

PROSPECTS OF MORE BRITISH TRADE.

Something About Wool Consuls, a Board of Trade Mission, and Company Laws.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Manchester, July 10, 1906.

Toronto letters, accompanied by samples, invite various North of England wool-spinners to buy Canadian wool. At least a million pounds, it is stated, will be available for the English market consequent on the inability of Canadian producers of blankets to pay the very high prices ruling for raw material. It is not known that business has resulted and probably it has not, as buyers are working from hand to mouth.

The English clip has not sold at the prices that farmers expected and values are lower in Bradford for wools of the coarser types. Canadian wool is not unknown to our users. Some of it is admired. Some sorts have proved deceptive, losing quality at each succeeding process, whereas Australian is consistently improved by the work put upon it. Wool prices, of course, are determined by comparative values. Less prejudice than ever is attached to the origins of woollen materials.

A Trade of Commerce report from Ottawa shows that Canadians are considering ways of making British Consuls abroad useful to themselves. The report calls certain replies received from the corps in the United States "splendid testimony to the efficiency of the service." But that dictum is surely premature. By waiting a little longer Canadians are reasonably sure to find our Consuls very willing, but very helpless persons in most commercial matters. They will do whatever they feel it their duty to do, and the results will, perhaps, be satisfying. The report does not say whether an important rule of the service has been relaxed. British Consuls' replies on trade subjects have to be made through the Foreign Office. Must replies to Canada be made via London?

It surprises us to learn that Canada has no commercial agent in the great adjacent country, and the more so when we remember that America has some two hundred odd in Canada. Now we only neglect our own relations; in strange lands we have between six and seven hundred Consular agents. On occasion they are of considerable service to perplexed traders, but their chief commercial functions relate to shipping. They have a diplomatic standing which tends to put them out of touch with sordid commerce. The more they are asked the more will H. M. Consuls get to know, and the better it will be for all who rely on their assistance.

Looking for Correspondents.

Manchester provision merchants have been impressing on Mr. Grigg, the Trade Commissioner to Canada, their opinion that Canada should have a regular service of steam-communications up the Ship Canal. Mr. Grigg replied that the matter was more for ship-owners on this side than for the Canadian Government. Although that be so, it may be as well to put on record the demand for regular sailings of vessels fitted with refrigerators. The Commissioner has gleaned little that is definite showing the English view of terms of credit in Canada. He anticipates that Canadians will tell him that Germans give more credit than English firms. The opinion is a safe one to hazard for, turn where you will in papers dealing with foreign commerce, that saying confronts one. Not the least important of the Commissioner's duty is the appointment of correspondents in the chief trade centres of the Dominion, who are to be the permanent referees on Canadian trade sub-

jects. Possibly some one can assist Mr. Grigg in finding good men for this responsible duty.

A committee of the House of Commons has recommended the amendment of our company laws. One question considered was whether companies registered abroad and carrying on business here should be required to comply with certain requirements as to prospectuses or to make deposits for the security of British creditors. The committee avoids extremes, by calling for a copy of the annual balance-sheet to be filed with the registrar, as well as a copy of charters, statutes and articles of association, and the name of a person authorized to sue or be sued on behalf of the strange company. Canadian companies using the word "limited" and inviting subscriptions of capital would be compelled to state the company's place or origin, and on its English premises would have to put up its full name and its home address. These proposed amendments will alarm nobody. Nor will it greatly trouble those devious persons who avoid legal restrictions by issuing companies without formal prospectuses, if they are obliged to file particulars with a registrar of the sort necessary in a proper prospectus.

TOWARDS HUDSON BAY.

Minerals, Timber, and Farm Lands North of Existing Settlements.

The Government railroad, on which is Cobalt, will intersect the Grand Trunk Pacific, which will be built east and west, somewhere about the region of Lake Abitibi. Already the rails are beyond the "height of land" which divides the St. Lawrence basin from the country tributary to the great Canadian sea. The T. and N.O. road may be extended to Hudson Bay so as to bring the unsurpassed supplies of fish in northern waters to the populations of middle Canada and the central States.

Boston Township Iron Range.

The iron range, discovered there a few years ago in the township of Boston, fifty miles north-west of New Liskeard, consists of magnetite, interbanded with jasper and other silicious material. It is similar to formations in the Temagami and other parts of Ontario, though its width is generally not more than 90 or 100 feet.

The Abitibi Region.

The exploratory survey of the northern clay belt west of Lake Abitibi, ordered by Mr. T. W. Gibson, Director of the Bureau of Mines, in 1904 resulted in a practical plotting out of that region from a geological (and mineralogical) and from an agricultural standpoint. In an area of such extent the conditions naturally vary very widely, but there are parts where the prospects for settlement appear to be very good. In the basin of the Abitibi, for instance, there is much mixed timber, the poplar and balsam particularly being fine timber, reaching 60 to 80 feet in height and sometimes a diameter of three feet, though the average would be 15 to 20 inches. Spruce grows high, but rarely reaches a diameter exceeding two feet. The soil is a good quality of clay, well drained by many creeks. Some of the clay land is wet, however, owing, not to lower elevation, but to its flatness. What summer frosts occur are likely to be dissipated as a future result of the clearing up of the moss-covered land. The best areas for settlement are the Abitibi basin, for an average of three miles on either side the river, the basin of the Frederick House River for a width of two miles, the basin of the Mattagami River for a rather less width, and the parts adjoining the main tributaries of these rivers.

This bridge over the White River is a sample of Government railroad engineering. It is nearer to Hudson Bay than any similar structure. It is in the fertile clay belt, north of Cobalt, where construction is especially difficult.

