

The Crops.

On another page of our present issue we give brief extracts from our various exchanges regarding the present state of the crops in all parts of the country.

The effects of the warm, growing weather, and the refreshing showers of the past few weeks upon vegetation of every kind have been altogether unprecedented, and there is little doubt that the spring crops of the present season will be among the heaviest for years back. A prominent Oxford farmer remarked in our hearing recently that his haycrop surpasses in appearance anything he has seen in Canada during the past thirty years.

Spring wheat, and such portions of the fall crop as escaped the killing-out process, look remarkably well, and the same remark will apply to barley, oats and, indeed, all spring crops. The potato-beetle has made its appearance in full force as anticipated, but the remedy for this pest is so generally known and effective that the exercise of a little vigilance is all that is necessary to keep it in check. We regret to learn that ravages of the grasshopper have been rather severe in Lanark and adjacent counties. On the whole we think our farmer friends have this year very little to grumble about, and a very great deal indeed to feel thankful for.

The English Climate.

From whatever cause, the climate of Great Britain is changing. The most noticeable fact is that, while the winters are less severe, and the summers not so intensely hot as formerly, there has crept in what may be called a jumble of weather throughout the year. We have cold when we should expect heat, and warmth when we have every reason to look for snow. Meteorologists, who profess to speak scientifically, fail to enlighten us on the cause or causes of these phenomena. It cannot be said that, as regards the culture of grain crops, or the rearing of cattle, sheep, and other marketable animals, there has been any falling off. In these departments of affairs, and we may add in the forest culture, there has rather been an improvement than otherwise. Change of climate has been more especially demonstrated in the case of fruit, the crops of which are exceedingly liable to be damaged by unseasonable frost (hence frosts in the later spring months are the terror of gardeners; and unfortunately the destruction so caused is becoming so serious in many places that some kinds of well known fruit are no longer worth cultivating. Better, it is thought, to import fruit than try to rear it. A paragraph has been going the round of the newspapers regarding this mysterious change of climate as concerns Scotland. At a recent meeting of the Botanical Society, Mr. McNab read a paper on Further Evidence of Climatal Changes in Scotland, and mentioned that several old Scotch gardeners, as well as amateur cultivators, concurred with his opinion, that many varieties of fruit now cultivated in that country were by no means equal to what they were about ten years ago. It is on pippins and Nonpareil apples are alleged to be inferior in size and flavor as well as number to the specimens formerly seen. The Jargonelle pear, once extensively grown and thoroughly ripened on standard trees in various districts of Scotland, is now exceedingly scarce. The famous Carse of Gowrie orchards, which half a century ago were so remunerative, and in which seventy varieties of apples and thirty-six varieties of pears were cultivated as standards, still exist, but with a sadly diminished production of fruit. The Clydesdale orchards are in the same fading condition. The damson shows signs of becoming extinct, and the common black sloe and huckleberries are in like manner on the decline. From the old minute-books of the Caledonian Horticultural Society it appears that from 1810 they offered prizes for peaches grown on open walls without the aid of fire-flues; but after 1837 they were discontinued, and the generality sent are grown on flued walls or in peach-houses. Similar painful evidence was given with regard to cherries, gooseberries, and Scotch-grown American cranberries; and even the filberts and hazel-nuts are, it is stated, not by any means so flourishing now as formerly. From 1812 to 1826 the large white poppy was cultivated in the field in various parts of Scotland, for the making of opium; and about fifty years ago tobacco was frequently grown in certain districts. All is changed or changing now, although several winters of late years have

been remarkable for their mildness, and proved most favorable for flowering plants. The Scotch, however, cannot feed on flowers, and are much to be pitied under the calamity with which they are threatened, of being dependent on our English green grocers and fruiterers for their supplies of fruit.—*Chambers' Journal*.

The Duke of Sutherland on Dynamite.

A committee of the Commons, headed by Sir John Hay, has been for some time inquiring into the laws for regulating the manufacture, carriage, and use of explosive substances. Generally speaking, the representatives of the gunpowder trade who have appeared as witnesses have held that this compound is much less dangerous than the newer and in some respects more forcible explosive, such as dynamite, gun-cotton, and nitro-glycerine. Little has been said on behalf of these compounds until Friday, when the Duke of Sutherland appeared before the Committee, and gave evidence of circumstances within his own knowledge and experience favorable to the use of dynamite. The Duke stated that his men took to it very kindly, and wished to carry the cartridges in their breeches pockets in order to keep them at a proper temperature. It was used in blasting up the roots of trees, and was so sudden in its action that little or none of the explosive force was wasted away through interstices, as was the case with gunpowder. They could do with dynamite for sevenpence work which would cost them six shillings with gunpowder. Owing to the railway companies declining to carry it he could not get nearly so large a stock as he would like to have. For his own part, he would not object to travel in the same carriage on a railway with dynamite, because it required both concussion and heat to explode it, and though you might get concussion on a railway, you were not likely to get both concussion and heat together. It was made in Glasgow, and he trusted to the manufacturer for its purity. He was not aware that it gave off exhalations, and was very dangerous under those conditions. They, however, had not any accident during the three months they had used it. Such were the difficulties in getting it transported that they had to stow it away in hat boxes or any other smuggling sort of thing, and when they got it they stored it in boxes underground. Mr. John Downie, manager of the British Dynamite Company, Ardeer, in Ayrshire, also gave evidence as to the safety of dynamite in transport, storage, and for general use.—*N. B. Agriculturist*.

The Hop Districts and the Frosts.

The *Hop Journal* says:—"In the hop-growing counties of England, as in the French vineyards, the frost has committed serious ravages, and, early as is the season, it is all but certain that the destruction of a considerable portion of the crop will be the result. In some grounds, we are told, the frost has done more injury than the oldest inhabitants can remember. Certainly so severe a frost has not been known in May for the last thirty years. In the low-lying grounds, which in the hot forcing seasons are the most prolific, the vine has been the most seriously injured, the greatest ravages being observable where the subsoil is clay; rocky and deep subsoils escaping with comparative little injury beyond the heads of the vine being cut, and the growth checked. As one correspondent points out, the hop plant is far more hardy in its nature than we generally imagine, or it would have been entirely cut down, as have pieces of peas, cabbage, &c., and even ash and chest nut plantations. As it is, the heads of the vine have turned black, and the leaves, which first were spotted, subsequently became yellow, and now the grounds look as though a fire blast had gone through them. Already we have reports of the flea in myriads, and the great danger is that the sickly condition of the plant—the effect of the frosts and the cold sharp winds—will lead to an increase of aphids, this pest having already made its appearance in various quarters. Should this be the case, the growers will be very fortunate if they escape a total blight. The season, however, is yet early, and a fortnight of warm weather, with genial showers, and especially a steady increase of night temperature, will do wonders for those grounds which have not suffered severely. The most that we can hope for under present circumstances is a partial crop.

An agricultural exhibition is now being held at Bremen.

The crops in all parts of the Fraser and Cowichan districts of British Columbia look remarkably well, and give promise of an abundant harvest.

The farmers in Illinois are importing Norman horses. The animals are heavily built, and are specially adapted for agricultural purposes.

The Duchess of Oneida, the two-year old heifer purchased by W. J. Alexander at the New York Mills sale last fall for \$19,000, died on the Alexander Farm, Woodford Co., of pneumonia.

A CORRESPONDENT of one of our exchanges states that a little buckwheat sown among potatoes is an effectual bar to the potato-bug. He has seen several fields planted in this way, and not a bug to be observed in any of them.

The township of Puslinch is likely to suffer severely from the grasshopper pest. They are of diminutive proportions as yet, but when they attain the stature of their "fathers" of last year, certain annihilation of the crops must be the result.

The entire Ottawa district this season gives promise of a more than usually abundant harvest. The hay crop will exceed anything that has been produced for years, and the fall wheat, spring grain and root crops are already very promising.

SIR HARRY M. THOMPSON.—This eminent agriculturist died at Kirby Hall, York, on Sunday, May 17th. He was born in 1809, became an original member of the Royal Agricultural Society of England in 1838, and president in 1867, besides filling various other offices of trust and responsibility. He will be very much missed in agricultural circles.

"HEARTH AND HOME."—This popular publication has recently passed from under the management of the Orange Judd Co., and is now issued by the Graphic Co. of New York. The first number of the new series is profusely illustrated in the best style of the "Graphic" art, and the reading matter is fresh and vigorous as formerly. We wish the new publishers much success.

BUTTER AND CHEESE EXCHANGE.—The First Annual Report of the Butter and Cheese Exchange of New York is before us. It is a well printed work of some 150 odd pages, and contains, in addition to the charter and by-laws of the Society, the Ninth Annual Report of the American Dairymen's Association, with transactions and addresses at the annual meeting, list of members, factory reports, &c. The work is an interesting and valuable one.

MR. JOHN R. CRAIG, of Edmonton, sailed by the steamer of the 26th ult. for Liverpool. He proceeds to England, he informs us, for the purpose of selecting Short-horns and Cotswold sheep for importation to Canada. Our statement in the last issue of the CANADA FARMER, to the effect that Mr. Craig had disposed of all his short-horns to Mr. Groom, of Kentucky, was scarcely correct. It should have read, "a number" of his animals.

THE Grangers held a Convention on the 10th ult., at Indianapolis, and adopted a platform, one plank of which was in favor of an irredeemable paper currency. To all appearance, this Association, which was expected to introduce a new order of things and purify the whole political atmosphere, is falling into the hands of wire-pullers, who are determined to use the farmers for the accomplishment of their own selfish purposes.

DURING the sittings of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod at Philadelphia recently, the Committee on the Order known as the Patrons of Husbandry or Granges, presented their report, which states that they emphatically and unequivocally condemn this and all other secret orders, as ensnaring, deceptive, and sinful in themselves, as prejudicial to the best interests of society, and a lawless and inefficient way of obtaining redress of grievances. The report was adopted by a unanimous vote.