

## English Letter, No. 6.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Liverpool, Sept. 1.

I have just had an interview with Mr. Dyke, the energetic agent of the Dominion Government. He is exceedingly busy with the development of the new project of the Hon. Mr. Pope for attracting the farming classes of this country to the Dominion. I cannot say that he seems sanguine of any very considerable amount of success, and I am bound to admit the force of what he says about the intense prejudice of the farming classes here. They have, however, had a rude awakening of late. The harvest all around indicates disaster, and many will be convinced, however much against their wills, that to cling to the old order of things means simply utter ruin, and my impression is, that if only a few really reliable men come amongst you, and can be shown, as I have no doubt they easily can, that your resources are substantial and the prospects for the future brighter than they are here, the next few months will see a considerable migration of the tenant farming classes. I have friends who have been accustomed to make the very best brand of cheese in the South Derbyshire grazing districts, and to receive for it 75s. to 80s. per cwt., or 7½d. to 8d. per pound, from agents who readily bought it at their own doors. They have now great difficulty in finding customers at all, and prices rule rather under than over 50s. a cwt., or a depreciation in a little over a year of fully one-third; and this really means, on dairy farms, all the difference between a fair profit and a heavy loss. The result is that very large numbers of the Cheshire and Midland farmers now send their milk to the large towns. The retail dealers buy from them at 7d. and 8d. a gallon, and retail it at 4d. a quart, or 16 pence a gallon; so that anything like a good round in the milk trade must be rather a good thing. I hear that the Liverpool dealers have combined to keep down the prices they pay, and to keep up the prices they receive, so the poor farmers are again getting the worst of it, and the consuming public receive no benefit. I am rapidly coming to the conclusion that to be a middleman is the finest thing out in trade.

In one of my earlier letters I referred to the intention of the Liverpool corporation to hold provincial horse and cattle sales. These sales are to be held quarterly at the Agricultural Produce Market. The first of the series came off on Monday, August 25th. There were over 700 horses and about 30 head of cattle offered for sale. Of the former, only a very small number were really good animals, every jobber in fifty miles round who had a cobbled up bit of horse flesh of any kind for sale having appeared to regard this as a chance, the market fee being only a shilling a head. Of course this thing will soon die out, and the fair, it is to be hoped, will develop into a really useful medium for producers and importers to offer superior animals for heavy van and omnibus work.

By the time this letter reaches you the Assistant Commissioners appointed to go out to America to collect information for the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression will have landed on your shores. These commissioners, Messrs. Clare Sewell Read, M. P., and Albert Pell, M. P., are both practical agriculturists, and their report, whatever it be, will have great weight with the tenant farming class. They have a very wide field to investigate. Care should be taken by your authorities that Canada and the great North-West get their fair share of attention. This is imperative if the labors of the Commission are to be of any real use, for they have to deal with things, not men; enquiries are to be made, the several Cana-

dian localities visited, and, if possible, favorably reported upon, and Messrs. Clare Sewell Read and Albert Pell will be far more astute than they are credited to be in this country if they entirely resist the wiles and blandishments of these gentry.

I have an opportunity occasionally of glancing at your Canadian newspapers, and I see that the American Land Companies are everywhere prominent with their advertisements, trying to seduce your Canadian farmers from their homes. But this is only a bagatelle compared with their execution on this side of the Atlantic. As a sample,—it was stated in the papers the other day that some eighty farmers had left the counties of Durham and Yorkshire, in one steamer, last week, for Texas; and further, that this human consignment had been secured by a Dr. Kingsbury, European agent for one of the Texan Land Companies. I have been at some pains to find out whether this was really the case, and find that it was simply a Yankee canard. The emigrants bound for Texas numbered some forty souls, of whom probably not more than a dozen were agriculturists, and of these again the majority were laborers and not farmers. This man, Kingsbury, I understand, is most active in his exertions. Letters which were received by friends of mine in the Midland counties from him, promised profits of from 100 to 200 per cent. per annum. From the tenor of these letters I should pity the unsuspecting young English farmer who fell into such a man's clutches. Kingsbury has been from time to time exposed in the *Field* and other papers, but so far, apparently, with but little effect. The fact is, that he has, practically, unlimited command of "powder," and for one pound that the Canadian Government spends in inducing tenant farmers to locate themselves in a British dependency, where they will stand some real chance of bettering themselves, these American land speculators are spending hundreds in the effort to make a good thing out of our fellow subjects' bone, sinew and savings.

The reason why I allude to emigration at this length is that never before—probably since the potato famine—has the question occupied the minds of the general public so much as now. There must be many farmers who have succeeded in your country from all sorts of beginnings, and they could do an immense service to the land of their adoption as well as to their distressed brethren at home if they would send a series of practical, honest, straight-forward letters to one of our agricultural or other leading papers, giving them actual experiences from the first. This is a very important point, which cannot be brought home too forcibly to the minds of Canadians who have the knowledge and the ability to make themselves useful in this way. That a large population would be a benefit to the Dominion no sane man can doubt, and they would be adding to their own prosperity by doing their part in this way to direct the tide of migration towards your shores.

Although the weather, as you are aware, has been unprecedentedly cold and wet, there has been two or three short intervals of hot, damp, muggy weather, which have been exceedingly bad for the keeping of meat, and the result has been severe losses, not only in the dead meat trade but even in American beef slaughtered on arrival here. This has been owing mainly to the want of refrigerating appliances at the abattoirs, Messrs. Stevensons' cold store, which I have before described, being far too small and distant from the places of slaughter to be of much service in this respect. I understand that one grand lot of bullocks, brought over from the States, slaughtered at Birkenhead, and sent to London, owing to one of those close, hot spells, had to be sold at six cents a pound. You may readily imagine the loss

that resulted. It was recently stated in the papers that the Canadian Government had decided to extend the order prohibiting States cattle entering the Dominion. This has afforded immense relief to the trade here, who have been making a steady profit in Canadian cattle which were allowed to be sent alive into the interior. In fact, I am told that this advantage averages not less than 4l. to 5l. a head, a fair profit in itself. It may be taken for granted, however, that directly States cattle are allowed to enter the Dominion you will be scheduled, and this advantage will cease.

A dealer informed me, the other day, that the Canadian farmers are keeping their wether lambs this year, and thus improving their flocks, as suggested by me some few months ago. As this will reach you at about the time when the flock-masters send their surplus stock to the States, I again urge the necessity for your farmers keeping their young wethers in their own hands. Wether mutton, during the next few years, will be sure to command good prices. The like cannot be expected for old ewes and rams.

I trust you will have a fine autumn and everything propitious for your shows, and that your visitors may see the country to advantage.

## Caution to Farmers.

After issuing our September number we observed the following in the *Toronto Globe*:

## GRAIN BUYING.

A large and influential meeting of wheat buyers and millers was held at Palmerston on Wednesday, 27th August. Delegates were present from Port Elgin, Paisley, Walkerton, Mildmay, Clifford, Harriston, Palmerston, Listowel, Brussels, Galt, Guelph, Salem and Lucknow.

The subject under discussion was the present method of buying grain. The unanimous feeling was that a change must be made, and grain bought according to its intrinsic worth, in order to do justice to the buyers as well as to the farmers who take care in offering grain properly cleaned.

The feeling on this subject was so strong that the meeting unanimously agreed to adopt in their buying hereafter the scale of weights now in vogue in Waterloo and Wellington, which is as follows, wheat standing full weight of 60 lbs. being the standard:

If only 59 lbs. to the bushel, 1 cent off.	
" 58	" " 2 "
" 57	" " 3 "
" 56	" " 5 "
" 55	" " 8 "
" 54	" " 11 "
" 53	" " 15 "
" 52	" " 20 "
" 51	" " 27 "
" 50	" " 35 "

For grain going over-weight the same scale to be adopted.

If this plan is carried out in the localities above mentioned, most probably a similar attempt will be made in other parts of the Dominion. The result of such a plan would be a continued dispute in regard to the weight, and in some cases there would be an immense loss to the farmers. There is much light grain this year, and a farmer never expects so much for light as for heavy grain. He brings a load to market and sells at say 25 per cent. less per cwt. than for good grain; when delivering the bushels are weighed and a deduction of as much as 35 cts. per 60 lbs. allowed. Perhaps he has sold at \$1.10 per cwt., and by the deduction of 35 cts. per 60 lbs., equal to 58 cts., the farmer would only receive 52 cts. per cwt., not as much as bran would be worth at his farm. Thus he would lose his own time, the time of his horses, tolls and expenses. There will be but very little of the grain that will stand the weight test. The over-weight clause is of no account to farmers; not one in a thousand would receive the first cent for that. We would advise our readers to have nothing to do with this sliding scale, but to sell their grain at so much per hundred weight, and in no other way. We look on this as a dangerous trap to catch the unwary.