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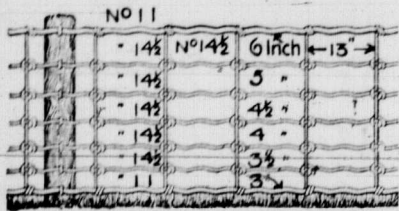
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The Country School Fair

Continued from Page 12

The whole movement tends to cultivate a relish for finding something better, no matter who produces it. It affords the young an opportunity to exchange ideas and avoid becoming narrow-gauge, self-made men. There are hundreds of reasons for the School Fair.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' CLUBS

With a view to developing a keener interest in our greatest industry the Department of Agriculture for Manitoba places a sum of money at the command of the College Extension Branch. For two years the superintendent of this branch has encouraged the formation of clubs among the boys and girls of the different schools.

If the boys and girls attending a school, or a group of schools, will form a Poultry Club the college authorities will send to the club a setting of eggs for each member. These eggs are from some selected strain of pure-bred fowls and are accompanied by instructions as to testing eggs for fertility, care of chickens,

etc. The pupil on the other hand must undertake to set the eggs under a hen, care for and feed the chickens, exhibit at the School Fair all birds raised from the eggs, and send to the college an account of his or her experience in caring for the chickens. The birds become the property of the members, and some have found that they had quite valuable birds. One boy is reported to have sold four birds raised from a single setting of eggs for \$10, an average price of \$2.50, before the birds had been wintered.

The score card used in making awards is as follows:—

	Points
1—The number exhibited the same as the number hatched (2 points off for each chicken missing).....	25
2—General appearance of chickens as regards size, age, weight, health and condition.....	25
3—Method followed in feeding and rearing the chickens.....	25
4—Composition, age of member to be taken into consideration.....	25
Total points.....	100

The Potato Club

The Potato Clubs are formed in like manner, except that fewer girls become members. The College Extension Department sends for each member 10 pounds of seed potatoes from some good variety, and the pupil is expected to plant the seed, care for the plot, dig the crop and exhibit one bushel of potatoes in the fall. He is also required to hand in an essay based on the experience gained.

The score card is divided as to points in this manner:—

	Points
1—Value on basis of yield.....	35
2—Quality as shown by exhibit of one bushel.....	35
3—Written history of growing the crop (not more than 200 words).....	15
4—Financial statement showing value of labor expended in growing the crop.....	15
Total.....	100

When Corn Clubs are organized three varieties of suitable seed are furnished to each member, enough of each variety for a row thirty feet long. The care of the plot, the composition, the sheaves of corn shown, are all factors in arriving at the score.

Special prizes may be offered for the care and condition of the plots. This practice was followed at Souris, Stonewall and other points.

At Stonewall for the fair fuller accounts of experience were required and special prizes for compositions only were offered. The 10 pounds of seed potatoes were planted and cultivated at home, but the boys of the Potato Club each planted one-tenth of an acre on ground leased for that purpose and cared for their own plots subject to inspection. The business statement was of more value than in the case of the 10 pounds as the

cost per acre could easily be figured. The market price of the crop is always a factor, but in the large plot the labor cost is easily estimated. Prices were good this year and some fathers were glad to find that their sons were in a position to sell them 15 or 20 bushels of potatoes for the family use.

A couple of larger plots of fodder corn were grown and the product disposed off in the interests of a common fund.

It would be well for all Manitoba readers to bear in mind that any school may organize these clubs.

NOTES AND HINTS

Why not encourage the boys to market coarse grains on the hoof?

It will do the old boys good to have the young boys chasing them.

The School Fair belongs to the mixed farming age.

The boy is the better for carrying personal responsibility.

The School Fair tends to make the boys and girls judges of the things they exhibit.

Don't give the boy a pig to feed for his own and then take his money when it is sold.

Try to keep the boy on the farm by giving him a personal interest in something that is going on.

The demand for dressed poultry in this country is a first-class reason for the Poultry Club.

The old man may be so good a feeder that he does it always and the boy never learns to do it.

Watch an iron-grey man tie the prize ribbon on the harness when he drives his horse from the judges' ring and then ask if it does a boy's heart good to win a prize.

Some people don't like to give the boys cash prizes. Lots of men are off the farm today because as growing boys they were not allowed any of the hard-earned cash. Don't give them your money; let them earn some.

No, the school district is not too small for a School Fair. The human heart in some places may be.

The writer knows that some men talk of the "nonsense of all this," but his mind reverts to a break in the world's stock market forty years ago when an unprincipled neighbor stole the lad's Dominic rooster. Gentle reader, such emotions are world moving if wisely directed.

When we see a fair director exhibit a Barred Plymouth Rock rooster with six breeds of feathers on his body and motley

feathers to his toes, we think it high time that somebody taught the boys to know poultry and to play a square game with the fair.

The price of a cheap cigar a day given to a prize fund would make the boys and girls hustle until it would be a pleasure to "watch their smoke."

If the Poultry Club chases the last dunghill chicken into the pot it will not be the greatest calamity of the year.

How many heads of barley can you grow from one garnered last fall? What is your average gain from reproduction? Reconcile the two.

The next thing to a good shower is the scuffer and hoe in the vegetable crop. The boys can be taught this if you think it worth while.

The Pig Club can be utilized to develop a wide knowledge of breeds and feeding values.

Potatoes worth 30 to 50 cents a bushel to the boy himself are not hard to pick.

Do you know at what stage to cut fodder corn? The Corn Club boys will soon all know.

Make your school exhibit the outgrowth of a steady year's work. There is no need for a spurt.

Talk about plant-food to the boys and girls who are cultivating plants.

Don't give a boy money. Let him earn it. Let him learn to make his money earn.

The Brandon Fair Association is offering big prizes for steers fed by boys. Yes, let them feed steers too.

Watch for the human touches to all this work. Here is the description given by one newspaper of the boy who exhibited a 465 pound, year-old pig at New Orleans last year: "The boy who raised this pig was an undersized lad of twelve, but as he stood beside the pen and looked at the product of his year's work his face beamed, his chest was drawn up, his head thrown back and in his eyes shone the spirit of conquest." Think of the scene, gentle readers.

The School Fair lends itself readily to teaching the foreign children something of mixed farming.

The good ideas for a School Fair are not all used up. Less than 20 per cent. of them have been distributed where they are lying dormant.

It will not injure the memory to have the hand and eye trained.

Orange McGee of Goldonna, Louisiana, raised 485 pounds of pork in one year on one set of legs, and bankers, packing-house men, merchants and railroad presidents were pleased to do him honor.

We banquet adult winners of great trophies.

We know one boy who has banked \$30 just from prizes during the past fifteen months. That increases his account, but think of how much more that chap has really lived.

Even the old men learn a lot from the School Fair competitions.

IRA STRATTON.

The Tinkling Cymbal

Continued from Page 21

He stood dully a minute or two; then, with a sigh, he dragged his steps to the box of coarse rations ready by the door, placed them in the borrowed wagon, and vanished into the gloom of the dismal December evening, cowering before the sleet-laden blast.

"Now about that cow, Brother Patterson. Here's seventy-five dollars—go get a good one," said the colonel, smiling graciously.

"Oh, thank you, thank you, my dear brother! May the Lord bless you for your unflinching goodness and kindness to one of His humble shepherds!" said the Rev. Ephraim, grasping the colonel's clammy hand with his right, and with his left deftly slipping the gold into his trouser-pocket.

Irish Co-operative Literature

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Under the leadership of Sir Horace Plunkett, M.P., Irish farmers have made greater strides in Co-operation than any other Anglo-Saxon people. As we have had requests for literature on Co-operation in Ireland we have secured 100 copies of each of the following pamphlets and will send one copy of each while they last to any address for 25 cents—just enough to cover the cost.

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An address delivered at the Annual General Meeting of the I.A.O.S., 10th Dec., 1909, by Geo. W. Russell.	

We are not selling the above separately as they are merely for those interested in Co-operation. 25 cents pays for one copy of each pamphlet. We have also secured 10 copies of last year's annual report of the Irish Agricultural Organization Society, as the central organization in Ireland is called, and will mail these out at 25 cents per copy.

BOOK DEPT., GRAIN GROWERS' GUIDE, WINNIPEG