

The country around Liverpool is beautiful. In the immediate vicinity of the town are the estates of the Earl of Derby, over which I was kindly driven by a friend. They are extensive, richly cultivated, and provided with well-stocked game preserves, in which the noble Earl and his friends reap abundant sport in the shooting season.

A very pleasurable day was that on which I passed over to the opposite side of the river, and attended an agricultural exhibition. The grounds were spacious, but none too spacious to hold the thousands of objects which were to be seen, and the thousands of persons who come to see. It was altogether such a display of products, natural and manufactured, as might be expected in one of the finest Counties of England. A considerable portion of covered space was devoted to flowers, which had a great many admirers. The fruit was little if any superior to what was exhibited a few weeks ago in Kentville. This was especially true of the apples, than which it may be doubted if any country under the sun can produce finer than are raised in Nova Scotia.

The animals were astonishingly large and fat. In England the question of the production of beef has been thoroughly, I might say, scientifically mastered. The two factors chiefly dealt with in its determination are feeding and breeding. By a skillful blending of these, oxen are produced of almost any desirable size, shape, and fatness. In some instances it is said the farmer draws on a black-board an outline of the creature he wishes to grow, and then by the means just indicated brings him into conformity to it. And why should he not do so? What is this but a partial exemplification of the doctrines which Mr. Darwin has taught his countrymen? If, according to his teaching, "an animal is capable not only of reproducing its kind, but of giving birth to new kinds, capable, again, of increasing and improving the nature of their descendants," if monkeys have been evolved from jelly-fish, and men from monkeys, why should not a large and handsomely-formed ox be developed from a small

and ill-shaped one? There is nothing like farming, and, indeed, doing all sorts of other work on scientific principles! A very ingenious application of the Darwinian theory has been made, I have been told, by the Paris glove-makers, who sometimes manufacture the article from rat-skins. By a skillful crossing of the breed of rats, such a peculiarly shaped rat, it is said, has been produced that its skin just fits a lady's hand. That is to say, the skin of the tail, which is made to grow from the rat's side, serves for a thumb to the glove, the skin of its legs for the four fingers, while the eyes and ears answer the purpose of four button-holes.

But there were on exhibition at this show animals that I was hardly expecting to see; these were dogs. It is not perhaps generally known that a considerable part of the population of England consists of dogs. I do not know how many millions of them the last census gave, but the tax upon them amounts to quite an item towards meeting the expenses of the nation. Some of the most interesting pages of English biographical literature are those which record the virtues of deceased dogs,—their intelligence, their fidelity to their masters, their watchfulness and courage, and their love of home. Dogs are offered for sale in many of the public markets of London, and there are rows of shops in which the manufacture and sale of dog-collars is the sole business. Landseer's dogs are among the most celebrated paintings in the London National Gallery of Art. The expression he has thrown into their faces is marvellous, surpassing any original I ever saw, yet being essentially canine. In this he has shown the highest art, which consists, not in the literal copying of nature, but in the creation of an imaginary nature which harmonizes in spirit and form with the nature that is real.

Now, such being the interest taken by many of the English people in dogs, it is not surprising that their production should be encouraged by exhibitions in which their excellences may be compared, and prizes given for the best. In the exhibition above