

Agricultural Societies.

There are many who complain about the mismanagement of directors, the squandering of money, and the partiality, injustice or ignorance of judges. Sometimes there may be just grounds for such complaints, but in nine cases out of ten the grumblers themselves are to blame. The majority of the directors, and especially the secretaries, perform a great deal of labor and exercise care and patience to maintain and improve their societies, for which too little thanks are given. Judges, if sent from the skies, could not give satisfaction to all poor mortals.

We wish to ask you one question—Have you done your duty? If not, shake off dull sloth; you may be the very man that the country wants to fill the Presidential chair of your Society, and perhaps of the Provincial Board. Perhaps you may bring forward some improved plan that others may follow, or you may see improvement to be made in your Society. If so, be up and doing; be sure you are right, then go ahead. Fear not; if you do not succeed in your first attempt, persevere and succeed. Attend your annual meetings, and do not be afraid to express yourself clearly and courteously. If you are right, you will gain friends and conquer. If you have no suggestions for improvement to make, you should attend the annual meetings and hear what others say. By staying at home you lose the opportunity of gaining some knowledge, and knowledge is power. You may depend that those who attend such gatherings have an advantage over those who stay at home.

It is beneficial to Societies to have some new men in them. If it were made compulsory to change some of the officers every year, we think it would be beneficial, and if some of the old officers were to retire for a year or two, on purpose to get others instructed in the working of the Societies, and encourage those who show a desire to improve, it would also be of benefit.

You should make yourself conversant with the Act governing your agricultural affairs. We quote a few clauses that may bring to your mind the coming duties of this month:

"The said Societies shall hold their annual meetings on the second Thursday in January of each year, and shall elect a President, a Vice-President, and not fewer than three, nor more than nine other Directors, and the officers so elected shall elect, from amongst themselves or otherwise, a Secretary and a Treasurer (or a Secretary-Treasurer); and the said Societies shall also elect two Auditors."

"The annual meeting of every Electoral District Society shall be held on the third Wednesday of January in each year, in a county at one o'clock in the afternoon, and in a city at seven o'clock in the afternoon, of which meeting at least one week's previous notice shall have been given by advertisement in a newspaper published in the Electoral District and by placard."

"1. The Electoral District Agricultural Societies in each Division shall, at their annual meetings provided for by section forty of this Act, each elect a delegate by a majority of the votes of the members of the Society present at such meeting; and the Secretary of each Society shall, within six days after the election, forward to the Commissioner of Agriculture the name of the delegate so elected by the Society.

"2. The Commissioner of Agriculture shall, as soon as practicable after being notified by the Secretaries as aforesaid, appoint a time and place at which the said delegates shall meet and elect a person to represent the Division in the Council of the Association, and name the Society having the greatest number of members for the preceding year.

"3. In case of an equality of votes for two or more persons, the delegate representing the Electoral District Society having the greatest number of members for the preceding year shall have a casting vote."

The Provincial Exhibition vs. the "Side Shows."

BY A HURON FARMER.

At the last meeting of the "Arts and Agricultural Association" I voted to centralize the Exhibition in the city of Toronto, as from my standpoint of a western farmer, I believe it would be most conducive to the best interests of agriculture, as a whole, in Ontario, to fix our Exhibitions in the capital city. Although beaten, 112 to 42, and after listening patiently to the "big wigs" of agriculture on the situation, who were for Ottawa to a man, I am like Goldsmith's Schoolmaster, "unconvinced still." But on another point, upon which I have been for some time suspicious, I was perfectly convinced, viz., that the average farmer of Ontario is a very simple, easily-humbugged person. I have not a doubt that if left to ourselves to judge upon the merits, and looking to our own interests, a respectable majority would have located the next Provincial Exhibition in the city of Toronto. With its central position, its beautiful grounds, its excellent and commodious buildings, its facilities for travel by rail and water—for the purpose of holding an agricultural exhibition, there is nothing to compare with it in the Province. But the rival cities of the "side shows" got alarmed. A Central Fair and a Western Fair are all very good in a way, but what are they compared to the Provincial? And so the tact and talent of Hamilton and London were turned out to assist sister Ottawa to get her turn, and thus perpetuate the ridiculous rotation. And then there was "button-holing," I assure you—jovial-faced landlords, free with a treat—cool-headed, wide-awake store keepers, and glib-tongued, wily lawyers plied their arts right and left, and, as usual, the farmers capitulated; so the Exhibition goes to Ottawa next year, where not one in a hundred of the farmers in the western peninsula will either exhibit or be exhibited. Seeing that the villages, towns and cities beat us, nine times out of every ten, in the race for municipal and political honors, and can befog and bamboozle us as they please about our exhibitions, I for one "throw up the sponge," and will no longer contend for this or that as a right, but rather, humbly, and, as it were, with hat in hand, ask their honors—What will you be pleased to do for us? And this brings me to the objective point of this communication—What are the authorities of the Western Fair going to do about their next Exhibition? I am well aware that the city of London must "catch a whale," so that I am only anxious about the size of the sprat we are to be baited with; for as times go, there will be no disputing the fact that, as the bait is, so will the catch be. As a means to that end, I hope they will pardon me for offering the following bit of advice: As the Provincial goes far from home next year, you have a splendid opportunity of having a "Fair" such as you never had before. But you must broaden out your prize list; especially, you should offer liberal awards for herds of Shorthorn and Ayrshire cattle (you starved the Ayrshires last year), and also for herds of Cotswold, Leicester and Southdown sheep, and put your very best foot forward for all classes of horses. Next, be particularly careful in the selection of judges; avoid local men—get them from a distance if possible. All who have had experience know how difficult a matter it is to get the right men in the right place in the shape of judges; but we expect you to do your very best, knowing as we all do how much success and satisfaction at an Exhibition depend upon having good judges. Do not, I beseech of you, give us a repetition of the dose of judging the Ayrshire cattle and heavy-draught horses experienced last Fair; it was, in many respects, a laughable farce, had it not had a serious side in seriously injuring the reputation of the Western Fair. But more anon, as I am getting lengthy, beyond the bounds I contemplated at the start.

Work and Reward.

BY D. M'K., INVERNESS, QUEBEC.

Everywhere it will be found that most men will work and work hard, provided a good result be obtained by such labor.

And there are few in this country who decry labor as being undignified. Seeing it is so, and knowing that country and city alike are busy human hives, the vital question for every young man to ponder, and ponder well, is what will I be at—what do—what devote my strength and energy to accomplish?

During the critical period—in most cases—of incipient manhood, a youth might be supposed to take stock of himself and prospects somewhat after this fashion:—

"I am young and I am strong and intelligent. The world is before me—my history is not yet traced. Where shall I move? Shall I enter the lists as a competitor at law, where I may have to wait for years, and in misery before I get my first brief? Or shall I turn my attention in the direction of medicine, in the hope that some day I may become a shining light amongst that class of men who kill nearly as often as they cure, and who, moreover, would have little to do if it were not for the ignorance and self-abuse of the common people?" Turning from these, he exclaims: "None of these for me. The professions are even more overcrowded, and, anyhow, life surely presents some nobler calling. When I consider mercantile life, which deals largely in speculation, although sometimes one is successful, yet the competition is so keen that a small capitalist is sure to do a very small trade, which seem to me to mean present trouble and doubtful future success. Then there is the numerous fry of small trades and other occupations, but these are wearing and too monotonous, and most of them afford little chances for intellectual development. I want some business which will allow time for both physical recreation and mental study, and which also by application and economy secure to me and mine a peaceful competency. Such a business, I think, is farming. I can farm, thank fortune, and please heaven, I will."

And who will doubt but this conclusion which has been arrived at is a sensible one, for it is true that there is no one science which is at once more noble and more neglected than the science of agriculture. A much needed improvement in this direction is being brought about to a large extent by papers and books which advocate the husbandman's interest, and teach him what to do and also how to do it. And it is not only when viewed from a sanitary, but also from a purely financial standpoint, that the business of farming presents great and growing inducements in this, our noble Canada.

Let a young man determine to devote himself to this calling, and resolve: If a stock raiser, to keep only the best; if a grain producer, to till thoroughly; if a general farmer—and in any case endeavor to excel—to use all available helps and every improved method to be diligent and deal squarely with all, and we will warrant that with health, and applied common sense, he will become a successful man, and his will prove a useful life.

The impoverished, run-down homesteads in our land, as well as the yet unbroken prairie, call for lusty, ambitious, nineteenth-century men who will renovate and reclaim and build up together the fortunes of themselves and of the nation.

Let good citizens avail themselves of the good chances. When looked at aright, farming is found to be not only paying, but patriotic work, and if he who causes two blades of grass to grow where one only grew before, be accounted a public benefactor, how much greater a benefactor must he be who make ten times ten thousand blades of grass and wheat, of barley and oats, grow where formerly reigned only the primeval wilderness, transforming the drear, barren and fruitless desert, and making it bloom and blossom as the rose.

And yet such is the avocation of the farmer, and such are some of the results achieved by the efforts put forth by his hands.