

Our English Letter.

CANADIAN TRADE IMPROVING IN SOME LINES.

The speeches of Premier Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain this week have brought the question of Fiscal Reform once more into the forefront of the political battle, and there it is now likely to remain until the country has given its verdict. The idea of a Colonial Conference, although not a new one, has been received by the ministerial press as a good stroke of business, but as they expect to be defeated at the polls—and doubtless will be—it can only be an election cry, and nothing more. Farmers are not at all satisfied with Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. They say they are being "killed" by free imports. Now, I want to know if the killing will be more pleasant to them because it comes from a Canadian hand, instead of a Yankee. As Canada promises, in ten years' time, to be in a position to supply all our wants, this is a very pertinent question.

The Council of the Royal Agricultural Society met on Thursday last to discuss the question of the loss arising from the shows at Park Royal. Lord Middleton, who presided, stated that the Society had no funds whatever to meet any loss which might result from another year's show, and, in the present state of their finances, the Council could not sanction an expenditure of not less than \$100,000.00, with a possibility of a loss on such an outlay, which was hardly likely to be less than \$30,000.00, and might be much more. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided to hold the 1905 show at Park Royal, in the second week of July, provided a guarantee fund of \$50,000.00 was raised by subscriptions from members, exhibitors and others, towards defraying the expenses. It may be taken for granted that the money will be forthcoming.

At the Dairy Show this week, in the Agricultural Hall, the Canadian exhibit stands in a class by itself, and is a credit to the Department of Agriculture. The stand decorated with cereals and grass is exceedingly picturesque, and shows up to perfection the choice display of dairy produce, including butter, cheese, eggs, condensed cream and milk, hams, bacon, poultry, honey, apples, etc., etc. Mr. J. H. Moore informed me good business was being done, although he was careful to add that the object of the stand was more to bring the produce under the notice of buyers than for actual sale.

The Board of Trade returns, published yesterday, show a large decrease in our imports of food-stuffs from Canada for the months ended September 30th. The value works out at about ten million dollars less than the corresponding period of 1903. Wheat, maize, cattle and cheese are the principal factors in this decline, flour, oats, peas, bacon and butter having all done better than last year, the last named especially so.

We have again experienced seasonable weather in the British Isles, and farmers have been able to make good progress with field work, the probability being that there will be a largely increased area devoted to wheat, compared with last year. Native wheat in country markets is by no means plentiful, and it meets a continued good demand at from \$7.50 to \$8.20 for good to fine red, according to quality and district. In London, the wheat market exhibits much firmness, and prices show a further improvement, especially for distant deliveries. Buyers on Wednesday were somewhat affected by the big increase in the American visible supply, but there are no offers of American wheat at anything like our level. For No. 1 northern Manitoba, landed, \$9.54 is being paid, and \$8.90 c.i.f., might buy new crop, Oct. and Nov. shipment. Oats are dull, with a larger stock than expected, and 100,000 qrs. arrived last week. New Zealand quoted \$4.10 to \$5.75.

The cattle trade can hardly be said to have improved since my last letter. The quality of the beasts received at Deptford has been very middling, with the exception of those from the States sold on Wednesday last, which were really A 1. As far as numbers go, a fair amount of business is passing, but the Smithfield buyers are not at all keen, and to clean out the lairs is a very difficult matter. Canadian cattle in some cases this week have made up to 12c. per pound, but the general figure is 10c. to 11c. The best Yankee beasts were quoted as high as 12c. on Wednesday, with seconds 12c. to 12c. One thousand four hundred and twenty-eight Canadian sheep were sold last week at 12c., but this week we have had none on the market.

The demand for cattle at Deptford today (Saturday) was much better than has been the case of late. Four hundred and seventy-three States beasts made 11c. to 12c., and 500 Canadian beasts made 11c. to 12c. In a firm trade 265 Canadian ewes changed hands at 12c.

Bacon.—Trade throughout the week has ruled within moderate proportions, and the tendency of prices is rather easier, although no change has been made in list quotations. At the close buyers were reticent, and the market finished up dull.

Davies' bacon is officially quoted 12c to 12c. per pound; other brands from 10c.

Hams.—Trade very quiet, and prices in buyers' favor. Canadian long cut (green), 10c. to 11c.; short cut (green), 10c. to 11c.

Cheese.—In the Canadian cheese department there is not much stir, although the trade has been steady during the week. Heavy supplies are coming to hand, and it looks as if the market was to be overstocked. Primest September make are again quoted at 9c. to 9c.

Butter.—Canadian butter is in fair request at late rates. Good to fine, 18c. to 20c.; choicest, 21c. to 22c. American butter continues to have a wide range from 14c to 18c. per pound. London, Oct. 8th.

Potato-growing in Michigan.

Mr. G. A. Campbell, of Orangeville, Ont., after having spent a short time in Michigan recently, gives The Banner his observations on the methods of growing potatoes in the Wolverine State.

"The general run of farmers have from five to twenty acres of the tubers and sometimes more. One farmer took me over his field and tried several hills, each of which had from five to twelve large potatoes. He did not expect to have more than two per cent. of unmarketable potatoes. As to quality, judging from those served up at his very hospitable board, they were the best potatoes I ever partook of. His method of cultivation was as follows: In preparing his seed, he used only good, large, well-developed potatoes—I think, so far as I know, the very opposite from what the majority of farmers use here. Yet from small, poorly-developed seed, we expect a crop of sound, well-developed potatoes, and quite naturally fail to get what we expect. After having selected his good potatoes for seed, he cuts off a small portion of the seed end of the potato and throws it with the other refuse to the pigs. The rest of the potato he cuts up, so that there shall be only one eye in each piece of seed. Only one seed is dropped in each place. The ground is marked into squares, about 32, 34 or 36 inches in size. This is done by a marker hauled by a horse. The tool used to plant with is very simple looking, being funnel-shaped, in fact, very much the shape of the old cow bell, with which we are all familiar, only hinged on the sides so



The Stock Parade at Victoria, B. C., Fair.

that, after pressing it down with the foot three or four inches into the ground and then moving sideways, it opens at the bottom and allows a single seed to drop out. The seed is then covered with the foot. The implement has a handle about four or five feet in length. After the ground is marked a man can easily plant four acres in a day. They use the ordinary one-horse cultivator, but cultivate both ways, and do so quite frequently—at intervals of from a week to ten days, according to the weather, in the earlier part of the season. The method followed is flat cultivation, very little hill being raised. In harvesting the crop they throw the potatoes from two rows into the center. This leaves quite a wide space between each row of dug potatoes, along which they drive a horse attached to a kind of stoneboat, on which are placed 8 or 10 square crates, about 15 or 16 inches square. These are made of strips of wood about 2 of an inch thick and 2 1/2 inches broad, with a space about an inch in width between each strip. Each crate will hold a bushel without heaping. When the crates are filled, they are set off and replaced by empty ones. Later in the day a low, broad-wheeled wagon comes along, the crates are loaded and hauled to the barn, where the potatoes are emptied into the cellar. The crates are much easier to handle than bags, and can be piled one above the other to any desired height. They are generally made by the farmer himself, who will have from 75 to 100 around the place. Potatoes are usually held until spring before selling. They are seldom sold less than 50c. a bushel, and often reach as high as one dollar."

Forthcoming Stock Sales.

The following auction sales of pure-bred stock are advertised in this paper:

- Oct. 21st—Ed. Martin, Beeton, Ont., Shorthorns.
- Oct. 26th—Estate of T. E. Perkins, Petrolia, Ont., Shorthorns.
- Oct. 27th—T. H. Hassard's Clydesdale fillies, at "The Repository," Toronto.
- Nov. 10th—H. Cargill & Son, and W. G. Pettit & Sons, at Hamilton, Ont., Shorthorns.
- Nov. 16th—John Bright, Myrtle, Ont., Clydesdale fillies and Shorthorns.
- Every Tuesday and Friday—Walter Harland Smith, at The Repository, Toronto, horses.

Canadian Sheep and Swine at St. Louis.

The sheep and swine exhibit in connection with the Louisiana Purchase Exposition has gone into history, and will no doubt be cited to future generations as the world's greatest show of sheep and hogs up to date, type and quality considered. And for this Canadian breeders deserve a great deal of credit, especially in the mutton breeds of sheep and in Large Yorkshire, Tamworth and Essex hogs. In the long-wooled breeds nearly all the winners were from the Canadian side of the line. A. W. Smith, Maple Lodge, was the principal winner in Leicesters, winning nearly every championship, as well as many of the other ribbons. Hastings Bros, Crosshill, and A. & W. Whitelaw, Guelph, also won a goodly share. In Lincolns the honors were all divided between J. T. Gibson Denfield; Graham Walker and J. H. & E. W. Patrick, Ilderton, the first named winning the lion's share. One of his champions dropped a strong, active lamb while at the show, which was a surprise to all. In Cotswolds, J. C. Ross, Jarvis, and T. H. Shore, Glanworth, made a strong showing, and won a good share, notwithstanding that they were in competition with a strong lot of imported animals. E. F. Park, Burgessville, showed a few head, and landed some important premiums. In Oxford Downs, Henry Arkell, of Arkell, had out a fine exhibit, and won a fair share of the ribbons, although he had the two strongest flocks in America, viz., Dick Stone's and Geo. McKerron's, to tussle with, and we think it would have been quite proper to have placed him higher up in some sections. Shropshires were out, as usual, in large numbers and grand quality. John Campbell, Woodville, the only Shrop visitor from this side, had, as usual, a splendid exhibit, and won nearly half the total amount of money offered for the breed, averaging \$80.00 per head of his exhibit, or over \$1,650 in all; also, championship for best pure-bred yearling wether against all breeds. In Dorsets, Col. J. A. McGillivray, Uxbridge, had out a very strong string, several of them being imported Royal winners. He was one of the largest winners in the class, winning three championships, also two grand championships. R. H. Harding, Thorndale, also made a good record, with mostly home-bred stuff, winning most of the prizes in pure-bred wethers, as well as several in the breeding classes. Three championships, one reserve championship and one reserve grand championship prizes were also included in his winnings. All the champion prizes came to Canada in this breed, and it was generally admitted that there was no better exhibit on the ground than the Dorsets, although three of the best flocks in the U. S. were in the competition. Southdowns were represented by a lot of good things, but no better, in our opinion than has sometimes met in Toronto. Sir Geo. A. Drummond's flock from Pointe Claire, Que., and Telfer Bros.' flock from Paris, Ont., each did their share to sustain the reputation this aristocratic breed has in Canada. Telfer Bros. were strong enough to secure the grand championship for best wether any age, breed or grade, with a pure-bred Southdown lamb. They also had a few head of Hampshires on exhibition that were winners.

Suffolk sheep were represented by three pens, two of which were owned and exhibited by Jas. Bowman, of Guelph, the well-known Aberdeen-Angus breeder. He was fortunate in winning the first and second ten prizes, on sheep that were only grain fed a short time before leaving home. In this breed there were only three flock prizes offered.

The swine exhibitors from here did not fare as well as the sheep exhibitors, considering the high quality of the stuff they had on exhibition. The Oak Lodge Yorkshires, from the herd of Mr. J. E. Brethour, Burford, won a goodly share, including championship over all breeds in the barrow classes, although they did not conform to the judge's ideal sufficiently to win as much as we expected they would when we looked them over, as we considered the Oak Lodge string a very strong exhibit. The Yorkshires, taken on the whole, were of high-class quality, a large percentage of them being either bred in Canada or imported from England. The Berkshire class was extremely large, the entries totalling over six hundred. The herd from Canada fared the worst of any Canadian exhibit. The large, growthy Berkshire cannot win much under the average American judge. They seem to favor the nobby, stylish hog, without as much length as Canadian Berkshires are noted for. Tamworths, shown by D. Douglas & Sons, of Mitchell, Ont., fared better than either of the other breeds. The competition was keen, still they went prepared to meet the best in large numbers, and won out. Messrs. Jos. Featherston & Son, Streetsville, were on hand with their Essex and Yorkshires, with which they did exceedingly well, especially in the Essex breeding sections and pure-bred Yorkshire barrows.