

**WHEAT FROM VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.**—Two vessels have arrived at this port from Launceston, Van Dieman's Land, with cargoes of bark, gum, mahogany, and wheat, the produce of the colony. One of them, the Benjamin Heap, brings 2,848 bags of wheat. It is in linen bags of fine quality; but in consequence of the mahogany steaming in the ship, and communicating a light moisture to the grain, it will require to be turned over two or three times, as it is technically expressed, before it will be dry enough to enter into consumption. 50 sacks of the wheat, we are informed, are consigned to a gentleman in Staffordshire, from a friend in the colony, and intended exclusively for seed. An experienced corn dealer on 'Change informs us, that he never saw grain of so fine an appearance. It is very white, and the skin of the grain is of unusual thinness. Numerous applications have been made for samples of the lot, but in vain. The remainder of the cargo is of superior quality, and as at the present time there is a great demand for Indian corn and other articles not usually consumed in this country, we direct the attention of the public to the importation as a decidedly prominent subject, and one which may hereafter exercise a great influence on the imports to this country. We have not the means of stating anything respecting the amount on hand in Van Diemen's Land, but we are told by the gentleman from whom we derive the fact here stated, that there is plenty of it to be had. The cost of this cargo was as follows:—

	s.	d.	
Cost in Van Diemen's Land,	3	0	per bush. of 70 lb.
Freight.....	2	3	"
Duty.....	0	1½	"
Commission.....	0	6	"

giving a total cost of 5s. 10½. per bushel of 70 lb. A portion of that part of the cargo which is to be disposed of, has already been sold at 9s. 6d. per bushel, realizing to the importer, in the present state of the market, a profit of more than sixty per cent. A little competition would probably reduce the charges, and the extraordinary profit which has accrued on a first transaction, and would bring the produce of the colony into a ready market. As the import has made some sensation amongst corn-dealers there can be no doubt but that the enterprise of the merchants of Liverpool will be directed to more extensive importations from the colony at Van Diemen's Land, which, under present circumstances, will benefit the colony, and be lucrative to themselves.—*Liverpool Courier.*

**WHEAT FLOUR.**—The attention of the Board of Customs having been called to certain cases in which the collectors and comptrollers of the customs revenue at the outports have continued to charge the duty of fourpence and one-eighth per cwt. on wheat flour the produce of Canada, under the Act 6 and 7 Vict., cap. 29, the commissioners have deemed it expedient to cause the principal officers of the several departments in London, and the collectors and comptrollers at the various outports throughout the United Kingdom, to be apprised that the duty imposed on wheat flour by the Act above-mentioned is considered to have been repealed by the present corn law of 9 and 10 Vict. cap. 22, which enacts that the duty on wheat meal and flour from foreign countries shall be "For every barrel, being 196 lbs., a duty equal in amount to the duty payable according to the average price at the time on thirty-eight gallons and a half of wheat;" but if the produce of and imported from any British possession out of Europe, "on wheatmeal, barleymeal, oatmeal, rye-meal, peameal, and beanmeal, the duty shall be for every cwt. fourpence half-penny;" and that the

proper rate of duty chargeable on flour the produce of Canada is 4½d. per cwt., the same as wheatmeal under the latter-mentioned Act; and the respective officers have received directions to govern themselves in the matter in future accordingly. The importations of flour from Canada are well known to be of an extensive character, although not so much so as those from the neighbouring States of North America, under the American Union; the matter will, therefore, be of interest and importance to the trade.

**THE OXEN OF THE CAPE COLONY.**—The method of journeying in South Africa, where extensive trips are meditated, is by waggons well stored with all necessary commodities, each drawn by twelve or fourteen oxen, which are harnessed in yokes two abreast, and driven by a Hottentot, armed with a huge bamboo handled whip, with another man, or leader to conduct the team, or span, in colonial phraseology, over difficult ground. Each ox has his name, and when addressed, immediately recognises it by increased exertions. The sagacity and docility of the Cape ox, when properly trained, is amazing. Good cattle, without a guide, and in the darkest night, will adhere to a road and never leave it whilst in harness. Should they by any accident lose their way they will stop. On these occasions the two leading oxen, always the best in the span, carry their heads close to the ground and seem to be exercising all their powers of discernment. They obey the voice of their driver, when desired to go to the right or left, with great readiness. I have even heard of a trader to Port Natal, whose oxen would bring an empty waggon across narrow but deep rivers, if they only saw their master wave a white handkerchief on the opposite bank. The leaders appeared to watch for this signal, and on beholding it at once dashed in and swam in its direction. This story may appear incredible, but I had it from a very respectable person. It may assist the reader to give him a slight description of the Cape ox waggon. It is clumsy and uncouth in appearance, but never was any vehicle more admirably adapted for contending with bad roads, upsets, and other vicissitudes of South African travelling. Should an overturn occur, it is so constructed that the sides, roof, and other portions easily detach themselves from the bed, and in half an hour all may be replaced; or if a fracture have taken place, except in the wheels, which can rarely happen, it may be mended or supplied on the path, by the aid of a few tools and some green wood.—*Methuen's Wanderings in South Africa.*

**AGE OF PLANTS.**—Some plants, such as the minute funguses, termed mould, only live a few hours, or, at most, a few days. Mosses, for the most part, live only one season, as do the garden plants, called annuals, which die of old age, as soon as they ripen their seeds. Some, again—as the fox-glove, and the hollyhock—live for two years, occasionally prolonged to three, if their flowering be prevented. Trees, again, planted in a suitable soil and situation, live for centuries. Thus the olive may live 300 years, the oak double that number; the chestnut is said to have lasted 950 years; the dragon's blood tree of Teneriffe may be 2,000 years old, and Adamson mentions banians 6,000 years old. When the wood of the interior ceases to afford room by the closeness of its texture, for the passage of sap, or pulp, or the formation of new vessels, it dies, and by all its moisture passing off into the younger wood, the fibres shrink and are ultimately reduced to dust. The centre of the tree thus becomes dead, while the outer portion continues to live, and in this way trees