

English Letter, No. 9.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Liverpool, Dec. 1.

The great event since my last letter has been the return of a member of the Agricultural Delegates who left this country for the Dominion in September last, on a tour of inspection. They all appear to be greatly pleased with their visit. Some will recommend farmers to commence operations in your Province and in the Eastern Townships, whilst others are decidedly in favor of Manitoba. At all events it is very pleasing to be able to state that, although those who went to the North-West passed through some of the leading agricultural States of the Union, they have expressed themselves most decidedly in favor of Canadian lands. It is also pleasing to note that the British press, almost without an exception, are pointing to the Dominion as the most promising region for our agricultural emigrants. All this is leading, if I am not greatly mistaken, to such a migration from this country to the Dominion of small capitalists as has never yet been approached. It is with this class that the shoe pinches most severely, and they are consequently looking most keenly for some more certain means of livelihood than English agriculture now presents. I have just seen a letter from a farmer's son in the midlands, addressed to a clergyman in Liverpool, in which he says, "I am a hard-working farmer's son, 26 years of age, and have been helping my father for some years past, but prices and seasons clean beat us here; we have lost a lot of money the last five years, and worked hard all the while." This is in substance the cry of thousands at the present time who feel that they must make a change, and that speedily, if they are to save anything from the ruin which is gathering round them.

The depression in the horsetrade still continues, more especially in the poorer classes of animals. Farmers and others have been obliged, through the pressure of the times, to dispose of their horse flesh, and of course buyers have been proportionately few. I was informed the other day that a tramway in the north was horsed recently at £28 per head. You will observe that at this price there is no margin left for the exporter from Canada. It is anticipated, however, that with the turn of the year, and better weather, this trade will revive again. The second of the fairs inaugurated by the Liverpool corporation took place on the 25th ult. There was some slight improvement in the average of animals offered for sale, compared with the first fair, but nothing calling for special comment. The rough element, so great a nuisance on such occasions, was almost wholly excluded by the charge of two pence per head for admission to the Fair Ground.

Prices for cattle and sheep have improved somewhat, and Canadian importers have again been able to realize a profit.

Another lot of 20 tons of Canadian salmon has arrived in London, is stated to be in the pink of condition, and is being sold freely at from 28 cents to 37½ cents per pound. The trade in this article, as also in lobsters, may reasonably be expected to extend. A great deal of trouble and annoyance has been experienced by Mr. A. C. McDougall, a son of the Hon. Wm. McDougall, formerly Minister of Public Works, and he deserves great credit for the amount of zeal and tact which he has shown in initiating this important new branch of the Canadian export trade. Mr. Frank Buckland, the English Government Inspector of Fisheries, has had samples of this fish submitted to him, and, from experiments which he has made, declares in his journal, "Land and Water," that they are excellent for the table.

The "export fever" from Canada has, I am glad to say, not subsided, nor is it likely to do so. It is only to be regretted that it did not set in years before, and that Canadians had not placed all their eggs in the one basket of a United States trade, relying on the States markets alone. The result was that the crash which came some five or six years ago left Canadians high and dry. It is quite to be hoped and expected that, with the opening out of new markets for our produce on this side the Atlantic, such a catastrophe cannot be repeated. A shipment of cattle has been sent to Antwerp from Montreal, and from what I understand, good results have attended the venture.

To show the extent to which our perishable goods are being sent to the interior here, I observe an advertisement of a Mr. Wm. Glassey, of Liverpool and Birmingham, who, in advertising 5,000 barrels of Canadian potatoes for sale, styles himself importer of fruit, potatoes, poultry, game, oysters and fresh salmon from Canada. What would people have said of such a programme a few years ago?

Enormous quantities of potatoes are just now being brought into the market by the home producers, notwithstanding that the yield must have been vastly less than usual. I expect that this is owing to the scarcity of cash, and the necessity for realising as soon as possible. German growers are also shipping largely before the navigation of their districts closes. The immediate effect is to glut the market and to bring down prices, and I am sorry to say that in to-day's market Canadians only realised £5.10 per ton, with £6 and £7 for a few choice lots. This, however, means a great reaction later on, and there is a good time coming for those who can hold on to new stocks for a while. Canadian exporters who ship potatoes here and draw against them, leave themselves very much in the hands of their salesmen, or, what is worse, of the trade rings which have a hold upon the markets such as it would be hard for a Canadian, who has not had a taste of them, to imagine.

In this relation, I see a paragraph in the papers to the effect that a number of Yorkshire farmers—heartily disgusted with the fact that, notwithstanding the heavy depression in their products owing to the large importations from Canada and the States, the public, through the intervention of the middle-men, are reaping little if any benefit—have determined to establish stores of their own in Manchester, with the view of placing themselves in direct communication with the consumers, and thus securing their legitimate share of the considerable profits which now go into the hands of salesmen and other middle-men who are about the only really flourishing class in this country at the present time.

Though some of Lord Beaconsfield's general remarks at Aylesbury anent the Dominion may have been in a degree erroneous, all that was essential in them has been capped by Mr. Gladstone during his recent assaults on "the heart of" Midlothian. He has evidently the roughest opinion of the resources and probable developments of the Dominion.

Mr. George Roddick, the well-known cable salesman of this town, who has probably had two-thirds of the whole Canadian imports of live stock to this part in his hands, has now in his possession a magnificent dark red Durham heifer, which was bred near Guelph, with which I expect to hear he will astonish the visitors to some of our fat cattle shows. He just missed the 31st annual show at Birmingham, now being held, but I hope to be able to report his success at Carlisle. She is stated to be of extraordinary good quality, and will turn the scale at 2,300 lbs.

One duty and equal pleasure remains, and that is to wish your readers a merry Christmas and a very happy and prosperous New Year.

The Provincial Board of Agriculture.

For years past this journal has condemned the acts of this Board and the injudicious expenditures of money; the unjust acts to exhibitors and the injury they have been doing to the honest farmers of Canada. Many an honestly-earned prize has been unjustly, we might add, fraudulently withheld, from the just and proper deservers of them. Honest men have been compelled to lose their time and money, and have had to pay costs by attempting to have justice done; undeserving men have been intentionally awarded honors that they never were entitled to. Favoritism, designing and cunning have characterized the acts of this Board to such an alarming extent that the real industrious farmers have been and are taxed to a burdensome degree to support a body of men who claim to be and set themselves up as honorable and honest members of society. One shields and cloaks the other's misdoings. They do this knowing that such things are wrong, but they are so bound that they have not the spirit of freemen left in them to act right.

We have informed the Hon. O. Mowat privately of the dangers existing, and have told him that neither the farmers' money nor their interests were safe in their hands, and that their acts should be minutely scrutinized by a fair and impartial public. The following extract from the *London Free Press* of December 17th just gives a slight opening to the show that must follow if the public are to be made aware of facts, and they should be. No barrier should be allowed to obstruct the investigation of this matter, which should be traced to the fountain head. These frauds have been known to have been existing for many years, and others far more glaring and disgraceful are yet to be unearthed—such as will astonish and disgust every honest man in the Dominion. The following is the extract referred to:

THE DOMINION EXHIBITION.**DISCLOSURES OF SERIOUS FRAUDS ON THE PART OF EMPLOYEES AND THE GREAT CARELESSNESS OF THE MANAGERS.**

The Ottawa Chief of Police has published a full report of the investigation into the alleged frauds in connection with the recent Dominion Exhibition in this city. It is as follows: "1st—There seems to have been no check kept on either keepers of gates or turnstiles. 2nd—That, despite the statement of the President and officers of the Association that it was against the orders that gate-keepers should receive a cent of money for admittance, from personal observation and from information received from reliable sources, I know that more people at the gates passed in that way than did through the turnstiles. On Wednesday morning I saw a great many people going in at the Bank street gate, and am positive there were four or five parties taking money from them. I have also statements of parties who report that a similar state of affairs existed at the gates leading to the water. I have also statements from some of the leading citizens to the effect that they visited the Exhibition during every day of its continuance, and by different entrances, and paid at the gates each time. 3rd—That from want of proper instruction, or otherwise, the gate-keepers in many instances did not take up the exhibitors' tickets each time they passed through. They merely looked at them and allowed the parties to pass, consequently numbers of exhibitors either sold or gave away their three extra tickets. 4th—I have the written statement of one of my constables, who was on duty outside the gates on Bank street, to the effect that the turnstile-keeper on that street sold tickets for the greater part of two days to parties, and sent them in the big gate." The Chief of Police makes several other statements, and concludes: "The registers of the turnstiles, I am credibly informed, were not opened or checked from the time they were set on the first day until the following Saturday morning after the Exhibition was over, although, as I understand, it should have been done at the close of each day."