

* Open Letters. *

THE APPLE PROSPECT IN BRITAIN.

LONDON.

SIR,—The progress of budding, blossoming and setting of fruit-bearing trees has greatly varied during this season (which has been unusually late this year), and the minds of growers have alternated between hopes of great abundance and fears of failure of the crops. At the commencement the show of fruit was highly favorable for abundant crops, specially of apples; the hopes thus raised were, however, quickly frustrated through continued frosty weather and torrents of icy cold rains, the damage then not appearing so great as it now proves to be. In some districts the yield of fruit was almost more than the branches could support, and not much notice was taken of some fallings, which have since increased to such an extent as to almost denude some trees of the fruit, and this is attributed to the unseasonable weather during the setting period, and which has seriously upset previous estimates as to the probable yield of the apple crop.

A careful summary of the various reports received, as well as personal investigation, gives the following results:—

ENGLAND.—The reports from the *Western Counties* indicate a fairly average crop, consisting mainly of cider fruit.

Southern Counties.—These are the principal contributors of apples to the London market. From some parts over an average crop is reported, while in other parts the crop is stated as under an average.

Midland Counties.—A fair average crop is reported.

As to the remaining parts of England, as well as Scotland and Ireland, it may be accepted that the crop will be under an average, and, in a few districts, especially in Ireland, it will be almost a failure.

The reports from the Continent may be summarized as follows:—

HOLLAND AND BELGIUM.—The apple crops originally promised well, but, owing to bad weather, large quantities are falling from the trees, and late sorts will be scarce.

FRANCE.—Advices, though not wholly satisfactory, point to a fair average crop, and early sorts will be rather abundant.

GERMANY.—Reports are more satisfactory than from any other part of the Continent, and indicate a full average apple crop of both late and early kinds.

The other parts of the Continent have little (if any) influence on the importations from your side of the Atlantic.

After careful perusal of the various reports and consideration of all the facts that have come to my knowledge, and of the influences they bear on our importations from America and the British Colonies, I am of opinion that there will be an ample home supply of the earlier sorts of apples, and as regards the London market we shall not require to draw any from your side till well on in the month of November, but shipments to Liverpool and Glasgow can be fairly made somewhat earlier.

J. B. THOMAS, *Covent Garden, London, Eng.*

LATER FROM LONDON.

SIR,—You will have my circular as to apple prospects on this side. I may, however add, that owing to continued rainy weather, “fallings” are getting very heavy, and it appears that good keeping sorts are scarcer than we have anticipated recently, but as a matter of fact the home crop is, after all, of minor importance as far as exports from your side are concerned, as it only means a few weeks delay in shipping from your parts, even if we have a full crop; and if your crop is a good average, and you can ship largely, imports to any extent from the European Continent is not possible, as it does not pay them to compete.

Yours faithfully,

London, August 15th, 1891.

J. B. THOMAS