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Some Thoughts on the Fair

The Industrial Exposition, as the reports elsewhere show, has again demonstrated that it has no rival as the greatest all-round agricultural fair on this continent. While this is the case, no one, not even those directly concerned with its management, will for a moment assume that it has reached perfection. There are many features which should and must be improved upon if the Toronto Fair is to hold its own and take the place which its many friends expect it to take. The one thing above all others that is preventing advancement at the present time is the lack of suitable buildings and accommodation for exhibits. Ten years ago the buildings on the grounds were quite adequate to the requirements at that time. But this country has grown rapidly in these years and its agricultural resources have greatly developed. This advancement has brought with it more producers of fine stock and farm products of all kinds and greatly increased the number of exhibitors, who require accommodation. While the Toronto Fair has kept pace with the progress in the country in many respects, it has not done so in so far as buildings and equipment are concerned.

We believe the management of the Industrial fully realize the need of larger and better accommodation and are willing to do all in their power to meet the wishes of exhibitors in this particular. But it requires capital, and a large amount at that, to equip a great show. Look for one moment at the large amounts expended on the Paris Exposition and at Buffalo at the present time in preparation for the Pan-American next year. All such enterprises are assisted from the public treasury to the tune of millions of dollars. While no such sums would be required to fully equip the Industrial, yet a considerable amount is needed and much more than can be secured from the excess of receipts over expenditures at any annual fair. This is the exact position of things so far as the Industrial is concerned, and if our governments cannot be induced to come forward handsomely in the way of a grant for building purposes the funds have got to come from some other source. The only other source from which they can come is the city of Toronto, and it is to be hoped that the good people of this fair city will deal generously with the by-law for money for Industrial Fair purposes when it is submitted as we understand it will be within the next few months. The Industrial needs the money and the whole Dominion would greatly appreciate the gift. Nothing that the city of Toronto could do would advertise the city abroad better than thoroughly equipping the Industrial Fair in the way of buildings and accommodation for exhibitors. The Fair

belongs to Toronto and the citizens have a responsibility in connection with it that must not be shirked when the time to act arrives.

Two features of the show this year indicate progress along educational lines. These are the butter-making competition and the live stock judging contest. Until last year, when the butter-making feature was introduced, no individual could secure a prize for his skill displayed in person at the Fair. This year we have the judging competition added and now have two features in which the individual has an opportunity to exhibit his skill in person and not through good stock or a high quality of product. These two innovations are directly along educational lines, and if we had more of them there would be no need of special attractions to draw crowds. With a properly-equipped building for the butter-making competition and a suitable arena for the judging contest, these would prove great drawing cards.

The methods of judging live stock and other agricultural exhibits are capable of being greatly improved upon. Why would it not be possible for the judges, in making awards, to give reasons why prizes go to certain animals and not to others? Something along this line is greatly needed in order to make the Fair of the greatest educational value. If a small grand stand were erected in the ring where the various animals are judged, and the judging done directly before it, so that visitors could see the methods and hear the reasons for certain decisions, there would be less grumbling about the awards, and the Fair throughout would have a much greater educational value than it has at the present time.

These are suggestions along lines upon which we think advancement could be made, and it is for those in charge to accept them or not as they see fit. The fall fair, as we understand it, is not run altogether for the money there is in it, and the aim should be, as far as possible, to make it of the greatest educational value to the country at large. True, it is looked upon by many as only an outing for those on pleasure bent, but it has another and much more important mission to fulfil in educating our own people on lines of progress and in showing visitors from abroad our resources and capabilities as a nation.

The report of the Industrial Fair in this issue will be found interesting reading. It contains fully 16 pages of solid reading matter of value to every farmer. Everything in the agricultural line is dealt with, except poultry, a report of which will appear next issue. This full report, appearing as it does immediately after the exhibition is over, shows the advantage of a weekly agricultural paper.