

the ability of his owner as a breeder and feeder) as to bring him out in fine show condition, yet I contend it is out of place to offer a prize for this at the local fair. It has lost its educational influence and we want something new. As in politics we want to cry "It's time for a change" and yell it loud and long throughout the land. Let us get up to date and make the annual fair an educational event as it was originally intended it should be. A step in advance all along the line is wanted. Something new to attain to—higher ideals in accordance with present day truths and progress.

It is easier to criticise than to suggest improvement, because improvement in this case can only be brought about by agitation and education along new lines. At present the framing of a prize list is a thankless task and any upsetting of present plans must be gone about in a careful way or those who have been in the habit of receiving a share of the spoils will lead opposition that may upset everything. It is strange, you know, how we cling to habits and customs of our forefathers. In the first place it is necessary for the directors to thoroughly understand local needs and then decide how best the fair can be made to help by educational methods to bring about a fulfilment of these needs.

The following suggestions along the various lines of work may be helpful.

Live Stock:—At most fairs all prizes for pure bred animals can be cut out. Leave this to the big fairs. It is no longer necessary to demonstrate the superiority of these breeds. We are past that stage now and it is a business proposition which should stand on its own merits. The survival of the fittest in this case can be fought out at the big shows. The owners of this class of stock might, however, be given free entrance to the grounds, if thought advisable, so the people can compare animals and make a selection.

Prizes might be continued in the grade classes as at present because we have frequently seen these classes much superior to the pure bred ones. Here is where the educational effect will be noticed. In no case would I allow an animal that has won a prize in one class to show again in the same class next year. I do not mean to debar a yearling showing as a two-year-old the next season. This would, I think, encourage new exhibitors to come out because it would be known that no excellent animal would be there to scoop the prize year after year. I would also have classes for exhibitors that have never shown an animal before or that had never won a prize.

By having fewer classes and only grade animals the judges could supplement the work of the stock-judging schools by taking time to explain fully the reasons why they place the animals as they do without injuring the value of the animals. The judging would thus be a kind of stock-judging school and a practical demonstration.

Competitions in practical judging of classes of stock might be opened for men, young men and boys. This would supplement the work of the stock-judging schools. In this way if the judges followed, giving their placing and reasons, the greatest educational benefits would be derived.

I would cut out herd prizes and all sections that tended to duplicate.

I would cut out all prizes for grade males. All stallions should be enrolled under the Horse Breeders' Ordinance before they can win a prize.

Owners of sires might be encouraged to give special prizes for the get of their respective animals.

Cut out the general purpose class in horses and insert a miscellaneous class with power to the judge to place the animals in their proper class. This suggests a good prize for those who have attended the stock-judging schools, that is a motley class of horses, one containing all class of types which the contestants must sort out and classify according to type.

Classes should be arranged according to type rather than weight, making two divisions where necessary in one class according to weight. There is good work to be done by such a convention as the present one in defining more clearly the type of many classes.

In the live stock classes, the effort should be made to understand the needs of the district and to frame the prize list accordingly. Encourage those classes for which the locality is suited. Economize in these items which are non-essential and encourage the essential ones.

Poultry Classes:—The time at which the average fair is held is not favorable to bringing

out a fine exhibit. The summer fairs come at an off season for the older birds and just a little too soon for the young ones. Therefore prizes should be reduced for the older birds and an effort made to encourage the early hatching and development of the young chicks. This has a double lesson, it brings the chicks on the market early and provides winter layers.

The utility breeds should be encouraged if there is to be the development along the lines of supplying the market for dressed fowl. Don't be tempted to give a prize for all the breeds represented in the district.

Special effort should be made to bring out good entries of dressed poultry at the fall fairs. Prizes might be offered for crate fattened poultry and demonstrations made of the methods of fattening by the crate system, as well as the proper methods of killing, plucking and preparing for market. Why shouldn't the society spend some money on this line of work? It is educational and will do the community more good than the same money thrown away in a useless prize. Plucking contests would be instructive as well as amusing.

More attention should be given to prizes for eggs, both according to color and size. An educational exhibit might be made of eggs classified according to market requirements.

Grains and Grasses:—For a country growing so large an amount of grain, the classification is unsatisfactory and the amount of money out of proportion to the importance of the subject. The sections should be developed in accordance to the district. The idea suggested in connection with the live stock classes could be used here, that is, prizes for those who had never won before, the idea being to interest those who have not been interested before. Note should be taken of all attempts to introduce new varieties, or to develop early maturing varieties.

The usual way of describing grain is as short as possible—two bushels of spring wheat, etc. Don't be afraid to use printers' ink. If a little more specification were added of what is wanted, it would improve the prize list and assist the judges as well. Prizes should be offered for a greater variety of sheaves of grain and grasses, but the size of the sheaf should be specified together with other hints about putting up the sheaves. This would tend to greater uniformity in the exhibit. Special encouragement should be given to bring out exhibits of home grown seed of alfalfa and other clovers and new varieties of grasses. It is from this source that we are going to get a start along these lines. All grain and grass seed should be shown in clean sacks of the same make—even if it is necessary for the society to supply them.

Vegetables:—Everyone knows the country is famous for its vegetables. At the summer shows it is hard to get out any kind of an exhibit; then

why not encourage the growing of them in hot-beds or cold frames? At the fall fairs more should be done to bring out the essentials required in a good vegetable of the various kinds. How often one style of vegetable wins a prize one year, and another another year. Education is wanted.

More attention should be paid to flowers. Prizes should be offered for individual plants, because many people have good single plants that cannot make a collection of three or six.

Fruit culture should be encouraged because all the small fruits do well. There is yet much to learn; but if more of it were grown it would greatly improve the average farm home, and it is therefore worthy of encouragement.

The Ladies' Interest:—I have purposely left this to the last, because, though not the most important from a farmer's standpoint, yet where would the fair be if it were not for the ladies? They have a part in this work that must be recognized; that must be encouraged, and that must be developed in every way possible. Preserving fruit, baking, fancy work, and all utility work must be encouraged along progressive lines. Cooking demonstrations, and even contests of this nature would interest. Butter-making competitions would also interest.

This article would be incomplete without some reference to sports; but as the subject is to be discussed in another paper I will pass it with a few words. The sports need not be expensive; but need to be original. A horse-race confined to farmers' sons, and to horses never in a race before, will make as good sport as a professional race. Harnessing and unharnessing races, potato races, and things of that sort are just as good as more expensive affairs.

The prize lists should be hand-books of information. Where new classes are introduced the object sought should be defined and some hints given about preparing exhibits and what is expected will be brought out. Our prize lists are too often short in their descriptive matter in many cases.

The farmers are hungry for information, and there is a great opportunity for societies to supply this information. The indifference so apparent is because of the lack of any educational value in the annual fair aside from the holiday aspect. I have tried to point out that the conditions have changed, and that the prize list and general method of operating a fair are out of touch with present day conditions; are, in fact, obsolete. Let us revise these things, and bring them up to date. Let us put first things first, and make the fair the successful influence it should be.



YEARLING SOUTHDOWN WETHER.
Champion over all breeds, grades and crosses at the International, 1907. Owned by Sir Geo. Drummond, Beaconsfield, Quebec.