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Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se filigunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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EUROPEAN AGRICULTURE.

From the Report on European Agriculture and Rural Economy, by HENRY COLMAN, we have received as much pleasure as from any work of a similar character which has lately come into our hands. The author is a man well known in the Agricultural circles, and left this Country during the year 1843 for the purpose of making an extensive tour through the British Empire and the Agricultural countries of Europe, to instruct the Farmers and Planters of his own country. He took with him credentials from various Industrial Societies of which he was a member, which, it appears, procured him the entire into that society with which he was most anxious to become acquainted. We like the book, or at least that part of it which we have seen, because it does not either depreciate or over-estimate the Agriculture of Europe or our own Country. Of the domestic life of the various grades of English Agriculturists it gives sketches to our mind, very true and correct; and to the Agricultural improvements known in Europe, but not introduced as yet into the United States, the author appears to have paid peculiar attention. From the hundred pages of his book already published, we select, almost at random, such passages as contain hints which seem to us valuable to the Agriculturists of our Country:

"Agriculture is now getting to be recognised as the commanding interest of the State: so it must ever be as lying at the foundation of all others. Few persons are apprised of their obligations to agriculture; and it is difficult to estimate the extent of these obligations. Every man's daily bread, his meat, his clothing, his shelter, his luxuries, all come from the earth. The foundation, or, as the French would say, the *material* of all commerce and manufactures, is agriculture; and its moral influences are innumerable and most powerful. It will be found likewise, upon an observation of the different conditions of different nations or communities, that a laborious agriculture is, in a high degree, a conservator of good morals; and that those countries are, upon the whole, and on this account most blessed, not where the fruits of the earth are yielded spontaneously without care and without toil, but where its products come only as the reward of industry, and the powers of the mind, as well as the labour of the hand, are severely taxed in a struggle for the means of subsistence and comfort. Every one recognises labour as the source of wealth. How few things have any value, which have not been either produced or modified by labour? and in what department is labour so productive, so essential, and so important as in that of Agriculture?"

ENGLISH AGRICULTURE.

I will not dwell longer upon these considerations, with which every, intelligent mind must be impressed; and which must, more or less, constantly present themselves to our notice in that field of observation which we have entered. I shall proceed to present some general views of the agriculture of England, and shall descend, in the course of my reports, to such details as may be deemed most useful and practical.

The condition of practical agriculture in Great Britain, as far as I have had opportunity of observing it, must be pronounced highly improved. Many parts of the country present an order, exactness, and neatness of cultivation greatly to be admired; but a sky is seldom without clouds, and there are parts of England where the appearance is anything but laudable, and where there are few and very equivocal evidences of skill, industry, or thrift. We are often told in America, that England is only a large garden, in which art and skill and labour have smoothed all the rough places, filled up the hollow places, and brought every thing into a beautiful and systematic harmony, and into this

highest degree of productiveness. This is not wholly true; indeed, though there are many farms to be altogether admired for the degree of perfection to which their cultivation has been carried, yet there are not a few places where the indications of neglect and indolence and unskilfulness are but too apparent; and where, in an obvious contest for victory between the cultivated plant and the weeds, the latter triumph from their superiority both in force and numbers. I shall however, most cheerfully admit that English farming, taken as a whole, is characterized by a neatness, exactness, thoroughness seldom seen in my own country. An American landing in Liverpool, is at once struck with the amount of labor everywhere expended; the docks, and the public buildings, and the lofty and magnificent warehouses astonish him by the substantial and permanent character of their structure. The railways, like-wise, with their deep excavations, their bridges of solid masonry, their splendid viaducts, their immense tunnels, extending in some cases more than two miles in length and their depots and station houses covering acres of ground with their iron pillars and their roofs, also of iron, exhibiting a sort of tracery or net-work of the strongest as well as most beautiful description, indicate a most profuse expenditure of labor, and are evidently made to endure. He is still more overpowered with amazement when, coming to London, he passes up or down the river Thames, and contemplates the several great bridges, among the most splendid objects which are to be seen in England, two of which are of iron and three of stone, spanning this great thoroughfare of commerce with their beautiful arches, and made as if, as far as human presumption can go, they would bid defiance to the decay and ravages of time. If to this he adds (as, indeed, how can he help doing it?) a visit to the Thames Tunnel—a secure, a dry, a brilliant, and even a gay passage under the bed of the stream, where the tides of the ocean daily roll their waves, and the mighty barks of commerce and war float in all their majesty and pride over his head, exhibiting the perfection of engineering, and a strength of construction and finish, which leaves not a doubt of its security and endurance—he perceives an expense of labor, which disdains all the limited calculations of a young and comparatively poor country. He remarks a thoroughness of workmanship which is most admirable, and which indicates a boldness and bravery of enterprise, taking into its calculations not merely years but centuries to come. We have in America a common saying in respect to many things which we undertake, that "this will do for the present," which does not seem to me to be known in England; and we have a variety of cheap, insubstantial, slight-o'-hand ways of doing many things, sometimes vulgarly denominated "make shifts to do," which we ascribe to what we call Yankee cleverness, of which certainly no signs are to be seen here. In front of my lodgings in London, near Charing Cross, is now in the process of erection the Nelson Monument, a Corinthian column of stone, more than one hundred and fifty feet in height, surmounted by a statue of that distinguished man, one of the idols of the British nation. Now I have been credibly informed that the staging alone, which is a wooden frame, constructed and put together with remarkable skill and strength, cost not less than four thousand pounds, sterling. I mention these as examples of the manner in which things are done; and add, that agricultural operations and improvements are in general conducted and finished in the same thorough and substantial manner.

The walls enclosing many of the noble men's parks in England, which comprehend hundreds, and in some cases, thousands of acres, are brick walls, of ten and twelve feet in height running for miles and miles. The walls round many of the farms in Scotland, called there "dykes," made of the stone of the country, and laid in lime and capped with flat stones resting vertically upon their edges, are finished

pieces of masonry. The improvements at the Duke of Portland's, at Welbeck, Nottinghamshire, in his arrangements for draining and irrigating, at his pleasure, from three to five hundred acres of land, without doubt one of the most skilful and magnificent agricultural improvements ever made, are executed in the most finished and permanent manner; the embankments, the channels, the sluices, the dams, the gates, being constructed, in all cases where it would be most useful and proper of stone or iron. These are only samples of the style in which things are done here. The important operations of embanking and of draining especially under the new system of draining and subsoiling, are executed most thoroughly. The farm houses and farm buildings are of brick or stone, and all calculated to endure.

I cannot recommend, without considerable qualifications, these expensive ways of doing things to my own countrymen. We have not the means—the capital for accomplishing them; but we might gather from them a useful lesson; for in general we err by an opposite extreme. We build too slightly—we do not execute our improvements thoroughly—we have little capital to expend when, of course, no substantial improvements can be effected; and labor, with us, is with more difficulty managed, and requires to be much more highly paid than here. I hope I shall be pardoned for adding, as my deliberate conviction, that we are too shy of investing money in improvements of this nature however secure, because they do not yield so large a per centage as many other investments some what more questionable in a moral view, and vastly more so in respect to the security which they offer.

There are circumstances in the condition of things here, which certainly warrant a much more liberal expenditure in improvements than would be eligible with us. Here exist the right of primogeniture and the law of entail, so that an estate remains on the same family for centuries; and a man is comparatively sure that the improvements which he makes will be enjoyed by his children's children. Things are entirely different with us—houses in our cities are continually changing hands, and are scarcely occupied by one life; and in the country, even in staid New England few estates are in the hands of the third or fourth generation in the direct line of descent. I shall not at all discuss the comparative advantages, expediency, or propriety of one or the other system. I leave those inferences to others—my business is with the fact as it is; and, like short leases, it has an obvious tendency to hinder or discourage improvements of a substantial and permanent character, involving a large expense.

Of English Capital, the Author says:

"Another marked distinction, already alluded to between the condition of the proprietors of the soil here and with us, is in the amount of capital existing here. It is absolutely enormous; and almost distances the system of enumeration which we are taught at our common schools. Let me mention some facts which have been stated to me on credible authority; and let me premise that a pound sterling is about equal to five dollars United States, currency. Under a law of the present government here, levying a tax upon every man's income, when it exceeds one hundred and fifty pounds sterling a year, persons liable to taxation are required to make a just return of their income under a heavy penalty. A confectioner, in London, returned, as his annual income, the sum of thirty thousand pounds sterling, or one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, or six times as much as the salary of the President of the United States; which showed, at least, how skilful he was in compounding some of the sweets of life. A nobleman, it is said, has contracted with a master builder to erect for him, in London, four thousand—not forty; not four hundred, but four thousand houses of a good size for occupation. In some of the best parts of London, acres of land, vast squares, are occupied with large and elegant dwelling houses paying heavy rents in long rows, blocks, and crescents, and all

belonging to some single individual. One nobleman, whose magnificent estate was left to him by his father encumbered with a debt of some hundred thousand pounds, by *limiting*, as it is termed here, his own annual expenditure to thirty thousand pounds, has well nigh extinguished this debt, and in all humane probability, will soon have his patrimonial estate free of encumbrance. The income of some men in the country amount to twenty, twenty-five, fifty, one hundred thousand, two hundred thousand sterling—even three hundred thousand pounds annually. It is very difficult for New England men even to conceive of such wealth. A farmer in Lincolnshire told me that the crop of wheat grown upon his farm one year was eighteen thousand bushels. The rent annually paid by one farmer in Northumberland, or the Lothians, exceeded seven thousand pounds, or thirty-five thousand dollars. These facts, which have been stated to me by gentlemen in whose veracity I have entire confidence, and who certainly are incapable of attempting any 'tricks upon travellers,' show the enormous masses of wealth which are here accumulated. A gentleman of distinguished talents and fine classical attainments, and who adds to them a public spirit in agricultural improvement, worthy of his education and his high standing in the community, has recently added to his property, by the purchase of lands, to the amount of two hundred thousand pounds sterling; that is, a million of dollars; and his estate, now in cultivation, and under his own personal inspection, and, with the exception of about four hundred acres lying in one body, amounts to six thousand acres. Another gentleman of high rank, in respect to whom and to whose amiable family I have a constant struggle to restrain the open expression of my grateful sense of their kindness, and who, an example here not uncommon, to an extraordinary brilliancy of talent and an accomplished education unites the most active spirit of agricultural improvement, has, though not all in his immediate occupation, yet all under his immediate supervision, a tract of more than twelve thousand acres in a course of systematic cultivation or gradual improvement.

From an English Periodical.

SEA-WEED AS MANURE.—A few questions having been addressed to a very intelligent correspondent in the Isle of Thanet respecting the mode of using seaweed as a manure in that district, and the supposed results, the substance of the answers may, perhaps, be acceptable to such persons as are interested generally on the subjects of manures; and through the same quarter it is hoped that we shall be enabled to give a chemical analysis of the substance resulting from the decomposition of the alga. Sometimes the weed is merely brought to the top of the cliff and laid in a heap, where it is allowed to rot. The more approved plan, however, is to put a layer of mould, then a layer of sea sand, and then one of stable-dung. Those lands profit most from dressing which have had the least of it previously; but, perhaps, most benefit is obtained in stiff soils, *ceteris paribus*. It is good indiscriminately, for any crop. It does not appear that after a series of years the land is deteriorated by the presence of magnesian salts, because the farmers are always eager to use it when it can be obtained; and many lands adjoining the sea have had it applied constantly from time immemorial, and it is still used and found to be beneficial. Sea weed hastens very decidedly the decomposition of other manures when mixed with them; neither salt nor soda do good to land which has had the sea-weed manure. It is never applied alone, if rotted separately is mixed with other manure. Nothing will grow for several years on the spot where a pure sea-weed reep has rotted, except it be a few species of atriplex.—M. I. B.

DOMESTIC YEAST.—Persons who are in the habit of making their own bread, can easily manufacture their own yeast by attending to the following directions: Boil one pound of good flour, a quarter of a pound of brown sugar, and a little salt,