

LOCATION OF THE WINTER FAIR.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I have been an interested reader of the letters appearing in your columns regarding the removal of the Ontario Winter Fair from Guelph to Toronto Junction, and I must say I fail to see, from the arguments used, that any good end is likely to be served by such action. If Toronto is such a suitable center for a fat-stock show, is it not strange that, with all the boasted enterprise of that city, no provision has ever been made by its people to establish such a show there, while the people of Guelph, slow and lacking in push as they are represented to be, founded and kept up a creditable fat-stock show for over thirty years, without a break, and without any Government aid, before the Winter Fair, as now conducted, was permanently located in that place? Much capital is sought to be made by the friends of the Junction of the alleged fact that Guelph has not sufficient hotel accommodation for the people who attend, but what about Toronto Junction in that regard? Anyone who knows the place is aware that many of our country towns are better prepared to provide for visitors. The writer has attended the Fair at Guelph regularly every year since its inception there, and has never lacked a comfortable bed or a good meal, and if advantage had been taken of the provision made by the local committee for the feeding and housing of visitors, I do not believe anyone need have suffered inconvenience in that respect.

If Toronto Junction is so suitable for a stock show, why are the winter and spring horse shows not held there, instead of down town? When, a few years ago, the Armories could not be longer secured for the horse show in May, and it was proposed to hold the show on the Exhibition grounds, the city representatives solidly declared it would be the ruin of the show, as city people would not go so far out to attend a horse show, and so the show was relegated to that charming specimen of modern architecture known as the St. Lawrence Arena, if you please, a structure the like of which, as remarked by the president of the Horse-breeders' Association at its annual meeting recently, has not been seen elsewhere "in the heavens above or the earth beneath." This serves to show how much Toronto is prepared to do in the way of providing accommodation for a winter fair. Why, the city authorities, we are told, actually refuse even to supply sand or shavings to cover the floor for the Horse-breeders' Show, and the Association has to foot the bills for fitting up a building about as suitable for the purposes of a stock show as an empty ice-house would be. And what about the attendance at the Horse-breeders' Show in Toronto, as compared with that at the Winter Fair at Guelph? The fact is that, while at the latter the crowd resembles a convention of swarming bees, one feels lonely at the former. And if this be the case down in the heart of the city, what may we expect if the show is taken to the Junction, five miles out in the country? And if the city people would not go to the exhibition grounds to exhibit their fine clothes in May, what reason is there to hope they would make a pilgrimage to the Junction to see a show of cattle and hogs in December? The Winter Fair at Guelph has realized the object of its existence and proved a success where it is, and the authorities will do well to consider the situation carefully before venturing to experiment by changing its location.

The proposition to add a horse show to the Winter Fair, in my humble opinion, would be a grave mistake. In the first place, while December is an ideal date for an exhibition of fat cattle, sheep, hogs and poultry, and for a dairy-cow test, it is anything but a suitable season for a horse show, or a show of breeding stock of any class. It is, in every sense, harmful to breeding animals to keep them all the year in the high condition necessary to show to best advantage. They should be gradually reduced in condition after the fall fairs, and turned out in the fields for exercise, the strengthening of their muscles, and the conservation of constitutional vigor, instead of being constantly coddled and pampered. The spring is the proper season for a horse show, and December the most desirable for other stock. Furthermore, I firmly believe, nothing but a set of side-shows, such as the "Midway" at the fall fairs supplies, would more certainly detract from the educational features and influence of the Winter Fair than would a horse show in connection. People, as a rule, will run after horses, to the neglect of other stock and of lectures, however eloquent or helpful, and for that reason, if for no other, a horse show should be a separate affair. Then, the room required for the housing and display of horses is so great that the expense for this and for seating accommodation makes it a rather serious proposition for any city to tackle as an experiment, even with the aid of a Government grant. The Union Stock-yards of Toronto Junction may be, and doubtless will be, a very suitable center for the holding of auction sales of stock, and if the horsemen agree that it is the

proper place for a horse show, I, for one, have not the slightest objection, but let us keep our Winter Fair intact for the useful work it is doing.

While I plead for the status quo in this matter, believing it for the best, I am free to say the citizens of Guelph and the County of Wellington do not appear to have hitherto fully realized the benefit to themselves of the location of this institution in their midst, and have not been as liberal in providing for its housing as its importance to them rightly demands; and if it is removed to another place, they will themselves be largely responsible, owing to their lack of liberality in contributing to the expense of its maintenance.

Brant Co., Ont.

STOCKMAN.

THE LIVE-STOCK INDUSTRY OF QUEBEC.

(Condensed from an address given by Dr. J. A. Couture, before the National Live-stock Convention, Ottawa, February, 1908.)

The live-stock industry is still in its infancy in the Lower Province, not because of any lack of intelligence among the people, but rather because the farmers, like the majority of agriculturists everywhere, are slow to adopt new methods, and have, besides, been placed in an especially disadvantageous position. It was not, in fact, until Confederation, in 1867, that the Province became finally free of the turbulent condition in which it had been since the conquest, and was at last established upon the firm political basis which is necessary for the progress, agricultural or otherwise, of any country.

During the long period of isolation in which Quebec (its people having assimilated not at all



Derwent Performer (8823).

Hackney stallion; foaled in 1903. Winner of second prize in 15.2 class, containing 40 entries, London (Eng.) Hackney Show, 1907. Sire Rosador (4964); dam by Garton Duke of Connaught. Imported and owned by W. J. McCallum, Brampton, Ont.

with their conquerors) stood practically alone; agriculture was almost at a standstill. In 1850 its farmers were still growing cereals without any fertilizers; but few cattle or horses were raised, and crops were steadily becoming smaller and smaller, while there was not in the Province a single organization whose duty it was to promote and protect the interests of the farming classes. Moreover, the population was rapidly increasing, and yet for many years no more land was available. Owing to the absence of roads, new lands were not opened up, and in the Eastern Townships a considerable territory belonged to privileged persons, who held them as a speculation, and refused to sell them.

And all this time Upper Canada was steadily prospering. From 1841 to 1846 nearly a million and a half of dollars had been given it for colonization; canals had been built, and the farmers' interests were protected and encouraged by the Government.

The inevitable happened. An exodus of the French-Canadians began to the United States, and assumed such proportions that the Government at last realized that something must be done, and that the improvement of the system of farming was one of the most pressing needs of the country.

In 1847 it got the Houses to vote the first act respecting agriculture. That act authorized the formation of agricultural societies, to which the Government undertook to give three times

the amount subscribed by their members, the money to be expended in giving prizes at agricultural fairs, in importing live stock, and in purchasing seeds of improved kinds. These societies, however, left to themselves, without experience, and without direction, remained pretty much inactive. Five years later another act was passed creating the Department of Agriculture and the Board of Agriculture, and authorizing the establishment of agricultural schools and model farms.

NATIVE BREEDS ESTABLISHED.

At this period, said Dr. Couture, although we were poor as regards the number of our live stock, we were rich as regards their quality. We had only one breed of horses, of cattle, of sheep, and of swine, but those animals were thoroughly acclimatized, admirably adapted to our needs and to our country, and of as pure breed as are to-day the English Thoroughbred horse and the Jersey cow. All the animals were descended from those sent out from France in the early days of the colony by the order of Louis XIV., who instructed his Minister, Colbert, to send only the best animals of his kingdom. In accordance with this, a number of both mares and stallions had been sent from the Royal stables, and, while remaining the King's property for three years, were distributed among the gentlemen of the country who had done most to promote colonization and cultivation.

"The Canadian horse of fifty years ago," as Gagnon has described it, "was smart, active, well-shaped, strong, but not too heavy; could go from the plow to the light cart, travel easily 60 miles a day over impossible roads, through snow-drifts in which it sank up to the ears. It was a noble animal, that could always keep to the road, in spite of storms, whose foot was sure, and whose scent was never deceived."

In 1850 Quebec had about 150,000 horses of that breed—a breed which was her very own, and which to-day would be a mine of wealth for her farmers if it had only been kept pure and improved by selection, so as to increase its height one inch and its weight 150 pounds.

Our breed of cattle, issued from the same strain as the Jersey, Guernsey and Kerry, resembles one or other of these breeds in certain points. For richness of milk, delicacy of shape, and gentleness of temperament, it takes after the Jersey; it has the frugality of the Kerry, the large body and abundant lactation of the Guernsey. Endowed with the robust health of the northern breeds, and of incomparable thriftiness, no other breed of cattle possesses alone so many qualities, gives better returns for the care it receives, and is more profitable for the generality of farmers.

The same may be said of our little French sheep—hardy, robust, frugal, almost stealing their livelihood, so little care did they need from the farmers, to whom they cost nothing, and to whom they supplied wool of good quality and excellent meat.

A BUDGET OF MISTAKES.

In 1853 the agricultural machinery was sufficiently organized to be set in motion, but mistakes were made. At that time even the simple and elementary principles of rural economy were unknown, both to the Department of Agriculture and to the generality of farmers, hence the movement was given a wrong direction from the beginning.

It is clear that those who directed it should have begun by getting the farmers to improve their system of cultivation and take better care of their stock. As this progress was effected, they should have worked at the improvement of our live stock by selection, perfecting their shape, increasing their size, etc., and thus, in 25 or 30 years, we should have had breeds which would to-day be a source of wealth to our farmers and the pride of our Province.

A POLICY OF ANNIHILATION.

Instead of doing this, the Board of Agriculture set to work to revolutionize everything, and began by trying to destroy our live stock. In the first year, it laid down, as a portion of its programme, the importation of animals of large size. It also enacted that at exhibitions imported animals should receive prizes double the amount given to native animals, and later that the latter should not be awarded prizes at all. Then it compelled the agricultural schools to keep only foreign breeds. This campaign of destruction lasted 25 years. At the end of that time, about 1879, the Council of Agriculture proclaimed that there were no more Canadian horses and cattle, and that the French sheep were, fortunately, about to disappear. This was a strange mistake as regards cattle and sheep, for at least 75 per cent. of them were still free from foreign blood. The breed of horses, however, had