

EXPORT TRADE.

For years past almost seven-eighths of the export trade of Canada has been to Great Britain and the United States, the remnant of a few odd millions going to other and more distant countries. A compilation which we made in 1895 showed the proportions of Canadian produce exported that year, total value \$1,005,886,858, to have been as follows to different countries:

Proportion sent to Great Britain	60.53 per cent.
" United States	29.12 "
" European countries	1.72 "
" West Indies	3.54 "
" Newfoundland	2.48 "
" S. A. and Australia	1.02 "
" Other countries	1.60 "

Total..... 100.00 per cent.

These proportions have probably altered since then, for we are sending more goods now to China and Japan, more to the West Indies and undoubtedly more to Australia. The letters of our Sydney correspondent show that Canadian direct exporters have made a distinct impression on the market of that province and Victoria. To-day's letter shows, too, in a curious way, how the Canadian manufacturer is sometimes bedeviled by the 'cute Yankee. Our people, or some of them, need to learn some of the wisdom of the serpent.

OUR AUSTRALIAN LETTER.

ONE OR TWO POINTED ILLUSTRATIONS.

Amongst the articles which Australian importers are now seeking in the Dominion of Canada are flour, wheat, potatoes, onions, beans, peas, apples, bacon and hams, butter and eggs. Most of the articles named have come in larger or smaller quantities and have demonstrated that taken at the right time and in the right way there is a business to be done in them at a profit. If I recollect aright *The Monetary Times* some time ago had a paragraph concerning a gentleman who was rampaging through Canada with a can of preserved mutton in his coat tail pocket, terrifying the souls of your farmers with the story that if this Australian line of steamers were continued it would ruin them by overwhelming their markets with Australian cheap produce. A single trip of one of these steamers has brought more agricultural produce into this country than the whole line has carried out of it, to Canada, since the line was started. Take this frozen mutton for example. Last year the steamers took to Canada about \$5,000 worth, about enough to last the Australian pilgrims to the loopydyke three months. The year before they carried none. The canned mutton trade amounted to a little more, about \$8,000 for the year. This but displaced so much of Armour's Chicago beef. Against this take the fact that a steamer not belonging to the line has just arrived from Vancouver with thirty thousand dollars worth of Northwest flour on board, and this was a cargo which the regular liner had shut out for want of space.

The trade in these articles is not large just yet, except in wheat and flour, for several reasons. One is that Canadians are only learning "how to do it" and to have connections at this end established. This is slow work and early experiments are likely to be failures. Take potatoes as an instance. A consignment arrived here about a year ago, but did not land in good condition, and did not bring enough to pay the freight over. It was naturally concluded that there was no trade here. But the Canadian Commissioner believed that shipped at the right time and in the right way there was business to be done. He had a sample of potatoes shipped as he instructed and it verified his theory. To-day half a dozen Sydney produce men are looking after the trade. There is not sufficient shipping capacity. The steamers are too large for Australian exports, but unequal to the Canadian exports. At prices quoted the steamers for August, September and October could be loaded with potatoes alone. The available space is not used to the utmost by Canadians. They are a bit too slow. Here there are a number of branches of United States houses who are always on the watch for chances. By the time that the Canadian has made his

arrangements by mail the opportunity has passed, or if not, on his leisurely proceeding to get space on the outgoing steamer he finds his Yankee competitor has stepped in long before him and taken up the whole room by cable and the Canadian is left with his finger in his mouth groaning at his "hard luck."

Here is another illustration. I was in the Canadian office when a gentleman came in and said, "Well, I have a consignment of doors coming from New York. Your Canadians are too slow." It appears that many months ago Mr. Larke thought that a trade in doors could be done from Eastern Canada, when the circumstances became propitious, and he reported on the fact, and wrote to some Canadian firms about it. They, perhaps, found from the prices quoted that there was no money in it and did not reply to the letter. But the circumstances came, freight from New York was cut down to one-half and prices went up here. The Yankee was all ready with his information and acted. The Canadian was not. The tortoise can catch the hare when the latter is asleep, but the Yankee hare is not that sort of a creature. It may be possible that the doors are of Canadian make and the producer may be doing as well by selling to this American middleman, as by shipping direct, but again, he may not. At all events he does not know whether he is or not, and besides he is never certain how long that sort of trade will last. The common ending of it is that as soon as it becomes of any value the New Yorker passes it over to a fellow countryman.

There is a Canadian business man in Melbourne now who tells the following story: Some time ago he thought he would try and do some business with Australia and entered into correspondence with a well-known New York export house. He got favorable letters in reply and sent on samples and prices of his product. Nothing came of it and he concluded to go down to New York and see the firm for himself. He was asked to sit in the outer office for a few minutes as the principal whom he wished to see was engaged. While sitting there he heard the principal say to his visitor:

"Now, here are the samples and the prices, and unless you can equal them we shall have to send our orders to this Canadian manufacturer."

The two who were talking seemed to come to terms, and on the visitor retiring from the room the waiting Canadian recognized him as a United States manufacturer in the same line of business as himself. On going into the office there were his own samples and price list spread out on the table. He announced himself: "I am Mr. —, of —. These are my samples and price lists. I will take the price lists now and you will have the goodness to have these samples sent to my hotel. This is all my business with you, sir. Good morning."

Continuing the story this Canadian said, "I concluded I had better come out to Australia and see what I could do for myself." Mr. Gardiner of the Gardiner Tool Company, of Sherbrooke, Que., is in Sydney looking into the prospects of business.

Fairly good rains have fallen over a considerable portion of the continent. They were badly needed by both the pastoralist and the grain grower.

Federation was carried in the other colonies who were parties to the compact, but lost in New South Wales. It got a majority of about six thousand on the vote cast, but lacked about eight thousand of the minimum of eighty thousand required. The Premier is endeavoring to get the Premiers of the other colonies to meet him and see whether some changes in the bill cannot be agreed upon that will make it more acceptable to this colony. His overtures have not been well received. He is accused at home with being a traitor to the cause and by his hostile criticisms to have brought about its defeat here, and two of the Premiers of the other colonies have plainly intimated that they have no confidence in him, and Sir George Turner, while agreeing to meet him, requires that he shall give some hostage that in case an agreement can be reached Mr. Reid will be true to it. So the prospects are not particularly bright for the conference. The question will next be carried into the general elections, which take place in August and become the chief issue thereat.

F. W.

Sydney, N. S. W., 18th June, 1898.

The British Columbia Chamber of Mines has resolved to compile and publish in pamphlet form a general review of the mining industry of British Columbia, during the first half of this year.