

FARMING

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Xmas Gifts.

How They Come to You Without Money.

The premiums offered readers who secure new subscriptions to FARMING are a kind that fit in admirably for Christmas. In our full-page advertisement elsewhere in this issue you can learn how to possess these without any outlay of money.

The Provincial Winter Show

A large amount of space in this week's FARMING is devoted to the Provincial Fat Stock and Dairy Show to be held in the City of London on December 12 to 15th next. The historical write up by Mr. F. W. Hodson, the retiring manager and secretary, published elsewhere in this issue, will prove of interest to every breeder and farmer in this province. While Mr. Hodson has had the active management of the show for several years, and its present success is largely due to his indomitable energy and push, yet his efforts have been ably seconded by an energetic board of directors, comprising many of the leading stockmen and breeders of the province.

As to the show itself it is hardly necessary for us to make any special comment in regard to it. As will be seen elsewhere, the show has made remarkable advancement during recent years. Last year's show at Brantford was one of the best, if not the best, shows of the kind ever held on this continent, and as far as we can learn this year's show will equal it in every particular and doubtless excel it in many ways. At any rate visitors to the show at London may rest assured that they will see as fine a display of good stock as will be found anywhere on this continent.

Farmers make a serious mistake by not patronizing the show more liberally. There are no especial attractions to take up one's time and attention: and the day or two spent there can be devoted exclusively to examining and studying the various exhibits. The block tests alone in which a number of hogs and sheep will be slaughtered and prizes awarded for the best carcasses should prove a sufficient drawing-card to those interested in our bacon and mutton trade.

While there may be very little, if any room, for successful criticism of the show or its management, yet there are a few details in which we think an improvement could be made in this coming show. Last year a couple of the judges in awarding the prizes publicly stated their reasons and why they gave the awards as they did. This proved to be one of the best educational features of the show, but unfortunately only those close to the judges could hear what was being said. We would suggest an improvement in this line, and that some arrangement be made by which those who wish to hear can do so. This might necessitate erecting a number of raised seats with an arena in front where the animals could be seen and the judges' remarks heard.

A full explanation from the judge giving his reasons for awarding the prizes should prove the most useful

and important feature of any show, and we would like to see it practised more generally in Canada. There would be less fault-finding with the judges, and fewer complaints from exhibitors, if this were done in every case where prizes are awarded. This might be difficult to carry out at the large fall fairs, but at the winter show, where the whole attention can be given to live stock alone, it could be more easily done. Stockmen in the Western States are taking this matter up, and at their annual gatherings have animals brought before the meetings and experts point out their good and bad qualities to the audience. The average farmer, and even the average breeder, in this country does not know all that is to be known as to the good and bad points of an animal, and many of them would welcome an innovation of this kind whereby they could secure accurate and definite information along these lines.

There is room for improvement also in the killing and dressing of the animals in the block test. Last year many of the carcasses were so unevenly cut down the back that it was almost impossible for any but an expert to tell the exact proportion of lean and fat in the sides. We look for something better this year. While the block test is primarily for the purpose of giving an object lesson as to the kind of hogs producing the best bacon, yet it might serve a useful purpose in other ways. Every farmer kills and dresses sheep and hogs for his own use, and sometimes for market, and this block test should certainly show him how a carcass should be dressed and cut up. The killing should be done by an expert who knows how to cut up and finish a carcass afterwards.

In closing we would direct attention to the series of live stock meetings to be held in connection with the provincial show. As the program published in another column shows, a good array of talent has been provided. Subjects of vital interest to breeders and farmers will be discussed and everything promises a very instructive and profitable gathering.

Ontario Crop Yields

The Ontario Department of Agriculture has just issued its special November crop bulletin. The yields vary little from the August estimates, excepting in being more conclusive. The acreage sown to fall wheat has been somewhat reduced. Fall pasture, as a rule, has not been good, the fields in most localities being dry and bare until a comparatively late period in the season, when they were revived to some extent by the heavy rains. Threshing has been finished, except in a few localities. The fine autumn weather has enabled farmers to make good progress with their fall plowing. Except at harvest time the supply of farm laborers has been sufficient for the demand. The following is the estimated crop yields in the province for 1899, which will be found interesting:

Fall wheat, 14,439,827 bushels, or 13.8 bushels per acre.
Spring wheat, 7,041,317 bushels, or 17.7 per acre.
Barley, 14,830,891 bushels, or 30.2 per acre.
Oats, 89,897,724 bushels, or 38.0 per acre.
Rye, 2,284,846 bushels, or 16.6 per acre.
Peas, 15,140,790 bushels, or 20.4 per acre.
Buckwheat, 2,203,299 bushels, or 16.7 per acre.
Beans, 651,009 bushels, or 16.1 per acre.