

The Colonial Exhibition—Farmers, Wake up! Some mention is made in last month's No. of the ADVOCATE respecting the Colonial Exhibition. A little information on this head through its columns would be of service to intending exhibitors. I see by a local paper that exhibits are to be in not later than April; this seems to me to be rather an awkward time, as it is too early for fruits. I was intending to send something, even if only a small lot, but in the absence of information it seems difficult, and these questions arise: Do they go free? Whom address to? And in the event of an exhibitor going over, would he have to pay full fare, or would he get any advantage in this respect on account of being an exhibitor? I find that farmers in this section keep very close. If they would hold more frequent intercourse with each other and exchange opinions on farming operations, such a course would promote a spirit of brotherhood and smooth down some of the rough points acquired by most of us by continued isolation. The ADVOCATE has suggested as a remedy for this state of things to establish farmers' clubs in each locality, and thus by interspersing intellectual pursuits and well chosen or enlivening conversation upon the grand topics of the day, with the more rugged duties of the farm, would do much towards elevating an occupation already (as I think) too much despised, and make the noble occupation of the farmer more honorable. It seems to be too generally admitted that farmers don't require to be educated men, but I believe we want more brain manure to enable us to attain more satisfactory results. I admit there are many uneducated farmers, but they labor under many disadvantages. The time is come when it is essential for the farmer to study up and perfect himself in his business: it is quite as necessary for him to do so as the professional man, if he is to succeed. The efforts of the commercial and mechanical parts of our population are invariably crowned with success, while with a few exceptions compared with the great mass, the efforts of our farmers but just enable them to live. Is this not for want of education in agricultural principles, and the directing of their energies to the object sought? The ADVOCATE has from time to time many articles upon the most important thing in farming—that is the manure heap. If we look round, how many farmers do we see worn out for want of fertilizers, some only producing eight bushels of wheat to the acre? Farmers must now wake up, and where only one blade of grass grows make two stand in its place, and this is only to be done by a judicious course of manuring. The continual cropping with grain, without a due regard to the recuperation of the exhausted soil, has been carried too far. A resort to fertilizing material is really necessary, and I find we want to know more of agricultural chemistry, if we are to be really successful farmers. We are told that carbon, oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen form the four chief elements of plant food. Out of these the farmer has to manufacture (as it were) the various forms of vegetable growth. The presence of these constituents in the soil, or the absence, has much to do in making a piece of ground fruitful or barren. I find the ADVOCATE of great assistance in my farming operations the study of which has been of great profit to me this year. I wish it all the prosperity it deserves.—W. H., St. Thomas.

[Mr. W. Saunders, of this city, President of the Ontario Fruit Growers' Association, has charge of the fruits from this Province which are to be shipped to the Colonial Exhibition. His duty is to accept all the best fruits he can procure, but, as the display is limited, he cannot undertake to transship all the fruits that are sent to him. He is now engaged in selecting the best specimens and preserving them with certain fluids in air-tight glass jars. The exhibits will be labelled with names of the varieties and of the exhibitors. This is the only way in which fruit exhibits can go free. The regulations do not provide for special privileges to exhibitors. Mr. Saunders intends to ship about the first of February, and all parties wishing to exhibit should send him their names without delay. For general information, write to A. W. Wright, Ontario agent of the Colonial Exhibition, 6 Wellington street west, Toronto, Ont. We sympathize with you in your anxiety to improve the condition of the farmer, and we hope you will compete for our prize essay on this subject.]

"How Should Farmers Spend their Evenings?"—If you will kindly allow me space, I would be glad to reply to the article signed "G. R." in your November issue. I am most happy to inform "G. R." that he is entirely mistaken in his supposition that I have never lived on a farm, and as he failed to discover the fact, I must deplore my inability to truthfully and naturally depict scenes in farm life. I am a farmer's daughter, was born and brought up on a farm, and am proud that I am a country girl. My father, like "G. R.," spent the best years of his life in "reclaiming the wilderness," having taken his farm in a state of primeval nature, consequently the duties which then fell upon barefooted, bare-headed, brown-handed, clad-in-home-spun country youngsters became mine, and with all due respect to "G. R.'s" thirty years' experience, I challenge him to a friendly contest when the potato planting season comes round, the test to be decided by the amount of work done, and the consequent effect on the litherness of our respective muscular organizations. A more congenial test, however, to me would be to allow the cows to get lost in the

back fields, and see who would be the slowest in finding them, but the readiest in making excuses as to why we—the cows and ourselves—were not home the sooner. It is because I am a farmer's daughter that I venture to suggest "How Farmers Should spend their Evenings." It is only because I have the most cordial sympathy with, and the highest appreciation of, the worth of country people, that I dared to comment on their lack of culture. It is because I would hasten the time when farmers can hold their own, socially and intellectually, with "men of letters, science and law," and this they never can do without attention to mental culture. He who ridicules the "hard, horny hands, awkward gait, and bent body" of a fellow-man, is merely a piece of senseless clay which, for convenience' sake, is called a man, but I think few young men of to-day are quite pardonable if they are totally regardless of mental and social culture. In the moral statistics of our country I have not the least doubt farmers bear off the palm. If "G. R." really thought, however, that the farm was not my native element, I do not blame him in the least for resenting certain unvarnished statements regarding our coming yeomen. "G. R.'s" contribution would seem to indicate that he views favorably that class of farmers alluded to in the second paragraph of "How Farmers Should Spend their Evenings," but we would read between the lines better things of him. I do not wish to be impertinent in my remarks, nor do I wish to impair the respect due to a gentleman who has been thirty years a farmer, but I do venture to say that it is not clear to me that he has proved the following statement erroneous: "It is admitted by all that, taking the annual average, farmers have more leisure than those in any other occupation." Observation proves that as a class, they have more leisure. Business men who are successful find literally no leisure in the evenings; anyone who has been "behind the scenes" in business men's offices can testify to this. Farmers possessing tolerably good farms, free from debt, enjoy a leisure, freedom and independence that doctors, lawyers, editors, merchants, mechanics, tradesmen, &c., never know.—JESSIE ROBERTSON.

[We admire Miss Robertson's pluck in challenging G. R. to a friendly contest; and we should also like to see a friendly prize essay competition, in order to ascertain which of the contending parties spent their evenings to the best advantage. We venture the opinion that if the farmers had half the culture and public spirit which Miss Robertson displays in her writings, their yokes would be easier, their happiness greater, and they would now be driving instead of being driven.]

"What Are our Shows Coming to?"—Now that the Fairs, from the Dominion to the Township, are over, it may be worth our while to take a glance backward and see what we have learned. That there have been great advancements made in many directions is a fact that forces itself on the attention of every one who has been attending the fairs for the past few years. The great improvement in stock of all kinds is something of which we may all be proud, although, perhaps, we are not all stockmen. In machinery the progress has been almost phenomenal. But there is one thing, Mr. Editor, that, it seems to me, is preventing our fairs from becoming, at least to a certain extent, the educators of our farmers that they should be, and that is professional showmen. By professional showmen I mean those who make it a business to go from fair to fair, and exhibit the same articles over and over. They have their stock fattened to such a degree that they are nearly or quite worthless for breeding purposes, but they expect, by attending a number of fairs, to make up in premiums what they lose in value as breeders. On the other hand, farmers who desire to use their stock for breeding will not show against them, knowing they will be beaten, unless they run the risk of ruining their stock by too high feed, which it would not pay them to do, without they take the rounds and become professionals, which they have neither time nor inclination to do. Is it not contrary to the meaning of the Agricultural Act, the spirit, if not the letter? There is a grant to the Provincial Societies, and provision made in certain cases for a union of two or more; but throwing a county or township fair open to the world is not, it seems to me, the intention of the Act. Another feature of it is, supposing a stranger attend say a county fair for the purpose of judging for himself what the capabilities of that county are, with a view, perhaps, of making it his home. He sees very fine exhibits, but upon enquiring from what part of the county they are from, he finds that they belong to some one perhaps a hundred miles away, who is taking in this particular fair in his professional round. Now, Mr. Editor, I am not an exhibitor, either professional or otherwise, but my attention has been drawn to this feature in our fairs by seeing the same exhibits at different places, until, in fact, they seem to become old friends. If my memory serves me correctly, one person remarked that he had taken between five and six hundred dollars, and was not through yet. Whether there is a remedy for it or not I do not know, but I certainly think there should be, and that it should be applied. SANDIE, Vittoria, Ont.

Controlling Sex of Offspring—Professor Turner, of the Institute of Agriculture, South Kensington, London, S. W., writes us saying that he would be pleased to receive from us or from any reader of the ADVOCATE a statement of any facts bearing upon "the conditions and circumstances which influence the sex of the offspring." There is to be a conference of the Institute of Agriculture in Lon-

don (England) in December, and any communicated facts will be welcomed and embodied in their report on the subject.

[Many of our readers have informed us that they have tried various receipts for influencing the sex of offspring, but nothing is spoken of as being satisfactory. Those of our readers who have any knowledge or experience in the matter would oblige us, as well as the distinguished Professor, by writing to him without delay.]

Leveling Implement.—In answer to W. E. L., of Dundas, who asks for an implement for leveling ground, I will give him a description of one which I use: Take three pieces of oak scantling 8x4, and five feet long; lay them on the ground five feet apart; then take two pieces 12 feet long, 2x6, and lay on the ends and pin or bolt them fast; then take a piece 2x10, 12 feet long and bolt across the centre of them, and your level is done; fasten the chain for drawing at the corners to the 2x6, and ride on the front end.—J. H. M., Beamsville, Ont.

How to Construct a Self-Cleaning Cistern.—In the October number of the ADVOCATE I notice an article on "The Value of Cisterns—How to Make a Cheap One." The concluding sentence reads as follows: "For household purposes the cistern should be cleaned out once a year, but when the water is used for stock there will be no danger in leaving it untouched for several years." A good plan in building a cistern is to run the overflow pipe from the centre of the bottom (all cisterns should be basin-shaped in the bottom), to the wall, up the wall and out at the top. By this means, every time cistern is filled with water, the waste pipe being in operation at the bottom, draws all sediment into it and thus automatically cleanses the cistern.—S. M., Hamilton, Ont.

Painting Roofs.—We prize the FARMER'S ADVOCATE above all other papers, and would not like to be without it. Enclosed please find \$2.00 and two new subscribers, and will send more if I can get them. I would like to hear something from you about the benefit of having the roofs of buildings painted; some claim that they do not last any longer by being painted. The railway building here is all painted except the roof.—T. A., Allenford, Ont.

[Painting will add very little to the durability of roofs unless a fresh coat is given every four or five years. On houses, where durability is required, slate is now extensively used. It does not usually cost more than double the price of shingle roofs.]

Prince Edward Island Heard From.—In your last issue I noticed some notes from Manitoba regarding agricultural matters in that country sent by a subscriber to your paper. Would you kindly insert the following brief notes regarding this part of the Dominion. We have been favoured with a splendid sea-on; the oldest inhabitants say they cannot remember a finer summer and autumn. There were no early frosts, and very few nights with frost up to date. The hay crop, which was above the average (some farmers having 3½ tons to the acre), was saved in splendid condition. There was also an abundant harvest this year in all parts of the island; one farmer claims having threshed 125 bushels clean wheat, from 6 bushels on ¾ acre of land, being a yield of nearly 21 bush. to one sown, or 3½ bush. to the acre, while many farmers have from 15 to 18 bush. to one sown. The yield of potatoes was excellent, while the yield of turnips has never been surpassed. One farmer has on exhibition a turnip weighing 27 lbs., and another farmer has one 24½ lbs., while many farmers have turnips from 18 to 20 lbs. in weight. The prices of all kinds of produce are exceedingly low. Oats are selling at 30c. per bushel; potatoes at 14c., and turnips at 13c. per bushel; beef and pork are selling at c. per pound; fresh butter sells at 22c. per pound. Farmers are nearly all done their ploughing and other fall work, and are preparing for the coming winter. Wishing your paper every success. I remain, W. C. North Wiltshire, P. E. I.

[We are thankful to the above correspondent for his interesting letter. We do not pay for contributions which appear in the CORRESPONDENCE department of our columns, but we have recently opened a special book in which we write the names and addresses of those who favor us with occasional letters, although we have not yet decided in what way they will be rewarded.]

Fish Culture.—I see a piece in the correspondent's column headed "Fish Culture," written by W. B. of Pittsburgh, Pa., U. S. A. Now what I would like to know is if there are any Gurnan carp in the Dominion, and if so, can I get some, and if not will you give me W. B.'s name so that I can communicate with him? And if I should get any of him, can I get them through the Custom House?—J. H. M., Beamsville, Ont.

[The name is W. Baird, who no doubt will give you all the information you require. Read letter from Commissioner of Fisheries, Washington under the heading of "Fish Culture." The tariff list makes no mention of a duty imposed on eggs or fry, but they would unquestionably come in free, as having no marketable value, or as a means of improving our stock. We see no reason why every farmer who has a pond should not send to Washington for a supply; it will cost nothing, and the experiment would be worth trying. Those who embark in the business would greatly oblige by sending us the result of their experience.]