

of Mr. Bourne's, to which he gives the name of belief, is destined to perpetual sterility.

CANADIAN AND BRITISH AGRICULTURE.

Professor J. P. Seldon, of Downton Agricultural College, England, read a thoughtful paper, before the British Association, on British and Canadian agriculture. He remarked on the competition that is going on between the farmers of the two countries and endeavored to trace the lines on which it will probably run in future; though the thought that nothing is so inevitable as the unforeseen, so many unlooked for factors come into play and involve the adoption of various modifications in farming practice. Taking the statistics of past Canadian exports, he remarked on the falling off in butter and the much larger increase in cheese. "Canada," he said, "indeed, has in recent years proved herself capable of producing cheese of very superior quality and condition, her climate being, so far as the great American continent goes, exceptionally well adapted to the pursuit of dairy husbandry. The disparity I have indicated as between cheese and butter, as regards transit and preservation, is one which has no need to exist, for butter can be so made and packed as to travel safely and in good condition to the other side of the world and back again if need be. Canada may produce such butter, and may win a large portion of this self-same trade to herself." The need of adopting good methods in the manufacture of butter has often been pointed out in these columns; and until we get this economic reform, our export of this product must remain in an unsatisfactory state.

As a stock-exporting country, Canada is obtaining a prominent position. In the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1883, the value of the animals and their products which she exported was \$20,284,443, the greater part of which was sent to England. The demand of the English market develops this tendency to an increase in stock raising. Professor Seldon is probably not wrong in his forecast, when he predicts that the old Provinces will become stock-raising and dairying countries, and the North-West will become the granary of Canada. The latter process, he thinks, will be much more rapid than the former. Present indications point in these directions.

But in India, Canada will have to meet a new competitor in the growth of wheat; and by that competition Professor Seldon thinks, Canada may "find herself seriously handicapped." This new competitor had not been unforeseen; we have more than once pointed to the rapid progress India is making as an exporter of wheat. When the railways now projected and, some of them, under construction, are completed, India will become a much more formidable competitor than she has hitherto been. At how low a figure India wheat can be grown is still an undetermined question; but if the lowest estimates should ever be realized, it is quite certain that Canada and the United States, not to speak of England, would have to retire from the contest. But India is not

likely to produce all the wheat that England requires; and the varying rates of the cost of production in India and other countries, would help to determine the price. Still there cannot be a doubt that the competition of India is already felt, that it bore a part in the decline of prices that has taken place during the last year; and this year its pressure will be felt in a still greater degree. It is fortunate for Canada that, at this crisis in her history, she is enabled to offer to cultivation a vast area of highly productive virgin soil, which requires only to be broken by the plough to produce abundant crops. If Indian competition should press with severity on Canada, what will not its effect be on the farmers of England? The land question will demand adjustment, in the only way in which adjustment can be of any avail: rents must come down, as the only condition on which the new competition can be sustained. But any great increase in the means of subsistence will tend to bring its own remedy; a rapid increase of population will take place, and prices will have an upward tendency. This Indian competition may, as Professor Seldon assumes, be a reason why the old Provinces should extend their operations in stock raising and dairy farming, in which case, he thinks, "it will be well for them to copy the best practices of the old country as far as may be, viz: Crop rotations made subsidiary to stock raising, stock fattening and the production of milk; and in order to effect this the conservation of manure, thorough tilling of the soil and the employment of purchased feeding stuffs and fertilizers, will occupy a prominent position in the farmers' programme." How far imitation of European methods may be advisable, must be left to experience. So long as land was abundant, relatively to population and to capital, a system of farming which took the largest returns from the land at the least cost, was the only one generally followed. The old Provinces are now entering on a new stage of their existence; and they have to meet the competition not only of all the rest of the world, but of the virgin soil of our own North-West.

Professor Seldon is of opinion that, "in course of time, as land increases in value, the landlord and tenant system will grow up in Canada," and he adds thoughtfully, "it will be well that it should at the outset be defined on equitable lines." Much as it may be desired that this revolution should not occur, there are unmistakable signs of its coming. Already a good deal of farm land is rented, in Ontario, and the quantity is steadily, if slowly, increasing. The interest paid on mortgages stands in lieu of rent; and the aggregate amount annually paid in this way is enormous. If the capital borrowed goes into improvements and judicious extensions of area, and if after paying interest a profit is left to the farmer, all is well; but there may come a time, under the competition with which the farmers of the old Provinces are threatened when there will be no profit left after interest is paid. In view of this possibility, a reduction of mortgage debts would be a rational precaution. The farmer, as Professor Seldon hints, should be careful not to bury too large a capital, not to put into the land what he will be unable to get out of it again, with a profit.

JAMAICA AND CANADA.

There seems to be no reason to doubt that some movement has been made, with the object of adding Jamaica to the Canadian confederation. The West India Island is said to have memorialized the colonial office to bring about this connection. The object of the islanders seems to be to get free trade with Canada, our tariff having the effect of somewhat restricting mutual trade. The trade previously done between Canada and the West Indies, in sugar materials, has of late shown a tendency to go, in part, to other countries. Nevertheless, the Halifax merchants, who are in the West India trade, do not appear to favor the proposed connection. But the objections, reported by the *Halifax Morning Chronicle*, are not so much commercial as political. It is admitted that it would be a benefit to have Jamaica as a Canadian market. Instead of consuming American flour, the island would use Canadian, if it could be made suitable for that market, of which, we presume, there need be no serious doubt. Nova Scotia would be more benefitted by free trade with Jamaica than any other province; and Jamaica would not only preserve, but greatly extend its trade with Canada. At present, the island is, economically, in a bad condition, and any change that would increase its trade would be for the better. There is a large absentee proprietary, who principally reside in England. Many of them were ruined, as a consequence of emancipation, owing to the difficulty of obtaining labor on which it was possible to rely. The importation of Coolies, in some degree, relieved the difficulty; but the island has never recovered its ancient prosperity. Absenteeism has been an evil; but the absentees and the island all suffered, though perhaps in different degrees. The natives have latterly been raising sugar in small quantities; and if the practice were extended, hope might lead them on to more extended cultivation. Production is too feeble, at present, to permit the island to be prosperous.

Sugar being the chief product of Jamaica, the growing competition between cane and beet root sugar, throws a dark shadow over the prospects of the island. Beet sugar is constantly counting for more, in this struggle for the survival of the fittest, and on the whole, it is getting the best in the race. The decrease in the price of the colony's staple product has led to failures among the merchants, and planters feel much discouraged. But if the sugar which now pays duty, came into the Canadian market free, there would be a considerable revival of the sugar industry, in the island. The other West India islands would suffer, and Canada would have to face a rather heavy loss of revenue. This loss is not to be measured by the amount of the present duty on Jamaica sugar; the removal of the duty would give a spur to production, by greatly increasing the consumption of Jamaica sugar in what would then be the home market of Canada. Rum would probably be subjected to an excise duty; there would be no more reason why it should be free from excise than Canadian whiskey. The coffee trade between Halifax and the