

gentleman differs from the Government in a variety of details, the honourable member for Hawke's Bay cannot understand how the honourable member can support the Government.

(b.) At the rate of 80 words per minute. Takes 10 minutes.

Mr. GLADSTONE, who was received with loud cheers, said: Ladies and gentlemen, it has been my habit to address a few words to you on the occasion of this gathering. Last year I detained you for a considerable time, for various persons had brought before me very interesting aspects of the subject in which you are concerned, and therefore I made an inroad upon your patience which I do not think I shall repeat this year, for there is a rule in politics, or, at any rate, if not a rule there is a precept, which some people think would be better if it were a rule. When you have got nothing to say the best way is to say nothing. (Laughter.) Unfortunately, that precept, which has a great deal in it, in the spirit if not in the letter, is not universally observed, either in politics or anywhere else. (Laughter.) Well, having not much occasion to delay you to-day, I will endeavour not to delay you much; and that is approaching to the spirit of the excellent maxim to which I have referred. (Laughter.) There is one thing, however, that ought always to be introduced—that is to say, the main question of the day, whether we are gaining ground or losing ground. (Hear, hear.) You are aware that this institution, which I hope is gradually acquiring solidity and a prospect of permanence in consequence of the increasing interest that is felt in it—this institution was founded for one single purpose in the main, namely, the promotion of cottage gardening. (Hear, hear.) That was the main object, and if we failed in that, or if we were going backwards in that respect, it would be a very poor consolation to think that we were making ground in any other directions; and the first thing, therefore, is to consider how we stand with regard to cottage gardening. Well, now, on the authority of those who are most competent to judge, I am rejoiced to be able to say that this year again has been a year of decided progress, and that the exhibits which have been sent in are considerably more numerous and more important than on any former occasion. (Cheers.) I hope therefore that you will consider that there is a very great encouragement to persevere in a course of effort such as has heretofore been made, and that we may, as we hope, be able to record as each season comes round that the feeling which has been stirred up in the minds of the cottagers of the country is a feeling that gains strength instead of losing it; because recollect that we are not now speaking of anything merely abstract: we are now speaking of the extension both of a sentiment and of a practice which tells in the most direct and in the most important manner upon the comforts of the people and upon enabling them to live in tolerable abundance as regards the necessaries and some of the conveniences of life. (“Hear, hear,” and cheers.) However, the plan when it was founded did not exclude what lies beyond cottage gardening—namely, what is commonly called fruit-farming at large. Nay, it even goes beyond fruit-farming. But the great distinction which marks this extension of the original plan is that it brings in another and a very different class—namely, the farmers of the country; and I respectfully venture to say again to the farmers of the country that, although I know it is a very difficult thing to modify traditional practices, and although especially the first steps, the preparatory and initial measures, in a new course are attended with much difficulty and often with but comparatively moderate results, yet I do venture to say with regard to fruit-farming and with regard to all the minor branches, not merely the question of fruit, but with regard to all the minor branches of production that are connected with this great and important profession—I do believe it will be immensely for the benefit of the country, and especially for the benefit of that class, if they continue to introduce a more systematic and more permanent regard to those branches into the pursuit that they follow with so much advantage to us all. (Hear, hear.) You know, gentlemen, that in other countries, in Belgium especially, perhaps in France more than in any other country of Europe, and in certain parts of Italy, this most beneficial practice of following what is called the small culture in all its branches is very extensively pursued, and forms a very considerable element in the general industry and general prosperity of the country. (Cheers.) As far as I know the fruit-farming which has heretofore been pursued in England—

(c.) At the rate of 100 words per minute. Takes 5 minutes.

DEAR SIR,—

KING STREET HOUSES.

We beg to remind you that the sale of the above-mentioned property will take place at the Auction Mart on Wednesday next, the 16th inst., at one o'clock. We have asked your solicitor to meet us there a quarter of an hour before that time, to fix reserves. Please attend also.

Yours truly,

WALTERS AND HOLMES.

SIR,—

In reply to your favour, we beg to inform you that we have disposed of the lease of 7 Salisbury Park, but can offer you the lease of No. 9, the next-door house, which has 9½ years to run, at a rent of £125 per annum, and a premium of £2,000, which includes the furniture (except ornaments), or a premium of £1,000 including the fixtures but not the furniture. Should you like to view the house we shall be glad to make an appointment for you to do so, and any further information you may require we shall be most happy to supply you.

We are, Sir, your obedient servants,

GENTLEMEN,—

37 Pall Mall, London, S.W., 3rd February, 1888.

In reply to your letter, we are instructed to let or sell some shops with premises over, now in the course of erection opposite Norfolk Terrace, a short distance from Queen's Road. They will be completed about June next, and we recommend them to your favourable consideration, as the