

### The Provincial Exhibition.

The forty-second Provincial Exhibition will be held in Ottawa, September 19th to 24th. The citizens of Ottawa are making the necessary preparations, and everything thus far indicates that it will be a first-class exhibition. Although the Western Exhibition will be held at the same time, the Provincial comes in just after the Toronto Industrial, the Quebec Exhibition and that of the Eastern Townships at Sherbrooke, so that stock in all the intervening localities, and the very cream of it, will be assembled this year at Ottawa. We hope the townships in the eastern portion of Ontario will do their best to make a good showing. There must now be a large amount of good stock in the aggregate in those townships, and we hope the people down there will make a strong stand to hold their own against those who may come from the west. In the eastern townships of Ontario there is a large amount of good land and plenty of material in the form of good stores and timber to put up good buildings. There is also an abundant water supply. In addition to these the only remaining requisition to successful stock-keeping is energy and enterprise. Possessing the former, we know that our good friends in the east will make it clear that they do not lack the latter, and we trust that not only this year but in succeeding years they will hold their own in competition with the westerns in stock exhibits, as they have done in other years in competitive examinations and in all the lines of professional and mercantile life.

Every young man destined for the farm within 100 miles of Ottawa should go to the Provincial Exhibition this year, and take in a large amount of useful information from the great object lesson to be gathered there at the time already indicated.

A pleasing feature this year will be the introduction of catalogues whereby a visitor obtaining one will be enabled to take in the live-stock exhibit without the assistance of a guide. The directors of all our leading exhibitions must stay their efforts till this system is introduced with success, at least equal to that to which it has attained in England.

The natural scenery around Ottawa, especially in the vicinity of the river, is of so attractive a character, that this alone would repay a long journey to see it.

### A Minister of Agriculture for Ontario.

States grow, and with their growth their wants increase. The present Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. A. M. Ross, also holds the office of Provincial Treasurer, of which our readers are aware in all probability. It is the consensus of opinion amongst the farmers, we believe, that Mr. Ross has discharged the duties of each of these offices with commendable fidelity, but they are also of the opinion that the time has come when the individual energies of our Minister should be given to the promotion of agriculture, which in material importance towers high over every other interest in the province.

When the Central Farmers' Institute was organized on the 28th day of last April in Toronto, the following resolution in reference to this subject was passed:

"That in the opinion of this meeting, the appointment of a practical farmer as Commissioner of Agriculture for the Province of Ontario, who could devote his entire time and attention to his department, would be beneficial to the agricultural interests of this province, it being distinctly understood that this resolution does not reflect in any way on the present Minister of Agriculture."

In reference to the views set forth in this motion we do not think there will be any difference of opinion amongst the farmers. The material interest which

they represent amounted to \$989,497,911 in 1886, which surely entitles them to a voice in the Cabinet, and a share in its deliberations, if the material argument is of any value.

There can be no question but that a practical farmer is just the man for such a position, or, to put it differently, that a man possessing the other requisite qualifications and at the same time a practical farmer, has an advantage over one who is not.

In the management of this department we can conceive of questions arising very frequently where a practical knowledge of the details of farming would be of immense service, enabling him to arrive at a safe conclusion at once, when the Minister not so favored would hesitate and be in doubt, although perfectly honest in his endeavor to do the right thing.

So reasonable must this request appear to the Legislature, that they will not think of opposing it when brought up in this form. As to who the Minister who shall first be appointed to fill this position shall be, it is of course for the Government in its wisdom to say, but this is sure, there is no lack of efficient material amongst the farmers. There occurs to our mind at this moment the names of N. Awrey, representing South Wentworth; J. B. Freeman, representing North Norfolk; J. Dryden, member for South Ontario; C. Drury, the member for one of the ridings of Simcoe—any one of whom would doubtless make an efficient Minister in this line, and there is a long list of others, it may be, equally well qualified, whom we do not stay to name.

### The Comparative Profits of Stock-keeping.

The prices of all kinds of live-stock, unless it be horses and some famous families of pure-breeds, has fallen somewhat in Canada during recent years throughout all her borders. That thus it should be is very natural, and had it been otherwise it would have been an indication only ominous, an evidence of an undue prosperity that could not possibly rest upon a sure foundation. Such numbers would have entered into it that the business would have become so glutted that the end must have been disaster to very many, and disappointment to all. On the principle that misery is fond of company, some are disposed to find comfort in the fact of a less full revenue from the live-stock interest than formerly. They say, "Aha, I told you so!" and wrap more tightly around them the girdle of the self-complacent prophet. But we fail to see wherein there is anything in this state of affairs that should afford satisfaction to any one. The grain grower need not rejoice, for the more stock grown the better the prices for his grain, owing to the amount that shall be fed; nor should the consumer do so, since the depression that sends down the price of meat and dairy products also lessens the capacity to buy these.

With the less full prices that we get for live-stock products, they compare very favorably with the prices realized for other lines of farm produce. Grain growing is unremunerative, more so than was ever known before in the history of the country, and so of fruits and the products of the hive, while there are still gains arising from the judicious growing of live-stock.

If it could be shown that grain-growing was equally profitable to-day with stock-keeping, but not more so, that would afford no argument in favor of the former style of farming, for in such a case every crop would bear away from the land the elements of growth, so that every succeeding crop would be less, while in

stock-keeping every yearly return would or should leave the soil rather more than less fertile.

But there need be no difficulty in perceiving that grain-growing is not a profitable business at the present time. When wheat grown on soils more fertile than those of to-day failed to enrich the average farmer, at one dollar a bushel, there can be no profit in growing it at 80 cts. per bushel. On the other hand meat at 4 and 4½ cts. per pound with the present prices of grain, will yield as good a profit nearly as it did at 5 and 6 cts. per pound years ago, and dairy products are not very much lower than in years gone by.

Of those who look upon the live-stock interest with shadowy eye we may ask, what interest in the line of farming will pay so well to-day? The beef-grower need not lose heart, for if he could make money in the past at the rates then current, he will not lose money now with the low prices for which grain can be bought, and he has the satisfaction of knowing from year to year the productive capacity of his land is increasing, or, in other words, compound interest is being added to the fund invested in landed estate.

The dairymen, too, may live in hope; indeed, their skies are sunnier than those of most classes of farmers. The local prices of butter are far from discouraging, and with the firm establishment of our reputation for making a good class of butter for the foreign market, it is almost certain that this price will increase. While the beef-producers should by no means relax their efforts, dairymen should increase theirs. We see what we believe to be a fine opening for butter dairymen, and we shall fondly hope that our expectation here is not a vain one. The butter dairy is useful in so many ways. There is profit on the butter and profit on the skim-milk, and enrichment to the land. In butter dairying there is food for calves and pigs, and the opportunity of constantly replenishing the herds. A large amount of territory is unoccupied, or, in other words, there is much land that is but half stocked and even less. The butter dairymen should take possession of this as fast as they can, and in this way swell the revenue of the farm.

We believe that with a majority, profits may be made from stock-keeping even now, by close attention to improved methods of management. But the methods must be improved. Green feed must be grown, and better protection provided, and the stock of all kind must be improved by breeding and selection. If under a comparatively reprehensible system of farming, the handlers of the soil made money in prosperous times, under a good system of farming, they are not likely to lose money in less encouraging periods.

But it may be claimed, it is not enough to save oneself: there ought always to be a margin? True, a margin is more satisfactory, but if in times of great depression a body of men pursuing the one calling, can all, or nearly all, get a good living and hold their own, there is room for congratulation. We venture to affirm that this can be said of no other class than farmers in such a time, for in merchandize and in other lines men are, during such visitations, tumbling over like the soldiers of an army in a battlefield, many of them to rise again in business *nevermore*.

Farming may be compared to a highway without many hills or hollows, while other lines of business are filled with these. They need not look usually for making fortunes such as a few business men make, and surely they may well be content with a pace which, though slower, is more comfortable.

There is no reason, then, for chafing with the present dulness. It is always much more laudable to be