

between the one or the other contributor to her commercial and industrial requirements. Until the colonies are in a position to satisfy her demands to a much larger extent than they are now capable of doing it seems hopeless to expect that a preference, which would be so costly to her people, could be granted.

But there is no reason why, in the meantime, some steps should not be taken to obtain a partial realisation of advantages that, it is hoped, would follow from preferential colonial tariffs. To whatever point the principle might ultimately be capable of extension, it may be safely asserted that there are now many restrictions to intercolonial commerce, caused by duties that might, with mutual advantage to those concerned, be subjected to revision on the lines of differential treatment. In the foregoing pages some indication is given of the direction this policy might take in the case of Canada, and an examination of the Australasian tariffs would very probably result in similar conclusions being arrived at.

The result of the recommendations which the Conference made in respect of inter-British tariffs must, so far as regards their application to trade between Canada and these colonies, depend on what answer be given to the request made to the Imperial Government for an extension of treaty-making rights. In respect of Australasia this power already exists; but so far it has not been used. Whether the attention that has been directed to the subject by the Conference will have the effect of urging forward practical action remains to be seen. The resolutions at Ottawa echoed but the voices of the few: it is the many who must determine their value, and decide whether the principles they embody are such as would, if put in practice, tend to the general advancement of the Empire's interests.

### THE CANADIAN EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.

It will, perhaps, be of interest to the people of this colony if some brief reference be made to an institution which has been found of great benefit to the agricultural community of Canada. I allude to what are there known as experimental farms, of which there are at present five in operation, but it is intended that more shall be established if circumstances require them. The idea of instituting these State-conducted farms was brought forward in 1886 by Sir John Carlin, who was then Minister for Agriculture. It was felt that by the aid of experimental operations carried on at the public cost much time could be saved and experience gained in the prosecution of Canadian agriculture. A Bill for establishing such a national measure was passed through Parliament almost without opposition, and a commencement was at once made. The area of Canada is so large, and the climatic and other conditions vary so greatly, that it was considered advisable to make provision for farms in different parts of the country. The first step was taken in Ontario, within a few miles of the city of Ottawa, where some five hundred and fifty acres were purchased, upon which has been established what is known as the Central Farm. This farm is now in full operation, and every description of experimental work is carried on there. The institution is managed by the Director, who also controls all the branch establishments; and residing on the farm are the Dairy Commissioner, the Entomologist, Chemist, and Horticulturist. Laboratories are fitted up with appliances for making tests and analyses of manures, soils, quality of seeds, &c. Farmers from all parts can send in any of the above articles for scientific examination without any charge. The professors also give lectures and addresses on matters of interest.

With regard to the actual operations of the farm, they embrace almost every branch of agricultural procedure. Experiments are carried on in the growth of a variety of cereals, root-crops, and the results are recorded. From time to time these are published, and a distribution of the information made throughout the Dominion. Seeds are sent out to farmers, who are requested to test their suitability for the district, and report thereon. Fruit-trees, shrubs, &c., are also grown, and distributed to the branch farms, so as to find out which varieties are adapted to particular portions of the country. Stock of various kinds are also kept, with a view to furnish information as to stock-raising and dairying matters of interest.

I spent a very pleasant afternoon in company with Sir John Carlin at the Ottawa farm, and was shown over the whole establishment by Professor Saunders, who is the chief Director. The work that has been done, and the complete manner in which every branch of investigation is conducted, testifies to the energy and scientific method of the management. I was informed that the department would be glad to reciprocate with us any trees, shrubs, seeds, or other agricultural products that it might be thought desirable to exchange. Perhaps one of the most interesting sights at the farm is that in which the relative merits of fence-making shrubs is shown. A large space is devoted to the growth of these, many different kinds being planted in rows, particulars of their yearly growth, effects of climate on same, &c., being recorded. That these institutions are being much appreciated is shown by the fact that last year over twenty thousand farmers availed themselves of the advantages which they afford.

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