

Correspondence.

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Provincial Exhibition—Future Prospects.

SIR,—As the season for agricultural exhibitions is approaching, I send you these few hints for the purpose of inducing our farmers to consider our present system of agricultural shows, and see what suggestions can be made for their improvement. Agriculturists of all classes are proverbially slow to adopt new ideas and averse to changes. But amid the rapid development and constant changes that are taking place in this Province, we should be constantly on the alert to watch the chances for improvement and adopt our policy to secure our share of the advantage.

The improvement of agricultural shows is a text that may keep all your subscribers thinking for some time; for myself I will only attempt to give you my ideas at present on the question. Is it advisable to continue the present perambulating system for the Provincial Show? I am aware that this question has often been discussed, and decided in my opinion slightly in favor of the present plan. When there was only one large Show in the Province, it was necessary to move, as there are comparatively few inclined to incur the trouble and expense of going a long distance to an exhibition; consequently the great bulk of the visitors and exhibitors have been from that section of the country where the show was held, and it was necessary to hold it in different places in order that all might share in its benefits. But within the last few years circumstances have entirely changed—that necessity no longer exists. The buildings provided for the Provincial have enabled the inhabitants of each section to hold Central Fairs, that have in a great measure taken the place formerly held by the Provincial, although, of course, they do not give an opportunity of comparing the products of the whole country.

What is needed to promote the general and uniform advancement of agriculture and the arts in all parts of the Province is a grand Central Exhibition as far in advance of the Central Fairs as the Provincial was formerly of the County Shows. And it is my firm conviction that the time is at hand when the Provincial must take that stride in advance, if they would maintain their old pre-eminence and continue their success. But such a Show must be permanently located; the expense of erecting buildings that would be required to accommodate such an exhibition would prevent the possibility of removing it from place to place.

No doubt the expense of holding an annual show of this description would be far beyond the means of the Agricultural and Arts Association. But I believe an annual Provincial Show is not necessary; a quadrennial Exhibition would answer every purpose. The Central Shows are all that is required for annual competition. Then every fourth year I would propose that all the Central Shows should be dropped, and all unite in one grand gathering at the Quadrennial Exhibition.

If this plan were adopted, the Association could, without any increase of the Government grant, certainly offer at least \$50,000 in prizes, and if permanent buildings were erected as they should be, they would be a credit and an ornament to the Province, instead of the miserable make-shifts that we have to put up with at present—buildings calculated to make the exhibitors as well as the stock comfortable during their stay at the Fair. Then the Exhibition could be kept open for at least a month, and Ontario would undoubtedly have both the profit and the praise of having the best Agricultural Show in America.

I know it will be said we are doing very well at present; why not keep on the same plan? I answer, in the first place, the plan I propose would be far superior in every way to the present; and,

secondly, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to continue the present system without a large addition to the Government grant to the Association, of which I see very little prospect. No doubt we shall have a very good Exhibition this fall and a large attendance, as the London, Huron and Bruce R. R. opens a fine tract of country that has not hitherto had communication with the Provincial by rail.

But although, as is likely, the Association will save a surplus this year in London, and next year in Toronto, the amount will certainly not be sufficient to cover the deficiency that is sure to occur when the eastern part of the Province claims the Provincial Show in 1879. Then some new arrangement will be a matter of necessity, and it would surely be wise to act while we have a choice, and prepare public opinion to move the Legislature to establish the Provincial Exhibition on a permanent basis suited to the requirements of the country and the spirit of the age.

There is an impression amongst many people that the Provincial Association is extravagantly managed. They say if they cannot get along with \$10,000 per year from the Government they ought to go down. The Western Fair is acknowledged to be one of the most successful of the Central Shows, and I will give you some figures comparing a few items of the expenditure of the Western Fair and Provincial for the past two years that will satisfactorily account for more than the \$10,000, and entirely refute the charge of extravagance as against the Provincial.

The total paid by the two societies for the last two years, 1875 and 1876, on the four following items, was as follows:

Provincial.	
For Prizes.....	\$30,846
Advertising and Printing.....	5,462
Veterinary College.....	4,034
Construction of Buildings.....	5,500
	\$45,842
Western Fair.	
For Prizes.....	\$15,704
Advertising and Printing.....	1,194
Veterinary College.....	
Construction of Buildings.....	1,498
	\$18,396
Total, Provincial Fair.....	\$45,842
“ Western Fair.....	18,396
	\$27,446

Showing that the Provincial has paid \$27,446 more than the Western Fair on these four items alone in the last two years. On the amount paid in prizes I need say nothing; the printing appears a large amount, but more than one-half of this was expended on the Herd Book, an absolute necessity to the country if we wish to improve our live stock; and when it is considered that we have to advertise in the papers and scatter the bills and prize lists broadcast from Ottawa to Sandwich, it might readily be supposed that a smaller amount would not suffice. As for the amount paid on account of the Veterinary College, it is just so much saved to the country, if the institution is to be supported at all, as the Government would have had to provide funds if the Association did not.

And the amount paid the local committees for the construction of buildings, although the funds came from the Association, is quite as much for the advantage of the local Fairs, as they use the same buildings for the three intermediate years.

After looking at these figures, showing that the Provincial has paid upward of \$13,500 a year more than has been paid by the Western Fair on these four items named, the wonder is not where the money goes, but how it is possible to make both ends meet. I am convinced that any one who takes the trouble to get posted on the subject, must be convinced that the Provincial Association at present is the most economically managed institution of the kind in the Province. H. A.

"H. A.'s" communication must awaken discussion. The management and future of our Exhibitions deserve attention. Perhaps "H. A." might give the total receipts and expenditures of the Exhibitions he speaks of.

The Guelph and Hamilton Exhibitions are unfortunately arranged to take place in the same week. Both follow the week after the Provincial.

SIR,—I stated in my last that I was engaged constructing an important drain 180 rods long. You can imagine my surprise when I found it changed by the compositor into what I suppose must be a cellar 18 x 20 yards. Such mistakes are annoying, but I am sure to none more than yourself.

THE SPRING CROP.

has been very much injured by a severe spell of hot weather, just when ripening, especially the wheat. All kinds are injured more or less, but the Red Chaff and Eldorado have suffered the most. I have seen some fields that are not worth cutting and threshing. Both these kinds appear to be easily rusted, and are therefore very unsafe to depend on for a crop. The Fife is generally pretty good. The Redfern and Red River varieties will be sowed again; they appear to stand well against the rust. My Redfern was very promising a few days before it was cut, but the heat dried it up too quick; there will be about 14 bushels per acre; the straw is excellent, it being cut quite green. Oats will yield perhaps the best of any spring crop. I took in two loads and threshed; they yielded 70 bushels, seven sheaves on an average yielding a bushel. The barley is much better than last year, still not so good as was expected a short time ago. From the remarks you have made about the

MODEL FARM

at different times, I should judge you have not much faith in it ever being worth to the country what it cost. In this I think you are right. I don't believe there is one in ten of the farmers in the country who believe in it. My idea of a Model Farm is one that should pay expenses, one that should prove to the farmers that agriculture is a paying business, if properly managed, and there are hundreds of such farms in the country. There are not as many experiments tried as there should be, yet those that are tried at the Model Farm are only a mere fraction of what are being tried in the country. There is one thing certain—whatever it takes from the farmers to carry it on, just so much it lessens their ability to properly manage their own farms. I hope you will watch this institution, and keep your readers posted as regards its real utility.

Last year I noticed a farmer taking great pains to subdue a

PIECE OF SWAMP LAND

by summer fallowing. I concluded to watch the process, and mark the results. He did the work very thoroughly by repeated plowing and harrowing, grubbing out stumps, &c., and then about the time of sowing fall wheat seeded it down with timothy grass. I passed this summer when it was being cut. The crop was splendid. This is what I call success. I have about ten acres of such land, that used to grow willows and tamarack; a good many years ago I cut the willows on part of the swamp, and thought the cattle would keep the sprouts down, and in that way I would get it into pasture. But the cattle would eat just the thing that I wanted to grow, and what I did not want they left; consequently, in a few years the willows were worse than ever. About four years ago I made another attempt to subdue them, cut them again over the whole swamp, and when the stumps sprouted, pulled the young sprouts off with my hands. They soon gave up, and now they are all dead. But this did not end the trouble. No sooner were the willows out of the way than up came a great variety of fast-growing weeds, thistles, mullens, &c., and occupied the ground so completely that it was almost impossible to get grass into it. It could not be fallowed for green stumps, so that there was no help but to take the scythe and hoe and cut with one or the other whatever we did not want to grow. It was discouraging, slow work, but I had counted the cost; the land was worth nothing as it was, and it would be worth \$100 per acre if in good pasture. Calculating in this way, the gain seemed so large that it stimulated to effort. I determined to master, and not have it said by the passer-by: "He began, but was not able to finish." Well, the result is, I have accomplished more than I expected, and have had the pleasure of hearing the remark several times this last year: "You have made a good job of that swamp." One man said he did not know of another field that would stand as much pasturing. A light steel hoe, kept sharp as a knife with a file, was the principal tool, and grass seed was sown at different times of the year. When cutting weeds I sometimes carried a mixture of grass seed in my pocket, and threw a little into every place I thought it would catch; and by persisting in this way in cutting whatever I did