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RURAL ECONOMY.

May your rich soil, Eschert, nature's better blessings pour On every land.

From the American Farmer.

Relative Cheapness of Improved and Unimproved Land.

Essay read by Mr. Fitzhugh before the Agricultural Club of the 11th District of Baltimore County.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CLUB: I propose in the following essay to offer some observations on the proper application of capital to agriculture; but as the whole subject would occupy greater limits than I can afford, and is of too much importance to be treated cursorily, I shall confine myself chiefly to maintaining a single proposition of a very practical character; it is this—that in the present condition of the land market improved farms are much cheaper, and offer better inducements to investment than unimproved and low priced lands. In other words, that at present prices, improvements will not bring their cost.

It is not meant by this that improvers will not be remunerated simply for their improvements; on the contrary, a man owning poor land, which he cannot, or will not, sell, has only to choose between improvement and starvation. Still, when capital is seeking investment, it is of great importance to know that improvements can be bought at a much smaller cost than they can be affected. That this is the case, is perfectly demonstrable; and the reason, in part, is, that, as agricultural science is in its infancy, and the improvement of the soil requires more skill than any other branch of agriculture, most improvers have to feel their way in the dark, and often, in consequence, lose both time and money. From hence it occurs, that improvements are generally not worth their cost, since you will rarely meet with an improver who would readily admit that many of his processes have been too costly, and too laborious. Most especially, then, when the adventurer is without agricultural skill, it will be advisable for him to invest in improved land, since whatever may be the fate of my other proposition, I think no one will dispute that half the skill will manage an improved farm that it requires to improve it first and manage it afterward.

There seems to me no subject on which men more deceive themselves than on this. They love to dwell rather on results than means. A beautiful and productive farm is so fascinating an idea that it quite carries their imagination over the dreary tract of toil, economy and expense, which must be passed before the acre worth five dollars can be changed into the acre worth fifty. Imagining the mere possession of land—acres of any description, the chief preliminary to the business of agriculture, and relying with Mahomedan security on fate to supply them with the skill, "appliances and means to boot," to make that land productive, individuals daily put the whole of their money into land, or even go in debt for that, totally ignorant or forgetful of the fact, that the first cost of poor land is one of the smallest items of expense. The first cost of one hundred acres of land at five dollars per acre, would bear but a proportion of one tenth of the expense when it is improved to the cost of fifty. To get out of barren soil the means of improving it, is like trying to cut down a tree with the axe in your hand to get a helve for it—a thing that may be accomplished perhaps, but not to be recommended by the judicious. I will venture the assertion, that the want of means to perform every necessary or proper operation at the right time, and in the best way, is the cause far more frequently than either indolence or unskillfulness of the frequent failure of agricultural adventurers.

I will be here perhaps met by the remark, that it requires a large capital to buy improved land, and that it is better for an industrious man, with small means, to buy poor land, jog along with it by degrees till both get rich together. I am not much of a logician, but I suspect that there is no proposition generally true, which is not equally so in its particulars. If it be the best policy for the large capitalist to buy improved land, it must be so for the small one. For myself I cannot, after much reflection, recall a single instance in which a poor man has improved a poor place without resort to some trade or employment other than that of cultivating his barren fields. The poor man must get daily bread for his daily labor; he cannot advance his soil for remuneration at a distance, however great that remuneration may be; so that, in fact, it is the capitalist alone who can afford to improve, for he alone is able to wait. Nor can the poor man improve so cheaply as the rich one. Putting aside the proba-

bility of his using greater economy, which is, however, a mode as free to the rich as the poor—and he has every advantage. The magic of ready money, of concentrated labor, of improved machines, will be on the side of the capitalist, while his competitor is making with his limited means a progress so painfully slow and expensive, that nothing but the most unconquerable energy and iron constitution, qualities which in a better theatre might have made their possessor rich or great, can bear him through.

I hold it best for the man of small means, to buy less land, or buying more to leave a portion unpaid for, that he may reserve to himself the means of working it to the best advantage. I am far from counselling the contracting of debt, but there is a right and a wrong way of doing even this. It is impossible to conduct a farm without means, even if it is necessary to go in debt for them. To ask credit from all with whom you may deal, is a most miserable policy, and surrounds you with petty difficulties of the most annoying character. It is better to owe one man a thousand dollars than twenty men fifty. Instead of a moneyed mortgage you are probably satisfied with his interest punctually paid, you will have merchant, mechanic, day laborer and neighbor on your bonos. Twenty claims of the "small debt" genus within the jurisdiction of a single magistrate pursue you. Your nose is on the grindstone, and a fresh man ready to take the handle whenever a tired one lets go. You must thresh when you should sow, and sell in the fall to buy again in the spring. You are charged two prices because you make all wait, and pay fifty per cent. in your bills because you were afraid of six on a mortgage. A portion of your profits will pay a debt judiciously contracted, while one of another character will prevent your making any profit at all. You may carry a load comfortably on your back, and still have your hands free; but take it in your hands and you cripple your whole body.

In fact, the process of improving, is a thing but adding to the value of land, by mixing as it were capital with it. The very name of improvement implies expense. Whether that capital be in the form of labor that we hire, or that we ourselves perform, in manners that we purchase, or such as we manufacture, are questions only of economy, and do not affect the principle. For the sake of an illustration, let us term all the means necessary for working and improving a farm the unproductive, and the land the productive capital of the farmer, since it is from the land the product immediately comes. It will now be seen, that the constant effort of the improving farmer, is, to convert his unproductive into productive capital. His operative force, although necessary to conduct the farm, is yet a heavy burden on the profits. \$1500 per annum spent on a farm is interest on \$25,000, which for all practical purposes may be considered the amount of his unproductive capital. By removing stone, grubbing, ditching, fencing, building, in short, by effecting any permanent improvement he converts a portion of his unproductive into productive capital. If by such means he can reduce his annual expenditures to \$1,000, he has done what is equivalent to converting one third of his unproductive into productive capital; every labor saving machine, every improved process, has a similar effect—and it is by these means, all of which are expensive in the extreme, that improvements are made.

The man who invests his money in land which has thus been put into the most productive state, is at least certain of one thing; that he will at once get the best return for his money that agriculture can make. He puts himself beyond the reach of unfortunate experiments, while the man who has every thing to do for himself, though he may have the greater pleasure, will, at the same time, incur the greater risk. But if, as I shall now proceed to show, the capitalist may in most parts of Baltimore county buy improved lands at less than their improvements cost, or than he could improve them for, I think I shall convict all of folly who will buy and improve poor lands until their proportionate cost be much less than at present.

To get room for a calculation, we will assume, that a farm from twelve to fifteen miles from Baltimore of two hundred acres, with good buildings, after a ten years' course of improvement, in which two timings, each of 50 bushels, shall have been given to each arable acre, and plaster, clover and the manures of the farm judiciously used, will bring in the market \$50 per acre; and that its first cost was \$5 per acre, with no improvement of any description. I propose in the first five years to free the land of stone and grubs, to fence and ditch it, to put on 1,500 bushels lime annually and erect buildings of the right kind. It will require for that period annually 4 men, board and wages each \$140, \$560 1 woman, 80 4 horses, keep and interest, each 70, 280 2 yoke oxen, " " 30, 60 1500 bushels lime, at 15 cts. 225 Plaster and seed of all kinds, say 100

Board, clothing, &c. of self and family, say	250
Taxes, say	15
\$400 worth farming utensils, int. 12 per cent,	48
Smith's bill,	20
Carpenter's bill,	20
Doctor's " "	5
Amount of charge,	\$1000
For five years,	\$4950
Land,	1000
Buildings,	2500
4 horses, cost 75 each,	300
2 yoke oxen, 65 "	130
Farming utensils, say	400
2 cows, 20 each,	40
Stock hogs and sheep, say	50

Int. 6 per ct. on \$12,915, average 2 1/2 years,	\$12,915
	1,915
	14,830
Value of personal services for five years at 150 per annum,	750
	15,580
Allowing the farm to be worth \$700 per an. in support of stock and family 5 yrs,	3,500
Whole cost,	\$12,080

Thus it will be seen, that if the various items of expense are stated correctly, as in a general way I believe they are, and if \$700 per an. be a sufficient allowance for the product of the farm, which is rather above an estimate I have made with the various particulars stated, the first five years' improvements bring the farm to something over \$60 per acre in the market, and the stock might be worth \$1000 more. If the improver was now forced to sell, he would lose \$5000 by the operation, and yet, those accustomed to judge only by the first appearances would think it as wonderful as well as profitable, that land in only five years could be raised in value from five to thirty dollars per acre. In taking the same farm through another five years' course of improvement of the same kind, the expense would be considerably less, by the reduction of the force, say a hand and a half, and a yoke of oxen, and by the greater cheapness of support on a farm somewhat improved. This saving would amount to say \$300 per an. which would leave the annual charge of \$1400. This in five years would amount to \$7,000

Int. on \$12,080, 6 per ct. for five years,	3,624	
Personal attendance as before,	750	
Cost of first five years,	12,080	
Whole cost in ten years,	\$23,454	
The income of the first 5 years, \$700, tribled in the 2d term—	\$2100, which multiplied by 5, gives	10,500

Leaving \$12,954 As the total net cost of the place in ten years, when it would, according to my supposition, command \$30 per acre, or \$10,000, which would still leave the improver minus about \$2,000, after deducting a thousand dollars as the value of the stock.

I think such a calculation fully sustains my position, that, at present relative prices, improved lands are much the cheaper, since the adventurer would probably obtain property in the condition supposed at the end of the first five years for \$7,000, while its cost was upwards of \$12,000—and the end of the second for \$11,000 what has cost near \$13,000. It shows too, that it requires less capital at present to buy improved lands than to improve them. A judicious and industrious man need not be afraid of a large debt on a good farm; whereas improvement is a continual and heavy drain on resources and cannot proceed with debt.

There is another fact presented by this calculation, which is not to be overlooked, viz: that improvements, however extensive at first, do ultimately pay handsomely, since the loss of \$5000 in the first term is reduced to \$2000 in the second, while a third would show a handsome profit. It may perhaps be attempted to turn this against me, by taking, say a period of twenty, instead of ten years on the improving farm, and showing a balance where the profits would make the farm cost nothing. One must have but humble views of prosperity if he is content with having lost nothing by the labor of twenty years. But the true test is, to start two men of equal capacity with the same capital; the one on a poor farm to be improved, and the other on one already productive, and see how they stand at the end of ten or twenty years. The man on the improved farm would be able to buy another like it before his competitor's would yield him a support.

It thus appears, that in this community the slow, toilsome and expensive process of improvement is not sufficiently appreciated, and hence we find persons every day declining good lands on account of their cost and adopting the doubly expensive alternative of improving bad ones. This hallucination has this happy effect—the country is improved, if individuals

suffer. The improvements often stand long after the improver has fallen. We have all heard the proverb, that "fools build houses and wise men live in them;" in the same spirit we may add, "that gentlemen improve farms and husbandmen reap the benefit." Finally, until science shall have pointed out means of improvement more rapid, more certain, and less expensive, it seems to me impossible not to conclude, that improved lands are from 50 to 75 per cent. below their value.

From the Watchman of the South SUGAR CREEK, N. CAROLINA.

Mr. Editor: Should you ever pass on the upper stage route from South Carolina, through the "North Star" to the "Old Dominion," you will be taken through Charlotte, in Mecklenburg Co. Concord, in Cabarrus county, Salisbury, in Rowan co., Lexington, in Davie co., Greensborough, in Guilford, and through Danville, or Milton, as you may choose, after crossing the Dan, to direct your course to the James. You will pass along the line of the early settlements of that most fertile part of Carolina, that lies above the river. Less than one hundred years ago, the settlements of white men were unknown. Here and there the hut of a trader, or temporary adventurer might be seen; but no cheerful neighborhoods of men of principle and stability.

You will also pass along the line of operations of the British forces in the ravaging warfare and invasions during the American Revolutionary war, and may visit localities whose interest shall be undiminished while the history of the Revolution has its place in the reading of educated society.

The colonies on the seaboard of North America must ever surpass in romantic interest the settlements of the interior country. But of the interior settlements, none can surpass in varied exhibition of the heroic and the gentle virtues of our nature, that line of settlements formed by one race of pre-occupied people, of which this part of North Carolina is a section, extending from the Potomac, the Northern boundary of Virginia, through South Carolina, on the Eastern base of the Alleghanies.

The emigrants were from Ireland. One part landing at Charleston, and other parts of S. Carolina, found their way to the interior; the other, and the larger part landing at Philadelphia, turned Southward, and traversing Virginia and the North State, met the Southern tide on the waters of the Congaree. These two streams from the same original fountain Scotland, through the North of Ireland, meeting in this new soil, and intermingling their waters, nevertheless preserve their characteristic difference, the one of Philadelphia, and the other of Charleston. This large people were peculiar; the Puritans and Roundheads of the South,—the Blue Stockings of all countries; men that settled in this wilderness on principle, and for principle's sake; that built churches from principle; and fought for liberty of person and conscience, as their acquisition, and the birthright of their children.

Let us visit a few of the localities. As you pass Northward, on the great road from Charlotte,—of which more may be said as the place of the famous Convention, whose declaration appeared in the public prints last summer—in about three miles you pass a large brick church near the road on the right hand. This is the present place of worship of the oldest congregation, and the first numerous settlement between the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers. Previous to 1750, scarce a white settler was to be found in this Mecklenburg; and about the year 1756, so rapid was the emigration, that a Presbyterian Church and congregation were formed, which took a name from the creek near by—Suga or Sooga—but now written Sugar. This brick church is the third house of worship for the congregation.

Let us visit the site of the first; it is about half a mile West from the great road. Here on this pleasant rising ground, surrounded on all sides by the forest, a few steps from the East wall of this burying ground stood a log church, where Craighhead preached, and where were congregated from Sabbath to Sabbath many choice spirits, who having in this wilderness, far from their native land, worshipped the God of their fathers, now sleep in that yard. The house is passed away; the preacher is gone; the generation that took possession of this land is passed away; its deeds remain. Their children are passing; scarce a single man or woman of the first generation are in the land of the living; and with them is passing to oblivion, the knowledge of things and deeds which posterity would fain dig from the rubbish of antiquity—but shall dig for in vain; as the generation are passing without a history, and almost without an epitaph.

Let us go into this gathering place of the emigrants, where they lie side by side in their sleep, to be aroused on the resurrection morning. These little breaches you see in this time defying wall, were made by gold diggers, when that excitement first spread over this land, upon the

discovery that the emigrants had lived and died, and were buried here, ignorant that there was, or would be, in this their place of worship and sepulchre, and deposit more dear to posterity than the ashes of their adoring ancestors. We will enter by the gateway at the Northwest corner, through which the emigrants carried their dead. Now let us read some of the few and scanty memorials reared by affection, to mark the tomb of friends amid the multitudes that are crowded in this venerable spot without a stone to tell who rest beneath your feet. This first one is to the memory of Mrs. JEMIMA ALEXANDER STANLEY; "born Jan. 9th 1727; died Sept. 1st. 1797; a widow 38 years." One of the earliest emigrants, she used to say that on her arrival between this place and Hope-well Church, her nearest neighbor, Southward and Eastward, was at the distance of 15 miles; Northwardly about 8 miles. The coming in of nearer neighbors was a matter of rejoicing to this bold woman, who had need of all the strong help of the strong doctrines of her Church and creed, to hold up her heart in her lonely condition.

Now let us go on to the Southwest corner; here read the inscription; JANE WALSH, who died July 21st, 1792 in the 80 year of her age. This was the mother of the first settled preacher a Providence, some 15 miles South, the able defender of the truth of christianity against the infidelity that went over this country like a deluge at the close of the Revolutionary war. His grave is among the people of his charge. This stone near the middle of the yard is to the memory of David Robinson, who died Oct. 12th, 1808, aged 82—an emigrant, and the father of the late Rev. John Robinson, D. D., who departed his life Dec. 15th, 1743, after serving the congregation of Popular Tent about 40 years, having labored in the ministry about 50.

The oldest monument, but not the monument of the eldest grave, is a small stone thus inscribed:—

Here lies the Body of ROBERT MC KEE who deceased Oct. 6th the 19th 1775 Aged 73 years.

The letters K and C, of McKee, are joined in one, the lower turn of the K forms the C.

Come now to the Southeast corner; here is a grave without an inscription to tell whose ashes are sleeping here, or even a stone. This is the grave of Rev. Alexander Craighhead, the first Minister of the congregation, and the first in this Carolina settlement. Fleeing from Virginia during the Indian invasions that followed Brantock's defeat, he was settled here about the year 1756, and was buried here in 1776, after a life of great usefulness. Tradition says that these two large cypress trees standing one at the head, the other at the foot of the grave, sprung from the two sticks on which as a pier the coffin was born to the grave. Being thrust into the ground to mark the spot of the grave, the green sticks, fresh from the mother stock, took root and grew. Was it an emblem? Were we as superstitious as the people of Europe a hundred years ago, we might read in the ministerial history of the congregation a full account of the mute prophecy. After the death of Mr. Craighhead, his son preached to the congregation for a short time;—his grand son became the settled Minister, and served them 35 years; his successor, Dr. Morrison, now of Lincoln, after a few years' service, being called to the Presidency of Davidson College; his great son, J. M. M. Caldwell, took charge of the congregation, and now ministers to the people.

Let us return to the Church by the road side, and enter the grave yard that lies at the South, by the gate in the North Wall. This first stone that meets your eye marks a grave directly beneath the location of the pulpit of the second building occupied by his congregation. The preacher occupies this grave, and the congregation sleep around him. The house and the preacher, and the builders, have passed away. Even the children that assembled here in Revolutionary times are grown old, only here and there one of them remains to tell the history of the War, and the traditions of the settlement.

Along this road the American forces retreated before the British army, when they entered Charlotte from South Carolina, and took possession of the "Hornet's Nest," and turned the College into a hospital. A little distance up this road, the gallant Graham, the father of one of the candidates for the Governor's Chair, fell wounded, and was left by the enemy for dead. The widow's daughter, by whose means his rescue and recovery were in a measure accomplished, still lives—herself the patriarchess and chronicle of the congregation. O how rapidly does time change us from youth to the wrinkles of age! But what events have been crowded into her protracted, yet short life!

As the victorious British forces marched along the Catawba, plundering the staunch Whigs, and making trials of the irresolute, many families of the Scotch Irish origin, fled from their homes, and took shelter in North Carolina, again soon to seek another shelter elsewhere. Among

three families was a pious widow, from the Waxhaw settlement in South Carolina, by the name of Jackson, with her little son Andrew. She found an asylum in this congregation, about six miles East of the Church, in the house of a widow, (or one who was soon a widow,) by the name of Wilson. Andrew aided the widow's sons in tending their corn, and performing other operations; after exercising himself with such in the manuevers of the drill exercise, and wishing that he was bigger, and telling what he could do were he larger, with the red coat. One of the sons of the widow Wilson in later years became the Pastor of Rocky River congregation, in Cabarrus county; and the memory of his labors is lodged deep in the hearts of numerous students in literature, and hearers of the Gospel. The son of widow Jackson, in the title of N. Ogden, more than fulfilled the aspirations of his father in driving the red coat; and far outstripped all youthful imaginations when he sat in the Presidential chair for eight years.

Men have often wondered, why he, in his most thoughtless days, always treated a faithful Minister of the Gospel so respectfully, and why, after encouraging his wife in a religious life, he himself should in his age become a member of the Free-bycyrian Church. The cause is found laid deep in the heart long ago, by the instructions of a mother and the ministrations of God's house.

This grave beneath the pulpit of the second Church, contains the remains of the second settled Preacher—his chosen place of sepulture. His epitaph drawn up by his friend Wilson, of Rocky River, reads:—

SACRED to the memory of the late Rev. SAMUEL C. CALDWELL who departed this life Oct. 3d 1826

in the 50th year of his age and the 35th of his pastoral office of Sugar Creek Congregation His long and harmonious continuance in that relation is his best Eulogium.

Licensed when he was but 19 years of age, Dr. Hall took him under his special care with his well known fatherly kindness, and persuaded him to accept the invitation to become his grand-son's successor in the ministry. He preached the Gospel 40 years.

Come now to the middle of the yard, to the grave of one whose name will always be cherished; the Chairman of that famous Mecklenburg Convention. The epitaph is short and simple; but more full than any history or record, or memorandum yet given to the public.

ABRAHAM ALEXANDER, died April 23, 1786 Aged 68 years Let me die the death of the Righteous—and let my last end be like his VIATOR.

The Victim of a Proof-Reader. Foul murder hath been done. L. here's the proof! OLD PLAY.

Oh for the good old times of typography, when operatives in the art could render the ancients—when Caxton translated Ye Snye of Troye, from the language of Greece. Would that in this latter age, when Champollion has deciphered the hieroglyphics of Egypt—when the spirit of inquiry is every where abroad—some one might be found, who could continue to shelter from typical aggression a writer for the press!

I am the victim of a proof-reader. The blunders of others, and not my own, have placed me in a state of feeling akin to purgatory. Ever since I began to shave for a beard, I have been more or less afflicted with the *cacoethes scribendi*, and I flatter myself that I have not always been unsuccessful in my writings. But my printed efforts have not been honorable to my genius nor grateful to my vanity; on the contrary, they have been quite the reverse. I have had the sweetest poems turned into three sordid stanzas; sentences in prose, on which I doted in manuscript, have been perused in a deep perspiration, and with a positive loathing, in print. All this has arisen from a conspiracy which seems to have been formed against me by all the typographical gentlemen of the country. It is true I write what Mrs. Malprop might call an "intelligent hand;" but to the painful minutiae of crossing 's' and dotting 'i' I never could descend.—I have often given directions to publishers, that if a word was otherwise "past finding out" that they should count the marks—but that plan failed, as I have indeed all my plans for correct habits of thought before the public. If this narrative shall prove to be correctly printed, it will be the first article from my pen that has ever met with such an honor, and I shall be proportionably pleased.

Like all other mortals, I am penetrable to the arrows of Cupid. My heart is not unweakened with the epidemics of a rhinoceros, or the bullhides of Ajax; consequently I am what they call in romances a susceptible person. When I was nineteen, I fell in love—and as I found poor tobacco a medium, too staid a drossery for