

The Future of Canadian Agriculture.

Our readers cannot peruse the elaborate and painstaking report of Prof. Fream, which we publish in another column, without coming to the conclusion that the days of our old system of farming are numbered. The rapid increase of wheat imports into Great Britain from Australasia and India must ultimately, if not in the near future, shut Canada, excepting Manitoba and our Northwest, from the British wheat markets. Indeed, it is questionable if we can export any more wheat at a profit, except in case of a disastrous war in Europe, or a failure of the wheat crop in a majority of these countries; and yet it is a deplorable fact that many of our farmers, purely out of habit, will continue wheat-growing after it ceases to be a profitable business, and after it has been fully demonstrated that other branches of farming are in a flourishing condition. The wheat-producing capabilities of Australasia, India and our Northwest are almost illimitable, and it is therefore quite likely that the quantity imported into Britain will increase as rapidly in the future as in the past.

It is instructive to inquire into the causes of this disaster—if disaster it may be called. Our mind first reverts to the American policy of exclusion. The high tariffs, ostensibly for the protection of agriculture and other industries, have created an industrial war which drove Britain into other wheat fields amongst a more sympathetic and congenial people, and Canada was forced to participate in the consequences. Thus we see that our agriculture and our commerce are built upon the shallow head of the American politician, whose petty freaks are our agricultural and commercial barometer. The same policy of exclusion has been faithfully imitated by our own Government, so that the head of our politician forms one of the cornerstones of our agricultural structure—that, too, under the most corrupt system of Government by party.

With our illimitable phosphate resources, we might have successfully continued wheat-growing for an unlimited period of time, and controlled the British markets. The skill and labor required would be less than those in the industries that are to supplant the growing of this article of universal consumption. The blow is too sudden; we are compelled to open up new agricultural industries while we are quarreling about agricultural education, and the best methods of drilling our farmers into an appreciation of their altered conditions. It is true that, under natural conditions, the best wheat-growing countries in the world would have been ultimately discovered; but in this case our farmers would be educated gradually into a realization of their agricultural and commercial position; but if they unite and become resolved to cope with their present situation, the changes may be regarded more as a blessing than as a disaster.

In this issue we present the situation in such a manner that it may be taken in at a glance. What we can do in horse-raising is pertinently set forth in the article by Col. Ravenhill and the illustrations connected therewith. Our dairying situation is put into a nut-shell by the pen of Mr. J. W. Robertson. Mr. Robertson is professor of dairying at our Model Farm, and we are pleased to learn that this institution

has at last produced something worthy of publication in the ADVOCATE. We have not seen the Professor's reports, but, so far as we can judge, we believe the Government has made a good appointment. Prof. Saunders has fully demonstrated what he can do in the exportation of fruits, and this bids fair to become one of our leading industries. The future success of our beef-growing industry is yet to be demonstrated, if we wish to persist in it on a comprehensive scale. Much depends upon the progress made in the refrigerator process in shipping fresh meat. Recent reports from Europe furnish us with the details of a new process of preserving meat to be shipped long distances, which process, if the reports are true, will bring us into competition with Australasian meat in the British markets.

The Moral of Exhibitions.

Now that the leading exhibitions are over, it would be well to reflect on what they have accomplished. We have only to deal with their agricultural aspect, and to observe their moral and industrial tendencies, as well as their financial successes.

The financial success of an exhibition is frequently the main source of its failure. In no case do the prizes bear any relation to the objects which deserve encouragement; on the contrary, things which should be entirely suppressed often receive the highest prizes; such things, in their turn, draw the largest crowd, and the financial success of the show thus becomes assured. If these remarks only applied to the hippodrome department, the condition of affairs would not be so deplorable, and there would be hope for the future. A condition equally appalling has crept into our agricultural departments. The stockman, knowing that obesity and monstrosity are the secret of success in the show ring, prefers to ruin his scrubs by high stuffing than to bring his high-toned stock into the competition. In the dairy department, a laudable attempt was made to base the awards on the merits of the cows, but this standard threatened the trade of the manipulators so seriously, as well as the financial success of the show, that the plan had to be completely abandoned, or developed into a gigantic farce. In the agricultural and horticultural displays, the selection of the varieties is often the whims and fancies of one man, so that little can be learned from the choices made.

The show managers are beginning to feel the weight of the opposition to their schemes, and, in heartfelt sympathy with the demand, are showing indications of their desire for reforms. They seek to impress upon the minds of the public that a change in the system of judging would remove all the ills that the fair is heir to. They propound the one-judge system as a remedy for the incapacity and tyranny of the Czarish trio—in the hope that the discussion of this question will divert the public mind from the glaring iniquities of the real issue, and thus build confidence in their righteousness and sincerity. We accept their logic—that one head is wiser than three—providing they carry the principle to its logical conclusions, viz., that no head is better than one. Indeed, this is sound doctrine; for it is better to annihilate the whole business than to waste time in discussing such childish philosophy. Any

decision is useless—and worse than useless, for it also misleads—which fails to approximate the real, practical, money making value of the animal judged, the awarding of prizes, based upon fancy points which fill the eye and empty the pocket being a relic of barbarism in a practical age. No attempt has been made to compare the judges' decisions with the intrinsic merits of the prize animals. If pedigree is to be the supreme court of appeal, why not send the pedigrees into the ring, and leave the animals at home? The truth is that a judge's decision is just as false as the pedigree, and the standard of the one is as hurtful to our breeding interests as that of the other. If pedigree were to be made the standard, is there a judge on earth who could correctly decide what herdsbooks possessed the highest merit? Seeing that our existing judges cannot agree, ignorance and petty prejudices awaying their minds to such an appalling extent, it has been proposed to establish a standard of points. Who will guarantee that a scrutiny of these points will approximate the true standard—that of individual merit? For example, our Model Farm professors contend that a mature steer should be a year old or thereabout, that each end should fit into a rectilinear figure vulgarly known as a square, and that each side should exemplify a rectangular parallelogram. All this may be very satisfying to the consciences of those who receive public funds in consideration for talking; but who will maintain that these vagaries have anything to do with the truth? Besides, it has yet to be proved that straight lines are more beautiful than curves, and add flavor or profit to the carcass or to the dairy products. The abolition of two of the three judges would be a hop, step and jump in the right direction, but we will never be on the straight road to perfection until the other judge be also dismissed, and until we make a fresh start, basing our standards on intrinsic merits alone, and educating a class of judges who, by casting their eye and placing their finger upon an animal, can approximate the amount of profit to be obtained, and give substantial reasons for their decrees.

The Western Fair recently held in this city must have opened the eyes of the public to the enormity of our show imperfections. The prizes in the live-stock were insignificant, the result being that the display was very meagre, while the exhibit in agricultural implements surpassed any we have ever seen in the Province. Why was this thus? Farmers require good stock as well as good implements, and why should the former require encouragement in the form of prizes, the latter being utterly disregarded in this respect? Are our farmers blind to their live-stock interests? Do they not meet the class of animals they desire for profit, as they do in the class of implements? or do our stockmen not understand how to push their business as the manufacturers of implements do? The fact of the matter is that our farmers have lost confidence in our live-stock manipulators, who have pushed their business for more than it is worth, and have gone beyond the paying basis. As soon as the time arrives when our stockmen can exhibit on a business basis, regardless of prize inducements, their industry will begin to flourish, and success will be positively assured; but before that time arrives confidence must be established in