

## English Letter, No. 11.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Liverpool, Feb. 4.

You will be pleased to learn that the reports of the Farmers' Delegates have now been brought out in pamphlet form, and you will probably have received a copy ere this. I have attentively read considerable portions of these, and I cannot imagine a more valuable testimony, unanimous as they are in their praise of the Dominion and its great resources. If I am not very much mistaken, these reports will prove the finest stroke in emigration propaganda ever devised, and will bring large numbers of men with substantial means to try their fortunes amongst you.

Last week a pioneer consignment of cattle was landed here ex the steamship Brooklyn by a company which has recently been organized in the Maritime Provinces. Although these cattle were coarse in quality and caused no small amusement when passing through Liverpool and London by the clatter of their shoes, which were still on them, I am glad to say that they returned a fair profit. It should, however, be borne in mind that the beast which has been the faithful slave of some back-woods settler or lumbering firm in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, for a decade or so, is not the sort of animal required for beef in this country. From what I hear, however, of the efforts which are being made by the farmers' societies in the Maritime Provinces to improve their breeds, and also from the remarks of some of the delegates on the resources of certain districts of those provinces, and especially their wonderful pasturage and their close proximity to the British markets, I cannot see why these provinces should not successfully compete with the rest of the continent in the production of choice beef and mutton for the British markets.

A quantity of fresh beef was also landed from the Brooklyn, but, owing to its not having been packed in a proper manner, a heavy loss resulted. On the other hand, some beef brought from the Eastern Townships, frozen and packed in cases which were firmly, indeed almost hermetically sealed, reached this port in good condition and turned a fair shade of profit. Still I should not like to recommend this system, for the experience of some years has now shown me that the best, most profitable and least risky way is to ship live stock and not dead meat.

We have again been experiencing very severe frosts—that is, for this country. This unexpected severity must retard field operations and prolong the period of indoor feeding; for the frosts, being without snow, have had a proportionably severe effect on vegetation. In the sheep-breeding districts, where grass and roots are scarce, this will have, I fear, a bad effect on the ewes next lambing time, now near at hand.

The prospects of the sheep trade in the immediate future are not very promising, for in addition to the scarcity of food the "rot" is so prevalent in many districts of England and Ireland as to cause quite a panic amongst the breeders of this class of stock, and a consequent desire to send all that they have at all fit to market as speedily as possible. Indeed, some, I fear, do not scruple to send animals so far gone with the disease as to be really unfit for food. I need not point out to you how such a course of proceeding will in due course react materially in favor of the importer. To be really successful, however, the shipper must be more attentive and careful as to the class of animals he sends. A few lots of sheep have recently been landed from Canada, and it is really astounding to see the careless manner in which your shippers have made their selections. The majority

of these sheep have been ewes and rams, as usual. The poor ewes are actually dropping their lambs on the quays and in the markets. What on earth can your people be thinking about? Is it likely that butchers will purchase ewes whilst they are dropping their lambs? and is it much more likely that they will find a market amongst farmers? How can your exporters expect to show a profit when they are guilty of such miserable neglect?

Mr. Alderman Mechi, of Tiptree Hall, who, as you are aware, is a leading agricultural authority here, has just published his annual report on the working of his model farm. For the first time in fifteen years the balance is on the wrong side; with all the usual care and no lack of means they have been unable to make ends meet. What then must have been the position of the average farmer? The deficiency is set down at £750 8s. 3d., compared with 1878. This is the result on land well drained, heavily manured, and deeply and cleanly cultivated. The live stock account shows a deficiency of £381, compared with the preceding year.

I have had the opportunity of glancing over the report of the Dominion agent at this port, and I note that he refers to several subjects of the greatest interest to the industry of dairying and stock-raising, and gives information of an unique and very important kind. I strongly advise in the interests of your readers, and of the agricultural community generally, that copies of the Minister of Agriculture's Report for 1879, in which the one I refer to is included, should be obtained. The cost, obtained through the Members of Parliament for the various districts, would be very slight. If influence could be brought to bear in the right quarter to get the report of your agent at Liverpool published in pamphlet form for circulation amongst your farming classes, I am sure the result would be very beneficial.

There is an unfortunate printer's blunder in my letter No. 9:—Speaking of Mr. Gladstone's speeches in Scotland, I wrote, "He has evidently the highest opinion of the resources and probable developments of the Dominion." Your printer has it "roughest."

## From the United States.

[BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Washington, D.C., Feb. 18, 1880.

The rights and interests of the agriculturists of the United States, who number not less than 25,000,000, are about to be more fully recognized by Congress, before which body there is a Bill pending to greatly increase the powers and duties and usefulness of the Department of Agriculture, and elevate the Commissioner of Agriculture to the dignity and authority of a Cabinet Minister. Should this Bill become a law, it will be the only instance among all the existing Governments of the world where the farmers, planters and ranchmen of the country are represented in the Cabinet or among the chief counsellors of the nation's ruler. The Department of Agriculture as now organized is of great practical benefit to the farmers of this country. Its recent experiments, not only in the propagating grounds of the Department, but through the experimental and practical planters and farmers in different localities, is rapidly increasing the cultivation and growth of the most useful and valuable plants, trees, shrubs, grains, &c., collected with judicious care from different portions of the world. The experiment being made with several tea plantations in the South give great promise of success. The Assam tea, from India, which is larger and hardier than the Chinese varieties, and which is successfully cultivated in the higher altitudes of India by an English company, is said to be better adapted to the soil and climate of our Southern States. If

the results thus far achieved are any index of what is to follow, we may expect in a few years to see Canada securing her supply of tea from her Republican neighbor, instead of pagan China.

Another very interesting experiment is being made in the growth of the "Wattle," a tree recently brought from the colony of Victoria, Australia. Two of the three varieties of wattle brought from Australia are of great value, not only on account of the great rapidity of their growth and the production of the bark, known in commerce as "mimosa bark,"—which contains a larger percentage of tannin than any other article used in tanning, except cetechu of Bengal and Bombay—but for its wood, which may be utilized in the manufacture of all those articles requiring wood of a tough and durable grain. The commercial uses of the wattle are not limited to the bark and wood, for a fair revenue is to be derived from the gum which annually exudes from the tree, and as the price of Australian gum is high this alone should commend the strange tree for adoption. As the wattle will grow in any kind of poor soil, and grow rapidly, so that it may be stripped of its valuable bark at the end of five years, it is thought that many thousand acres of land unfit for pasture and agricultural purposes will be utilized and made profitable by the growth of this Australian wattle.

Gen. Le Duc, the Commissioner of Agriculture, has just received a letter from C. S. Read, M. P., from Norfolk, England, informing him that he had—at the former's request—purchased from an English farmer and sent to Gen. Le Duc a lot of English and Italian rye grass, varieties of oats, and some seed of a kale which can be raised without hoeing, yields abundantly, and furnishes excellent feed for hogs, cattle, &c. With this letter came a copy of a speech delivered by Mr. Read to his constituents, who gave him a welcome at the Market-Tea, South Norfolk, on his return from the United States and Canada, where he had been recently travelling in the interests of the agriculturists of England. As a part of his address relates to agriculture and Canada, I will give you an extract:—

"But are we desirous of having a Department of Agriculture?" I voted strongly for that last year, but that is a point in which the Government were beaten. I don't fancy we can gain any great financial benefit by it, but we should at any rate know to whom to apply in our difficulties. But how do they treat the farmers in America? There they have a Department of Agriculture presided over at the present time by Gen. Le Duc, who is a man of singular ability and administrative skill. I went to see him when I was in Washington, and in the course of our conversation I happened to make a casual remark that I thought our English rye grass was superior to the timothy grass that they grow there to a very great extent, and I also said I thought their varieties of oats were inferior to our own. Well, last week I received a letter from Gen. Le Duc, requesting me to send him \$500 worth of the best rye grass I could obtain, and \$500 worth of the best black and white oats I could get here. These will be distributed among the best experimental farmers in the different States of the Union. This fact will show you that agriculture in America receives an amount of attention and protection such as we cannot expect to enjoy here.

"Although I greatly admire America, and have contracted strong affections for many Americans; and though our brethren of Canada are deserving of all praise for their patriotic loyalty and untiring industry—(cheers)—yet I do say in the words of the poet,

"While I wish them to be blest,  
England is my home—my rest;  
My native land, I love thee best."

We had something to say of the profits of the nettle in the U. S., but will not nettle you by so prolix a subject.

Lorus.