

English Letter No. 32.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Liverpool, Nov. 1.

The past month has been singularly deficient in matters likely to be of interest to your readers. I refer, of course, to those special subjects usually discussed in this letter. In general matters the month has been very lively, and especially in regard to the great and apparently interminable Irish question. In one respect, however, this question may affect materially the Canadian farmer, and is therefore a fit subject for discussion in your columns. It is not to be imagined that radical land reforms are to be allowed in Ireland, whilst the old, cumbrous, restrictive and vexatious laws of England and Scotland remain untouched. A comprehensive reform of the land laws of England and Scotland is a feature of the near future; and, under an improved system of dealing with our lands, a much heavier production is certain to follow. This, however, will probably not do more than keep pace with the increase of population, and still leave a very large and profitable market for those who send a good article, and quality is a *sine qua non*, whatever the article may be.

A history, adequately written, of the improvements which have taken place during the last quarter of a century in the production and still more in the distribution of food, would form a vastly interesting volume. The other day I dined at a friend's house off a leg of Australian mutton, and I can honestly say that I never ate anything superior for tenderness and flavor, and it was bought at little more than half the price that is asked for English-fed meat. It is doubtful, however, whether the prices obtained leave any profit, and, as the inferior parts of the carcass are practically unsaleable, the margin for profit is woefully small. Whilst the handsome bounties subscribed in the Antipodean colonies for the promotion of the trade remain unexhausted, we shall continue to have cheap Australian mutton; but when they have run out—rumor sayeth not. The mere question of preserving the meat seems to be fully solved, for I have been told of fresh salmon being taken out to New Zealand, brought back again, and still found to be in a perfectly fresh and sound condition.

The steamer Texas, which left this port last week, carried for Canada one of the most useful lots of cattle probably ever shipped from this country. The lot comprised eighty-six Hereford bulls, twenty Polled Aberdeens and four Jerseys, besides some Oxford and Shropshire Down sheep and some Clydesdale stallions. Mr. W. Horseman, a well-known stock authority, referring to these shipments, says that the wholesale importation of cheap rubbish into the Dominion might increase, in the first instance, the number of white faces out there, but, in the long run, will not improve the breed in the estimation of practical men. Much of the stock recently sent over has been wretched stuff, such as Mr. Horseman described. The eighty-six bulls referred to, however, are first-rate animals, specially selected. After passing through the ninety days' quarantine at Quebec, fifty of them are to be drafted off for the Hon. M. H. Cochrane's farm near Bow River, and the remainder, I am informed, are to be disposed of in the Province of Quebec, with the view of improving the breeds of cattle in that district. It is to be hoped that the farmers of Quebec Province will take advantage of this opportunity, and will not let these valuable animals be snapped up by ranchmen from the States. The Hon. Mr. Pope had nine exceptionally good cows and heifers on the Texas, and I was informed, by one who saw them and is com-

petent to judge, that they excel in quality any previously shipped.

This morning (November 1st) was ushered in with a violent snow storm, and we have every appearance of a long and severe winter. Yet even we are favored, compared with the north of Scotland; for in Aberdeenshire well on in October many corn crops were still standing, with eighteen inches of snow in the fields, and comparatively little had been housed.

The great North-west is rapidly growing in public interest here, and we can now rarely take up a newspaper or magazine without seeing articles upon it, or references to it. English people are very slow to move; but when once their interest is roused it is generally thorough, and there can be no doubt that this awakening interest is largely due to the influence of the reports of the farmers' delegates, which have been very widely circulated during the past two years. Four German and one Swiss delegates, with whom the necessary arrangements were made by Mr. Dyke, the Dominion agent here, on his recent visit to the Continent, have just returned from a tour through the Dominion, and have expressed themselves highly pleased with Manitoba, and also with the older settled parts of your province. Their reports, I understand, will be published shortly, and this circulation of reliable information respecting the Dominion, in Germany, will no doubt have a marked effect in directing the stream of emigration next spring towards the Dominion.

The agents for Texas, Arkansas, and other parts of the Union, are again working vigorously and paying enormous commissions; but no doubt their efforts will be largely counteracted by an extensive propaganda on behalf of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which, as yet, can hardly be said to have moved in the matter.

A large number of samples of grain and other produce from the Canadian fall shows have been sent to this country and will be exhibited on various occasions during the winter. The Root Growers' Association, of Toronto, have also promised consignments of their roots, and experience has shown that these will be of great service in making plain to the comprehension of the British agriculturist the capabilities of your vast and magnificent country.

The Pocklington Grape.

About two years ago we were met in Brantford by two tree pedlars. They were nicely equipped with beautiful plate books of fine fruit, handsome trees, flowers, etc. They tried hard to sell a Pocklington grape. They lauded it so much that we looked on it as one of the usual swindles, like the Alpine Strawberry, El Dorado Wheat, &c. To tell you the truth we are rather shy about purchasing from travellers. We prefer to deal with some known establishment. And we wanted no grape vine of any kind. The price asked was only \$3 a vine. That put on the cap-sheaf. A swindle sure, we thought. Some time after this we met one of the members of the Canadian Fruit Growers' Association, also a member of the Board of Agriculture and Arts. This gentleman, we thought, ought to be posted, and in answer to our enquiries he pronounced it a humbug and said it was a hard, poor grape, fit for bullets. Shortly after this one of our agents sent us a large advertisement of this grape. We rejected the advertisement because we thought we should be injuring our paper as much as if we gave long advertisements in our reading columns of some injurious patent medicine men, that we knew were tending to the injury of the public. About two months ago our opinion was very materially altered, as Messrs. Stone & Wellington, of the Fonthill nurseries, sent us a bunch

of these grapes by express. To our astonishment they were undoubtedly the largest and finest looking white grape we had ever seen, that had been raised in the open air in this country. On testing them we did not find that acidity we had heard of and expected, neither did we think they would answer very well for bullets, although we do not consider the quality equal to our little favorite, the Delaware. We took them to Mr. H. Mountjoy, the largest importer of foreign grapes in this city. He looked at them, tasted them, and pronounced them a good saleable grape, by far the best he had ever seen grown here, and said he could sell such readily for 15c a pound—that is about double the price of any other out-of-door grape raised in this part of the continent. We also showed them to Col. Leys, an amateur gardener, who immediately wanted to get some of the vines, but we did not tell him who had them. He will now see. We also showed them to Mr. Wm. Saunders. He said they were undoubtedly a new grape, and quite an acquisition.

Editors, you see, are not infallible in their opinions, but when from any cause they do not give correct information they are, or ought to be, ready to correct errors. We have always been ready to make corrections when any have ever been pointed out to us.

Should Agricultural Exhibitions be Abolished?

Many officials or officious persons have endeavored to abolish Township Exhibitions, and those living near the desired locality for holding County Exhibitions may have aided that project. Some have advocated dividing the public grant between four cities. Perhaps these cities would like to get it, but the President and Vice-President of the Industrial Exhibition of Toronto rather exceed such injurious steps.

The President at a recent meeting in Toronto had the honesty to speak plain and said he did not wish to act against public opinion. He quite approved of a large exhibition being held every fourth year.

NO OTHER EXHIBITION

to be held in any other place. This should be provided for by Government legislation. He thought Toronto was the most central and best point for any such exhibition. Alderman Baxter said he would not exactly accuse the Provincial Board of breaking faith, but they had done something very like it. He did not care for public opinion.—[From Toronto paper of the 15th Nov'r.]

Among other instructive attractions at the Industrial Exhibition this year was a negro putting his head through a hole and dodging a ball that the enlightened marksman might throw at him at so much per throw and a premium per hit. The Association should have added a medal or a diploma as a premium.

Farmers, your voice should have weight. Should the backwoods farmers be taxed to support the whims of those who would take your agricultural exhibitions from you and turn them into circuses. All those who voted to take the power from the farmers and centre the Provincial Exhibition permanently and solely in Toronto, should have their names published. Every person should give a clear and lucid reason for every act of his in a public position. Excuses and evasions or pretended ignorance should no longer direct our agricultural exhibitions.

M. J. Hover, the well known agricultural implement agent, says from his observation that parsimonious persons live poor for the purpose of dying rich. Question—Does it pay? If so, in what way?