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Educational Attractions at Fairs

THE success of the Model Fair at Whitby last week, a report of which appears elsewhere in this issue, is another proof of the wisdom of putting purely educational features to the front at the local fall fair. For years the side show, the horse race and the vaudeville entertainment have held full sway at the majority of our fall shows. To such an extent has this been the case that many of these shows have been nothing more than a circus performance with a little distribution of prize money on the side to give it an exhibition tone and to enable the managers to draw the government grant. But a reaction has set in, and it looks as if the high kicker and the trapeze artist will have to give way to the more valuable and more elevating influence of attractions that are purely educational in their nature. And right well they should. The people of this country have not sunk to such depths that it requires a menagerie or circus attraction to secure their attendance at a fall fair. Where the educational attraction has been tried, as in the butter-making competitions at Toronto and London this year, it has proven a very strong drawing card indeed. So much so that Fair Boards may well consider the advisability of securing these or similar features, if for no other purpose than to bring the people out.

The Whitby Fair was this year operated as a purely educational exhibition with a view to demonstrating what could be done in this direction. It has succeeded admirably, and there need now be no sceptics as to the drawing powers of educational features at fairs.

So far as gate receipts and providing entertainment for the people are concerned the educational attraction has proven itself equal to if not superior to any other form of entertainment that might be provided, while it has the great advantage of giving practical information that should aid in greatly improving the products of the country and increasing the wealth of its citizens.

A feature of the Whitby Fair that should commend itself to fair managers was the experimental plot of clovers, grasses, corns, roots, etc. It proved most instructive and attracted as much attention as any other part of the show. People were eager to find out the uses for the various plants grown and how they might best be adapted to their own conditions. Such an ex-

perimental plot could be conducted on every fair ground in the country at comparatively small cost and we are sure the Agricultural College or the Central Experimental Farm would be glad to supply the seed and to assist in laying out and caring for the plots during the summer.

But the Whitby Fair is not the only one where these educational features are being tried. Over fifty of the local fairs in the province have been grouped into divisions by the Supt. of Fairs and expert judges are now at work making the awards and giving the reasons for their decisions. It is hoped in time to have every fair in the province brought under the same system, when they will become important factors in imparting information of practical value to every farmer in the country. When that time arrives every local agricultural society will be fulfilling the objects for which it was originally instituted and giving some adequate return for the government money which it receives.

The Argentine or Canada?

The proposal of the Hon. Mr. Hanbury, President of the Board of Agriculture for Great Britain, to accept the assurances of the Argentine Government in regard to foot and mouth disease having already been eradicated from that country, and that the restrictions which had to be imposed on the Argentine stock trade in the spring of last year must be withdrawn forthwith has aroused strong opposition in Britain from those interested in removing the embargo against Canadian cattle. At a meeting a few weeks ago of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, the directors spoke out with no uncertain sound on the Argentine question. So strong appears to be the opposition that it is doubtful if the Hon. Mr. Hanbury will have the courage to remove the restrictions against Argentine cattle coming into Great Britain.

The discussion has waxed warm and the champions of Canada have more than held their own. They have reasoned thus: No one can say that disease was ever spread in Great Britain by Canadian imported stock; whereas it was only eighteen months ago that the Argentine live stock importation trade had perforce to be closed on account of foot-and-mouth disease having been spread in Britain by affected Argentine cattle being landed at British ports. And still in the face of this evidence the British Board of Agriculture would

accept the assurances of the Argentine Government that there was no disease in all that wide unsettled country, while they flouted the assurances of the Canadian Government that this loyal British colony was absolutely free from disease. It would seem as if the word of a foreigner counted far more in the home land than that of a citizen of the Empire. Perhaps there is some other motive behind it all. If so what is it? Unless there is something we know not of, there seems no good reason for raising the embargo against the Argentine and not against Canadian cattle.

Is Egg Production Decreasing?

The exports of eggs from Canada have fallen off very materially during the present season and many in the trade are becoming concerned lest the farmer may permanently reduce his egg production. At a conference held last week between Prof. Robertson and the poultry and eggs branch of the Montreal Produce Merchants' Association, the President and members represented that owing to the attention that was lately being given to chicken fattening, they feared that farmers were fattening and killing a large number of pullets. This practice, if followed to any great extent, would result in a large falling off in the production of eggs. They advised, therefore, that farmers be encouraged to fatten only cockerels and to rear as many as is practicable of the good pullets for supplying eggs during the summer and winter. The egg men further advised that farmers be encouraged to kill off the cocks after the first of June in order that the eggs collected during June and later would be infertile and would therefore have better keeping qualities during the summer.

Canadian eggs have won a good reputation in England, so much so that many English dealers are re-packing eggs from the continent, notably from Russia and Austria, into cases similar to Canadian standard egg cases, holding thirty dozen each. While these eggs are not labelled or sold as Canadian eggs, they are sold as eggs in Canadian cases and to that extent have an unfair advantage in that they may lead people to believe that Canadian eggs are similar to these continental eggs in size, quality and condition.

The egg merchants petitioned the government to assist them to secure a large number of ventilated cars for the carriage of eggs on the railways.