

general trade the *Shipping List* declares "the disturbances occasioned by the outbreak of labor came at a time when the progressive development of trade was most promising, 'but the prospective improvement then in sight has been irretrievably lost and trade must now move quietly on until the favoring influences of good crops, prosperous industry and growth of confidence are felt.'"

### THE COLONIAL EXHIBITION.

Products of Canada are no new thing at British or foreign exhibitions; London, Philadelphia, Paris, Antwerp, have each and all afforded publicity to Canadian wares. But the present Colonial and Indian Exhibition is a field in which this country may be said to be pitted against her equals, instead of, as on former occasions, against nations which are industrially her superiors by reason of greater age and experience. And the testimony which many observers have borne seems to be that while the display made by the Dominion is less ornate and picturesque than those made by India and Australia, yet in variety and commercial value it is far the best of the whole.

It was a disappointment, doubtless, that the non-arrival of a large portion of the exhibits—whether through official blundering or by reason of the delay of exhibitors themselves in violation of regulations—left such annoying blanks in the Canadian Court on the opening day. But this misfortune has been atoned for and the display now made by the Dominion of Canada is such as we may be reasonably proud of. The show does not lack for spectators, either. In the first week the attendance reached 128,000, twenty-one thousand having entered on one day. In the second week of May 117,500 attended, and when the Queen made her appearance the "Healthies" and the "Inventories," as those exhibition are nick-named by the Londoners, were surpassed in point of crowd.

Some novel features are furnished to our British cousins by "the Colonists," as we are still called. Agricultural machinery in motion is something that had not before been seen at any such show. Then the practical illustration of fish-breeding is one which was given, if we remember rightly, by Canada in the 1883 exhibition. It was one of the primary principles of Artemas Ward, in his capacity of showman, that to be successful, "you must knock the people; you must fetch them; you must git their attenthun." And this seems to have been well understood by Mr. Begg, of the C. P. R. That gentleman, we are told, devised and superintended the agricultural trophy, which occupies the middle of the east transept in the centre gallery. This structure, which is described elsewhere, may be said to answer the showman's purpose, for it certainly "fetches" the people, being rarely without an admiring and enquiring crowd around it. The specimens of woods from our forests mingle with the grains and grasses from the prairie. Cereals and vegetables are to be seen side by side with the home-made implements by which they are cultivated or gathered. We "take

the lead in cheese and dairy products," according to a London journal, while the popular verdict upon the Canadian fruit display is that it "makes our mouths water," as it well may.

It must have seemed a bold thing for Canada to exhibit her manufactured goods in the very heart of the workshop of the world, and a very forlorn hope that we might thereby secure additional markets for them. But it ought to be reassuring to us, as a people, besides being a proof of the efficacy of advertising on a grand scale, to find the display now made resulting already in additional business with people far abroad.

The *Mail's* correspondent tells us that, as a direct consequence of this show, an order for 3,500 instruments has been booked by an Ontario organ manufacturing concern. And a Montreal firm, according to the same authority, is taking orders freely for its revolving desks and other office furniture. The beautiful displays of manufactured furs by a Quebec house and by the Hudson's Bay Co. attracted the notice and the 'commands' of Royalty; gasstoves made by a London (Ont.) company are selling fast, while Toronto biscuit makers are audaciously adding novelties to the gustatory pleasures of the much-lunching and heavy-dining Englishman.

### COMPETITION FOR DEPOSITS.

A communicated article recently appeared in the *Montreal Herald*, on the effect of the competition of the government savings' banks on the chartered banks of the Maritime Provinces. The complaint is that the government, by paying an excessive rate of interest, attracts an undue proportion of deposits from the local banks. Of the fifty government savings' banks in Canada, forty-five are located in the Maritime Provinces. This disproportion is certainly very great. It must not be forgotten, however, that people who live down by the sea are more given to depositing money in savings' banks, even when they are not backed by the credit of the government, than the inhabitants of the upper country are. The deposits made in the savings' banks by the people of Massachusetts are vastly greater, in proportion to the population, than similar deposits in Ontario, under the temptation of the high rate of interest complained of, coupled with government security. This is a factor in the problem that has generally been overlooked.

There must be some reason for this difference, and before we can thoroughly understand the whole question we must know what it is. But, meanwhile, it is quite certain that the disposition which takes depositors to the savings' banks in Massachusetts and our Maritime Provinces, and which keeps them from that form of investment in Ontario, has some deeper cause than the inequality in the number of savings' banks. If the number of government savings' banks in Ontario is much less than in Nova Scotia, there is probably some reason for the discrimination to be found in the habits of the people. It is not at all certain that a larger number of these savings' banks in Ontario would proportionally

increase the deposits; the chances are that it would not. May it not be that the objects of investment are more numerous in one province than in another? Is it not a fact that money will bring a higher rate of interest in one province than in another? But Nova Scotia is very far from having reached the stationary condition; she is still making visible and even decided though not rapid progress.

The complaint is made that the fifteen million dollars drawn into the government net, in the Maritime Provinces, is draining the life-blood of the chartered banks. This drain, we are told, causes the best managed local banks "considerable uneasiness." And certainly, on the face of the facts, the drain does seem to be excessive. The writer of the article in question adds that if this state of things continue to exist, "there will be such a crisis produced in these [Maritime] provinces as no part of Canada has happily ever seen." Complaints are made of depressed business, low profits or no profits at all, though losses are not few; the ship-building industry is at an end, the West India trade exceedingly unsatisfactory, the United States market virtually closed against our (N.S.) fish. In this picture there is too much truth; but it is usual to ascribe these miseries to very different causes, and the question is whether the government savings' banks be responsible for the greater part of them? Wooden ships have largely gone out of fashion, and the undesirable features which the West India trade presents are not due to a lack of capital to carry it on; while exclusion from the American market depends on the sovereign will of Congress.

Still there is probably much truth in the complaint that commerce, acting through the chartered banks, can not afford to compete with the government for the deposits. If the fifteen millions diverted from the chartered banks of the Maritime Provinces were to return to their coffers, could it be employed by the banks, in these provinces? Have not some of them sought outlets for their means in other provinces? It cannot be a matter of doubt that the Maritime banks are suffering from this competition; and it would be hard to explain why the government should go out of its way to benefit one class at the expense of another. It is, however, not unusual for savings' banks to pay more for deposits than the banks of commerce pay. This often happens in the States of New York and Massachusetts; sometimes, not unfrequently, the savings' banks pay depositors a higher rate than the banks of commerce obtain on their average loans, a thing that never happens here. If this takes place in these States might it not take place in Canada, even if there were no government savings' banks? However this may be, it is impossible to ignore the fact that the supposed superior security of the government, as a custodian of private deposits, is not without its attractions for depositors, and it is doubtful whether any private savings' banks which it would be possible to establish, in the Maritime Provinces, could attract an amount of deposits equal to that obtained by the government.