

cast throughout the country that the wheat in sight is increasing very rapidly, and that the crops in countries now being harvested will befar greater than at first reported. This will be followed a few days later by a report having for its object the very opposite effect. The producer from one point of view, and the consumer from another, look upon this great gulf of strife, turmoil, and excitement between them, and wonder what the outcome will be. The one is in a dilemma because he does not know when to sell, and the other because he does not know when is the best time to buy.

If this speculation were confined to transactions connected with the goods in hand, the evil effects from it would not be so great. But when these manipulators carry their gambling operations, for they are nothing else, into the future, and buy and sell goods that are not yet in sight, the effect upon the trade is most disastrous. In several European countries there is a strong agitation for laws to prevent such species of gambling. In Great Britain all the agricultural and trade societies have passed strong resolutions condemning such practices. At a recent meeting of the General Austrian Millers' Reunion, held in Vienna, the following resolutions were passed and strongly recommended for consideration by the Government:

"Considering the perniciousness of gambling in corn, which we believe to be a national-economical danger, we, therefore, petition the Government (1) that the systems be entirely prohibited on the Austrian bourses; (2) that the trade in corn be only permitted in real and existing goods, with precise indication of quality and time of delivery; (3) the institution called Usance-Corn be abolished; (4) that an inquiry by representatives of all branches interested in the question be held, based upon which new regulations are to be worked out in the spirit of the preceding three points."

The debate winds up as follows: "The General Millers' Congress hopes and prays that the Government will accede to the just wishes, not only of the whole millers industry of Austria, but also to the most injured party, viz., agriculture, which has joined in this movement and will insist upon the Committee of the Vienna Corn Exchange definitely abolishing the gambling in fictitious grain under the Option or Terminal systems, one of the causes that have reduced the Austrian millers' industry to its present state and afflictions."

Though Canada is not much affected by speculation within her borders in regard to wheat, she is directly affected by gambling in wheat and other grains at Chicago and other centres across the line. We cannot do more than agitate in regard to these wrongs and endeavor to get our good friends to the south to think as we do. There is not the least doubt but what agriculture on this continent would be a far more profitable business if drastic measures were taken at once to prevent this wholesale dealing in fictitious grains. It is one of the greatest curses of the nineteenth century, and the sooner the legitimate trader, who makes a good living by an honest margin of profit, and the producer as well, rise up in rebellion against it, the sooner will agriculture on this continent reach the position to which it is justly entitled.

In connection with one of Canada's most important industries, however, dealing in futures is assuming somewhat alarming proportions. We refer to our cheese trade. Every season there are instances of the buying and selling of cheese that has not yet been produced. A month or two ago a number of contracts made on cheese for future delivery were reported to be repudiated because the market had become dilapidated and the purchaser refused to adhere to the contract. In our cheese trade, if buying and selling were only carried on in connection with the goods in hand, such instances of repudiation would not have happened, and our cheese trade would perhaps be in a better position as regards prices than it is to day. We will return to this phase of the subject again.

Requirements of the Horse Trade.

The disastrous results from lack of skill and knowledge of the principles governing good breeding are to be seen in the scarcity of really fine horses in the country at the present time. This scarcity is somewhat unfortunate at this juncture when there is a revival of the horse industry, resulting from an increased demand for good horses. Outside of fine carriage horses the demand seems

to be for a good, servicable horse of large size. This style of horse is a scarce article just now.

One of the reasons for this scarcity seems to be the lack of right methods of breeding, coupled with a strong desire on the part of the farmer to sell off his good stock, and keep only the scrubs for his own use. In fact, many farmers have kept for breeding purposes what may be considered the "culls," and have considered it only necessary to procure a good sire to breed a good offspring. Such a practice is contrary to the laws of good breeding. No matter how good the sire may be, if the dam is a scrub, the offspring will partake somewhat of the nature of a scrub. The colt may be considerably larger than its dam, but it will partake of so many of her poorer qualities as to be classed only a little higher. True, there will be an improvement, and if such a practice is followed for several generations, a higher type of horse will be the result. But a large amount of time will be wasted in the process, and the opportunity for marketing many a good horse will be lost. It will be better to start right at the very beginning, and select only the very best mares for breeding purposes.

Not only should the mares for breeding purposes be of the right stamp, but farmers should see to it that the sire used is one of the very best. Unless some definite plan of this kind is adhered to, we shall never be in a position to supply the English market with the right kind of horse. In some countries, not so far advanced in many things as Canada is, the farmer is not left entirely to himself in the selection of the sire he purposes using. In our issue of November and we mentioned the fact that in Italy the government maintains seven stallion depots, in which, last year, there were 557 stallions. During the breeding season these stallions are distributed over the country for service. In addition, no outside stallion can stand for service until he has been examined by the "horse commissioner" of the district, and if in this examination he fails to come up to the standard required, his owner cannot use him for stud purposes. Such a system, if properly enforced, cannot help but result in a vast improvement in the quality of the horses produced in that country.

In some things Italy's example may well be copied by Canada, and this is one of them. If instead of the slip shod methods followed by many farmers in the breeding of horses, some system were evolved whereby they could be induced to follow more correct methods, our horse trade would soon recover from its present unsatisfactory condition. There are too many small "scrubby" horses in the country for which there is no market, and for which there is not likely to be one. There has been a good demand for a really fine horse, even during the late depression in the horse trade. And though prices have revived somewhat, there is no possibility of the demand for the ordinary small horse being much better than it has been for several years. The demand will continue to be for the large servicable horse and the fine carriage horse, and unless the best quality of these is produced we cannot expect to expand our export trade in horses to any great extent.

Keep More Sheep.

In our issue of November 16th, Mr. John I. Hobson stated that he did not think Canadian mutton could compete with the Australian mutton in England. At the time of Mr. Hobson's visit, New Zealand mutton was selling on the London market for 6½ cents per lb., and the Australians are prepared to lay down mutton there at less than 6½ cents rather than lose the market. This is a very low price, and no doubt Mr. Hobson's contention is correct, that we cannot compete at a profit. The conditions in Australia are different from what they are in Canada, and are especially adapted for sheep-raising. But the more favorable conditions there may be counteracted in a large measure by our comparative nearness to the market. If Australia can lay down mutton at less than 6½ cents, and carry it four or five times the distance that we have to, our conditions for raising mutton must be

comparatively poor indeed if we cannot approach that limit. However, we will have to face things as they are, and if we wish to develop our mutton trade with Great Britain we must be prepared to supply as good mutton at as low a price as it can be got elsewhere.

We are not in possession of any definite information, nor do we think there is any reliable data extant as to what is the actual cost per lb. of producing in Canada a quality of mutton that would be suitable for the British markets. Will not some of our enterprising sheep men help us in this regard, and let us have the actual cost of producing a pound of mutton in Canada for the benefit of the readers of FARMING? Roughly it is estimated that it costs as much to keep a cow as for five sheep. The average cost of keeping a cow well for a year is estimated to be about \$30. On this basis it would cost about \$6 to keep a sheep for a year. We are of the opinion that this figure is somewhat high. But if it is about correct there is not much possibility of our being able to compete with the Australians for the English mutton trade.

Notwithstanding this somewhat gloomy outlook for Canadian mutton in Great Britain, our advice to the Canadian farmer "to keep more sheep" still holds good. If it were for no other object than to keep down weeds, it would pay our farmers to keep more sheep. There are many kinds of weeds that would get a good start on the farm if it were not for the sheep. In fact, in nine cases out of ten, where you find a farm that is dirty and overrun with weeds, you will find that the owner does not keep sheep. Sheep are said to be sure death to sour dock, dandelion, and many other kinds of weeds hard to get rid of. The list of weeds that may be destroyed by a good flock of sheep on a farm is indeed very large, and we are surprised that more of our farmers do not keep sheep. If kept on a farm with other animals sheep will almost live on the weeds and grass not eaten by the others.

Canadian Butter in Great Britain.

Satisfactory reports have been received from the shipments of butter to Great Britain from the creameries of the Northwest Territories, under the management of the Dominion Department of Agriculture. The shipments landed at a very inopportune time. Unusually large shipments of butter from Denmark, Russia, and the United States at this time, when very open and mild weather prevailed in England, caused the market to be depressed. The shipments from these countries for one week amounted to about one thousand tons of butter more than during the same week of 1896. Notwithstanding these unfavorable conditions, the reports from these experimental shipments are very gratifying. If there were the least foundation for Secretary Wilson's statement that the butter sent from the colonies to Great Britain contained injurious ingredients used, as perservaline, it is not probable that these shipments would have met with any demand whatever under such depressing conditions.

The following letter, in regard to them, was received by the Department of Agriculture from Messrs. George and John Nickson & Co., Liverpool, under date of November 10th: "Enclosed herewith we have pleasure in handing you account of sales for butter ex-Labrador. We regret that your shipment to us should have met with such a depressed market as ours has been for the last three months, which is chiefly owing to the very open weather we have experienced during that time. We are pleased to be able to report the quality of butter shipped by you as satisfactory, and with regular shipments we are certain we could build up a demand for your brands."

Similar letters were received from other well-known produce dealers containing satisfactory accounts of sales.

Along the Right Line.

Prof. Robertson, Dominion Commissioner of Agriculture, and Mr. A. G. Gilbert, manager of the Poultry Department of the Experimental Farm,