

Editorial Correspondence.

[No. 4.]

THE FRENCH EXHIBITION—ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY'S SHOW OF ENGLAND.

Canterbury, July 7th, 1860.

My communications are all more or less of a necessarily hurried, and, I fear, desultory character. In the midst of shows and rapid travelling one can scarcely find time and opportunity for making rough notes of the thousand things that come under observation. I must say a few words more in addition to what was stated in my last in reference to the late National Exhibition of France.

The department of agricultural produce was for the rest of the exhibition, very extensive, comprising nearly four thousand entries, arranged in a tasteful and commodious manner for general inspection. It was impossible to assess this splendid display of French industry, including not only the productions of France but also of her colonies, without a proportionate impression of her great varied resources. The produce of the Colony of Algiers occupied a very extensive space, and constituted a marked and interesting feature of the show. In addition to excellent specimens of the roots and cereals common to Britain, were to be seen numerous productions of the sunny south, embracing not only of such even as are of a purely tropical character. It is said that there are nearly three millions of acres in this country devoted to gardens and orchards, the varied produce of which can be readily understood at the exhibition. Apples, pears, cherries, plums, hops, &c., characterise northern France, while the grape, olive, maize, saffron, and other produce belong to the central and southern portions. Apples are produced in large quantity, and mulberry trees for feeding the worms are planted by the roadside, as well as in large fields, occupying tens of thousands of acres. Beet root is extensively cultivated for sugar, the number of manure-vans being upwards of three hundred, producing from forty to fifty thousand tons annually. Sugar is met with at all the hotels, beautiful in colour and white, but it is deficient in saccharine matter, as compared with cane sugar. A sunny summer is essential to the full maturity of the sugar beet, which has not been able to answer well in England for making sugar except in particularly hot summers. In

Canada it would probably succeed, but whether our sometimes severe frosts in the fall would not injure the saccharine properties of the root, and interfere injuriously with the power of crystallisation, is a matter, at least, doubtful. The numerous wines of France formed a prominent object in the Palace of Industry; and although there is but little probability that among the working millions of England they will displace the national beverage of malt liquors, yet under the new treaty their general introduction among the people of Great Britain, must to some extent diminish the consumption of ardent spirits, and thus exert a favourable influence on the health and morals of the community. All I could learn on this subject is in accordance with my own limited observation, that the ordinary use of French wines, is in that country compatible with general sobriety. I observe in the last Report of the Bureau of Agriculture of Canada, an article containing some interesting and encouraging information on the culture of the grape; whether, however, an extensive culture for the purpose of wine making can be profitably carried out in Canada, carefully conducted experiments on a sufficiently large scale can show. I saw the other day some excellent specimens of wine produced from some rather extensive vineyards in New South Wales, some sixty or seventy miles west of Sydney.

One thing particularly strikes a stranger in France, viz. the vast amount of small farms, or rather holdings. Two-thirds of the land is divided into lots varying from five to twenty acres each, consisting in fact of long and narrow strips, on which there is neither capital nor scope for the employment of improved modern implements and machines. The compulsory division of land so unrestrictedly carried out in this country presents an insuperable barrier to the general improvement of its agriculture. It appeared to me that on most of these diminutive holdings there was not, as in Belgium, a deep and thorough cultivation, with a husbanding and systematic application of manure. The tools and implements were mostly of the rudest kind, and the occupiers, though evidently tidy and industrious, do not command anything like the same amount of the first necessities of life as do the majority of English or Canadian laborers. I saw some farms of larger dimensions; a few in the vicinity of Paris from two hundred acres and upwards, well cultivated on a system