

### ABUSE OF AGRICULTURAL FAIRS.

In our visits to the State Fairs annually held by our American cousins, we have lamented to observe a tendency to divert these exhibitions from their proper end, and to foster appendages which in the long run must be fatal to the institution on which they fasten their parasites. In this country we have thus far avoided these evils; and if the experience of our neighbors be correctly read by us, we shall continue to avoid them. We are glad to find such a journal as *Hearth and Home* adopting such a healthy moral tone on this subject as the following extract evinces:

"Any person with his eye half open can see that the farmers' annual festival is becoming more and more perverted. Originally designed to promote the interests of husbandry, it is now made, in many quarters, to answer the purposes of a grand holiday, to take the place of the old 'training days,' or to be a sort of second Independence Day. In many places, auctioneers, showmen, pedlers, gamblers, and humbug catchpennies of all sorts, hang about the Fair-ground, begetting vulgarity and vice. Drinking and betting, wrestling and fighting, follow close behind mammoth women, hogs with five legs, and nimble Jacks, to the great annoyance of sober people, to the moral injury of the young and inexperienced, and to the degradation of the farming interests. Female equestrianism and horse-racing complete the circle.

"Perhaps it will do little good, but we mean to utter our remonstrance against this perversion. The new policy may swell the number of those who attend our fairs, but does it not also bring in the mob? Farmers and respectable, sober-minded people find themselves elbowed aside by horse-jockeys and 'fast' people of all sorts; and year after year, the fairs are made up of less and less of those for whom they were originally established. We beg the managers of these annual festivals to look ahead and act wisely."

### HOW ANNEXATION WOULD AFFECT THE CANADIAN FARMER.

The farmers of our loyal Dominion are, perhaps, as little inclined to look with favor on Annexation views as any other class of our people, and certainly there never was a time when such views were in greater disfavor than at present. Nevertheless, it is well to look at the strong reasons there are for letting well alone, and being content with our lot. We have pleasure, therefore, in transferring to our columns the following judicious remarks on this subject, which we find in a recent number of the *Globe*:

"The question of annexation has been frequently discussed by our papers of every shade of politics. We propose merely to see if there be any possible incentive justly held out to the Canadian farmer sufficient to induce a change of flag.

"First. There are some things in which we should gain nothing. Our markets would not be benefitted. The Americans must have our cattle, sheep and wool, our timber, our barley, flour and

apples. This is plainly shown by the fact, that ever since the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, they have obtained from us large quantities of such agricultural products. Notwithstanding the thirty per cent. duty, which would seem to be almost prohibitory, they pay as good a price for their purchases in the Canadian market as they did before the Treaty was annulled. A glance at the market quotations and the yearly statements will prove that the above assertion is correct.

"As our sales, then, have not been perceptibly affected by the loss of the Treaty, we should gain nothing in market prices were the duty removed by the union of the two countries.

"Secondly. In many respects we should find ourselves losers. It is stated on the authority of United States organs that whereas ships are built at \$22 per ton in Nova Scotia, the cost on their own side is \$45 per ton. The same relative difference of cost will apply to the manufacture of farm implements. The high wages paid to mechanics on the other side is due to the heavy taxation and the great cost of living. Were we annexed, we should, of course, be subject to such expenses, and should certainly lose the difference between the present cost of our implements and the price we should have to pay under the new regime.

"Then the question of taxation comes up. In considering this point, we will take for a basis the statement issued in a late number of the *Chicago Tribune*, that the expenditure of the people of the United States is computed at \$10 per head, while that of our own country stands at \$5 per head; thus our average taxation under the present form of Government is but one-half of that of the Americans. After annexation each farmer would have to consider his taxes doubled; the tradesman must advance the price of his goods in proportion to this increased assessment. We should have to pay very much more for our provisions, clothing, and labor, etc.

"On the whole, the Canadian farmer has every reason to be contented with his present condition, and would lose in every particular by annexation. Our agricultural prospects have never looked brighter than they do to-day. That great plague, the midge, has lost the worst of its sting; our taxes are light; our wages and rates of living restrained within reasonable bounds.

"Were we annexed to-morrow, taxes would be immediately doubled, the prices of provisions, clothing and living greatly increased; the privilege of the vote, hitherto wielded by every farmer amongst us without fear or favor, would be overridden by the bribery of ignorance; and we do not believe that our market prices would be raised one iota in gold. Let the Americans keep up protective tariffs, they must have our products and at our own prices. Instead of being as free a country as exists, we should, after annexation, become but a small corner of the great republic, bearing our full share of the enormous taxation, in close competition with the Western States, and our prices ruled solely and only by the American market; there would then be no alternative between their prices and no sale. We should lose our name of Canadian farmers, a name of which each one amongst us is justly proud, and have to rest contented with such a share of republican glory as would be in proportion to our population and our isolation.