

Great Eastern Exhibition, Sherbrooke, Que.

The twentieth annual Sherbrooke Exhibition came to a close on Sept. 3rd. It will be a memorable one chiefly on account of the fatal accident on the G.T.R., which kept hundreds from attending the fair, and cast a gloom over the whole of Sherbrooke and the surrounding district. The total attendance falls somewhat short of last year's record, but under the circumstances must be regarded as satisfactory. The weather remained perfectly fine until the last day and a half.

No great attempt was made by the Association this year to outdo past exhibitions, it being realized that the exhibition had outgrown its building accommodation, and the directors were content to mark time with a view to making large improvements during the coming year. The projected buildings will entail a considerable outlay, so that the Association recently issued bonds to the extent of \$15,000, in order to provide the necessary funds; these bonds were guaranteed by the city of Sherbrooke.

The number of entries in all departments was the largest on record. The exhibit of horses was one of the best ever seen in the Eastern Townships, and compares favorably with that of the horse show held in Montreal. Horsemen who have followed the various shows in the Dominion say that the class of stallions at Sherbrooke was the best ever shown in Lower Canada. The exhibit of Belgian horses shown by the Quebec Government, the Compton Model Farm, and Baron Champlois, of Danville, Que., attracted much attention. This is a useful breed, and is sure to improve the standard of horses throughout the province. The show of Hackneys has never been excelled, and the Shire and Clydesdale and Standard bred classes were above the average.

The cattle exhibit, while representative, cannot be said to have been strictly first class. It is unfortunate that Toronto and Sherbrooke Exhibition dates should always clash, and is, unfortunately for Sherbrooke, as the foremost local breeders prefer that their best animals represent them at Toronto in preference to Sherbrooke, and send the first herds to the Queen City. An occasional fine animal was noticed in good exhibition trim, but as a general thing among the beef breeds especially, there was a very evident lack of fitting. In grades, some very good specimens faced the judges, but even in this class there seemed to be a lack of quality. Can it be that the introduction of dairy blood is depriving the Townships of its reputation for first quality beef cattle? What must have been the reflections of those who witnessed this year's cattle parade, who can recall a few years back when the Hillhurst and Polled Angus cattle were annually seen at Sherbrooke, when Tushingham was in his prime and the Ingleside Herefords had pride of place at the Eastern Exhibition; when the East View Stock Farm annually showed its "white faces" and its "doddies" and the names of Judah, Verdun, McClary, and many others, stood for the guarantee of a sight of something choice in beef? Many red ribbons were awarded this year where ridicule would have been meted out in those days.

In dairy cattle there was a creditable display. Jerseys were well represented and competition was keen. Guernseys were few in numbers and only ordinary with regard to quality. French Canadians were represented

by three fine herds of good, hardy, useful-looking dairy cattle. Holsteins were fairly numerous and of more than average quality. Ayrshires, of which we have been used to seeing so many during the last few years at Sherbrooke, were in fewer numbers this year, and in the case of some individual animals, real merit was discernible, the exhibition as a whole in this class must be placed below those of former years.

The herd of Brown Swiss, shown by Frank Freemyer, of Breakabeen, N.Y., attracted a good deal of attention, it being the first time this breed has been seen at Sherbrooke.

Of sheep can be said the same as has been remarked of the beef cattle classes, not strictly first class. It must have been a bad year for sheep or else the best ones must have gone to Toronto.

The swine exhibit was good, what there was of it, and although poor specimens are always turning up at exhibitions for some unaccountable reason, they were conspicuous this year by their absence entirely.

There was nothing wrong with the poultry exhibit, every coop had its occupants, and some very fine specimens were handled by the judges, Messrs. Butterfield and Jarvis. Buff Orpingtons are surely coming to the front more and more, and are evidently replacing the old favorites, the Rock and White Wyandotte to a considerable extent.

The Bench Show, well, perhaps the less said about it the better; in 1902 and 1903 it showed signs of becoming one of the features of the Exhibition. Why 1904 should tell such a different tale is a source of conjecture. The dairy exhibit was representative, cheese entries numbered 57 and there were 43 entries of butter of 3 boxes each. Mr. Warrington judged the cheese and said that the quality was of the best. However, Mr. A. J. Price who scored the butter, had reason to be disappointed with the flavor of many samples. Bad flavors had been much in evidence throughout this season, and makers must be on their guard and must adopt methods to meet altered conditions of manufacture. The intention of the Association is to erect a new and more suitable dairy building and to utilize the present one entirely for the horticultural, fruit and vegetable departments. To be an apple year in these parts, a very large entry of this fruit was exhibited, and other fruits were fairly numerous and of fine quality. Flowers and plants formed a pleasant contrast at one end of the Dairy building to the very monotonous but businesslike-looking boxes of cheese and butter at the other end.

The display of vegetables, which required a special extra tent to hold them, was very fine, and the season must have been a most favorable one for their growth. Corn was scarcely as forward as usual, but ripe melons were in abundance, as well as celery, tomatoes, and other later vegetables.

The honey and bread exhibit formed a very pleasing feature in the dairy building, and a hive of bees at work was most interesting to watch, as well as a part of a hive under glass, in which the queen bee was plainly visible from time to time. In the main building the numerous exhibits were arranged artistically and the fancy work in the ladies' and children's departments was greatly admired.

Owing to the removal of the old cattle sheds, the side shows occupied a rather more conspicuous position

than usual, and in point of numbers, I am sure, must have established a record. The special performances in front of the grand stand were fairly good, and the trotting was perhaps the best ever seen in Sherbrooke.

Mr. Hillhouse, of the Bondeville Poultry Station, gave interesting illustrated talks on chicken fattening, etc., but beyond this no educational work was attempted by the Association this year. It is probable that more will be accomplished along this line in the future, and it might be a good idea to replace half the side shows with various field demonstrations of practical value to agricultural visitors.

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The Provincial Exhibition here is now in full swing. The attendance to date is not so great as of former years, but in some respects the show itself is not as strong as some of those which preceded it. For instance, the agricultural exhibits in the field and garden sections are less numerous than usual, there being a falling off in turnips, carrots, beets, mangolds, and some other lines. This is, no doubt, due to the early date on which the present exhibition is being held. Our season in some weeks late in the year in Ontario and consequently an early exhibition must suffer to some extent. The exhibits of potatoes, cabbage and grains are many and well up to the average in quality. The poultry display also is not as large as in former years, but the quality is wonderful, considering the early date. Nearly every county in the province is represented and when it comes to the distribution of prizes, Kings' and Annapolis will not have the monopoly which was their portion in the past. It is evident that the great improvement becoming much more general throughout the entire province. The best part of the show is probably the cattle. The excess of exhibits in this department is so great that every pen is full, and many of the sheep pens have had to be used for cattle. There are in all over 600 head of cattle. Every year great improvement has been noted in the number and quality of the cattle exhibited, and the feature is attracting a great deal of favorable comment.

About 300 horses are on exhibition. The number is slightly less than last year, but this defect is made up by the quality, which is the best that Nova Scotia or New Brunswick can produce. Sheep raisers complain that owing to the fact that good after feed was scarce it was impossible to get their animals in good condition and the exhibits are somewhat less numerous for this reason. In this branch, as in the raising of cattle, the farmers are learning year by year that it costs no more to raise a good animal than a poor one, while the profit is much greater. Particularly noticeable is a flock of 60 from St. Andrew's, N.B., which are not penned as the others, but are cared for in the open by a Scotch herdsman, with a well trained dog at his assistance.

From the standpoint of the management, a point has decidedly been scored by the early date at which the exhibition is held, while from an agricultural standpoint the exhibits have not, as above indicated, in several important departments. The attendance has been so far, in excess of previous years, and with a continuance of good weather, the exhibits have not an absence of the deficit in finance which has characterized the exhibitions held here in the past.

A fuller report will be forwarded for next issue. J. B.