

St. John Exhibition.

St. John was blessed with ideal weather for its exhibition. Clear, sunny days and bright moonlight nights resulted in the largest daily attendance in the history of the fair. The attendance on the whole was larger than at Halifax, and when we remember that no horse racing was conducted on the grounds of the exhibition, which so many fair boards seem to consider necessary to a large attendance, the success of the St. John Fair for 1904 furnished an excellent argument for those who have been contending for the agricultural fair pure and simple. The exhibits in most departments of the fair were quite equal to those at Halifax, and in some particulars better. This is especially true of the display in agricultural hall, which was far in advance of that exhibited by the farmers of the sister Province. This may be partly accounted for by the fact that fruit and vegetable crops had about ten days longer to mature, and ten days at this time of year means a great deal, especially to tree fruits and root crops.

The exhibits in the various live-stock departments were very similar to those at Halifax, if we except the contributions of a few exhibitors who were not out at Halifax. Many of the animals, however, had lost some of the bloom and finish which they showed at the former exhibition, and made it very clear that exhibitors of live stock should be liberally dealt with by exhibition committees, in order to compensate in some measure for the expense and risk incurred. The live stock was accommodated at Halifax in warm, comfortable quarters, and after a tedious railway journey of from 48 to 60 hours, were obliged to stand for a week at St. John in open sheds, exposed to the raw, cold sea winds, and the wonder is that they showed in the ring as well as they did. Fair boards should not forget that the actual cash expended is only a small part of what it costs a breeder to exhibit. The wear and tear on the animals and the risk of loss from accident and from exposure constitute a much more considerable expense than the mere cash outlay.

We would suggest that the St. John Fair be held annually hereafter, instead of biennially as at present. The board of management could then afford to put up suitable sheds for the accommodation of the live stock, and provide more suitable judging rings, etc. There is nothing to hinder St. John from holding a large and successful annual exhibition. There is ample material in the Provinces; we have the stock, and we have the men. There is nothing wanting, so far as we can judge, but the courage and the enterprise to undertake it.

One reform that we should like to suggest, is that the side-shows, vendors of cheap trinkets and fakers of various stripes should not be allowed to take up their positions in such a way that visitors to the fair cannot pass from one building to another without running the gauntlet between a double row of these public nuisances, hawking their wares and pushing their persistent and ugly faces in front of almost every spectator. These gentry should be assigned to some less conspicuous position in the backyard of the exhibition grounds. One's general impression of the beauty and tasty arrangement of the fair is sadly marred by the memory of the insistent and oftentimes impudent solicitations of the men with the cheap cigars.

HORSIES.

Here, as at Halifax, the light horse classes were much the strongest, both from the standpoint of numbers and of quality. Some very excellent animals were shown, particularly in the harness classes, and the judging of the various classes was watched with the keenest interest from the grand-stand. The idea of conducting a regular horse-show in connection with the exhibition, as was done both here and at Halifax, is, we think, a good one. We know of no cleaner or more attractive feature that can be held out to the general public as an inducement to attend the exhibition, than a well-conducted horse-show. Handsome horses, in their faultless harness and appointments, skillfully handled, and shown in singles, tandems, unicorns and four-in-hand, constitute a drawing card that few can resist. The exhibits of the local breeders and dealers were supplemented by liberal contributions from the stables of Mr. Learmont and Mr. Pearson, of Montreal, and also from the Sanborn stud at Lewiston, Me.

Heavy horses did not make quite so strong a showing, particularly in the classes for females. The diploma for best stallion any age was won by a very nice three-year-old imported horse, shown by Gov. Snowball, of Chatham, N. B. This is a horse showing a good deal of quality and Clydesdale character, although a trifle light in his middlepiece, and inclined to droop too much in the croup. The honors were contested by Caspar, a Scotch-bred five-year-old horse, shown by Mr. Wright, and a two-year-old Canadian-bred horse, shown by Mr. McMonagle, of Sussex. Caspar is an evenly-balanced, nicely-turned horse, and an excellent mover, but with scarcely as good a quality of bone as the three-year-old. Mr. McMonagle's colt is a sweet little thing, full of quality throughout, but too small in the bone, and rather undersized for a strictly heavy draft classification.

CATTLE.

The Shorthorn classes were strengthened by the presence of that veteran of the show-ring, Mr. Joseph Barnett, with a splendid draft from the herd of Senator Edwards, of Rockland, Ont. These cattle were brought out only for exhibition, and did not compete for the money. The herd prizes, both for aged and young

herds, went to Senator Edwards, with C. A. Archibald second. Mr. F. T. Holmes took third in the aged herd, and F. W. Thompson in the junior herds.

In Herefords Mr. W. W. Black was the only exhibitor, while the "Doddies" were represented by the herd of Mr. C. R. Harris, of Church St., N. S.

In the classes for beef grades and fat cattle, Mr. W. W. Black, of Amherst, N. S.; and Mr. F. W. Thompson, of Fort Lawrence, N. S., captured the cream of the prizes, dividing the honors almost evenly.

Dairy cattle made the largest exhibit in point of numbers, while the quality of the stock shown was perhaps quite equal to that of any other department of the fair. We regret that space will not permit a detailed discussion of the various classes.

In Ayrshires the prizes for senior herd went to F. S. Black, Amherst, N. S.; C. A. Archibald, Truro, N. S.; and S. Creighton, Silver Falls, N. B. For breeder's young herd the prizes went to Messrs. Black, Archibald, and Easton Bros., of Charlottetown, P. E. I. The sweepstakes for best bull any age went to Mr. Black, and for best female to Mr. Archibald.

In Guernseys, Mr. W. McMonagle, of Sussex, N. B., won first and second, and Roper Bros., Charlottetown, P. E. I., third for both senior and junior herds, and in Jerseys the herd prizes, both senior and junior, went to W. McMonagle, Sussex, N. B., and S. Creighton, Silver Falls, N. B., in the order named.

Logan Bros., Amherst, N. S., won first for Holstein herd; R. H. Giles, Fredericton, second, and Chamcook Farm, St. Andrews, N. B., third. For young herd, first and second went to Logan Bros., with Chamcook Farm third. The winnings in the herd competitions give a fair idea of the relative standing of the various exhibitors in the other classes.

There was a splendid show of sheep in both the long and short wool classes, and with one or two exceptions they were the same exhibit as at Halifax. The same may be said of the swine exhibit. A number of excellent animals were shown in almost all of the classes. One feature of the show that was patent to the most casual observer was that breeders of all of the breeds are making a strenuous and successful effort to fashion their animals after the ideals of the bacon curer.

Light horses were judged by Mr. Gardiner, of Charlottetown, P. E. I., and by Mr. Sterriker, an American gentleman; heavy horses, A. P. Ketchen, Ottawa; beef cattle, J. M. Gardhouse, Weston, Ont.; dairy cattle, W. Stevens, Trout River, Que.; sheep, A. P. Ketchen, Ottawa, Ont., and W. S. Fraser, Bradford, Ont.; swine, Andrew Elliot, Galt, Ont.

At the conclusion of the judging in each department, the judges gave a short address in the ring on the desirable and undesirable points of the animals under discussion, illustrating their remarks from selected specimens. This is a departure that might well be adopted by other fairs.

One other matter on which we should like to comment is the sportsmanlike manner in which the exhibitors in these Provinces take defeat. Even in those classes in which there was the keenest rivalry, the decisions of the judges were accepted without protest, and the best of harmony and good feeling seemed to prevail. It takes a better man to lose gracefully than to win well.

Cotswold Sheep.

As this is the season when the fall fairs are in full swing, farmers ought to be on the lookout for any points they may be able to gather that will be helpful in the selection of the breed of stock that they prefer.

I have headed my contribution "Cotswold Sheep," and I will now tell why I prefer that class of sheep. As I take a stroll through the pens at the fairs, I cannot pass without admiring the magnificent animals, but when I come to the famous old breed the Cotswolds, and note their magnificent fleeces, although I do not pretend to be an expert judge of wool, still, having handled most of the different breeds, I feel confident in saying one will get several pounds more wool off a Cotswold than off many of the other breeds, which is one point in their favor. Some people will say: "Oh, it is so coarse." Well, have we no use for coarse wool? I claim we have. What is better material for a man to put on to go out into the woods than an undersuit of allwool, or an outside suit of homespun gray? But is the Cotswold wool all coarse? We answer, no, if care has been taken to breed a fine, even, lustrous fleece, which is found to be general in the best flocks. It certainly is coarser than that of some of the Down breeds, but with our improved machinery we can make it all look about the same, and then you get four to five pounds to the fleece more, which means a nice item in the finances of the farm. The Cotswold is one of the largest if not the largest breed of sheep we have, and if properly cared for it ought to be the heaviest also, which, again, means a fuller pocketbook in the end. Now, we have two points in our favor. Although most of the sheep men of our day claim that the Downs mature earlier, I cannot see why they should: that is, if they are all fed the same. The Downs may suit a light local trade, but is that what we ought to look to? I claim that it is not. Our export trade in live sheep ought to receive our best attention, and if we want to send the heaviest sheep away, we will have to

breed the Cotswold. The next point is the general appearance of the sheep. As I stood in the passages of the pens at the Toronto Exhibition, I could not but admire the broad, square backs of the Cotswolds, in comparison with the round backs of the Downs, and as people passed by I was struck by their remarks, hearing them say: "What a grand fleece on that sheep." "That man will make some money out of his wool," and so on. And they certainly do look grand, their long, fine, curly fleeces hanging in ringlets all over their body is a sight that one does not soon forget. One more point, and I am through: It is hardiness. I think they are the hardiest and easiest-kept breed of sheep we can raise. I have seen all the different breeds raised, and am convinced they are, without exception, the easiest sheep to raise. In conclusion, let me sum it up in these words: The Cotswold gives the most wool, most mutton, is the easiest to raise, and in general appearance is head and shoulders above them all. J. C. H.

Peel Co., Ont.

FARM.

Would Have Plowing Matches.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

In some of the recent issues of your paper, I noticed a number of articles on plowing and plowing matches, and thought it would not be out of place to write my views concerning the same. I have not had any experience in conducting matches, nor do I pretend to be an expert plowman, but always admire and like to see good plowing encouraged, and I am convinced that there is no better mode of encouragement than by holding plowing matches.

In my opinion, plowing is deteriorating to-day, which should be regretted, for if a farm is not well plowed, however else it may be cultivated and worked afterwards, we cannot expect to raise as good crops as upon one which has had good plowing, with a due amount of cultivation along with it, for good crops, as a rule, follow good plowing.

The average young man to-day does not seem to care how his plowing is done, so long as it is turned over in any shape, and he can show a good day's work when night comes. I am of the opinion that if plowing matches were instituted throughout the country they would greatly aid in making young plowmen take more pride in their plowing, and in a few years we would see great improvement along this line.

The advantages to be derived from holding such would, I think, be great, if arrangements were made for the holding of them annually in conjunction with the Farmers' Institutes and agricultural fairs of each county. At first, there would be difficulty in getting sufficient money to offer as prizes, but I think that if those two societies were to take the matter up and lay aside a certain sum of money each year, this, together with a little subscribing among the farmers of the immediate vicinity in which the match is to be held, money enough could be obtained to award prizes worth competing for.

One of your correspondents advocated prizes being given for plowing to boys sixteen years and under. This, in my opinion, is a mistake, as I think boys of that age are altogether too young to plow. Undoubtedly, there are some boys who can do fairly good plowing at that age, but the majority, as a rule, cannot, and I think eighteen would be a more suitable age as the limit for boys, as it would give more boys a chance, and they would be capable of doing better plowing.

Peterboro Co., Ont.

PLOWMAN.

A Plea for Fall Plowing.

By plowing in the fall, the farmer not only advances his work preparatory to the next season's crop, but he does what is perhaps of greater importance—he exposes the plowed land to the action of the winter's frost. He thus enlists in his service one of the most powerful and beneficent of nature's agencies. The upturned soil becomes thoroughly permeated and saturated with water by the rains of autumn, and as water expands one-tenth of its volume in freezing—ten cubic inches of water becoming eleven cubic inches of ice—this law of expansive force is working silently but energetically and effectively during the months of winter, breaking up and pulverizing the hard masses of earthy and rocky matter of the soil. Thus the work of preparing the land for the reception of seed is done more thoroughly and completely than can be done by mere artificial means with a large expenditure of labor and muscular force.

In clay soil the advantages of fall plowing are, no doubt, greater than in soils of another character, it being an extremely difficult task to make a perfect seed-bed in clay land by working it in some of its conditions. But nature is kind to the farmer if he will study her laws and invoke her aid. Let us, therefore, avail ourselves of nature's help in preparing a seed-bed by doing our plowing in the fall. W. J. WAY, Kent Co., Ont.