

## Editorial Items.

THE late celebrated Robert Hall one day was a hearer under an aspiring and rain-glorious preacher. The young man had been descending to little purpose on the red horse, the pale horse, the black horse, and the white horse of Revelations, and Mr. Hall, having been quite wearied, pushed his way out as the congregation dispersed, exclaiming—"Let us get out of this horse fair."

**SPEAKING OUT.**—At Bodmin, Mr. R. Oliver said that though they had spoken against pampering, the judges had given the first prize to a pampered animal. Having tried both plans, he was convinced that high feeding was neither profitable to a farmer or to a butcher.

*The Farmer* (Scottish) lets itself down, and shows a stupid want of appreciation of the great movement going on among the agricultural laborers of England, by writing very contemptuously of Mr. Arch and his mission, under the caption of "The Modern Wat Tyler." Our contemporary had better freshen up his knowledge of English history, and when he does this, he will be puzzled to find any points of resemblance between Mr. Arch and his alleged prototype.

Are there no good stock artists in England? A miserable caricature of St. Duchess of Geneva (the \$40,000 cow that was), appears in *The Farmer* of Dec. 8th. Mr. Page must pay a business visit east of the Atlantic, and teach our friends there not only how to auction short horns, but how to delineate them.

## Ontario Veterinary College.

The students in this institution were examined by the regular Board of Examiners, at the Agricultural Hall, on Thursday last. The following gentlemen passed their final examination in a creditable manner:

John P. Bond, Toronto; Robert Baird, Brucefield; Richard McKenny, Michigan, U. S.; James Charlesworth, Clinton; Benjamin Holmes, Erin; William Brady, Tilsenburgh; Louis O'Leary, Duffin's Creek; Henry Smith, Whitchurch; John Nott, Brussels, Ont. These gentlemen are third year students, and, being complimented by the Board, were awarded the Diploma of the Agricultural and Arts Association of Ontario. The Board of Examiners comprised Messrs. Hagyard, V. S., Galt; Wilson, V. S., London; Sweetapple, V. S., Brooklyn; and Thorburn, M. D., Toronto. The classes will recommence on Monday, the 12th January, 1874.

We may add that each successive session of this important and useful institution adds to the opinion of its worth, and the number of students is a guarantee that the requirements of such a class of professional men are far from being exhausted. We have to congratulate Dr. Smith, the Principal of the College, on the success of the institution.

## Birmingham Dog Show.

A highly successful dog show has recently been held at Birmingham, which is reported at great length in our English exchanges. The dogs were divided, as usual, into sporting and non-sporting classes. Among the former, the most conspicuous were the deer-hounds, fox-terriers, pointers, setters of all kinds, retrievers, and spaniels; while among the latter, the mastiffs, St. Bernards, bull, smooth-haired and black-and-tan terriers, Pomeranians, Bedlington, and Dandie Dinmonts, were prominent. Accommodation was provided for 344 dogs, and some of the classes are described as having been "terribly crowded." This exhibition was held under the auspices of the Curzon Hall Society, which has a rival in the Kennel Club, whose show is held in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. There is keen competition, and a spirit of rivalry, which displays itself in petty jealousies, between the two English canine associations.

## Correspondence.

## Mistakes in Connection with Agricultural Shows.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR:—As the funds at the command of even the most thriving of agricultural societies, are never too abundant, I hope you will not think I am an opponent of agricultural progress, because it is my intention to call your attention to cases in which it seems to me that various societies have, at the recent fall exhibitions, expended their funds injudiciously.

I will just mention the practice of giving prizes for grade male animals, which I consider an error of the most serious kind, and I believe that so far from offering any bonus to good-looking grade males, the keeping of such entire animals ought to be discouraged in every possible legitimate way, by all who profess to feel an interest in agricultural improvement. This would be done without depriving their owners of their share of reward and credit, if as liberal prizes as possible were offered for fat grade stock of all kinds, from which all pure bred animals ought to be rigidly excluded, and it would be only fair to allow the grades to compete for an extra prize, to be awarded to the best fat beast at the show.

There is not the same objection to giving prizes to cross-bred female breeding stock, even in the fertile and wealthy districts, in which the breeding of pedigree stock is fast becoming an industry of acknowledged importance. The majority of the farmers are obliged to breed from grade females, and I think it is very probable that there is not, all Canada over, one farmer all of whose breeding stock are of pure blood, while in the newer, and more remote and backward settlements, the farmers are so poor that it is only through the agency of a local agricultural society, that even a male animal of pure breed is procurable. In these backward districts, and even on farms where a more enlightened practice ought to be followed, the saving entire of tolerably good-looking males, is far too prevalent, although there is nothing about stock-breeding more certain than that the substance and kindness of such stock, will not be inherited by their offspring.

It seems to me too, that the holding of very small local shows, is another too common, and very great mistake. At the Pumpkinville show, lately held, prizes to the amount of rather more than \$50 were offered in sums varying from \$1.50 down to 20 cents. Probably the expense of hand-bills, and advertising, brought the total expenses of getting up the show to at least \$60. The show resulted in the exhibition of the following stock and produce:—Three or four hardy-looking little mares, with foals at foot; four or five one, two, and three year old colts, and fillies; the whole lot of them light, and rather leggy; four or five yokes of very lean, working bullocks, that had neither size, shapeliness, nor well-matchedness to recommend them; half-a-dozen milking cows, very low in condition, as some folks say *milking cattle always ought to be*; the two prize-takers were compact, low-set, and hardy-looking animals, but they both had very coarse and meaty udders, and, I think, one of them had lost a quarter; three bulls, small and ugly, and of no particular breed, perhaps one of them had some Ayrshire blood in him; a pen with two sheep in it; one ram in another pen; a small black boar—he was lengthy, but he had a very light fore-quarter, and looked like an animal with a very tender and delicate constitution. I heard him called a Berkshire, but a Berkshire pig he certainly was not, there was perhaps a cross of the Essex in him; in another pen were two coarse, and very ugly pigs, decidedly inferior to the average pigs of the district; in another pen, a good, and very lushy breeding sow, probably three parts Berkshire bred; finally, one or two starved-looking heifer calves. There was also a sample bushel of oats, not true seed; a sample of good bright peas, rather truer than the oats. I think there were but two samples of wheat, one spring, and the other fall wheat. There were also on exhibition six of the very ugliest turnips I ever saw; some small beets,

the tops of the roots all overgrown; there were some very ugly carrots—they were rather small, and although not forked, they had branch rootlets bigger around than knitting needles; there were six parsnips, even uglier and more scrubby-looking roots than the carrots; there were three or four exhibits of cabbages, firm-hearted, but rather small, even the best of them were not really fine vegetables; there were some rather poor samples of onions; the few potatoes shown were really good ones, most of them were well grown, clear-skinned, and bright-looking roots. Besides the articles already mentioned, the ladies had sent two loaves of light bread, three lumps of clean-looking butter, one cake of very yellow beeswax, a small jar of honey, some quilts, and a few other articles of domestic manufacture.

Now, though the Pumpkinville cattle are but a very sorry-looking lot, their pigs are of fair quality, and their sheep are nice, level, useful-looking animals, that yield both mutton and wool; and the introduction of successive well selected thorough-bred boars, or rams of the same variety, would soon raise many of them to a standard of excellence that would be highly creditable to the stock-holders of the district. And if the money the society wasted, I say worse than wasted on their show, could have been added, and the value of the time lost by the farmers, and others, their families and their teams, in attending the show, the total sum would have sufficed to purchase, and bring into the district, a really useful pure-bred bull, and conferred a lasting benefit on the farmers of the whole district. Even the \$60, or so, wasted in getting up the show and the prizes, would have produced either a good boar pig, or a pedigree ram, and that kind of stock being a thrifty, useful sort of animal the smaller outlay would, perhaps, have produced the most immediately noticeable improvement, and the earliest pecuniary advantage.

Now, Mr. Editor, I venture to suggest that it would be well for the very small agricultural societies to hold no local shows at all, but to expend their funds on the introduction of new seeds, and varieties of grain likely to succeed in the district, and on the occasional renewal, from not too dissimilar soils and climates, of seed of old established, and well proved soils. They ought also, as soon as possible, to commence the improvement of their live stock, beginning whenever possible, with the soil that stands in the greatest need of improvement. As the boarding-out system has been almost invariably proved not to answer, it would be a good plan to put up the animals as soon as brought home, to the competition of the club members, the buyer undertaking to receive a certain number of females from each other club member, at a certain fixed price, and being allowed the privilege of charging non-members a higher rate for their stock, or for all female stock sent by club-members in excess of their proper quota. The buyer (as he might get his animal very cheap indeed) ought to give bond and good security that he will retain the animal in the district, and keep him fit for breeding from, and also undertake, that when tired of him, or from lapse of time, in a measure, obliged to part with him, that he will again put him up for sale to the members of the same society, from which the animal was originally purchased. The difficulty of procuring the services of competent judges is a very serious one, even in the well-settled townships, and in the thinly-settled districts they really cannot be found, and there are no funds available for importing them from other districts.

Minden, 1873.

## Our Native Orchids.

This peculiar and beautiful family of plants is tolerably well represented in Canada. They form an excellent example of the mutual dependence existing between the vegetable and animal kingdoms.—When the flower is examined, it is evident that the only way in which most of the species belonging to this order can be fertilized, is by means of receiving the pollen adhering to the wings and legs of insects. Thus we see that while the honey-seeking insect obtains its supply of food, it at the same time completes the final process necessary to the continued existence of the plant. Among the specimens in my collection obtained in this neighborhood are the following:—*Orchis spectabilis*, *Isotria medeolae*; *Habenaria fimbriata*; *H. phycodes*, *H. blephariglotis*, *H. ciliaris*, *H. viridis*, *H. dilatata*, *H. Hookeri*; *Calopogon palmellus*, *Cypripedium arietinum*, *C. pubescens*, *C. parviflorum*, *C. spectabile*, *C. acule.*

Almost all of these species grow on the boggy margin of the small lakes existing in this region.