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The Rural Canadian.

EDITED BY W. F. CLARKE.

TORONTO, OCTOBER 2ND, 1882.

SKETCHES OF CANADIAN WILD BIRDS.

Mr. Kells desires us to intimate that he will have to suspend his interesting sketches for an issue or two. He will be absent for a short time, on a visit to some brother ornithologists, whose collections he is anxious to study; and as the classes of birds he wishes especially to investigate come next in order to be sketched, he prefers to delay for a little, so as to obtain the freshest and fullest particulars. We hope that the youthful readers of the RURAL CANADIAN, and all of them for that matter, will study these articles on our feathered friends, so as to become more interested in them, and more familiar with them.

TORONTO INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION.

"Canada's Great Fair," as the Toronto dailies delight to call it, has once more passed into history. Owing to absence on a tour in the North-West we did not see it, which we much regret; still, having seen its predecessors, we can form a pretty good idea of it from the details so fully published in the metropolitan journals. Financially, it was all that could be desired. The gross receipts were nearly \$29,000, an increase of about \$6,000 over those of last year. It must be owned that the chief attractions to the crowds that attended consisted of features distinct from and foreign to the essential belongings of an industrial fair. "Speeding in the horse ring," donkey races, a mock bombardment, and various other side-shows provided by the directorate, had the most to do in drawing the multitudes who, day after day, thronged the Exhibition grounds. It is pleaded in defence of these extraneous attractions, that mankind must be amused as well as instructed; that, on such occasions, people turn out for a holiday; and that many who would not go to a purely agricultural and industrial exhibition will be tempted from home, and led to visit a scene which is at once a play-ground and a school; carrying away with them the recollection of not a few valuable lessons, along with a sense of enjoyment. We are not inclined to be cynical in regard to these things, and yet are forced to confess to a doubt whether the good really overbalances the evil in the present instance. This doubt especially attaches to the horse-racing feature, perhaps the most prominent one in the recent fair. Horse-racing it was, though disguised by the soft name of "speeding in the ring." In view of the bad moral influence which always connects itself more or less with horse-racing, and with the experience of our neighbours across the lines, who have thoroughly tested the effects of the "agricultural boss-trot" in connection with their State Fairs, we fear the Toronto Directorate have not acted wisely in this matter. That their intentions have been good; that they have honestly wished to make their exhibition, on the whole, beneficial to the public, rather than otherwise, we do not question for a moment; but

the hard facts of observation and experience justify hesitancy in affixing the seal of approval to their policy.

Apart from its questionable points, the Exhibition was evidently an excellent one, well fitted to illustrate the resources and products of Ontario, and to rouse a spirit of emulation among our farmers and manufacturers. The turn-out of stock appears to have been unusually large, and of choice quality. We are pleased to note that two highly deserving breeds of cattle were, for the first time, displayed to our people in respectable force. We refer to the Polled Angus and Jerseys. The capabilities of this country in the way of supplying the British market with fat cattle and sheep were never more clearly demonstrated. Our agricultural implement makers have done themselves honour by showing how fully they are able to meet the growing wants of the farming community in the line of improved implements and machines. It was a wise thing to show the public the process of cheese and butter manufacture in actual operation. The honey display was more varied and excellent than last year, which is saying much, not only in view of last year's performance in this direction, but also in view of the fact that this has been an exceptionally bad season for bees. It was expected that the exhibition of fruit would be meagre, for Ontario has rarely known a year so unfriendly to the products of the orchard; nevertheless, this department exceeded the most sanguine anticipations, and the natural reflection was, if these are samples of what our fruit-growers can do in a bad year, this province must indeed be one of the best fruit countries in the world. Garden products, both vegetable and floral, were in profuse display, and could hardly fail to induce a taste for horticulture. The electric light was a novel and pleasing feature, illustrating one of the most interesting and important improvements of the age we live in. We are glad to observe that a more general satisfaction with the judging is mentioned by the papers as one of the characteristics of the recent fair. This is indicative of greater judicial competence, a thing much to be desired in connection with all our shows. On the whole, Toronto and the province at large may be congratulated on the successful outcome of "Canada's Great Fair" for the year 1882.

EXTORTIONATE FREIGHT RATES TO THE NORTH-WEST.

No just-minded person will grudge his neighbour a fair profit on his labour, capital, or skill, in whatever department of business these may be employed. We are benefited in so many ways by railroads, that the public is disposed to be specially generous toward the enterprising men who build and run them. Still, there is a limit to the generosity of the people in this direction, and it is quite possible for the eagerness of monied men to carry them the length of extortion. That this has been the case with the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad will be questioned by few. So high are the freight charges levied by this road, that it is no wonder manufacturers and settlers are laying their grievances bare to the eye of honest criticism. Mr. F. W. Glen, of Oshawa, one of our most prominent implement-makers, has recently published some startling facts and figures in regard to the road just mentioned. He shows that the charge for carrying reapers is \$6.50 each over and above a fair rate; that on threshing machines, \$66.25 above an average rate; while the tariff on smaller implements, such as ploughs, harrows, grain drills, horse hay rakes, waggons, etc., is in the same proportion.

Another manufacturer testifies that out of a

charge of \$812 per car-load from Toronto to Brandon, the Grand Trunk and Chicago and North Western roads get only \$56, while the St. P., M., and M., and the C. P. R. get \$256, nearly five times the amount, for conveying less than half the distance! It is no wonder that at the recent annual meeting of the St. P., M., and M., the surplus net revenue for the fiscal year was reported to be \$985,000; that the dividends were so large it was proposed to announce them quarterly; and that, as in the case of other concerns paying high profits, the propriety of watering the stock is under grave consideration.

It is proverbial that corporations have neither consciences nor souls, and this is emphatically true of railroad corporations. Their natures are hard and tough as the steel rails on which their cars run at such money-making rates. What is the much-abused and long-suffering public to do? Competition has been tried and proved a failure. In railroad, as in other business concerns, the big fish gobble up the little ones, and sometimes, as in the case of the G. W. R., one large fish is gulped down by another yet larger. The people of the North American continent are minus hundreds of millions of dollars contributed by them to check monopoly by competition. Soulless corporations have become fatter and richer in consequence of the very means employed to keep them within moderate dimensions. When there is no other course practicable, rival roads pool their earnings, and so become, practically, a monopoly. The result of all this is, that farmers groan and struggle against a taxation so exorbitant, that were it levied by Government for any purpose under heaven, it would excite rebellion. It was recently stated that there are four men in the city of New York who, by a single stroke of the pen, could impose a tax on the people of the United States which Congress dare not levy. A rise of five cents per bushel on the freightage of wheat from Chicago to New York would amount on this year's estimated crop to from \$80,000,000 to \$100,000,000.

There is but one remedy for this gigantic evil, and that is, restrictive railway legislation. To apply it, the people must be enlightened as to the facts, and stirred up to demand their rights. We talk of liberty, and fancy we are a free people. The fact is, that the freest nations on earth are under the tyranny of great monied corporations, that can only be reached by the strong arm of law. When any attempt is made to reach them thus, bribery is used to paralyse the only arm that can interpose for the protection of the public. Perception of the evil, vigilance over legislators, union and determination among the people, will secure the reform of this abuse, as they have done the reform of others. Farmers, particularly, should open their eyes to the evil that is so rife. Extortionate railroading is a tax on every acre of land in the country. The soil is the ultimate paymaster, and every dollar of ill-gotten gain is coined out of the sweat of the man who tills the soil.

"For every evil under the sun
There is a remedy, or there's none.
If there be one, let us find it;
If there be none, never mind it."

There is no way in which the Vanderbilts, Goulds, and other railway magnates can honestly roll up their millions at the rate they are doing it. The days of highway robbery are said to be past. So they are, in the Dick Turpin style of performance. But the devil is a gentleman in these days of intelligence and refinement. He does not bestride a fleet horse, arm himself with a brace of pistols, and say, "Your money or your life." No, he sits in a luxurious office, picks up a gold pen, and quietly writes, "Freight tariff from A. to B., \$— per cwt." Our sleek railway directors are the modern highwaymen, and can