

# The Farming World

For Farmers and Stockmen

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## Antipodean Agriculture

Some Interesting Facts for Canadian Farmers and Stockmen



TORONTO had two very interesting visitors last week in the persons of Captain A. W. Pearse, managing editor of the *Australasian Pastoralists' Review*, Sydney, N.W.S., and Mr. Grant, of New Zealand. Mr. Grant was accompanied by his wife and son. The party are on a tour around the world and left on Friday for Vancouver where they take one of the C.P.R. liners for home.

Captain Pearse since leaving Australia a few months back has visited New Zealand, South America and Great Britain. From the last-named place he came to Canada for the purpose of learning something of our methods of agriculture and of the resources and people of the Dominion. He spent a few days each at Ottawa and Toronto and visited the Agricultural College at Guelph. The work carried on by the Dominion and Provincial Departments of Agriculture interested him very much. To a representative of THE FARMING WORLD he stated that it was a surprise to him to find that so many connected with this line of work were or had been practical agriculturists. Such was not the case in his country. In the Departments of Agriculture in Australia there is not a practical farmer or one who has any practical knowledge of the business directing their work.

The Governments of that country are entirely under the control of the labor element, which ignores fitness for a position so long as party candidates are subservient to their interests. In the whole of Australia there are not two members of parliament who are farmers. Manhood suffrage prevails, which seems to give the labor or moving population of the country the balance of power.

The Australian colonies have suffered severely from drouth in recent years. Since 1895, 31,000,000 sheep have died from starvation and scarcity of water. In 1895 there were 63,000,000 sheep in the colony, and considering the natural increase this loss is simply appalling. The effects of the drouth are being modified to some extent by the sinking of artesian wells. These are all put down by Canadians and are sunk to a depth of from 200 to 6,300 feet and supply from 100 gallons to 6,000,000 gallons of water a day. These materially increase the water supply of the country but do not assist much in producing pasture.

Sheep rearing, which is the chief agricultural industry of the country, is carried on principally for wool production. A few years ago an attempt was made to introduce mutton-producing sheep, but this has practically been abandoned. Wool production is made the first consideration. Australia

does a large business in frozen meats, which has developed wonderfully of late years. There are numbers of what are known as freezing depots all over the country, and magnificent steamers fitted up with the most improved cold storage facilities ply between that country and Great Britain, South Africa and other consuming centres. Strange to say, this cold storage movement is entirely due to private enterprise. The Governments have had nothing to do with it excepting during recent years. The steamship lines and those associated with the meat trade have found it profitable to provide the necessary facilities to carry on this trade without any government assistance. For the past year two large refrigerator steamers owned by the American Government have been plying regularly between Melbourne and Sydney and Manila, carrying food products, such as canned meats, cheese, butter, etc., to supply the United States army in the Philippines. In addition to this, steamers leave these ports every fortnight for Japan, carrying frozen meats, a trade that is developing very rapidly.

Australia, New Zealand, and the Argentine have the advantage over Canada in that live stock do not require to be housed and fed during the winter. This is a big advantage, and reduces the cost of production to a very low figure. Since the drouth the price of meat has gone up very much in Sydney. A good 56 lb. wether, that could be bought formerly for 3s., would now cost 2d. per lb. by the carcase. MacLaren's Imperial cheese is the only Canadian cheese sold in that country. It sells for 2s. 6d. per lb. Capt. Pearse thinks it is delicious, and has it at every meal. A great many Canadian agricultural implements are sold in Australia, the Massey-Harris Co. doing a very large business. Their warehouses are to be found in every town, and are doing much to advertise Canada. The Australians grow enough wheat for their own use. New Zealand is also a wheat-growing country. Mr. Grant, who is a large farmer in that colony, last season had 600 acres of wheat which yielded 50 bushels per acre. Oats average 80 bushels per acre quite easily.

Captain Pearse was quite enthusiastic in regard to the outlook for trade in the Argentine. He travelled over a great deal of that country just recently. In one locality he saw 200,000 acres of wheat growing in one field. The average yield there is about 17 bushels per acre. The plague of grasshoppers has been got under control, and the output of wheat is destined to increase enormously during the next few years. Labor is cheap, and the cost of production is low. The farmers or land owners are very wealthy, having managers to look after their *estancias*, while they live in the cities or travel in other countries. The frozen mutton trade of the Argentinian