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Nec aranearum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se filaginant, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus et apes.

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FOR APRIL.

From the British American Cultivator.

EXTRACTS FROM SKINER'S ADDRESS.

I should not fulfil my duty were I not here to relate something of what I observed last week in old Massachusetts, where, short as my sojourn was, to meet my engagement here, so much occurred to fill me with admiration and personal gratitude. Not from any view to invidious comparison, but to stimulate you to inquiry and reflection, note was made of the progress of a single town whose situation is analogous in some striking respects to Wilmington, especially in local advantages, in vast water power, and in vicinity to a large city of enormous wealth like Boston, whose capitalists, with an enterprise and sagacity all their own, leave no resource neglected that art and opulence can make available. I was in that venerable State when Lowell was little more than a farm. The oldest of their manufactories was chartered in 1822, and on the 1st of January last, there had been consumed within the past year, of cotton, 22,830,000 pounds. The monthly wages distributed in cash, were \$10,000; one establishment alone, the Middlesex mills, manufactures the fleeces of 1200 sheep daily; and through the year, American wool of the finest quality, of the valuable of \$500,000. The same establishment consumes annually 15,000 gallons of American lard oil, besides 7000 gallons of sperm oil brought by American vessels—four millions of reazles of American growth—eight hundred tons of Pennsylvania coal, besides other articles of American production, and of the value of more than a half a million—giving steady employment to 805 hands, who are paid monthly in cash. The machinery is American in manufacture and principle. The capital embarked in this one establishment is \$750,000, and what constitutes the salutary distinction between American and English establishments of this character, the practical operatives who daily work in the Middlesex mills, own £50,000 of the stock. Lowell, which, as I before said, was scarcely more than a farm when I was last in Massachusetts, now boasts a population of 25,000 people, and to crown the whole, they levy on themselves, and pay without grumbling, a school tax amounting to \$24,000 a year. Note in all this, my friends, the mighty energies of an industrious, economical, educated people!

I was pleased to learn, from one of the accomplished and liberal proprietors of the works to which I have particularly referred, that the descendants of the fine-wooled Saxony sheep transplanted to Ohio, were supplying his mill with wool of longer staple, and equally fine as that of the original stock. To return to the causes of your slow progress in population and the obstacles presented by it to a more general diffusion of the art of husbandry, to say nothing of one great drawback which cannot now be reasonably applied, to Delaware or New Jersey, there are yet other causes of blight which seem to have stunted the growth of the old states on the Atlantic slope south of New England, sufficiently obvious and remediable to warrant me in referring to them. Among the most prominent is the inherited habit or prejudice of mistaking and going for quantity rather than quality of land, which pervades the region referred to, and which is said by some to be the monomania of the Saxon race. How many are there who own from 400 to 500, and even more acres of land, of which one third, or at least one sixth part, lies totally unproductive in useless brushwood, in uncleared swamps, or in land rendered worse than profitless, for want of proper draining? the owner not seeming to remember, that for every such acre not yielding something in grass, in pasturage, in tillage, or in growing timber, he should charge himself, as with so much lost or thrown into the fire or the sea. Of how much more are men

robbed by their own indolence and shortsightedness, than by thieves who break in and steal?

There is no mistake more common than that of supposing that the more land a man has, the greater must be his profits—forgetting that the profits arise not from the land itself, any more than from an idle mill or an empty ship, but from the skill and manner of using it—and so indispensable is capital in the business of farming, that in general it may be laid down as an axiom that money employed in agriculture, will yield an interest in an inverse ratio the area to which it is applied. Thus, if \$100 be expended, and yield ten per cent. on ten acres, the probability is that it would yield much more if applied to half that area. In England where this matter is so well understood, the land-steward of the Marquis of Suffolk, a practical man, being asked the amount actually required to stock and carry on a farm, said that in Staffordshire, a farm of 250 acres medium quality land, bearing a proportionable quantity of good, fair, and inferior qualities, and one-fifth in permanent meadow, would require a cash capital of \$12,500 in an ordinary state of entering and an additional capital proportion to be effected in the way of road-making, fences, and under-draining.

Numerous instances must be familiar to all who hear me, of the wonderful effects of lime and other manures, in enhancing the value of Delaware lands, especially since the establishment of this Society, and the excitement and rivalry produced by it—raising it in many cases from \$8 to \$10, up to \$50 and even \$100 an acre. I will detain you to mention but one instance of the efficacy of lime, and of the necessity of some chemical knowledge, of the nature of manures, soils and crops, related to me on undoubted authority since I left home to meet this engagement.

Mr. Collins, residing on Scuppernon Lake, in North Carolina, a gentleman of large fortune, and, to his honour be it mentioned, as it does not always follow, of liberal temper, had a large field of rich black alluvial soil, which yielded heavy crops of Indian corn, but, as often happens, was ill suited to wheat, producing not over 13 bushels to the acre. He purchased and applied to this land 250 bushels of lime to the acre, and then reaped 47 bushels of wheat! For this lime, the refuse of kilns on the Hudson river, brought into Oeracock as return freight, by lumber vessels trading to New York, he gave 10 cents a bushel. This made, you will perceive, an outlay of \$25 capital to the acre, at a single dash; but mark the result! Deducting 13 bushels, the most that land of the same quality alongside of it produced, and there remained 34 of wheat against \$25; the land being left permanently impregnated with an elemental and alimental ingredient and food for that noble grain, of which, with all its capacity for producing other crops, it was until then nearly destitute. Most of you are, doubtless familiar with instances of the efficacy of capital applied in like manner.

When it is considered that labour becomes cheap, or what is the same thing, more productive, exactly in proportion to good tillage and the richness of the land combined, either naturally or by force of the manure applied, is it not self-evident that if the owner of unproductive land cannot otherwise command the requisite capital, he had better sell off one half for the means of improving the remainder, rather than retain the whole in a state of paralysis, that he may vainly boast, "I am monarch of all I survey," even though it be but a barren waste? No spider in the midst of his web, is more circumspect of whatever approaches, than is the capitalist in the midst of his strong boxes; and if the farmer, whose all is in land, cannot by force of his character for economy and intelligent management, command the requisite capital, and will not alienate, had he not better divide at once among his sons, giving to each if it be but 50 or 25 acres, with a set of centre-draught, ploughs, together with a subsoiler, a pair of mules, or a span of New England-like, oxen, and a drag-log; and thus instead of running

riot for want of employment, or going to seek through a life of exposure and hardship a precarious livelihood on the frontiers, his children would cluster around him, constituting, as well in the vigor of manhood as in his declining years, his safest friends and most delightful companions. Not a week since, having the pleasure to pass a delightful day, in company with the enlightened, liberal, and zealous editor of the *New England Farmer*, and other gentlemen distinguished for intelligence and character, at Indian Hill Farm, the residence of Col. Benjamin Poore—Poore in name, but rich in all the qualities that "gave assurance of a man"—I heard him remark that, as a young man beginning life, to make his way by industry, and without capital, he would sooner commence on one acre than on one hundred. You may estimate the weight of his authority when I add, that he took the premium for not only the best managed farm in the State, but for the best specimen of under draining on a large scale, and for the best system of keeping farm accounts! There were among other proofs of uncommon energy and skill, about forty acres of originally worthless waste land, which he had so reclaimed as to produce two and a half tons of the finest hay to the acre, while his own flourishing plantation of forest trees, concealed an ornamented rocky precipice, inaccessible to the plough.

From the Albany Cultivator.

Cheap mode of rearing Hogs.—The Maine Farmer contains an account of the mode in which Mr. True Remick raised six hogs, which is worthy of attention. It is stated that the pigs were farrowed in May or June, 1843. Four of them belonged to one litter, and the others to two other litters. The first summer, they were kept in a close pen, and fed with skimmed milk and boiled potatoes. In the fall they had a run of an acre of pasture ground, and through the succeeding winter they were kept entirely on boiled potatoes. On the first of May, last they were turned into the cow-pasture, with rings in their noses. While running in the pasture they had forty bushels of raw potatoes given them, but had no other food till put up to fat. Two of the sows raised pigs—eleven in all. The last of September they were put up, and fed with boiled potatoes and a little milk, but nothing more. The long, red potatoes were the kind used, and it is well known that swine are much more fond of these than any others. The hogs were killed from the 6th to the 23rd January last, and their average weight, dressed, 398 pounds—the largest weighed 513 pounds. The account states that the whole six never ate so much as three bushels of meal of any kind. If this account should come to the ears of some of the French chemists and physiologists, what would they afterwards say about there being none of the fat-forming elements in potatoes?

From the Albany Cultivator.

ROTATION OF CROPS.

Mr. Editor.—It is indeed a matter of astonishment, that at this day after so great improvements have been made in agriculture, and so much light thrown upon the subject by scientific men of almost every country, any should be found who will not give assent to the doctrine of rotation or who will not admit that a judicious system of alternation of crops should be adopted by every one who would cultivate the earth with success. Yet it is no less true than strange, that there are thousands who still cling to the old way of cropping their fields continually with the same kind of grain or plant, until they hardly make a return of the seed they have received. To such men, farming will prove to be a sinking business. These too, are the very men whom we always hear finding fault with their crops, and almost charging the Wise Dispenser of all things, as being less favorable with them than with some of their more wise and prudent neighbors. They do not once think, that they have violated the laws of nature, and placed every obstacle in the way of her performing her kind offices. The truth is,

they have tired out the land. It has become exhausted of the specific food which the plant requires, and utterly refuses to produce. Such farmers may sow, but they cannot reap; and if they persist in this ruinous course, they must sooner or later feel the evils of an empty purse. No man ought to expect a return for his labor, unless he give back to the soil, in some form, a part at least, of what he takes from it. It is to obviate in a great measure the evils consequent upon the practice of taking all, and returning nothing to the land, that is proposed to be effected by the rotation system. We do not say, that none of those who follow the old and hackneyed path, have raised large crops, or been in a degree successful in the business of farming; on the contrary, we know that by heavy manuring and high cultivation, land may be made to produce one kind of grain, perhaps abundantly, for a number of years in succession. But we do say, that the soil cannot without great expense of labor and manure, produce two or three crops of a kind without a perceptible falling off in the product. Neither is it contended that manure can be dispensed with in the rotation system. But one manifest advantage which this system has over the other modes of cultivation is, it enables the farmer so to economize in the management and use of his manure, as he may receive a two fold benefit from it. For instance, his manure may be applied in an unfermented state to roots and other hoed crops, and they receive their supply of nourishment from it, and at the same time it remains unimpaired for the use of the small grains that succeed. We will now proceed to state a few general principles on which this system is founded. And they are principles that are established by scientific investigations and experiments, and should be familiar to every one engaged in this most laudable pursuit.

And 1st. Soils, however fertile, or highly cultivated, will lose their productiveness, if continually cropped with the same kind of plant.

2d. The degree in which a plant impoverishes the soil, depends much on the amount of food it returns to it, in the decomposition of its stalks and roots that remain.

3d. One plant draws its nourishment from a depth in the ground, another from the surface.

4th. Some plants receive nearly all of their food from the earth, while others are fed almost wholly from the atmosphere.

5th. The cultivation of the small grains, renders the land foul; the hoed crops tend to free it from weeds.

6th. Those plants that are permitted to ripen their seeds, are great exhausters of the soil; while those that do not mature their seeds, exhaust it comparatively little. If these principles are founded in truth, they will serve us as a guide in arranging our different crops of grain, roots and grasses into a regular system of rotation. In making choice of crops to alternate with, care should be had to select those that are best adapted to the soil. In this, the judgment of the farmer will enable him to decide, as he is best acquainted with the nature of the land that cultivates. It will also be an easy matter to determine which kind of plants should, and which should not succeed each other.

In conclusion, we would say that a system, whose operations conform so completely to nature's laws, and the effects of which are so well calculated to improve the soil, and the condition of the farmer, commends itself to the consideration of all. And it is to be hoped that this subject will receive that attention which its importance demands.

A SUBSCRIBER.

"By rubbing an unripe apple upon a grater, and washing the portion which is rasped off, in cold water, starch will also be collected, which starch, had the apple been suffered to remain dead ripe, would have been converted, into sugar, forming the sweet juice of the fruit."