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By M. MAC LEAN.

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### AGRICULTURAL.

THE ORATION ON THE FOURTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE, delivered by Rev. John OVERTON CHURCH, at the Broadway Tabernacle, October, 1841.

[Concluded from our last.]

It is one of the happiest signs of the times, that many men of education and wealth are turning their attention to husbandry; they are making a wise choice for their own happiness and that of others. Let me quote from Lord Stanley, at Liverpool, in relation to the magnitude and vastness of agriculture, as affording room for investment. Speaking of draining, "I am aware," he says, "that the process of draining is an expensive one, which requires an outlay of capital which, if we were to take the total of even a single county in England, would strike every man as something marvellous and almost appalling; and yet I am satisfied of this, that while no landlord could expect a tenant to engage in operations so extensive without his concurrence and assistance, and without his incurring the principal burden of the original outlay, I am firmly persuaded of this, that there is no bank in the whole country, no commercial speculation, no investment, so safe, so sure, so profitable, as that in which even borrowed capital may be engaged, by investing it under the ground of your own soil."

I should not be surprised if here, as in England, farming came to be a fashionable pursuit, and almost every man here may afford to be in the fashion. We may get our small farms of fifty, eighty and one hundred acres, and almost every man may enjoy his homestead; nor need we for this go out into the wilderness. We can find good land, at cheap prices, almost at our very doors. The opening of that portion of New York and Erie Railroad which is completed, placed all the facilities of a farm in the reach of every man who covets them. I wish I could persuade you all to go look at the country through which the route of that road is laid. You would then be satisfied that there are the same happy miracles of improvement to be accomplished in the southern tier of counties, which have blessed and civilized our state on the line of the Erie Canal. How strange that any apathy should exist among us in reference to this vast important work which brings all the produce of the west to our doors at all seasons—gives us access to New Orleans in nine days—offers us a western business not only in spring and autumn, but during the whole year. I am sure that in ten years the line of that road will exhibit an appearance of culture, comfort and opulence, worthy of the great highway to the commercial emporium of our country.

I wish I could see in all our farmers a disposition to magnify their calling; but I have been grieved in many a farm house, to listen to lamentations over what they term their "hard lot." I have heard the residents upon a noble farm, all paid for, talk about drudgery, and never having their work done, and few or no opportunities for the children; and I have especially been sorry to hear the females lament over the hard fate of some promising youth of seventeen or eighteen, when remarkably filling up his duties, and training himself for extensive usefulness and influence. They have made comparison between his situation, coarsely clad and working hard, and coming in fatigued, with some cousin at college, or young man who clerked in a city store, till at length the boy has become dissatisfied, and begged off from his true happiness. I am conversant with no truer scenes of enjoyment than I have witnessed in American farm houses, and even log cabins, where the father under the influence of enlightened Christianity and sound views of life, has gone with his family, as the world has termed it, into the woods. The land is his own, and he has every inducement to improve it; he finds a healthy employment for himself and family, and is never at a loss for materials to occupy his mind. I do not think the physician has more occasion for research than the farmer; the proper food of vegetables and animals will alone constitute a lasting field of investigation. The daily journal of a farmer is a source of much interest to himself and others. The record of his labors, the expressions of his hopes, the nature of his fears, the opinions of his neighbors, the results of his experiments, the

entire sum total of his operations, will prove a deep source of pleasure, to any thinking man. If the establishment of agricultural societies, and the cattle shows of our country, should have the effect of stimulating one farmer in every town to manage his land and stock upon the best principles of husbandry, there would be a wonderful and speedy alteration in the products of the earth, because comparison would force itself upon his friends and neighbors; and his example would be certainly beneficial, for prejudice itself will give way to profit.

I know an individual who, at a great expense of money and travel, carried, hundreds of miles, a pair of imported Berkshires; his fellow farmers around were large raisers of pork, and their swine were, without exception, of the genuine land pike and a ligator breed, all leg and snout; well, they crowded to see the new pigs, admired their shape, did not like their color, did not think they were "so great, after all," and thought that one hundred dollars invested in two pigs was "quite ridiculous." The result, however, was that the farmers were soon willing to help pay for the original outlay, for they quickly became dissatisfied with their own rail like breed; and I have since seen, at the piggery of a flour mill two miles off, more than fifty half blooded Berkshires, and all though the township they are getting a better article for pork and hams.

The prejudices of the farmers to new ways, fresh breeds, and book farming, are all destined to give way. I am sure that a remark which that great man, De Witt Clinton, made in 1825, in relation to American invention, that we were "a people that had no stand still in us," is perfectly applicable to us as agriculturalists. Our farmers have eyes, they can all see, and they will learn. I am acquainted with a vicinity where a root crop had never been raised as a principal resource for cattle. An experiment in 1838, has now twenty rivals, all at first slow to believe, but quick to follow; and all their working cattle this winter will have cause for thanksgiving. In that town a man has converted a soil, marred by the salts of iron, into valuable ground, by the free use of lime; a course to which he was advised by a neighbor who took the Cultivator. And here let me say, that in 1820, on a lost western journey, I one day remarked to my friend, that I thought I could give a pretty shrewd guess, from observation as we went along, as to the fact whether the occupants of the farms took any agricultural papers; in thirteen trials I made but one wrong guess. It is important that the doings of this society, good agricultural reports, books and periodicals, be circulated among the farmers; because improvements and the alterations of established customs and habits are very slowly admitted, and the farmer oftentimes, from his retired position, unless he is addicted to reading, is likely to acquire very little knowledge of his art, but that which is traditional and peculiar to his vicinity. We should do much for our state, if we could put forth a periodical into every farm house; one that would keep pace with the times, and afford the earliest notice of every important invention or discovery in rural life. I never take up the Ploughboy, the New York Farmer, and especially the Cultivator, without an earnest wish that such admirable pages of wisdom and experience, and plain, roundabout common sense, could be scattered in every farmhouse in America, and its volume placed in every city habitation. I do not know a more amusing or instructive set of volumes than Buel's Cultivator. I almost envy that great good man his claims upon national gratitude.

I wish I could induce the father of every family to give this work a place in his house at Christmas, for the benefit of his children; the practical information which they would gain from it, and their acquaintance with things of rural life, would richly repay the expenditure, and this knowledge would all come into useful play. I know a youth, the son of a president of a city bank, a boy of eighteen, who gravely asked how long it took to bring a crop of wheat and barley perfection, and what animals were called neat cattle, and yet this lad was deemed well educated and accomplished, in the circle in which he moved.

We all know how much is done by oral instruction; how often men are more affected by what they hear than what they read; and this has induced me to wish

\*I am happy to state that Mr. A. B. Allen has commenced another periodical devoted to agriculture. It is published in New York, and is called "The American Farmer's Magazine," a monthly, at two dollars a year. No writer in our country brings more thorough practical skill and a larger share of science to the subject than Mr. Allen. His magazine will, I doubt not, be a standard authority. New York city ought to furnish it with a large number of subscribers. Our merchants depend so much upon the productions of the soil, that their very business interests demand that they should be acquainted with the farming interests of the State and country, and Mr. Allen will give such statistics as are adapted to their use.

that suitable, and of course, well qualified men, could go through every portion of our state, and address the population of every vicinity on the great subject of the improvements in husbandry, and urge the cultivators of the soil to a generous rivalry. The man who went out upon this task should not go forth as the proud scholar, or the refined gentleman, but as a plain, honest-hearted citizen, who had an important subject to talk about, and valuable information to diffuse.

I believe that such an agency would be productive of the happiest results. It would do much to overcome prejudice; the individual would drop the seed of suggestion upon much good ground; he would acquire immense practical information. There are a hundred things which a wise man could do upon such a tour that we can hardly hope to effect by our publications. Improvements in fencing, especially in building, could be pointed out and explained; the abatement and removal of absolute nuisances could be judiciously hinted at and enforced in good natured conversation, and the cultivation of fruit recommended. I know a gentleman who prides himself on having induced several farmers to get up wood piles, where formerly daily fuel was only to be obtained by daily prayer and coaxing and scolding, on the part of all the women, to all the men in the establishment.

It is to be deplored, that in many parts of the country the farm-houses makes so little pretension to external beauty, and that it is destitute of those attractions which are always at the command of the occupant.

How many abodes do we know that are almost without gardens, and quite without flowers. It is the part of wisdom to make our habitations the home of as many joys and pleasures as possible, and there ought to be a thousand sweet attractions in and around the sacred spot we call our homes.

This feeling is perfectly philosophical. The fragrance of the rose that is plucked at the door of the cottage, is sweeter in odour to the poor man, who has assiduously reared it there amid difficulties and discouragements, than if it were culled from the "parterre" of the palace; and the root which he has dug from his own little garden is more grateful to his palate than if it were the purchased product of unknown hands; and this argument, if it be true when applied to individuals, is equally valid on the broad principle of nations.

O, we greatly need something more of the sweet and beautiful about our homes and cottages, that shall make childhood, youth and age all cry out "there is no place like home." In your summer rambles away from the hot city, you go to the farm houses of this and other states; now just think how differently your memory calls up various houses at which you have sojourned. You can think of spots like paradise, and there are others that you recollect, and there are only the capabilities for improvement and fine opportunities for the hands of industry and good taste. How well we recall to mind the pretty white cottage, the deep green blinds, the painted trellis, the climbing shrub, the neat garden fence, the sweetly scented flowers, the entire air of comfort, and how we long to enjoy the bliss of quietness and repose.

I believe a garden spot exerts a salutary influence, not only in early life, but in the advanced periods of human existence. "O, how much sweeter is it to me," said Madame De Genlis, "to recall to my mind the walks and sports of my childhood, than the pomp and splendor of the palaces I have since inhabited. All these courts, once so splendid and brilliant, are now faded; the projects which were then built with so much confidence are become chimeras. The impenetrable future has cheated alike the security of princes and the ambition of courtiers. Versailles is drooping into ruins. I should look in vain for the vestiges of the feeble grandeur I once admired; but I should find the banks of the Loire as smiling as ever, the meadows of St. Aubyn as full of violets and lilies of the valley, and its trees loftier and fairer. There are no vicissitudes for the eternal beauties of nature; and while, amid blood-stained revolutions, palaces, columns, statues disappear, the simple flowers of nature, regardless of the storm, grow into beauty, and multiply for ever."

Hannah More felicitated herself through life on her attachment to the garden, and declared to an American friend, that in her eighty-third year the love of flowers was the only natural passion left to her which had lost none of its force.

I am unhappy when I see a farm without a garden, and almost so in a house without flowers. I believe all who possess sensibility are fond of plants, and I also believe that at some period or other of life the prediction will break out. I think nature indicates the garden as man's proper place; for the infant can hardly walk before he is found planting a flower. Every boy loves a garden—a garden of his own; every sailor talks about his garden.

us rare ones. Napoleon and Siddons, Washington and Jefferson, in their retirement from life's busy scenes, are found in the garden.

As far as I have noticed, the greatest admirers and most passionate cultivators of flowers are females and manufacturers. I was much pleased at the exhibition in New Haven last week to observe that the choicest fruits and flowers came from the care of the ladies; and the manufacturing classes in England and Scotland, especially in Staffordshire and Lancashire, and vicinity of Paisley, are enthusiastic florists and derive much enjoyment from their gardening societies; they regard gardening as a relaxation. It is not undeserving of a notice on this occasion, that a mechanic who labors daily in our city, has a garden in Williamsburgh, where he can show a finer collection of the flowers than is possessed by most rich men, and his dahlias are now adorning our agricultural room at the Garden.

Flowers, of all created things are the most innocently simple, and most superbly complex—playthings for childhood, ornaments of the grave, and companions of the cold corpse! Flowers, beloved by the wandering idiot, and studied by the deep thinking man of science! Flowers, that unceasingly expand to heaven their grateful, and to man their cheerful looks—partners of human joy, soothers of human sorrow; fit emblem of the victor's triumph, of the young bride's blushes; welcome to the crowded halls, and graceful upon solitary graves. Flowers are, in the volume of nature, what the expression "God is love" is in revelation. What a desolate place would be a world without a flower! It would be a face without a smile, a feast without a welcome. Are not flowers the stars of the earth? Are not stars the flowers of heaven? One cannot look closely at the structure of a flower without loving it. They are the emblems and manifestations of God's love to the creation; and they are the means and the ministrations of man's love to his fellow creatures, for they first awaken in his mind a sense of the beautiful and good. The very utility of flowers is their excellence and great beauty, for they lead us to thoughts of generosity and moral beauty, detached from and superior to selfishness: so that they are pretty lessons in nature's books of instructions, teaching man that he liveth not by bread alone, but that he hath another than animal life."

I think it will appear to all who have visited our best herds and seen the state of the English cattle shows, that the time has arrived when we should breed for ourselves; and, with our climate in New York, Ohio, Michigan, and Kentucky, so favorable for our purpose, and perhaps even for exportation, I know men who think we may not have to wait one hundred years to repay favors to our friends in England. Only let us keep our high blood pure, and bring up judicious selections to the best pure blood bulls, and breed steadily toward the Durham, and I expect we shall have cattle that will reflect as much credit upon their breeders as the milk pots of Col. Jaques, or the short horns or alloys of Collings. One thing I am quite satisfied of, and that is, that we have no further need of extensive importation in short horns. I think their value cannot well be overated for milking qualities or for beef. If any are sceptical on the latter point, I beg their particular attention to a pair of steers which Mr. Townsend will exhibit next week for competition, and which weigh 2,615 lbs. each.\*

In relation to the cattle, I have hardly time to say much; nor perhaps is this the best place, though something may be expected. It is well known, that for a few years past much attention has been directed to this subject, and very heavy investments have been made in the improved breeds. The best herds of England have been inspected; and we have now in New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Michigan, and Kentucky, some of the choicest animals that have ever been reared. Great praise is due to such men as Van Rensselaer, Prentiss, Corning, Lotch, Lossing, Bemont, Pope, Giddings, Whitney, Townsend, Poole, Renwick, and Clay, who, at great expense, have brought among us the best blood of England.

I trust that our farmers will avoid the grievous error of preferring a breed whose services may be obtained cheaply, rather than selecting an animal of the highest merit. This, indeed, is to be "penny wise and pound foolish."

I yesterday had the pleasure to accompany Mr. A. B. Allen, of Buffalo, who has just returned from an agricultural tour in England, on board the packet ship Hendrick Hudson, from London, for the purpose of inspecting the superior stock selected by him for himself and his friends. Several large previous importations had arrived by the packet ships Mediator and Wellington. This consists of South Down sheep, the great York and Kennilworth breeds of pigs, shepherd dogs, the large Dorking fowls, which are dis-

\*These noble animals afterwards received the silver cup at the Fair. They are returned to New Haven, and will probably have an addition of 500 lbs. to their individual weight when they are brought to the market.

cussed like Goliath by having an additional toe, English pheasants, &c. Of cattle, Mr. Allen has made no importation, principally on account of the disease which is at present prevailing all England, and he was fearful of importing that with them, to the injury of our present stock. He however concurs with me in the opinion, that New York, Ohio, and Kentucky, with the exception of one herd, may even now challenge all England in the breed of short horns; and this is the judgment, after having attended the Royal Agricultural Society's Exhibit on at Liverpool, and the still finer one of Durhams, long-wooled sheep, and horses, at Hull, Yorkshire, and examining the celebrated herds of Earl Spencer, Mr. Bates, and other eminent breeders. Mr. Allen thinks very favorably of Herefords, but more so of some very large and improved South Devons. The celebrated Ayrshires he greatly admires; but for the most delicate knife, and for a source of real profit to the grazier, he thinks highly of the Scotch highlanders, as now raised by a few choice breeders. These animals are of but medium size; they are occasionally of dun color, more commonly black, without horns, and very hardy and thrifty. There can be no doubt that they would suit the climate of New England.

If any of you, gentlemen, wish to investigate the history of the improved breed of Durhams, I would advise you to consult "Cully on Live Stock," a work, I have reason to believe, quite as much to be depended on as the more recent treatise of the Rev. Henry Berry. It may not be amiss to say, that we can trace back the short horns for nearly two hundred years. Sir H. Smythson then used to weigh out food to his cattle, and his notes upon his herd, as to the eye, horns, hoof, hide, all indicate the identity of this breed. It is an interesting fact, and probably known to very few, that while Lord Percy was engaged in this country during the Revolution, his steward sent the celebrated herd, one by one, to the shambles. At the return of Lord Percy he found the butcher carrying off the very last cow, which he rescued from the knife, and thus preserved the breed.

Mr. Allen thinks that in horses we are far superior to England. There is nothing there equal to our American trotters. Their cart horses carry more flesh, but have not the muscle of our heavy Pennsylvania horses; nor are they as enduring in their work, or as strong at a pull, and are much coarser in their conformation, with long hair below the knee, and heavy fetlocks, that gather mud, give them disease, and hinder quick movement. Even our racers, he thinks, would beat England as weight carriers, at three or four mile heats, but does not know, owing to their very fine training, and the soft springing turf on the course, but the English horse might be quicker a few seconds for a mile heat; but generally, that ours have the most bottom or endurance, he has not a doubt. He thinks our climate greatly superior to that of England for breeding these noble animals; and if we only pay close attention to this department of husbandry, we may become large exporters, especially of roadsters. Our horses are already much talked about and enquired after abroad; and Mr. Allen tells me he rode after some quite ordinary American horses that had been taken to England, which were highly prized, beating everything upon the road with perfect ease.

The South Downs which I saw yesterday I hardly know how to speak of; they must be seen to be understood. You have often heard travellers' stories about English snuff; well, let the incredulous go and look at these importations. Three of them are brought out by Mr. Allen for the honorable Mr. Stevenson, late Minister at St. James; three for Bishop Meade, of Virginia; five for Mr. Rotch, of Butternuts, Otsego county, N. Y.—Mr. Stevenson has been abroad six years, and after visiting all the flocks of note, prefers the South Downs to all others; and Dr. Meade and Mr. Allen concur fully in this opinion. I have heard it doubted whether the South Downs are adapted to our hard northern climate; to this I would say, that they have been found to endure a Scotch winter even better than the Cheviots, at an elevation of two thousand feet above the sea.

These sheep were selected from the celebrated stock of Jonas Webb, Esq., of Babraham, Cambridge, who carried off all the prizes this year at the show of the Royal Agricultural Society. These animals are of great size for Downs, of the most finished form, of a fleece about equal, I think, to three quarters blood Merino, and as thick and close as felt.—The bucks will shear from ten to eleven and a half pounds per annum, and are of great weight; those of Bishop Meade and Mr. Stevenson are of two hundred and forty-eight and two hundred and fifty-four pounds, though only eighteen months old, while that of Mr. Rotch, a lamb of six months, is one hundred and fifty-two pounds. Mr. Webb killed a wether last Christmas which weighed, dressed, with the head on, two hundred. The sire of Mr. Rotch's buck, as the best yearling in all England, took the prize of thirty Sovereigns from the Royal Agricultural Society at Liverpool, and is now merely let to the Duke of Newcastle for the present season at one hundred

sovereigns! The shepherd's dog I think remarkably beautiful; he is of a medium size, of shining black color, with long and glossy hair. The breed is so good and true, that they break themselves in, to guard and drive sheep on the extensive ranges of hill and dale, without any training. He is almost as active as the greyhound, and very docile and intelligent. The introduction of dogs into agriculture would be of great service, and especially in driving flocks to city markets. The Dorking fowls are of immense size, often weighing eight pounds dressed, and all sportsmen know the beauty of the English cock pheasant. I am happy to inform you that my friend Mr. Allen will soon favor the public with an article upon the history and pedigree of South Downs, with a series of engravings.

In relation to pigs, it is well known that Mr. Allen has long been one of the most extensive and successful breeders; his learned article, which appeared in Albany, has been reprinted in London, and excites much attention. To examine the breeds of England was one great object of his tour, and in the investigation of this matter he travelled many hundreds of miles.

He still pronounces the Berkshire the best, combining the finest qualities, and, he thinks, yielding a sufficient size. He saw the best Chinese, the wild boar, the German boar, and all the crosses which have been procured.

Our good friends in Kentucky, who "go the whole hog," regard the Berkshires as only approximations to bacon excellence, and have always been asking northern breeders to furnish them length, length. Well, I think Mr. Allen will satisfy them now, he has a breed which he can easily take to weigh fourteen hundred; he saw one exhibited in England, and, strange as it may sound, under the patronage of Queen Victoria, over his head. From the tip of nose, over his head, to the tail, nine feet nine inches; from the tip of nose, along the side, to the end of the rump, seven feet nine inches; in height, four feet, girl round the breast seven feet seven inches. This is the stock from which Mr. Allen has shown me specimens.

The details of the Agricultural Society at Liverpool afford the most interesting proof of the fresh impetus which the cause of improved husbandry has received. The best men in England, in all walks of life, are becoming interested. Noblemen may be seen in their gaiters and nailed shoes, cuffs turned up, examining cattle and guiding ploughs. Young Noblemen, leaving their habits of dissipation, are joining the masses of the people, doing what they can to advance the true interests of the land.

It is gratifying to know that Mr. Allen has received the kindest attention from the gentlemen who are engaged in agriculture, and has been treated with the greatest confidence; and it is to be hoped that the results of his tour may be speedily laid before the public.

I close by indulging myself and gratifying my audience by quoting a passage from a work which I strongly commend you to purchase. Read it, read it again; it will do the young man more good than he will get from any half dozen novels that have been published this year; it is *Horrit's Rural Life in England*; I have placed it, by recommendation, in the hands of several friends, and they have all been delighted with the work.

"There is no class of men, if times are but tolerably good, that enjoy themselves so highly as farmers; they are little kings. Their concerns are not huddled up into a corner, as those of the town tradesman are. In town, many a man who turns thousands per week is hemmed in close by buildings, and cut no figure at all. A narrow shop, a contracted warehouse, without an inch of room to turn him on any hand, without a yard, stable, or outhouse of any description, perhaps hoisted aloft, up three or four pairs of dirty stairs, is all the room that the wealthy tradesman can often bless himself with, and there day after day, month after month, year after year, he is to be found, like a bat in the hole of a wall, or a toad in the heart of a stone or of an oak tree. Spring, and summer, and autumn go round; sunshine and flowers spread over the world; the sweetest breezes blow, the sweetest waters murmur along the vales, but they are all lost upon him; he is the doleful prisoner of Mammon, and so he lives and dies. The farmer would not take the wealth of the world on such terms. His concerns, however small, spread themselves out in a pleasant amplitude both to his eye and heart. His house stands in its own spacious solitude; his offices and outhouses stand round extensively, without any stobbers and limiting contraction; his acres stretch over hill and dale; there his flocks and herds are feeding; there his laborers are toiling—he is king and sole commander there. He lives among the purest air and the most delicious quiet. Often, when I see those healthy, hardy, full grown sons of the soil going out of town, I envy them the freshness and the repose of the spots to which they are going. Ample, old-fashioned kitchens, with their chimney corners of the true, projecting, beamed and seated construction, still remaining; blazing fires in winter,