

harem, and they of the Shropshire and Tamworth breeds—these, with all their accessories, find themselves bound one fine September day for that rendezvous, so dear to the heart of country folk, the County Fair. All roads lead there; and over them pass people of every class and aspect.

In the wee sma' hours of the morning, when it is still dollars to doughnuts whether the sun can disperse the thin drizzle, the hired help and boys convey thither the stock in slatted crates and high-boarded wagons, whence they are transferred to the stalls lining the entire circumference of the fair-ground fence. By the time they have been fed, bedded and watered, extraneous elements have entered, and are driving in tent stakes, and setting forth the various paraphernalia of their craft. Nor is this always accomplished without some wrangling. The fortune-teller, that gifted seventh daughter of the seventh daughter of euphonious name, who can, with the aid of a cube of glass, lay bare the mysteries of past and future, she of the flashing eye and raven locks, resents the proximity of the sword-swallower's booth, and there is language and much fierce gesticulation before an understanding is reached. But if all is bustle and hurry without, no less busy are those whom the horticultural building has from time to time received into its cool, roomy vastness. Upon the counters, spanning the whole length of the ground floor, are men artistically arranging baskets of the year's maturity to the best advantage. Even at this early stage a plate of "extra fine" Red Astrachans or grapes, a mammoth squash, or strange species of the fantastic gourd family, elicits an admiring ejaculation from the hurrying passer, who has not yet been succeeded by the slow-moving, fingering, insatiable throng of sight-seers. In the corner under the stairs the White Ribboners are laying out pamphlets and basketwork for sale. And as one mounts, one sees through an aperture in the partition, rows of speckless carriages, sleighs, furniture, and catches the initial strains of the piano man's waltz, destined, later, to become but the faintest monotone in the vast strophe of pulsating life.

Upstairs, the counters are buried beneath flowers of every design and hue; triumphs of culinary art; and intricate examples of what the eye, needle and a lamentable perseverance can accomplish in fragile, useless prettinesses. Two ladies, presumably judges, are vacillating between a pillar of asters in graduating shades, and an anchor design of beautifully-arranged mixed flowers. I feign interest in a gaudy bedspread, that I may hear their cogitations.

"Are you SURE?" inquires one, uncertainly. "Why, yes, as sure as I can be," responds the other. "I drove through his grounds only last week—on purpose, you know—and saw purple asters just like those."

The first lady sighed. "It is a pity," she said, "THIS is so pretty, and THAT so coarse. But I suppose it would never do not to give HIS the prize?"

Her companion shook her head emphatically. "Never!" she supplemented, succinctly, "he would be raging."

Then they pinned the first prize on the asters. But later in the afternoon I saw the closing scene of this little drama. An impulse to see once more the line of reconnoitering femininity—heads aslant, fingers fumbling, tongues criticising—impelled me to go upstairs again. A voice speaking alone by the flower stand

drew me that way, and I recognized one who is great in the land.

"Ladies," he was saying, his voice distant with displeasure, "Ladies, you have er-r-ed in judgment." And he proceeded to give a dissertation on the relative merits of the two designs, detrimental to the asters, brazenly flaunting the honor prize, while the judges, standing crestfallen by, could only assent, miserably conscious the while that they had not only defied their own good taste, but offended the one of all others they were designing to please.

Squatted here and there behind their buggies, in social proximity with the unharnessed horse, grazing near, are family groups munching their midday meal. Sallying forth to do likewise, one passes children dragging at the hand of some uncompromising elder, who is engaged in renewing acquaintance with an erstwhile school friend.

"What is that, child? Punch and Judy? Well, by and bye, when—"

Something in the child's face awakes an echo from other years. Now, if "things" go awry, or hopes are slow in materializing, reason opens her stores of consolation. But what hope for a missed Punch and Judy? The gods themselves can do naught. Three hundred and sixty-five days of aching void, and then—another. A few steps farther on a little girl is opening her first-prize packet, breathless with anticipatory thrills that it may be a brass—a thousand pardons! gold, of course—watch. "It" turns out to be a toy snake, which wriggles uncannily. If she had only chosen the garnet packet she took up first—perhaps—who knows?

More interesting, perhaps, than the heated tents, where for "only one dime" the beholder may witness the high dive, or see the fat woman immeshed with snakes, the wild man devouring raw meat, the child marvel sporting two heads, and like unholy sights—is that spot so popular to half-grown youth, where two rival concerns for selling cigars, a row of dolls on a wire before a sheet, and ninepins ranged upon a table, are never without their votaries.

"Aw, jest watch him, now! Watch him! Watch him! admiringly shouts the tall, black, foreign-looking proprietor of the latter, whose smile is someway even more repellent than his frown, as a newcomer nervously fingers the ball, and makes several false starts.

"Pret-t-ty clo-o-o-se," comes from the fair, youngish, silly-looking stripling presiding over the dolls, who has a flattering way of laughing up from under his eyes. "Pret-t-ty clo-o-o-se," and something in the subtly suggestive inflection that failure next time was one of the things that simply could not be, incited many an indifferent shot to a second and even third attempt. It is as good as a play, as the phrase is, to watch the different competitors. There is the well-to-do young man, who first sees the affair when opposite, and turns aside with an "if there aren't those bally dolls! I used to make them topple every time when I was a kid. Wonder if—believe I'll try." He is always leisurely and self-assured, and calls patronizingly to him of the inky moustache to "look out, my man," and to "look lively, there"—and the balls usually "toppled." Then there is the undersized boy, with the round straw hat and Sunday suit, one never sees anywhere else, who approaches step by step, as if drawn by some potent mesmerism. He hangs round, watching worshipfully, while various loungers turn many balls, till that inevitable moment arrives when

the temptation proves too strong. And it is his turn to stand there in all his pitiful, nervous bravado, the cynosure of all eyes he probably believes, a moment later to slink away and lose himself in the crowd, which has not witnessed his shameful failure.

But the prime good accruing from the fair is not that it affords foreigners the means of turning an honest penny, and children an easily-attained Mecca; not that it gives racers an occasion to show their mettle, and men of speculative propensities the opportunity to profit or lose, according to their acumen in judging of horseflesh; nor even that through the exhibit of produce farmers are enabled to drive many a hard bargain. The crowning good consists in the stimulus and practical benefit of the farming profession meeting and comparing notes; in sustaining interest in and propagating the advance of industrial and agricultural pursuits; and the inevitable broadening of the people's horizon, through social intercourse with those in other walks of life. Apart from the break it makes in the tedium of routine, it is of inestimable value to Brown, who is "going into" sheep, to learn that his mode of feeding the ewes is in default, and responsible for the loss of as smart a pair of twins as ever rose upon stilt-like legs, and bumped saucy, waggish black heads together. Nor are these exchanges of hard-earned experiences limited to farmers alone. The people's representative at Quebec and at Ottawa seizes this opportunity for meeting so many of his constituents en masse. Any new discovery or improvement at the Experimental Farm is recounted, and questions of national import broached, while his hearers reciprocate by giving their reasons for discontent, should it exist, at the way they are being governed, and how, in their opinion, wrongs could be righted. The game of politics, indeed, accounts for the presence of many whose interest in agriculture or horticulture is superficial. A ministerial figure moving here and there among the crowd, the occupants of two motors in earnest consultation—so have laws been altered, to these have candidates owed their nomination.

Then, there is another aspect from which to view the fair. Not everyone who comes is actively interested in the intrinsic value of what they see. A fair is sure to be amusing—or the spin over the hills, beginning to flush and glow in the autumnal light, and down between orchards, harvest and pumpkin fields, is poetry of motion through poetry of scene. But somehow—somewhere—they catch the contagion, these transients from city thoroughfares. They were not conscious of any yearning toward nature and the simple life when they entered. They are not sure when they first felt with Charles Dudley Warner that "to own a bit of ground, to scratch it with a hoe, to plant seeds, and watch their renewal of life,—this is . . . the most satisfactory thing a man can do." But some latent chord has been stirred, and the learned scion of a long line of lawyers the following spring irrefutably proves he is of the lineage of Adam, by being mightily concerned about the crops on his new fifty-acre farm, whither he transports his family, in lieu of Europe.

Thus the influence emanating from the County Fair is deep and wide-spreading in its results, affecting, in short, the welfare of the whole country. A sort of thermometer it is, too, of that country's progress, improving as it improves, on the threshold, perhaps, of its greatest era.

HELEN E. WILLIAMS.

Brome Co., Que.

A Good Exhibition at Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Bright sunny days, tempered by a western breeze, an occasional shower to settle the dust, made ideal weather for the successful holding of an exhibition.

While Quebec Province boasts of many splendid county and district fairs, yet its one large exhibition, held under the auspices of the Eastern Townships Agricultural Association, is held annually in the thriving City of Sherbrooke. It, therefore, becomes the Mecca to which our farmers and their friends from all over the Province, and the neighboring States of Vermont and New Hampshire, resort, and where may be seen high-class live stock of the various kinds and breeds; products of the farm, orchard and factory, as well as the product of the skill and industry of the women folk, the home-makers of our Province.

Last year being a Dominion Exhibition, we did not expect to see as large a display again this fall, but we were pleased to learn the entries in most classes were more numerous than in previous years.

Under the management of Mr. J. Cochrane, and his efficient lieutenant, Secretary Tomlinson, and their staff of workers, the fair passed off successfully, and financially ahead of former years.

The main building contained many fine exhibits of the factories of our land, also that of the 4,000 Central Railway, with chrome, asbestos, copper ores, samples of wood—representing the mine and forest wealth of Quebec. The C.P.R. and G.T.R. had also attractive exhibits.

The fruit exhibit was up to former years, and, considering the dry season, apples and pears were of good size and well colored.

We have seen a better display of vegetables here. The potato exhibit, despite the failure of this crop in the Townships, far surpassed our expectations; the tubers were not large, but of exceptional quality. The corn exhibit of P. P. Fowler, Dalling, Que., would be hard to excel.

We noticed some fine samples of grains and grass seed. The white and red Fife wheat exhibited by W. L. Davidson, Davidson Hill, Que., were beautiful samples, as was also his oats and barley.

The machinery hall was well utilized, with gasoline engines of various makes, maple-sugar-making evaporators, grain grinders, etc.

The exhibits of flowers, fancywork, etc., in the women's building was always appreciated, and here could be seen some beautiful work from the deft fingers of our ladies.

In the dairy building there was a fine exhibit of butter and cheese, accounted for largely by the liberal prizes (\$500) offered for dairy products by the Eastern Townships bank. It could be readily seen that the Eastern Townships were capable of producing a superior quality of butter. S. S. Carr, Richmond, won first on best three white cheese, not less than 60 lbs., and A. Thibodeau, Ascot, won on colored. The prize for best three boxes of butter, not less than 56 lbs., was won by S. M. McKay, Lennoxville; while the prize for print butter went to H. W. Edwards, N. Coaticook.

The various makes of cream separators were on exhibition, with the addition of a new firm, Barmeister & Wain, of Copenhagen, Denmark, who have lately opened an office in Montreal. Their cream separator is built on the same principle as the De Laval, only has a self-balancing bowl. Their centrifugal churn was a novelty; it brings butter by the rotatory motion instead of by agitation. Their display of sanitary milk pails (with strainer attached), milk and cream shipping cans of various styles, all made from one piece steel and seamless, will be much appreciated by our dairymen.

The exhibit of live stock was not only larger but of better quality than in former years. Cattle, on the whole, were not in quite as good flesh, owing to the short pasturage caused by the drouth.

HORSES.

CLYDESDALES predominated among the horses, and were a strong class. The awards were made by W. Gibson, Beaconsfield, Que. In the aged class of stallions, first went to Gus. A. Langelier's Royal Edward (imported by R. Ness), an animal of fine quality, with good legs and feet, and grand action. He also won the diploma and the gold medal offered by the Scottish Society. Second went to Sweet Everard, owned by Stonycroft Farm, St. Anne de Bellevue, a horse of great substance and breeding. In three-year-olds, R. Brownlee, Hemmingford, won the red with an imported colt, Harrier, with grand bone, quality and style. T. B. McAuly, of Hudson Heights, got first in two-year-olds with an imported colt of merit. Messrs. Nussy Bros., of Allan's Corners, Que., secured first in the yearling class with a good quality colt, by Baron Silloth. On three-year-old fillies, Gus. A. Langelier headed the string with Stadacona Queen, a breedy mare, and had also second with a two-year-old filly, Stadacona Flora; also first on yearling filly, Stadacona Molly. Langelier won first on pair of mares, with Royal Kate and Stadacona Rose. The Messrs. Nussy won first in the two-year-old class with a grand quality filly; on brood mare and foal of 1908, a get of The Rejected. Other exhibitors were C. Lyster, M. Fleming, W. Collins and J. McLeary.

The draft horses were well represented, the classes being nearly all filled, and among them were a lot of fine pieces of horseflesh.

Percherons, Normans and Belgians were more numerous than on former occasions. They were shown by P. Mosse, G. Nuthbrown, B. Beaulieu, T. Cook, Isaleigh Grange Farm, A. Hodge, H. Cleveland, and J. Cillis.

CANADIAN HORSES.—This popular breed was not out in large numbers, most of the breeders awaiting the great show of Canadian horses at St. John's next week. Many of the best were, therefore, not exhibited;