

at the array of charges. Freight (twice as much as it should be), docking, warehousing, cartage, tolls, disbursements, portage, receiving, collecting, sale, expenses, sampling, insurance, brokerage, commission, telegrams, postage, bills of lading, and last, but not least, the term del credere, under which they can do as much robbing as they like, and no one will be the wiser. More yet, commission of general agent on this side, commission of all sub-agents on this side, a grab here and a pull there, with the poor farmer standing by groaning, when he has the remedy in his own hands.

R. J. MESSENGER.

O. A. C. Boys Victorious in Debate.

Following the comment of the London journalist, who gave his opinion that the farmers presented the best case to the Tariff Commission in the Western City, and evinced the best grasp of general trade and economic conditions of all those who appeared before it, it is interesting to note that the Farmers' College at Guelph worthily upholds the reputation of the profession for clear exposition and effective argument. In an inter-collegiate debate last month with the Western University, London, Ont., the O. A. C. representatives scored a victory of 164 points to 155, and on December 7th they won the decision in a similar contest with Woodstock College. It is noteworthy that the O. A. C. boys, though good, husky young men, have not, as a rule, distinguished their alma mater particularly in debate, partly for lack of opportunity for early training, and partly, no doubt, because the muscles of most of them have been more accustomed to work than to play, hence they have not shone in athletics as have the students in some other institutions, but when it comes to a test of intellect they can more than hold their own. This is a hopeful sign. It means that in the future agriculture will be more and more ably championed in the councils of the nation, and instead of being prey of other classes its rights will be ably and successfully demanded.

Commissioner Castle's Estimate of Western Wheat Crop.

Mr. C. C. Castle, Warehouse Commissioner, Winnipeg, has issued the following estimate of the wheat situation in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta on November 30th: Estimated yield, 88,418,000 bushels; inspected to date, 30,525 cars, 30,525,000 bushels; in store in country elevators of C. P. R., 13,229,052 bushels; in store in country elevators, C. N. R., 2,129,038 bushels; total, 15,694,942 bushels. In transit, C. P. R., 2,129,038 bushels; C. N. R., 577,000 bushels; total, 2,159,038 bushels. Milled west of Winnipeg to date, 3,159,000 bushels; in farmers' hands, 36,633,020 bushels; total, 88,418,000 bushels; less required for country mills, 5,591,000 bushels; less required for seed, 8,500,000 bushels; total, 14,091,000 bushels. Balance to market, 22,542,020 bushels. Add amount in store and in transit, 18,100,980 bushels. Balance available to move by railway, 40,643,000 bushels.

Western Farmers on the Tariff.

Before the Tariff Commission sitting at Brandon, on December 6th, the Manitoba Grain-growers' Association appeared in a gathering comprising representatives of over eighty local associations. The main points asked were: That rough lumber be retained on the free list; that dressed lumber be placed on the free list; that substantial reductions be made in the present tariff on agricultural implements, threshing machinery and vehicles; that substantial reductions be made in woollens and cottons; that all gauges of fence wire, gasoline and cement be made free; that fruit be also put on the free list; that the British preference be restored to 33 1-3 per cent., and that in consideration of these abolitions and reductions the existing tariff on agricultural products be swept away.

The idea of preserving the valuable home market to the farmers was scouted as a myth, of service only to the advocates of protection, who used it as a lever in procuring substantial advantages for themselves.

Pure Seed Campaign.

A special campaign in the interests of seed grain and weed eradication is to be carried on in the Provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan, and the final arrangements are being completed. The C. P. R. and C. N. R. will furnish free transportation by special train to the lecturers carrying on the work, two large coaches being fitted up as lecture rooms. All meetings will be held in the daytime, and will last from one to one and a half hours. Mr. George H. Greig, of Winnipeg, has charge of the arranging of these special meetings, and the staff of lecturers will consist of Messrs. Angus Mackay and S. A. Bedford, Superintendents of the Experimental Farms at Brandon and Indian Head; Dr. James Fletcher, of the Central Experimental Farm, and G. H. Clark, Seed Commissioner. Two representatives of each Province will be with the delegation in their respective provinces.

An Impartial Commentator.

Allow me to congratulate you upon the high standard maintained in your most excellent paper. In these days of selfishness and lowered ideals, it is refreshing to read your impartial comments on current affairs, especially your vigorous protest against the pernicious so-called attractions of our annual fairs. May the coming year be one of great prosperity to you.

(REV.) T. T. GEORGE.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

Principal Mt. Elgin Institute.

Notes from Ireland.

SAFEGUARDING IRISH PRODUCE.

In my last letter I mentioned that a deputation had been appointed to wait upon the Department of Agriculture to urge the importance of having one or more inspectors resident in England to look after the interests of Irish farm produce. Since that the deputation has received a most cordial reception from Sir Horace Plunkett, the Vice-President of the Department, who expressed his sympathy with the suggestion, and stated that he was quite sure that his Department would now look out for a suitable official to take up the work. The deputation called attention to the fact that American laddies are often packed in Irish firkins, and sold as Irish salt firkin butter; that factory and other brands of butter are packed into pyramid boxes bearing brands as "pure creamery butter," and that in several parts of England, at certain times of the year, buyers ask for a special description of Irish kiels, representing them afterwards as Danish packets, when the Danish butter is at its worst, the packets being sold as Danish butter. Such are some of the trials of the poor Irish producer, and it is generally hoped that the steps now taken will lead to an effective remedy. Fair, honest competition nobody can object to, but fraudulent practices deserve nothing but the strongest condemnation, whoever the victim may be.

THIS YEAR'S HARVEST.

Within the past week I have had an opportunity of acquainting myself with reliable reports written by practical farmers in every county in Ireland regarding the results of the past season's harvest. I was much struck by the unanimity of these statements regarding the effects of the financial results of the year's working caused by the very low prices current for cattle. All over the country complaints on this score have been rife, and this circumstance alone accounts for any murmuring among farmers. The season, climatically speaking, was a trying one in the early part, and a prolonged drouth during summer did not make matters as propitious as could have been wished, but still, notwithstanding this drawback, most of the principal crops came on well, and the year, on the whole, regarded from the aspect of crop yield, consequently holds its own in comparison with other seasons. All the grain crops are reported as satisfactory, although, as might have been anticipated from the character of the weather, the yield of straw has not been quite up to the usual amount.

Potatoes, which, as everybody knows, constitute a staple crop for the Irish farmer, be he a big landholder or a humble peasant, have turned out exceptionally well and remarkably free from blight or disease. Mangels have also left but little room for complaint, though of turnips the results have been variable, but on the whole satisfactory. Though not so heavy as last year, the hay crop was saved in excellent condition, and any deficiency in bulk is likely to be counterbalanced by superior feeding quality. Prices for sheep and pigs were well maintained throughout the year, and the general consensus of opinion is that the season has proved a good average one.

THE QUESTION OF RAILWAY RATES.

To say that the development of any agricultural country is to a great extent dependent upon the facilities afforded by its railways for the transit of produce, is to make an assertion the accuracy of which can never be questioned. In Ireland this subject is one of peculiar importance to farmers, and in view of this, it is very regrettable that the state of affairs existing should be such as to give rise to the very widespread and bitter complaints among agriculturists to be heard at all hands. Some idea of the character of the situation at present may be obtained from the utterance of several who are competent to express opinions on the point, and many such have no hesitation in declaring that one of the greatest obstacles in the way of the agricultural development of Ireland lies in the exorbitant rates charged by the railway companies. Indeed, so strong has the feeling become in some quarters regarding the matter that one prominent and accepted authority recently stated in public that as things are at present there is no use of talking about improving agriculture, because if the farmer produced anything that will yield a higher price, the increase will go into the pockets of the railway companies! The opinion prevails that it is the province of the Government to step in and devise some plan for effecting a remedy for the existing difficulty, and in this connection attention has been drawn to the fact that in Canada it was not an unusual thing for the Government to go to the railway authorities when a new district or new country was being opened up and offer to indemnify them against any loss if they would carry the produce of such a district at reduced rates. Whether such a course would lend itself to general adoption in Ireland is a matter for consideration, but, while there is no desire to injure the interests of the railway people or the shareholders, there is no doubt whatever that the

satisfactory settlement of the difficulty is absolutely essential to the material progress of the country from an agricultural and industrial point of view.

EMERALD ISLE.

Farm Notes from Maine.

Old settlers say that it has been the driest season in the history of Aroostook County. Children have been playing where once the beautiful Aroostook river flowed with swift current. In this section wells are being sunk, and water can be had for the pumping. Barns and cellars are full; the farmer has little to complain of, and, confident of a prosperous winter's business, is planning to increase his acreage another year. The potato grower has a fine crop on hand; some are holding for the \$2.00 mark, others will sell at a quarter less, while there is more business at the present prices than the railroad can handle. The shortage of cars has always been a cause of complaint, and this year is no exception. The heavy shippers can lease an ordinary car for the season, line the bottom and sides at a cost of some \$35, and be reasonably sure of its prompt return, but the small grower must wait his regular turn about. The latest quotations were \$1.50 in all upriver towns except Moulton, where \$1.60 was cited.

Threshing machines are busy, and the yield of grain was reported as excellent for a dry season, wheat yield being 25 to 30 bushels to the acre; oats, 40 to 50. Stock is coming to the barns looking well, and considerable will be carried through the winter.

The Grange of this county has taken up the telephone question, and is working for lower rates. Quite a discussion obtained at the last two meetings of Pomona, and at the request of the company a committee has been appointed for a conference with the managers. The patrons are determined to run their own lines if a satisfactory agreement upon price cannot be reached. The outcome of this conference is awaited with interest.

The State assessors report the number of the sheep in 1904 as 214,838. The present year will see a shrinkage of 20,000. With dairy interest almost at high-water mark, together with the high price of wool (35 cents) in many parts of the State, a marked increase in this line of live stock is expected. M. B. A.

To the Right or Left?

In the Maritime Provinces, and on Vancouver Island, B. C., the Old-Country rule obtains that teams or bicycles meeting turn to the left. Many a catastrophe has been narrowly averted when a visitor to these parts, either unknowingly or by force of habit, has attempted to pass on the right. If behind a horse the animal generally puts the driver right, but the bicyclist has no intelligent beast to remind him. Why do they stick to this old custom? is a question frequently asked. The answer usually reveals a reason or two that the American or Upper Canadian never had thought of. Drivers everywhere sit in the middle or on the right side of the seat. In turning to the left the man handling the ribbons is on the side nearest the other rig—a distinct advantage in a "close shave." Apart from this point either way is as good as the other, once you get used to it, and as practically the whole continent of North America has established the custom of turning to the right, it will eventually, no doubt, become the rule in the provinces mentioned. Already it is being adopted in parts of New Brunswick along the Maine boundary, and while it will be slower of adoption in the insular parts, and in peninsular Nova Scotia, it is bound to come.

This instance has a value beyond mere information. It illustrates, by anticipation if you like, the irrevocable manner in which the greater rules the less. Sectional customs and provincial ideas may persist never so stubbornly, but the irresistible tendency is to universal customs, universal aspirations and universal ideals, and in the fusing process, while a good practice or a good idea is occasionally appropriated from the lesser element, the overwhelming tendency is the other way.

Worth Many Dollars.

In forwarding a question to our Veterinary Department, Fred J. Gilstorf, Wellington Co., writes as follows about the benefit he has derived through the Questions and Answers columns of the "Farmer's Advocate":

"I have a registered heifer, four years old, that always used to be very fat, and I could not get her in calf. For about a year I tried every means I knew, but to no use. Eight months ago I wrote to the 'Farmer's Advocate,' and you advised an operation which had the desired effect, and she is now about calving. If she has luck it is worth \$100 to me."

It is all right to advise people not to worry, and the best thing in the world is for every such adviser to be able to take his own advice—but say—when you get to that point, dearie, you will be just about ready to get measured for those shining robes we used to sing about at Sunday School.