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Winter Fair Accommodation

WITH increased gate receipts over last year of \$362, and with an entry on the whole equal to that of other years, the Ontario Provincial Winter Fair of 1905 has at least maintained the high standard of other years. And this is saying a good deal, as the standard reached in previous years was about as high as the facilities afforded for holding the show will allow. About the only way advancement is possible under present conditions is in point of quality, and it is only fair to say that this year's display in point of quality was in several respects superior to that of other years. Exhibitors in the different classes are gradually bringing their exhibits up to the standard set up by both judges and lecturers.

There can be no doubt, however, that more and better accommodation is needed if the Winter Fair is to progress in the future and keep pace with this advancing age. Those in authority have during the past few weeks given assurance to the people of Guelph that the Winter Fair is a fixture in that city. In our opinion they should have made the promise conditional upon the accommodation provided being adequate to the needs of a show of this character and importance. What the city of Guelph and the Government have in view regarding increased accommodation has not been stated, but we understand they have the matter under consideration.

A serious defect with the present building is the lack of sufficient light on the ground floor. Any change of plan should include adequate provision for better light. The lecture hall and the entrance to it are entirely unsuited to the purpose for which they are intended. It is difficult to see how this can be remedied, unless a complete change in the structure is effected. But there has been no lack of suggestion. Realizing that something must be done everyone interested in the fair has a remedy to offer. Among those we heard floating around during the fair were the following: Add another storey to the present building and elevate the poultry display one flat higher up; extend the building to the north about thirty feet and take in more of the market square; tunnel under or bridge over the railway and build an annex to the south of the railway; let the City of Guelph erect a new city hall on another site and turn the present civic building over to the Winter Fair to be used as a lecture hall and fair offices.

While there may be something feasible in some of these proposals it is up to the people of Guelph and the Provincial Government to deal with the

question in a way that will provide ample and suitable accommodation for future shows. When the question is under consideration it might be well to consider accommodation for an exhibit of breeding horses. There is no doubt a good horse exhibit would prove an attractive and valuable feature of the show. Provision should be made if possible for exhibits of cattle in car lots. One of the great features of the Chicago International is the splendid exhibit of car lots of cattle. It might be possible to have an exhibit of this kind at Guelph, though it could be much better carried out at a large cattle market centre.



Canadians have reason to feel proud of the honors won by their fellow countrymen at Chicago last week. In the face of the strongest kind of competition the highest honors were won. Canadian sheep breeders have always taken a high place at the International and have fairly well maintained their ground at the recent show, though the competition which faced them was stronger than ever before. In the horse arena those enterprising Canadians, the Graham Bros., have again won distinguished honors, landing nine firsts, two championships and one grand championship. For several years Canada has not made any serious attempt to exhibit in the cattle sections. This year John Dryden & Son with one animal, and the Watt Bros. with a carload, entered the lists and came out with several good prizes in the Shorthorn classes. It is worthy of note that the bull that carried first honors to Mr. Dryden's Maple Shade herd, was a typical Canadian bred animal, tracing back to stock imported into Canada 40 years ago. There was also Canadian competition of no mean kind

in the swine section, so that taking it altogether Canadians can congratulate themselves upon the honors won.

The Bacon Hog Question

While some light was thrown on the bacon hog question during the discussion at Guelph, we are very little nearer to the removal of the difficulties surrounding that trade than we were before. Both the farmers' and packers' views were stated very clearly, but no satisfactory conclusion was reached. It is doubtful whether the packer realizes the seriousness of the situation, and is fully persuaded that the farmer has a real grievance in the matter. But we can assure him that the farmers' case as stated at the Winter Fair represents the feeling existing all over the country at the present time and if the packer does not lend his energies towards having it removed it will be a sorry day for the bacon trade and the packing business of this country. As one speaker said at Guelph: Hogs are not a necessity to the farmer, but they are to the packer.

As to regulating the price of hogs according to quality, this is a matter the packers have under their control. Let them exercise this control by paying a larger premium for select bacon hogs at the packing house and drovers in the country will be compelled to discriminate and pay more for first quality than for inferior stuff. As a matter of business policy the packers should do this. It would in a large measure help to remove the suspicion which undoubtedly exists among farmers generally that they are not getting "a square deal" from the packers in the marketing of their hogs.

As to the unnecessary middleman, who in several localities has lately come in between the packer and the producer, we understand that the packers themselves have taken the matter up and that effective means are being adopted that will put a stop to his operations and leave only the drover representing the packer in the country. The drover seems to be a necessary factor in the business, but there is no room for any one else to come in and get a little rake off as the hog passes from the farmer to the packer.

The most difficult question, however, to regulate, and we have grave doubts as to its ever being settled to the satisfaction of all concerned, is the great variation in price during the year. Often there is a drop of 50c to \$1.00 per cwt. in a few days, without any apparent reason therefor, so far as the farmer can see. Then there is the more serious question of the great drop in price in the fall of the year, when far-