is carefully picked and sorted. In bygone years, the custom too often has been to put nice apples on the top of a basket, or in the top end of a barrel, and fill up with any sort of trash. In England, I believe apples are sold by emptying out the whole contents into a sheet and then sold, this is a fair and equitable way of doing. The government, last year, graded the fruit as follows :

Good fruit, sound, of small size.... No. 1 " larger " A.. No. 1 44 "

٤. very large, Extra No. 1

In order to get a good price for our apples or fruit of any kind, we must get the confidence of those whom we expect to consume our fruit. The people of California know how to pack and ship fruit. There have been a good many thousands of dollars paid for California fruit in Montreal alone.

I hope and trust these few words of advice will be taken in a friendly way by those who in the past have picked and packed fruit for market and may continue to do so.

Butter-What is the matter with our butter shipments this year so far? they are some 136,000 more than last year at the same date, and last year was a record year, there has been paid out for but er more than last year, one million five hundred thousand dollars-and how about the price-how is 23 cents for high? as the slang phrase goes, and I believe there were certain factories sold at that recently.

Cheese.--About the same state of affairs rules in the cheese market as has in the butter. The shipments are some 144.000 boxes more than last year, and the price fully one cent a lb. dearer on the average than last year, take the increased shipments and the difference in price from last year, means some one and three quarter millions dollars more in the farmers pockets.

Farmers, now is your time to make money: with 23 cent butter and 12 cent cheese, we are back to olden time prices. Horses are selling at a good price, eggs ditto, hay is a fair price. The farmers ought to be cheerful these days, study economy, and there is no danger for this Canada of ours.

Yours truly,

PETER MACFARLANE. Chateauguay, 31st August 1899.

VALUE OF HUMUS IN THE SOIL.

Through continuous cropping without following any systematic rotation, the fertility of many of our lands has been impaired. The yield of crops has shown a constant diminution, yet much more marked where no returns were made to the soil in the shape of Such lands, where the crop has fertilizers. fallen below the profit margin, are termed exhausted. But must we understand that these lands are completely deprived of these four elements, necessary to plant growth, viz Nitrogen, Phosphoric acid, Lime and Potash? No, these are still present, and in large quantities in most of our so-called exhausted lands. Only one element is lacking, which can easily This is the Humus, or that be replaced. black earth so plentiful in our virgin soils. This substance is formed by the decomposition of all vegetable or animal remains: leaves During long years it has been roots, etc. considered as of little value, as an unimportant element. But now, before the light of science opinions have changed. It is acknowledged that upon this humus depends almost entirely the fertility of our soils.

Humus is in the soil the storehouse of nitrogen, an element for which a high price must be paid if bought as a chemical fertilizer. In decomposing under the influence of the air, humus slowly liberates this nitrogen, which, if conditions are favorable, changes into nitrates readily available. Other gases are liberated at the same time, which attacking some compounds, hitherto in a potential form, also render them free to concur in the nutrition of plants. Thus, humus is a direct and indirect fertilizer; direct in giving out nitrogen, indirect in rendering other elements available.

In its effects towards improving the physical conditions of the soil, humus has no less importance. Like lime, it lightens heavy soils augments their porosity and facilitates the circulation of air therein. It gives also more consistency to sandy lands, preventing leaching, and in both cases enables the soils to absorb and retain more of the sun's heat by darkening their color.

Last but not least comes the water, holding power of humus which has been estimated at