

Danish Egg Trade.

(London Leader)

The ever-increasing import of food-stuffs from abroad is a question to which alarmists are never tired of calling our attention, and not a few of them have raised the cry of unfair competition. It seems impossible, at first sight, to believe that countries whose natural advantages are obviously inferior to ours, should compete successfully with us in our own markets, and the tendency is to jump to the conclusion that their export trade is being fostered by means which raise it out of the sphere of open competition. In some instances, as in the case of the sugar bounties of France and Germany, this is undoubtedly true, but in regard to most agricultural products a closer study reveals the fact that our foreign competitors have fairly won their position in the English market by virtue of the superiority of their methods.

An admirable illustration of method may be found in the Danish egg trade. If there be one form of produce in which, more than in others, the English farmer might reasonably expect to hold his own against all comers, it is this, and yet Great Britain pays close upon five millions sterling every year for eggs imported from France, Belgium, Denmark, Russia, Canada, and the United States, and many other countries. Of these foreign competitors Denmark is perhaps the most formidable, and Denmark owes her strength largely to that genius for organization which she has exhibited in so many branches of agriculture.

About one-sixth of the egg exported from Denmark passes through the hands of a great co-operative society, or federation of co-operative societies, known as the Dansk Andels Aeg-Export, and this powerful trading corporation is able virtually to control the Danish export trade, and indirectly to exert a considerable influence on the English market.

The Dansk Andels Aeg-Export, which was founded in 1895, embraces about 100 affiliated branches, with a total membership of some 25,000 poultry-keepers. Each branch has its local depot, and appoints a collector, who is paid a small commission—about 1d per "long hundred"—on the eggs collected. The eggs are purchased by weight—a system which, in itself, is an inducement to the farmer to keep improved breeds of poultry. The most stringent rules are laid down to ensure that no egg shall be handed to the collector which has not been laid since the previous collection, and infringements of these rules are punished by fine or expulsion from the society. As all the eggs are stamped not only with the brand of the Dansk Andels Aeg-Export, but also with a number representing the branch society and the registered number of the member who supplied them, it is always possible to trace the history of any defective egg from the London breakfast table at which the shell is broken to the Dutch farmer in whose poultry yard it first appeared. It speaks well, both for the public spirit of the Danish co-operator and for the completeness of the system, that complaints of defective eggs are very seldom made.

From the local depot the eggs are forwarded to one of the central packing stations which have been established in the principal towns having convenient means of communication with the various English ports. At these centres the eggs are "graded," according to size into five different classes (an ingenious machine doing in use by which this can be expeditiously carried out), are branded with the society's registered trade-mark, and packed in wool-wool in large cases, to be dispatched by the first available steamer. The steamship service between Denmark and the United Kingdom is a most excellent one, and the vessels are fitted with refrigerating chambers, in which the eggs are kept at the proper temperature, so that they arrive at their proper destination in perfect condition, and command high prices on the English market.

The system of collection and marketing is such that the eggs are brought with the least possible delay from the producer to the consumer—a condition of the first importance in dealing with produce which is of so perishable a nature. At the same time it ensures that the maximum price shall be received by the farmer, as there are no middle profits to be drawn out of the money paid by the English merchant who purchases the eggs. The price actually paid to the members on delivery is fixed from time to time by the committee of the

Dansk Andels Aeg-Export, according to the market quotations, and at the end of the year the net profits of the society are distributed amongst the members in proportion to the value of the eggs which each has supplied.

Fur Season in Lonely Labrador.

Reports are reaching civilization of the operations of the past winter in the interior and upon the coast of Labrador. The season was, generally speaking, a mild one, and the fatalities among the Indians fewer than usual. A good supply of furs was secured, but none of such peculiar value as some of those taken during the preceding winter.

The highest price paid for a single skin of last winter's catch was \$300, which was for a black slyer fox, the king of all the fur-bearing animals of Labrador. Exactly double that amount was paid for a skin of the same variety a very noble specimen, about a year ago. Prices in general are scarcely so good at present as they were this time last year.

Marten skins, which have brought as much as \$25 a skin, sold this spring for \$15 to \$18. Traders are especially proud of the otters and minks which they obtain from Labrador, which have fur of a peculiar fineness and lustre.

The hunters from the interior of Labrador had not heard of the death of Queen Victoria until they emerged from the woods a few days ago. No mail matter can reach them during the winter. Even the residents along the coast had only six mails from autumn till spring, and these had to be conveyed over the snow by dogs, on sleighs, for want of proper roads and other means of conveyance.

The oldest living settler upon the coast is Philip G. Touzel, who went there from Jersey nearly fifty years ago, and for more than twenty years was the only settler. He visited civilization the other day, after a long stay in his dreary home. He is a most interesting character, a quaint old-world figure. He is the only Protestant in Sheldrake, where he resides even his own children being Roman Catholics, but he possesses the confidence of the eighteen families of the place to such an extent that he is their doctor, minister, lawyer and postmaster. When asked what he generally prescribes for those who fall ill in the winter time far away from medical aid, he replied, meditatively:

"I find that they generally crave a little whiskey—that is, of course, whiskey with some other ingredients mixed in with it. I don't give it to all who ask for it," he said, "but I have found it most efficacious in a majority of cases. During one hard season," he continued, "an epidemic of grip or something of the kind killed a score or more, and threatened the rest of us, but by determined effort I managed to gain the victory. It was a tight squeeze though."

Damascus Steel in Iowa.

The following romantic story comes from Des Moines, Iowa. In the paroling of S. R. Dawson last week, Governor L. M. Shaw, of Iowa, probably saved to science a secret one lost and now rediscovered by the aged man just set free from prison—the art of making Damascus steel and hardening copper. Practically all his life Dawson has been working on the steel of the manufacture of Damascus steel. In the early '90's he perfected his process, and after exhaustive tests by business men it was pronounced a success.

Just as he was entering upon a realization of his life dream he murdered Walter Scott, a young man who had eloped and married his daughter, Clara. That was Christmas eve, 1897. He was tried and sentenced to the penitentiary for ten years and into the prison cell he took with him the secret of his steel process.

Just before Dawson committed the murder that blighted his prospects a company had been formed to manufacture the steel. Dawson in return for the financial support and assistance given him by the men who formed the company agreed to put the secret formula for the making of the steel into a safety deposit vault. He further agreed that when he became disabled he would give the key to the officers of the company so that they could go ahead with the work. Dawson put the secret in the vault, but when he was sent to the penitentiary he argued that he was not disabled, and refused to

give up the key. One of the members of the company who saw the documents placed in the vault decided that they could not be deciphered by any ordinary man.

Dawson was sixty years old when he was sent to prison, and for years has not been in rugged health. Fearing that the confinement and his advanced years might suddenly terminate his life, the company known as the Damascus Steel Company, formed to put the Damascus steel on the market, began to seek for Dawson's release, rather than take a chance on having the secret lost to the world. Governor Shaw made use of his official prerogative, and the prison doors swung open to the old inventor.

As soon as practicable a meeting of the Damascus Steel Company will be held. At that time it is expected that an arrangement will be made with Mr. Dawson whereby the secret will be conveyed to some trustee in case of his death or injury. That done the company expect to expend a large sum of money in making a series of exhaustive tests to learn just what the steel can be made for commercially. Dawson has always claimed that can be made cheaper than the steel of the ordinary commerce. If it can be produced at a reasonable cost in commercial quantities the company expects to erect a smelter, a blast furnace and a large plant.

The company, which were organized and incorporated under the laws of Iowa in the fall of 1897, are capitalized for \$250,000, and have the following officers, all of Des Moines: Dr. L. D. Rood, president, Stewart Goodell, vice-president, A. H. Miles, secretary. These officers, with the following, form the board of directors: G. M. Chappell, W. L. Read and L. H. Chamberlain.

Before the company were organized the steel process received an exhaustive test at the hands of C. G. McCarthy, then auditor of the State of Iowa. He declared positively at the time that the process was a success, but he dropped the matter because of demands Dawson made in regard to the organization of the company.

To Get Harvest Hands.

The question of supplying harvest hands is of such vital importance to the whole of the West that a press representative made further inquiries Tuesday of the immigration commissioner regarding the possibility of assistance from other parts of Canada and the United States.

The commissioner stated that under instructions from the Hon. Clifford Sifton the entire department of immigration north and south of the line had for some weeks been doing their utmost to secure men for the harvest. Not only had the Dominion agents been given instructions to join with the Manitoba government in securing help for Manitoba in the eastern provinces, but it was hoped that a large number of easterners would find their way into Assiniboia, where there is a very handsome crop to harvest and free homesteads to be had.

The desire of the railway companies to meet the needs of the case was very noticeable. The Canadian Northern railway will carry harvest hands from the States at one cent per mile. The Canadian Pacific Railway company will for the purpose of enabling harvest hands south of the boundary to reach the wheat fields of Manitoba and the Territories, give a one cent per mile rate from Fortral, and special rates from Regina. The question has been under discussion for the past two weeks between the Hon. Mr. Bulyea, commissioner of agriculture, and the immigration department. It is hoped that a large number may be induced to cross the line to assist in taking off the bountiful harvest, and it will be the aim of the department to retain permanently such a fine class of men as settlers.

The C. P. R. passenger agent has been engaged for some time in securing data as to what help can be obtained from the many new-comers on the Calgary and Edmonton branch who may not be needed for the crops in the immediate vicinity of their homesteads, and it is quite possible the C. P. R. will offer a rate that may induce a few hundred to leave the Edmonton district temporarily for work at Indian Head and points east. At any rate, there is no doubt that all available help from every quarter will be secured.

It is feared that little help can be

obtained on the Prince Albert branch, as people naturally seek work as close to their home as possible.

The crops in and around Yorkton and Swan River districts are so good that it is impossible to secure the assistance of any Guelphians or Doukhobors now in those localities, in fact, in the former district sixty of them are already under contract for the threshing season at \$2 a day and board, and in the Swan River country they are busy making hay on which to feed stock for other people during the coming winter.

The prospects at the present moment for a very large number from the United States are not very bright, and while a number of them may start on their way to Canada, they may be picked up by North Dakota farmers, who are also blessed with a splendid harvest. However, under specific instructions from Mr. Sifton, all the Dominion government agents in the United States have been for weeks past offering inducements and making special arrangements for American farmers to view the country and help take off the crop. The extent of this labor may be gleaned from the fact that our harvest prospects and the need of 20,000 or 30,000 harvest hands has already been published in over 7,000 newspapers in the United States.

Speaking of the rate of wages, the commissioner said: "All laborers, including Guelphians and Doukhobors, have been eagerly engaged at \$30 and \$35 per month and board wherever offering, and the farmer who secures his hired help at once will prove his wisdom, as the rate of wages will undoubtedly advance and by harvest time at least \$40 per month and board will be offered in the Territories for a three months' engagement."

Ocean Grain Freight Rates.

The ocean freight market for grain is a sick one, engagements having been made for Glasgow at 6d, and even 6d has been accepted. Liverpool space has been pretty well taken up for August at 1s 3d to 1s 4½d, but London is almost dead, and what business has transpired recently was at 1s 3d. These rates are very low, but we have seen them considerably lower, as we remember the Messrs. Allan going into the market and paying, if we mistake not, ¼ to ½c per bushel for a cargo of heavy grain as ballast of one of their steamers. Of course, there has been very little now export business in grain recently as the speculative boom wheat, corn and oats has put prices beyond an export basis. But as soon as the new crop of American wheat commences to move there should be an improvement in the ocean freight market.—Montreal Trade Bulletin.

Canada's Foreign Trade.

The latest estimates of the Dominion department of Trade and Commerce show that the foreign trade of Canada increased during the year ending June 30 to the extent of about \$13,000,000, as compared with the year previous which in turn was the largest on record up to that date. The total amount of foreign trade for 1900-01 according to this latest return was \$134,000,000, as compared with \$381,517,250. The exports make the following showing: Mines, \$39,352,573; fisheries, \$10,720,352; forest, \$30,003,877; animals and their products, \$55,423,527; agricultural products, \$24,977,602; manufactures, \$16,012,502; miscellaneous articles, \$44,642, coin and bullion, \$398,077. These figures indicate an increase of about \$15,000,000 in products of the mine and of about \$2,000,000 in manufactures. The total imports entered for consumption during the year recently closed amounted to \$181,225,380 as against \$180,804,316.

D. M. McMillan, agent, Brandon, Man., has made an assignment.

The dry goods stock of Neelds & Collins, Moose Jaw, Assa., valued at \$4,000, is offered for sale by tender.

The strike of the stationary firemen in Pennsylvania has tied up nearly all the mines in the Wyoming Valley, and a conservative estimate places the number of men idle at 43,000. This includes the men out in the Scranton district. Only about 800 of these are firemen. The remainder is made up of miners, laborers, engineers, breaker boys, and machinists employed in and about the collieries. Every mine from Pittston to Nanticoke is affected.