

NOTES AND NEWS.

A branch line of railway is being located between Killarney and Lauder, Man.

The customs revenue of the Dominion for the six months ending December 31st, 1903, amounted to \$20,653,761, a large increase over the same period last year. This is only one of the things in Canada which are making the Finance Minister smile.

The Transvaal Government has placed an order for 10,000 head of cattle with Texas breeders for the purpose of restocking the African farms.

Four million seven hundred thousand tons of coal, an increase of three hundred and fifty thousand tons over the preceding year, were shipped from Nova Scotia during 1903.

An attempt will be made at an early date to establish an English market for Canadian-grown tobacco.

The Berlin National Zeitung states that Great Britain has informed Germany that in commercial matters Canada must not be regarded as a foreign country.

The construction of the main canal for irrigation purposes in Alberta will call for the excavation of 250,000,000 cubic feet of earth. The completion of the irrigation system in that district will, it is expected, make useful for agriculture and grazing 3,000,000 acres of land, now comparatively useless because of the periods of extreme drought to which the area is subject.

When Sir Charles Gavan Duffy was a leading figure in Victorian politics there sat in the Melbourne parliament a wealthy, but not well-informed, butcher. The chief secretary of the day was deprecating the attitude of the leader of the Opposition, whose conduct was, he declared, worse than Nero's.

"Who was Nero?" interrupted the knight of the cleaver, with equal scorn and sincerity.

"Who was Nero?" replied the delighted chief secretary. The honorable gentleman ought to know. Nero was a celebrated Roman butcher."

"There is a wide difference in success between the earnest, energetic farmer who makes a dairy student of himself, and the average farmer who keeps cows, almost any kind of cows, in any kind of way."—Hoard.

"It is a law of good economy to make the best of everything."—John Ruskin.

A Sheffield firm has undertaken a contract to supply 6,000 tons of steel rails for the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway. The quantity now bought will, it is said, be sufficient to complete laying the track as far as New Liskeard, a distance of 112 miles from North Bay.

The Reciprocal Trade Bill, recently passed in New Zealand, by which Canada will be enabled to establish better commercial relations with the colony at the Antipodes, attracts much favorable comment in Canada.

A Connecticut "small farmer," whose domain amounts to only thirty-three acres of land, has shown that the small dairy, when well managed, pays very well. Last year, from nine cows, he sold milk and cream to the value of \$1,369.61, besides the milk used by two families. In addition, he sold pork to the value of \$182.66, and \$65 of hay.

Porcupines have become so plentiful in the timber lands near Wilkesbarre, Pa., that expert hunters have been employed to kill them. They were gnawing the bark and destroying many of the trees.

The butter production in Minnesota has increased 100 per cent. per cow during the last twelve years. This is attributed to the fact that a steady education along dairy lines has been going on in that state.

One of the forty German farmers who made a tour of America last year said: "You have a wonderful country in extent and fertility, but I can see that your farmers are not making half the profit they would make if they were better educated in their business; and, besides that, because they are not as well educated as they should be, they are rapidly destroying the fertility of their farms." This criticism, coming from a son of that hothed of scientific endeavor, Germany, may possibly be worth a thought or two.

It is stated that the cold-storage men took fully one-third of the fish caught on the Columbia River last year. The fish-canning fraternity may not care to hear things like this.

There are now more than 500 students taking the agricultural course in Wisconsin University. Just 500 more enthusiasts who will assist in putting agriculture into its true place among the arts and sciences.

The barbers of Toronto will, henceforth, sterilize their instruments after each using. This is a step which might well be followed in other places.

Mr. Eben James, a leading fruit and produce merchant of Cape Town, writes that Canadians are shamefully neglecting their opportunities for extending trade in fruit, produce, etc., in South Africa.

The number of immigrants coming to Canada this winter is far in excess of the number that came last season. English people are in the majority, but there is a large percentage of Germans and Scandinavians. There is a decrease in the number of Russian, Polish and German Jews.

Owing to the war in South Africa and the droughts in Australia, there has been a tremendous falling off in the wool exports from these places. Canadian manufacturers, who have hitherto been accustomed to import rather extensively from these lands across the sea, are beginning to look elsewhere for their supplies, and have found that wool from the Territories, especially Alberta, is very similar to certain grades grown in South Africa and Australia. This should be encouraging to the Northwest wool-raisers.

Rev. Father Burke, of P. E. I., writes us: "The Christmas number of the 'Advocate' is indeed a marvel of enterprise, and speaks volumes for the agriculture of Canada."

In the Olds (Alta.) district, Niority Bros. are reported to have threshed 350 bushels Early Banner oats for Chas. Wieler, in one hour and thirty minutes. In the same district, W. Bame's threshing outfit has finished work for the season, during which they have threshed the following: oats, 28,687 bushels; barley, 6,284; wheat, 485; rye, 18; timothy seed, 176.

A large number of the alumni and ex-students of the Iowa State College, who are interested in agriculture, met at Ames and formed an organization, to be known as the "Iowa Agricultural Union." This organization is similar to that of the Guelph Experimental Union, of Ontario, and the Ohio students' Union, of Ohio. The officers elected for the ensuing year are as follows: President, R. B. Eckles, Aplington; Vice-President, T. A. Hunt, Ames; Secretary, G. I. Christie, Ames; Treasurer, Herman Knapp, Ames; Prof. C. F. Curtiss, Ames, Chairman of the Executive Committee, and E. C. Beard, Decorah, Member of the Executive Committee.

Dr. James Mills for the Railway Commission.

Despatches from Ottawa, as this issue of the "Farmer's Advocate" goes to press, state that Premier Laurier has offered Dr. James Mills, President of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, a position on the Canadian Railway Commission. The appointment of Hon. A. G. Blair as chairman, a position which he has accepted, was announced in our last issue. The other commissioner appointed is Hon. M. E. Bernier, late Minister of Inland Revenue, M.P. for St. Hyacinthe, P.Q., who will probably be succeeded in that portfolio by Hon. L. P. Brodeur, present Speaker of the House of Commons. Hon. H. R. Emmerson, M.P. for Westmoreland, N.B., has been sworn in as Minister of Railways and Canals, as successor to Hon. A. G. Blair. The Chairmanship of the Railway Commission carries a salary of \$10,000 per year, and the two other commissioners \$8,000 per year each, for a term of ten years. Commissioners are not eligible after reaching the age of 75 years. Dr. Mills is at present 63 years old, and is one of the best-known men identified with agricultural advancement in Canada to-day. The Secretary of the Commission, whose name is not yet announced, is to receive a salary of not exceeding \$1,000 per year. We understand that Dr. Mills has accepted the position.

The retirement of Dr. Mills at this juncture constitutes a crisis in the history of the Ontario Agricultural College, made famous throughout the world through his untiring efforts. A new era of advancement must now be inaugurated, and the inception of the Macdonald educational institutions in connection with the college imposes still more serious responsibilities upon the president. Obviously, a man of exceptional attainments and qualifications is required for the position. Should none of the present college staff, in which good presidential timber is not lacking, be advanced to the presidency, the "Farmer's Advocate" would suggest as a successor to Dr. Mills, Prof. C. C. James, B.A., M.A., formerly Professor of Chemistry at the college, from which he retired a few years ago to assume the important position of Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Ontario, in the discharge of the duties of which office he has displayed qualifications of the very highest order. During recent years he has also been the author of several works in relation to agricultural education and other subjects.

South Grey, Ont.

As early as the middle of December the roads have been almost impassable with snow—an unusual circumstance. All available horses have been bought up at fancy prices. Good yearlings cannot be bought for less than \$100. There are not many cattle fattening this winter. Fairly good beef brings 4c. Hogs are again looking up. Two loads were shipped the other day at \$1.90 to \$5.10. The farmers here have gone very generally into hog-raising. Help is more plentiful and easier to get, with wages easier. Good men are looking for from \$175 to \$200 per year. Grain is still very low. W. SCARF.

Oxford versus Kent.

Your Oxford correspondent spent a few days lately in Kent Co., where corn seem to be the principal crop, and little or no attention paid to the comfort of cattle and pigs. In many instances, cattle seemed to be lying around the straw stacks or in open pens very plentifully provided with ventilation by boards broken off. The farms we visited were laboring under a great disadvantage by the quarantine then in force, in consequence of the outbreak of hog cholera. I saw several pig-pens with a plank floor, slightly raised from the ground, with a space underneath, which could not be cleaned out, but where all sorts of bad odors and germs might breed without the least hindrance. Then, there seemed to be very few, and, in the majority of cases, no roots at all raised, and nothing but corn fed to pigs from one end of the year to the other. Very few cows were kept on the farms I visited, so that there was no milk or whey to feed to the pigs. This continual feeding of nothing but corn could not, in my opinion, be very healthy. There are many slow-running creeks through the country, where the pigs would likely be wallowing in summer, so that the cholera germs would very naturally be floated down stream from one farm to another. In Oxford County, the large majority of farmers have comfortable bank barns, where all the animals are kept at a temperature above freezing point. Our farmers could not sleep at night in their own comfortable beds if their animals were exposed to all the cold that blows around a straw stack. Kent County farmers have not stones to build bank barns as we have, and even sand and bricks have to be hauled great distances, and are expensive, but lumber and tar felt are comparatively moderate in price, and would make very comfortable quarters for cattle and pigs. If these great crops of corn of the County of Kent were put into silos, and warm quarters provided for cows and pigs, and if every 100-acre farmer would keep from fifteen to twenty cows, or more, and pigs to correspond, in a few years the farmers would receive a return for all the outlay necessitated by the erection of silos and comfortable quarters for the animals, and twenty-five per cent. of profit every year besides. I hear some one remark, "But look at the labor." Well, in all wisely-directed labor there is profit. Some one may ask, what are we to do with the milk? If you provide enough of it, some enterprising cheesemaker will offer his services to make it up for you; or, you could raise calves by letting two suck a cow. But the cheese industry is the best under present circumstances. The Kent farmers I visited were very comfortable in their homes, and I believe that it would be a paying investment if they would make their animals as comfortable. It certainly takes much more food to keep a cow up, standing beside a straw stack on a cold night when the thermometer is down about zero, or perhaps under, than if she were lying down chewing her cud in a comfortable stable where the thermometer registered over fifty degrees. On a few farms in Kent the corn shredder had been at work, and was generally approved, but cornstalks were usually fed out to cattle, and in many instances to horses, just as they grew, and much of the stalks were wasted, and must make the manure very awkward to handle. Many of us in Oxford pulp roots and mix with the cut cornstalks, which makes a nice, palatable, healthy feed for cattle. D. L.

Two-Dollar Wheat.

Mr. F. W. Thompson, Vice-President and Managing Director of the Ogilvie Flour Mills Co., places more reliance on the increasing demand for breadstuffs the world over to cause an increase in the price of wheat than he does in the war outlook. He points out that countries where, until recently, wheat was practically unknown, are beginning to use bread as a daily food, with the result that they will soon take a considerable part in the world's consumption. Four years ago, not more than one per cent. of the population of Japan ate bread. Mr. Thompson places the percentage now as threefold more, and expects to see a rapid increase within the next few years. He applies the same to such other countries as China. Mr. Thompson was asked: "Do you think wheat will sell higher than present prices, independent of war between Russia and Japan?"

"While no man can say definitely as to future prices, still the present basis of supply and demand are such as to indicate a higher level of prices for the next few years than has existed during the past five years, meaning that wheat at \$1 a bushel in Chicago under conditions now prevailing will be as common as 70 and 75 cents during the past few years."

"Then you expect most prosperous conditions throughout the Canadian Northwest?"

"Decidedly, I do. In fact, I believe that no agricultural country in the world to-day has a brighter future than our Canadian Northwest."

"Where would wheat go should war be declared?"

"Oh, that is a hard one. It might go to \$2 a bushel in Chicago."

Increased Elevator Capacity.

The elevator capacity at Port Arthur and Ft. William has been increased 2,500,000 bushels by the completion of C. P. R. elevator E, an annex to elevator D, and an annex to King's elevator. The latter will accommodate about 500,000.