

FARMING

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The Industrial Fair

A visit to the Industrial Fair cannot help but impress one with the greatness of Canada's resources, and more particularly those of Ontario. To many who visited the Fair for the first time this year it seemed almost a marvel that such large exhibits of live stock, agricultural products, dairy products, fruit, machinery, fine arts, etc., could have been got together for a ten days' exhibition. A few years ago it was thought that the extensive grounds on which the exhibition is held would be ample for many years to come. But so great has been the expansion of this, Canada's great fair, during recent years that not only many of the buildings, but the ground itself, may have to be enlarged at an early date.

All this is, no doubt, very gratifying to the directors and those who have made the exhibition what it is to-day. There is a sense, however, in which every Canadian may rejoice in the success which has attended the Industrial Exhibition. This great fair has done much to advertise Canada abroad, and especially among the people of the American Republic. Every year the number of visitors from the United States is increasing, and this year the number was very much greater than at any previous exhibition. A just feeling of pride must come to every Canadian in the fact that every visitor from the United States or elsewhere who comes to Toronto during the fair sees one of the best annual exhibitions on the continent. Looking at it from an agricultural point of view, we question very much if it has its equal anywhere as an exhibit of high-class live stock and agricultural products.

Though the Industrial Fair has been extensively advertised abroad during recent years, we are inclined to the opinion that even more might be done in this direction, especially in connection with the live stock exhibits. Every year a great many American breeders visit the Fair and take away a large number of our pure-bred animals. But there is room for more to be done along this line, and if the various live stock associations of the province would co-operate with the Industrial Fair Association to do some special advertising among the breeders and purchasers of pure-bred stock in the United States more of them might be induced to visit the Fair for the purpose of replenishing their herds. Why is it not possible to make the Industrial Fair, so far as the live stock interests are concerned, the meeting place for buyers and sellers of pure-bred stock on this continent just as the British Royal Show is the meeting place for buyers and sellers of live stock for almost the whole world?

While the Industrial Fair excels in many respects in the accommodation provided for the various exhibits, there are one or two features of the show which can and must be improved upon if the present standard of the exhibits is to be maintained or improved upon. For the past three years the dairy exhibits, which represent one of Canada's greatest industries, have been side-tracked, and the accommodation provided not at all what it should be to display the exhibits properly. Surely some better provision could be made for the cheese and butter department. To locate it in under the grand stand, away from the other exhibits and in a place where there is poor light and not the purest atmosphere, is something the dairymen did not expect from so broad-minded a body as the directorate of the Industrial Fair, and it is sincerely hoped that better accommodation

will be provided before another year. All agricultural products should be grouped together, if not in one building at least in one portion of the grounds. As it is, the agricultural hall and the dairy building are several minutes' walk from each other. Other exhibits are not treated in this way. Everything in the machinery line is grouped together, and so should everything in the line of agricultural products. What is needed is an agricultural hall big enough for holding all the agricultural products, including cheese and butter.

The Fast Steamship Service and Cheaper Freight Rates

It is not our practice to dabble in politics, nor do we intend doing so at this juncture. It often happens, however, that in the interests of the agriculturist we are compelled to touch upon questions that savor somewhat of politics. But in doing so we endeavor to discuss them entirely free from politics in any way, and such is our purpose at the present time.

The Peterson-Tate contract for establishing a fast steamship service between Canada and Great Britain has fallen through, and if we are to have such a service an entirely new arrangement will have to be made. Looking at this question from an agricultural point of view, and in fact from a point of view in which the interests of our growing export trade are considered, it seems to us that the proposal for a fast steamship service might very well lie in abeyance till more adequate provisions are made for transporting Canadian food products to the British consumer in the quickest and best possible way, and at the lowest possible cost.

It is apparent to everyone who is at all familiar with the freight rates on goods destined for export that the Canadian producer and shipper are at a great disadvantage as compared with the producer and shipper of the United States or other competing countries. From reliable information which we have at hand we find that during 1897 the Canadian shipper had to pay \$6 per head more for sending his cattle to Great Britain than the shipper in the United States; or, in other words, that, while the United States shipper was able to send his cattle forward at an average transportation charge of \$20 per head, it cost the Canadian shipper \$26 per head. This illustration alone is sufficient to show that there is something radically wrong with our freight service either by rail or by ocean steamer. We may go on till doomsday endeavoring to educate our farmers in the best methods of breeding and feeding cattle for the export trade, but unless we have some better arrangement in regard to transportation charges we shall never be able to compete successfully with the cattle-producers of the United States or any other country having the same advantages regarding freight rates that they have.

It must be borne in mind that it is not the shipper who pays this \$6, but the producer. When the latter sells his cattle he has to allow a sufficient amount off the price for his product to pay for this extra cost in transportation. If the export freight rates on cattle were placed upon a proper basis there is not the least doubt but that this \$6 per head could be saved to the farmers of Canada. During the first six months of this year we exported to Great Britain 30,048 cattle. If this \$6 per head for extra freight charges could