

English Letter No. 30.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Liverpool, Sept. 1.

Disaster to all, and ruin to many, is, in brief, our agricultural record of the past month. Up to the end of July there was every prospect of a good, if not a brilliant harvest, and English farmers generally, though scarcely hoping to retrieve past losses, were at least sanguine of holding their ground. But, alas! almost without intercession there has been rain, now a steady downpour and then a deluge, floods, and high winds ever since, over the whole of the British Islands, and the hope of winning any considerable portion of the crops in fair condition, has now almost wholly died out. The hay crop was very thin, but this will be compensated for to some extent by the abundance of the autumn pastures. Disease, owing to the incessant wet, is threatening the potato crop, which is abundant; and other root crops, owing to the ravages of the fly in early summer, cannot be heavy. The general condition of the British farmer therefore is worse than ever, and he may well despair. As samples of the general state of things I may quote the following instances: I met a farmer who is also a miller near Liverpool, two days ago. He told me that his grain had been cut now for some days, and he fears that it will soon sprout as the ears have been kept in a constant state of saturation. That morning looking out of his bedroom window, he was horrified to see several loads of wheat floating round the flooded mill stream. A letter I saw the other day says: "I am farming about 200 acres of land in Monmouthshire, but, what with the high rates and taxes, and now this frightful weather, I find I cannot make it pay, and must go." Another writer says, "I was farm bailiff for Lord —, but am now farming on my own account; I have done so for the last three years at very great loss, in fact I am now getting quite tired of losing my capital and am determined to emigrate." Yet again, I heard that on account of this fifth successive disastrous season, no fewer than 40 families from one nobleman's estate are making arrangements for leaving for Manitoba in the ensuing spring, encouraged by the reports of one of their people who went out two years ago.

The Liverpool horse fair was held last Tuesday, and was a marked improvement on most of its predecessors, both in the number and quality of the animals submitted for sale. The show of heavy horses was good, and prices were well sustained. Mr. Scotson, who probably has the best of the heavy cart horse trade with the Liverpool merchants, refused 180 guineas (\$945) for a pair of fair average animals, nothing special about them. The demand for heavy draughts in this country is increasing, and apparently the same state of things exist on your side of the Atlantic. The extension of the tramway system in Liverpool and other towns should also keep up the demand for animals of a lighter mould but great power.

As you have no doubt been informed by cable, the cattle trade is buoyant, and I understand that arrangements are being made for large shipments this fall. The rates of freight are fluctuating, and both dealers and steamship agents begin to regard \$15 per head as a living freight for all parties concerned, and this will be about the general quotation, I expect, for stock next season.

The dead meat trade, notwithstanding the fair keeping weather, is flat, and it is stated that some of the beef exporting firms of the United States have made very serious losses this season, in one instance running as high as \$100,000. Of course this makes our Yankee cousins very jealous of the advantages under which Canadian cattle enter

Great Britain. One dead meat dealer in Liverpool is very spiteful towards Canadian cattle, and in his weekly report to a journal published here in the interests of the U. S. trade, has for a long time past seized every opportunity possible of saying nasty things. This week he says, "the show of plain beef would be Canadians, and very rough they were." It is to be noted that the sheep coming forward from Canada are improving in quality, though there is still much room for improvement. A very fine lot of wether sheep arrived recently from Prince Edward Island, and these fetched the top price in the market.

As a commentary on our deficient hay crop of this year, I may remark that Messrs. Cleeve, Torontonians, who are now established in business at Limerick, Ireland, have made arrangements for a large weekly supply of first-class Canadian hay, mixed timothy and clover, to be delivered in Glasgow and Liverpool. They appear to have every prospect of carrying on a remunerative business.

I understand that several noblemen and gentlemen in our inland counties have recently been forming herds of Polled Aberdeens. A number of the Suffolk polled cows, which are red in color, and have been vastly improved of late, have recently been exported to the Dominion and to the States. It will be interesting to watch their success in the showyard when brought into competition with their black-coated rivals of the north. Mr. Coleman, the well known mustard manufacturer, of Norwich, has probably done more than any one else to improve the red polled cattle of Suffolk and Norfolk, and I understand that he intends sending specimens to America next year to compete with other breeds for early maturity and leanness of meat.

Mr. H. D. Troop, of St. John, N. B., an extensive ship owner, is in this country arranging for the purchase of steamers to form a line from St. John to Liverpool, mainly for the development of the dead meat and produce trade of that Province.

Mr. A. B. Sheridan, carpet manufacturer, also of St. John, is here engaging hands for a large new carpet manufactory. This should stimulate the local production of wool.

Notes from Devonshire.

[From an Occasional Correspondent.]

Exeter, Eng., Aug. 31st.

Harvest operations in this corner of England have been sadly retarded during the past two or three weeks by rain and storms, and such an unfavorable state of affairs naturally affords some ground for anxiety on the part of the farmers. Whatever may be the result further up the country, it is certainly rather early to be shrieking in these parts, as some alarmists have been doing, about the utter failure of the harvest, because such a depth of misfortune as that has not yet been reached; indeed, with the change for the better in the weather that has set in since last Saturday, there seems every probability that a large proportion of the unsaved crops will be brought in in tolerably good condition.

With regard to the immediate neighborhood of this city, it is pleasing to note that the farmers' prospects are anything but gloomy. The accounts received from agriculturists living within a radius of 20 miles of Exeter tend to show that for the most part the wheat crop has been got in, and put away in better condition than might have been expected. In some few places, where the crops are late, however, things were discouraging before the last few days of sunshine. Samples of new wheat were shown on the Exeter Corn Exchange last Friday, some of which were acknowledged to

be very good indeed, but farmers asked more than millers seemed inclined to give, the quotations varying from 6s to 7s per bushel. The Devonshire barley crop is everywhere reported in excellent condition, and far superior to the wheat. With few exceptions, the rain does not seem to have injured it to any great extent, and all that is wanted is a continuance of the present fine weather to save it well. The root crops of Devon are not so good as last year. Turnips are reported to be rather thin, and in some quarters damaged by the fly, but mangold looks more promising. Potatoes, too, are said to yield well.

Speaking generally of grain, be the outlook in this quarter cheering or cheerless, the corn merchants have considered the present an opportune time for raising the price of wheat, and the baker in town has advanced the price of bread. In some measure purchases by the French and American speculators account for this, and it is not wholly due to the operation of the natural laws of supply and demand. Still it would hardly be safe, be the weather what it may, to reckon on prices being easier for some time.

One of the oldest herds of cattle in this country—the famous Cadbury herd of Mr. George Turner—will be brought to the hammer at Tiverton next Saturday. Mr. Turner, who has won over 600 prizes with his pure bred Devon cattle and Leicester sheep, having now reached the advanced age of 88, has decided to sell the whole of his stock by auction. Connoisseurs have been loud in their praises of the Devon cattle comprised in this stock, which are said to be the most ancient pure-bred cattle in England. Evidence is adduced of their purity for two centuries, and they have always been remarkable for the amount of beef they produce in comparison with waste. Such cattle, in fact, as the housewife, above all others, would admire. A great merit in them, too, for breeding purposes is said to be that they thrive in any climate, having been tried in many parts of the continent, and in both North and South America. They are not of large size, but I am told it has been proved in this country that you can keep and fatten three pure Devons on the same quantity and at the same expense as two Shorthorns, and butchers will give one penny per lb. more for them. Mr. Turner's flock of sheep was formed more than 60 years ago.

Several of the leading fairs of Devonshire have been held within the past two weeks, and taking a survey of the whole the supply of stock seemed short as compared with former years. Most of the cattle offered appeared to be what is known here as "keeping sorts," and these changed hands at from £13 to £15 apiece. At Crediton Fair useful horses realized from 30 to 35 guineas each. The average for sheep was about £6 10s., but at one or two fairs good long wool rams fetched as high as 9 guineas each.

DEVONIA.

From the United States.

WASHINGTON, D. C.,
Sept. 16th, 1881.

The long continued drought in the United States during August has greatly injured the unmaturing crops. Corn, cotton, tobacco and potatoes, in all the sections where these are cultivated, bear evidence of its withering breath. The reports received from all parts of the country at the Department of Agriculture, and just issued, show the general average condition of the corn crop up to the first part of September to be 17 per cent. below that of July and 31 per cent. lower than a year ago at the same date.

The Veterinary Surgeon of the Department of Agriculture, who was sent to England in June last by the Commissioner of Agriculture for the U. S. to investigate, in connection with the Privy Council of Great Britain, the question of Pleuro-pneumonia among American cattle landed in that country, has returned, and reports that upon his arrival in London, at his solicitation a meeting of the Privy Council was held, the president, Earl Spencer, presiding; and that the result of the ex-