

nor for that matter the British farmer either. The British farm for years has had to bear a rent out of all proportion to its earning value. That rent was fixed in days gone by when the classes enjoyed what seemed to be a prescriptive right to live upon the masses. Foreign grain was excluded from the country by prohibitory duties that the price of home grown grain might be kept unduly high; and what the farm seemed to earn by its sale of wheat at an inflated price went to the landlord as good fat rent. The fall in the capital value of English farm lands is only the natural settling of the water to its true level when the artificial dam has been taken away.

#### United States Department of Agriculture.

The activity of the United States Department of Agriculture, under the presidency of Mr. Secretary Wilson, is extraordinary. We revert to it again and again, as we do, not so much as matter of news (though even in that respect we should think it extremely interesting to our readers) as to point to it as an object lesson—both to incite our own departments of agriculture to continue any similar lines of policy which they may have adopted for the promotion of agricultural trade and industry, and to encourage our people to be generous and hearty in their support of their governments whenever they are seen to be earnestly trying to follow out such lines. For we may as well open our eyes to the fact at once: the business of the world is getting to be more and more an affair of governments; and competition in the future will not be so much between individuals as between nations. That nation or state which is most enterprising in securing for its people the best possible facilities for a thorough industrial education, the best means for the safe and cheap transportation of its products, and the best advantages for the sale of its products in profitable markets, will forge ahead, and leave its competitors far behind.

Mr. Wilson expresses himself as pretty well pleased with the results of his efforts to introduce American butter into the English market. Previous to the beginning of his efforts the sale of American butter to England amounted to only one per cent. of England's total import. The importation this year, however, from the United States will be much heavier than ever before. Mr. Wilson has had to contend with the very poor reputation which American butter had acquired for itself in England; but he has partially overcome this difficulty, and he says that he will overcome it wholly: for he intends to keep on shipping fine butter to England until the English people are thoroughly satisfied that American creamery butter is as good butter as can be obtained anywhere. As soon as he gets the way opened up for American butter, he intends to take up the introduction into the English market of American cheese. And soon as he has made the British people familiar with American cheese and butter, he proposes "to get them into the markets of continental Europe." When this is done, he says, his next step will be to make use of the Mississippi and the Gulf route to get all perishable food products, not only butter and cheese, but meats, fruits, vegetables, etc., as well, into Europe by means of cold storage.

The above is a big programme, but we have little doubt that Mr. Wilson will carry it out. His objects are wholly in harmony with modern political economy. The good sense of the people of to-day demands that governments shall prove themselves useful.

#### British versus Canadian Agriculture.

The British farmer is in a bad way; and though he has had a Royal Commission to investigate the causes of his distress, he is still far from comforted. The trouble is that he will persist in following a line of agriculture in which he is now and ever shall be hopelessly beaten. Like many a Canadian farmer, he thinks that his mainstay is wheat, and his spirits are accustomed to rise and fall as the wheat price moves up or down. But inasmuch as

on the whole the wheat price is ruling lower and lower year by year, he has become utterly discouraged. The truth is that so much is he out of the race in the growing of wheat that his own crops scarcely affect wheat prices at all; and as likely as not he finds prices lowest when his crop are shortest. And yet the very best market in the world for the things he *can* raise profitably (as compared with other farmers) lies at his very door. Britain imports \$200,000,000 of milk, butter, cheese, cream, fruit, poultry, eggs, and vegetables, and yet the British farmer produces only the smallest fraction of these products. So far away is he from being an important factor in the supply of these commodities to his own markets, that to produce only ten per cent. of the quantity of these commodities which is annually imported into Britain from other countries, would mean an entire change in his system of farm management. Why he does not thus take advantage of his own unequalled home market for specialized products seems to us Canadians wholly inexplicable. It certainly is a little amusing to read that the British farmer should need to be given such advice as this:

"In the multiplication of agricultural colleges, of dairy schools, creameries, and factories, in the proper marketing of perishable goods, in the improvement of live stock, and by seeing that every grain of seed of every variety, every plant of every kind, every animal of every species, is of the best possible type for propagation and reproduction, lies the hope of the British farmer."

And yet this is the advice which even to-day has to be given him by the ablest and wisest counsellors. What seems strange to us is that the necessity of this advice has not been generally recognized long since! for the principles of action laid down in it have been the common-places of action in the work of bettering the condition of the Canadian farmer for years.

#### An Irish Department of Agriculture.

*The Irish Homestead*, and other popular organs in Ireland are advocating the establishment of an "Irish Department of Agriculture." They are constantly pointing to what Canada has achieved by means of its Provincial and Dominion Government agricultural bureaus. The competition which Irish farmers are meeting from Canadian farmers in the London market and other large markets of England is arousing them to a sense of their own lack of public and national encouragement. The efforts recently made by the Government of Canada to provide cold storage transportation across the Atlantic have been especially efficacious in inciting them to ask for a department of agriculture of their own. *The Homestead* has this to say of Canadian enterprise, and its bearing on Irish agriculture:

Canada's appearance in the field within the past four years is directly and entirely due to the action of the Dominion Ministry of Agriculture. We showed this several weeks ago. The information which we published then as to the latest move of the Canadian Department of Agriculture (the cold storage project) proved the fact most forcibly. Without such machinery in modern times Irish industry is as a sailing ship racing with a steamer. As the loss which our own country suffers, and the corresponding gain of the foreigner, is going on increasing all the time, such a department of government for Ireland is not only a great need but an urgent one. What are all those state-subsidized and state-equipped refrigerating steamers, coming over from Canada for, but to take money from the pockets of the Irish farmer—to shove his produce down lower and lower in the market? While we wait, undefended, our position is being captured from us by these armor-plated, quick-firing competitors with all their modern equipment. Their trade with the British market is increasing month by month, and increasing by leaps and bounds. Canada's export of butter to Great Britain, as we mentioned above, has quadrupled in four years. All this progress is at the expense of Irish agriculture. As the value of the Canadian sales goes up the value of the Irish sales goes down. As we put it last week, every additional pound of foreign butter or bacon or other kindred produce sold in the British market means a pound of Irish produce displaced. If this process goes on unchecked for five or six years longer Ireland will be squeezed out of the market altogether, and it will be almost impossible for her to recover the lost ground. To help to check it we want a Department of Agriculture and Industry of the most approved type, like those of our go-ahead, co-operative competitors abroad, and we want it without delay. While there may be other measures of reform for Ireland which can wait, this is one which cannot.

#### Jerseys at Home.

Mr. Plumb, of the Indiana Experiment Station, has been visiting the Island of Jersey, seeing the far famed Jersey cattle in their native home. In an interesting letter to a recent number of *The Jersey Bulletin* he has been giving an account of his visit and of his impressions. In the island altogether there are 9,000 cows and 12,000 heifers, bulls, and steers, a total of 21,000. The population numbers about 60,000. The herds are small and distributed generally over the island. Mr. Plumb thinks that about six animals to a herd is the average size. The farms are very small. The land is cultivated like a garden. A few acres constitute a farm. Potatoes are the principal crop, almost the sole export crop. The potatoes are sent to London. They are planted in February and in three months are harvested, and then the land is fitted for some other crop.

Mr. Plumb thinks the native Jersey superior in constitution and udder formation to the average American Jersey. Thin, narrow chests are decidedly the exception, while the fore udder is certainly better developed than in America. He says that on the island one does not see so many "refined" looking animals as will be found in the States. The native stock is certainly more robust in appearance at any rate than the Jerseys we see on this continent. The reason for this is that on the island the cattle pasture out all the year long.

White spots are very common, some cows being marked very strikingly. This is not considered an objection. White noses and tongues are found even in the best animals. One cow, the daughter of the first prize aged cow at the Manchester "Royal" this year, had a "red nose." This affects her value for sale; yet her owner refused \$425 for her, and holds her at \$500. The English and American fanciers demand solid colors, black tongue and switch, etc.; but the island breeders think this is a craze and that priding to it has been detrimental to the physical development of the stock. Fancy points are more disregarded on the island than ever before.

The bulls used are mainly one and two year old bulls. Mr. Plumb saw no bull over three years old. The heifers are bred so as to drop their first calves at about two years old. The calves are taken from their dams at once after birth and are fed on new milk for a week or so. Then they are changed gradually to skim-milk, and this is used as their staple growing food.

Grain is scarcely ever fed. Pasture is relied upon mainly, and then hay and roots. A wide variety of roots is seen, but mangolds are mostly used. Parsnips however are very popular, and the islanders esteem their nutritive properties very highly.

#### Sheep Raising in Ohio and Canada.

Secretary Wilson, in a recent speech at the Ohio State Fair, strongly advised the Ohio sheep husbandmen to be sure to raise sheep that were good for mutton as well as for wool. While the fleece of a fine-wooled sheep sold more per pound than the fleece of a good mutton-producing sheep the total value of the fleece of the one differed little from the total value of the fleece of the other, while the difference in the value of the mutton produced was very considerable. He also strongly advised the keeping of sheep that mature early and the preparation of a portion of the yearly production of lambs for market before they were a year old. He asserted that the conditions for raising good mutton sheep were as favorable in Ohio as in any part of the world. This advice of Secretary Wilson is right to the point, and fits the case of the Canadian sheep-raiser quite as well as that of the Ohio sheep-raiser. And it is some satisfaction to know that the conditions for growing good mutton sheep in eastern Canada are just as favorable as they are in Ohio.

#### The Hog Cholera as a Schoolmaster.

The dreadful epidemic of cholera which the swine industry of the Middle States has experi-