

The outlook for trade continues to be favorable. The rainfall in New South Wales has been more general than for some years, and grass and the crops are coming on well. It is nearly as favorable in all the colonies, with the exception of Western Queensland. Prices of wool have advanced from 10 to 15 per cent. and as nearly all the wool has yet to be marketed the producers will get the benefit of the rise. The other articles of export also bring good prices. The gold output is still increasing and shows an advance of nearly 14 per cent. so far over the production of last year. This has produced increases in the value of stocks and some increases in imports. Those of Sydney are nearly two millions in excess of the same period last year.

Orders for what are known as "American" lines have rather declined. This is attributable largely to an advance in prices that has lately been made, and purchases are being made in England and the Continent instead of the United States. The extension of Canadian trade is still hampered by inability to fill orders. I am in receipt of letters by every mail from Canadian firms regretting that it is not possible to pursue Australian business at present but promising attention to it later on or as soon as the unusual pressure of orders at home will permit. In some cases preparation is being made for this event by looking over the ground now and arranging for the trade expected to be done later on. All things point to larger demands in these colonies but business cannot be created in a day. The orders that would go forward for a twelve month or more would not in most instances be large, and to fill them should not strain any ordinary business. They would, however, open up a channel that may be very useful to the Canadians not long hence.

The representatives of two Canadian firms have just gone home and both are well satisfied with what they have accomplished. They have not only opened up new avenues of business, but taken sufficient orders, the profits of which will more than pay the expenses of the trip. It is advisable that when any Canadian exporter arranges for representation in Australia he should notify me of the fact. I could then be of service to both principal and agent in helping on their transactions. It is not impossible that an agency may be held for some time by one who does nothing to secure any business. A change is needed in the interest of the Canadian exporter, but unless he keeps me informed I am unable to do anything. The agent who does nothing will certainly not inform me of it, and it is only by accident that I can become aware that he has had any Canadian relations if not informed from Canada.

The Canadian steamers have full cargoes both in and out. The last steamer from Vancouver was unable to take all offering. Flour to Australia, and sugar from it constitute the principal articles. The trade would justify the company in replacing two of its fleet with larger and more powerful ships. It is impossible with the ships it now has that it can command the passenger business it should get, or accommodate the freight that will offer itself for the greater portion of each year.

The Pacific cable.—The Premiers of the four colonies interested had come to an agreement as to the selection of the three Australian representatives on the Cable Commission when the government of New South Wales resigned owing to the passage of an adverse vote in the Legislative Assembly. This has delayed the selection, but there is little doubt the new Premier will soon take action.

TARIFF PROTECTION IN AUSTRALIA.

Speaking of the to be policy of tariff protection to manufacturing industries in the new Australian Confederation, the Australian Ironmonger, Sydney, N. S. W., of October 2nd says:—

The Federal Tariff is to be discussed in Melbourne at an early date by representatives of the New South Wales, Victorian, and South Australian Chambers of Manufactures. It is hoped that the manufacturers of Tasmania and Queensland

may also be represented. The object of the conference is to frame a Federal Tariff for submission as a recommendation to the Commonwealth Parliament when it comes into existence. Naturally enough, the tariff will be prepared from the manufacturers' point of view, but the result of their labors may afterwards be submitted to a joint conference with the various Chambers of Commerce. In New South Wales a committee is at work collecting evidence with a view to ascertain what rates are necessary in the interests of Australian industry. It was first suggested to meet at Adelaide during the currency of the Arts and Industries Exhibition from March 15 to April 16, 1900, but this was considered too distant a date, and the present proposal is to meet in Melbourne in October or November of the present year, and then, if thought fit, meet again at Adelaide in the following March. In supporting such a conference in the New South Wales Chamber, Mr. E. Braby said the heavy revenue to be raised under Federation meant a protective tariff, and manufacturers should see that it was not constructed in a haphazard way. He would divide goods into three classes—(1) materials used in manufacture which could not be produced in Australasia; (2) materials which could be so produced; and (3) manufactured articles. The first he would admit free. In his opinion, wherever practicable, specific duties should be imposed in preference to ad valorem duties, as the latter did not fall equally and opened the door to falsification of invoices. Mr. W. Sanford, of Lithgow, who recently returned from Europe, also supported the proposal, expressing the opinion that the uniform tariff here should be framed somewhat on the lines of the Dingley tariff in America. The iron trade, he went on to say, was the barometer as to all other business in England. In New South Wales there was an unlimited supply of iron ore and cheap coal. That colony would be the great iron and steel producing colony of the Federation. All the other colonies might claim that iron and steel were their raw materials of manufacture, and should be admitted within their territories free. The matter would have to be considered in view of that possibility. The feeling in Great Britain now towards Australian enterprise was different from that of two years ago. Then money could not be got for investment in our industries, but now, in view of Federation, it could be obtained, only those who were to provide it said, "First give us a tariff." Mr. Sanford, it must be remembered, is a pronounced protectionist. Specific duties could be fixed upon satisfactorily by finding out the rate of wages paid in the colonies upon articles manufactured in Australia and then putting on sufficient protection to cover that rate, thus placing every manufacturer in Australia in the same position as a manufacturer in any other part of the world.

Walkers' Limited, of Maryborough, Queensland, says the Brisbane Courier, are by far the largest ironfounders and machinery makers in that colony. Their managing director recently in London in a letter to a friend in Brisbane, writes: "I hope to see you early in December, and I hope the Commonwealth Bill will be passed throughout Australia by the time I get to Queensland." This is accepted as proof that that company are not afraid of competition under a free-trade policy between the colonies. The Federal Tariff, says the Ironmonger, will come into operation certainly not earlier than January, 1901, and more probably January, 1902. June 30 is the end of the financial year in several of the colonies, and it is possible that that date in 1901 may be fixed.

WAGES FOR CHILDREN IN GERMANY.

Vice Consul-General Hanauer at Frankford, writes that in the official report of the Government inspector of factories for Coburg-Gotha, details are given as to the labor of children under 14 years engaged in their homes in making buttons, toys, etc. It appears that in this district, 5,455 such children are employed. They work from four and one-quarter to six hours per day and earn in button making from 4 to 30 pennings (fifteen-sixteenths of 1 cent to 7 cents); in making dolls, 2 1-8 to 18 1-2 cents; in work on toys, 1 7-8 to 14 cents.