

the flames at Alton Hall, and the splendid herd of Berkshires, some fifty in number, including two imported boars and three imported sows, have all been lost. The buildings were in great part the work of Mr. Sorby's own hands, and were in many respects models of convenience.

The ordeal that Mr. Sorby has been called upon to pass through, has certainly been a most trying one, and we are quite sure that we will receive the commendation of every stockman in the land, when we take this opportunity of tendering to him their sincerest sympathies.

To be necessitated to witness the demolition of the gatherings of a lifetime in one short hour is a trial which very few possess the calm constancy to face unmoved, and is enough to crush the spirit of ordinary men. The origin of the fire is unknown, but it is supposed that it traces to some wandering tramp without a soul. The loss is estimated at \$11,000, and fortunately is pretty well covered by insurance, but what insurance money can put back again the comfortable outbuildings of this beautiful rural home? It cannot be done without years of patient and painstaking labor with all the worry and annoyance inseparably connected with such undertakings.

As we pen these lines the thought forces itself upon us, how many of our stockmen have shown the wisdom of Mr. Sorby in having their valuable stock insured? If we but learn the lesson written for us in the bones of the dead Galloways and Herefords of Alton Hall, amid which the ashes play with every passing whirl, what has proved so bitter an experience to Mr. Sorby may prove in a sense a blessed experience to some of us.

Our Agricultural Exhibitions.

As the season is approaching when arrangements will be made for the holding of our annual exhibitions, we earnestly ask the members of the various boards who may chance to see this paper, to consider most carefully the following resolution passed by the late Indiana State Agricultural Convention consequent upon the reading of an address by the Hon. J. N. Davidson:

"Resolved, That any county or district fair which shall allow the sale of intoxicating liquors on the fair grounds, or will not enforce the law against games of chance, is unworthy the name of an agricultural society, and meets the strongest condemnation of this delegate board."

We are delighted to see the good sense of the country thus speaking out so plainly in this matter. For the sake of revenue these condemnable features have been introduced or allowed, with the result amongst others, that the best portion of the community is either withholding its support altogether, or giving it in a half-hearted way. Like the hungry vultures which follow in the line of march of an eastern army, the carrion-devourers follow the circuit of our fairs throughout the season, laying their snares to catch the unwary; and when not allowed to come within the fair grounds they hang out their baits most dangerously near the gates. Some of our agricultural boards have already taken the firm stand that those ravenous devourers shall not gain admittance to the grounds, rather choosing the alternative of diminished revenues than to stain their hands with accursed gold brought in at the fearful price of the corruption of the young men of the country; but many of them have not yet taken this stand, and we do hope that those who have not, will weigh well the import of the grand words of that Indiana resolution which says that any local exhibition allowing these things is *unworthy the name*.

But many who in this age of Scott Act-legislation

may take the stand that intoxicating liquors should not be allowed upon the fair grounds, look differently upon games of chance. They argue that these are in a manner harmless, and that if young men are duped by these things, it is through their own simplicity. It is very thoughtless to argue thus. The young are without experience, and they carry in their bosom what is in itself commendable, a strong desire to look into what is new to them, a fallow ground from which those curses to society, the vendors of chance games, reap their richest harvests. Those men are plying a *dishonest* trade, and the board which countenances their work in any way are partakers of their wickedness. The man who takes from his neighbor, by taking advantage of the ignorance of the latter, by way of barter without giving an equivalent in value in things lawful, is dishonest. How much more then is it dishonest to do so in things that are unlawful! What equivalent do these men give? Nothing by way of pecuniary advantage, but much in the way of tainted morals. How many a promising young man have they sent rapidly on the downward road, who was ascending the difficult upgrade of rectitude till he met with them.

It is alarming to think of the extent to which those men are tolerated, and it omens ill of the state of society to know that such is the case. They could not subsist without finding prey, and prey that is drawn from the immediate surroundings. Carrion devourers in the east have been found dead from want of prey, and this would be the fate of the calling of those vultures in a community altogether virtuous. But the sure way of multiplying the evil is to give it countenance or even to wink at it. Like all pestilent weeds, it will multiply itself by an almost spontaneous reproduction, and in a rapid degree.

What do those mistaken men do for the country? They have no live-stock to exhibit; they do not bring any manufactures, the products of their skill. They have nothing to exhibit in the arts line. They do not bring bread to sell to the hungry. Their business is robbery, plunder, ill-gotten gains, trapping the unwary, sapping the foundations of moral rectitude, blasting the prospects of young men by contaminating their morals; fattening upon ill-gotten gains wrenched from the unheeding. They are accursed fountains sending forth bitter waters that smite with blasting and turn into an arid desert this land over which they flow; and all this they do under the approving nod of boards elected by the people to protect their best interests in the line of agriculture, and to further these as best they can through the medium of exhibitions.

The great wonder is that the good sense of the community has tolerated these foul blots upon the civilization of to-day so long, or the boards either, who with open arms have received them, or even given their presence a reluctant sanction within the grounds. We do not think it enough to banish them without the grounds. The legislature should say that they may not come within a certain distance of the gates. Thus deprived of the opportunity of plying their nefarious trade they would be forced to give it up, or go to foreign countries, where they could plant their standard upon a more congenial soil.

It is very gratifying to notice that our neighbors across the line are moving in this direction, and shall we on this side, who boast so much about what we have to exhibit at our exhibitions, allow them to lead the van in this?

"I think the JOURNAL the best agricultural paper in the Dominion."—JAS. E. CAMBER, Frederickton, N. B.

"I like your JOURNAL very much, and think its price is one dollar well invested."—JOSEPH BULLWING, Marshville, Ont.

Dearth of Heavy Draught Sires.

There are but few counties in Canada where, at the present time, there is a sufficiency of heavy draught sires to meet the wants of the different respective communities. In some two or three of the counties of Ontario where heavy draught horses have been bred for many years, there may be an excess of stud sires, but in nine counties out of every ten, we feel quite sure that there is a dearth, more especially of imported sires. In some of these the want is realized, and in others of them it is not. The latter is the saddest plight of the two, and in no way can the farmers be so quickly convinced of the mistakes of their nondescript breeding of the present, as by sending amongst them a few good imported heavy draught horses on routes judiciously selected.

We urge this matter upon the attention of breeders and importers of heavy draughts. We would not have them embark in an enterprise that would not be attended with material gain, but we feel quite sure that in time the undertaking will pay well, even though it did not the first year. We believe that the Clydesdale Association of Canada could do something in this matter by urging it upon the consideration of the members, and we are in no doubt as to the patriotic nature of the work. It would in the end greatly strengthen the association by the impulse it would give to the breeding of Clydes, and widen the field for foreign purchasers. The Shire breeders, and breeders of Percherons might well move in the same direction, although in their case there would be more difficulty in attaining the desired end from the lack of organization.

Ontario has already become famous for the superior class of Clydes which it produces, but this celebrity is wholly due to the praiseworthy efforts of the breeders of some half dozen counties, notably the county of Ontario, which to-day possesses more good Clydes than ten other counties that might be named. Now, if the larger number of our counties produced but half the good stock of heavy draughts that is furnished annually by the county of Ontario, how much it would widen the field for purchasers, and could not fail to attract them in numbers more proportionately increased than the stock which they come to purchase.

Herein horsemen have a great advantage over the breeders of other classes of pure-bred stock. They can carry the war into the midst of the most prejudiced community, and by the resistless power of a demonstration that cannot be gainsaid—the living animal itself—they can produce conviction in the minds of the most unwilling. Other breeders must reach those sections by some far more round about way, or must patiently wait till the people come out of the hiding places within which they have curtained themselves from the advancing rays of the live-stock light of the most recent decades. A stallion may walk up and down the country with triumphant tread, the acknowledged conqueror of all the mongrels in his line, his owner located a hundred miles away, but a pure-bred bull can only drive the scrubs into the hiding places of the forest, where he has been introduced by purchase.

A good sire is used in pork production, and buyers tell us the value of the meat is increased at least one dollar per hundred pounds. A good bull is used in grading, and the increase in the carcass at two or three years old, is at least one-third; but in breeding from good stallions, the proportionate gain is as much greater as is the excess in value of a good horse over a good cattle beast.

We have viewed with much gratification the rapid encroachments made by draught horses in recent years