

English Letter, No. 23.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Liverpool February 4th.

If the old idea that a severe winter will be succeeded by a beautiful summer is to be verified this year, the English tillers of the soil have a good time in store.

The day but one after the despatch of my last letter, a frost of exceptional severity set in, and continued until a day or two of the close of the month. I cannot imagine that the sharpest of Canadian winters could be worse than some of the weather we experienced. There were several heavy falls of snow; trains were engulfed and traffic completely suspended over wide districts. The Mersey, for several days before the close of the frost, presented an arctic picture, and at one time it was feared that the trans-river traffic would have to be wholly stopped; as it was, many of the lines of ferry boats had to give in to Jack Frost, who had converted the whole expanse of the Mersey into a vast field of floating ice. The change when it came was very sudden, and to-day might very well pass for one of the balmiest of May. The thick coating of snow protected the young wheat, and the reports as to its present condition are very favorable. One of the most comical incidents of Jack Frost's reign was witnessed the other day, when, amongst the floating packs of ice coming down the Mersey with the tide, was one sustaining on a pole a notice board, "Trespassers will be prosecuted." The notice, in its then position, was, to say the least of it, superfluous.

Foot and Mouth Disease continues to spread, and last week the county of Chester was declared an infected area. A salesman near Liverpool did not pay any attention to the official notice, and was fined \$100 and costs for his temerity. It has not yet been decided whether the lairages in which the Canadian cattle are landed shall be declared a public sale ground; but if this should be done, the salesmen with whom I have spoken do not anticipate any difficulty or loss will be incurred by Canadian shippers, as the cattle can be bought there and shipped to any portion of the United Kingdom for slaughter; but they must not be exposed, in that case, in any market place.

I understand that the Hon. Mr. Cochrane, of Hillhurst, is about to visit this country, in order to purchase a number of Polled Aberdeen and Hereford cattle; and also several drafts of Cotswold and Shropshire Down sheep. Mr. Cochrane's son James, who, I am informed, was a student at the Royal Agricultural College, at Cirencester, is taking the active management of the Hillhurst farm; and, although Shorthorns will still take the leading place there, nearly every breed of cattle in this country will be represented on the estate.

The Hon. J. H. Pope, Minister of Agriculture, has secured eight Polled Aberdeen heifers from the best herds in Aberdeenshire. I understand that he has paid a high figure for them; but they have been specially selected to found a herd of these cattle at his farm at Cookshire, Province of Quebec. I suppose your readers are aware that last year he imported a very fine bull and two heifers of the same breed. This breed appears to be universally coming into power; for I note that a few days ago a valuable lot was shipped to the Sandwich Islands.

The horse trade bids fair to revive this spring, but only for animals of first-rate breed and quality. I observe that the French gentlemen who visited your fair at London last fall, and whom I think I have already mentioned, are of opinion that thoroughbred Cleveland Bay horses should be used as sires in your Province, rather than the

heavy and dull Clydesdales. This, of course, is a matter of opinion; but there is no doubt that, if you breed a horse of quality and style, there is a market here for him. In conversation with a dealer who was proceeding to Ireland the other day, he informed me that he had been hunting for several weeks for a pair of bright bay coach or carriage horses, which should be more than half thoroughbred, or as you call them, blooded, for which he was prepared to pay 500 guineas. At present it is very difficult to get five or six year old horses in Ireland, as the dealers usually have their "guinea" hunters on the look-out, and directly a foal shows any kind of style he is marked, and a buyer usually takes him up at two or three years old. Several of your exporters will remember Lucas's Repository in this city. Mr. Mat. Lucas, who went to Canada for his health last year, died shortly after his return, and now Mr. Corp, the senior partner of the firm, has passed away; and thus one of the oldest firms of horse-dealers and commission men in Great Britain will probably collapse. Several hundreds of Canadian horses have been sold at this repository during the last few years.

In the south and southwest of England ewes are put to the rams at a much earlier period than in the north, in order to supply the London and principal markets with early lamb, for which almost fabulous prices are charged. The lambs which have been dropped lately in such districts, have had a woful time of it; whilst abortions have decimated large numbers of flocks. The outlook for the sheep raiser, therefore, is not a bit better than it was last year. In fact, in some parts of the country, ruin is staring them in the face. Again it may be pointed out to the sheep raisers of Canada that the market for their mutton shows an improving tendency, and is likely to continue to do so for many years to come, seeing that the Dominion on the American Continent, so far as prime mutton is concerned, has no serious competitors. They should, by all means, castrate their ram lambs, instead of running them on and selling them to the United States markets. The advantages of raising wether mutton have been so repeatedly pointed out, that it is surely not necessary to dilate further upon the subject.

At the third meeting of the session of the Royal Colonial Institute, London, on the 25th ult., Sir A. Galt, the High Commissioner for Canada, read a very interesting and exhaustive paper on the "Future of the Dominion of Canada." I cannot, within the limits of this letter, say more than that a numerous and distinguished company heard the paper read; that Sir Alexander drew a most hopeful and brilliant picture of the future of the Dominion, and that in the discussion which ensued, his views were heartily endorsed by the great majority of the speakers.

Farm Laborers.

Farm hands should be required to give satisfactory evidence by certificate from former employer, or others, of their honesty, sobriety, care of what is entrusted to them, a good, moral and industrious character, etc; to be fit companions of the family, free from contaminating or corrupting the morals of children by vulgar and profane language, etc. Clerks and employes in many other branches of business are required to furnish certificates from good authority, of their character as employes, and why not farm hands as well, as they should be equally responsible? Farmers frequently sustain great loss from the wilful carelessness, destruction and dishonesty of those employed about them, as well as the corruption of the morals of their children. They are frequently not fit companions for the children and family, and sometimes much harm is done before the parents are aware of it, as children are frequently and much in the presence of hired men and boys, and on the other hand, men of good character will be employed more readily and on better terms.

From the United States.

[BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Washington, D. C., Feb. 18, 1881.

Last summer Gen. Le Duc, the Commissioner of Agriculture, directed Dr. Chas. P. Lyman, F. R. C. V. S., to proceed to Great Britain and continue his investigation into pleuro-pneumonia as affecting American cattle. His latest report upon that subject, recently transmitted by the President to the U. S. Senate, contains some data and information of interest to Canadian readers.

Dr. Lyman visited Edinburgh, Scotland, and London and Liverpool, England. At Edinburgh he not only examined cattle, but conferred with Prof. W. Williams, F. R. S. E., and principal of the new Veterinary College. Professor Williams stated that during the six months succeeding the arrival of the steamship Ontario in 1879, he had examined portions of the lungs of fully three-fourths of all the animals coming to that port from America and found to be diseased, and that he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that in no case had he found them to exhibit the characteristic lesions of contagious pleuro-pneumonia. From Edinburgh Dr. Lyman proceeded to London, where Mr. Cope, chief inspector of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council, showed him what specimens they had preserved in fluid of "American Pleuro." Mr. Cope stated that animals affected with pleuro-pneumonia came to them from the ports of Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Boston and Portland, and that at that time they were receiving more than ever of those affected. He stated that they had never had a suspicion of Canadian cattle. At Deptford, which is the foreign animals' wharf for London, Dr. Lyman saw some twenty-seven hundred head of American bullocks tied up waiting slaughter. They had been received recently from New York, a few from Baltimore. From London he proceeded to Liverpool. Cattle from the U. S. arriving at this port are by law allowed to remain alive not longer than fourteen days after debarkation, during which time they must remain in the buildings on the wharves fitted up as stables. The Veterinary Inspector of the port inspects the animals when alive, and after slaughter every lung, while the animal remains suspended, is subjected to his examination, and if pleuro-pneumonia is discovered it is condemned. The number of cattle landed at Liverpool from the United States, from June 1st, 1880, to August 13th, 1880, was 10,670, and the number condemned as having pleuro-pneumonia was six. On July 20th, at the Canada docks, were examined 222 cattle, ex-steamship Texas, from Montreal. One of these animals, a fat cow, was breathing rapidly and had a high temperature. She was killed and the lungs examined, but no indications of pleuro-pneumonia were found. Mr. J. W. T. Moore, the Veterinary Inspector of the port of Liverpool, assured Dr. Lyman that he had repeatedly had this done, always with the same result.

Dr. Lyman, in his report, states that the animals coming from Canada to Liverpool are landed at wharves entirely separate from those used for the trade with the United States. The animals coming off ship-board are tied up in houses furnished for the purpose, and after twelve hours rest and quarantine, are subjected to a not very close inspection by the veterinary officer of the port, when, if no contagious disease is found—and there never has been as yet—they are allowed to go inland on the hoof without any further restriction. In this way they became scattered to such an extent before being slaughtered that it was impossible for him to see the lungs as he did those of cattle from the United States; and, indeed, no