

Our London (Eng.) Letter.

The rainfall of 1903, up to the end of last month, having broken all records, is now resting on its laurels, and with the advent of December the weather became what we call seasonable; that is, of the description more generally associated with Christmastide in story books than in real life. With the drop in temperature the spirits of our meat traders rose in anticipation of a continuance of favorable meteorological conditions. Yesterday these fond hopes were "knocked on the head," as the weather reverted to its usual muggy state, and business, consequently, is again slow and uninspired. To-day a black fog hangs over London like a funeral pall.

Since my last letter, 21st November, the Canadian export season from Montreal has closed, and the last shipments are now on our markets. From what I can gather from those in the "know" here, the season has not been a successful one financially. The total numbers to end of season are 156,741 cattle, and 66,304 sheep, as against 79,937 cattle and 45,455 sheep the year previous.

The great annual Smithfield Club Show, which opens on Monday, is of course the central event of the Metropolitan year, and bids fair to be one of the most successful in the history of the famous club. The three great shows already held this season—Norwich, Birmingham and Edinburgh—have been well supported, both as regards entries and attendance.

Within the last few days the farming world on this side has lost two good friends, in the deaths of Mr. Jasper More, M.P., and Sir John Blundell Maple, M.P. As a tenant farmer's advocate the former had earned a great name for himself. The latter, apart from his connection with the world-renowned firm which bears his name, will be long remembered as a famous breeder of pedigree stock. At his home farm, Sir J. Blundell Maple bred and fed Shorthorns and Aberdeen-Angus cattle, and Hampshire Down sheep. It was here, also, that his world-famous stud of Shire horses was kept, representatives of which have found their way to wherever the Shire horse is known and appreciated.

The fiscal question with us maintains the lead it has established in the public mind. Every day "great speeches" are poured into the ears of the working men by the leading statesmen on both sides. Truth to tell, the working man is getting a bit tired of it all, and what the outcome of the "raging, tearing propaganda" will be it is hard to forecast. This, however, is clear, the masses do not like the idea of their food being dearer, and fiscal questions are, after all, pre-eminently bread-and-butter questions. If Mr. Chamberlain can show that with the increased cost of living the workers will receive higher wages and better employment his views will prevail. But can he? "There's the rub"!

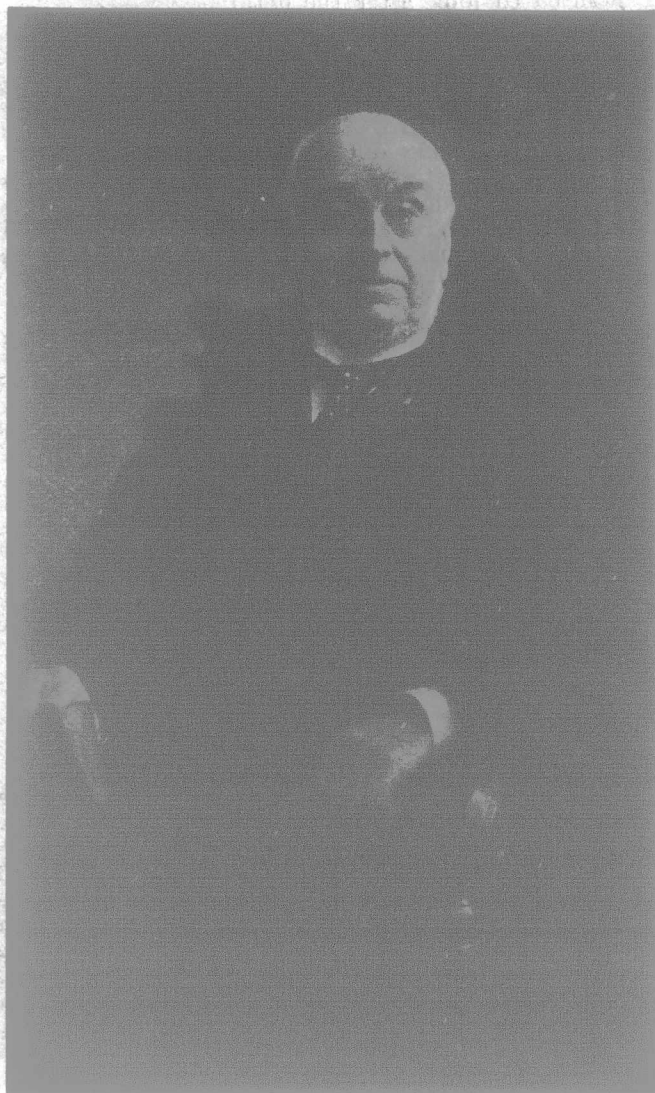
Another question which our traders are determined to bring to the front at the next general election—which may come in the spring of 1904—is the removal of the restrictions on the importation of Canadian store cattle. A clear case has been made out by all the parties interested against the Act of 1896, and although our present Minister of Agriculture, Lord Onslow, is very hostile, the agitation now going on all over England and Scotland will probably lead him to modify his views. On the reassembling of Parliament the question will be brought forward very prominently, quite a number of M.P.'s having recently been induced to view the demands of British agriculturists in a much more favorable light. The complimentary luncheon and presentation to Mr. George Roddick, President of the Liverpool Foreign Cattle-traders' Association, and founder of the trans-Atlantic cattle trade, which took place at the Exchange Station Hotel, Liverpool, on 27th November, was an unqualified success. Mr. W. S. Williamson, who presided at the function, was supported by the majority of the trade representatives. Mr. Williamson is the well-known Canadian salesman so long associated in business with Mr. Tom Bater and Mr. "Sandy" Goodfellow. The accompanying portrait of Mr. Roddick will, no doubt, interest your readers.

With regard to the markets, prices at Deptford have practically remained unchanged since my last. The very best Canadian bullocks are not being quoted at more than 3s. 8d. per stone, of 8 lbs. Sheep met a fair trade at 3s. 10d. for the best pens. On Monday a bunch of 113 lambs realized 5s. 2d. Although trade may be described as firm, only exceptionally choice lots of American cattle have made 4s. In the provision departments Canadian produce continues to meet with a steady enquiry, but the ample supplies in hand and on the way have kept prices at their recent low level. The very best Canadian bacon may be quoted at 48s. to 50s.; second-class and outside brands down to 43s. Cheese, both fancy, white and colored, are in steady demand at 52s. to 54s. Butter is also steady; best creamery making from 94s. to 100s., and factory sorts 84s. to 92s. Prices in the poultry market are sky-high for everything. A. J. SCOTT.

Dec. 5th, 1903.

[Editorial Note.—Mr. Williamson, referred to

in the above letter, is a native of Brampton, Peel Co., Ontario, and owns a beautiful home there yet. Mr. Tom Bater, his former partner some thirty years ago, was herdsman in charge of the Shorthorn herd of John Snell & Sons, Snelgrove, Ont. He was one of the first exporters of cattle to Great Britain, and later a commission salesman at Liverpool, where he became quite wealthy.]



Mr. Geo. Roddick, Liverpool, Eng.

FARM.

Dr. A. G. Hopkins Rejoins The Farmer's Advocate Staff.

Dr. A. G. Hopkins, B. Agr., D.V.M., is about to rejoin the editorial staff of the weekly "Farmer's Advocate" at Winnipeg. During the past year and a half he has been engaged on the Dominion Government Veterinary Service, looking after the inspection of pure-bred stock for export to Canada from the Old Country, where he also visited all the leading breeding establishments and thoroughly investigated the conditions of the Canadian dressed meat, cattle and horse trades. Upon returning to Canada he continued important work in the veterinary service, latterly in British Columbia. His love for agricultural journalism, however, did not abate, and he continued to contribute many valuable articles to our columns.

Dr. Hopkins originally joined the "Farmer's Advocate" staff on Jan. 1st, 1901, as associate editor, during the managing editorship of Mr. Geo. H. Greig, who, on his appointment as Livestock Commissioner for Manitoba, was succeeded as editorial chief of the paper by W. J. Black, B.S.A., who will now have the valued aid of Dr. Hopkins. Mr. M. D. Geddes will continue to devote his energies to the interests of the "Farmer's Advocate" and its readers in our branch office at Calgary.

Special Clubbing Rate.

In order to greatly increase our subscription list, we make the following liberal club rate: One renewal and one new subscriber, \$2.50; one renewal and two new subscribers, \$3.25. Regular subscription price, \$1.50 per year (52 numbers). Show prospective subscribers a copy of the weekly. Every farmer should have it. Address, "Farmer's Advocate," London, Ont.

Oil in Grey County.

A reader in Grey County has struck oil in rock at 124 feet, and would like to know whether it is a valuable find, and what to do with it? Oil found at this depth is known as surface oil, and is frequently found under similar conditions and at varying depths in the neighborhood of one hundred feet. Such deposits are seldom lasting, but frequently indicate greater supplies lower down. In certain localities in Lambton County the wells are sunk to 400 feet, but the exact depth at which the most oil is found is only ascertained after several trials have been made by sinking wells to different depths. As the indications for oil are good, it would be well for our reader to correspond with or visit some one in the oil districts of Lambton Co., in order to get a practical knowledge of the method of working his well.

Samples of Seed Grain.

Dr. Wm. Saunders, Director of the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, writes us: "Another distribution will be made this season of samples of the most productive sorts of grain to Canadian farmers for the improvement of seed. The stock for distribution is of the very best, and has been secured mainly from the excellent crops at the branch Experimental Farm, Indian Head, N.W.T. The distribution this spring will consist of samples of oats, spring wheat, barley, Indian corn and potatoes. The quantities of oats, wheat and barley to be sent this year will be 4 lbs. of oats and 5 lbs. of wheat or barley, sufficient to sow one-twentieth of an acre. The samples of Indian corn and potatoes will weigh 8 lbs., as heretofore. Every farmer may apply, but only one sample can be sent to each applicant; hence, if an individual receives a sample of oats he cannot also receive one of wheat, barley or potatoes, and applications for more than one sample for one household cannot be entertained. These samples will be sent free of charge through the mail. Applications should be addressed to the Director of Experimental Farms, Ottawa, and may be sent in any time before the 1st of March, after which the lists will be closed, so that all the samples asked for may be sent out in good time for sowing. Parties writing should mention the sort or variety they would prefer, and should the available stock of the kind asked for be exhausted, some other good sort will be sent in its place."

Satisfactory Beef Ring.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

I have been asked by members of our beef association to give you the average weights of the dressed beeves killed by our beef ring. We started on the 20-share plan two years ago, and the members are all well satisfied. We cut by the chart taken from the "Advocate." The first year on our 20-share plan the average weight was 531 pounds, and this last year our average weight was 541½ pounds. Would be glad to hear from any other beef associations to know if they are making a better average of two-year-olds.

So satisfactory has been the working of our Town Line Beef Association, which has been in operation for thirteen years, that at the annual meeting last month an oyster supper was tendered Mr. Walkington, who during all that time has dressed the beeves, as a mark of appreciation of his work. An interesting programme of addresses and music for the meeting, which was brightened by the presence of many of the ladies of the families interested, was provided, and a very pleasant evening was spent. W. W. York Co., Ont.

Farmers' Institute Problems.

Dr. Jas. Mills, of the O. A. C., Guelph, to whom the Ontario Farmers' Institute system owes its existence, took charge of the session of workers during the Winter Fair, who met to discuss the needs of the organization. In the opinion of the Doctor, any lack of interest in the meeting of the Institute was due to the local secretary, and the records of different branches throughout the Province he claimed bore him out in the statement. Secretaries are not necessarily expected to do all the work of the executive committee, but should be able to secure men to do it for their own interest.

Several of those present believed that the practice of holding meetings on Saturday, and especially on Saturday evening, should be abandoned.

Mr. MacMillan, Huron, thought there might be more local talent engaged.

Mr. Kydd, Norfolk, would like to see advertising more widely done.

Dr. Robertson, Halton, said that the effort of the Institute now should be to build up character, by bringing out the young people to discuss subjects of vital interest.