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Editorial.

THE ROYAL EASTER SHOW.

Tradition associates the Easter season in Sydney with the Royal Easter Show. After a lapse of six years, whilst its showground was occupied by the military authorities, the Royal Agricultural Society now plans to provide bigger and better Easter Shows. Such a Show is in prospect for Easter 1947.

In the humdrum world of business, it is customary every so often to pause and take stock of one's assets, calculate one's profit, estimate one's progress and re-orientate one's objectives in the light of past events.

The Sydney Royal Show does indeed serve as a reflex of Australia's national progress, where primary and secondary industries vie, one with another, to display their best and most noteworthy products. Here visitors can find laid out before them much of what is best, typical and most progressive in Australian life—rural and industrial. All roads, in fact, at Easter lead to the Show. It is the Mecca of the farmer as it is of the city dweller.

Much water has passed under the bridge since the date of the last Show. The following statistics, picked at random, serve to illustrate this point:—The passengers carried on the New South Wales Railways, for instance, have risen in number from 194,000,000 in 1941 to 267,000,000 in 1946. During the same period, tram passengers have increased in number from 311,000,000 to 417,000,000. Savings bank deposits have moved from £87,750,000 in 1941 to £236,250,000 in 1946. The total value of production of the principal industries in New South Wales for the year 1944-45—pastoral, agriculture, dairying, poultry and bees, forests, fisheries, trapping, mines and quarries, etc.—amounted to nearly £108,500,000 and nearly £160,000,000 for the manufacturing industries, making a total of over £268,000,000. The total value of production per square mile of the State's area was £867, made up of approximately £276 for the rural industries, £74 for forests, fisheries, mines, etc., and £517 for the manufacturing industries. The value of production for the preceding year was even higher at a figure of £284,000,000.

We live in an era of post-war development. Cities will continue to depend upon the farm population for food and raw materials. Cities will still be the centres of industry, learning, science and arts.

During the war period, one most important phase of the national effort was to produce the maximum volume of foodstuffs for the needs of the forces, the civilian population and for export to our kinsmen in Great Britain. With a return to the problems of peace we find an ever-growing recognition of the need for the development of a healthy and well-balanced Agriculture, as being the greatest single contribution to the economic, as well as the social, well-being of the nation. In close association with this, of course, are the various moves towards the provision of more ample rural amenities through the decentralisation of industries to rural areas, the development of rural electrification, and water services, the provision of better library facilities in country areas, etc.

The agricultural problem is not a separate thing to be disposed of superficially by the city man. The interests of city and country are closely interlocked and if the Royal Easter Show had nothing else to its credit than the forcing of this relationship more and more into the public consciousness, it would more than justify its existence.