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

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ADDRESS

Delivered before the Greene County Agricultural Society, by the Hon. ZADOCK PRATT, President.

Gentlemen—You have chosen for your president one who does not boast the graces of eloquence, and you cannot, and do not expect from him, on this occasion, a display of fine words and happy fancies; but rather a plain statement of true and practical ideas. You are working men, and you have chosen a working man, and it is on this account that your choice confers honour upon me. It was in Congress, where my strength has always been given to the protection and advancement of American labour, that I heard of this new evidence of your kindness and confidence; and I thank you for it, and for thus affording me another opportunity, and a more honorable place than the halls of legislation, to express my highest sense of the dignity of those occupations, the interest of which, this society is so happily designed to promote. I need not say to those who know me, that through life I have practised and encouraged industry, and exerted my influence in every sphere (according to my ability,) in promoting the true welfare of my fellow men. I have acted upon the principle, and so have you, that it is not mere physical or mental structure that makes the man, in the best sense of the word, but the mode of life. It is not to have a head—a heart—an arm—a human body and soul, that makes one worthy of so noble a name; but to give the wisdom of that head—the strength of that arm—the combined energy of all the powers to constant and useful industry. The hard working farmers and mechanics of our country are its glory and strength; their labors have produced wealth; their honesty, their patriotism, and its faithfulness to the institutions of liberty, have given it its standing among nations, and in times of danger, their strong arms and firm hearts are its safeguard. He is not the lord of the soil who calls so many acres his own, yet has no power to use them, but he, rather, who plows and sows, and reaps and scatters abroad over the country, the products of the glorious harvest, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. He is not master over earth's treasures who has the bare title to a mine; but rather he whose skill and industry raises the ore, reduces the metal, moulds it into countless shapes of usefulness, and sets to work the gigantic engine with its thousand hands. Farmers and mechanics if faithful to their duties, are men, in the full meaning of the word—useful men; men that the world cannot do without. Their occupations develop all the faculties, and produce "sound minds in sound bodies;" they accustom men to rely on their own strength, to love labor, and to feel that independence of other men, and that contempt for little difficulties which are the foundation of true greatness of mind.

These, fellow working men, are the occupations, this is the land,—ours are the institutions, and our fathers the stock which have produced the noblest race now living; and shall, if we value the use of our privilege aright, yet exhibit human nature in its highest standard of perfection. We have resources and advantages possessed by no other nation; and a people better fitted than any other to develop these resources and improve those advantages. We need little aid from abroad, for we have everything at home; we need little teaching from strangers, for we know best what is best for ourselves. According to my observation, farmers are too easily persuaded to look to other states and countries for the means of increasing the products of their fields, and improving their flocks and herds; we are not in England, nor at the north, nor at the south; and neither English, northern, or southern improvements are what we want. We want improvements of our own, suited to our

own wants and position, such as none can make for us as well as we can make them for ourselves. Is it not better, as a general principle, both as to animals and vegetables, to choose and improve the best of such as are already adapted to our climate and soil, than to be shifting and changing, in the vain hope of arriving, by some short cut at such results as God intended we should accomplish only by close attention and the sweat of our brows?

Of all the animals created for the use of man, none has been the subject of so much observation and esteem as the horse. In their native wilds, nature forms them into herds and groups, and gives them in command of the strongest and fleetest; and by this and other wise arrangements, of which only God is capable, guards the species against general degeneracy. The same kind care has been shown in special provision for the security of every race of animals; but when this security is taken away, and they are brought under the dominion and management of man, the most skillful attention is required in changing the general character of the species, and producing and improving distinct breeds, each adapted to its own specific purpose. It is not every breed that is suited to every locality; for climate, and the face and food of different countries, will modify the shapes and qualities, not only of the domestic animals, but of the human species; the raw-boned, industrious, hardy, and temperate man of the north becomes enervated and indolent, both in the mental and physical constitution and energies, in tropical latitudes, where he reposes in the lap of luxury, enjoying without exertion, the abundance which nature lavishes around him.

The horse, best fitted to travel in the sun and sands of the south, is the descendant of the small, hard-boned, light-footed Arabian, with his high courage and silken coat; while grain growing Pennsylvania and Ohio, with their cumbersome waggons, prefer to use a heavy corn fed breed, that will throw a greater weight upon the collar. The north again is better served by more compact and active race of middle size, endowed with much more strength in proportion to their weight, and greater powers of endurance; who bravely champ the bit, and nobly strain to the load with lion-like vigor; rejoicing at toil and answering to the driver's voice with proud step and martial air, as if it was the trumpet calling them to battle. Thus the wants and peculiarities,—the soil, climate, and uses of each district—require and produce that peculiar breed which is best suited to itself. What better stock do we need than such as can be bred from the best of those we already have. The teams of Z. Pratt & Co., composed of a single span, (natives of our own region,) are in the habit of drawing from Catskill over the mountains to Prattsville and back, loads of hides and leather of from thirty to fifty and even sixty hundred weight, each waggon or sleigh not included, the distance being thirty seven miles, and requiring three days to go and come.

The quantity thus transported within the year, is nearly two and a half millions of pounds, and the expenses the last season, including all risks and charges, was only thirteen cents a hundred. During twenty years of this service, which I make bold to assert has not been equalled by horses of any other district or country on the globe, not a horse has been injured, in the hands of a careful driver, and to the honour of the county be it said that we have never lost a hide or side of leather, of the million and one half thus transported.

I am aware that there are those, and among them, my friend Mr. Skinner, the experienced editor of the Farmer's Library, who have strongly recommended mules for slow and constant work; on the grounds of much longer life—greater exemption from accident and disease, and more economy in feeding; but experience, the best of teachers, seems to show that the mule and the slave are destined to work together in the

sunny south—both are uncongenial to us and our latitude.

The horse which we have is just the kind that we need; and if we pay proper attention, in breeding, to the selection of both sire and dam, we shall soon have, of our own raising, a class of animals that for our purposes cannot be excelled; already, indeed, two of the most celebrated trotters the country ever saw, have been raised in our immediate neighbourhood. We do not want such horses as roam half wild, over the pampas of South America; they are small, light, active, always on the gallop, and admirably fitted to chase the ostrich over the sand, or the ox through the tangled grass; but when put to severe tests, they are found wanting in strength power of enduring fatigue, and even fleetness. Neither do we want the English dray horse, which represents the other extreme; he is large and strong, like the ox, and like him, too sluggish, heavy, and unwieldy.

The requisite spirits and vigor are not to be looked for in overgrown size and fatness in the horse, any more than in the man—animation that ensures perseverance—the muscle that gives activity, and that ardour and ambition which never permits them to look back and balk, are what is wanting in both.

What I have said as to horses being improved on the foundation of our native stock, applies with equal force to cattle.

In every settlement, a stock of good cattle is of the highest importance; and every sagacious farmer will learn to choose for breeders, such as promise best for his particular object, whether it be butter, cheese, or labor; and he should study this subject with a deep feeling of scientific interest, as well as for the sake of gain. Let his first care be to put aside the very best progeny of his stock, and never permit his dearest friend to cast a wistful eye on him—nor be tempted by any price, to sacrifice them to the butcher's knife. If he has a favourite cow of the real fill pail breed, let him reserve and turn out that one of her calves that most resembles herself, before it grows old enough to be sold to the butcher, and always guard it with special care.

We read of premiums being given to large imported cows that have yielded some thirty quarts a day; but every dairy woman will tell you that it is not the cow that gives the largest quantity at a milking, that makes the best one in a long run. A better one still, is she that keeps on through the year, giving milk for your dairy, and cream for your table, in winter as well as summer, let the feed be short or long. Run fast, is a good name, but hold fast is a better one.

In the Agricultural Journals, I have read an account of a middle size country cow; I refer to the celebrated Oak's cow, bought out of a drove in Massachusetts, for a mere trifle. Her history illustrates two things worthy of note. First, that we can obtain from the best of our old breed; and secondly, how much depends on good feeding; and just as it was with the Oak's cow, so will every man find it with his farm. If he won't feed his farm, and that often and well, he need not expect it long to feed him. Always taking out of the meal tub, and never putting in, will soon come to the bottom, as poor Richard says. But to return to the Oak's cow, that did so much honor to the name of Caled Oaks; it is stated on the most unquestionable authority, such as satisfied the Massachusetts Agricultural Society, that in the first year, with extraordinary keep, she made but 180 pounds of butter;—the next year she had twelve bushels of corn meal and then gave 300 pounds of butter, the next 36 bushels, and she gave more than 400 pounds; the next year she had a bushel of meal a week, and all her own milk skimmed, and then she gave from the 5th of April to the 25th September, the day of the show, 485 pounds, besides suckling her calf for five weeks. She was exhibited, and deservedly, took the premium on the last

mentioned day; and will carry down her owner's name with credit, to posterity, as long as oaks grow.

After all, my friends, in respect to cattle, the true question is, not what breed can be made the heaviest if stuffed with food, as in some countries they stuff geese and turkeys, until no more can be crammed down their throats; but what breed, according to our locality and objects, will do the most work, or yield the greatest weight of butter, milk, cheese, or beef, as the case may be, from the food at our command. In old, mountainous districts, says a writer of high authority, it is necessary to restrain, within certain limits, the ambition of having highly improved stock. In such circumstances, the grand point is to have a hardy race, not over nice in its food, which consists through a considerable portion of the year, of but short and coarse herbage. The best milch cow, generally, as every good dairy woman will tell you, is the one that, while she is at the pail, turns everything into milk, and is least disposed to be or to look fat.

The same consideration, that apply to breeding domestic animals, apply also to vegetables and grain. We cannot contradict nature, but we can co-operate with her, and working in her methods, and in conformity to her laws, produce all the results that the Creator ever designed to put within our reach. A man passing a few years ago, by a field of ripe wheat on Long Island, was struck by the rich appearance of two or three heads which grew near the road, and hung down as if the grain was of great weight. He stopped and plucked those heads, and sowed them the next season in a place by themselves, and so cultivated them year after year till they had increased to over a hundred bushels, that for colour, weight uniform plumpness of the kernels, are, perhaps, not surpassed in the country: at least, they are expected to take the premium on the approaching fair of the American Institute. This shows what we should do if we wish to carry out nature's plans, and finish what she had begun. The very best specimens should be chosen from those that have been grown on our own, or on a neighbouring farm, instead of sending to a distance for such as when we get them, will be forced, by the irreversible laws of soil and climate, to change their character, and adapt themselves to their new locality. The high scented Cuba tobacco loses its flavour on being transplanted to other countries. So the eight rowed Dutton corn of the north refuses to exchange localities with the gourd seed of James's river. Wheat, too, changes its character, and cannot be transferred from one climate to another, without losing its original color and other characteristics. As well might you attempt to transplant the beautiful hemlock of your mountains, where the God of nature placed them, to regions designed for the live oak and the olive, as to neglect the peculiar varieties of grain that our own region produces in perfection, and cultivate those whose distinctive properties are the result of a different soil and climate.

Therefore let me urge upon you to hold on upon what you have proved to be good. Choose always the best of its kind in the animal and vegetable departments, and depend on your own clear heads and strong arms for the rest. You are in the very middle regions between the extreme rigors of the north and the enervating heat of the south—in the finest climate that the sun ever shone upon; and of all positions, the one best adapted to develop the human faculties and to bring forth the noblest display of mental and physical energy, and, in a word, to grow the whole man. Rely then on yourselves to do your own work, and to make your own laws; to improve your own animals and agricultural products; and to pursue, on all subjects, those investigations, and make those discoveries and arrangements, which your own interest require. Bring up your children to respect the character and to love the labors of the farmer and the mechanic, for on them at last, as I