

English Letter, No. 5.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Liverpool, August 8.

This is a season which, in this country, is practically without precedent, for the learned in such matters say that we must go back to the year 1764, or 115 years ago, for a parallel to it. Till the middle of July it was the common remark that winter had been continuous since November; and really the weather in the first three weeks of July was cooler, rougher and altogether more wintery than one usually expects at any time of the year, unless it be within two months of Christmas. It was one succession of cold, wet, cheerless and sunless days. The last ten days of July were better; and now and then there was a bright hot one, but rarely two together; and August so far has been very wet, and as cold and boisterous as March. What the condition of things, agricultural and horticultural, is, you may well imagine. Farmers are in despair, and the announcements of three or four suicides amongst their number is no matter for wonder. Foreign and colonial competition, even with plentiful harvests at home, is bad enough; but with rotten hay—cut or uncut—and unmaturing grain, the next rent-day must be looked forward to with dread by many thousands of tillers of the soil in these islands. Many landlords are making or preparing to make deductions from the rents of from 10 to 20 per cent.; but, liberal as these concessions may be, they will do little to stem the tide of disaster which has set in. The fruit crop, also, which three months ago promised to be one of the best on record, is largely and in places wholly spoiled, and there ought to be a good trade this season in foreign and colonial produce of this class.

The season, however, has been favorable to the trade in all perishable goods, the percentage of spoils having been much less than usual. I have nothing special to report in respect either to the live stock or dead meat trades this month; but I may just remark that the reports which were circulated both here and on the continent that American bacon and swine were affected with typhoid fever and *trichina*, have had one very peculiar effect. Consumers are well aware that anything sold in this country under ten-pence a pound must be American; and hitherto the placards of "fine American bacon" have been common enough. The fact, however, of our Canadian produce, alive and dead, having free access to this country—the freedom of our live stock from disease being thus implied—has induced the retail dealers to label their goods as "prime Canadian," and the word "American" is almost wholly tabooed.

I have just seen a dealer in horses, who informs me that there are upwards of 150 carriage horses from Canada and the States for sale, in Liverpool, at the present time. A number of these have been in the stables for weeks without even a shilling being bid for them. One very useful lot of twelve were sold yesterday, to go to France; and a very fine lot of Canadians were despatched to Edinburgh. One of these was a horse brought over by Mr. Hodgins, of London, Ontario. This horse had been sold to a dealer in London, who in turn re-sold it to a dealer in Liverpool; and it has now been sold to Captain McEwen, of Dundas Castle, Scotland, for 200 guineas. He is stated to be now one of the grandest goers in the country. Since he has been in the hands of the dealers he has at least doubled in value. I mention this fact to show that you have some valuable horses in Canada, and that you can produce them equal to anything here.

Although it may not properly come within the province of your paper, it may interest many of

your readers to learn that we have recently received here a most successful shipment of fresh fish from the Maritime Provinces. If such perishable goods as salmon can be landed here in such condition as to carry dismay into the minds of the Scotch fishery masters, why, with specially devised processes of preservation, should not some of our splendid peaches, tomatoes and other fruits of Western Ontario, be also shipped?

A consignment of 20 tons of fresh salmon landed here recently was readily sold to wholesale dealers at 10d. per pound, and the dealers realized a very handsome profit upon it. One Scotch fishery proprietor saw some of the cases opened, and felt confident that in the immediate future these importations would very seriously depreciate his business.

It has often been a matter of surprise to me that the suggestion of the Canadian Government Agent here as to condensed milk being prepared for this market in Canada, has never been followed up. The demand for goods of this class, and of good quality, is annually increasing. Both England and France import immense quantities of condensed milk from Switzerland. The French import alone in 1878 amounted to nearly \$200,000. You have equal facilities for shipment from Canada, and freight would be at least as cheap; and the capital required for such an undertaking cannot be very extensive.

Notwithstanding all the enormous importations of animal food, the consumer has as yet received little if any benefit. In some parts of London, Brighton and other fashionable or well-to-do places, beefsteaks are still quoted at 1s. 2d., or 28 cents a pound; and legs of mutton and the primer joints at the same rate. It would interest many of your readers could they witness the sale of scraps and cuttings at the butchers' stores on Saturday evenings to the poorer classes. Bits of brisket, necks of beef, breasts of mutton and other coarser parts are readily snapped up at from 12 to 20 cents per pound. The fact that the middlemen are making these heavy profits (for the golden shower falls mainly on them) is attracting more and more attention; and I expect to see an extensive direction of joint stock enterprise to food supply ere long. Co-operative stores for the supply of butchers' meat, poultry and farm produce generally, are being started freely in the leading centres of population. These companies or associations will have agents abroad, and I am pleased to observe that their attention is being largely directed to the resources of the Dominion.

I have been enabled to see a prize list of the forthcoming grand Dominion Exhibition. I notice that several valuable prizes are offered for dairy products; but I should have been pleased to see a special prize offered for the cleanest and most attractive tub or package of butter for export. Although the outside-appearance may not have any effect on the quality of the butter, it most assuredly has upon its sale. Any wholesale butter dealer in this country will immediately tell you that butter as put up in the Western States in neat, clean white tubs, although inferior in quality to some of ours, commands a better sale at better prices. In points of attractiveness the Canadian samples are the worst which are brought into this market; and if this arise, as I expect it does, from a false sense of economy, the sooner our producers get rid of it the better for them.

There is more danger of barns being struck by lightning a few weeks after the crops have been stored away than at any other time. This is caused by the heating of the contents, which effect ascends into the air. This danger is obviated by the use of well-constructed lightning-rods.

Manitoba—No. 3.

The telegrams we sent from Manitoba to the press of Ontario and to the Minister of Agriculture and Public Works, and also our descriptions of Manitoba have been written with a desire to check the maddening and excited rush of farmers' sons and men without means from leaving their homes and the employment they now have to go to that country, where the farm and mechanical labor market is now overstocked. This great excitement has been caused by publications, communications, dodgers, pamphlets and lecturers which have been sent out by contractors and speculators in Manitoba, or by those who are interested in it, and all have cash in view; the greater the rush the better for them.

None of these cite the dark side, and any person or paper that only depicts the favorable side of any subject is apt to mislead. Thousands have now been misled to go from Ontario to Manitoba who would now gladly return; many have been so deceived and disgusted that they have gone to work and settled in the States and left Manitoba. We should not touch on the disparaging side again, but we deem it our duty to warn farmers, as we still notice that Ontario papers continue to publish flattering accounts, some of which we know are written by and for speculators there, and are not intended for the benefit of readers, but to enrich land-grabbers. We deem it wrong to disturb the settled, industrious farmers of the older provinces, where they work and can live comfortably, for the risk of life, health and every comfort. Farmers are not yet prepared to hire, and mechanics and clerks are too numerous to find employment. This is the state we found affairs in, and yet the excitement is kept up. The time may come, and no doubt will come, when laboring farm hands and mechanics will be wanted. Land will be as advantageously obtained by the real practical farmer in a few years hence as it can be procured now, considering the advantages and disadvantages at present existing. There is at the present time a land-grabbing mania; it is an infectious disease; it has ruined thousands in the States. These land-grabbers must and will have to pay taxes shortly; that is the only way to have a country settled, namely, to tax heavily all land held by speculators, leaving the homestead of the actual settler on 80 or 160 acres in new districts as free from burden as possible; but the land-leeches that monopolize hundreds of acres, whether for the advantage of themselves or with a view to sell at higher prices, should be taxed, and those that hold thousands of acres should pay a much higher rate. The withholding of land from actual settlers requires immediate and stringent attention. Every acre of land that is not in the hands of the Government—every piece of land that is reserved for any purpose should be made to pay towards the expense of increasing it in value. Every settler increases the value of land, and should meet with every encouragement. There is land that is as yet of no value; there is land enough, to be increased in value by railroads, to pay all the cost of the construction of the railroads. The land so improved should be taxed for the cost of the railroad; for instance, before the railroad was talked of the land was not worth one cent an acre, but the talk of the railroad put value on the land, and every improvement and expenditure adds to it. Scrip was bought after much had been expended for \$25, equal to a few cents per acre. The public expenditures have increased the value of that land so that \$10 per acre is asked for some of it. Land near the centres of business is often increased by R. R. stations and public buildings to many times its original value.

Is it right that the increase in the value of land