FARM

Agricultural Exhibitions.

A Prize Essay by J. S. A. Laidman, Binbrook, Ont.

What are agricultural exhibitions held for? This is a question that is at once suggested by reading the above heading of this paper, and a question that very few take the trouble to answer. Well, let us see. Viewing the exhibitions as they are held and conducted at present, we find that the principal attraction is the trotting and horse-racing that have become so prevalent at our shows. Most of the farmers who take stock and produce to the shows take them for the purpose of trying to win win a little money with the prize, and also to let their neighbors see what they have got. But it is not the farmer alone who is benefited by the show; for upon visiting any of our fair grounds, we find them almost covered with an innumerable number of jewelry and peanut stands, while quack doctors and noisy side show men make the air ring, again and again, with their jargon, as if the exhibition had been planned solely for their benefit. Show day is the time for the farmers to get together and talk over the events of the next election, or deliberate on the good and bad points of a neighbor's horse. This seems to be what the fairs are for chiefly, but we find a *few* farmers who really attend them for a nobler purpose—that of getting a little information concerning their business. But, strange as it may seem, there are only a few farmers who go for the purpose of being educated, while the others get about as much benefit from them as a man would from the Farmer's Advocate when he refuses to read it.

Whose fault is it that our exhibitions are not more educational to the farmer? It is very hard to tell exactly whose fault it is, for it seems to be nobody's in particular, and yet it is partially the fault of almost everybody. In the first place, it is the farmer's lack of interest in his business, for if he would only take the interest in his work that other people take in theirs, he would add greatly to the success of the fairs, besides aiding himself. Ambitious jockeys and horsemen, who each thinks he has the best horse, are greatly to blame for the present state of affairs; and the way in which the prizes are distributed tends to lower rather than raise the standard of our exhibitions. For instance, we find on some of our prize lists that fifty or seventy-five dollars is the prize given for the best trotting horse, while not more than two dollars fall to the lot of the man who has the best two bushels of wheat. Now, when this is the case, we can scarcely call our shows Agricultural Exhibtions at all, for all the attention is paid to the animals, and scarcely any to the real agricultural part. It would be better to call our fairs "fat stock shows" and be done with, for the majority of them come nearer to that than to anything else.

How might a change be made so as to make them more educational, and what would be the educational advantages derived from them? In the first place, let every farmer take a deep interest in the exhibition and do his best to make it more beneficial to his fellows. Then, lose no time getting up a feeling against so much trotting, Why this has so much trotting. Why this has so much importance attached to it we can not see. Of what use are trotters to the average farmer? None at all; and I can see no reason why such large prizes are given to trotters and such small ones to draught or general purpose horses. The method of giving prizes should be reversed, the large prizes being given to animals that are of some use in the world, letting the others take care of themselves. The general purpose horse is the one for the farmer, and should receive the most attention at our fairs. Then it would be better if all the quack doctors and side shows were banished entirely from the grounds and keep the people from seeing more important things, and, besides, the majority of them turn out to be frauds after all.

Then let the farmer notice the peculiarities of the different breeds of horses, so that he can tell which would be the best adapted to his locality. A farmer on a stiff clay soil would not do a great deal with a span of ponies; and if he would only notice the different breeds of horses at the fair, he could tell which would be hardy, easily kept and adapted to his farm. Again, when he visits the cattle he should take particular notice of them, so that if he had a good farm for dairying he might select those cattle which would be likely to give the best returns, and if he intended to raise cattle for beef he could also make a selection in that particular line; or if he wanted a general purpose cow, here is his chance to select, for when you have a large herd of the same breed of cows you can at once see their leading characteristics much better than when only a single animal is examined. Similarly with sheep and pigs. Let him notice the breeds suited to his wants and locality, and run into that line of stock as soon as possible. Now let him step into the hall and there look at the fruits and see which are the most profitable for him to raise; and if he happens to see some of the exhibiters about, he may, by asking a few questions, soon get a great many hints on their successful cultivation and preservation. Also, among the root crops he may find out what kind of soil is adapted to the different crops, and the manure that each one requires.

Suppose a farmer wishes to buy a new reaper or mower and has not yet decided what kind to get. Let him go out among the machinery and examine the different kinds of machines. He will then form an opinion as to which one he wants; and will ask persons whom he meets how such and such a machine works, and can make a purchase to suit himself. Or, if it be plows and harrows that he requires, here is his chance to make a selection.

The agricultural exhibition is chiefly for the farmer, but the family may also receive a great deal of benefit if they only will. The boys may follow the directions given to the father; and the wife and the girls may find a great deal among the fancy work to interest and instruct them. They will see patterns of fancy work that they can look at copy when they get home, or they can see some nice way of putting up fruit; or, perhaps, in a chat with some exhibitor of butter they may learn of a better way of treating their cream to make good butter. There are many other ways that the family may be educated at the exhibition, but no more need be mentioned.

Then, there are many ways in which our exhibition may be improved. For instance let prizes be given more to agriculture people, per, as for the best grain raised by the use of some artificial manure; or give prizes for cattle fattened on different kinds of food so that the farmer may see which is the best food to give to fatten his cattle.

Another thing that could well be attached to our shows, and one that would have good results, would be for the directors to get some professor of agriculture to deliver a public lecture on the evening of the exhibition, on some department of agriculture. If this were done and a good speaker were to deliver an address on some subject, as—"How best to destroy weeds," "How to destroy insects injurious to fruit, or Canadian forestry," we believe that such an impulse would be given to agriculture in this province that our fertile Ontario would at once go far beyond all other countries and surpass even her present self as an agricultural district.

Agriculture after all is *the* business and the only one that this Dominion of ours is to become yet more famous for. We *must* have food and clothing, and that is really all any person gets, and these come from the farm.

It is the farmers that feeds the world. It is on his bounty we must rely. Then let us keep our eyes open to his value, and assist him all we can. Let the farmer keep his eyes open when he attends the exhibitions, and be on the alert for everything that will promote his cause. If he will do this and then make use of what he hears and sees, he will receive an education that will be of more value to him than silver or gold, for no one can take it away.

Demons of the Sea

The mere sight of a shark chills the blood, so villainous is his look, so rapacious the hideous leer which he casts up at those who look down upon him. Of sharks there are many kinds, most of them with a sort of fierce beauty in their shapes and the marks upon them. Such is the fin-tail, whose color is cinereous, streaked in some parts with red and dotted with small black spots. Such, too, is the sea-fox, as it used to be called, to be met in the Mediterranean, and remarkable for the great length and elegance of its tail, the body being about seven feet and the tail six feet long. But the most substantial horror of the deep is the white shark, often thirty feet long, and of an average weight of about 4,000 pounds. It is described as having a mouth furnished with a six-fold row of teeth, flat, triangular, sharp at the edges and finely serrated. When the shark is in a state of repose these dreadful teeth remain flat in the mouth, but when it seizes it spreys these rows of grinders rise like the fable growth of deadly weapons from the soil. It is not very surprising that out of this grim and merciless companion of the mariner sailing under tropical heavens many quaint and striking superstitions should have been evolved. For ages seamen have regarded it as a creature of ill-omen. They believe it capable of scenting a victim, even though he should be perfectly well and without suspicion of his death being close at hand, and that it would follow a ship that had a dead body in her for leagues and leagues. Of its veracity there is no end of stories told. A French naturalist asserts that it prefers white men to black, which we believe is pretty well known; but goes on to pay us, as a people, a curious compliment, by saying that, of all persons, sharks like Englishmen most. The same man says that a shark cut open at Marseilles was found to contain a man clad in armor in its stomach, while inside of another shark there was found a whole horse! It is comforting to read that the shark is kind to its young, taking its infant into its stomach in case of danger. One would think such an act of virtue entirely above a shark's moral nature, and that if ever it did swallow its offspring it would be rather to digest it than to preserve it.—*London Truth.*

Bee-Hunting.

The native of Australia adopts a peculiar method for discovering wild honey. He knows that bees never wander very far from home, seldom more than two miles, and he also knows that when a bee is laden with honey it makes, nearly as possible, a straight line for home.

All that is necessary, then, is to find a bee that is well laden, and follow it. But that is more easily said than done. Any boy who has tried to follow the big and gay-colored bumble-bee to its nest knows how great a task it is. But that is a mere trifle to following the sober little honey-bee, which can be lost against a gray-colored hillside.

In order to be followed, the bee must have a distinguished mark that can be easily seen; and with such a badge the Australian provides it. He gums a small tuft of white cotton to the bee's back, and thus follows it with comparative ease.

But the question now comes up, how is the cotton to be put upon the bee's back? The gum is quickly found—it is on almost any tree; the cotton grows right at hand. The bee, too, is found in almost any sweet flower, buried head first in the dusty pollen, drinking in the nectar, and showing quite plainly whether its honey-sac is full or empty. It moves a little in its eager haste to secure the delicious liquid, but perhaps a quick dab will fasten the cotton on its back. Do not try it. As the little boy told his mother, the bee is a very "quick kicker."

Watch the Australian—and he is a very stupid fellow, too, in most things. He fills his mouth with water, has his snowy tuft of cotton ready gummed, finds his bee, gently drenches it with water spurted from his mouth, picks it up while it is still indignantly shaking itself free from the water which clogs its wings, and with a dexterous touch he affixes in an instant the tell-tale cotton.

Very much out of patience, no doubt, with the sudden and unexpected rain-storm, the bee rubs off the tiny drops from its wings, tries them, rubs again, and soon—buzz! buzz! away it goes, unconsciously leading destruction and pillage to its happy home.

It Would Seem So.

Customer—"Have you any arsenic?"

Druggist—"No, sir, just out."

"Any strychnine?"

"Sold the last this morning."

"Have you Paris green?"

"None now, but I have some ordered."

"Well, what kind of poisons have you?"

"I haven't any just now. You see there was an ice-cream supper last night down here, and there is no call for anything more in that line."

FOREIGN FLUTTERINGS.

Edward King says that Zola's reputation is on the wane in France.

Professor Winnecke, of Strasburg, the discoverer of nine comets, has gone mad. Was it unlucky to stop at nine?

It is said that everybody in the town of Yakutsk, Siberia, gets drunk on New Year's Day, the bishop solemnly setting the example.

There are thirty thousand Hebrews who possess the right of residence in Moscow, and an equal number are residing there either with or without permits.

The Severn Tunnel was opened on the first of this month for coal traffic only. The formal opening will not take place until a double line is completed for passenger traffic.

Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone have gone to Germany for six weeks. They will be the guests of Lord and Lady Acton, at their villa at Tegernsee, near Munich. A quiet stay in the fine scenery and the bracing air of the Bavarian Highlands will doubtless prove highly beneficial to Mr. Gladstone's health and spirits.

German photographers have succeeded in photographing a projectile in the course of its flight, and some of these photographs show the head of condensed air which precedes every shot. It is said to be this "head" which prevents even skilful riflemen from hitting an empty egg shell when hung on a long thread. The air blows the shell out of the way of the bullet.

The Queen took particular notice of Queen Mary's tree, the famous plane near Craigmillar, when she passed it the other day, and expressed a wish to obtain a seedling and a picture of it. These were presented to Her Majesty next day, in the library of Dalkeith Palace, by the son of Colonel Borthwick, a boy of seven, who knelt and kissed the Queen's hand as he offered the gifts; and he was allowed to ride back to Edinburgh on his pony just behind the Royal carriage.

When Lord Tom Brassey, who is now on his way to America, was in the Bahamas, in order to ascertain which way the Gulf Stream was built, he threw overboard a couple of hermetically sealed soda water bottles, with a little flag and button on top. Each bottle contained a notice that the finder would receive £5 on forwarding it to Lord Tom; and, in order to facilitate the task of identification, Lady Brassey inserted a fac simile etching of the two bottles in her new book. About a week after its publication the fun commenced. Soda water bottles came pouring in by rail, van, and parcel post, until the backyard at Normanhurst became impassable and bottle racks at a premium. The lot are now to be had cheap.

English sporting papers did not predict the success of the Galatea in the recent match for the America's cup. The *Bat*, a London paper, says:—The Galatea may succeed in winning the America's Cup possibly she will not. In any case, it seems very absurd that neither last season nor this has the best boat been sent across. There may have been a reason for this seeming want of discrimination on the part of those who have had the matter in hand. Both the Genesta and Galatea were built from designs of Mr. Beaver Webb, an enterprising gentleman, who appears to have been chiefly instrumental in getting up the challenges. Mr. Webb has now announced his intention of taking up his abode in the United States with, I presume, the intention of carrying on his business of yacht-designing. On the face of it, the whole business looks like a very direct and ingenious advertisement. So long, however, as we retain such designers as Richardson and Watson, we can cheerfully spare Mr. Beaver-Webb, and if the future designing of American racing crafts be left solely in his hands it will not be very long before the America's Cup will be brought back to England again.

The physicians of Paris have been greatly interested in the case of Eudoxie Adelonin, who recently awoke from an unbroken slumber of nineteen days' duration. She had had a slumber of fifty days early in the year in the hospital where she now is and has been for many years. While she was on both occasions sleeping relays of medical men kept watch by her bedside. Some hours before her second period of somnolence ended she showed great nervous agitation, often started, and had intermittent fits of trembling. She at length opened her eyes in the midst of a loud burst of laughter, which continued for about ten minutes during that time she stared fixedly, and appeared, though laughing so hard, as if under some painful apprehension. Then she spoke as if she were addressing her mother, who was not with her, in an endearing manner, and on being handed a glass said she only saw her mother's image in it. She has since become quite cheerful, but seems to have hardly any ideas except those suggested to her by the doctors. Contrary to what is observed in most hysterical subjects, the sense of taste remains while she is under the influence of suggestion. Thus, if she is given aloes and told it is sugar, she will swallow it, but makes a wry face to show dislike. If told to drink water from a champagne glass she shows exhilaration, and if a packet, which Doctor Voisin says contains an emetic, is put into her hand, she has violent fits of nausea.

Beavers.

Every one knows that beavers dam up streams, in order to form ponds for refuge, into which their lodges open under water. It is not perhaps so generally known that they make an opening in the top of the dam to let off the surplus water, and widen or narrow this, as the stream is high or low, in order to keep the level of their pond as nearly as possible the same. When the dam is very long—some reach from three hundred to five hundred feet in length—the pressure of water is often very great, and then the beavers build a second dam below the other, the only use of which is to hold back some of the overflow water, and so neutralise some of the pressure on the upper dam. The canals are almost more wonderful than the dams. As beavers live upon the young shoots and bark of trees, which they cut down with their teeth, it is obvious that in course of time they must clear the forest near their abode. When they have done so, they dig canals to the nearest suitable timber, so as to be able to bring home their cuttings easily. Where the ground rises, they make a series of weirs and gather the water from moist places above, building large crescent-shaped dams which gather it in from a wide stretch of land and fill the canal.

WORTH KNOWING.

What a Woman Should do When Her Clothes Catch Fire.

A girl or woman who meets with this accident (of setting fire to her clothes) should immediately lie down on the floor, and so any one who goes to her assistance should instantly, if she still be erect, make her lie down, or if needful throw her down into a horizontal position and keep her in it. Sparks fly upward and flames ascend. Ignition from below mounts with fearful rapidity, and, as a result well known to experts, the fatality of disfigurement in these lamentable cases is due to the burns inflicted about the body, neck, face, and head, and not to injuries of the lower limbs. Now, the very moment that the person whose clothes are on fire is in a horizontal position on a flat surface the flames will still ascend, but only the air and not the flames encircle their victim. Time is thus gained for further action, and in such a crisis in a fight against fire a few minutes are precious, nay, priceless. Once in the prone position, the person afflicted may crawl to a bell-pull or to a door so as to clutch at one or open the other to obtain help. The draught from an open door into the room would serve to blow the flames, if any, away from the body; or again, still crawling, the sufferer may be able to secure a rug or table cover, or other article at hand, to smother any remaining flames. I say remaining flames, for as soon as the horizontal position is assumed they have no longer much to feed upon, and may either go out, as the phrase is, or may be accidentally or intentionally extinguished as the person rolls or moves upon the floor. In any case not only is time gained, but the injury inflicted is minimized. In the event of the conditions not being those of self help, but assistance from another, if it be a man who comes to the rescue, having first and instantly thrown the girl or woman down, it is easy to take off his coat and so stifle the diminished flames with this or some other suitable covering, the flames playing now upward from the lower limbs or the lower part of the body of the prostrate fellow-creature. If it be a woman who rushes to give aid, this last named condition suggests that the safer mode of rendering it is to approach the sufferer by the head and fling something over the lower part of the body, for fear of setting fire to herself. If, in these fearful accidents, the horizontal position be assumed or enforced, there could be, in short, comparative immunity and limited injury. If not, what must happen? The fire will mount; the flames (and it is these which will do the injury) will envelop the body, inside and outside the clothes, and will reach the neck and head, and then, indeed, they may be smothered by a coat or wrapper or rug, while the victim is frightfully disfigured or doomed to perish. For many years I have urged these views while lecturing on injuries from burns, and once I had an occasion to illustrate them practically, though in a comparatively trivial accident. Some dressings of a very inflammable character caught fire at the bedside of a patient in one of my surgical wards. They were promptly seized by a student, who threw them into the middle of the ward and endeavored to stamp out the flaming material. But this containing paraffine and resin adhered to his boots, and his legs, as he danced about, were getting uncomfortably hot. To his astonishment and to the undoubted surprise of every one in sight, I caught him by the collar of his coat and tripped up his legs. Instantly the flames became harmless, and were extinguished by a nurse throwing a jug of water on them.

BREVITIES.

You can be nicely cremated in Paris for the trifling sum of $3. Expense to Paris about $100.

A spouting spring has been found near Bay City, Mich.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* explains that "Galveston, Texas," is on "a Western prairie."

Brooklyn's free baths are used by 25,000 bathers every week.

New South Wales has just increased her public debt by $27,500,000.

It is estimated that the Iowa onion crop will fall 100,000 bushels short.

The month of July was the dryest on record in Iowa for twenty-five years.

The ballet of the Paris Opera comprises 1,027 women and costs $900,000 a year.

Half rate sometimes means half freight, the railroad company keeping the other half.

Ex-President Arthur has gained forty pounds since he went to New London, Conn.

Prof. Wiggins announces that a terrible windstorm will sweep through Iowa Sept. 27th.

Phantom boats are seen upon the waters of Devil's lake, Dakota, and people are nervous.

The Niagara whirlpool is rushing business. Another crank has been hustled through.

If you gib advice at all, agree with de ideas of the pussons askin' it.

Charles Stewart Parnell has a brother in Alabama. He is running a large peach plantation.

The ninth century of the introduction of Christianity into Russia will soon be celebrated at Kieff.

Pomatum was introduced in 1586. It was compounded of the pulp of apples, lard and rose water.

Mrs. Swartz, of Three Rivers, Mich., is charged with beating her three-months' old babe with a rawhide.

What annoys not a few of us who are really growing old is the conviction that in our youth we must have missed a whole world of delight now open to the children of these incomparable times.

Wanted a Pension for the Boy.

Old Lady (to Pension Office Agent)—"Mister, I want a pension for my boy."

Agent—"On what grounds?"

Old Lady—"His father was killed in the war."

Agent—"Killed in the war? Why, the boy ain't 6 years old!"

Old Lady—"His father perished in the war, I tell ye. He had the consumption, too, and it is now croppin' out in the boy. Johnny, show the gentleman how you cough."

MEN AND WOMEN.

Cornelius Vanderbilt is one of the few very rich Americans who do not make use of English crests and mottoes on the panels of their carriages. The initials of his name, C. V., are painted simply on his carriage.

Sir Robert Nicholas Fowler, Baronet, M. P. for London, and Lord Mayor of the British metropolis in 1883 and 1885, is in Toronto, accompanied by his son Mr. Thos. Fowler. They are making a tour of the American continent, Sir Robert is a successful banker in London.

Miss Carrie Suydam, of Philadelphia, underwent a severe fright, under very peculiar circumstances, not long ago. The fright brought on sickness, and she was compelled to lie in bed for a week or two longer. When she arose, her eyebrows, which, like her hair, had been raven black, were found to be snow white.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe was for more than two years the faithful and tireless nurse of her husband, Professor Calvin Stowe, who died at Hartford, Connecticut, last week. The professor's malady was Bright's disease, and it killed him by inches. Toward the end he was quite helpless. Professor Stowe was in his eighty fifth year, and he had been married to Harriet Beecher since 1836.

As the sheets of Dr. T. Sterry Hunt's forthcoming work on mineralogy have been passing through the press, the author has matured a most important generalization in chemical law, which he condenses into a brief postscript to his volume. This generalization is nothing less than the inclusion within the scope of the law of constant volumes, of both solids and liquids. Gases and vapors have long been known to conform to this law; Dr. Hunt proves that all matter conforms to it.

Mr. William Gooderham, the millionaire philanthropist of Toronto, is abroad. Says the Isle of Wight (Ryde) *Times*: A Canadian gentleman (Mr. Gooderham) has been lodging at Harcourt House, on the Strand, during the past few weeks, and we regret he did not stay longer in the town. On Thursday he gave a tea at the Gassiot school-room, Oakfield, to 400 of the working classes of the neighborhood. Gen. and Mrs. Carr Tate kindly lent the building, and were present. Addresses were delivered by Mr. Gooderham and Mr. Whisker.

The Duchesse de Laynes, who is at present in Newport, is a daughter of the Princesse Yolande De Poligaac, a famous beauty in her day. Her father is Comte de la Rochefoucauld. The duchesse is a widow, and has two children, a son and a daughter. The latter is one of the loveliest girls in Paris. The duchesse lives a very quiet life, has simple tastes, makes no display in her dresses, and is a thoroughly distinguished, amiable, and attractive gentlewoman. She is also something of an artist, a clever pupil of Cot, and signs her pictures "Yolande Dalbert."

Sir William Dawson is thus referred to in the opening of a sketch of his life in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of Aug. 18, written by Rev. H. R. Haweis: In Sir William Dawson the British Association has secured as President this year at Birmingham one of the most sagacious, learned, and personally estimable scientific men of the day. Sir William early accepted his vocation. As a boy at Pictou college, Nova Scotia, where he was educated, he was devoted to the study of Nature, and was famous for his extensive collections of such minerals, stuffed creatures, and skins of animals as belonged to his native province. He not only accumulated, but he early assimilated his knowledge. He loved it, and one of his great educational missions in life has been to make others love it. Needless to say that he soon branched out into fields of original exploration and inquiry which have made his name famous throughout the civilized world. He was born in 1820. At the age of twenty-two he fell in with Sir Charles Lyell, and in 1842 he had the good fortune to be his travelling companion during a scientific tour in Nova Scotia. They devoted themselves especially to the carboniferous rocks and such vestiges of the animal creation as were to be found in them. In 1846 we find him at the Edinburgh University studying chemistry; and in 1850 he returned to Nova Scotia to apply his experimental knowledge to geology. His name is associated with the first Normal school there, the New University of New Brunswick, and since 1855 with the McGill College and University at Montreal—over which Sir William presides as Principal, and Professor of Natural History.

Illustrating a Contribution Box.

Rev. Moses Black's remarks at the close of his sermon last Sunday night were very touching.

"No, bredren," said he, "yer kaint expec' ter enter de gates eb hebben unless yer pays fur to git in. De bookkeeper of de Lawd am takin' down whut ebbrey membah of dis congregation put in der conterbution hat, an' whut ebery one doan put in. Dem whut pays gits in de inside ob de gate, an' dem what doan pay stays on de outside an' am skeeted down into eberlastin' hell-fire an' damnation wha dere's weepin' an' wailin' an' nashin' ob teeth. Bookkeeper eb de Lawd, git ready! Bruider Webster will now pass around de conterbution hat."

Woman's Holiest Work.

In the highest, holiest type of wife-love there is always a large proportion of mother-love, that kind which finds deeper pleasure in watching over, shielding, guarding, warding off trouble from him in whom is centred a woman's holiest affections than in being watched over and shielded herself. To spend and be spent for him is her chief joy. To watch and nurse is woman's holiest work, not to be pampered, petted, and kept from care and responsibility until she becomes the most useless thing on earth—a helpless baby in a woman's form.

The Tariff Question.

"Are you in favor of direct or indirect taxation?"

"I'm in favor of none at all. I am the only man whose position on the tariff can be understood."

Kate Field says that women hear with their eyes. We reckon that Kate is right. When a number of women are conversing at the same time it is all that any one of them can do with her ears to hear self talk.