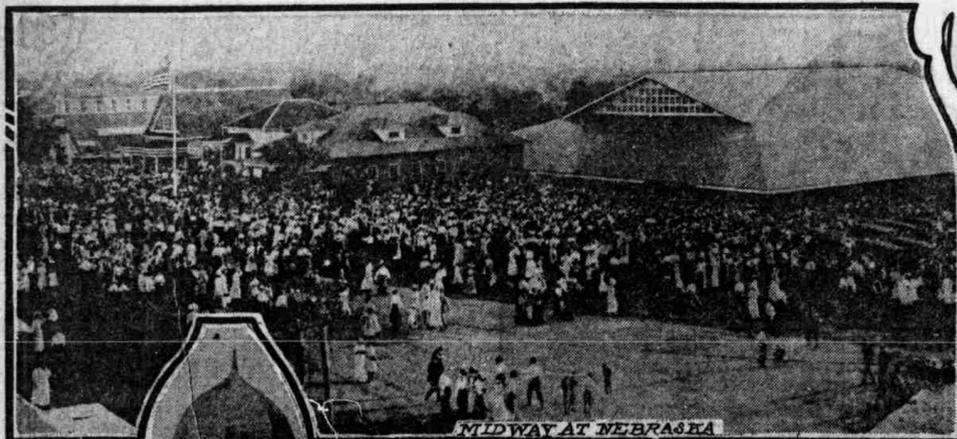


Agriculture Exhibitions as Factors in Public Education



MIDWAY AT NEBRASKA



ENTRANCE AT ILLINOIS



AVENUE AT WISCONSIN



LIBERAL ARTS HALL - IOWA



MIDWAY AT SPOKANE

By G. W. HERVEY.

THE central west, which comprises Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and South Dakota, the great grain growing and live stock producing district of the United States, has developed in exposition importance and magnitude beyond any similar area of agricultural country in the world. Their state and county fairs have been brought to a high standard of exposition grandeur and excellence. The richness and productivity of their soil, the quality and superiority of their live stock, the ambition and in-

telligence of their citizens combine to make this a most desirable and prosperous agricultural district of country. The agricultural fair throughout these states has been organized as a means of exploiting the agricultural industries and interests of these several commonwealths, of the developing of the agricultural resources and the promotion of agricultural education, which is at the basis of agricultural prosperity.

The agricultural fair from its earliest inception was based upon the principal of comparison and the exhibition of the best. This incentive to a friendly rivalry in contest has been the stimulating

influence which has given the agricultural fair its educational bearings, and which has placed a premium upon excellence in quality as a just recognition of merit. The ambition of man to excel in ownership and production is only exceeded by his ambition to acquire knowledge. The agricultural fair and exposition is the setting forth of things acquired, the presentation of principles in animal and plant breeding, growth and development involving improvement. The agricultural fair is a great demonstration station where the experimenters, experts in the various lines of agricultural and indus-

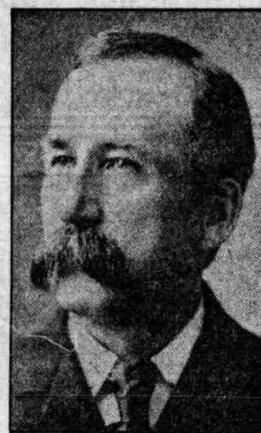
trial enterprise, congregated annually to report their achievements and measure by comparison for the degree of merit to which each is entitled. The fair is the promoter, the promoter, in fact, that sows the seed of contest in the mind of man, that creates ambition within the ambitious to become aggressive rivals in production of the very best that the skill and ingenuity of intelligent man can cause to be brought forth as breeder, grower or manufacturer.

The agricultural fair is becoming more and more a community necessity. The improved methods of farming that are now taught, studied and practiced makes each farmer, to some degree at least, an experimenter and scientific investigator in crop growing. This class of farmers are interested in what their neighbors are doing, how they are doing it, and in their results. Here develops the necessity and demand for the county fair and introduces the backing for its successful operation. This spirit of scientific farm operation does not stop here; it is of the expansive sort; it eventually reaches out till it knows no bounds; it is not circumscribed by county boundaries. The more progressive farmers soon become of state notoriety in their

work and production and demand stronger competition than the county fair affords, thus the state fair becomes a necessity from this feature of exhibition standpoint.

The agricultural fair stands for thrift, industry, enterprise, all that means advancement, progress and the building up of the commercial and manufacturing interests of the country or community in which it is located. The agricultural fair might be said to represent the outgrowth of intelligence and agricultural progress that this particular community has attained. The agricultural fair to be true to its name and purpose, should be an educational exhibition in all its departments and features. The tendency now throughout the agricultural communities is toward education; not merely education in the knowledge of books, but in a knowledge of things and in the operation of methods and their results.

Man's admiration for the best, for those things that reach the highest degree of perfection, is only the natural outgrowth of intelligence and the acquiring of skill in the particular branch of industry involved. The agricultural fair should be so planned and so directed in



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all its exhibition features as to present the instructive and educational aspect of the display to the eye of the public. The trained exhibitor will always present most prominently the suggestive features of his display in order to enlist the attention of the visitor, the sightseer, the inquirer for information. The agricultural fair in all its departments should be suggestive of the possibilities of the highest degree of excellence to be attained in the particular branch or line of product displayed. The agricultural fair built upon the principles outlined and conscientiously guarded in every feature and form of exhibit and concession, that nothing is admitted to the fair grounds or remains on exhibition or in operation under its sanction that is not meritorious as a clean and creditable amusement feature, cannot but merit and receive the commendation and approval of intelligent people.

The educational demands of the country are increasing. In every department of industry or business there is improvement introduced that is the result of educational effort. This is made quite pronounced at the fair, where the best of everything is congregated, where the principle of exhibition is based upon the best in quality. While inferiority used in comparison with the best may serve an educational purpose in the demonstration of quality by observation and comparison, there is no direct benefit in the creation of inferiority, whether in animal or vegetable life. The educational influence that the fair is exerting upon the mind of the public is a strong factor in support of this principle of training. The fair is increasing in popularity among the people because of the advantages it is capable of offering in the higher ideals of excellence

In every form of production and manufacture.

In order to obtain the greatest educational advantage from the agricultural fair it is necessary that every feature of exhibition, amusement and entertainment introduced upon the fair grounds be of an educational tendency, of a character and influence capable of appealing to the finer sensibilities of its patrons. Each department on the fair grounds should become educational within itself by being under the supervision of a skilled and trained instructor, in the special work or industry in charge, thus affording visitors the advantage of capable and qualified persons to answer intelligently any and all questions pertaining to the work or industry. This is the foundation principle upon which the educational fair is built.

The two great industries grain growing and stock growing, embody not only the commercial features of economical production of soil and animal products, but they emphasize the skillful blending together of animal and plant life by the most ingenious and profit saving plan of manufacture in order to attain the highest degree of commercial product. Thus we find today a very remarkable degree of intelligence with this class of farm operators, men who are students in the strictest application of the term.

The educational advantages of the farmer and stock grower have in recent years advanced along practical and scientific lines, about as fast as the average man has been able to grasp opportunities and keep pace with the system of agricultural training, experiment station work, farmer's institute instruction and other features of educational persuasion made practical under demonstration methods. The progress that has been made in agricultural enterprise, the advancement that has been made in educational interests among the people, changed conditions that have been brought about on the farm in the last quarter of a century, compared with the preceding, marks a period remarkable for its influence in study, investigation and attainments in agricultural skill and proficiency in every branch of this greatly diversified industry called agricultural.

As intensified agriculture becomes more and more a fixed principle in methods of cultivation and operation of farm interests for increased production of crop there will follow improvement in quality and disposition to raise the standard of excellence along every line of animal production. These two branches of farm industry are so closely allied in ultimate results that their blending together on the same farm and under the same management has resulted in making the American farmer what he in truth has been represented, the most independent of men in vocation and operation of his business interests.

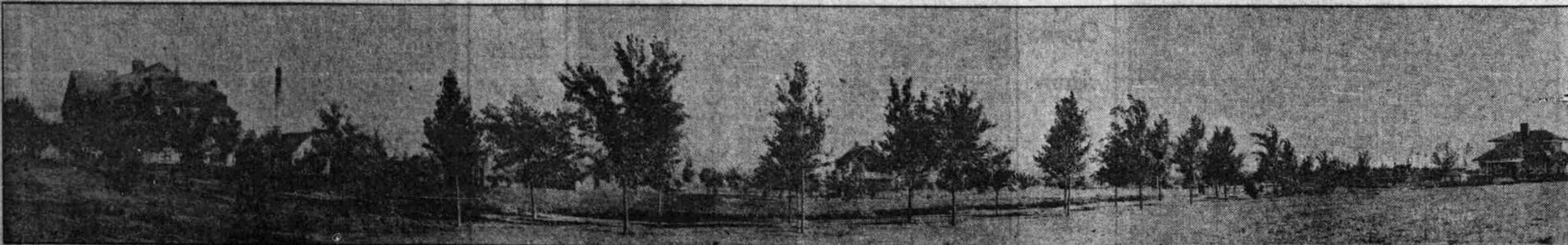
All farmers recognize the need of becoming better acquainted with breed and quality of the animals usual to the farm.

(Continued on Page Twelve.)

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