

dian board of management are Sir Hector Langevin and the mayor of Three Rivers; and it has an array of bankers, solicitors, brokers, auditors, and all the machinery that looks well on paper in such a case.

In the estimate of working we find it proposed to handle, say, 50,000 cattle at 2½d. and 200,000 sheep at 2d. per pound live weight. The hides, skins, and offal from these is placed at 35s. per head for the cattle and 5s. per head for the sheep, making the estimated receipts in all £844,583. The price set down as likely to be received in England is 4d. per pound for both cattle and sheep, and the total receipts say £987,500. Thus a working profit of 14½ per cent. is figured out. But through "concessions" from the city of Three Rivers, where abattoirs, etc., are to be built, and through "advantages" either mentioned or hinted at, much larger profits to the shareholders may be inferred. The feeling produced when one first reads such a prospectus as this is one of wonderment at the gullibility of English gentlemen or bankers and of investors who would put their money into a scheme whose prospectus contains such extravagant statements. Surprise is increased upon finding Sir Hector Langevin's name associated with it. On the third page occurs this statement: "From the district east of Quebec, large quantities [of cattle] are sent to Chicago, where they are slaughtered, and the produce sent back another 900 miles for export to Europe via New York." Such transparent nonsense bought to be enough to kill any concern that utters it. While it may be true that breeders of high-class cattle in the Province of Quebec have sold bulls or heifers at high prices to stock farmers in the Western States, we can find no one who believes such a yarn as that quoted as either possible or likely.

The engineer and promoter of this enterprise, M. Eugene Prosper Bender, C.E., of Montmagny, Que., is a clever statistician, judging from the voluminous, not to say marvellous, figures with which he has loaded the prospectus. But he or some one else has called on the imagination to assist the "facts" set forth. Canadian enterprises in Britain are much more likely to be prejudiced than assisted by such wild and visionary schemes as this of the Canadian Direct Meat Company, Limited.

THE LONDON (ENG.) FIRE BRIGADE.

From the report for 1889 of Capt. Shaw, chief of the London fire brigade, which is an octavo pamphlet of some fifty pages, we obtain the following information with respect to the operations of that important body of men: The brigade responded to 3,131 calls during the year, of which 153 were for fires resulting in serious, and 2,185 in slight damages. There was an increase of 350 alarms as compared with the previous year, or 267 more than the average for the past ten years. The percentage of serious fires out of the total number of alarms has stood at 7 per cent., in round numbers, for the past five years. Life was endangered in more than a hundred instances during the year, 140 persons being saved and 44 losing their lives. The

total distance run by the engines of the brigade was 68,060 miles.

In the extinguishing of fires twenty million gallons, or about 98,000 tons of water was used. There were employed 707 firemen of all ranks, aided by 131 horses, and supplied with 48 steam and 95 hand engines, with 31½ miles of hose. These were supported by numerous wagons, floating fire engines, and apparatus of all kinds. The active force was increased by 113 men during the year, (Capt. Shaw says he finds sailors make the best firemen, as a rule), and though attending an average of thirteen fires *per diem*, only two firemen were killed and 104 injured in the twelve months. The greatest number of fires occurred between the hours of six and eleven p.m. Christmas week was the most prolific of alarms of any in the year, 97 calls being received during that period. These brought up the average of December to 312, the highest for any single month.

Of the ascertained causes of fire, the most frequent were: lights thrown down, 186; lamps upset, 150; candles, 136; sparks from grates, 130; and there were two fires traced to over-heated electric wires. There has been a steady rise in the number of fires within the Metropolitan Fire Brigade district during the last 20 years. In 1869 the total number of fires was 1,572, in the year 1879 they had risen to 1,718; while last year they had still further increased to 2,338.

TORONTO TRADE FIGURES.

There is but little difference in aggregate of imports between January, 1890, and the same month of 1889, though dry goods were \$150,000 less last month, but there was a decided decline of exports, e.g., \$86,000 in value of barley, \$30,000 of seeds, and \$16,000 of wool. The total of inwards and outwards trade for last month was \$1,721,695, consisting of \$1,537,119 imports and \$184,846 exports. Against this the figures of January, 1889, were, imports, \$1,582,964; exports, \$320,121; total, \$1,903,085. Free goods imported were, last month, \$267,340, as compared with \$209,476 in January, 1889. The principal items, as taken from the Board of Trade returns, are:

IMPORTS.		
	Jan., '90.	Jan., '89.
Cotton goods.....	\$229,509	\$314,290
Fancy goods.....	49,333	55,850
Hats and bonnets.....	40,214	29,860
Silk goods.....	84,792	80,087
Woollen goods.....	224,712	293,113
Total dry goods....	\$628,560	\$773,200
Books and pamphlets....	30,255	33,361
Coal, bituminous.....	39,548	34,940
Drugs and medicines....	14,209	10,200
Earthen and china ware..	5,156	11,209
Fruit, green and dried....	19,498	36,688
Glass and glassware.....	12,053	19,118
Iron and steel.....	90,551	84,413
Jewellery and watches....	21,836	18,597
Leather goods.....	16,261	19,051
Musical instruments.....	15,738	19,369
Paints and colors.....	14,441	4,043
Paper goods.....	32,001	31,353
Spirits and wines.....	8,277	7,192
Wood goods.....	16,207	13,574
EXPORTS.		
	Jan., '90.	Jan., '89.
Produce of the forest.....	\$ 1,593	\$ 3,389
" field.....	100,089	214,639
Animals, &c.....	48,345	57,226

Manufactures.....	30,767	33,075
Miscellaneous.....	11	1,400
Total Canadian products....	\$180,805	\$309,721

POINTS ON COUNTRY TRADE.

Said a retail merchant from Grey County when asked for his experience of the effect of the present mild winter on business: "Well, it's a tough time for the country storekeeper, no doubt about that. He has lots to worry him just now—but as for me, I do just the best I can and don't worry. You see the roads are bad, mighty bad. There is no snow, and you may have noticed, Mr. Editor, that when there is no snow, the average farmer claims this as an excuse for everything. If you drive round and ask him to pay up his account, he will say: 'Bless you, I haven't been able to get around; we have no sleighing and I can't market my grain; and the wife she can't sell her turkeys and chickens, and you can't haul hogs to town when you ain't got no snow,' and so on. But the worst of it is there is next to nothing doing in the store. I don't hanker after credit sales, and there are mighty slender cash sales these days. There is one thing comforts us, and that is this: while the farmer is making a poor month over low prices, and pretending to be poorer than he really is, the merchant, if he keeps himself posted, finds out that his stock is good value—firm markets in the Old Country for most of his stuff—and that helps us to keep a stiff upper lip. If your city merchants could keep these infernal bankrupt stocks away from us we could worry along, and pay a hundred cents."

An observant commercial traveller visiting the west of this province, and a wholesale dealer who has just returned from the east of it, give somewhat different versions of the existing conditions. The former declares that one might fire a gun down the main street of several places he visited within the fortnight, and not hit any country customers, but he might hit from two to six commercial travellers anywhere. "There is no snap in anything or anybody. I did not unpack my samples for days together. 'La Grippe,' the lack of snow, and the wretched roads seem to have killed trade." The latter tells a better tale of the east. He found in the back of Peterboro and Hastings counties plenty of frost, and took some good orders. In the Ottawa district things were found relatively better than west of the Northern Railway, and while trade could not be called brisk, payments were relatively better in the east and trade perhaps not so much cut up.

One thing appears evident from the statements of United States bank clearings for the month of January, says the *Financial Chronicle*, of New York, this week, and also from the returns of railroad earnings for the same month, namely, that the volume of trade still continues on a large and increasing scale. "Our total of bank clearings indicates a gain over January, 1889, of 399 million dollars, or 8.3 per cent. This would perhaps not be so very remarkable in itself, except that it follows a gain of no less than 780 million dollars, or over 19 per cent, in the same month of the year preceding. It may be claimed that the mild weather prevailing has been a prominent influence in this special improvement. The open winter certainly does offer some advantages. But on the other hand it must be remembered that certain drawbacks follow from the same circumstances. Thus the demand for goods adapted to winter use is diminished, the consumption of coal falls off."

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