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AND NORTHUMBERLAND, KENT, GLOUCESTER AND RESTIGOUCHE.

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Com. & Agr. Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes. [COMPRISED 13 VOLUMES.]

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Agricultural Journal.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal. AN AMERICAN'S VISIT TO ENGLAND.

Mr Henry Colman, a citizen of the State of New York, and a distinguished friend of agricultural improvement, has been lately making a pretty extensive tour through the British islands, for the purpose of personally inquiring into the condition of our husbandry and general rural management, with a view to carrying home information which may be useful to his countrymen. We are glad of the visit of such men as Mr Colman. Intelligent, candid, and with an eye only to what is publicly useful, he has produced a volume of reports not only interesting to Americans, but valuable to readers on this side of the Atlantic.

As comparatively few among us can have an opportunity of seeing this remarkable production, we purpose to afford it the publicity of our pages.

Mr Colman set sail for England in April 1843, and ever since his arrival he has been touring through the country. Although accustomed to tolerable good agriculture and orderly arrangements in the State of New York, which has now been generally settled for two centuries, he was greatly impressed with the tidy and advanced appearance of things in England, albeit there were some matters which required considerable improvement. The evidences of wealth and liberal outlay of money gave him most surprise. An American landing in Liverpool is at once struck with the amount of labour 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 likewise, 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 network of the strongest as well as most beautiful description, indicate a most profuse expenditure of labour, 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 decays 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 and 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 labour 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-of-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. The walls enclosing many of the noblemen'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 improvement 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 draining, especially under the new system of draining and subsoiling, are executed most thoroughly. The farm houses and farm buildings are of brick and stone, and all calculated to endure.

Going on in this strain, he alludes to the amount of private wealth realised by the indomitable industry of the people. 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 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 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—nor 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 human probability will soon have his patrimonial estate free of incumbrance. The incomes of some of the rich men in the country, amount to twenty, twenty-five, fifty, one hundred thousand, two hundred thousand pounds 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. 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 'trick upon travellers,' show the enormous masses of wealth which are here accumulated.

Accustomed to see rough enclosures dotted over with stumps, the tourist was delighted with the smooth lawns and trim level fields of England; but in the midst of this rural loveliness what dreary wastes and other signs of prodigality appeared. This surprised him very much; for the English have evidently at all times an eye to economical management; there being however a singular exception as respects reclamation of wastes, and the extirpation of needless tracts of bush, called preserves. There are occasionally immense tracts of unenclosed commons, and heaths, and moors, where there is no cultivation, where nothing grows, and in some cases little can ever be made to grow; or which, otherwise, are abandoned to the growth of furze or gorse for the protection of the game, and for the pleasures of the chase. These are called preserves, and are leased to sportsmen occasionally; or rather

the right to kill game upon them is leased, at a rate which we would deem a high rent even for purposes of cultivation.

An eminent agriculturalist has shown that in England and Scotland there are ten million acres in heath and moors, all susceptible of being brought into productive cultivation. These lands of course remain as they are by voluntary neglect or design. And we would add, a very wicked neglect or design—the means of raising food for human creatures being recklessly sacrificed in order to feed and shelter broods of worthless feathered animals.

The smallness of many of the fields and the wasteful manner in which they are encroached upon by broad hedges, ditches, and stripes of weeds, also somewhat astonishing this American. In parts of England the fields are generally small and of all shapes, often not exceeding four or five acres. It is reported of a farmer in Devonshire that he lately cultivated one hundred acres of wheat in fifty different fields. There must have been here a great waste of land and labour. The loss likewise from the fences being a shelter to weeds, and a harbour to vermin, could not be inconsiderable. The statement of an intelligent farmer on the highly improved estate of Lord Hatherton, whom I had the pleasure of visiting, is well worth recording. Speaking of the farm called the yew tree farm, he says, 'the turnip field is sixty-five acres; it was two years back, at the time I entered upon the farm, in eight enclosures. I have taken up 1914 yards of fence, and intending upon dividing it into three fields, it will take eight hundred yards of new fence. The field in which I was subsoiling is forty acres; it was in six enclosures. I took up 1246 yards of fence; if I divide this field, it will take three hundred yards of new fence. The land Lord Hatherton mentioned on my Deane farm was originally in twenty seven enclosures—nearly one acre. I took up 4427 yards of fence it will now lie in five fields, and will take 1017 yards of new fence. I cannot,' he adds, 'really say what land is gained by the different operations; but some of the fences were from three to four yards or more wide, that the plough never touched, my new fences are upon the level, without ditches. In the whole of the old fences there was a great number of ash trees, which are all stocked up, as a great part of the oak, only leaving a few for ornament and shelter. I think the greatest gain in land will be from getting rid of the trees.'

The necessity for getting rid of trees as well as hedged rows may be acknowledged, yet we would recommend every proper precaution in this species of clearance. Trees and hedges are required for shelter as well as for rural beauty; and we would emphatically condemn the short sighted and mean policy which inconsiderately divests the land of these its appropriate coverings.

Our American seems to entertain similar feelings on this subject. He speaks with great delight of the extensive parks which are to be seen in many parts of the country, and which constitute a truly magnificent feature in English scenery.

'These parks are the open grounds which surround the houses of the rich and noble in the country. By open, I do not mean entirely free from trees, because many of them are exceedingly well stocked with trees, sometimes standing single, at others in clumps, sometimes in belts, sometimes in rows, and squares, and circular plantations, and more often scattered as if they were thrown down broadcast. The ground under them is kept in grass, and depastured by cattle, sheep and deer, and affords often the richest herbage.

With some exceptions the plough is never suffered to disturb these grounds, and in the neighborhood of the house, which is generally placed in the centre of them, the portion which is separated from the rest, as I have observed, by an invisible or sunken fence just now described for the cultivation of ornamental trees and shrubs, is kept so closely and evenly shorn, that to walk upon it seems

more like walking upon velvet than grass. Nothing of the kind can be more beautiful, and I never before knew the force of that striking expression of the prince of poets, Milton, 'of walking on the smooth shaven lawn;' for it seems to be cut with a razor rather than with a scythe, and after a gentle shower, it really appears as if the field had had its face washed, and its hair combed with a fine tooth comb. It is brought to this perfection by being kept often mown; and I have stood by with perfect admiration to see a swarth mowed evenly and perfectly, where the grass to be cut was scarcely more than an inch in height.

These parks which I have described, abound, as observed, with trees of extraordinary size and age, they are not like the trees of our original forests; growing up to a great height, and on account of the crowded state of the neighbourhood, throwing out few lateral branches, but what they lose in height they gain in breadth, and if I may be excused for a hard word, in umbrageousness. I measured one in Lord Bagon's celebrated park in Staffordshire, and going round the outside of the branches within the droppings the circuit was a hundred yards.

In these ancient parks, oaks and beeches are the predominant trees, with occasionally chestnuts and ashes. In very many cases I saw the beauty and force of that first line in the pastorals of Virgil, where he addresses Tityrus 'sitting under the spreading shades of a beech tree.' These trees are looked upon with great veneration, in many cases they are numbered, in some a label is affixed to them, giving their age, sometimes a stone monument is erected saying when or by whom this forest or this clump was planted; and commonly some record is kept of them as a part of the family history. I respect this trait in the character of the English, and I sympathise with them in their veneration for old trees. They are the growth of ten of centuries and the monument of years gone by. They were the companions of our forefathers, who, it may be, were nourished by their fruit, and reposed under their shade. Perhaps they were planted by the very hands of those from whom we have descended, and whose far sighted and comprehensive beneficence embraced a distant posterity. How many revolutions and vicissitudes in the fortunes of men have they surveyed and survived! They have been pelted by many a storm, the hoarse and swift wind has often howled and whistled among their branches; the lightning and tempest have many a time bent their branches or scathed their trunks—but they, like the good and truly great in seasons of trial, have stood firm and retained their integrity. They have seen one generation of men treading upon the heels of another, and rapidly passing away; wars have burst forth in volcanic explosions, and have gone out; revolutions have made their changes, and the wheel again returned to its starting point; governments and princes have flourished and faded, and the current of human destiny has flowed at their roots, bearing onwards to the traveller's bourne one family and one people after another—but they still stand, green in their old age, as the mute yet eloquent historians of departed years. Why should we not look upon them with reverence? I cannot quite enter into the enthusiasm of an excellent friend, who used to say that the cutting down of an old tree ought to be made a capital punishment at law; yet I deem it most sacrilegious to destroy them, excepting when necessity demands it; and I would always advise that an old tree, standing in a conspicuous station either for use or ornament, should be at least once more wintered and summered before the sentence of death which may be passed upon it is carried into execution. The trees in the park of the palace of Hampton Court are many of them—the horse chestnut and the lime—of great age and eminent beauty; several straight lines of them forming for a long distance the approach of the pal-