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Nec aranearum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SYSTEM
AND METHODOICAL ARRANGEMENT
IN FARMING.

BY J. SPROULE.

The prevailing want of methodical arrangement either in the succession of crops or in the operations of the farm, as well as the slovenly manner in which the latter are generally executed, is apparent to every observer. Talk to the great mass of farmers of the importance of system and neatness in their operations, and they will generally assent to the propriety of your observations; though perhaps in each individual case there are so many drawbacks and difficulties to be surmounted, that he is not able to manage things as he would wish, when, in fact no exertions are made to effect such very desirable results. Part of this apathy may proceed from not turning the attention to such trifling objects; but if from the perusal of this paper some of the class of persons for whom these remarks are intended can be influenced with a proper idea of their importance, the object of the writer will be accomplished.

It has been truly remarked that no other portion of the community are so much averse to the introduction of anything new as to the cultivators of the soil: but in nothing are they more deficient than in the habit of accurate observation, which is of the utmost importance in every department of industry. It is no uncommon thing for a person to see a thing done a dozen times, and not be able to do it again, though it may be even some of the common operations of the farm, requiring neither much skill to plan nor dexterous manipulation to execute; and all this proceeding from inattention, by which an indistinct impression is left on the mind.

The proper arrangement of the crops of the season is of the first importance to the farmer, though in general the crop which is to occupy any particular field is not decided on until perhaps the period nearly arrives for putting it in the ground. A person unacquainted with rural affairs could scarcely suppose that this could be the case; the farmer, however, knowing the character of his different fields, should have his arrangement of crops for the ensuing season made out while the preceding crop is still growing and he will thus have the advantage of a whole season to test the propriety of his arrangement. Should he, from further observation, see cause to change any part of his plan, it will be maturely done, and at a time when the change will not be productive of any inconvenience, instead of thinking of it when too late. In arranging his crops, the principles of a rotation of cropping, now so well understood, should be kept steadily in view, observing to make the different kinds of crops alternate with each other. Where a variety of crops is cultivated, there is in general sufficient time to attend properly to all; but when the produce of the farm is chiefly spring corn or any other crop, all is bustle and confusion at the period of the sowing of the crop in such a case, the process being often delayed until the proper time for performing it has passed, while there is almost nothing to do at other periods of the season. For this reason, therefore, crops which are to be sown in the autumn are deserving of attention, and should be combined with spring crops as thereby by more regularly apportioning the farm labour throughout the different periods of the year.

An important object in the arrangement of labour is to perform such operations as are not dependent on season, at a time when the other operations of the farm are at a stand. Thus, during the frosts of winter, manure is advantageously conveyed to the fields, and there formed into heaps, in which it is to remain until it is to be applied to the land. The roads through the farm will at this time be little injured by traffic on them;

and when the season of active labour arrives in the spring, this arrangement will be found to facilitate the putting down of the crops in a material degree. In like manner the land intended the green for crops should be ploughed early in the winter, that not being a period of active labour; and the land is, besides, materially benefited by exposure to the atmosphere through the winter, as may be observed in spring when it is to be harrowed, that ploughed earlier in the season being much more easily pulverized, and as a consequence more easily cleared of root-weeds. The necessary preparations for the harvesting of the grain should also not be deferred until the necessary hurry of the harvest has arrived. Stands for stacks may require repairs, and this should be done before hand, so that no interruption may take place when the grain is ready to be carried in. The harvest carts and waggons, too, should undergo inspection for a similar purpose before the time arrives when they will be required.

The thrashing and winnowing of the grain are important operations to the farmer, no matter on what extent of land; and it is proper that in their execution they should interfere as little as possible with the other operations of the farm. For this purpose it may be proper, especially on the smaller sized farms, to put a quantity of unthrashed grain into the barn so soon as the last thrashing is disposed of; and in the event of wet weather setting in, which would prevent the usual out-door operations, thrashing can go on; thus affording constant employment for the men and horses, and preventing the thrashing of the corn from interfering with other farm work. When thrashing machinery is driven by water, the same precaution may be necessary, so that advantage may be taken of the increased supply obtained in wet weather. Similar remarks are applicable regarding the making of mats, baskets, and brooms, or such of these as are made on the farm. These latter, indeed, it might appear superfluous to notice, were it not the fact that they are so generally neglected. It is not at all uncommon to see these minor though useful articles to be provided just when they are wanted; and, whatever may be the urgency of the occasion, affairs must remain at a stand until they are obtained. It may be here remarked that the manufacture of such small matters might often be carried on in the farm where they are at present provided for extraneous sources. Some of the farm labours would be much better employed in making baskets, or similar articles, on wet days than be discharged by the farmer, and spend their time in the ale-house. No doubt can, in fact, be entertained that a little additional attention to what may be termed the minor details of farm management would not fail to be the means of procuring an increased quantity of profitable employment to the labouring classes, which in many districts of the country is so very important an object.

In the arrangement of the operations of the farm yard during the winter, when the store cattle are confined to their yards, the utmost attention to the regularity of their performance is essential. The animals of the different kinds are to be supplied with their food at fixed intervals of time. Perfect quietude is known to be one of the conditions necessary to facilitate the accumulation of flesh, and there is no more effectual way of securing this than by feeding at stated hours; the animals, from habit, soon become accustomed to the hour of feeding, and become uneasy when not supplied with their food when it arrives. The effect of such irregularity not being at the time apparent, its importance is the less felt, but is not on that account less inimical to the growth of the animals. This is pre-eminently one of the departments of rural economy in which attention to small matters is of most importance, and in which it is perhaps least regarded. If the farmer for a moment considered the care which a merchant will exercise to prevent any depreciation in the value of the stock, whatever it may be, which

he has on hand, he would surely not be so careless in the maintenance of his. Whenever through mismanagement of any kind, a due return is not made for the food consumed, it must be recollected that a direct loss is sustained, growing or fattening animals should never be a day stationary, as in such a case the food which is thus consumed may be regarded as so much thrown away. A further advantage is secured by performing the operations at a fixed time, as intervals will then frequently occur between the different meals, during which the attendants will have leisure to do sundry other matters in the farm-yard essential to neatness and cleanliness; while under different management they are always in a hurry with their work and never done. This remark indeed applies to work of every description; those who do not practice habits of order and regularity being proverbially in a bustle, everything they do being done out of season, as well as imperfectly performed. When workmen of any kind are aware that they must have their operations performed at a fixed hour, on penalty of being discharged for their neglect, they usually make previous preparations to effect that purpose.

A very common cause of irregularity and loss of time is usually occasioned by neglecting to have broken implements repaired, and such additional ones procured as the case may require, until they are actually required for use. A labourer is frequently working under the disadvantage of using a mattock or crowbar, the point of which is worn off by use; or a ploughman working with plough-irons which require sharpening. In either case a direct loss is to a greater or less extent sustained, inasmuch as the workman in the one case and the horses in the other, are subjected to an unnecessary amount of exertion in the performance of their work; whereas with a little attention the evil is easily remedied. It should indeed be observed as a rule to be invariably practised, that, in any case, a broken implement should not be laid aside without having it repaired, even should there be no further call for it during the season. When everything is kept in proper order, no loss of time is sustained in commencing an operation, or in changing from one thing to another. Both in seed time and harvest it is frequently necessary, in taking advantage of any change whether, to go from one kind of work to another several times during the day, which, as usually managed, is often a fruitful source of annoyance and loss of time. In the spring, especially on the smaller class of farms on which the different kinds of work cannot be carried simultaneously forward, it is necessary, to change men and horses from the ploughs to the borrows, and *vice versa*; and in the autumn a still greater diversity of labour is often to be performed in a short time. In each of these cases, however, little time may be lost if the necessary articles are always at hand, and in proper order. Generally speaking, the plan for the entire day's proceedings should be made out and attentively considered in the morning, and such additional implements taken to the fields, before commencing work, as are likely to be required during the day, instead of sending for each as it may be required. Circumstances may indeed occur during the day which it was impossible to have foreseen; but the loss of time occasioned by such means is trifling, compared with that proceeding from general inattention.

Some of the preceding remarks may seem to relate to circumstances too trivial in their nature to demand so much attention; but it is to be remembered that it is by attention to minutiae in farming, as in everything else, that success is to be expected. When small matters are properly attended to, it may be regarded as certain that the more important affairs are not likely to be neglected.

From the Albany Cultivator.

POINTS OF A GOOD DAIRY COW.

It is admitted that cows are sometimes met with which give large yields of milk and butter, that have few or none

of the points usually considered indicative of excellence. Some farmers, indeed, seem to consider beauty or symmetry wholly incompatible with good milking qualities, and judging from their own herds, believe that the more ugly and uncouth the shape and appearance of their cows, the better they are.

Although in this case the breeder should regard dairy qualities as of the first importance, he should by no means be satisfied with these. His cows may give a large quantity of milk under circumstances which particularly favor them, and yet lack some essential requisites of profitable stock—such as constitution, and an ability to sustain themselves under disadvantages of food and climate. A weak constitutioned cow, when highly fed and well protected, frequently gives much milk, though it is apt to be deficient in richness; and notwithstanding she requires more and better food, and more care in sheltering, &c., than a hardy one, she will not last long, but will fail at an early age. Her weakness also exposes her more to the attacks of various diseases, which, as she has not the energy to resist them, are likely to prove fatal. Thus, excepting for use in the dairy for a short time, she is nearly worthless. Her progeny usually inherit her feebleness, requiring, if reared, very careful nursing, and in the end seldom prove profitable. Hence the breeder of dairy stock should endeavor to unite in his animals all the qualities on which their aggregate value depends.

The points of a perfect milch cow are—the head small; the muzzle fine; the face rather dished; and the space between the eyes wide. A wedge-shaped head should be avoided, as indicating weakness of constitution. The eye should be large, full, bright, and expressive of mildness and intelligence; the horns slender and of a waxy appearance; the ears thin; the neck small at its junction with the head, rather thin than fleshy, but pretty deep and full where it joins the body. The breast need not be so wide as in cattle designed chiefly for fattening but it should not be too narrow; the portion of the chest beneath the shoulder deep; the shoulders not coarse and projecting, but well lain in at the top; the back straight; the loin and hips wide; the rump long and the pelvis wide. The ribs not quite so round as is preferred for grazing stock, but still giving to the carcass a barrel-like form. The flanks should be deep and full; the hind quarters long, and heavy in proportion to the fore ones; the twist wide; the thighs thin; the tail slender, excepting at its upper end where it should be large; it should not rise much above the level of the rump; the legs rather short, and small and flat below the knee and hock. The skin should be of middling thickness, mellow, and elastic, and of a yellowish colour as indicative of richness of milk; the hair thickly set and soft. The udder should be capacious, spreading wide on the body, but not hanging low, without fleshiness, but having plenty of loose skin; the teats of medium size, regularly tapering from the upper end, widely separated from each other, and placed well on the forward part of the bag. The milk-veins large, springing out near the fore legs, and developed to their junction with the udder.

The points relative to the skin, udder, &c., though mentioned last, we consider most indicative of good milking qualities.

Some of the best cows for the production of butter, have been known to possess nearly all the above characteristics—they therefore approached nearly to perfection, for while they had all the requisites of dairy cows, they possessed those also which fitted them for other purposes and greatly enhanced their value. Their progeny if females, were such as were wanted for cows—if males, and by a bull of the right kind, they made the most valuable stock for work or fattening.

There is not only a great difference in the amount of cream and butter afforded by a given quantity of milk from different cows, but the quality of the butter produced by the same process, is likewise