

THE WOOL CLIP OF 1867.

THE wool clip of the Province will come in somewhat later this year than usual. The season is very backward, and in many sections the farmers have got but little of their spring work done. These circumstances must throw shearing operations rather late, although speculations with regard to the extent of the clip, and the prices likely to be obtained for it, are commencing to be indulged in by those more immediately concerned.

In all probability, the quantity of wool produced throughout Canada will be larger this year than ever. We have made very steady and regular progress in this respect in the past; almost every year has witnessed an increase in the number of sheep kept by farmers, and consequently a larger amount of wool has been produced. There is no reason to suppose that 1867 will prove an exception to the rule, for if prices were not equal last year to those obtained during one or two previous ones, they at least afforded wool-growers a reasonable return, and therefore would not operate to check production. It may be safely concluded, then, that the crop of 1867 will, in point of quality, manifest a progressive increase equal to previous years.

Last spring very different opinions were expressed with regard to the prices which wool would command in the market. The very heavy duties imposed by the United States frightened not a few. They feared that the restrictions imposed would almost entirely shut Canadian wool out of the American markets, and reasoned therefrom, that the latitude of 25c. per lb. would be reached. Many took opposite ground. They reasoned that the Americans had lately entered into the production of worsteds to a considerable extent, that they could not run their mills without our long wools, (not producing half enough for that purpose themselves,) and, consequently, they would have to buy our combing wools at nearly such prices as we saw fit to place upon them. Neither of these opinions have proved entirely sound. Unfortunately, several large worsted manufactories in the States were forced to stop work, thus decreasing the demand from that quarter; on the other hand, however, it was found that we were not so dependent on the American market as an outlet for our wool, as was supposed, and that our rising woollen establishments were able themselves to take a large portion of the clip at very fair prices. The price of wool, consequently, neither ran up very high or down very low; but maintained a pretty fair medium between both extremes.

We do not anticipate any very great change during the approaching wool season. Our position and circumstances are much the same as last year. The United States tariff continues as exorbitant as ever. Our exports of wool across the lines largely fell off last year, and cannot be expected to increase whilst such restrictions continue to be imposed. Some shipments were made to England and France during last fall, and these may possibly be increased during 1867; but the main reliance of our wool-growers will rest upon our home manufacturers, and there is every reason to believe that they will require a much larger quantity of wool than usual, as new mills are about to go into operation in almost every section of the country. It is a fortunate circumstance for the farming community, that we now have establishments of our own which can work up the greater part of our annual wool clip; if it were not for this fact, wool-growers would find themselves in a very tight place at the present time.

Whilst the increased demand of our home market will tend to keep up the price of wool, there are a few other circumstances which will have a contrary effect. Probably the most potent of these is the plentiful supply of cotton which the British markets have exhibited for some time. Many in England anticipated a scarcity of cotton this spring, and a corresponding rise in prices. Experience has, however, proved the contrary. The supply has been abundant, and with the prospect of increased cultivation of cotton throughout the Southern States, the price of wool, and even of woollen fabrics, may be effected.

In closing this article, we would advise farmers to use increased care in preparing their wool for market, if they desire to secure the highest prices. Last season buyers paid more attention than usual to the classification of wools, and there is every reason to believe that the different qualities will affect prices still more this year than ever before. This is very necessary, both in the interests of manufacturers who have to make wool into cloth, and of the intelligent farmer who grows the finer samples and suitably prepares it for use. Coarse, dirty wool should no more command as good

a price as finer and cleaner, than satinette should command the same price as broadcloth, and we may, therefore, expect in future to see a closer connection between quality and price than has been customary heretofore. Let our farmers then take greater care in washing their sheep, and in afterwards preserving the fleece from objectionable matter calculated to decrease its value.

The wool season usually begins about the end of May. This year we think there will be very little, if any, offered before the whole clip is marketed. Our wool crop has now become very valuable, and during the season, always puts a considerable amount of money into circulation.

THE NEW DOMINION.

PUBLIC WORKS EXPENDITURE.

THE list of new and costly public works lately undertaken and projected in Canada alone, assures us that an important era has dawned. First, there is the Intercolonial Railway, which will cost in round numbers \$20,000,000, and which will open up new tracts of country for settlement, and by peopling them, bring the populations of Canada and the Maritime Provinces close together. The expenditure of such a large sum of money will be beneficially felt throughout all parts of Canada and the Lower Provinces. A large proportion of it will find its way to every part of the country where anything is to be sold or where anything is manufactured that will be required for that great international work. Twenty millions of dollars is a large sum to be added to the capital of this country, and although it is only a loan and will have to be repaid with interest, and although the road it will construct will require to be sustained by an annual outlay, yet in the end the new dominion will be the richer for it. While we shall have to pay four per cent. for the loan, we shall, it is to be hoped, so invest it and turn it over and over that it shall pay us four hundred per cent. Besides the railway, we shall have a new and fertile country, and an increased and well-to-do population, to be divided between Canada and the Lower Provinces. Cities, towns and villages, will arise where now there are only Indian huts and ancient forests.

Passing over the minor railway projects and public works of Lower Canada of which there are many spoken of, let us next instance that great and useful work, the damming of the Lachine Rapids, by which Montreal will have at her disposal the greatest water privilege and water power on the Continent. This work will not cost less than \$2,000,000, the outlay of which will go to swell the riches of the commercial capital of British North America, and to raise her to her destined position as the rival of the great sea-port towns of the Atlantic. Besides this work, the Government stand pledged to begin at no distant day the construction of fortifications which will cost from one to two millions of dollars, an expenditure which will, of course, add to the wealth and importance of the city which it is designed to protect. The Ottawa and Georgian Bay Canal—so favorably recommended for political and commercial reasons—is not likely to be built until other works of more pressing necessity are completed. But, without doubt, the day will come, and fortuitous events now unforeseen may hasten it, when this work of national importance will be taken in hand. Its estimated cost of \$20,000,000 is a bagatelle beside the good that would result to the country if it were accomplished. And if the Western portion of the Confederacy should unwisely insist upon an expenditure within its domain of a sum equivalent to that provided for the Intercolonial, no public work has such claims for preference as the Ottawa and Georgian Bay Canal.

To come to Upper Canada, we find at once a rival project to that work in the Toronto and Georgian Bay Canal. But in point of utility or political importance, or commercial value or expense, the one bears no adequate comparison to the other. The Ottawa and Georgian Bay Canal would cost \$20,000,000, the Toronto and Georgian Bay Canal would cost \$40,000,000. The lockage and tolls on the two routes, say, would be equal; but while by the Toronto route a vessel would escape a sail through Lake Huron, the river St. Clair, Lake St. Clair, the Detroit river, Lake Erie and the Welland Canal and its tolls and locks, the Ottawa route would save a journey through not only all these, but further, the sail through Lake Ontario and the entire distance of the River St. Lawrence to Montreal,

and all the St. Lawrence Canals and their tolls. Again, in political importance, the one is inferior to the other. But this is so self-evident and so well acknowledged that we need not say more on that head. Notwithstanding all this, however, we would, by no means, decry the Toronto and Georgian Bay Canal. Both it and its rival can exist and be profitable. It is even probable that the Toronto work may be undertaken before the other. Great as the proposed outlay will be, there are capitalists who are willing to go into it and to furnish a portion of the capital, and what with local and political aid and grants of land so freely spoken of, we may any day hear that the second sod has been turned and that the canal has been actually commenced. The expenditure of \$40,000,000, or even half or quarter that amount, between Toronto and the Georgian Bay Canal, could not fail to give an additional impetus to the rapidly growing country North and West of Toronto.

But Toronto does not wait on the long-talked of and oft-ridiculed canal to add to its wealth and importance. Within the past six months cheap railways have been all the rage, and several of them have been so far forwarded to completion that companies have been formed, resolutions have been passed, stock has been subscribed, and incorporations have been sought. Among the lines most popular are two main ones, the one to run North-East and the other North-West of the city. When completed they will form the two sides of a goodly triangle, of which Toronto will be the apex or converging point. The one running North-West is intended to pass through the fertile and populous Counties of Grey and Bruce, and to have its terminus in Owen Sound with branch lines to Walkerton and Kincardine. Such a line through a populous country where railways are unknown could not fail to pay, and to prove a great advantage to the western peninsula of Upper Canada. It would enhance the value of all farm produce, and consequently of all farms. It would also give a profitable market for cordwood, now a drug in the North-Western Counties. Besides this line, a competing one is spoken of from Guelph. This latter line would, from its starting point, pass through the Counties of Wellington, Grey and Bruce, but it would be longer than the Toronto and Owen Sound line—taking Toronto as its Eastern terminus. As, however, the Grand Trunk extends to Guelph, the actual length of line to be constructed would be shorter than the Toronto route. It is by no means improbable that the difficulty between the two routes will be settled by the construction of the two lines; and no doubt in time there will be work enough for both of them to do. They are both to be constructed on the cheap principle.

The second main line from Toronto that we spoke of is to run north east to Balsam Lake. It is to be called the Toronto and Nipissing railway, a name indicating an intention to extend it one day as far north as Lake Nipissing, on the Ottawa and Georgian Bay canal route. The line to Balsam Lake and one to Beaverton would no doubt also be constructed, and would open up the back country of the counties of York, Ontario, and Victoria, and be followed by the happiest results. This line is to be on the cheap principle likewise. Hamilton has also its cheap railroad project in the North Western Railway. As its name indicates it would strike off in the direction of Guelph. Beyond that town it could not fail to come into competition with the rival lines we have spoken of to be constructed from Guelph and Toronto, north-west to Owen Sound. Lastly an agitation has long existed for the construction of a line from Brantford or some point thereabouts on the Buffalo and Goderich line to Harrisburg, or some other place on the Great Western line. We do not hear that this short line is to be built on the cheap principle. Probably as it will be used in connection with the Great Western railway it is not.

We have now finished the list of proposed railways that are to be begun with the new confederation, and our readers will see that the list is a large one, and that it embraces the expenditure of a very large sum of money and the opening up of an important and extensive portion of the new Dominion.

We have yet, however, to allude to other public works, the construction of which will also produce important results and be attended with considerable outlay. First among those works will be the opening up of the great North-west territory, extending to the Rocky Mountains. What sum, if any, will have to be paid to get rid of the Hudson's Bay Company's claims over this territory it is foreign to our purpose to enquire. Assuming, however, the new Dominion to get possession of the country, the first thing to be done