

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

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EDITORIAL.

A Word with the Western Fair Directors.

In our report of the Western Fair attention is called to a complaint which we have heard from many quarters regarding the conspicuous position allotted to the side-show element, compared with that occupied by the magnificent display of agricultural machinery. Our enterprising manufacturers go to great trouble, and no little outlay, to make displays commensurate with the magnitude and importance of the industry, and we do not wonder at grumbling when we find the noisy "freak" fraternity occupying a choice position in the foreground, and actually blocking the way of the public to the machinery hall, which lies away back by the southern enclosure westward. The side shows are no credit to any high-class agricultural exhibition, and if a sort of necessary evil, then let them be all kept together, and shunted to the background, after some such plan as that pursued by the Toronto Industrial, so that people who do not crave that sort of thing will not have it thrust upon their notice to the prejudice of the substantial exhibitors. Another matter to which we must call attention is the reappearance on these grounds of the wheel-of-fortune gamblers, just across the way from the side shows, so that the unsophisticated had to run the gauntlet of the rock on the one hand and the whirlpool on the other. The wheel-of-fortune crowd, of whom there were several types, should be shut off the grounds altogether. Associated with each one of them were several "cappers," as they are called—in other words, decoys—employed by the principals, who manipulate the game so that the "capper" wins handsomely and is handed his cash with a great flourish, thus "roping in" a fresh lot of gullibles to try their "luck," for it is a dead sure game against them. We do not think that a fair which has attained the magnitude, excellence and substantial resources of the Western is in any way advantaged by the little revenue it gathers in from the parties running these disreputable games, the sole object of which is to fleece the unwary. Furthermore, they are illegal. By an Ontario Act of 1898 games of chance and gambling are prohibited at agricultural exhibitions, under heavy penalties. We would also suggest the desirability of taking such steps as will increase the number and character of what might be termed the industrial exhibits in the main building, which were this year not up to the mark. When an organization has been as liberal and progressive as the Western Fair Board has been in the past, we do not like finding fault, and only do so because we deem the points stated of sufficient importance to imperatively demand attention.

A Scarcity in Hay.

In our September 1st issue, high prices for some time to come were foreshadowed for hay and other stock foods, owing to the drought in many localities and enhanced values for farm stock generally. Already we notice on a good many local markets that hay is selling higher than last season. According to an American contemporary, this condition is very much more marked through that great agricultural district known as the Middle West. "The more one travels," says the writer, "the more one is impressed with the scarcity of the hay supply. Even in the richest farming districts of Illinois no one has hay enough, and some of the largest farms have only raised a sufficiency to last their stock until Christmas. This, too, on farms that as a general thing have hay to sell. When hay is as scarce as this on farms that usually have a large surplus to dispose of, it means that before many months have passed prices for this indispensable article must reach a famine level. In England, the almost unpre-

cedented drought in the hay-growing months cut the British crop to a very material extent, and there will before spring be an excellent demand in Liverpool, Glasgow, and London for American baled hay. Nowhere does there seem to be much of a surplus—the entire world is short this year on the hay crop. It would therefore seem that those who have hay to buy for the coming winter's consumption would best contract for it without delay."

Beekeeping.

Elsewhere in this issue we publish the first of a valuable series of articles on beekeeping, by Mr. Morley Pettit, son of Mr. S. T. Pettit, of apiary fame, whose right-hand man he has been for some years. By practical experience and research on a farm where the industry has been carried on most successfully, he is thoroughly up-to-date, and, withal, original in his methods, and readers engaged in or contemplating keeping bees, will, we feel sure, find his articles helpful. Rightly conducted in favorable seasons—because it is greatly dependent on natural conditions affecting bloom, etc.—the production of honey is a most interesting as well as a remunerative branch of agriculture. Skill and expert knowledge are essential to success, and it tends to a closeness of observation and care in manipulation, that afford a specially valuable training to those undertaking it. Mr. Pettit's first article deals with "Uniting Weak Colonies," and from issue to issue he will take up others of a seasonable character, so that in due course he will have fairly well covered the whole subject. We commend them to the careful study of our readers.

Our Fruit Areas Developing.

Outside of the Dominion, what one hears of Canadian fruits seems to give the impression that their production in any marked degree of excellence is limited to a few favored localities, thanks to "Our Lady of the Snows" and kindred illusions fostered by ill-informed poets and others. We all glory in the beautiful Annapolis valley, with its wealth of orchards that an Edenite might envy; in the profusion of vineyards and peach plantations of the Niagara district; in the fancy fruits of its more recent competitor, the Essex area; in the fruit-laden slopes of British Columbia, and other localities that might be specifically named; but these do not constitute Canada the staple fruit producer any more than England makes up the British Empire. Thousands upon thousands of barrels of the choicest apples in the world, not to mention plums, grapes, pears, and berries, go from other countries to the great fruit-consuming centers; but now and then some new district suddenly and quietly forges to the front as a fruit-growing locality *par excellence*.

The report we give elsewhere from the Georgian Bay (Ont.) region, a few years ago would have made an incredulous world stare, but the crop there this season is of such marked excellence that, in conjunction with the general shortage of apples, the ordinary wholesale price in the orchards has been \$2.50 per barrel for winter fruit, while individual orchards have returned their owners as much as \$350 per acre, instances also being mentioned where as much as \$3,000 has been paid for the fruit of a single orchard. Those who a few years ago set out orchards of good varieties, and have properly cared for them, are now harvesting their reward, as our correspondent very well points out. The fact of the matter is that Canadian farmers generally are only beginning to realize the great natural possibilities that there are in fruit-growing. With present increase in home and foreign consumption of fruit, we need not fear overproduction, if by advanced methods the quality of fruit is improved and cold storage and transportation facilities are kept up to date.

Prof. Robertson's Offer to the Boys and Girls.

Farmers' sons and daughters throughout Canada will be greatly interested in the letter which we publish elsewhere from Prof. Jas. W. Robertson, Canada's Agricultural Commissioner, offering \$100 in prizes for 100 selected heads each of wheat and oats. For particulars as to the division of the large sum mentioned, and the object in view, we refer our young readers to Prof. Robertson's letter.

Farm Dwelling Competition Closed.

As has been announced for several issues of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, the time for receiving the plans, photos and descriptions of farm residences for our prize competition has now expired. Judging from the large number we have received, the subject has awakened widespread attention, and we believe the publication of those selected will not only prove exceedingly interesting, but be of great practical service to farmers, particularly those who contemplate building in the near future or improving their present homes. The heavy task of passing upon the respective merits of the many plans sent in will now be undertaken, and the results we will make known at as early a date as practicable.

An O. A. C. Graduate Goes to Michigan.

Mr. J. J. Ferguson, B. S. A., has received the appointment of Instructor in Dairying and Assistant Professor of Live Stock Husbandry at the Michigan Agricultural College. Previous to this autumn, comparatively little has been undertaken in dairying at that institution, but an appropriation of \$15,000 has been set apart for a new dairy building in which earnest work will be taken up, with Mr. Ferguson at the head. In live stock husbandry Mr. Ferguson will assist Prof. Herbert W. Mumford, the Professor of Agriculture. Mr. Ferguson is a '94 graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College, in which institution he enjoyed a brilliant career, winning a silver medal and numerous other good prizes. Since he was graduated he has farmed with his father at Smith's Falls, Ont., giving especial attention to dairying and the raising of pure-bred hogs. He has done considerable very acceptable service on the Ontario Farmers' Institute staff, and last year in the Maritime Provinces. He has also been a much-appreciated contributor to the columns of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE. We bespeak for Mr. Ferguson a marked success in his new field of labor, and congratulate the Michigan Agricultural College upon securing the services of a Canadian whose attainments and practical achievements indicate his fitness for the position.

Retiring Officers Honored.

On the evening of the 13th, members of the Ontario Agricultural College staff assembled at the residence of Mr. Wm. Rennie, the retiring Farm Superintendent, who was presented with a beautiful cane, handed him by Prof. G. E. Day. The address, which was read by Prof. J. B. Reynolds, pointed out that the practical results of Mr. Rennie six years' work was a demonstration that scientific farming was synonymous with successful farming, and had done a great deal to popularize the Agricultural College with the farmers of Ontario. Mr. James McIntosh, who has for some 25 years served faithfully and well in the capacity of foreman of the Mechanical Department, is also retiring, and was presented with a handsome cane, handed him by Mr. C. A. Zavitz, the Experimentalist, a congratulatory address being read by Prof. H. H. Dean, of the Dairy Department.

President Mills, in regretting the departure of two such faithful officers from the institution, said he had no hesitation in declaring Mr. Rennie to be one of the best tillers of the soil on the continent. His system of cultivation and rotation had given the very best results, producing good crops every year and steadily improving the fertility of the farm.