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EDITORIAL.

The Permanent Location of the Ontario Winter Show.

The question of securing a suitable building and other accommodations for the holding of the Provincial Fat Stock and Dairy Show is one which should be resolutely faced by all parties concerned, and that without delay. The great importance and usefulness to the farmers and stock-raisers of the country of this exhibition is conceded on all hands, and experience has proven that it cannot be developed and carried out in a manner and on a scale commensurate with its importance unless a proper building for its accommodation is provided. Since the adoption of the dressed-meat and other educational features, greatly popularizing the show with the public, visitors being now attracted from long distances, the need for better facilities becomes increasingly imperative—not only that such tests may be so conducted as to be of permanent value to the country at large, but in order that ample provision be made for the comfort both of exhibitors and visitors. In order to secure this, we believe there is a general concurrence of opinion that the selection of a permanent location is involved.

The itinerant system was adopted a few years ago for the reason that, since public funds were granted for the objects of the show, the people in different sections of the Province had equal rights to its benefits being brought within easy reach in order that they might profit by its educational, but more particularly to share in its local advantages, and this plea was so persistently urged, in the Legislature and out of it, that it was thought best to try the peripatetic plan; but, as we have said, experience has taught that more suitable accommodations for the comfort of visitors and the advantageous display of the stock, etc., must be provided in order to secure the best results. The provision made in the last two years by the Winter Show Association, whereby the excess of freight on exhibits coming from a greater distance than one hundred miles is paid by the Association, has done much towards removing the objection to centralization of the show, and the favorable passenger and freight rates secured from the Railway Companies have also greatly aided in doing away with that objection.

The experience of the old Provincial Exhibition Association in their effort to prolong the itinerant system ought to go far to satisfy all parties that the system is out of date, being cumbersome, costly and unsatisfactory, and the fact that the only exhibitions that are now successful are those which are permanently located and provided with suitable buildings should serve to settle the question without demur. The successful fat stock shows of Great Britain have been fixtures for a century or more, and plans have been adopted on a gigantic scale for a permanent fat stock show at Chicago, to commence this year. If Canada is to hold her place of prominence in the production of superior stock this subject must be dealt with in no narrow spirit by our people, but the general good must be considered. A united and earnest appeal to the Government by the various stock breeders' associations for a special grant for this purpose will, we are confident, meet with a generous response, and the question of the selection of the place for the future home of the show will largely depend upon the liberality of the cities seeking the same in offering inducements for its location. One thing we would impress upon the minds of all concerned, and that is, that action cannot commence too soon and that earnestness and enthusiasm should characterize every movement in regard to this very important matter. Canada cannot afford to go back on its fat stock show record, and a vigorous forward movement is imperative.

The Winter Show.

The Ontario Provincial Fat Stock, Dairy and Dressed Poultry Show, held last month in the Western Fair buildings at London, while perhaps not quite as full in the number of entries in the beef cattle classes as in some former years, was yet well filled in all other departments, and never on any previous occasion of this kind did the best animals shown measure so well up to the ideal type, and never before have the superior educational advantages of this class of show been so clearly demonstrated. If the attendance of visitors was less than in the last two or three years, it was but a repetition of the experience of the promoters of such events in this country when held in larger cities, and was due to no dereliction of duty on the part of the officers and committees of management, who did their part faithfully and well. If there was a defect in the management at any point, it was perhaps in the method and manner of the local advertising, which certainly failed to create an interest on the part of the people of the city and neighborhood, from whence the bulk of attendance at these exhibitions usually comes. The attendance of farmers and stockmen was probably larger, more representative, and from a wider extent of the Provinces than on any previous occasion, partly owing, no doubt, to the liberal arrangements made by the Department of Agriculture, by which the Farmer's Institute delegations were enabled to avail themselves of the helpful lessons presented in the practical demonstrations brought out in the living examples of approved types of animals, and also in the dressed carcass competition and the methods of their preparation for market. Never at any former fat stock show in Canada was the championship winner in the cattle classes so nearly a perfect model of the type and quality required by the markets, never was his closest rival so nearly equal to the winner, and never before were 1,800 pounds of high-class flesh presented in smaller superficies or likely to shrink so small a percentage when dressed. Never in the dairy section of these shows, nor in any other public milking trial in America, was so great a record made by a milking cow as was demonstrated by the indisputable evidence of weights and measures on this occasion, and that is saying a great deal. These statements we are confident will be endorsed without demur or dissent by the great majority of those who were present and are conversant with the facts, and we might go further and state that in our opinion the best of the beef cattle shown this year, apart from the champion and his nearest competitor, were nearer to the standard of first-class butcher's beasts than the best usually seen at these shows, and the best dairy cows competing in all the classes were better in conformation and promise, and generally better in performance, than at any previous winter show. So far as the cattle classes, at least, are concerned, Canadian breeders and feeders are not merely marking time, but are making commendable progress.

In regard to the sheep and swine departments, we are not sure that as marked proportionate improvement in the type and quality over the display of the two former years can justly be claimed even in the best specimens shown, but the competition in these departments was well up to the mark in numbers, and a very large proportion of the exhibits conformed nearly to the desired standard of form and quality, though too many came short of it.

The dressed carcass competition, although limited to sheep and swine, was one of the most interesting features of the show, from an educational standpoint, and was studied with keen interest by breeders and feeders and by farmers generally, showing, as it did, the extent of shrinkage in killing, the deficiency in quality and condition of flesh where animals had been killed too early, being insufficiently fed and fitted for market, and in other

cases where they had been carried past the point of best condition, being made too fat, and their value as food minimized on that account. The comparison of these extremes clearly shows that there is a golden mean where fat and lean are properly proportioned and a tender, juicy and well-flavored product is secured, which brings, or should bring, the best price.

The practical and pointed addresses of the judges in the dressed carcass competition, giving reasons for their decisions and illustrating by the aid of living and dead "subjects" the class and quality of product required by the markets, were well calculated to afford helpful information to those interested, while the words and works of Professors Gilbert and Graham, and Mr. and Mrs. Yuill and Mrs. Gilbert, illustrated on the platform by practical demonstrations in feeding to a finish, killing, dressing and preparing poultry for the home market and for export, were intensely interesting and instructive, and should prove profitable to all who availed themselves of the information and advice given.

While the exceeding usefulness of the winter show under the direction of practical men is fully conceded on all hands, it must be apparent to all who have attended, that in order to carry out its objects successfully and satisfactorily the one great need is a suitable building in which to hold it, where visitors can be comfortable, where the animals can be seen and shown to advantage, and where the dressed carcass and poultry competition, which is bound to increase, can be properly accommodated. This is a fact that cannot be faced too soon if Canada is to hold its place of prominence in this line of work on this continent, for the gigantic preparations now being made for the prosecution of similar work in the United States will, unless we bestir ourselves, so overshadow our shows as to be discouraging to our people. We may not hope to cope with our neighbors in vastness of display, but, with *quality* as our motto, we may face the world, and if we are to do so successfully, liberal things must be devised for the encouragement of our live-stock industry, which is, and must continue to be, the mainstay of the Dominion. We can conceive of no other way in which the Governments can more wisely apply a reasonable amount of public funds than in promoting such an enterprise, and if its best success involves fixing the show at some point, local jealousies should not be allowed to hinder a work which is of such vital interest to our common country.

Index of Farmer's Advocate Articles for 1899.

In accordance with our usual custom, we have prepared a complete index of the articles and engravings published in these columns during the past year, and issue it in connection with the present number. So many of our readers now preserve their papers by binding or otherwise, for future reference, that a good index becomes of very great value, and is really indispensable. All departments of farm work being regularly dealt with by experts, every number becomes a veritable mine of wealth in the way of practical information. In our "Questions and Answers Department" many hundreds of perplexing practical problems are dealt with from time to time, and very frequently the reader will be confronted with the same difficulty upon which some other reader has received help, and by turning up the index the time and trouble of writing us on the subject will be saved. We have heretofore always published the index in connection with the Dec. 15th (Christmas) number, but the amount of space required for articles and engravings in our last issue rendered its publication until the present time practically impossible. We need hardly, therefore, urge upon our readers the desirability of carefully preserving this index.