

WITH THE FARMERS

IMPROVEMENT OF PRIZE LISTS.

In his address before the agricultural societies convened at Regina recently, George Harcourt, B.S.A., Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Alberta, delivered an address on "The Improvement of the Prize Lists." The address had the effect of stirring up the exhibitors at the fall fairs, and the same-controlling the fair, and the address was made the subject of a special comment in the Regina Leader. The text of the address and the editorial comment are reproduced in full. The subject implies that the average prize lists in use at our local fairs are not perfect, in that it needs improvement. The question then arises, where in it does need to be improved, and how shall improvement be made? It would be better to understand the situation as it is, than to be misled by the first place the object in offering prizes should be to encourage the production of an improved class of stock, grain, vegetables, or other farm products. This was the original intention, I take it, and is the only ground on which a government is justified in giving aid to agricultural fairs. Views from this standpoint we must admit that much of the money given away from annual fairs is wasted. In fact, one of the West told me that there was no money he grudged to give more than that which went to the agricultural societies because there was absolutely no return for it. The prize list and method of conducting the average fair are out of touch with the real situation and consequently useless—in fact, a waste. "One critic has said: 'The average fair is an expensive burlesque to give a little government money among a few people.' I think the criticism comes very near the mark for some fairs, as they have not largely any educational value they once had."

Why is this? To my personal knowledge there has been absolutely no material change in the live stock classification of the average prize list in the last quarter of a century. I think we are still using the same classification of the average prize list twenty-five years to it. One instance will suffice. The average classification for bulls runs as follows:

- Bull, three years old and over;
- Bull, two years old and under three;
- Bull one year old and under two;
- Will calf.

This is the time when, but I don't know how you can improve it unless you cut it out altogether. Half a century, or more ago when this classification was devised there were not a few pure-bred herds throughout the country as there are now, and there was need to encourage the breeding and feeding of improved stock. Now the good farmer uses a grade male. Pure bred studs, herds and flocks of all leading breeds are to be seen everywhere, and the idea has been firmly planted that the improved breeds are the best and marry everyone in using them. Why then, should the breeder of improved stock in the neighborhood of any fair when it is the interest of that fair to show the best stock out for show in the very best condition possible? To offer him money to do what he ought to do in his own interests is a good business. The breeder is a director and thus interested in framing the prize list which provides prizes for his special breed he should be charged with great responsibility. He would be if he were in municipal politics. In fact, we have had years of advertisement and improvement along all lines of agriculture work and the prize list has stood still. It is obsolete—out of touch with the great progress that has been made during the last two decades, and ever the last decade. While I admit that there is no way so effective in demonstrating the superior qualities of an animal (and the ability of his own as a breeder and feeder) as to bring him out in fine condition and contend it is out of place to offer a prize for this at the local fair. It has lost its educational influence and it wants something new. We are getting to date and make the annual fair an educational event as it was originally intended it should be. A step in advance along this line is to improve something new to attain to high ideals in accordance with present day truths and progress.

It is easier to criticize than to suggest improvement, because improvement in this case can only be brought about by agitation and education along new lines. As present the framing of a prize list is a thankless task and any upsetting of present plans must be done about in a careful way so those who have been the habit of receiving a share of the spoils will lead opposition that may upset everything. It is strange, you know, how we cling to habits and customs of our forefathers. In the first place, it is necessary for the directors to thoroughly understand local needs and then decide how best the fair can be made to help by educational method to bring about a fulfillment of the needs.

The following suggestions along the various lines of work may be helpful. Live Stock.—At most fairs all prize-faring animals can be cut out. Leave this to the big fairs. It is no longer necessary to demonstrate the superiority of these breeds, as in the past that stage now is a business proposition which should stand on its own merits. The survival of the fittest in this case can be taught out at the big shows. The owners of this class of stock might, however, be given free entry, and the grounds might be divided into sections for the comparison of animals and make a selection. Prizes might be continued in the grade classes as at present because we have frequently seen these classes

much superior to the pure-bred ones. Here is where the educational effect will be noticed. In no case would I allow an animal that was not a prize in one class to show in the same class next year. I do not mean to debar a yearling showing as a two-year-old the next season. This would I think, encourage new exhibitors to come out because it would be known that no excellent animal would be able to receive the prize year after year. I would also have classes for exhibitors that have never shown an animal before or that had never won a prize.

By having fewer classes and only grade animals the judges could supplement the work of the stock-judging schools by taking time to explain fully the reasons why they place the animals as they do without injuring the value of the animals. The judging schools by taking time to explain fully the reasons why they place the animals as they do without injuring the value of the animals. The judging schools by taking time to explain fully the reasons why they place the animals as they do without injuring the value of the animals.

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Attention should be given to the quality of the prizes. The prizes should be made according to the quality of the animals. An educational effect might be made of eggs classified according to their quality. Grains and Grasses.—For a country showing so large an amount of grain, the classification is unsatisfactory and the amount of money out of proportion to the importance of the subject. The sections should be made in accordance with the quality of the grain. The sections should be made in accordance with the quality of the grain. The sections should be made in accordance with the quality of the grain.

Vegetables.—Everyone knows the dairy is famous for its vegetables. The summer shows it is hard to get out any kind of exhibit, then by not encouraging the growing of them in hotbeds or cold frames? The fall fairs more should be done to bring out the essential vegetables, good vegetable of the various kinds. I often find one style of vegetable wins prize one year, and another another year. Education is wanted. More attention should be paid to the quality of the prizes. The prizes should be made according to the quality of the animals. An educational effect might be made of eggs classified according to their quality. Grains and Grasses.—For a country showing so large an amount of grain, the classification is unsatisfactory and the amount of money out of proportion to the importance of the subject. The sections should be made in accordance with the quality of the grain. The sections should be made in accordance with the quality of the grain. The sections should be made in accordance with the quality of the grain.

more of it were grown it would greatly improve the average farm home and its produce worthy of encouragement. The Ladies' Interest.—I have previously left this to the last, because, though not the most important from a farmer's standpoint, yet where would the fair be if it were not for the ladies? They have a part in this work that must be recognized. They are encouraged, and that must be developed in every way possible. Preserving fruit, baking, fancy work, and all utility work must be encouraged along progressive lines. Cooking demonstrations, an even contest of stock-judging would interest the ladies. This article would be incomplete without some reference to sports, but as the subject is to be discussed in another paper I will pass it with a few words. The sports need not be expensive; but need to be original. A horse race confined to farmers' sons and to horses owned in a race before will make a good sport as a professional race. Harnessing and un-harnessing races, potato races and things of that sort are just good as most expensive affairs.

The prize lists should be handled by the farmers' institute. When these classes are introduced the object should be defined and some hints given about the judging. What is expected will be brought out. Our prize lists are too often short in their descriptions matter in many instances.

The farmers are hungry for information, and there is a great opportunity for institutes to supply this information. The indifference so apparent is because of the lack of any educational value in the average prize list. The farmers' institute should be pointed out that the conditions have changed, and that the prize list and general method of presenting a fair are out of touch with present day conditions. Let us put first things first, and make the fair the successful influence it should be.

SWIFT HAS A BIG YEAR.
Chicago, January 6.—In the fiscal year ended September 30, Swift & Co. had an aggregate business of more than \$250,000,000, its highest mark. The net profit in the aggregate was \$2,735,946, or 1.09 per cent. The company's financial position as presented at the annual meeting of stockholders yesterday, was as follows: Assets, \$100,000,000; liabilities, \$75,000,000; surplus, \$25,000,000.

Cash	\$3,358,991	\$3,150,692
Accounts receivable	31,992,079	29,330,881
Inventory	21,735,564	21,334,374
Stocks and bonds	12,339,999	11,498,800
Real estate	14,196,000	14,196,000
Prepaid expenses	1,233,669	1,190,845
Interest	62,500	62,500
Total	\$100,000,000	\$75,000,000
Liabilities		
Capital	\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000
Bonds	5,000,000	5,000,000
Bills payable	23,870,239	19,750,190
Accounts payable	5,239,124	4,306,355
Reserve for taxes	1,233,669	1,190,845
Reserve for other purposes	1,233,669	1,190,845
Interest	62,500	62,500
Total	\$100,000,000	\$75,000,000

The company figures from this statement are a book value of \$19 a share for its stock. Concerning the price of the stock in the market—\$8 a share—Mr. Swift said in his annual report:

"In sympathy with the general decline in rail and industrial stocks, the shares of Swift & Co. were sold lower in the open market than for a number of years. However, I call your attention to the fact that the price at which the shares are selling does not affect the actual business of the company, nor diminish its earning power or its capital. The recent decline in market quotations has resulted in an increased demand from investors. The number of our stockholders during the last three months has increased considerably over 1,000, and at present we have over 9,000 stockholders—nearer 10,000."

"During the past year there has been started for the benefit of our employees an Employees' Benefit Association for insurance against death, sickness or accident, toward which the company gives assistance and all encouragement. We have insured over 5,000 employees."

"The past year has been one of our largest. We have had a record year. Our plants are in better physical condition than ever before. We have been and are now doing a profitable business, and the prospects for the coming year are favorable."

LECTURES ON DAIRYING.
(From Tuesday's Bulletin.)
The first lecture of the series to be given to farmers on dairying and its branches, was given yesterday afternoon at Alder, Alberta. The lectures are being held at forty-two different places in the province at the expense of the Department of Agriculture. The Department have employed several experts to give practical instruction with these lectures, and the local sheep market, trade was very quiet and dull. The local sheep market, trade was very quiet and dull. The local sheep market, trade was very quiet and dull.

CHICAGO LIVE STOCK.
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enough ideas on his subject to fill in his time, or not enough fire in his speech to reach his audience awake. Illustrations are a great help. An address should be illustrated. A farmer is accustomed to rather than to a speaker who reads a paper. Lacking these visible arguments, the speaker should present pictures. Do not be satisfied with words alone. Tell how Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith have done it and what results were. The listener has then a mental picture which he will remember. Illustrations are a great help. An address should be illustrated. A farmer is accustomed to rather than to a speaker who reads a paper. Lacking these visible arguments, the speaker should present pictures. Do not be satisfied with words alone. Tell how Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith have done it and what results were. The listener has then a mental picture which he will remember.

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totalled 512,000 against 61,000 last year with shipments amounting to 167,000 against 293,000 a year ago. Trade in corn and oats was light and featureless with slight buying. Corn receipts were 527,000 against 1,014,000 a year ago, with shipments totalling 682,000 against 622,000 last year. Winnipeg cash prices: No. 1 Northern, 1.07 1/2; No. 2 Northern, 1.04 1/2; No. 3 Northern, 1.02 1/2; No. 4 wheat, 90; No. 6 wheat, 61; feed, 22 1/2; No. 1 Northern, 99 1/2; No. 2 Northern, 97 1/2; No. 3 Northern, 95 1/2; No. 4 wheat, 87; No. 6 wheat, 47; No. 4, 47; Flax—1.05.

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(DEBENTURES FOR SALE.)
That they are ready to sell their debentures in four equal parts to amount to \$4,000, on sell in \$1,000 or \$2,000 or \$4,000 on the whole \$4,000 together all tenders to be in on or before the 21st day of Jan., 1908. All tenders shall be sealed and addressed to Israel Umbach, secy-treas.

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CITY COUNCIL.
Inaugural Meeting of 1908 City Council. Statement as to City's Status and Paying Accounts—Decision.

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