

Legislative Agriculture.

Probably the first really important step taken by our Legislature intended for the advancement of agriculture, was the establishment of the Provincial Board of Agriculture and Arts. The inception of this Board was brought about by a few energetic gentlemen of honor and ability. Their first steps were taken without Government aid; they subscribed liberally themselves; they devoted their time and abilities freely; they obtained voluntary contributions, enlisted the aid of Americans, and got up an agricultural exhibition in Toronto which was so successful that the Government took it up and founded the Provincial Board and the Provincial Exhibition. They both increased in popularity and in utility for many years, but poor mortal man has always been fall-

ow increases a greater opportunity is afforded to use such power for selfish purposes rather than for the public good. No honorable person will pretend to deny the fact that this has been the cause of the general complaints made against the Board and against their management. Many of the members of the present Board are undoubtedly honorable men, and desire to do their duty; but duty may sometimes place one in a very disagreeable position. People would rather give and receive a few favors from those with whom they may be working than make exposures and cause hard feelings. The original Board has been increased in numbers, with the object of giving it more power. The increase in numbers has not been objected to by the members, and the Government has laid great stress on the recommendation of this Board for increased expenditures of the public money. The numerous grants, and the large proportion of those grants that have been absorbed by the members of this Board in so many ways, should cause us to consider whether the receivers and payers should fill the same office—or rather, have we not been creating an army of recipients and giving them power to do as they choose in regard to collecting money, information, etc., and using the influences as they choose? Should we not consider whether such sums of money as were granted for the use and encouragement of the plain, practical farmer, have not been used, perhaps inadvertently, against his interest?

It has now become plain to every one that changes must take place, but what those changes should consist of should not be too hurriedly decided, as many changes heretofore have been. There is ample time before the next session of Parliament for measures to be brought before the public and openly discussed. Some one, at least, of all the members should openly and clearly express themselves both in regard to the past and future of this institution in some of the journals devoted to agriculture.

It is our opinion that very little good is done by grafting on the end of an old overgrown vine. This is what has been attempted for years past. The vine had borne good fruit; would it not be better to give it a thorough pruning both in root and branch? The husbandman would prefer this course rather than to dig up and plant an unknown vine that might bear only inferior or sour fruit. The root is good; it is the suckers that have overgrown and sapped the fruitful stem. The mere advocating of expenditures is easy and may suit many, but accounts of past expenditures should be first satisfactorily explained by any one advocating more expenditure.

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English Letter No. 31.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Liverpool, Oct. 5.

Taken on an average, there is no very grievous fault to be found with the English climate; but, unfortunately, we have no regularity in the weather except in one thing, and that is its uniform irregularity. The pouring wet of August, usually one of the most settled months, has been succeeded by a September and early October of great warmth and brilliancy, and in Scotland and the north of England the farmers have been able to get in their cereal crops in fairly good condition. The root crops are almost uniformly good, and the pasturage continues exceptionally good and plentiful.

Trade matters between this country and the Dominion pursue an even course just now, with little or nothing calling for special notice.

The Hon. J. H. Pope, your able and practical Minister of Agriculture, has lately been making some important additions, through an agent well up to the work, to his splendid herd of Polled Aberdeens. These animals will form an exceedingly choice lot, and leave to-morrow by the S.S. Dominion for their destination at Eastview. This fine addition to the Eastview herd includes the following: Charmer III, bred by the late Mr. M'Combie, of Tillyfour, and purchased for one hundred guineas at the recent sale of the Marquis of Huntley's stock; Mary of Balquharn, bred by Mr. Adamson, Melon; Princess of Montbleton; the heifers, Princess Dagnar, Fairflower, Gretchen, Beatrice of Canada, bred by Mr. M'Combie; Pride of Endovie, Annie III, Princess of Paris and Canada Lass.

Shorthorns, judging by recent sales, would seem to be rather going out of fashion. Mr. Chandos, Polo Gell, one of the leading breeders in this country, recently sold his herd by auction, at his seat in Derbyshire, and though the company included the elite of the Shorthorn society and other knowing ones, and the animals offered included representatives of some of the most celebrated families in Shorthorn history, the highest price reached was 360 guineas, and the average was a very moderate one indeed. On the other hand, however, I hear that Mr. R. Gibson, of Ilderton, is in England, and will sail towards the end of the month with a very valuable draft of Shorthorns, for some of which he has been paying quite fancy prices—one animal figuring, I believe, for something like \$10,000. Of course, these animals are real "cracks."

I am very glad to notice a number of Canadian buyers in the market for Shropshire Down rams. Their purchases will be hurried forward in order to reach Canada in time for the season. Prices in the cattle trade are ruinously low for beef, both alive and dead; but for mutton are good. Public men speaking on agricultural topics in this country lately have been pointing to the production of mutton and barley, as the sheet anchor of the British farmers. As Canada is their only formidable competitor in these things, it behoves Canadian farmers to have their wits about them, and to give special attention to the production of mutton and barley.

This week a number of cattle have arrived from Canada by way of Boston, and will, of course, have to be slaughtered at this port. The reason why they came by Boston is obvious. The freight from Boston is only \$6 per head for cattle, as compared with \$22 from Montreal; and 4s 6d for sheep, as compared with 8s to 10s from Montreal. Again, as a set-off against the slaughtering clause, the great railway companies here are charging 25s per ton

for dead meat shipped to the London market, whilst Irish and home beef has to be paid for at 50s, or exactly double the former rate. This is a real grievance, and the British farmers, I expect, will not be slow to make it known.

The chief feature in the horse market is the scarcity of first-class heavy stallions. The various shows up and down the country, as well as the difficulties of would-be purchasers for foreign and colonial markets, conclusively prove this. So many good animals have been sold to leave the country that a real want has sprung up at home. Canadian dealers are anxious to buy now in order that the sires may be got out to their destination in good time for next season.

Messrs. Woodall & Co., fruit merchants of this city, recently sent out a circular to the trade to inspect imports of fruit, tomatoes, melons, etc., packed under the new patented process of Mr. George Cochrane, of Montreal. Great surprise was expressed at the complete success of the process. A great trade is at present being done in tomatoes from Spain and Portugal; but these are packed in barrels of sawdust, causing great loss of space and frequent injury to a whole barrel from the decay of a few. In Mr. Cochrane's patent the fruit is first subjected to a process which arrests any tendency to decay, and it is then packed almost solid, effecting a great economy in freight, enabling Canadian fruit to compete on at least equal terms with the European productions. The specimens recently arrived appeared as firm and fresh as if they had just been taken off the vine. The invention indicates a complete revolution in the fruit trade, and the great extension of an already important industry in the warmer sections of the Dominion.

The "Fair" Trade movement is making progress in this country, notwithstanding the fierce attacks which are made upon it and its promoters from quarters many and mighty. A feature of the movement, not without its significance, is that it seems to be independent of any political limit, but to have amongst its advocates as many Liberals and Radicals as there are Conservatives and Tories. If Lord Beaconsfield were alive now he would wait till the movement had made a little more headway; he would have taken it under his "protection," and educated his wavering followers to the necessary pitch. It remains to be seen how Salisbury and Northcote will deal with it. Of course, it is not to be supposed that Gladstone and Bright will deviate one inch from the Free Trade ticket. As pointing to a commercial federation with the colonies, I cannot but regard the movement as fraught with a meaning of the utmost significance to the Dominion.

My Silo.

BY R. SHAW WOOD, WOODHOLME, ONT.

In the year 1855 or 1856, I am not certain which, I was in France about to take the train on one of the roads leading through the vine country. My custom in European travel was as second or even third class; but a gentleman with me, who had only travelled in the States, insisted on first class tickets in this instance. I yielded; but on reaching the train I found a solitary old gentleman, apparently a General, in the first. I told my companion he could go in the first, but that, as I was travelling to see the country and people, I should go in the third, which was of open seats on the top of the first class carriages. The guard, taking my first class ticket, I mounted, and there found a crowd of travellers, English, German and French, and a very jolly, pleasant set they were. I was seated by a German gentleman, who had travelled very extensively and possessed a vast store