NUARY, 1890

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Farmers and Fairs.

Ever since the Industrial Fair Association announced their intention of compelling all stock exhibited at the Industrial Fair of 1890 to remain on exhibition two weeks instead of one. the ADVOCATE has, I notice, been endeavoring to find out the real feeling of stockmen and farmers on this subject; and as I feel certain that an attempt is being made in this case to carry out an innovation that will be very distateful to a large majority of the exhibitors, I would like to say a few words on the subject. It has often been a source of great surprise to me to notice what very different relations the farmers who are, or at least should be, the persons most interested in an Agricultural Show, hold towards these shows in England and in Canada, and I think that these relations may best be described as follows :-

In England the principal farmers of a neighborhood decide upon having an Agricultural Show; they hold a number of meetings with a view to establishing one, ask and in almost every case receive the willing co-operation of the tradesmen of the neighborhood, and finally if the prospect is favorable towards paying the expenses, they form an Agricultural Society, get out their prize lists and hold a show, which, while it is liberally patronized by all classes, is still recognized as the special property of, and is consequently engineered by farmers.

Now let us look at Canada. Here we find the principal agricultural shows managed by whom—farmers? Not a bit of it; newspaper editors, manufacturers, storekeepers, etc.; while the farmers, to whom belong at least three-quarters of the exhibitors, and one-half or two-thirds of the visitors are content to put up with just whatever this Board chooses to dictate to them.

Now, this is manifestly wrong, and the first question is, What is the cause of such a state of affairs? I am afraid were the matter thoroughly sifted, it would be found that to a very great extent the farmers are themselves to blame, and the reasons that have forced me to this conclusion are these: I have had the honor for the last two years of being a director of a county agricultural society in Ontario, and my experience as such, has led me to believe that nine farmers out of every ten, look upon an agricultual exhibition, not as a place where they can strive to prove to their neighbors that brains as well as hands counts on a farm by improving their stock year after year by the use of purebred males, nor as a school where, by comparing their experience with that of their neighbors, they can lay by a store of valuable information, but rather as a place where, by expending a dollar in a member's ticket they run a chance, and in their eyes it is, of course, a very good chance, of making five or six dollars in prize

Perhaps you will ask me what are the experiences that have driven me to form such an opinion. Well, I will give you some idea of them—one, and a not too pleasant one, is that of driving all day up and down side-roads, concession lines, trying to dispose of member's tickets at one dollar each, and being continually greeted with the same reply, "Well, I haven't anything to show this year, so I guess I won't take a ticket; I can get in to see the show for twenty-five cents, anyway." And so 100 tickets are sold where 500 should be; and then when

the directors are forced to cut down the prize list for want of money, they are met with volleys of abuse on all sides, and are told that they are running the show into the ground.

While speaking of this let me give an instance that I can vouch for: In one of the wealthiest counties in Ontario, owing to continued bad weather at several successive fairs and to the lack of interest taken in the Agricultural Society by the farmers, the Society ran into debt, and a mortgage was placed on the fair ground, hall, etc. The man who holds that mortgage is a wealthy farmer, and yet last year he refused to buy a member's ticket at a cost of one dollar. Now, if this is all the interest that our farmers in Canada see fit to take in their Agricultural Shows, is it to be wondered at that Fair Associations like the Industrial are inclined to act on the principal of "Take care of No. 1;" and if they think that they can benefit themselves by any measure, to take that measure regardless of the wishes of the farmers.

Remember, I am not arguing that Fair Associations are justified in taking such steps, or that they are wise in doing so, but I do say that the farmers of Canada have neglected their own interests and have given all Fair Associations like the Industrial, that are private enterprises, a very great argument to use against them in a case like the present one. Of course I do not mean for a moment to class all farmers in Canada along with such men as I speak of, for I am well aware that we have here in Ontario as broad and liberal-minded men as can be found in the world; but I am perfectly sincere in my opinion when I say that these are the exception, not the rule, and that the general run, or, as they may be termed, the rank and file of our Canadian farmers, are disposed to carry out a very narrow and illiberal policy towards Agricultural Societies, and I warn them that as long as they continue to do so they may expect to be treated in similar way by those larger Fair Associations that are not dependent on them. In your next issue I hope to point out what steps may best be taken in the present case.

BLUE BLOOD. taken in the present case.

The Exhibition Question.

(Continued from Dec. Number.)

Dear Sir,—For my part I will not attend any exhibition where the stock have to stay two weeks, as it is a great expense. It will not stand a test among the stock men. It is a game of the Toronto shareholders.

P. ARKELL, Teeswater, Ont.

Dear Sir,—In regard to agricultural shows being held two

weeks, my opinion is it is too long. Exhibitors of live stock are quite satisfied with one week at a place, as they want to attend more than one show each season. By being kept two weeks at any one show takes up more time than any farmer can afford, as the next year's crop depends on his properly preparing his land in the fall. Exhibitors of live stock are nearly all farmers, hence the disadvantage of being kept two weeks when one will answer every purpose; it would also add heavily to the expense in hired help, board, etc. The Grand Trunk Railway Company has used us very kindly in the past, not only in properly shipping us from point to point, but by holding our cars that we had fitted up with stalls, and returning us home free of charge. Now could we expect them to hold our cars for two weeks awaiting our return! The refitting would add greatly to our trouble and expense, for it costs from \$4 to \$8 to fit a carat home; how much more at the exhibition grounds! I hope the directors of the Toronto Industrial Exhibition will think this matter carefully over and not ask live stock to remain two weeks when one will suit the majority of exhibitors better. I wish the Industrial every It is a grand show and well managed by the different officials. I, as an importer, breeder and exhibitor, still wish to show there, but if required to keep our stock there more than one week it will prevent me, also the majority of stock men from this part of the country, from exhibiting there. I have had a quarter of a century's experience in agricultural shows, and have always been a lover of good stock, but the taste of a two weeks' show we had in London eight years ago made us all sick, and any agricultural society will find they will diminish the numbers of exhibitors by add JOSEPH VANCE, New Hamburg, Ont. ing another week. Dear Sir,—As far as our experience has been as exhibitors at

anything to show this year, so I guess I won't take a ticket; I can get in to see the show for twenty-five cents, anyway." And so 100 tickets are sold where 500 should be; and then when

the breeders of stock, and too much simply to the exhibitors. By the expenditure of about \$2,000 an exhibitor can buy up a show herd and sweep the province, while the remaining por-tion of his herd are but indifferent animals, which will place him in a false position before the public, while on the other hand if prizes were given for those bred and owned by the exhibitor it would be a correct index as to the quality of the herds. A herd bred for a number of years from the same class of bulls will assume the same type. I do not say give all the prizes to animals bred and owned, but for them to be ouraged so that purchasers will know who are the breeders of our best stock. Another thing in which they have been remiss is this, an exhibitor for instance taking a carload of stock will require at least three assistants, his shipping bill allowing him to take only one, therefore he has to buy tickets for the other two. If he gets return tickets they ex pire before he returns, if he goes to more than one show consequently he has to pay for them returning, and first cla fare at that. This adds materially to his expenses. I believe this to be quite unnecessary. I believe that if the railway company were asked by the fair associations to carry neces-rary attendants free they would do so, or, at least, for a ninal charge. But as far as making exhibitor's expenses a light as possible, it has never given the fair associations the least concern. It has been a wonder to me that at a fair so well managed as the Industrial is, the stables should be allow ed to be put to the uses they are the first week of the show. The stench of these places when the stock men take posses them is something horrible, having been used for a wh week by thousands of people for water-closets, etc., while the strip of land back of the stables is used for depositing all the filth from the booths, eating houses, etc. For the two weeks of the show last year the stench that arose from this was enough to bring on an epidemic. If all this disease-breedi garbage was heaped around the main building what a hubble it would have made, and rightly so. Don't you think, friend Weld, that the stock men are as susceptible to the influence of these fever-breeding germs as others! I believe we are. With regard to the Industrial having the live stock on the grounds two weeks instead of one as formerly, we canon the ground two weeks insect to show complete from first to last, which will be a great boon to those attending the first week. Of course it will be the means of keeping the best stock from one of the other large shows, but they are power less to prevent it; they must bow in submission with the begrace they can. R. & S. NICHOLSON, Sylvan P. O., Ont.

Closer Relationship Needed.

I have been a reader of your valuable journal for a length of time, and have been much pleased with the interest you have taken in farmers. On them depends the welfare of this country. I am pleased to see that they have awakened to the necessity of banding together through clubs and institutes, for all other trades and professions have their combines and trusts, etc. The last, the millers' grab, only adds one more to the list. At last it seems a necessity that farmers should drop all party feeling and rise as one man to get our rights. Our debt, what with our Dominion, counties, townships and farms mortgaged, as grown a pace, is it not time we should seek a remedy. I would suggest that the Dominion Farmers' Council, or Farmers' Institutes, request the Reeve to call a meeting of the ratepayers of each township through the province to discuss any particular requirement necessary to the farmers, such meeting to be held early in the winter; and when any point has been adopted, let a delegate be appointed to meet in convention at some central place to discuss any point for the public good; and, when adopted, let pamphlets be printed containing such measures and be distributed by the assessor, so that each ratepayer could then have plenty of time to consider said measures; by this time the collector goes his round and has with him a petition for ratepayers to sign, praying the government to grant such request. This, I think, would destroy party; as it matters not from which side we obtain measures as long as it is good. If this were promptly done each year, petitions would be handed in while parliament is sitting (municipalities bearing the expense), and great good would be the LAMBTON FARMER.

A delegation from Dakota to Manitoba and the Canadian Northwest have selected homes for twenty families at Dunmore. They will move from United States soil to Canadian early in 1890.