass through the municipal councils and on to the Provincial Legislatures or Dominion Parliament, where, distinguished by prudent sagacity and intelligence, they become an ornament to their profession and an honor to their country. Nevertheless, there is truth in the contention that there is a type of chronic office-seekers who, upon entering public life, begin at once to neglect their farms, and such men should be quietly left at home by thoughtful taxpayers, because if they neglect their own private affairs they are also very likely to neglect public business.

Pointers.

The combination Shorthorn sale in the new Pavilion at Hamilton, Ont., on Wednesday, August 13th, promises to be the stockmen's event of the year in Canada. Ten of the best Canadian herds will be represented. These breeders are men of probity and reputation, who are thus bringing within reach of the public a class of cattle worthy the occasion. The stockman or farmer who desires to improve his herd or lay the foundation of a new herd, will find this sale the opportunity of a lifetime. Were the prospects for good beef cattle ever better than to-day? Keep your eye on the date, and be there. Catalogues and any other information will cheerfully be furnished on application to the manager, Mr. W. D. Flatt, Hamilton, Ont.

The letter of Mr. Messenger, of Annapolis County, repeats in vigorous terms the call for better transportation facilities, which has been heard before and will be heard again, unless the "Farmer's Advocate" misreads the course of events. Both in regard to what the farmer buys and what he sells, especially the latter, transportation facilities and charges constitute the key of the situation. It will pay the Government to heed the message and address itself more vigorously than ever before to the solution of the transportation problem.

Beware of the stranger who proposes to leave you a valise containing \$10,000 in exchange for \$5,000 of your own cash. Josh Billings used to

have his doubts about the future of any man who thought there was any better way of getting a dollar than by industriously and intelligently earning it. Moral: Have no fellowship with the unctuous stranger who wants to give you something for nothing, but subscribe for a first-class agricultural paper.

It is a most significant fact, pointed out in the letter by Mr. Falconer, President and General Manager of the Palmerston Pork-packing Company, that Canada was not able to fill large orders for bacon for South Africa, nor have our packers been in a position to take care of the Canadian home market for pork. With a steadily-increasing demand in Great Britain, and with prospects of a big crop of coarse grains in sight, why not raise more bacon hogs?

Improvement of Local Shows.

As the time draws near for holding county and township exhibitions, a few suggestions to directors and others interested in methods of improvement should be of interest. The real and lasting benefits to be derived by any district from a good local show are too well known to need discussion. Unfortunately, however, many agricultural societies have not caught the forward movement of the times, but remain content with a system unfitted to educate or enlighten that community of people whom they represent, and who, it may be, are unable to visit large exhibitions. In the management of local fairs, as in all other lines where financial and educational success is to be achieved, intelligent business ability must be exercised, and the men at the helm must become animated by the importance of their charge.

Of the many questions deserving the most thoughtful and serious consideration of any exhibition executive, the selection of competent and conscientious men to act as judges in the different departments is one of the most important. The decrease in the number of entries in some shows is traceable only to the employment of incompetent or unscrupulous men who grant the awards contrary to the merits of the animal or article exhibited. In Canada there is no excuse for this. Capable judges in live stock and the other leading classes can be secured at a modest outlay, such as the day's expenses, and in cases of local men, sometimes the honor associated with the duty is appreciated as sufficient. Since the single-judge system has given such good results, the total expenditure in this connection for any local show need be but a comparatively small sum, when compared with the satisfaction to be had therefrom, and no enterprising managers will hesitate a moment in setting apart a reasonable consideration for the purpose. The main point is to secure competent, trusty judges.

In the arrangement of the different classes in the prize list and the general accommodation for live stock, improvement is greatly needed in many cases. For example, shows are known where only two classes are provided for sheep, the division being made according to length of wool. As a result, Lincoln, Cotswold and Leicester go into the ring side by side, and no effort is made either to distinguish breeds or to emphasize and encourage the breeding of pure-bred animals. Thus a great educational feature of the live-stock department is lost. In other cases, limited provision is made for the billeting of stock on the show grounds. Cattle are made to

stand against a fence, without protection from sun or rain, and hogs are often not required to be unloaded from the wagons.

The different breeds should be also kept as closely together as possible, and suitable facilities provided for unloading and loading all stock conveyed in wagons. Placards should show the name of every breed, and the particular section in which each animal is being shown should be indicated by card or otherwise. It should be the special aim of fair managers to have every breeder of good stock in their county make an exhibit, and where a trophy is offered to the township or county exhibiting the greatest number of good animals, added interest will be given to the entire show.

In special attractions, various features have been suggested to displace the degenerating influence of the skirt-dance and side-show. When it is remembered that the real function of any exhibition is to educate those who attend, and that tastes, particularly in the young, are easily cultivated in almost any direction, it behooves those who have this matter in charge to make the special features of such a character that impressions may be made, the afterthoughts of which will in themselves be elevating. For the younger people, good prizes might be given for the best collection of mounted weeds peculiar to the locality. Specimens of weed seeds could receive similar recognition. The insects native to the county, both troublesome and injurious, could come in for the same consideration. The girls might be encouraged to make exhibits of flowers, while the boys could be induced to figure in a stock-judging contest. Prizes might be given for the persons naming the greatest number of varieties of apples, potatoes, etc. For those specially interested in the improvement of live stock, lectures might be given on the merits of pure-bred animals supplied for the purpose. Where expert judges are employed, demonstrations by them on a plan similar to that followed at the Ontario Winter Fair would greatly enthrall the people and do more to arouse an interest and awaken the rank and file of the farmers present to the importance of using pure blood in their herd than anything else which could be done at the same cost. It has also been suggested, and wisely, too, that the proper method of packing apples and preparing poultry for market might be profitably illustrated, and in dairy sections, demonstrations given or competitions conducted in buttermaking. However, each locality will do well to emphasize the special line of farming carried on therein.

Now, in conclusion, it may be said that the special features which have been mentioned will either cost too much to introduce or will not draw a crowd sufficient to make the show a financial success. This, we feel safe to say, is a mistake. Canadian people everywhere have always shown a disposition to encourage and patronize everything tending to elevate and enlighten. The sooner managers of local shows realize that a prosperous society can only be maintained by having an exhibition which encourages all that is highest and best in agriculture, the sooner will they receive from the people that patronage which they demand. We would be glad to receive by an early mail from officers or directors who have been endeavoring to make their exhibitions a greater educational as well as financial success, a short description of any features or plans which have proved valuable, and the publication of which might be helpful to others.