



"Once are the plans of the, delightful Peace, Unwieldy by their name, to live like Broom."

AGRICULTURAL.

The following excellent Address of Charles Fisher, Esq. President of the Rowan Agricultural Society, will no doubt be acceptable to a great portion of our readers: We have therefore pleasure in laying it before them.

AN ADDRESS

By Charles Fisher, Esq. to the Rowan Agricultural Society, at its meeting on the 4th of July, in the town of Salisbury.

GENTLEMEN: Believing that this society, if conducted with prudence and spirit, will be the means of doing much good among the farmers of the county, I cannot but feel myself highly honored by the station you have assigned me. If, in the discharge of my duties, I am unable to bring to your aid much talent or long experience, I can, nevertheless, with safety promise you constant attention and unremitting zeal. We all must see the wretched condition of agriculture as it exists among us, and anxiously wish for its melioration. But this alone is not sufficient: we must act; and to act with efficiency and success, our efforts must be made in concert. I know no plan by which this result can so well be produced as by the means of agricultural associations.

The benefits of such institutions in foreign countries as well as our own, have been fully realized. Writers inform us, that the establishment of the board of agriculture in England, is the era when English husbandry began to look up, and occupy that respectability to which it is entitled. At this day it has reached a high state of perfection, which has been effected principally by the means of agricultural societies.

The northern states, being that part of our country where the population first filled up, we find them the first to throw off the habits and practices of the early settlers, and introduce a better state of things. Their lands, like ours at this time, were rapidly exhausting and becoming sterile. Reflecting men saw the necessity of a change; but as no one or two individuals, in any neighborhood, could possibly accomplish this by their single example, agricultural associations were resorted to as the only effectual means. Successful efforts were made to bring the farmers together in societies, and to engage their minds and their feelings in a general plan of improvement; and wonderful has been the change produced in the appearance and condition of their agriculture. At this day, so evident are the advantages of agricultural societies, that they are everywhere coming into general sanction. We see the best farmers, and, in many instances, the most distinguished men in the nation, entering with zeal and spirit into these associations, and laboring to improve our agriculture, and exalt the farming interest of the country: men, that a few years ago, directed the destinies of this great republic, think it no disgrace now to aid in managing the concerns of a county society. Even the States, sensible of the importance, in a national point of view, of such institutions, have extended to them legislative support and patronage. In most of the states they are incorporated, and in some of them liberally encouraged by pecuniary donations. For example, New-York, of all the states the most abounding in natural advantages, and the most munificent in internal policy, has taken a measure in favor of her agriculture that cannot fail of producing the greatest results. Her Legislature, for the purpose of encouraging agriculture, has appropriated \$20,000 to be divided (in two years) in due proportions among the agricultural societies in the various counties. By the same act, an Agricultural Board is established, to be composed of the presidents of the different societies throughout the state, and to be held annually at the seat of government. This board shall annually compile a volume from the archives of the society, 1500 copies of which are to be published at the expense of the state. Here is an example worthy of imitation; but my object at present in mentioning this instance of liberality, is to shew the light in which an ambitious and enlightened state to the north, views the agency of agricultural societies in advancing the great work of internal improvement. But although New-York is the foremost in liberality, many of the other states are also pushing forward in the same race of improvement. Look to the north, and to the south, and we see life and activity pervading the farming community; even in the west, in the new states, the farmers begin to turn their attention to systematic improvement. He alone, continue lagging behind, dragging on in the good old way, without even a farmer's society to excite our feelings or direct our energies. It is time that we should awaken from our slumbers of inactivity; it is time that we should arouse ourselves from this lethargic indifference, and take some measures for the improvement of agriculture in this section of the country. And what plan can we adopt, better calculated to accomplish this end, than the one that has produced such happy results in other

parts of the country—the formation of societies among the farmers?

One of the greatest advantages flowing from societies of this kind is, that they are the means of commencing among the farmers, at one and the same time, a general movement towards systematic improvement. They, also, are the instruments of collecting into a common fund, the light and experience of many practical farmers, which is again diffused for the benefit of all. For example, by our constitution, it is made the duty of each member to apply his attention, as much as may be, to the different modes of cultivation, and if, in the course of his practice, he makes any useful discoveries, or verifies any former experiments, however small, he forthwith communicates them for the public good.

Another advantage is, we not only learn useful facts from each other in our own vicinity, but by means of the society, we collect valuable and important information from other and more remote parts of the country. We open an intercourse with like associations, and with intelligent individuals, whose lights and experience will be a desirable acquisition to us of profitable knowledge.

But another, and perhaps the most important advantage that we shall realise from this society, will be the effects it will have upon our minds and feelings. It will awaken among ourselves and our brother farmers, a spirit of emulation; it will set us to thinking and enquiring; and this, of itself, will give a spring to our moral and physical capacities. There is nothing like exciting the human mind to action—like arousing it to enquiry and reflection; give it but motives of excitement, and it will act, and will improve. For the purpose, then, of keeping alive a spirit of emulation among our farmers, we should, at stated periods, have Cattle Shows, and Agricultural Exhibitions. We should encourage them by the bestowment of prizes and honorary premiums.

Having said this much upon the advantages of agricultural societies, I will now, as briefly as possible, turn your attention to the state of agriculture as it exists among ourselves.

In looking around for the defects in our prevailing system of husbandry, one of the most striking is,—We pursue a course of cultivation that takes all from the earth and returns nothing to it: We go on, year after year, tilling our fields, without any pains to return to the earth the strength that each crop takes from it. We completely exhaust our soil by an unvaried succession of crops; and, when it can produce no longer, we turn it out into old fields, let it wash into gulches, and grow up with pines, and broom sedge, that never failing symptom of exhaustion. This is the common fate of our fields; the system that is defacing our country, and ruining our lands. How is it to be arrested? By stopping short in our present practices, and adopting in their stead the improving plan. It cannot be expected, on an occasion like this, that all the methods of improvement now in practice should be fully detailed; neither time nor qualifications could justify me in the attempt. But I may, in a few words say, that they all come under the head of manuring. That course of cultivation which takes all from the earth and returns nothing to it, must prove a defective and ruinous one: all the plans, then, of improving land, if successful, must, in some way or other, go upon the principle of returning strength and activity to the earth. Manuring is the end of them all. But there are several kinds of manuring; and different methods of applying them to the earth. I believe, however, manures generally have been classed under three heads: vegetable, atmospherical, and mineral.

Vegetable manure is the decomposition of all vegetable substances: stable-yard litter, straw and offals of our crops, are, with us, the common materials of manure. In our sister State Virginia, corn-stalks are made great use of for that purpose.

The atmosphere that surrounds us teems with matter that affords life and nourishment to all kinds of vegetation; this is called atmospherical manure. How to extract this element from the air, and convey it to the soil, is an important inquiry with agriculturalists. The best plan yet practised, is that of enclosing as connected with shifts of fields and rotation of crops. The principle of enclosing is, to suffer our fields to become thickly covered with rich vegetable substances, undisturbed by any kind of stock, and then, in proper season, to turn it under, where it soon rots, & enriches the ground. In the northern states, the farmers regularly sow their fields down in clover, and when it reaches its perfection, plough it under. It is the opinion of some, that clover will not succeed thus far to the south; but as far as my observation goes, the opinion is entirely erroneous.

The other kind of manure spoken of is mineral, such as gypsum, lime, &c. but these are scarce materials in our vicinity, and it would not be profitable to introduce them from a distance. Our main resource lies in the two first sorts; and to these we should direct our attention.

It is a lamentable fact, that in our part of the country the practice of manuring lands has been miserably neglected. Our farmers seem not duly to appreciate the

value of manuring, or clearly to understand the best methods of collecting and managing it. Go to one of their stable yards, and you will see it scattering every where, evaporating in the sun, or washing off with the rains. How differently do judicious farmers act in other sections of the country? They take as much care to make manure as to raise crops; they use as much diligence to save their manure after it is made, as to save their crops. Go upon the farm of such a man and you will find order, system and economy, visible every where. It ought to enter into the plan of every farmer annually to manure so many acres, such and such portions of his worn out land. To effect this would only require a little care and economy in the management of his affairs. To a farmer possessing an ordinary number of stock, it would be much easier to erect a field of worn out land, than to prepare for the plough the same quantity of new ground. If this be the case, how much more preferable is the one plan than the other. By reclaiming the old ground, you increase the value of your land, by making that good which before was useless; besides this, you save the timber of the new ground, as well as much severe labour in clearing it. Let me here remark, that the saving of timber should begin to enter into the consideration of all land holders in this section of the country; by our wretched system of destruction, it is rapidly passing from the face of the land; and in another quarter of a century we may find it necessary to economize it even for fuel. It is not with us, as in many other places, where stone-coal abounds; of this substitute we have none, or but little. The first settlers of a country are always prodigal of timber, because it is abundant, or rather, the great obstacle they have to surmount. We retain the habit of destroying timber after the reason of it has ceased to exist. How few of our farmers economize their wood land as they ought. Pass by the clearings, and the heart sickens at the waste and destruction. Even the thick coat of leaves that covers the ground, is raked into heaps and burnt; when, with very little more labour, they could be removed to the stable-yard, where they would increase the stock of manure.

Another great error in our system of husbandry is that of over-cropping. We attempt to cultivate more than our manual force will justify. This is a capital defect in our practice, and until this is corrected, there can be no agricultural improvements. This practice, likewise originated with the first settlers. When the country was first opened, such was the fertility of the soil, little more was required from the hands of the farmers than to sow the seed and it would come; but now cultivation is necessary. The farmer that over crops himself, must, in the first place, put his seed into the ground in a very slovenly and imperfect manner; in the next place, he can only half cultivate it. He must of necessity work part of his crop out of the proper time and season; some other part he scarcely works at all, until it becomes too late,—the consequence is, he only makes half a crop. How much wiser would it be to prepare our grounds well, put out less, and cultivate them in a proper manner?

Nothing more strikingly exhibits the wretched state of our agriculture, than to compare the products of our soil with what is made at the north. There, it is considered poor, cropping unless their wheat turns out 25 to 30 bushels per acre; even 40 bushels is often made. Here, take the whole county of Rowan, and the average product to the acre is not 7 1/2 bushels. The same may be said of every thing else that we raise.

Now, to what is this great difference owing? Not to the lands; for our soil, originally, was equal, if not superior, to theirs; nor is it as much owing to the climate, as some would seem to think. No! it arises principally from the different conditions of our agriculture, and the different modes of management. We overcrop ourselves, take no pains to improve our lands, put our crops in badly, and tend them still worse. To avoid the error of putting out too much, every farmer should, before he commences preparing his grounds, consider well how many acres he can cultivate with the manual force at his command; and, in order that he may see his way clear, he should measure all his fields, so as to know the exact quantity of acres each contains. How differently do the most of us proceed: We guess at the number of acres put into cultivation, and, like all guess work, we generally fall wide of the mark. If any farther comment upon over-cropping were necessary, we need only, at this time, look through the county and view the spectacle. Here, we see one farmer, neglecting his corn, to get the grass out of his cotton; there another, suffering his wheat to fall for the want of cutting, in order to get over a certain piece of corn; and in how many places, will we not see both corn and cotton completely brought under by the grass? I am aware, that a wet season of unusual length, is one cause of this; but the principal cause, is that the farmers have put out more than they can manage.

The next defect in our prevailing sys-

tem, that I shall notice, is a deficiency in our farming implements. It is as impracticable for the farmer, as it is for the mechanic, to do good work with bad tools. Examine the tools of the greater number of our planters, and we need search for no other reason why our fields are only half cultivated. Look particularly at our ploughs! The plough is the most useful and efficient of the farming implements; it is the first instrument that enabled man to bring to his aid, in the cultivation of the earth, the power and strength of the brute creation. Its form, at first, was rude and simple, consisting of but little more than the branch of a tree so shaped as to tear up the ground with one prong, while the other was hitched to the oxen. In the unenlightened regions of the earth the primitive plough is still made use of; but in our own country, no instrument of husbandry has been brought nearer to perfection. There are various kinds of ploughs suited to different purposes in farming; we hear of the Dagon, or Cary; the Freeborn, and several others; but we take no pains to procure models and try them. We go on in the habits and with the ploughs of the first settlers, regardless of what is passing around us in the way of improvement. If we wish to meliorate our condition, we must open our eyes and learn from the experience of others. Nothing so much retards the progress of improvement as prejudices, and the attachment to old habits. Such is the influence of prejudice, that in an obscure corner of a certain country in Europe, the people still plough by fastening that instrument to the cattle's tails. We are not quite so ignorant; but really, within a few years, I have known considerable planters, instead of iron traces, make use of grape vines and hickory withes. What false economy! what miserable management! But it is not only necessary that we should have good tools, in order to do good work; we should also take care of these tools. In this particular, the greater part of our farmers are culpably negligent. Go to one of their farms, and you may see a plough lying in this fence corner, in that a hoe; here, one thing and there another! What is the consequence? When these tools are wanting, much time is lost in searching them up, and it often happens that some of them are not found at all! To avoid this, every farmer should have some place set apart where the tools, when not in use, could be brought and laid away safe from the weather, and always near at hand. There is nothing like a little forethought in a farmer; it is always attended with economy in the employment of time and the management of business. A farmer that looks before him is seldom over-hurried in his work, and is never idle for the want of employment. Even rainy days he knows how to spend to good purposes; at such times, he repairs his tools, and fits them for use, or he finds some other useful employment.

Another defect that I shall notice, is in the raising and management of live stock. Is it not a fact, highly discreditable to the large, populous, and wealthy county of Rowan, that it cannot supply itself with beef? For the past 8 or 10 years, not fewer than between 2 and 300 head in each season have been brought from the upper counties and slaughtered for the market of this small town. In exchange for these, no kind of produce is taken—cash alone is paid. If every farmer in the county would so attend to his stock as to sell one beef annually, the money that now goes to the mountains, would remain and circulate among us. But before we can promise ourselves much improvement in our stock of cattle, two things must take place: first, a change in the breed of our cattle;—secondly, a change in our present mode of keeping and treating them. Time will not allow me to dwell upon either of these heads.—I will, however, suggest the propriety of our adopting proper means to procure some of the improved breeds so much extolled in the states north of this: these, crossed with the best of our common stock might produce valuable results. As connected with this subject, I will add a few words upon the business of the dairy.—Without the hazard of refutation, I may say, that that there is not, at this day, a first rate milk cow in the county of Rowan; nor will there be, until an entire change takes place in our system of management. I know persons who milk from 8 to 10 cows, that do not average one gallon each; when, with proper care and attention, the same quantity of milk might be obtained from fewer than half of the number. We should keep few cows, feed them regularly, and shelter them from the rigor and inclemency of the weather. One cow well taken care of, will supply more milk than three badly kept; and the expense of feeding will by no means increase in the same proportion. We hear of cows giving from 20 to 30 quarts of milk per day; we scarcely credit such statements, because we have no such cows ourselves; but nevertheless, it is true.

But I leave this part of the subject to make a few remarks on that of hogs. Our breed of hogs is much better than that of neat cattle; in fact, we have several kinds of hogs valuable for their hardy and thriving qualities. The Chinese hog has lately been introduced into the county; whether it will prove a valuable

acquisition, I cannot say. In Pennsylvania they are only esteemed for the purpose of crossing with other breeds; and it is probable, in this way alone, will they be valuable to us. But if our swine are good, and our bacon hams excellent, it must be confessed that our plan of feeding for slaughter, is not only wasteful but wretched in other respects. The common practice is to make a pen of fence rails so as to take in running water; in this, all the hogs intended for the knife, are put, and the corn is thrown in to them in ears.—The first rain that comes converts the whole surface of the pen into a perfect quagmire, and the poor animals have to root in mud up to their eyes, for their food. The hog is of a hot and thirsty nature, but it is not an amphibious animal; it cannot thrive well in mud and water. For the sake of experiment, let a few hogs be placed in a pen which shall be kept dry and shielded from the wet and cold: take a like number in the same plight and condition, and throw them into a common mud-pen. Let the same quantity of feed be given to each parcel, and the result will be such as to convince the most obstinate of the folly and inhumanity of the present practice.

If we are deficient in our attention to the management of cattle, we are still more so in raising that valuable animal, the sheep. We are told that sheep, in the northern states, yield from 6 to 10 pounds of wool at one shearing. This great disparity must arise, as well from the quality of our sheep, as from the little care and attention we bestow upon them: in both of these particulars, we must introduce changes before we can expect much improvement.

The making of fences is one of the greatest drawbacks on farmers in this section of the country: it consumes much time, requires much labor, and destroys much timber; but good fences insure the safety of the crops, and add much to the appearance of the farm. Let us once get into the enclosing plan, and there will be less timber required; even now many of our middle fences might be dispensed with. The society ought to encourage the raising of fences. Their introduction will form an important chapter in our agricultural history. They not only serve the purpose of rail fences, but they are very durable; they are ornamental, and contribute very much to set off a farm. The cedar and white thorn are likely the best materials in our reach. Instead of our middle fences, if we were to divide our fields with hedges, it would soon answer every purpose, and have a very striking effect.

When the western part of North-Carolina was first settled, it was surpassed in its prospects by none of the new countries. The old inhabitants still recollect the towering forests, its boundless range of grass, cane and pine, bounding every where. Its fame spread back to the north, and the tide of emigration was set in this direction. Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, Maryland and Virginia, poured thither their population to take possession of the new land of promise. But all is now changed! One half century has brought about a dreadful revolution. The descendants of those who flowed here from the north, are now passing off in crowds to the west. To what is this owing? Surely, in great measure, to a deterioration in the appearance and condition of our country, effected, altogether, by our wretched, destroying, and murdering system of cultivation. The only way to check this emigration is to improve our lands and increase the profits of agriculture. I do not pretend to assert, that the most perfect condition of agriculture would keep all from moving. No! there is something in the spirit of the American people, that impels them towards the forest. The current is set to the west, it will flow on. The Mississippi river could not stop it—the Stony Mountains will furnish no barrier. As long as there are new countries in prospect, our people will move on until the waters of the Pacific stop their march. But, if we cannot stop it, we may check it; we may, in a measure, remove one of the causes of emigration; an emigration that is draining us of our people and wealth. Upon a fair principle of calculation, North-Carolina, in the last ten years, should have increased in its population 200,000 souls; but from the returns of the census just completed, it would seem that our population has only gained about 10,000 souls. Where are the rest? Come in search of better lands beyond the mountains!

But although half deserted, our country is still a delightful one. We have a fine climate—pure air,—a soil susceptible of the highest improvement, and fitted to the products of every part of the Union. We live on a kind of middle ground, where the staples of the north and the south meet together in the same fields, and flourish in social proximity. All that we want is an improved state of husbandry, and a market for our products. Every state in the Union is pressing forward in the great race of improvement. Every class of the community is looking to its own interest. The merchants are uniting in every scheme to enlarge the circle of commerce, and multiply its gains; the manufacturers are making powerful efforts to exalt their interests, even on the ruins of all others; but the farmers alone, seem careless and indifferent. Above all, the farmers of this part of the country are heedless and unmindful of what is passing around them; of their own character and interest, and the character and interest of the state. If we go on many years longer in this way, our agriculture will become still more wretched, and our population will leave us in search of better prospects in the west. Self interest, then, pride and patriotism, all demand our exertions in the cause of improvement; and let it be hoped, that the formation of this society is a proof that the call will not be made altogether in vain.

BLANK DEEDS FOR SALE.