

### A Minnesotian in Defence of Canada.

In the April number of the CANADA FARMER, we mentioned that the *Mark Lane Express* of the recent date had contained a letter written by Mr. William Carr from the Bermudas, in which letter, to use an expressive vulgarism, Canada and Canadian farming caught "fits," and the Bermuda Islands were cracked up as a sort of Elysium in which only the most select class of angels would be good enough to dwell.

We do not suppose that any native of Canada, or any one who has lived here a few years, cares a great deal how much or how unjustly we get abused—for we are tolerably used to it by this time. Neither do we apprehend that our country will receive much injury by misrepresentation of even the grossest kind; for misrepresentation will call forth correction, and if it should be made to appear that Canada is a bad place for young Englishmen, with more money than brains, and for "fast army captains" with less brains than money, it will speedily be shewn that, after all, our country has many good points along with some bad ones.

Against the small number of well-to-do ignoramus who have come here and failed, we can set the large number of poor men who have come here and succeeded—and every township will furnish instances of them.

"Ah," say the anti-Canada men, "but see how hard they had to work!" To which we reply by asking:—"Are they or is the world any worse for that? And would they willingly go back to their old condition?" The answer would be a vigorous "No," except from a few chronic grumblers who will be dissatisfied in Paradise—if they get there.

As might be expected, the letter of Mr. Carr has called forth a defender; a former resident of Canada, but now of Minneapolis, and named G. F. Bolton. He writes to the *Express* setting forth the case for and against Canada in very fair light, concealing neither the advantages nor drawbacks. We will make a few extracts from his letter. He states first, that he has been a farmer in Canada in a small way, and knows something of the hardships of the emigrant's life.

"If Mr. Carr, he says, had gone through Ontario in the summer season, he would have found in the large, substantial farm homesteads and in the well-tilled farms prevailing there, abundant *prima facie* evidence of the success of farming in Canada." "If the instance of failure given by Mr. Carr were general, his letter would be very discouraging indeed; but the instances of success are plentiful where men, coming to Canada ten or fifteen years ago very poor men, are now the owners of good homesteads, good cleared farms, contented men, and loyal subjects; who, had they remained in England, would in all probability have been to-day labourers, protesting against their tyrant masters, admirers of Mr. Arch, and discontented and half-rebellious members of some labourers' union league."

Mr. Bolton then points out, as we did, that the instances given by Mr. Carr, cannot be taken as characteristic of Canadian farming, and then, properly enough, goes on to caution intending emigrants against being biased either by the darkly-shaded pictures of such as Mr. Carr, or the rose-colored paintings of the emigration agent. The differences between old country and Canadian farming are touched upon, including the fact that hirers of labor here are much more exacting than are English farmers.

"I quite agree with Mr. Carr that farming in Canada, as compared with farming in England, is a poor business; but then the English farmer is a capitalist, and generally has more money invested in his rented farm than would buy a farm of equal size in Canada, land, stock, and crops, all put together; but, then, I take it, the farmer who is doing well in England in his business is not the man who would seek to do better in the rough semi-civilized life of a colony. Emigration is for the man who can't do well at home, and for those restless spirits, who are always fancying they could do better, and deserve to do better, than they are doing. Take, for instance, the discontented English agricultural laborer, who is a thorough believer in labourers' unions. All his leaders have told him 'that he is a poor peasant, socially and politically ignored, trodden down and under by tyrant farmers and aristocratic game-preserving landlord.' Let him come to Canada or the States. England will thus have lost a dissatisfied and half-rebellious subject she does not want and can afford to do without, and Canada will have gained, it may be, a useful labourer; for experience gained on this side the Atlantic does sometimes make wise those who have been very foolish. Here he will find a wide field and no favour, and abundant scope for his energies. Here he will speedily gravitate to his natural level; for here he will be regarded just in proportion to his ability to abstain

from beer-drinking, and to work—and work he must or starve." "If the English farmer is well off, that is, can keep out of debt, give his family a good education, and his sons a fair start in life, with the reasonable prospect of their being as well off as himself, he will of course, remain where he is, content to do thus well, nor seek to better his or their condition by emigration, for the Canadian farmer, though he owns his farm, and follows his own plough, cannot hope to do more."

Mr. Bolton's letter is, as we said before, unbiassed either for or against Canada. No case in reality was made out against us by Mr. Carr's letter, which, in fact, was a stronger argument against certain classes emigrating at all, rather than against their emigrating to Canada; and Mr. Bolton's letter is of the same general tenor, though worded in a different and less prejudiced spirit.

Before leaving the subject we may mention that Mr. Carr has died since his letter was written. We do not know whether he fell a victim to the deadly climate of the country which he considered so far preferable to Canada, but if he did, he only did what many have done before him.

### Whackett's Needle Pole-Axe.

The following description of a pole-axe for slaughtering cattle, recently patented in England, is from the *Farmer*.

The first impression which strikes any one is that it is nothing more than an ordinary iron hammer, having two faces mounted on a shaft, to which it is secured by iron straps and rivets. On closer inspection the hammer head is found to be bored through longitudinally, that is, from one face to the other, and within the cylinder thus formed is placed a steel punch, the end being drilled out, so as to present a circular cutting edge about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in diameter. The punch is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches longer than the hammer portion, and is mounted at the upper end by a flat circular cap about the size of half-a-crown, and this is designed to receive the blow. To put the punch in place a portion of one end of the hammer or upper face, which is nothing more than a box or ferule, is removed by unscrewing; the punch is then passed downwards with a spiral spring of wire under its head. The ferule is then replaced by screwing it down, and we find that by means of the spring the head of the punch stands above the hammer head about 21 inches, and the cutting end is flush with the lower face. It is then ready for use.

The ox to be felled is then brought to the stake in the usual manner, and the operator takes the needle-pole axe in his left hand, and puts the lower face over that part of the skull where the blow would be most fatal. All things being steady, the head of the punch is struck by a wooden mallet, wielded by the right hand, and the animal drops perfectly insensible, and to all intents and purposes dead. An examination after death shews the frontal bones perforated as clean as if the holes had been drilled by the sharpest tool, and the brain is so disorganized that sensation or pain is impossible. The blow required is by no means heavy or violent, for the cutting edge of the punch or needle dispenses with much of the force required for the old pole-axe; and besides this it may be noticed that false blows are almost impossible, for a man holding the instrument with one hand may strike with greater ease and precision with the other than is possible with the old axe, having two hands and a swing blow, when almost always the creature will move in alarm, and so frustrate intentions. By means of the needle-pole axe, less exertion and bustle is required, and prominent in all the trials which have been made under our observation, is the fact that so little skill suffices to destroy the stoutest ox. The animals are led to the stake, and before half the trouble expended in ordinary cases can be observed, they lie on the floor an inanimate form beyond all sense of pain and suffering.

THE AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL, now before the Imperial Parliament, (we were in error in stating in our last issue that the bill had become law, though it probably is past by this time) has for its object the compensation of ejected tenants for unexhausted improvements. A curious point arises as to the duration of the beneficial effects of bones when applied to the soil in a broken condition. A correspondent of the *North British Agriculturist* has sent to that journal, a sample of bones collected from land to which they were applied *forty years* ago! In those days, the manufacture of bones into dust was very imperfectly

carried out, and one-third of the mass would probably be from one inch to two inches in length. The editor states that the bones were in a wonderful state of preservation when received.

IT IS NOT IN ENGLAND ALONE that the condition of the agricultural masses is a bad one, though we, in common with the remainder of the press of this continent, use the state of the English laborer to point the moral when we wish to contrast the condition of the Old World serfs with that of our own producing class. In Silesia, according to the report of a gentleman lately travelling there, the laborer's condition is anything but cheerful. The peasant's cow is very badly off, but his wife is not a whit better. For months every year the men have to seek work in mines, and during that time the women do all the work that has to be done on their tiny farms or on the farms of employers. More women than men work on the fields; and the women are to be seen "dragging barrows, digging up potato ground, loading and emptying manure carts, working as bricklayers' assistants, wheeling clay from clay pits in brick kilns, acting as blacksmiths' mates at the smithy. Meat is a luxury enjoyed by some once a week; by more two or three times a year. Bread is eaten in small quantities." The potato is the chief article of diet, and milk is not dear; but eggs are rarely eaten. The circumstances of the peasantry seem to attract little or no public attention, in which respect their English brethren have certainly had the pull of them, lately.

THE QUESTION OF THE INFLUENCE OF FORESTS on the hydrology of a region is one that has been warmly discussed. Some men of science, Dequeker for example, hold that forests increase the amount of water received by the soil; while others, Marshal Vaillant among them, assert that forests diminish the quantity. Some savans, such as M. Mathieu, Subdirector of the Nancy School of Forestry, have endeavoured, by way of experiment, to get together such facts as might, if they did not set the question at rest, at least clear up some points and supply a portion of the experimental data needed for a full explanation at some future time. M. Mathieu undertook to "determine the amount of rainwater received by the soils of two neighbouring districts, one of them covered with timber and the other arable land; and to find out whether, in consequence of the covering of trees which intercepts the rain-water, the soil of the woodland is as abundantly watered as that of the open." His conclusion is, that timbered soils receive as much, and more, rain-water, than the open country. Whatever conclusion the scientists arrive at with respect to the quantity of rainfall in wooded countries and those destitute of timber, it is a well settled fact that the presence of timber renders the distribution of the rainfall more equal, and that it tends to prevent the occurrence of such disastrous tracts as those from which France has lately suffered.

AFTER WE HAD PUT ON PAPER our ideas about over-working, we observed that Prof. Welch, agricultural editor of the *Chicago Times*, is somewhat of the same manner of thinking. Alluding to the fact that, this year, in consequence of the inclement spring, farm operations are unduly crowding each other, he says: "Unfortunately neither horses nor men are in the best condition to work. Hot weather came on so suddenly that a feebleness in the system was produced. Farmers while looking out for the condition of their crops, must not be neglectful of the health of themselves, their hands, and their teams. The injury produced from working in the hot sun is every year very great. Cases of sunstroke are more and more numerous every season. Almost every farming neighborhood contains persons of broken down health who owe their sufferings to over-work in the hay and grain fields in July and August. It is said that no people in the world 'toil in the heat of the day' to the same extent that Americans do. The cases of injury from the effects of heat are reported to be greater than in countries where the heat is much more oppressive. In India and most of the countries in southern Europe, field labor is generally suspended for about three hours during the middle of the day in summer. The people take their dinner and their sleep or rest. As it begins to grow cooler they go to the field invigorated, and work the remainder of the afternoon with redoubled energy."