BORN.

LAMONT.—In Guelph, on 13th December, the wife of G. W. Lamont, MERCURY Office, of a daughter.

MARRIED.

ROSE—McKERRY.—On 5th Dec., at the residence of the bride's father, by Rev. Mr. Strachan, Rockwood, Mr. Henry Rose, Eden Mills, to Miss McKerry, of Erramosa.

The Acton Free Press.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1888.

THE COUNCIL FOR 1889.

Municipal matters continue remarkably quiet and very little is said as to who will be the candidates in the field on Monday, December 31st.

Respecting the chair of Chief Magistrate of the municipality it is conceded on all sides that it is most desirable that Mr. W. H. Storey, the present Reeve, be re-elected to that office. It has been hinted that owing to his multiplicity of business cares Mr. Storey is anxious to retire from municipal life, but in the interests of the village this would be a misfortune. All will admit that during his long continued service as an officer of the municipality, Mr. Storey's time has been unstintingly imposed upon, and frequently when he would fain have retired to private life he has been forced into harness as a servant of the people. In the past very little has been done or said on the part of our citizens to show their appreciation of his efforts, further than to continue him in office, and it would be a graceful thing, and, although we have had no conversation at all upon the subject with Mr. Storey, we have no doubt he would consider it a very kindly act if the ratepayers would meet him at the municipal hustings with a requisition to continue his services to the municipality as its head, as far as possible, unanimously signed. Let some active citizen who has an interest in his town take hold of this matter.

Respecting the personnel of next year's Councillors, as stated above, very little has been said. We have heard of one or two members of the present Council who are anxious for re-election and who are working to that end. The Councillors of the present year have worked to the best of their ability, but there is is a necessity for some new blood in the Council. Acton has no dearth of eligible energetic young men fully competent to perform the duties of the office, and who would if brought out make satisfactory Councillors and be worthy of public confidence. Bring out the young men and get them to work in public life.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The Maritime provinces are sometimes supposed to be less progressive than Ontario, but there is not a single toll road in New Brunswick or Prince Edward Island.

For the first time since it was completed, twenty-nine years ago a train has run off the track in the Victoria bridge at Montreal. This speaks volumes for the care of the Grand Trunk Railway officials and employees.

It is estimated that over $53,000 were expended in public works and improvements in British Columbia during the past season. Further improvements to navigation of the north arm of the Fraser River at its mouth were also carried out.

Some people talk of continental sobriety. It is said that in each street in Paris, out of fifty shops thirty are devoted to the sale of wine and alcohol. It would really appear that, in France at least, one-half of the population has for its business the giving of drink to the other half.

The latest invention for protecting the American coast cities says an exchange contemplates the extension of large pipes along the bed of the ocean for several miles from the point to be protected which in case of danger are to be filled with oil. The oil will rise to the surface where it will be ignited, and then bear down in a seething flame upon the enemy's vessels with destruction terrible to contemplate.

Prof. Elisha Gray remarks that electrical science has made a greater advance in the last twenty years than in all the 6000 historic years preceeding. More is discovered in one day now than in a thousand years of the middle ages. We find all sorts of work for electricity to do. We make it carry our messages, drive our engine, ring our door bell and scare the burglar; we take it as a medicine, light our gas with it, see by it, hear from it, talk with it, and now we are beginning to teach it to write.

BURIED IN A WELL.

Thrilling Experience and Remarkable Escape of a Guelph Well Digger.

GUELPH, Dec. 10.—Alf. Willoughby, employed by one Johnstone, a well contractor, had an experience to-day which he will not wish repeated. He was clearing out the bottom of an old well, 32 feet deep, on Mr. Robert Cunningham's premises on the outskirts of the city, when the old curbing gave way about the middle of the well and doubled over, some ten feet of gravel rushing down on top of this and engulfing the man below. One of the pieces of wood fortunately got wedged a little above his head and became fastened with the falling debris, thus probably protecting his head. As soon as the accident was known hundreds of willing hands came to the rescue, but as things were situated they were powerless to lend any assistance, only two or three men being able to work in the well at a time and shovel off the earth. This work was steadily kept up until seven o'clock, when the unfortunate man was reached. He was found in a stooping position, covered to the neck with quicksand and gravel, his hands over his face and eyes to protect him from suffocation and give him every advantage the solitary plank which succored him could afford for air. There was only about a foot of water in the well. He was carried to the top amid ringing cheers from the large crowd, which had witnessed the operation for nearly ten hours. His limbs were so numbed that he could not stand or move at first, but after a little he was able to assist in undressing himself in Mr. Cunningham's house, where he now remains, with every prospect of a speedy recovery.

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ST. THOMAS, ONTARIO.

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☞ $100.00 paid in advance secures all the above advantages together with instruction in drawing and piano by the regular teachers for one year. For Announcement address, Principal Austin, B.D.

THE DAIRYING INDUSTRY.

A Series of Letters Addressed to the Agricultural Public of Canada, being a Careful Study of Dairy Methods and Practices in Great Britain and Europe, During a Four Months' Tour in 1888.

AMONG THE BRITISH DAIRY FARMERS.

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A sort of working holiday is what the British dairy farmer gives himself when he attends his annual association meetings. He wisely combines pleasant holiday excursions with excellent working conferences. While he works he travels, while he travels he feasts, while he feasts he grumbles, and one cannot easily say which he enjoys most. But the Englishman does enjoy himself, even when face to face with problems that are worthy of wisest heads and bravest hearts. The smart saying that the Englishman takes even his pleasures sadly, may not be full libel, but he certainly has a way, sometimes, of taking a deal of solid enjoyment out of good solid work.

MY FIRST WEEK SPENT IN ENGLAND

was a rare experience in simultaneous lesson-learning and pleasure-taking, and it afforded a fine opportunity for the study of English character, which, in spite of its strong marked type, is too many-sided to be understood at a glance or delineated epigrammatically. There is, of course, great temptation to elaborate the striking first impressions of a country so remarkable as England, but the limits of space, and the probable temper of my readers, demand that I keep within more prosaic lines. The first point of interest to Canadian dairymen, brought out by the discussions of the British dairymen, was the probability that

FUTURE PRICES OF DAIRY GOODS WILL RULE LOW.

It has been our habit, on this side of the water, to assume that the only question of obtaining a foothold in the British market for our butter product is the question of quality. We have been saying all along that all we have to do to make our butter production profitable is to suit the quality of our make to the liking of the British consumer. No doubt that this requirement is the first and most imperative need of our butter industry, but it does not depreciate its importance to say that it is not the whole need. The teachings of the conference suggested another and important problem, the existence of which was later confirmed by a careful enquiry into the state of the English market—the great market of the world. It was

THE PROBLEM OF CHEAP PRODUCTION.

Prof. Long stated at the conference last May that, except in favored cases, good butter was not worth more than 20 cents a pound, and in some districts less. This may be said to be pretty nearly the bottom prices for best butter in England in any season, but the price may rule at about this figure for months. I take it that Prof. Long referred to the prices received by the farmer, practically wholesale prices. As to retail prices, I saw no good butter in the shops at a lower price than 22 cents, and the commoner price was 24 cents. I saw displayed in some of the shops during the summer, butter ranging at prices as high as 24 to 30 cents, retail, but these appeared to be the top prices of the season for the finest goods. The bulk of butter sold, doubtless, for from 20 to 24 cents. I think these prices would fully justify Prof. Long's statement. A trade circular now before me, dated July 31st, 1888, gives further confirmation. This circular quotes for "butter landed," a range of prices from lowest Swedish, French or Dutch, at 17 cents, to highest Danish, Swedish, and "Creameries" at 23 cents. The above may give an idea of the summer prices which we may obtain for butter in England if we can place it in the market, in the fresh condition which characterises all the butter eaten there in the summer season. Now, these prices, when allowance is made for transportation charges, will not strike the Canadian farmer as enough better than home prices to be very promising of profit. It is true that I am speaking only of the summer season, when the large bulk of fresh-made butter depresses the market to its lowest figure; but nothing that I could see gave much encouragement to hope for very high prices, as a rule, at any season in the years to come. There are, indeed,

CAUSES WORKING AGAINST HIGH PRICES.

Said a Bristol buyer: "If fine creamery can be sold for 92 to 98 shillings (about 20 to 21 cents) for summer's make, and for 102 to 108 shillings (about 22 to 23 cents) for fall make, it can be sold here. When it goes to 116 shillings (about 25 cents), it makes it difficult to handle, and it gets blocked out of the market by margarine and cheaper brands of butter." Reference is here made, of course, to wholesale prices. The point is that while a limited quantity of butter may reach high prices, the bulk of the butter made must be sold at a price within the means of the average consumer, otherwise the consumption itself will be checked by the use of a substitute. The opinion quoted doubtless furnishes as encouraging an outlook as can be reasonably hoped for, since

THE COMPETITION WE ARE LIKELY TO MEET

in the near future is likely to dull rather than to sharpen the edges even of the low prices which have ruled in the near past.

Let it be remembered, too, that even the prospective moderate prices will be possible only for a fine quality. For inferior goods, he would be an optimist indeed who would hope in the future for any price good enough to pay for making butter.

With this not too rose-colored prospect before us,

WILL IT PAY US TO SEND BUTTER TO ENGLAND?

While I was abroad, this very practical query often thrust itself upon me most forcibly, and sometimes the answer seemed doubtful. I even heard the opinion confidently expressed by others that it is unlikely that we shall again be able to send butter to the English market profitably. The reasons given, however, for this dark view were not to myself conclusive. Notwithstanding a somewhat unpromising outlook, there were a few weighty considerations which led me to take a somewhat hopeful view of the situation. There are really only two serious barriers in the way of our finding in England

A POSSIBLE AND PROFITABLE MARKET FOR BUTTER.

These barriers are, first, the imperative demand for a higher quality than characterized our shipments these late years; and, second, this fact, just referred to, of probable low prices in the future. Assuming, for the moment, that we shall yet succeed in improving the quality, let us now deal only with the other difficulty—that of which we have just been writing, low prices.

To encourage shipment of produce abroad the foreign prices need to be enough higher than home prices to afford a trade margin. Now, our own market offers for butter, for home consumption, prices very nearly as high as what we have just seen have been ruling in England. Some of our dairymen where I am now writing (Eastern Townships) fird in Montreal at this moment (October) an easy market for the first-class butter which they make, at 20 cents, for Canadian tables. It is not easy to see how shippers can risk buying this butter at this price for the English market. This, of course, is salt butter, packed in tubs. Take print butter. Brome county farmers have been enjoying a market in Montreal for fine print butter, at a price even so high as 35 cents. The price has fallen somewhat, but I believe it is 30 cents even yet. From this it would appear that our home prices for best butter run so closely upon the low prices ruling abroad that the margin for profit would not appear to be encouraging to shipments.

Yet, in spite of the above facts, there are reasons for the hopeful view which I am taking. First,

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY

of all our butter will necessarily have a tendency to lower the prices of our best. The present prices of our best butter are higher because of the fact that comparatively little of our whole make is good enough to compete with the best. When the beautiful print butter of Brome county sold for 35 cents it was because there was a stiff demand for all there was available. The high price stimulated production, and soon the supply was more adequate to the demand, when the price fell to 30 cents. It is quite likely to fall still lower, say to 25 cents. Had all our butter been choice, the high price of 35 cents would not have been possible; and as our general make will improve, the price for the best will weaken. This fact is not so unsatisfactory as might seem at first sight. A lower price for the best, due to improvement in quality of the rest, may mean a better average price for the whole. To illustrate: A fine package of butter, because there are in the market nine packages of inferior butter to every package equal to it, will bring say 20 cents per pound. The improvement in the quality of the whole lot which would bring down the price of the single package to say 18 cents, would also bring up the price of the nine packages, perhaps from 16 cents to 18 cents. If each package weighed 50 lbs., the aggregate return in the first case would be $77.50; in the second case $90, making a gain by improvement in quality of $12.50, on the whole ten packages, or an average gain of $1.25 on each package. This would obviously be

A FAR BETTER STATE OF THINGS

in the common interest.

Second—While between foreign prices for good butter and the prices of our best butter here, there is little margin, there is margin enough, in all conscience, between foreign prices and the prices here for our lower grades of butter. When our best butter commands 20 to 25 cents per pound, there will be found poorer qualities of butter offering as low as 12 to 15 cents! A foreign market would need to not only pay 18 cents for this butter, to give the producer far better returns with an abundant trade margin. If, therefore, because of the home demand for our best butter the English market does not afford a tempting market for it, we might profitably ship our lower-priced butter, if only its quality were good enough to warrant the trade in doing so. Let it be remembered that I am dealing with the question of prices only, as affecting a possible future trade, not with that of quality. Of course the future trade here claimed to be possible involves that the quality of the lower grades of our make be much improved; which means, as we shall see, that we improve our methods of manufacture, packing, shipping, etc., phases of the subject to be treated of in subsequent letters. And here we may well pause to reflect on the quantities of "store packed" butter that had been sold even as low as ten or twelve cents, which might have been sold for eighteen cents and upwards, if only it had been made and packed in a way to command sale in the English market!

Third.—Bearing upon this question is the probability, or, rather, certainty, that from now on

PRICES OF ALL PRODUCE WILL BE LOW.

Multiplied production and stiff competition are slowly but surely bringing down prices of all farm produce. We may as well sell butter as anything else at a low price. Indeed, when we consider the general economic advantages of butter production, we may be led to prefer to produce butter at low prices, to producing low priced wheat or beef, or even cheese. The following extract from Prof. Robertson, of Guelph, will show some of the economic advantages of cheese-making, as proved by actual results, and those of butter-making are even greater. "Dairy farming, notably in connection with the establishment of cheese factories, has saved whole districts from the fate of speedily becoming unproductive. It has largely increased the productive capacity of exhausted lands and added to their yearly earning power. Many counties have been made wealthy by the increase in the fertility of semi-exhausted soils. Were this annual return from this extra earning power capitalized at 6 per cent. it would represent over thirty million dollars." Let it be understood that the production of butter is urged as advantageous not to supplant that of cheese, but rather to supplement it.

Again, while low prices will be general, it is a question if butter will not hold up more stiffly than almost any other farm product since many other products demand for successful manufacture less intelligence and skill. In one of the papers read at the conference (by Mr. Smith) it was stated that "dairy products had fallen in value less than any other commodity."

Fourth.—Prices for butter can hardly be permanently too low in England to allow us to compete with the British and European producer. Against intelligence and enterprize we ought to be able to bring like qualities, and with new-world vigor. Against distance to market and perhaps dearer labor we have here

CHEAPER LANDS AND LOWER RENTS.

The inventions of modern genius have a tendency to annihilate distances. The crowded condition of the old world has a tendency to increase the cost and rents of land, taxes, etc. If we cannot make a fair profit out of prices at which the European will continue to produce, it will doubtless be because we employ faulty methods. I heard grumbling both in France and England about the "profitless" prices of the day, and saw much evidence that prices are already nearly or quite as low as the European producer can comfortably live upon.

I may again quote Prof. Robertson, than whom there is no better authority on this subject, on the future prices of cheese: "The prospect for high prices for cheese in years to come is not very bright. Perhaps an average of eight cents per lb. may be all we can expect. At any rate, our farmers should try to produce milk cheap enough to be able to sell at that price at a profit. We can produce cheese at as low a cost as any country; and if severe competition comes we will not be the first forced out of the markets."

To sum up the matter, we may be hopeful of a possible foreign market; but to succeed in the competition ahead of us and to find such a market a profitable one, it will be necessary for us, besides learning to make a superior quality of product, to study the

SCIENCE OF CHEAP PRODUCTION.

W. H. LYNCH.

Danville, Que., Dec. 8th, 1888.

THE COUNTY COUNCIL.

The Last Meeting for the Present Year, and the Work Performed at It.

The County Council met in the Court House on Tuesday, 4th inst., the Warden in the chair. The minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

A letter was read from Ottawa re, tax exemptions, complaining of the large exemptions, and proposing to ask the next legislature for the abolition of these, and requesting the assistance of this council.

In accordance with a resolution passed at the last meeting, a plan was laid on the table of the manner in which the grounds in front of the Court House were to be laid out.

The annual grant of $25 was made to the Teachers' Association.

In Helton vs. G. T. Railway, a writ was served on the G. T. R. last September. The defendants deny that any bond was executed, and that the H. & N.W. Railway has not ceased to be an independent line. If the defendants are liable they are only liable for damages proportionate to the unexpired time that it was to be an independent line. The case was set down for Jan. 10th, '89, at Toronto.

The annual grant of $200 was made to the County Model School, and $600 each was granted to the Georgetown and Oakville High Schools. Some of the members were opposed to granting such large sums to these high schools as a large portion of the county was not convenient to them. The yeas and nays were taken.

The road and bridge committee reported that they had examined the bridge over the Credit between Georgetown and Esquesing, and had decided it to be a county bridge, and had let the contract for the erection of two cedar abutments, repairing the old bridge and clearing out the river channel, at a cost of $85. The bridge recently erected on the Sixteen creek, between Trafalgar and Esquesing, has been examined and found to be a substantial bridge, costing $282.97; the sum of $141.48 was recommended to be refunded to the Treasurer of Trafalgar; also that $227.23 be refunded to Esquesing, which was advanced on contracts. Mr. H. P. Lawson's account of $32.40 was recommended to be paid. Report adopted.

The finance committee passed the following accounts. W. H. Dandie, painting court house, $243; S. Bradley, coal, $135.11; Copp. Clark & Co., $101.40; Campbell & Panton, $65.30; W. J. Stearn, tinsmithing and stoves, $63.88; W. H McNab, hardware, $37.50; H. Watson, stationery, $16.50; W. Vanallen, straw, $18.10; W. H. Lindsay, $3.93; Wm. Jay, surveying, $3.70; Wm. Panton postage and express, $3.18; Jno. Lyon, box rent, $2; J. M. Field, $2.25; D. W. Campbell, postage $13.50; James Hodge, constable, $20—total $722.21.

The Warden, on motion, vacated the chair, and Mr. Robinson took his place. On motion, the thanks of the council were tendered to Mr. Storey for the able manner in which he presided over the council during the year. Mr. Storey replied briefly, and in fitting terms.

Fifteen dollars were ordered to be paid for the expenses of the county bridge committee. The acct. of Bain, Laidlaw and Co., for $200, was ordered to be paid.

$100 was ordered to be paid to the license fund to square up the accounts of last year.

A petition was received from W. Patterson and 250 others, asking for a grant to the Agricultural Society to meet the deficiency caused by the last unsuccessful show. Wm. Clements and Mr. Patterson addressed the council in behalf of the petition.

A motion was made to grant $200, but was lost. An amendment granting $100 was carried.

Council adjourned.

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When Baby was sick, we gave her Castoria.
When she was a Child, she cried for Castoria.
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Hamilton, Dec. 1st, 1888.

THOMAS C. WATKINS.

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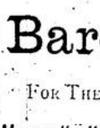

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