

AUSTRALIA-CANADA.

Improved Steamship Service Will Attract Antipodal Tourists to Canada—Question Might be Discussed at Forthcoming Colonial Conference—Australia's Trade and Finance.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Sydney, N.S.W., 29th January.

The trade of Australia for the year 1906 has been footed up and found to be £114,558,919. The following is a statement of the imports, exports and total trade of the Federation since its initiation:—

	Imports.	Exports.	Total trade.
1901	£44,555,511	£49,696,172	£94,251,683
1902	42,222,874	43,915,087	86,137,961
1903	38,835,682	48,250,112	87,085,794
1904	37,020,842	57,485,915	94,506,757
1905	38,346,731	56,841,035	95,187,766
1906	44,790,460	69,798,459	114,588,919

The striking feature of this table is that the imports are but slightly greater in 1906 than in 1901. They are very considerably larger than last year or in 1904, but the imports of these two years were exceptionally low. The increase in prices accounts for a good deal of the expansion of imports and while there has been some increase in the quantities imported, they are not as large as the figures would seem to show. The imports for 1906 are actually less per head than the imports of 1901, and a very little greater than those of 1902.

The exports, on the other hand, show great growth in quantity as well as increases in prices, and were £17 2s. 0d. per head last year, as against £13 1s. 2d. in 1901. Of the increase in exports last year, £7,041,362 was in merchandise and £6,006,750 in gold. As a matter of fact the increase of the exports of merchandise, as compared with 1905, was actually less than that of the imports of merchandise. But gold is an ordinary article of export from Australia, where the production of gold is so large.

Gold Export Larger Than Production.

One feature that is not so satisfactory is that the export of gold last year was beyond the production and indicates what is true, that the banks of this country had been exporting capital to London because better investments could be found there than at home. Nevertheless, the figures do show a remarkable expansion of Australian trade.

It may seem wearying to allude to the rainfall of Australia so often, but everything in this country depends upon it and the absence of drought means certain prosperity. The rains of January are of very great importance. The growth of grass which they promote makes the winter feed for the flocks and herds of the country. The rainfall of most of the country had been good up to January, and in large sections of the country the January rains have been especially good. In the far west, where drought is the normal condition, heavy rains have fallen.

Parts of the coastal area of this State were the chief sufferers and the water authorities have even now resolved to reduce the supplies of this city. Good rains fell on Sunday last and more are promised along the coast. On the whole, the weather conditions indicate a fine winter, as in most parts of the country good grass and water are assured.

It has been stated in previous letters that the Governments of Australia and New Zealand are borrowing largely at home, and as one would expect when capital is being exported to London, money can be had often on better terms at home than in the centre of the world's finances. Since 1901, the State Governments of Australia have borrowed £32,760,000. Of this, £20,236,000, or nearly 62 per cent. were borrowed at home and £12,524,000 abroad.

Assistance of the Government Railways.

The indebtedness of the States now amounts to £237,711,000, exclusive of municipal indebtedness. This is an increase of nearly four-fold in twenty-five years. It is often claimed as an excuse for this enormous indebtedness, that the States own the railways, but of the total amount of the debt, only £134,756,722 have been expended upon these works.

As an evidence of the improvement in Australian affairs, the railways last year returned a surplus, after paying cost of running and interest on capital, of £405,756. The railways of Queensland and Tasmania are running yet a long way behind. New South Wales and South Australia returned very handsome surpluses; those of Victoria a moderate one. Notwithstanding its heavy indebtedness, the financial affairs of Australia are in a healthy condition, and the revenue of nearly all the States not only show increases in 1906, but very considerable surplus of ordinary revenue over ordinary expenditure.

The United States mail line from San Francisco is still running behind time. The "Sonoma," which should have

landed her mails in time to have a reply by the outgoing Canadian steamer, was nearly a week late. Canadians may therefore expect to be disappointed in correspondence from this side.

Why Australian Correspondence is Belated.

It is all the more necessary that this should be known, because a good many Canadians do not appear to take note of the length of time that is required to receive a reply to a letter sent to Australia. It is not unusual for an Australian house to receive a letter, stating that "we have had no reply to your letter of a certain date." The last steamer or two of the Canadian Line, though its mails have been delivered on the due date, have been rather behind their ordinary performances. While as a rule it has been rare for the San Francisco steamers to arrive on their due date, the Canadian steamers have usually come in a day or two ahead of the fixed time.

The Canadian Australian Line has not yet announced what steamer will be put on during the coming travelling season. Canada is likely to lose a number of tourists owing to this delay. They will not go by the steamers that are now making the running, as they are anxious to book their passages sufficient time ahead as to secure choice cabins, they are taking their passages to England and return. They desire to take the Canadian route on the way to England, as they are likely to leave England a little too late to see Canada to advantage on the return trip.

Attraction of Tourists is Desirable.

A very strong delegation, composed of the men who are likely to control the affairs of the Commonwealth for the next three years, will be in England in June next, in attendance at the Colonial and Shipping Conferences. New Zealand will also be strongly represented. One of the representatives at the Shipping Conference will be Mr. Mills, the managing-director of the Canadian Australian Line.

It would be an admirable opportunity for the statesmen of Canada to confer with the representation from Australia and New Zealand as to whether some joint action cannot be taken to put steamers on the route that will be valuable mail lines, and be such as to attract tourists. Canada is more interested than Australia in this matter, and may have, therefore, to take the initiative.

F. W.

MANUFACTURES.

Mr. Wm. Oliver, of Lethbridge, is forming a company for the manufacture of cement blocks. Capital \$20,000.

The question of building an immense plant to manufacture steel cars at Hamilton, is being considered by the Canadian Northern Railway.

An arrangement has been made through which the output of the Peterborough Pre-Payment Meter Company will be sold only by the Allis-Chalmers-Bullock Company, of Montreal.

The Davis Acetylene Company, Limited, of Toronto, have opened a branch in Regina, with H. A. Kidney as manager, which will serve as the company's headquarters in Western Canada.

It is just possible that Hespeler will have another new industry before long. If the by-law is carried the Hespeler Hoisting Machinery Company will build a plant for the manufacture of elevators of all kinds.

Mr. W. T. Whitehead, formerly of the Dominion Textile Company, with thirty Montreal capitalists, will have within eighteen months a new cotton mill in operation, employing eighteen hundred hands, near the Island of Montreal.

The International Portland Cement Company decided at their recent annual meeting to construct a large addition to the present mill. The plant is turning out 2,000 barrels per day, but this does not meet the demand. When the addition is completed the output will be about 4,500 barrels per day.

Lacombe, which lies between Calgary and Edmonton, offers, through its town council, to encourage, with the consent of the ratepayers such new industries as will conduce to the town's prosperity. The town wishes to encourage manufacturers to establish branches. The population of Lacombe is, it is claimed, more than 1,000.

The blast-furnace plant of the Atikokan Iron Company, at Port Arthur, will be put in operation shortly. The structural work which has been going on for the past two years has been completed, and the furnace is now ready to erect. The plant will turn out about 150 tons of pig-iron in 24 hours.

Port Arthur is to have a 200-barrel flour mill, and in connection therewith a 200-barrel oatmeal mill. The Muirhead Milling Company have received \$97,000 in subscribed stock, and ask the town to guarantee its bonds to the extent of \$50,000. The company will then spend \$100,000 on lands, elevators, mills and machinery, to be ready to handle the crop next fall.

he intends to take the public more the future concerning the railroads. He claims that improvements which time to come, such as heavier rails, powerful locomotives, and improved facilities many billions of dollars. is asking authority to sell New York

N UNEVENTFUL ONE.

ament's Labors—Manufacturers' Be—Changes in the Tariff.

(Our Own Correspondent.)

Ottawa, March 7th.

incorporate the Manufacturers' Bank. The bill stood on the order paper as emp. of Toronto, though there was a new here, for, as it turned out, Mr. ge of the company or of its promoters, was reached in committee, there was no other bill incorporating a chartered need at this session.

day did a hard day's work on the tariff. oes was changed from a specific duty for the avowed purpose, so far as that a flexible tariff.

ty. nds at 30 per cent., and the amount to greatly with the season of the year. ill be extended to other fresh veget- and fruit. This duty is entirely pro- clude imports from the Southern edge off of appetite before our own are ripened and ready to market.

is to be changed so as to encourage ry. At present our factories only run out of the year, transforming domes- sugar. By permitting them to import at the British preferential rate, two ear for every pound of beet sugar pro- hoped that the Canadian refineries can en the greater part of the year. me to a deadlock, in considering the ickel silver and brass. No one dis- at if these articles were manufactured nufacturer deserved protection. There s of opinion, however, as to what were their production.

Ways.

Minister of Customs, pointed out that rers often antagonized another. Pro- and, the finished product of one fac- material of another.

tes that the session will come to a tely after Easter. The Government o that all public bills are doomed to e a Government order.

Done This Session.

the session will be: The two bills in- Fisher, one of them providing for a hat erect cold storage warehouses at by the Minister of Agriculture, and ernment control as to the standard of ined and the tolls to be charged; and or the inspection of canned meats and products.

for the compulsory investigation of e publication of an award that is not ies to the dispute. At present the bill ended as to require it to be reprinted. oyes are vigorously insisting that it m.

ill regulating the manufacture and sale ies.

of 1906, which is still in committee, may not greatly modify the Fielding

ne treaty with Japan of legislation an- wed in the speech from the throne, it nothing has been attempted towards n Act, the Insurance Act, the Post s a "better provision for dealing with

ite a dearth of private bills, and on the eventful session.

last week's issue as to the subjects at first brought to the attention of the Halifax Board of Trade," should have e Board of Trade."