

"The interest in and attendance at the Annual Convention was largely increased. Such a large gathering has the Annual Convention become, that the Board of Directors are beginning to consider the advisability of confining it to large towns and cities where suitable halls and sufficient hotel accommodation can be provided.

"Another new branch of work has been successfully inaugurated. Four very successful local conventions were held last year as supplementary to the annual gatherings. The increasing demand for information on all dairy topics has made it necessary to hold five of these local gatherings this year. The operations of the Association have extended more into the outlying districts of Western Ontario, where dairying has been very little developed, and where very little help has been heretofore given to promoting the dairy interests.

"The membership of the Association has more than trebled, and is likely to receive a much greater increase this year. The correspondence has very largely increased, till at the present time the Secretary has hardly sufficient time when not attending meetings to give attention to it. He has become to a large extent the medium through which cheese factories wanting makers are supplied, and makers wanting factories recommended to places. Many dairymen also look upon the headquarters of the Association as a place where they can get information on the various branches of dairy work, and are able to get light on many new features of dairying.

"Although this change in the management of the Association has necessitated a considerable outlay in fitting up and maintaining an office, and in paying a competent man sufficient remuneration to induce him to devote his whole attention to it, yet the success which has attended every department of the Association work since the inauguration of this new feature has amply justified the action of the Board of Directors in making this important change."

THE EASTERN DAIRYMEN'S ASSOCIATION, which enjoys the same annual grant (viz., \$2,750) as the Western Association, has not yet taken this advanced step, but jogs along in the old ruts, much as do our institutes. The report of their Annual Convention may be seen on page 30 of the issue of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE for Jan. 15th, from which we reprint the following clause, which we ask our readers to compare with the facts before given concerning the work done by the Western Association:

"With respect to the meeting at Peterboro, it cannot be considered an unqualified success. The addresses delivered were of the highest order, and were full of facts, truths and food for the dairyman and farmer, but the attendance was exceedingly small, considering the importance of the organization and the large dairy interests of Eastern Ontario. It does seem a shame that such capital addresses as were delivered at Peterboro should be heard by only about 125 dairymen and others, and that practical men should be under the expense of coming from Ottawa, Guelph, Toronto and other places to waste their energies on so scanty a crowd. Surely someone has blundered, and there must be something seriously wrong in the working of the organization controlling the convention. If the meeting had been properly advertised, and the attention of dairymen drawn to the importance of the gathering, there is no doubt but what the hall would have been crowded and have made the convention a success in every particular. An association that receives \$2,750.00 from the Government to carry on its work should see that such an important branch of its work as the annual convention should be a success."

In Manitoba the institutes are controlled by a secretary, who is

VIRTUALLY DIRECTOR.

He is surrounded by an Advisory Board, one of whom, Mr. Geo. H. Greig, a graduate of the O. A. C., recently wrote the writer as follows:—"Our Manitoba institute system is 'Heaven' compared with that of Ontario. You should take ours as a model."

A Director of Farmers' Institutes should doubtless be appointed in Ontario. But what persons shall compose the Advisory Board? Shall the members be elected by the Central Farmers' Institute, or should said Advisory Board be made up as follows:—The President of the O. A. C., the presidents of each of the following bodies:—The Cattle Breeders' Association, the Horse Breeders' Association, the Sheep Breeders' Association, the Swine Breeders' Association, the Poultry Breeders' Association, the Eastern and Western Dairymen's Associations, the Creamery Association, the Fruit Growers' Association, the Central Farmers' Institute? By the last plan every interest would be represented, all would be interested, the body would be non-political; none could then object to it on this account.

Whatever plan is adopted, the O. A. C., its staff and work must be kept prominently before the farmers. Without unduly taxing Dr. Mills, his wise counsel must still be enjoyed by institute workers. The duty of the director should be, first of all, to visit and become fully conversant with every institute, that he may better understand the needs and know the methods of working in each riding. As far as possible, he should endeavor to make the acquaintance of leading and successful farmers in each district, and wherever practicable press such persons into service as local workers. Much can be done by judicious correspondence.

There are a number of successful institutes in Ontario. The secrets of their success should be discovered by the director, and by him introduced into the weaker societies. He should, as far as possible, interest the editors of local papers in the work of the institutes. As soon as it can be arranged, a report of each institute meeting, together with a copy of each paper, should be forwarded to the director. These should be condensed, and a copy sent to the publisher of each "country newspaper" who agrees to use such matter. In this way much valuable data would be scattered among the people at a trifling expense. By the use of a cyclostyle or similar device, 500 or 1,000 copies of an article or report could be sent to as many publishers at an expense of not more than one and one-half cents per copy, postage paid. This alone would greatly increase the interest taken in institute work; thus farmers would be reached and benefited who never could be induced to attend an institute meeting. Many farmers read their country papers who read no other literature. At first some publishers may refuse to print articles sent to them by institute workers, but by making the articles good enough, and bringing to bear on such publishers the influence of local men, this difficulty

can soon be overcome. The work of preparing one article per week would be light, yet it could be furnished to many papers. Other work should be undertaken by the director. Space forbids further mention.

Some may object to the appointment of a director on the grounds that the annual expenses would be increased. To such we say, the position, if properly conducted, should soon become self-sustaining. Instead of increasing the expenses, a director should reduce them, or profitably extend the work.

The next question which we wish to discuss is the **CENTRAL FARMERS' INSTITUTE.**

This body is not a Government institution. It was organized entirely independent of the Government by Mr. Valancy E. Fuller, who was the original promoter. At first it was a voluntary gathering, but was afterwards changed and is now composed of delegates, two being sent from each local institute and affiliated society. The affairs of the society are under the control of a President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and a Board of Directors, who are elected by the delegates. This institution receives an annual grant from the Government of \$1,200; besides this, the Government prints and distributes the Annual Report at an expense of about two thousand dollars per year. The expenses of the delegates are not borne by the Central Institute, but by the local institutes who send them. Some of the local institutes are reported to have used most of their grants in this way. Some claim that \$200 of the total sum granted to the local institutes by the Government and the County Councils are thus spent. Others consider this amount too great and say that \$1,200 to \$1,500 would be about the sum expended by local institutes in this way. Accepting the last sum as the probable amount, we find that the Central Farmers' Institute costs the country \$2,700 a year, a sum as great as that received by the Western Dairymen's Association, which is doing a much greater work. What does the country receive in return? A very small Annual Report. Many delegates are dissatisfied with the work accomplished. Mr. Gibson, in the article previously quoted from, says:—

"Again, I think our Central Institute costs much more than it is worth. It reminds me of the Tooley street tailors; it accomplishes nothing; they meet to resolve and carry motions. Then what? Who cares? In theory it is all right, in practice a mockery and a delusion. I fancy I see a politician with his fingers along his nose, and a sly wink in his eye. It pleases the poor fools, and does us no harm; let them have their enjoyment."

Without doubt the Central Institute has injured not a little the cause of institutes in Ontario. Whose fault is it? We are free to admit it is not the fault of the officers or directors, but of the Constitution. In a word, none of the officers receive enough remuneration to enable them to give sufficient time to the work.

The contrast between the delegates and the officers is not vital enough. As at present constituted and directed, the Central Farmers' Institute never can be a success, nor can it return to the country value for money received.

The Wrought Iron Range Company.

Within the last few months we have noticed articles in several county papers in which the writers stated that notes given to the Wrought Iron Range Company of Toronto for sixty-nine dollars have been raised to six hundred and ninety dollars.

This statement was first made public by a reporter of a local paper. The owners of the paper were asked to investigate the matter, and if they found the statement false to publish a retraction. The investigation was made and the retraction published with an apology. There is no truth in the statement first made; nevertheless, the original untruth was copied into a number of other papers, all of which have since published apologies. The officers of the Company offer \$1,000 to the party who will prove the assertion true. A short time ago one of our staff called at the office of the company in Toronto; he found the officers energetic, reliable business men, and the business one of considerable importance. Upwards of one hundred men are employed. A first-class range is manufactured, apparently almost indestructible. From reports we have received from purchasers, we are led to believe these stoves are fuel savers, utilizing as they do all the heat from the wood or coal. While looking through the works we found them building a twelve-foot range for the Walker House, Toronto. This stove has three ovens and three fire-places, and twenty-four cooking holes on top. There were also two other large ranges being built, one for the Great Northern Transportation Company and the other for the McKellar House, Glencoe. The stove that will interest our readers is the No. 65 Range, which has a large oven, a seventeen-gallon copper reservoir, and a top closet shelf. The firm also manufacture carving tables, broilers, coffee and tea urns, laundry stoves, etc. The business was established in 1864. The head office is in St. Louis, Mo., U. S. A.

Prize Essay.

Mr. Jas. Beer, of Brantford, asks for directions for building an ice house with a cold chamber attached, suitable for storing fowls, butter and eggs, etc.

In order to obtain the most practical plans from farmers who are using such buildings, we will give a prize of five dollars for the best plan and directions for building such a house, suitable for general farm use. Plans must be in this office not later than June 1.

STOCK.

Chatty Stock Letter from the States.

FROM OUR CHICAGO CORRESPONDENT.

Top prices lately: Beeves, \$4.50; hogs, \$4.75; sheep, \$4; lambs, \$4.75. These prices are decidedly lower than were current a year ago, but compare well yet with the prices for grain and other farm products.

The export movement in live cattle is again on the increase, and it is much heavier now than a year ago. Prices on both sides of the water are considerably lower, and the shippers are complaining of losses; but as one was never known to complain of or admit anything else, there is nothing very sensational about that state of affairs. The fact remains that the vessel room from the chief United States ports has been engaged far in advance, and the cattle of fair quality seem to be offered freely at prices that are as low as were ever paid here for export cattle. The bulk of the 1400-pound cattle bought lately in Chicago cost \$4 to \$4.25, and at the present time the bulk of the cattle being used by exporters are selling at \$3.75 to \$3.90. The large cattle feeders in the far west are also beginning to take a hand in the matter, and several shipments have been made direct from Kansas and Nebraska. As a rule, however, those who experiment in this way are at a disadvantage and are apt to get very much the worst of it.

There certainly is a great deal of merit in the contention of Canadian cattle shippers that they should have as low ocean rates as are granted by the ships leaving the United States ports. Perhaps when the Canadian cattle had the advantage of free entry to the interior of England and Scotland, and for that reason, if for no other, were worth more, there may have been some show of reason for the Canadian steamship companies exacting higher rates, but no such show now exists. It looks as if it were merely a matter of charging "all the traffic will bear," as the railroads do out west. Having a lack of competition, they simply put on the price as much as they dare so as not to stop the traffic.

The tuberculosis bugaboo is creating a good deal of excitement. There is doubtless enough of it along the Atlantic seaboard, but the sensation mongers are never satisfied without greatly magnifying such matters. The people who favor an entire suspension of the live stock ocean traffic are adding the talk of tuberculosis to their arguments, claiming to be based on humanitarian grounds.

While the writer is inclined to think it would be wise for Canada to adopt a dressed meat system, it would seem unfortunate for either country to abandon shipments of live stock.

The recent revival of shipments to Europe of United States sheep has assumed surprising proportions. Numerous lots of 125 to 140-pound western corn-fed wethers, valued here at \$3.75 to \$4, have been forwarded; nearly 5,000 went from Chicago in one week. One lot of lambs attracted a great deal of attention. There were 523 head in the lot, and they were high-grade Shropshires and Southdowns. D. C. Earl, of Fairbury, was the shipper. The lot averaged 117 pounds and sold at \$4.75 per 100 pounds. They were pronounced the finest, considering number, ever seen in these yards. They were bought by R. F. Quick for export to Liverpool, and were bred, raised and fed by Earl, Myers & Grubb, of Fairbury, Neb. Same grade of lambs sold in 1891 at \$6.85 to \$7; 1892, \$6.65 to \$6.75; 1893, \$6.40 to \$6.50.

The following ruinous prices for sheep on the western ranges show that the sheep industry very badly needs all the stimulus that the present brisk export movement in fat muttons can give it. Sun River Sheep Co., 4,000 head at 25c; Charles Severance, 10,000 head at 50c; another outfit, 50c. to 70c. It is also stated that the Sun River Sheep Co. have offered their band of 7,000 head at \$1.25 each before shearing. To show how wool-growers are getting it in the neck, it is only necessary to state that the season before last Mr. Cook realized \$3.25 per head for the very class of sheep which now net him but 87c.

R. E. Norman, of Burlington, Ont., was at market with cattle and hogs from his 1,000-acre farm at Baird, Iowa. His cattle, averaging 1261 lbs., sold at \$3.75, and hogs, 300 lbs., at \$4.50. He marketed a year ago a load of hogs which sold at \$7.85 per 100 lbs., realizing nearly as much as the car load each of cattle and hogs combined did on the late shipment. But it must be remembered that last year was a boom time for hogs, and that values now for everything are on a lower level. Mr. Norman comes over three or four times a year to look after his western farm.

The horse situation seems to be picking up to some extent. The winter being over, there is the usual spring demand from those who consider it wise to sell rather than to winter their horses. Clearly there is an over-production of all common to fair horses, and prices even for good ones are low, but the really well-bred horses are selling quite as well in proportion as any kind of live stock.

The general business situation is improving, and as soon as the factories get to working full time, the live stock business will gradually mend.