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EDITORIAL.

Politics and the Farmer.

Politics, in the abstract, according to the Standard Dictionary, is the science of government or the conduct of public affairs, and, therefore, a fair general subject for discussion. But party politics at this season is a ticklish question, and with it, fortunately, the "Farmer's Advocate" does not require to deal. The newspapers will attend to that. Just now the country is in the midst of the throes of a general election, and we would, in the first place, admonish our readers not to be distracted by the clamor of interested politicians, who are more or less assorted with men who are entitled to rank as statesmen, on both sides of the fray. Now, it does make a great deal of difference how the public business of a country is conducted, but its progress and prosperity is to a greater extent dependent upon the intelligence and industry of its agricultural classes and its artisans than the "spellbinder" at the cross-roads campaign rally would have us imagine. In the next place, we should never forget that the franchise, as we have it now in Canada, is a priceless privilege, purchased by generations of struggle, and it is also a sacred trust, which men should conscientiously exercise in the light of the best knowledge at their command. It must be regarded as something that cannot be sold or purchased without personal dishonor, and all approaches in the one direction or the other should be resented as degrading to the citizen and a treacherous menace to the state. The farmer is probably, in the nature of things, more constant in his party affiliations than the town population, and when he finds it necessary to withhold or bestow his support from or to certain men or measures, it is because he has been doing some solid, independent thinking of his own. The "Farmer's Advocate" rejoices in this conviction that the intelligent agricultural voter is the least susceptible of all voting elements to improper influences, and is at the very furthest remove from the manipulation or inspiration of that mysterious modern organization or agency called the "machine," and it is a matter for profound gratification, amid the shameful revelations of the past year, that we have men who, in the public mind, stand significantly acquitted of complicity in these things. At this juncture, and on such occasions, we urge the farmer to resent and discourage in every possible way all such outside influences which may be brought to bear, either upon individuals or constituencies, and to so bear himself that he may be in a position to wear worthily, if occasion should arise, the high encomium of the Bench, as did a journalist member of the Local Legislature in Ontario not long since, who came unscathed through the searchlight of the election court.

Men Determine a Nation.

The foremost citizens of America are not its most successful financiers, but its men of ideas, of political foresight; its thinkers, its teachers, its statesmen, and its spiritual leaders; and American civilization is to be judged in the end, not by the produce of its fields, or its mines, or of its factories, or by the accumulation of wealth reported in the census returns, but by the number of men and women of powerful personality, of progressive ideas, of high character, whom it produces. The issues of life are not in things, but in men, and by the quality of its men and women the nation must eventually be judged.—[The Outlook.

The Winter Fairs.

Now that the autumn fairs are ended, the attention of stock breeders and feeders is directed to preparation for the winter fairs slated for November and December, which are, in many respects, quite as interesting and important to the farmer as are the earlier events. The winter fairs are, indeed, of greater interest to the average farmer and feeders, inasmuch as the special purpose of these shows is to present for their study first-class specimens of the best types of the finished products for the butcher's block or the purveyor's stall, in cattle, sheep, swine and poultry, together with a milking competition for dairy cows. These are lines of farm stock production, one or more of which directly interests and concerns nearly every farmer. If there be any truth in the adage, "What is worth doing is worth doing well," it applies in the matter of the kind of animals the farmer raises, and the manner in which he feeds them, with a view to the quality of stock he works with, and to economy in their feeding, in order to secure the best returns for the food he gives them.

The summer and fall fairs, in so far as their live-stock features are concerned, are mainly calculated for the encouragement of the breeding and improvement of pure-bred stock, the winter fairs principally for the encouragement of the production of the best class of commercial stock, or, in other words, the class intended directly for the home or the export meat market. For this reason, the winter fairs are more educative and helpful to the general farmer, and appeal especially to that large and important class for their countenance and support, to the extent, at least, of the small admission fee charged. In England, the fat stock shows are among the most largely attended and successful, financially, of agricultural fair functions, being liberally patronized by city people as well as by farmers. In America, as yet, it has been found necessary, in order to interest a large percentage of the people, to add to the fat-stock features classes for breeding animals in some departments, which, while they increase the volume of the show, and its interest, are not properly a part of the ideal winter fair, and we are hoping that the essential feature of such a show, the exhibition only of first-class butchers' stock for competition, will be more extensively taken up, and that, in time, exhibits of this class will claim all the space provided for these events, to the exclusion of breeding stock, which would be the better for breeding purposes if gradually reduced in condition after the fall fairs by more free exercise and less concentrated feeding. For the present, however, the public have no cause for complaint, as the breeding classes add to the interest of the show, and the prize money for that section is mainly provided by the breed associations and by private contributions.

The carcass competitions at the winter fairs greatly enhance their interest, from an educational standpoint, as here the observer can, in many cases, see the animal alive, and again after being dressed for market, and may learn valuable lessons that will be helpful to him in his home practice of breeding and feeding. The provision made for lectures by practical farmers and feeders, and by expert specialists in various lines, is a feature of these shows that has met with much appreciation on the part of the farming community; while the poultry show, in connection with the other classes, is a feature that interests every farmer and his family, as it is, considering its cost, one of the most profitable branches of farming.

The dairy department has not yet reached its best possibilities, but is improving from year to year, and will, doubtless, claim more liberal recognition in the near future, for, taking the years as they come, there is no class of farming more surely remunerative than that of dairying.

The first on the list of winter fairs is the Chicago International, commencing November 26th and ending December 3rd. This is decidedly the greatest show of its kind on the continent of America, and will be especially interesting this year, from the fact that most of the winners in the beef breeds at St. Louis Exposition will meet again at the round-up show at Chicago, while the display of heavy horses and the fat stock and carload competitions will, doubtless, be the greatest ever seen in America. The Ontario Provincial Fair at Guelph, December 6th to 9th, grows in interest from year to year, and from an educational and instructive point of view is par excellence the best show of its kind we know of in any country. The Maritime Show (following close upon the heels of the Guelph event), December 12th to 15th, is modelled after the same plan, and has already become immensely popular with the people of the Provinces down by the sea, and is exerting a splendid influence in the improvement of the farm stock in those Provinces. No time should be lost now in fitting stock for these shows, and no farmer can well afford to miss seeing them. Reduced railway fares will be arranged for attendance of all these events, and those intending to take them in should enquire early of the railway agent at their station if he has instructions for reduced rates, and if he has not, should at once write the secretary of the show to that effect, in order that he may enquire into and have the arrangements made in good time.

A Farmers' Exchange.

The marketing of farm produce so as to obtain the highest available price is always a subject deserving of careful consideration. It is a good thing to be able to grow the very best that the soil can bring forth, but it is also very essential to sell it well. Numerous instances are on record in which producers have banded themselves together for the marketing of their goods, but almost as numerous are the records of their failures. In the Okanagan Valley, B. C., the farmers have been able, through an organization called the Farmers' Exchange, to master most of the difficulties incident to securing the highest market price for the principal products of the farm. This organization began in August, 1903, with headquarters in the town of Armstrong, and to-day it includes in its membership all the leading and intelligent farmers of that district. The object of the Exchange, as set forth in their constitution and by-laws, is the marketing of all kinds of produce grown by its members. Up to the present time, attention has been confined to vegetables, fruit and dairy products—three commodities for which the Valley is rapidly becoming famous. Most of the grain offered for sale is handled by a milling company in the town, which is also owned and controlled by the farmers of the district.

To become a member of the Exchange, each farmer was required to pay ten dollars, and also give his note for forty, payable at the call of the management. The purpose of the latter was to enable the manager to obtain sufficient money from the bank to pay cash according as goods were delivered. So far, the notes have not been