

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

SIR,—I need hardly say that the system of farming in Canada differs very greatly from that pursued in the British Isles. In truth, we have no system, properly speaking; every man, in the more inland districts, doing what his neighbours do, and resenting, almost as an affront, any insinuation that the practice he and they follow admits of any improvement from the introduction of foreign methods of cultivation, or of modern modes of rearing and feeding stock; and the consequence is, that whereas the average yield of wheat is 29½ bushels per acre, in England; here, it only reaches 8½; the age at which bullocks are slaughtered there is 2 years, here 3½ or 4, the weight being about the same.

I presume that this enormous difference between the produce of the two countries will surprise as well as shock many people. It is one of those things "not generally known." But, when known and appreciated, I think only one opinion can be formed upon it; there must be something terribly faulty in the education of our farmers. The fact is, they, as a rule, receive no education; no special education, I mean, that will in the least degree aid them in their future pursuit. The lawyer, the physician, the merchant, all are at one time or another put through a course of training peculiar to their intended professions; the farmer alone is left to hunt out a road to success, and the chances are, that he follows the beaten path which he finds invitingly traced out for him by his forbears, and settles down on his land, contented with the miserable produce it affords under the old system of cultivation, from which it seems to be the lot of this Province never to escape.

To cure this defect in our farming population, we must, as in everything else, begin at the beginning. Nothing short of an entire change in the teaching of our elementary schools can do any real good. Prejudice is the first foe to be conquered. In the Island of Montreal the victory has been long ago won; and the Somervilles, the Drummonds, the Doads, and the Logans can show farms as well managed as any one could wish to see; and all of them cultivated after the model of the best Scotch and English districts. But in the country parts it is not so. Hint that such or such a plan might answer better than the one generally followed in the neighbourhood, and you are met at once with the unreasoning answer, "Oh! that's English-fashion, and won't do here." For this terrible bent of mind the cure must rest with the general instruction of the population of the Province, there is no special remedy; but as its parent is ignorance, entire ignorance of a specific subject, it will not, I think, be disputed that we are to a great extent faulty in not having that subject taught in, at least, our country schools.

And of what should this teaching consist? In as few words as possible, I will give, not only my own ideas, but the ideas of a gentleman who, from his position, has been compelled to study the question with attention.

In every school assisted by Government there should be given at least