

times, when so many things seem uncertain, we may comfort ourselves, at all events, with one certainty—that the agriculture of the sandy plains of Prussia is a demonstration that the land of England will never go out of cultivation. This, however, does not at all mean either that we are on the right tack already, or that nothing need be done towards bringing us on the right tack. We did well to accept the competition of the world. The recent developments of commerce make it necessary for us to accept the competition now imposed upon us.

I have not been looking here for facts and arguments in favour of peasant proprietorship, such as I described last year in the *Fortnightly Review* in two papers on the peasants of Limagne. By peasant proprietors is generally understood—though this falls very far short of describing the class—owners of three or four acres, who cultivate these small estates with the spade. What I have been inquiring into here is the work, the manner of life, and the position of the team-owning proprietors of about 50 acres. I this morning saw in the *Times* of the 18th inst., an interesting account of the extent and produce of some of the wheat farms in the Red River Valley. Much as the extent of these New World farms will astonish some of your readers, I doubt not but that they will be more astonished at hearing that in this time-out-of-mind settled and not sparsely-peopled district of the Old World there are farms not dissimilar in extent, and that require more capital, and that are not unprofitably worked. Mr. G. G. Richardson, in his work on the *Corn and Cattle Producing Districts of France*, tells us that at Salzmande Mr. Zimmerman cultivates 12,500 acres, and that near Ochersleben Messrs. Strauss cultivate 17,500 acres, and that each of these concerns employs a capital of not less than £40,000. And Mr. Jas. Howard, the well-known agricultural implement maker of Bedford, of which place he was a representative in the last Parliament, in his book on *Continental Farming*, describes his visit to a farm near Cologne of the extent of 2700 acres. Eight years ago I expressed the opinion that this is one of the forms the agriculture of the future will assume. In these days, when capital and labour can be commanded to any extent that may be required, and the means of transport have been thoroughly organized, it has become easy and profitable to carry on manufactures and trade upon a large scale, and one can see no reason why the same should not be done in agriculture.

What I am really desirous of suggesting is, that the success of the French peasant, of the Prussian team-owning farmer, and of the monster agricultural establishments to which I have referred,

and not only the success, but even the existence of all of them alike, depend on perfect freedom in dealing with the land. That alone it is which enables those who combine energy, knowledge and capital freely to acquire the land they need for their respective purposes, and to improve it up to its highest powers of production. All these methods, too, of cultivating the land are cheaper than the one method English land laws have imposed on English agriculture. This freedom, which is so highly beneficial to other countries, England alone does not possess. We may, however, I think, believe that the effective competition of the world which has at last overtaken us will soon enable us to see that the only way of meeting Free trade in the productions of the soil from every part of the world is freedom in dealing with and employing our own soil.

The publication in a sumptuous style of "The Gentle Shepherd, a Pastoral Comedy, by Allan Ramsay," has called attention to the whole subject of pastoral poetry. The *Athenæum* contends that it was not Ramsay but Gay, who, in his "Shepherd's Week," (1714) set the true fashion, and recalled Englishmen to the beauty and simplicity of Nature. Gay saw what Virgil scarcely saw, and what the Italians and their English followers did not attempt to see, that the true field of a pastoral poet was the unadorned country life of his own native land. In the preface to "The Shepherd's Week," these notable words occur:—

"Thou wilt not find my shepherdess idly piping on oaten reeds, but milking the kine, tying up the sheaves, or, if the hogs are astray, driving them to their sties. My shepherd gathereth none other nosegays but what are the growth of his own fields; he sleepeth not under myrtle shades, but under a hedge, nor doth he vigilantly defend his flock from wolves, because there are none."

The reader of to-day may, perhaps, without impertinence, be recommended to the study of the six eclogues of "The Shepherd's Week."

A LARGE ANIMAL.—I occasionally see in the columns of the "Sun," accounts of large oxen, cows, steers, &c. from different parts of the country and province, which are interesting to farmers and stock raisers. Happening to call at the barn of J. B. Flemming of Folly Village, a few days ago, I saw a steer calf thirteen months old of the following dimensions:—Girth, 5 feet 2 inches; height, 3 feet 10 inches; length, 5 feet 10 inches; color, red. The animal is a mixture of Short-horn and Ayrshire.—*Correspondent of the Sun.*

The following is from the *Amherst Gazette*:—It has gratified us to be able to refer several times, during the last few years, to the increased attention given in this section of the country to the breeding of horses. A laudable enterprise has been exhibited on the part of a few individuals in aiding the country to produce a race of horses which we hope will, ere many years, entirely take the place of the many ill-bred, coarsely shapen and slow-gaited animals which, while they give little satisfaction to the owner, and command a small price when he wishes to dispose of them, require the same care and outlay for maintenance as a handsome, well-bred and valuable animal.

In addition to the popular and promising stallions previously owned in this county, we are glad to notice a newcomer in the beautiful bay horse "Beacon," lately purchased by Mr. J. B. Lamy, at a high figure, to stand at Amherst, and perhaps in Westmoreland County.

"Beacon," who has been viewed with admiration by many judges since his arrival, is 16 hands high, of fine symmetry and action, and weighs 1130 pounds. He is a fast trotter, and a close descendant of some of the most favorite trotting stock in the United States, as will be seen by the following pedigree:—Beacon, got by Volunteer, dam Faith, by a son of American Star, out of a Long Island Black Hawk mare; grand dam, a trotting mare of unknown pedigree. Volunteer, foaled in 1854, still vigorous, and weighing 1200 lbs., was by Rysdyk's Hambletonian; dam, Lady Patriot, by Young Patriot; grand dam, a trotting and running mare.

Fox Harbour, Dec. 6, 1879.

I TAKE the liberty of sending you a note of the death of a most prolific cow, owned by Mr. Alex Fraser, of Fox Harbour, found dead in the pasture, supposed to have eaten poisonous mushrooms. She was seven years old, and had raised ten calves, five pairs of twins, and all of them have done well. Do you not think that hard to beat? Thinking you might take a note of above for *Journal of Agriculture*, I remain, Sir, yours truly,
C. J. McFARLANE.

It appears from a careful investigation by Sir Joseph Hooker, of the Royal Gardens, Kew, that the Prickly Comfrey is not *Symphylum asperrimum*, but an allied species, whose proper name is *Symphylum peregrinum*. Botanical rule requires that we should discontinue the use of the name *S. asperrimum*, and we hope writers on the subject will drop their asperities as well. Let us welcome the stranger and give him a fair trial, keeping in mind that a deep rich soil is necessary to give good results.