

EUROPEAN ANIMALS IN AUSTRALIA.

The extended introduction of useful animals into our Colonial possessions, occupies, we are glad to perceive, a large share of public attention, and will, we hope, lead to ultimate beneficial results.

The columns of the *Times*, which are usually available during the Parliamentary recess for the discussion of topics of social and general interest, have recently been made use of by Mr. Edward Wilson, of Melbourne, who, in a very sensible letter, brings prominently forward the importance of the introduction and diffusion of European animals over the Australian continent and islands. Without following Mr. Wilson in the poetry of his subject, when he inquires, "Why should the heart of our ploughmen not be gladdened by the song of the skylark? and why should the daughter of Australia, as she lingers with her lover upon a moonlight evening, be deprived of one more felicity, one more topic of conversation, in the nightingale perched in the neighboring thicket?" we may confine ourselves to the utilitarian and practical point of view.

When we see what has already been done in Australia for the comfort and sustenance of man, there is ample encouragement for further spirited exertion. The country, soil, and climate are highly favorable to the spread and support of living creatures.—"It is but the other day," remarks Mr. Wilson, "that we got the sheep; yet we already supply Great Britain with the chief portion of her finer wools. The first cow was imported within the memory of living man; and now vast herds roam over millions of acres, from Wide Bay to South Australia, and good judges are beginning to ask whether the colonial cattle will not bear a favorable comparison with the English average. We have got the horse, unrivalled in the whole world for his powers of endurance; for we see the deeds of our grass-fed stock horses but whispered within your well-kept English stables, the narrative would be roared down by a general chorus of incredulous horse laughter. The 'time' of our races would compare not very unfavorably with your own. And thus, with the dog, cat, pig, domestic fowl, duck, rabbit, pigeon, down to our old friends the common house rat and mouse, which with their own amusing pertinacity, stick by us with a fidelity worthy of a better cause, and multiplying exceedingly among us, give a home aspect to our colonial houses in their own ingenious and significant style."

The demand for mutton, beef and pork will lead to improved breeds of these live stock. Poultry, which have been little attended to, will greatly increase, in order to keep pace with the demand. Turkeys, we perceive, are fetching 25s., geese 10s. to 12s., ducks 6s., and fowls 5s. a-head in the Melbourne market. Dairy produce is also brought to market on a very limited scale, or such prices as these would not be realized in an old colony—fresh butter 3s. 6d. a pound, milk 1s. a quart, and eggs 3s. 6d. a dozen. All the cheese consumed, is also imported. The absence of good roads, and the expense of transport from distant farms to the town, has, doubtless, had something to do with prices and supply. But the extension of railways and common roads, the water communication by steam on the Murray river, and other tributary streams now available, will greatly facilitate the forwarding of dairy produce to the market, both to Adelaide and Melbourne.

In the matter of horses, of which Mr. Wilson speaks so favorably, the demand for them for India, and increased local wants which population brings with it, will lead to great extension of horse-breeding.

It appears that the flock of alpacas for Victoria are to be sent out in the *Goddess*, which will sail in a few days. They are under the charge of a competent attendant, obtained from the Zoological Gardens. There is no doubt other introductions of new animals will follow. The Angora, or Thibet goat, which the Cape colonists and South Australians are now trying to acclimatize, should also be introduced into Victoria.—We pointed out a few months ago the great importance of these efforts for the future of Australia. It is a great disgrace that the camel has never yet been introduced into Australia. What an admirable beast of burthen it would prove for the use of the explorer in the interior deserts, which have hitherto proved so fatal a barrier to progress and communication across the Continent! The animal could be obtained very cheaply in Algeria, Tunis, or by the way of the Red Sea. The colony of Victoria has ample funds at disposal: and what a benefit would a thousand pounds or two be, laid out for such a purpose, conjointly with the colony of South Australia, on public