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The Exhibition Habit

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With Drawings by Fergus Kyle



HE Exhibition Habit is closely allied to the Horse Show Habit, and is cousin germain to all forms of entertainment habit through which people show themselves and their clothes. Men have their simplicities as well as women. The women's simplicities are plainly and easily recognised; those which are particularly of men are to be sought under cover. His desire to show himself is usually hidden behind his desire to show what he has thought or produced or acquired, while the woman's tendency is to show herself.

The man who can go to the horse show or the provincial exhibition and bring home a red card or a red ribbon is a proud man. He may throw it in a corner when he arrives, or he may keep it in his pocket until the family ask for it; but if some person does not make a fuss over it there will be a greatly disappointed exhibitor. Call at the best barns in Ontario, the province where the Exhibition Habit is most highly developed, and you will find a number of red, blue and yellow cards tacked up in prominent places in the horse and cow stables. Go into the farm-kitchen, and in a glass-fitted frame you will find a red rosette and ribbon—perhaps of ancient vintage. And who shall say what effect these have upon the imagination of the "hired man" and

on the sons of the farm? They speak of battles fought, of honours won, and of possible victories in the future. They have something of the influence of the full-rigged ship-model of the English home; they have something even of the nobility of the ancient gilt-handled blade, the suit of armour or the family portraits of the baronial halls. These bits of paste-board and bunches of ribbon are the trophies of an agricultural people.

Yet the Exhibition Habit has other bases than its agricultural basis, because the exhibition is larger and more complex than the local fall fair. The exhibition has many sides designed to bring in all the interests of the province in which it is held. Agriculture, cheese and butter-making, fruit-raising, mining, manufacturing, natural history, art, women's work, education—all these are combined to develop a very complex exhibition. It is not alone an appeal to the man on the farm, but to the inhabitants of the village, of the town and of the city. It is an appeal, not to a class, but to a people.

An industrial exhibition is a sort of



ON SOCIETY ROW