

be returned to the grower. This might be an advantage in other ways. It would compel more careful handling.

It is part of the fruit grower's business to cultivate the public taste for fruit and enlarge his markets. The only way he can hope to do this is by producing a good article. I believe most growers are trying to produce the best. The grower may take all the care possible to have his fruit picked carefully and take it to the shipping point without unnecessary jar, then after all his care, the express people come along and generally with the help of some of the train hands pitch it into the car like so much cordwood. I have sometimes thought they would be more careful with cordwood on account of getting splinters in their hands. Once in a while a few careful men will come along and put the fruit on the car in a way that is very satisfactory and they don't delay the train any longer. Any man with the least bit of sense must know that taking a crate of berries and tilting it up on end will injure the contents. If these men could only be made to pay the damage that is done through their careless handling the matter would soon be set right. Mr. President, in conclusion allow me to say that I hope the few ideas that I have advanced in this paper will be criticised and discussed by the meeting.

FIELD NOTES

Events of the Week.

CANADIAN.

The contract has been let for the new Government buildings at Maple Creek, Saskatchewan.

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New Methodist and Presbyterian churches have been opened recently in Radisson, Saskatchewan.

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Dr. William Bayard who has practised medicine in St. John, N.B., for seventy years, died at his home there at the age of ninety-four.

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J. Israel Tarte, Minister of Public Works in the Laurier cabinet from 1896 to 1902, died at his home in Boucherville, Quebec, on December 18th.

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Only three of the sixteen samples of wheat sent from Southern Manitoba to be tested at Ottawa showed a germination of less than seventy per cent.

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The annual report of the deputy minister of labor, W. L. MacKenzie King, gives an exhaustive review of the labor conditions in Canada during the last year, with a resume of the effect of labor legislation of the past six years. During the calendar year of 1906, reports to the department showed that some 17,446 workpeople in Canada had received increases in wages aggregating \$12,741 per week, with a weekly decrease in hours of employment aggregating 7,958.

The total number of employees involved in trade disputes during the year was approximately 26,014, compared with 16,329 in 1905. The aggregate loss of time in working days was approximately 490,040, as compared with 284,140 in 1905. There were seventeen strikes and lockouts during the year, each involving 300 workpeople or more. The disputes were more numerous in the building trades than in any other trade, 29 out of 138 having occurred in various branches of this trade. The next highest number is in the metal trades, in which there were twenty-one disputes.

Nearly half of the whole number of strikes in the Dominion in 1906 took place in the province of Ontario, 61 out of the 138 strikes having occurred there. Fifty disputes ended in favor of the employers, and 41 in favor of employees, compromises being reached in 23 cases.

The total number of fatalities to work people was 1,107 as compared with 931 for the year 1905, an increase of nearly 20 per cent. The industry enailing largest number of fatalities to employees was the railway service which accounted for 252 deaths during the year. Agriculture takes the second place with respect to the number of fatalities, and fishing and hunting, lumbering and navigation with about equal figures, come next. The safest line of industry would appear to be the printing trade with no fatality credited to it for the year, and but 19 non-fatal accidents.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN.

Sixteen war vessels of the United States Atlantic Fleet left Hampton Roads for a cruise in the Pacific, the longest cruise in their naval history.

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Queen Carola of the Kingdom of Saxony died on December 16th of inflammation of the brain.

The Supreme Court of the United States has upheld the railways in their rule that if a portion of a ticket is used by one traveller the remaining portion cannot be used by another.

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According to Calcutta grain traders, the wheat crop of the world this year will be 400,000,000 bushels less than in 1906.

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The United States has decided in the event of war with any eastern foe to abandon the Philippines rather than to defend them.

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The American seven-masted schooner, Thomas W. Lawson, the largest vessel of its kind afloat, was completely wrecked off the Sicily Islands in the English Channel. Only one man was saved. It was rather a curious coincidence that the wreck occurred on Friday, the 13th.

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At the Rockefeller institute, New York, after a long series of experiments it has been found that sulphate of magnesium is a safe and simple anaesthetic, permitting any sort of operation without danger to the heart of the patient.

A Farmer's Soliloquy.

(Continued)

II.

My friend of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE proves to me that the pen is mightier than the ploughshare for successful farming. He proves to me, moreover, that I am no farmer, but only a gambler, that my "operations and business methods" are only chance-work, that I am above the average in "human avarice," that I am no "business man" because I conduct my affairs so "loosely," and that a man is not a farmer because his "sole occupation is grain growing." This he calls "The Great Gamble," and the moral of it all is that I should raise more cattle and hogs.

But I wonder, in case the crops are "obliterated," and man and beast left starving through a visitation of drought, hail, rains, frost, insects or fungus diseases" how I am to feed my cattle and hogs? Here I am right now, after following this modern advice, with thirty-five spring hogs in the fattening pen. Barley turned out only about twenty bushels to the acre, and oats not quite that, owing to some of those things mentioned above. Consequently I have hardly the feed to finish these hogs, and certainly not enough to winter them over. Then, a month before I could have them finished, along comes another gambler and tells me choice hogs are worth only four cents at my local market, because the Head Gambler at Winnipeg had written fixing the price at only five there. Can I afford to buy barley at sixty cents and oats at forty cents to hold these hogs until the price goes back? Besides, where can I get oats and barley in this district? I might ship in frozen wheat only the Biggest Gambler of all has raised the freight rates to a prohibitive figure. What shall I do with these thirty-six pigs, and the forty more that have come with the fall litters? Oh this farming with a pen, so that if I haven't a bushel of grain after the drought, hail, frost, etc., I can fatten up a score of my young cattle and two score hogs anyway, and so "reduce to a minimum the danger of adversities." If only an "obliterated" crop would produce straw, I might have let the young cattle rustle an existence through the winter, because my neighbors, not having grain to finish theirs, are killing them off as fast as they can sell the dressed quarters at four and five cents rather than take two cents live weight.

I don't see how I can make a success of mixed farming when the crops are obliterated. Nor do I see why hogs are away down in price when their feed is so high, because I notice that when wheat is high my feed goes up sure.

I feel quite willing to take chances on the Providence side of it about drought, hail, rain, etc., but what chance have I with the manipulators of what I produce, whether butter, hogs, cattle or wheat? The FARMER'S ADVOCATE is right—there is no business in which there is "so much left to chance."

Do I remember thirty years ago? I certainly do, and fewer years ago than that, when there was something in the life of business that is not there now, and that gave it a spice worth remembering. Yes, we had competition then. They have all gone, those competitors, honorable rivals for my half dollar. What a pleasure it was, on top of the money I spent, to have a "dicker" with the merchant! From a pair of suspenders to a wagon, I had several choices. I think they had also—those dealers of years ago. They talked like owners, not agents, and I could haggle with them to some effect, before they would let me go across, or farther down the street. They were great bargainers, and I could have quite a round out of them before even they weighed my butter or counted my eggs. Alas! those good old days by contrast!

To-day I am a so-called independent farmer of Manitoba. Then, I could borrow a few hundred dollars on my own note at five per cent. and for one, two or three years. To-day I am a rogue until proved honest, and I must provide an endorser, or mortgage my land, pay eight per cent. interest, and begin to return the loan in dribs of so much a year, or a quarter as the case may be. Why do it? Because there is no competition.

Then I could go to a saw-mill and dicker for what I wanted. If I couldn't get it, or the price did not suit, I went to another. To-day I have access to only one lumber yard. Several parties have tried to start another, but can't get a stock, though they have ample money. Can I dicker for the lumber I need to build a hog pen? Not now. The poor tool that runs the thing is only an agent. "It is thirty-two dollars a thousand, take it or leave it."

But—He won't listen to me. It costs ten a thousand in B.C. on a car, and eighteen to the railway that is bankrupting the farmer for hauling it to my town, and the "association" requires this "dealer" to get four dollars' profit, so there I am. No competition! I wonder if my friend the FARMER'S ADVOCATE thinks on these things when he urges us "to gather a few more cows about their farms, to keep a few more hogs for market, to fence more land, etc." I must pay fifteen cents for a poor fence post that some poor devil gets two and a quarter cents for in Northern Ontario. In a certain town there are five hardware stores, but it is useless to go from one to the other for bargains. You cannot buy a gallon of oil, an alligator wrench, or anything else, cheaper at one than another. It is no longer competition, it is "association." Oh the good old days when the merchant was a manly man, could call a few things his own, and especially his soul.

I have four elevators soliciting my patronage, one owned by a private individual, one by farmers, two by milling companies. They all want my wheat, but how do they try to get it? Bah! just by being good fellows. "Have a cigar—have anything you like on me." Will they listen to my haggle about the price? Poor puppets they dare not. And when I fib a little, just to draw them out, how they flare up and offer to bet five hundred dollars that no buyer in town will give me an eighth of a cent above his bid.

So I'm not calling them bad names, for what am I? Just a tool, a puppet, an agent, like the rest of them. Don't dare put a price on anything; that is all done for me by law. "Oh Lord! how long?" My friend the ADVOCATE is just about right. "If the people rule the country, why cannot we manage more economically, and if we do not, why should we not set about the wresting of power and influence from those who abuse it."

Cameron Mun., Man.

"FREETRADER."

("Freetrader's" reflections are representative of those of a large class. A legitimate objection to the conclusions reached in a previous "soliloquy" is that it is not just to reach conclusions as to the profit or loss in farming generally on the result of one year's operations.

As for mixed farming, raising hogs, cattle, etc., that is quite an intricate science which many have mastered and which many others have not the adaptability for. We know it is more easy to make out a case against such a system than it is to demonstrate that it is safe and sensible in practice. It is like the enigma of national prosperity when the imports are larger than the exports.

We have remarked before on the absence of competition that it is a natural outcome of the modern methods of eliminating expense and is here to stay, but whether or not the consumer benefits by this cheapening of the cost of distributing goods is quite another thing. In trade the "one price" arrangement is considered one of the most advanced steps in modern commerce. Rural economics is a field that offers great opportunities to the investigator looking for a subject for an interesting book. Ed.)

Those Fair "Attractions"

Just at the time when Dr. Chown received his notable letter in Toronto from someone in the West expressing righteous indignation with the manner in which some of our fairs are conducted, we received a similar one from an entirely different source and promised to publish it in our December 18th issue. We would much rather not have this duty to do for we want to see the fairs referred to become a power for agricultural advancement. Besides, there are many earnest, sober, men with a high moral sense associated with these fairs who have to bear a share of the blame for practices they protest and fight against. Nor are the objections raised against the side shows the protests of satirized religious recluses; some of the strongest of them come from experienced men of the world who know the degrading effect of certain classes of attractions. The fact of the whole matter is that some fair managements are simply strangling their exhibitions by their short-sighted policies, for the moral sense of the Manitoba public is too high to tolerate a continuance of such things as are openly flaunted in the faces of fair visitors.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

We have in Manitoba several fairs which purport to be industrial exhibitions, and as such receive grants from the Government, the various Live Stock Associations, the railways and manufacturing companies, as well as private individuals and from various other sources. The donors no doubt believe they are giving to a good cause, and that their money is wisely expended, and so it would be if it were supporting an industrial exhibition. There is a growing opinion, however, that some of our fairs in catering to the race track and the following that it brings, are degenerating into a carnival of side-shows and fakers' paradises.

Public opinion brought on a house-cleaning in the