

The month of June is a very critical time with us, for if we do not have plenty of rain then our hay crop will be light. Good pasture and hay together with the root crop are our main dependence now since the keeping of dairy and beef cattle has become our principal business.

Prices of grain and potatoes have gone below what they can be profitably produced for, and this obliges us to turn our attention to other lines that will tend to conserve and increase the fertility of our soil. Agriculture here is in a depressed state. We have had several bad seasons lately on account of drought, which seems to be becoming more prevalent of late years. The shortage in crops and the extremely low prices prevailing have made the lot of the farmer a hard one. Oats are now worth about 25c., potatoes 10c., and the best of fat cattle $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{3}{4}$ c. Fresh beef from Chicago and cattle from Ontario supply to a great extent the cities in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and Newfoundland, which used to be our markets, and barrel beef from Chicago is now coming to Charlottetown.

Our cheese business, from which we expected better things, has been disappointing, and has returned to the patrons of the factories only about 55 cents per hundred pounds of milk. This has put something of a damper on the dairy business, especially among those who have had only one year's experience in it, as is the case with patrons of about one-half of our factories. But the feeling is that we have touched bottom, and that better times must come soon. Low prices will not be an unmixed evil if they lead us to study economy in production, a lesson which we all need to learn, and which, if learned, will place agriculture on a sounder basis than it has hitherto rested on in this country.

Our cheese, which was all made and marketed by the government last year, sold for an average of \$8.40 per hundred pounds. The expenses for freight, insurance, cold storage, and interest on advances to patrons, amounted to 55 cents per hundred. The government charge for manufacturing was \$1.25 per hundred, and the cost of drawing milk would average about 9 cents.

Our output of dairy produce for the year totalled \$178,703, \$16,000 of which was from the winter creamery which the dairy commissioner put in operation last fall. The Dominion Government are only managing a few of the smaller factories this year. Prof. Robertson visited the island in the latter part of May, and met representatives of the factories and discussed the prospects with them. He considers that the dairy business is well established now, and will not require much more aid from the government. He

spoke hopefully of the future of the industry, and said that the experience of the past few years had taught them how to handle milk in our climate so as to make the very best quality of cheese. The professor advised us to make butter in October, as it was then too cold and moist to make and cure a good article of cheese.

This is the year for fruit on the island, and the trees now in bloom give promise of an abundant crop. Apple-growing is receiving a good deal of attention, and, where intelligently engaged in, is giving good returns. Prof. Craig's visit and address last winter gave the people much-needed information on the growing of fruit, especially on the kind of apples suited to our climate. Fruit-growing is coming to the front and will soon be an important industry.

POPLAR SHADE.

June 10th.

FOR FARMING.

An Englishman's View of the Cattle Exclusion Bill.

A tremendous endeavor is being made to get the government to make an exception in favor of Canadian cattle in the bill now before parliament, so as to put an end once and for all to all doubt as to the method under which the importation of live animals from abroad shall be carried on—an effort which every breeder at home hopes fervently will be unsuccessful. It is urged that the measure is simply one of protection in disguise, but this is a gross misstatement and utterly devoid of truth. The British farmer and stockbreeder is far too keen a man of business to ask for protection in the sense in which the word is generally understood, for not only would it mean to him dearer food for cattle, but dearer wages, etc., and thus most likely the result would be that he would be worse off than before; but what he does ask for, and what he is determined to have, is protection from all fear of the importation of diseased animals, either bullocks or sheep. It is urged that Canadian bullocks are free from disease. Well, this may be the case; but, even if it were conclusively proved that they were free from disease in every shape and form, it would not alter the question one iota, because there is always a very great danger of infection taking place on the voyage, and, consequently, a danger to the English breeder that infection may be unintentionally brought over. As regards sheep, one need not say a word on this, for the sheepmen here only too recently had an actual example of the state some arrived in.

Your farmers and breeders must, therefore,