

The Dominion Fair at Brandon

THE DOMINION FAIR

Credit must be given to the Management Committee of the Brandon Exhibition. From a financial, an artistic and educative viewpoint, the Fair was a gratifying success. So again all due praise must be given to the Committee of Management. There are some other committees not so open to commendation, but they are feeling badly enough without any added rebuke.

The outstanding feature of the Fair was the display of stock. There are few places in the world where a finer exhibition could be made or a finer parade witnessed.

Western Canada may easily become, and doubtless will become, as famous for its stock as for "its wheat". It should be so. Three things in farming go together. They are complementary. These are grain-growing, cattle-raising, the growing of legumes. A farmer who depends on wheat alone must either buy artificial fertilizer or impoverish the land. He must get back into it what he is robbing from it. The easiest way is to grow peas and raise cattle. In too many cases men have sold a dollar's worth of phosphorous for fifty cents—that is, for an immediate return of money for their wheat, they have permanently robbed the land of its most necessary ingredient.

In recent experiments made by Jas. J. Hill, he shows how by proper fertilizing the land one man may get as much from forty acres as another from three hundred acres. It is not land that is valuable, but the ingredients in the land. So we are glad to see good stock in Western Canada, for it means a revival of this old business. It means permanent wealth to the soil.

Three kinds of stock every farmer should own—horses, cattle, hogs. The horse in a few years will again be King. The demand for cattle and for butter was never greater than now. In a country where there is so much coarse grain and where vegetables grow so easily, there is no better investment than hogs. It is only the man who wants to make a fortune in a few years of new land that can afford to crop it in flax and wheat continually.

If the Brandon Fair had done nothing more than arouse a fresh interest in stock-raising, it would well have served its purpose.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

We sometimes find ourselves thinking that if we can only get good laws upon the statute books our difficulties are solved. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Over and over again the people of England, after enforcing legislation from their rulers, had to appoint committees to see that the legislation was enforced. A short time ago, a faithful policeman was appointed in New York and assigned the tasks of checking the accuracy of weights and measures. What he found was beyond imagination. It was not one or two scales which he burned in public as an object lesson. He had to take them out to the ocean in boatloads and dump them overboard. Every conceivable device was used to cheat the public. One man had an axe tied below the scale pan. Others had weights doctored with lead and false arms made. It was the same with measures. Wire was strung across the bushel measures one-fourth of the way up, berry boxes—but who needs to remark upon these. They are on the market to-day wherever we go, and one has to look twice to tell which is top and which is bottom, for the division is about the centre. A gentleman went to South America and found a fine wood for butter-plates. He shipped a machine down South and began to manufacture. Not a single plate could he sell. They were too light. Of a thousand barrels of fruit and potatoes, not a single one was up to weight. An honest man

could not live. All the time, of course, there was a law in New York making false weights and measures illegal and their use a misdemeanor.

Now, in Western Canada, we have little to complain of in this matter, but in the case of other laws there is continual failure to observe the plainest directions. In some places the liquor law is largely a dead letter, because those who are supposed to see it enforced for some reason or other are not particular. The laws against vice were openly violated until public opinion rebelled. The Child Labor Law, Compulsory Education Law, the Election Act, and other acts that any one can name, have been violated openly time and again, without a word of censure, without any action on the part of those appointed to administer the law. Indeed, it is notorious that in some cases it would be unsafe for those who administer the law to act, because the men higher up had ordered otherwise. There is in actual practice a power above the law.

This is said to emphasize the fact that the appointment of the right kind of public officials is of the utmost importance. The time has come when their appointment by an independent Commissioner seems absolutely necessary. The party system may be the only system possible at present in selecting legislatures, but the appointment of officials should not be in the hands of any one party.

This is a most important matter. Private individuals do not feel it to be their duty to see that laws are enforced. They trust to public officials. Being fairly honest as a class, our Western people do not look for dishonesty in officials of the government. Here they are often deceived. Modern governments which are unscrupulous have found that the best way to retain power is to appoint officials who know enough to wink at wrong-doing. Evidently some of them have grown so accustomed to winking that they have one eye closed all the time.

A GOOD ACTION

The average man does not take very kindly to a man with a disposition like that of the Minister of Militia. Bombast and braggadocio in these days cause laughter rather than a feeling of respect. Yet it takes a man of just this type to do things that would daunt others. Let us honor him for his onslaught on the canteen, and for his rebuke to the social dissipation that he found so common among the officers of the militia in certain sections. It has always been a failing of certain military officers to consider themselves too seriously, to adopt a lordly attitude, to pose as the social or rather the official aristocracy of the nation. This is downright nonsense. The real defenders of our liberty to-day are the ordinary everyday men and women who stand for principle, for right and purity. Brass buttons, ribbons and stars belong to flunkies just as well as to lords. It is well that the Minister of Militia has called a halt to unseemly behaviour and demanded in those at the head of a responsible service, respectful sobriety and manly humility. It is good commonsense which prompts the Montreal Witness to say:

"It is quite a modern innovation quite out of harmony with all our rollicking tales of military life, to dismiss an officer for getting drunk at dinner. In the good old days that was the usage. An officer who avoided doing so would have found himself uncomfortable at the mess. Still, if there is any one who should never get drunk it is a military officer. For one thing, his drinking is warrant for the men doing so too, and undoes the discipline of the force. For another, the lives of many men are, when occasion occurs, absolutely in the keeping of the officer. For him to be found at such a time unfit to exercise his soundest

judgment would be a crime. For him even to lower his general fitness by habits which undo the nerves and impair the judgment is unpermissible. Moderation is strictly enforced in the navy, and the officers of passenger steamships are forbidden drink while on service, and would be dismissed if they transgressed even moderately. Those in charge of railway trains now come under the same rule on most roads. So that it is not altogether a thing for amusement that our active Minister of Militia intends to discipline such officers as are found to have been the worse of their dinner. The time seems to have come for such a rule in the Canadian service."

CONSERVATION

Probably the most important gathering in Western Canada during the summer was the Forestry Convention. Quite properly the conservation of the great forest areas was under discussion. The most pleasing feature during that discussion was the address of the representative of the Canadian Pacific Railway, who explained that his Company was attempting to protect the forest areas. When the governments of the Dominion and the great railway corporations join forces, there will probably be less likelihood of a repetition of those disastrous conflagrations which have robbed Canada of its wealth and beauty.

The conservation of the forests is only one form of conservation. Every day we wastefully throw away our wealth. It is said that a German would make a fortune out of the dump heaps at some of our mines. One of the most noteworthy of recent cases of saving was the discovery by New York that its garbage is a mine of gold. The city has been paying \$51,000 a year to a firm to clear out the garbage. This year the firm raised the price to \$130,000. A new firm appeared on the scene and offered to do the work for nothing and give the city bonus of \$62,000 a year. The new company had learned how to make a dollar a ton on all garbage handled.

Here is a pointer for Western Canada. We shall get wealthy when we know how to avoid waste. That is as true of the dweller in the city as it is true of the tiller of the soil. It is as true of time as it is of matter. The man who can plan his movements so that he saves every one for a good end is surely going to succeed. The man who can dispose of every last ounce of his farm products to some useful end will make rich while others grow poor.

The greatest waste in this country as in others is the waste of life. The long winter evenings might be usefully employed in every farm home. The years from fourteen to sixteen need not be lost to so many city youths. All that is needed is a little planning and a little expenditure that will repay itself a hundred times over and in a hundred ways later on. To make money is desirable, but it is not as important as making rich one's life. A good library in the home a suitable school for the growing girl and the growing boy—these are among the best preventatives of waste of life.

The nation concerned for the conservation of its people should make the country home rich in comfort, in intellectual and social privilege and in spiritual aspiration. It is from the country home that the national life records its leaders. Twenty years ago seventy-five per cent. of the University men of Canada came from the farm house. Not more than twenty per cent. of the great leaders, even of the commercial world, were born in the City. The building place for homes is the broad bosom of old Mother Earth. The land, the farm, the country—the sweet clean open country—that is God's place for the making of a home. The country home has the first claim upon the farm.