



Devoted to Agriculture, Literature, Morality, Science, News, Politics, and Amusement.

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The Muse.



TO A LADY, GARDENING.

BY THOMAS MOORE.

O, could we do with this world of ours  
As thou dost with thy garden flowers,  
Reject the weeds and keep the flowers,  
What a heaven on earth we'd make it!  
So bright a dwelling should be our own,  
So warranted free from sigh or frown,  
That angels soon would be coming down,  
By the week or the month to take it.

Like these flies that wing through air,  
And in themselves a lustre bear,  
A stock of light still ready there,  
Whenever they wish to use it;  
So, in this world I'd make for thee,  
Our hearts should all like fire-flies be,  
And the flash of wit or poetry  
Break forth whenever we choose it.

While every joy that glads our sphere  
Hath still some shadow hovering near,  
If this new world of ours, my dear,  
Such shadows will all be omitted;  
Unless they're like that graceful one,  
Which, when thou'rt dancing in the sun,  
Still near thee, leaves a charm upon  
Each spot where it hath fitted.

Agricultural.



"Dig deep, while sluggards sleep,  
And you'll have grain to sell and to keep."

From a Treatise on Agriculture, published at Albany in 1819.

OF TILLAGE, AND THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH IT IS FOUNDED.

Tillage has three objects:—1st, the raising of plants whose seeds, stems, or roots, may be necessary or useful to man and the animal he employs;—2d, the improvement of the soil, by laying it open to those atmospheric influences which increase its fertility;—and 3d, its destruction of weeds, and plants which rise spontaneously, and are altogether unfit, or fit only in a small degree, for the nutrition of men and animals, if left to themselves, would stifle or starve the intended crop.

In fulfilling either or all of these objects, it is evident that the surface of the earth must be broken and divided into small parts, so that in the first instance, it may furnish a bed and covering for the seeds sown, enable them to push their roots into the soil, and draw from it a portion of their subsistence.

To accomplish this leading intention (the division of the soil) various means have been employed. Fossil, animal, and vegetable manures, as well by their mechanical action, as by their chemical properties, promote it; as do sand, pounded limestone and water (as in the culture of rice,) but it is to the spade and plough we must look for that degree of efficiency, without which the earth would have remained a desert, or would become one. Of these where the scale of labor is small (as in garden culture) the former is to be preferred; but in farming, the greater expedition of the latter gives it a decided advantage. Our remarks, therefore, will be confined to the operations of this instrument, and particularly to such of these as have given occasion to differences in opinion among practical farmers.

1st. At what season of the year (spring, summer, or fall) is ploughing best performed, in relation to a division and improvement of the soil and the destruction of weeds?

The more scientific opinion is in favor of fall

ploughing; because to the action of air and moisture it adds that of frost, whose sceptic or dividing quality is second only to that of the plough itself. In clay soils, this preparation should never be omitted: because on those the action of frost is greatest, and because one ploughing of this kind may save two in the spring, when time is every thing.\* In this operation, however, we must not forget to ridge as well as plough; and care must be taken that our furrows have sufficient declination to carry off surplus water. With these precautions, your clay ground will be ready early in the spring for another ploughing; and the decomposition of the sod and weeds (turned down in the fall) will be nearly if not altogether, complete.†

In dry and warm soils, these advantages are less, but still the time gained for a spring work is sufficient inducement to a practice that economizes, not merely of our labor, but the productive powers of the earth also, by soonest enabling us to shade the soil with a growing crop.‡

2d. What number of ploughings, preparatory to a crop, is necessary or proper?

The Romans were in the practice of multiplied ploughings. This appears as well from the precepts of Cato, as from the opinion of Columella, that "tillage, which does not leave the earth in a state of dust and render the use of harrows unnecessary, has not been well performed." Tull, and his disciples, carry the doctrine still further, and believe that frequent ploughings enable us to dispense with even the use of manures. This, however, is extravagant: it is certain that the plough can do much, but it is equally certain that there is much it cannot do.

Agriculture, like other business, having profit for its object, is a subject of calculation: its labor must be regulated by its end, and the moment the expense of this transcends the profit, it may be improvement, but it ceases to be farming. When, therefore, we hear of six ploughings, preparatory to a wheat crop, we conclude, either that the plough will soon stop, or that it belongs to one of the Dilettanti, who thinks it below him to count the cost. In our practice, we find that spring crops (of the cereal gramina) succeed best on one fall ploughing, well ridged and furrowed, and one cross ploughing in the spring: and that spring and summer crops, of the leguminous and cruciferous families, form the best possible preparation for winter crops, and render unnecessary more than one additional ploughing. After all, any proper answer to this question must necessarily be qualified by considerations of soil, weather, season, crop, and culture; influences which cannot but exist in all cases, and over which we have no control. Wheat, for instance, requires more preparatory ploughing than rye, and rye more than oats. Clay ground demands more tillage than calcareous earth, and calcareous earth more than sand. Wet or dry weather makes frequent ploughings (according to circumstances) either useful, injurious, or impracticable; and the shade of a horse hood crop is, perhaps, in itself, of more importance to that which succeeds, than would be the following of a whole summer.

3d. What depth of ploughing is most to be recommended?

This question, though less complicated than the last, requires, like it, an answer qualified by circumstances. Tap-rooted plants require deeper tillage than others: fall ploughings

may be deeper than those of spring, and spring than those of summer. If the vegetable soil be deep, deep ploughing will not injure it; but if it be shallow, such ploughings will injure a part of the subsoil, which is infertile, until it receive new principles from the atmosphere. "They who pretend," says Arthur Young, "that the under layer of earth is as proper for vegetation as the upper, maintain a paradox refuted both by reason and experience."

Where, however, it becomes part of your object to increase the depth of the surface soil, deep ploughing is indispensable; and in this, as in many other cases, we must submit to present inconvenience for the advantage of future benefit. But even here, it is laid down as a rule, that "in proportion as you deepen your ploughings, you increase the necessity for manures."

"From six to eight inches may be taken as the ordinary depth of sufficient ploughings."

4th. Of the different modes of ploughing [level or ridge ploughing] which is to be preferred?

This question admits no absolute answer.—We have already suggested the latter mode, in stiff, heavy, wet clays, and, in our opinion, all ground in which clay predominates, whatever be the culture, should be made to take this form; because it powerfully tends to drain the soil, and carry off from the roots of the growing plants, that superfluous water which, left to itself, would seriously affect both the quality and the quantity of their products.—In sandy, porous, dry soils, on the other hand, level ploughing is to be preferred, because ridging such soils would but increase that want of cohesion, which is their natural defect.

A loamy soil, [which is a medium between these two extremes,] ought, in a dry climate, to be cultivated in the flat way, that it may the better retain moisture; and in a wet climate in ridges, that it may sooner become dry.

From the New-England Galaxy.

HUMAN LIFE,  
OR THE FIRST AND LAST MINUTE.

Minutes pass.—The anxious husband paces slowly across his study. He is a father, a man child is born unto him. Minutes pass—the child was blessed by a parent, whom it cannot recognize, and pressed to that bosom to which instinct alone guides for sustenance—the young wife too has faintly answered to a husband's questions & felt his warm kiss on her forehead.

Hours pass.—The low moaning from the closely covered cradle, tell of the first wants of its infant occupant. The quiet tread of the nurse speaks of suffering around her; while her glad countenance says that the very suffering which she is trying to alleviate, is a source of joy; and the nameless articles, which from time to time she arranges on the hearth, tell of a new claimant for the courtesies and attentions of those, who have progressed further on the pathway of existence.

Days pass.—Visitors are thronging the chamber, and the mother, pale and interesting after her recent sickness, is receiving their congratulations, and listening proudly to their praises of the little treasure, which lies asleep in its rocking-bed at her feet. The scene shifts, and the father is with her alone, as the twilight deepens about them, while they are planning the future destiny of their child.

Weeks pass.—The eyes of the young mother are sparkling with health, and the rose blooms again on her cheek, and the cares of pleasure and home engage her attention, and the father is once more mingling with the world; yet they find many opportunities for visiting the young inheritor of life; to watch over his dreamless slumber—to trace each other's looks in his countenance, and to ponder upon the felicity of which he is the bearer to them.

Months pass.—The cradle is deserted. But the chamber floor is strewn with playthings, and there is a little one loitering among them,

whose half lisp'd words, and hearty laugh and sunny countenance tell you, that the entrance into life is over a pathway of flowers. The cradle is empty, but the last prayers of the parents are uttered over the small crib, which stands by their own bedside, and their latest attention is given to the peaceful breathings of its occupant.

Years pass.—Childhood has strengthened into boyhood and gambled along into manhood. Old connexions are broken—parents are sleeping in their graves—new intimacies are formed—a new home is about him—new cares distract him. He is abroad, struggling amid the business of life, or resting from it with those whom he has chosen from his own generation. Time is beginning to wrinkle his forehead, and thought has robbed his looks of their gait, and study has dimmed his eyes.—Those who began life after he had grown up, are fast crowding him out of it, and there are many claimants upon his industry and love, for protection and support.

Years pass.—His own children have become men, and are quitting him, as he also quitted the home of his fathers. His steps have lost their elasticity—his hand has become familiar with the cane, to which he is obliged to trust in his walks. He has left the bustle which fatigued him. He looks anxiously in each days paper among the deaths—and then ponders over the name of an old friend, and tries to persuade himself that he is younger, and stronger, and has a better hold upon life than any of his cotemporaries.

Months pass.—He gradually diminishes the circle of his activity. He dislikes to go abroad where he sees so many new faces: and he grieves to meet his former companions, after a short absence, they seem to have grown so old and infirm. Quiet enjoyments only are relished—a little conversation about old times—a sober game at whist—a religious treatise—and his early bed form for him the sum total of his pleasures.

Weeks pass.—Infirmity keeps him in his chamber. His walks are limited to the small space between his easy chair and his bed.—His swollen limbs are wrapped in flannels.—His sight is failing—his ears refuse their duty, and his cup is but half filled, since otherwise, his shaking hand cannot carry it to his shrunk lips, without spilling its contents. His powers are weakened—his faculties are blunted—his strength is lost.

Days pass.—The old man does not leave his bed—his memory is failing—he talks but cannot be understood—he asks questions but they relate to the transactions of a former generation—he speaks of occurrences, but the recollection of no one around him can go back to their scenes—he seems to commune with comrades, but when he names them it is found that the waters of oblivion have long covered their tombs.

Hours pass.—The taper grows dimmer and dimmer—the machinery moves yet more and more slowly—the sands are fewer as they measure the allotted span. The motion of those about him is unheeded, or becomes a vexation. Each fresh inquiry after his death is a knell. The springs of life can no longer force on its wheels—the "silver chord" is fast untwisting—the pitcher is broken at the fountain—and "time is a burthen." His children are about him, he heeds them not—his friends are near, but he does not recognize them. The circle is completed. The course is run—and utter weakness brings the damp which ushers in the night of death.

Minutes pass.—His breathing grows softer and lower—his pulse beats fainter and feebler. Those around him are listening, but cannot tell when they cease. The embers are burnt out—and the blaze flashes not before it expires. His "three score years, and ten" are numbered. Human life "is finished."