

Jottings Round the Exhibition.

BY F. GREEN, JR.

It is at exhibition times that any error or mismanagement at shows is apparent. These sometimes bear hard on the directors, and sometimes cause considerable trouble and even injustice to the exhibitor. In the former instance, these little frictions are usually removed before the next exhibition; but, in the latter case, they are often passed over, and the exhibitor, thankful for having passed through the furnace of his tribulations, either hopes that the trouble will be obviated before the next show, or else, perhaps, resolves in silence to stay at home for the future. This should not be so, for the boards of management cannot be expected to be omniscient, and any complaints or alterations that may be desired should be openly brought to their notice. Three things are required to make a successful show: Good buildings, good management, and good crowds. Good buildings, especially stables, are perhaps the most important, and, compared with many of the shows in the States, Canada is sadly behind hand, with the exception of the new horse stables recently erected at Toronto. The horse stabling at all our fairs are mere wooden shanties of no merit whatever, except that they form good places to conceal horses in. Even the new horse stables at Toronto are lacking in certain points; no place is provided for storing feed, and the sleeping places for the attendants are too small; while one side is totally unprotected, and an uneasy dreamer, if he turned over in his sleep, would, in all probability, make a sudden descent and find himself astride of his steed below. Want of flooring is another bad feature, both in cattle and pig pens, especially in the case of white and light colored animals, and is a constant source of annoyance to their owners and attendants. To pigs, indeed, the earthen floor presents an irresistible attraction, and they seem seized with an unconquerable desire to dig their way down to the antipodes. One exhibitor of colored pigs has been known to go to the expense of having his pens floored at his own cost, a fact which reflects somewhat on the liberty of the exhibition. Both at the Provincial and the Industrial, the entries in the calf classes were, as usual, very large. It has always seemed to me that the award of three prizes, and they of very small amount in a class where there is so much competition, is hardly acting liberally to the exhibitors. Often there may be several calves with very little difference in merit between them, and yet only three out of these can obtain a prize. In these sections, and others, where entries are invariably numerous, there should be additional prizes awarded; or, if the funds of the exhibitor will not admit of it, a high commendation, and a commended card might be given. These would not only be valued by the owner, but would also be of assistance to purchasers, many of whom (in the event of the three prize animals not being for sale, or being perhaps too high in price) would be glad to have the opinion of the judges as to the next best animals. Perhaps one of the most trying things to exhibitors, who have more than one breed of stock at the show, is that the judging of all breeds commence on the same day. This entails an unnecessary number of extra hands at considerable expense; while the want of a proper programme strictly adhered to condemns the owner and attendants to a state of perpetual *qui vive*, lest they should miss the call

into the ring. In most, if not all, shows in Canada the duty of calling out the exhibit is performed by an official, who passes hap-hazard by each shed, shouting out the class required, the onus of being on hand lying upon the owner or attendant. In this respect, the management of the recent horse show at Chicago contrasts favorably with the best of our shows. There was no chance there of not having the call; a map of the stalls numbered, and an index to the exhibitors was kept, and attendants were sent round to each stall, who were instructed to see the person in charge. There is one rule which should be strictly enforced at shows, *no one* should be allowed in the judging rings except the judges, the necessary official with the books, and the representatives of the press. The non observance of this rule, even if no wire pulling is going on, looks bad, and is liable to raise the suspicion that some underhand work is going on.

As to the number of judges, there is much difference of opinion. I have always been in favor of a single, *honest, competent judge*; whether he comes from far or near it matters little, provided he possesses the above requirements. Among the many arguments in favor of the one judge system, may be mentioned that it is less expensive, and easier to get a single judge than three; it would have a tendency to prevent incompetent men accepting the office, and it would encourage upright decisions, as one would know on whose shoulders to lay the blame if any unfair awards were made. Two judges and an umpire I consider the worst system of all, and the defects of it has been apparent in many a show ring. Apart from the task of uniformity in the awards, which is often seen where this system is adopted, the decisions often have a delightful uncertainty about them. For example: In Shorthorns there are three strains—Bates, Booth and Scotch—and a judge is usually selected to represent each strain. In the first class perhaps the Bates judge is appointed umpire, the Booth and the Scotch judges will then each, perhaps, select a different animal, which is probably one of their respective favorite strains. The Bates representative is then called in to decide between those two animals, and those only, although there may be another in the ring which he considers superior to either. In the next class, perhaps the Booth judge is arbitrator, and a similar condition may arise, and so on to the end of the chapter. Variety is charming, and certainly such a system is productive of it; but it can hardly be contended that an unposted looker-on is to be educated by the selection, in each class perhaps, of a different type of animal. In conclusion, a word on the straw question, an article which usually becomes beautifully less towards the close of an exhibition. This is a parsimony which is extremely annoying to exhibitors, who intend proceeding to the next show, and are anxious to keep their exhibits clean. If a certain amount of baled straw (for when baled it is much more easily handled and stored) were allowed to each exhibitor, a great cause of complaint would be removed, and the unseemly struggle for straw, which is so often seen in the fair grounds, would be relegated to the past and become an unlamented relic of by-gone days.

The American Southdown Association are considering the expediency of offering special prizes for Southdowns at a number of the leading shows of 1890, including Detroit and Buffalo. It is proposed that these prizes be in medals and cups. There is also a move being made at the present time in England to establish a public record for Southdown sheep, a thing that is much needed.

Our Maritime Letter.

Your readers by the sea are on the *qui vive* to know the ADVOCATE'S views as to the results likely to follow the meeting of our Dominion Dairymen and Fruit Growers at Ottawa. Since the advent of Chicago beef in our markets, and its demoralizing effects on that industry with us, the two interests represented at Ottawa are by far the most important of any we possess, and are therefore awaiting developments with a keenness of interest that is significant of the importance those branches of farming hold in the community. There can be no question but that the Dominion Government are actuated by an earnest desire to aid these industries, and place them on a sure and solid basis. It remains to be seen whether the deliberation of these organizations will result in the good anticipated. From the preponderance of papers read and addresses delivered before the conventions by learned professors, it is evident that we shall not suffer from the want of professional guidance in working out the future of these industries. The fact, however, that there is a large place for the practical dairymen and fruit-grower to fill at these meetings must not be lost sight of. Farmers, as a rule, are intensely practical, and it is a fact that the address of a thoroughly practical and successful farmer carries much more weight with it than is generally supposed. One thing is quite apparent, viz.: That the important purpose for which these conventions have been called into existence will be thwarted if by any possible means an attempt were made to run them into a political *groove*. The feeling is universally entertained that this is not contemplated by the promoters, and possibly with the ADVOCATE on the watch-tower it may never be attempted.

Many of our farmers are just now trying to solve the problem what to do with their surplus hay. Since the beef industry received such a severe check, there has been a great tendency to sell the hay, particularly among those farmers who possess dyke marshes. These marshes have been producing hay for a hundred years or more without any apparent diminution in the yield per acre. For the past two years this system has worked very satisfactorily, on account of short crops of hay in many sections, and the damage done by fall freshets on our rivers and streams. But, with the full average yield this year and the shortage in cattle, the hay trade is demoralized, and the farmers are face to face with the fact that too many eggs are in one basket. The conviction is being brought forcibly home that a return to first principles is the only solution to the situation. The out-look for dairy products is cheering, so far as a ready sale of first-class products is considered. The recent establishment of the West India steamship service from St. John and Yarmouth to the several ports in the West Indies, has opened new markets to our people; while the direct communication with the markets of Britain, without burdensome railway freights, makes our position a most desirable one.

To secure these markets, and hold them, it is absolutely essential that the quality of our goods should be A 1, and the packages in which they are shipped should be strong and neat, and in size suitable to the requirements of the markets on which the goods are placed. The pertinent question is, Will our dairymen make an effort to do this? *Nay, more*, will they succeed in doing this? thereby putting money in their own pockets and adding largely to the general exports of Canada.