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The Rural Canadian.

TORONTO, OCTOBER 16TH, 1882.

THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION.

As an Exhibition, the Provincial was this year a decided success. It was popularly supposed that the decision of the Directors to take it to Kingston would cause the Western exhibitors, especially of cattle, to remain at Toronto, Hamilton, or London. But the supposition proved to be fallacious. A better show of cattle has scarcely been seen than that on Kingston fair grounds.

The number of entries, though not exactly made up yet, was between 8,500 and 9,000. This is only between 500 and 1,000 less than usual. And the character of the exhibits was most excellent. As said, the show of stock was exceptionally good. The Shorthorns were out in full force, whilst the exhibit of Herefords, Polled Angus, and Jerseys has never been equalled. The Polled Angus are rapidly growing into as great favour with our breeders as they are with the British ones. It is only six years since the Agricultural College Experimental Farm first introduced them to Provincial notice, and already there are quite a number of herds. A fine herd of Galloways, fresh from quarantine, shown by Mr. McCrae, the veteran breeder of that kind of cattle, was much admired. Two special exhibits of cattle attracted much attention. These were those of Mr. Whitfield, of Rougemont, Province of Quebec, who showed Polled Angus, Sussex, Devon, Galloways, and West Highland cattle, all of a superior character. A bull of the latter breed he added to the second collection, which was that of the Agricultural College Experimental Farm. This collection was more to show the results of feeding on cattle and sheep than for pure exhibition. Printed cards, giving the age of the animal, the daily rations during the months of its life, and the results in pounds of flesh and wool, were attached to the stalls and generally distributed. The animals were not for competition, but their exhibition must tend to give an impetus to the careful study of experiments made by our farmers, whilst the results are of incalculable value for practice. The fat cattle were excellent, as the Wellington ones usually are; and the best of them found a purchaser in Mr Longworth, of the Prince Edward Island Government Farm.

The display of horses was exceedingly fine, especially in the department of carriage horses. Many of the Western breeders were astonished at the perfection and success of their Eastern brethren in this line. The show of sheep served to prove the rapidly growing favour of the Downs. Shropshire and Oxford Downs had the readiest sale of any class of sheep. But the show of all classes, both short, medium and long-wooled, was good. Pigs of all the ordinary breeds were out in the customary quantity and quality, though we thought that the Berkshire were scarcely up to the customary mark all round.

One of the most noticeable features in the exhibition was the ready and satisfactory sales of all kinds of stock. Never in the history of the Provincial has this been more marked. In none of the

district exhibitions was it this year at all equal to the Provincial. The report of Professor Brown upon the Live Stock department of the Provincial, as requested by the Directorate, will be looked for with pleasure and expectation by the exhibitors as by the general public.

The exhibits of grain and roots were not so large in quantity as usual, but were fully equal to the average in quality. That of fruit was superior to any show—district or otherwise—seen in the Province this year. Only in the East has the fruit crop been at all a success, and this fact accounts for the satisfactory exhibit.

The manufacturers of agricultural implements were out in full force—the Eastern makers especially—though the best of our Western ones were also there. The department of heavy machinery was far above the average—the best shown this year in the Province. The main building was highly creditable to Kingston, there being a full display of all the articles usually found there. That of ladies' work and fine arts was a credit to the ladies and artists of Eastern Ontario.

The special features of the Exhibition were all of a purely agricultural character. The Manitoba exhibit, under the direct charge of the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Acton Burrows, was the theme of universal remark and examination. Never has that Province appeared to such advantage, for everything was of the most superior character. The special milk test, for which a prize was given by the Dominion, resulted in a Shorthorn grade, instead of an Ayrshire, winning the prize, contrary to general expectation. The two special exhibits of stock we have already mentioned.

At the annual meeting the able reports on Prize Farms was brought in, as also that on Essays. We shall have something to say on both in a future issue, and will not at present do more than commend this feature of the Society's work, and the efficient and successful manner in which it is being carried out.

It is to be regretted that the very wet and decidedly cold weather prevented the Exhibition from being a financial success. But for that, it would undoubtedly have been one. Thousands of people came into Kingston who never went up to the Fair Grounds, thousands of the citizens never reached them, and doubtless the unpropitious weather kept thousands at home who would have gone. The funds of the Society can stand the loss, and the educational and other benefits to agriculture in Eastern Ontario are well worth the cost.

THE DANGER OF RAILWAY MONOPOLIES.

By the fusion of the Grand Trunk and Great Western Railways the farmers of Ontario are threatened with the evil which has been so keenly felt throughout many of the States of the neighbouring Republic. Before the fusion those two lines had absorbed almost all the smaller railways in the Province, though these for some time had indeed but acted as feeders to the Trunk lines. Those smaller lines were built largely from the proceeds of bonuses granted by the municipalities to them, and by grants from the surplus lying in the Provincial Treasury. But neither the by-laws under which those bonuses were granted, nor the Orders in Council or Statutes under which the Provincial grants were given, contemplated or provided for the contingency of monopoly. By purchasing the bonds when they fell due on the market, in many cases for a mere trifle, the two lines named obtained a controlling interest in the directorate of the smaller ones, and in this way became virtually their masters. But now, when these two lines are amalgamated and obtain, as

they doubtless will, a controlling interest in the one or two independent roads still remaining in the Province, they will speedily become masters of the situation. It remains to be seen whether they will also become masters of the public.

We are pointing out no fancied danger. It is the deliberate opinion of those best qualified to judge that in the course of a few months, or a year at most, the only two independent railways in the Dominion will be the Grand Trunk and the Canada Pacific. Though a freight war between the two would be the immediate result, yet all experience tells us that pooling receipts, and in this way virtual fusion, must be the ultimate issue. Whether by any precautions such a result could have been avoided is extremely doubtful. It would seem from our twenty years' experience on this continent that no matter what restrictions enter into legislative or other contracts with railway corporations for assistance in construction, such contracts are invariably broken. If no loophole can be found in the terms of the contract, any and every means, even to the buying up of representatives to the State Legislatures, are employed to enable those contracts to be voided. When one railway cannot accomplish the end sought many unite to form a "ring," and through their united exertions the desired legislation is obtained. Fusion and consequent monopoly seems to be the necessary laws of railway progress. For the aggregation of capital requisite for construction and operation is so great, that the power placed in the hands of a few men is similar in result, though different in nature and degree, to that exercised by the great landed Barons of the Middle Ages. And railway communication, efficient and progressive, is indispensable to individual, municipal, or national advancement in the rapid march of civilization.

If, then, we are obliged to accept the amalgamation of our railways as a necessary evil, it is incumbent on us to find some means whereby the national and sectional evils which must arise from such amalgamation shall be minimized, if it cannot be abated. Such means have been found in some of the States of the neighbouring Union in a Board of Railway Commissioners. But it has been found impossible for a State Board to deal effectively with those lines which only run through and have no terminus in the State. For the mere purposes of State taxation they are tolerably efficient, but as a thorough preventative of the evils of railway monopoly in freight or passenger traffic, especially the relations of the local to the through traffic, they have proved only a very partial success.

The most successful and efficient agency must, from the very nature of the case, be a Federal Board of Railway Commissioners. That has been found to operate well in England, though there the problems of the relation of local and through traffic are not so keenly felt as on this continent. It is the agency that must be established in our Dominion, and established immediately. What is needed is a Dominion Board of Railway Commissioners, clothed with the fullest powers exercisable within the Constitution. And there must be no restriction of those powers, and no circumscription of their exercise of those powers within due constitutional limits; for it is in this respect that the railways will seek to curtail the efficiency and success of such a Board.

This is a question which affects every citizen and every industry; but it prejudicially affects most of all ourselves, and the great agricultural industry. For in the moving of the grain crop and every agricultural and animal production is there the greatest opportunity for the exercise of monopoly powers and privileges. For the last two sessions such a Board of Railway Commissioners