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John Milton Adams

Oxford County Agricultural Society

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Ben E. Hopkins
with respect of the
Author

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

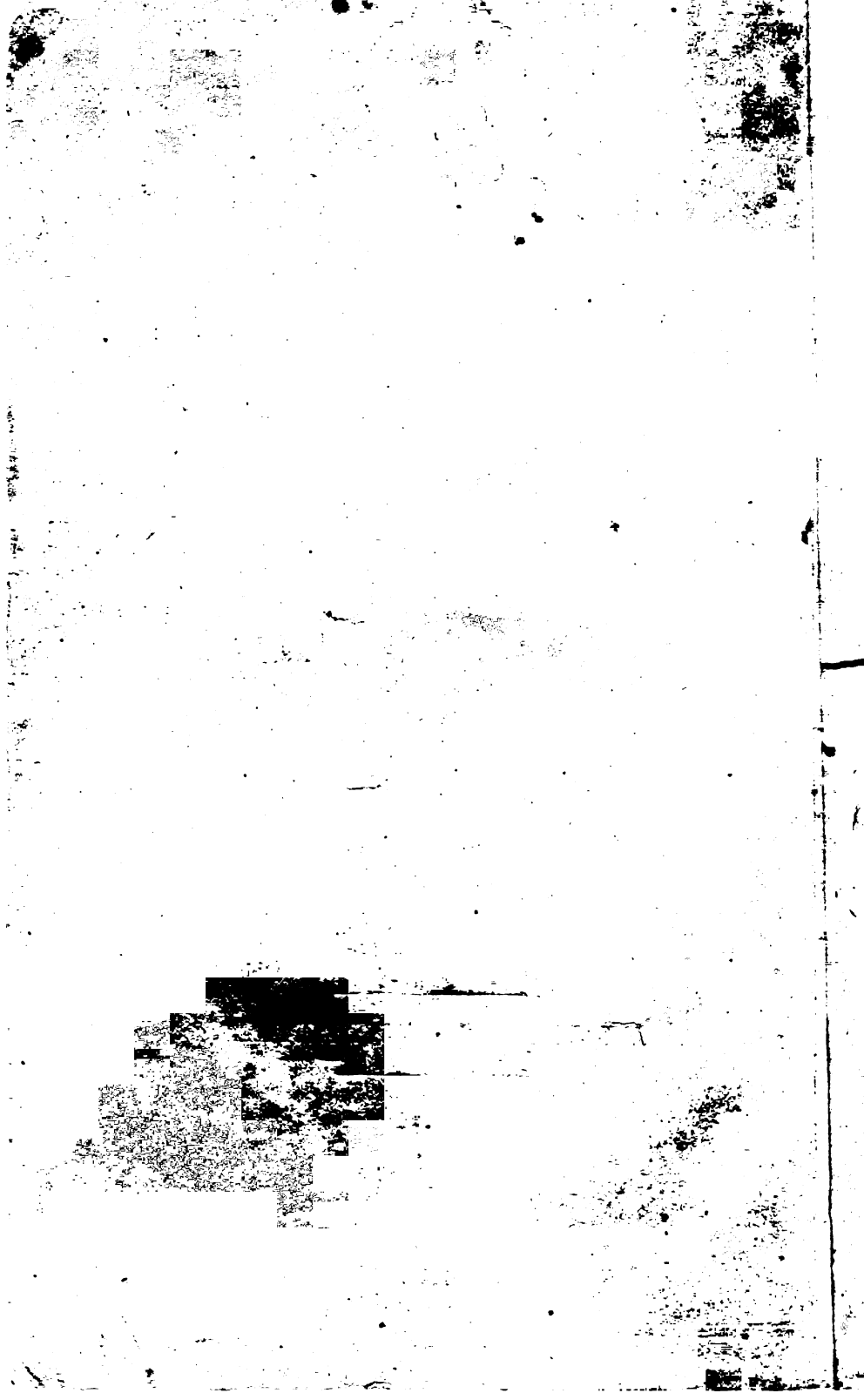
OXFORD COUNTY

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY,

OCT., 1852.

BY JOHN MILTON ADAMS.

PARIS, Me.:
PRINTED BY GEORGE L. MELLEN.
1853.



AN

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DELIVERED BEFORE THE

OXFORD COUNTY

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ADDRESS.



Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Oxford County Agricultural Society:—

While I express to you my heartfelt thanks for the honor conferred on me, by the invitation to address you at this annual harvest exhibition, and festival, I must also be allowed to say, that I undertake the duty, not unaware of its difficulties, and not without an almost painful sense of my inability to perform it acceptably.

Although my earlier years were spent in cultivating the soil and tending cattle upon the banks of your beautiful river, the Androscoggin; yet I have now been absent nearly fifteen years from the plow and the farm yard, and in this I find sufficient excuse, were any needed, for not presuming to speak to the intelligent and experienced Farmers of my native county upon the details of their own pursuits.

I shall only endeavor to express to you briefly my views of the importance and dignity of your profession; its relation to the wealth, power, and progress of the nation; show by comparison how vastly superior are the advantages of the American farmer over those in the most favored of foreign lands; pointing out some of the responsibilities which these high privileges devolve upon him, and throwing in by the way, such suggestions, as I hope may merit consideration.

Agriculture may be defined the art of cultivating the earth in such manner as to produce in greatest plenty and perfection, those vegetables which are useful to man, and to the animals which he has subjugated, and brought to his aid.

It is the basis of all other arts, and in all countries has taken its rise with the first dawn of civilization.

The beginning to till the ground is in fact, the first step toward civilization, and without it the race has never in any country risen above semi-barbarism.

Without agriculture, men would be savages, scattered through interminable forests, sheltered only by caverns and wigwams.

This branch of human industry is not only the first stepping-stone to civilization and necessary to its development; but it is the foundation of national wealth: of national greatness.

The elements of all wealth are drawn from the land and from the ocean. The products of the sea, derived chiefly through the fisheries, though of considerable importance in the aggregate, are but a minor source of national wealth: it is from the land therefore that the principal wealth is derived. The elements are three, minerals, animals, vegetables.

Iron, coal, lead, gold, silver, and other minerals, are of great importance, of great value; but theirs is a subsidiary importance, a secondary value. They are valuable as aids in the production and manufacture of materials derived from the animal and vegetable Kingdoms; both of which Kingdoms, come within the province of the agriculturalist, and which to use the graphic expression of Sully are the breasts from which nations draw nourishment and growth.

The agriculturist produces not only animal and vegetable substances to feed and clothe the inhabitants of the world, so far as they are

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fed and clothed, but also the materials for manufactures and commerce.

Thus the agriculturalist provides the material; the manufacturer makes it up; the merchant sends it off, to exchange for articles of necessity or luxury, which the country does not at all supply in sufficient quantity.

Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce, are the grand pillars of national prosperity and power; but it is plain that Agriculture is most important of the three. It is the parent of both others; and the great fountain of the wealth and grandeur of nations.

It furnishes employment to three-fourths the inhabitants of Christendom. More than eighteen millions of our own people are engaged in agricultural pursuits.

Our annual products of bread-stuffs and potatoes, exceed eight hundred millions of bushels; and if we include oats, which are reckoned bread-stuffs in Europe, the aggregate will exceed ten hundred millions, or one billion bushels. We have it is believed five millions of horses; nineteen millions of neat cattle; twenty-two millions of sheep; thirty millions of swine, and poultry valued at twelve millions of dollars. Add to these, the crops of hay, tobacco; cotton, and other articles; and the aggregate value of our agricultural productions will be augmented to an amount seemingly beyond computation.

It is calculated that each individual in Europe, consumes on the average, five bushels of bread-stuffs annually. Double this amount for each individual of our country (and I have no doubt our people consume double;) and still we have more than two-thirds of our crop remaining to feed animals, to export, or to store for future use.

It would seem then that our nation produces in one year at least enough for two years; and this is the true measure of a nation's wealth; namely, its capability for annual production. By this rule no other nation nearly equals our own.

The term *Wealth*, signifies surplus products stored up; and it is represented by various kinds of property or by money, the measure of property.

But what does it amount to, this heaped up

wealth of nations? Let the crops of the farmer fail for one year throughout the world, and one half the human family would perish. Let them fail a second year, and our earth would be one wide waste, with scarcely a human inhabitant.

True wealth consists not so much in acquisitions, as in capabilities: not in things acquired; but in the power to acquire. This applies to individuals as well as to nations.—The son who has a sound constitution and good mental powers, developed and disciplined by a correct and thorough education, is far richer than he, who has an hundred thousand dollars for a patrimony.

The law, symbolized by the perishable Manna of the Israelites, applies to all material acquisitions, and will one day be understood. Then will that other law which immortalizes intellectual acquisitions be better appreciated.

The Agricultural interest stands in relation to other interests, very much as a father to his sons. He sets them up in the world, furnishes them with means to do business, and in case they fail, their debts, if paid at all, must come out of the old gentleman's estate. So with the Agriculturalist; his products form the basis of operations for the manufacturer and the merchant. If they fail, or go beyond their means, it is he, the producer, who in the end has to foot the bills and bear the losses. The Idler and Speculator live by his industry. It is his money or materials which they squander; yet he never allows them to suffer for bread, however idle, reckless, and foolishly extravagant they may be.

The agriculturalist insures all others against starvation, and in our country, against want even. While he is thus in fact indorser to a certain extent for all others, he makes his own drafts upon Providence, and they are never dishonored. Without any expressed "value received," he has the promise to pay; the promise that seed time and harvest shall never fail. The intelligent, industrious farmer therefore, never does fail, while ninety-five of every hundred, who engage in mercantile pursuits do fail.

It seems to me, these considerations indi-

cate very clearly the importance of the agriculturalist to the nation, and the dignity of his position, as the almoner of God's bounties to the world.

There is no need after this, methinks, to cite the example of Regulus, whose farm, when he was called from it, to take command of the armies of Rome, was cultivated at the public expense; or of Washington, who after conquering the enemies of his country surrendered his sword and devoted himself to peaceful pursuits of agriculture; or of the hosts of other renowned men who were tillers of the soil; in order to establish, that this avocation is one of the most honorable among men.

It has already been remarked that the agricultural population exceeds all others in point of numbers, as three to one. In a country of universal suffrage like our own, one would naturally suppose this interest, if it did not exercise a controlling influence over legislation, would at least so far protect itself, as not to allow other interests to be built up by legislation at its expense. Yet such it seems to me has not been the case. Manufacturers by the aid of legislation, have been enabled in times past to make ten, fifteen and even twenty-five per cent. upon their capital, while at the same time, money invested in agriculture was producing an income of not more than three or four per cent. The profits of these two interests are now more nearly equalized.

But again—Agricultural pursuits are not only indispensable to civilization and to national prosperity, but they are of the highest advantage to those engaged in them. They serve not only to strengthen the bodily health in an unusual degree, but also to develop and energize the mental powers. There is I believe no avocation that admits of so few fixed rules; so few things that may be learned by heart and done by rote: no avocation that requires so continual and careful an exercise of the judgment, as that of the agriculturalist. Every operation requires it, and close observation is indispensable. This keeps the mind active, develops it, gives it power. And it explains why you generally find farmers, men of sound judgement, of good practi-

cal common sense (an article by no means super-abundant,) men of resources. Surround them with difficulties and obstacles such as they never encountered before, and instead of giving up, they will instantly hit on some new expedient for overcoming them.

All the influences by which they are surrounded promote mental activity. The driving winds, the pattering rain, the rushing stream, the sporting animals, the fluttering birds surround them with continual motion.—Motion evidences life, and life activity, and these if only in a whirlwind, or water-fall beget activity in man.

People are invariably stirring and energetic among mountains, where the winds whistle and the waters dash; while upon plain countries, they are usually heavy and sluggish. The people in Holland and some other parts of Germany; and also in lower Italy, furnish examples of the latter, while the Swiss, Genoese and Piedmontese who inhabit the mountains almost between these countries are the reverse. The contrast is so striking that no traveller fails to remark it.

There are a multitude of interesting inquiries which suggest themselves at every step in a farmer's life. Why does this piece of ground produce a fine crop of rye, while the wheat it would bear would not repay the reaper's toil; or a good crop of corn and not of potatoes? How does the insertion of a bud or scion change the fruit of an apple tree?

Why does the foliage of the forest, in autumn assume all the colors of the rainbow except the color of the Heavens? the leaves of the maple being more generally a beautiful scarlet, those of the birch a rich orange, and so on through the various colors and shades. Not a breath of air moves; yet why does the leaf which a week before, you could not break off without leaving a wound, now fall off itself, silently to the ground?

These are some of the thousand queries which the operations of nature suggest: to answer all of which would require a better knowledge of the chemical properties of soils and vegetables; and of the principles of the growth and nourishment of plants, than has yet been attained. Such inquiries furnish

Food for profitable research and reflection, and the mind expands by studying them. It was the falling of an apple that led Sir Isaac Newton into the train of investigation which resulted in the discovery of the law of gravitation, that wonderful, mysterious agency which not only holds in order every thing upon our globe; but which suspends in their orbits, myriads of revolving worlds: which shapes the dew-drop glistening, diamond-like in the morning Sun, at the same time that it is wheeling worlds through endless space.

The pursuits of agriculture are favorable also to integrity of character, and to the development of all the higher qualities of the soul.

The first requisite to integrity is independence. Put it in the power of another to give or withhold bread from a man and his family; and you place him in a situation of dependence that may jeopardize his integrity. It will inevitably affect his manliness of character. The American farmer is independent; emphatically so. He owns the soil which he cultivates and from it he gathers a competency for himself and family. For the necessities of life he is dependent upon no man. He is a sovereign of the land. Feeling the dignity of his position he respects it: he respects his integrity of character and cannot stoop to dishonest or mean actions.

But while the agriculturalist enjoys the advantage of being independent of other men (so far as may be in a community where each must in a measure be dependant upon others) he is more immediately dependant upon Providence, than any other.

He derives his sustenance directly from the growth of the soil, warmed by the sun and watered by the rain of heaven. He takes his harvest as it were from the very hand of the Almighty. Can he receive the gift without looking upward to the Giver? Can he thus dwell, as it were in the very presence of the Great Source of all truth and goodness, without taking in largely of those noble attributes? Can he live amid the changing seasons, the varying beauties, and majestic scenery of nature, feel its fresh fragrant breezes, and hear its sweet melodies, without experiencing an elevating and refining influence upon his mor-

al sensibilities? No! Impossible: universal observation shows that agricultural people possess higher moral qualities than the denizens of cities; who dwell amid brick walls, and come chiefly in contact with the grasping and selfish propensities of human nature. The morality—the integrity and the intelligence of the world, I verily believe, as much depend upon the country for sustenance, as the physical wants of man are dependent upon it.

But as I shall have occasion to refer to this point in another connection, I pass it to consider the position of the American agriculturalist as compared with that of the European. I need not speak of Italy, of sunny Italy—with its rich soil and fine climate, equal perhaps to any in the world; for it would be an insult to American farmers to compare them to the stupid semibarbarians of that classic land, once the seat of the Roman Empire, and Mistress of the world.

Some one has said, show me the agricultural implements of a people and I will tell you their rank in civilization.

That you may be able to apply this rule to the Italians I will describe some of their farming utensils. Their plow is made from the fork of a tree, one prong being cut off about two feet long, and pointed, serves for the plowshare, the other, being left of sufficient length to reach the oxen's yoke, to which it is lashed, serves for the beam. A strait stick inserted upon the upper part projecting backward is the only apology for a handle.

The ox-yoke consists of a straight piece of wood about four inches in width and five feet long, which is lashed firmly to the base of the oxen's horns upon the top of the head. There is no iron upon either yoke or plow. The oxen are very small, of a dirty white color and when drawing, throw their heads back in an apparently uncomfortable if not painful attitude.

The only thing answering to a harrow which I observed was a quantity of brush tied together and drawn over the soil. Cows are almost as frequently seen in teams as oxen. Mules of very small size; and donkeys are frequently used; and I have seen the comical team of a cow and donkey harnessed to-

gether in a little market cart, rude in its mechanism as the plow I have described.

This country is famous for its *Bulls*, (bulls of the pope of course) but I observed none of them in the plow-fields.

Large numbers of the peasantry are clothed in skins of sheep and goat, with the wool or hair outward, giving them anything but a civilized aspect.

These things were noted on my way from Civita Vecchia to Rome, which, with sparse habitations and large tracts of neglected lands gave me not a very favorable impression of agricultural operations in the Roman States. It seemed as though, were nature to meet man but half way, the inhabitants would all starve.

Further observation and inquiry convinced me that other matters, were at least as badly managed under papal despotism. This rude culture of a soil, rich in itself, aided by a genial climate, produces results better than could be expected; but the tyrannical administration of the government destroys every thing. Intelligence seems to be regarded as heresy and enterprise is looked upon as treason. It was once in contemplation to connect Rome with the rest of the world by railroad and telegraph, but the infallible eye of the Pope discovered danger in these useful projects, and had them promptly prohibited. Some six miles of railroad running along side the stupendous arches of Nero's Aqueduct (Tradition says that on completion of this remarkable structure the impious Nero boasted, that he did not care whether the Gods sent rain or not, as he would supply Rome with water,) were graded several years since, but the bull of the Pope was too powerful for the locomotive, and its whistle has never been heard in that territory.

Men sometimes claim the right to read their bibles, and to speak what they think, but neither will do at Rome. Some two thousand copies of the catholic Bible were in the American Consul's hands at Rome, when I was there, under seal of the United States, to prevent their being destroyed by order of the Roman Government.

There is no device that I have ever heard

of which can entirely control or restrain thoughts in the mind of man: but the rigid restraints of a Roman police pretty effectually check the utterance of them, and I relate an example or two, to illustrate the manner in which it is done.

Several months prior to my being there, a respectable young Roman who had been educated as a physician, was taken at midnight from his bed by the police and carried to the tribunal of the inquisition; since which time, his family had been unable to get any tidings of his fate. Perhaps he was sent to the galleys, perhaps exiled, perhaps worse.

The cause of his arrest was supposed to be the expression of republican opinions. Probably some one of the many spies overheard some unguarded remark. I learned these facts from an American Artist who was intimately acquainted with him.

A lady whose husband had been killed in the republican army was performing at midnight some religious rite to his memory: she was observed by her domestic, who reported her to the police, and before morning she was in the hands of the inquisition. An American lady whose husband was an Italian resided in the same house with her; and communicated these facts.

While I was at Rome the landlord of one of the principal hotels had notice that he must leave the country in twenty-four hours; and he was obliged to flee from his family and business as a choice of evils: the charge against him was the expression of Republican opinions, probably overheard and reported by a servant.

A Roman nobleman also, one of the most popular in Rome, whose name has escaped my recollection, received notice to leave the country in forty eight hours or pay twenty one thousand dollars. Charge,—His nephew had appeared in the streets wearing a republican hat, during the siege of the city by the French. The matter was finally adjusted by his paying seven thousand dollars, which he preferred to do rather than be exiled from his home and family. It is evident this case was only a pretext for extorting money. It oc-

curréd while I was at Rome and caused much excitement.

A few evenings before our departure from Rome Mr. Cass, the efficient American charge d'affaires, to whom my friend and myself were indebted for many attentions, was summoned at a late hour, to interfere in behalf of an American. He repaired instantly to the palace of the Quirinal (then the residence of the ruling Cardinals, the Pope still being an exile), in the court of which he found some, one hundred and thirty prisoners, who had been arrested and brought in from the country departments. One of these was an American. The prompt action of Mr. Cass, secured his immediate release, and remuneration for trouble and detention. The remainder, many of whom were females, and one a princess of the noble family of Colonna, were marched off that night, in charge of the Swiss guard to the prison of the Inquisition. Similar political persecutions at this time (winter of 1849 and 50) were going on in the kingdom of the two Sicilies- When we were at Naples it was estimated that more than forty thousand persons, many of them from the most respectable families, were in prison for political offences, chief among which was the utterance of Republican Sentiments. The prisons in and about Naples were literally crammed with human beings incarcerated without being proved guilty of any offence or having had even a mock trial and whose sufferings and deprivations were worse than death.

In Tuscany things were little better. On our way from Florence to Genoa we had for fellow passenger, Mr. Pakenham, a brother of Gen. Pakenham who was killed at the battle of New Orleans, and of the Earl of Pakenham, since dead, who was on his way out of the country by command of the government. He was at the time Consul of the English government at Florence, and was driven from the country for the crime of distributing bibles, which had been sanctioned by the Catholic authorities, during the existence of the Republic.

But I have wandered far enough in this digression, and I plead in excuse for it my

desire for Americans to appreciate the difference between the freedom they enjoy and the despotism which hangs like a pall upon the liberties of continental Europe.

Returning to my subject; it is but justice to say, that the agriculture of all Italy does not come entirely within the description I have given. That part of it embraced in the kingdom of Sardinia, as Genoa and part of Piedmont, also Tuscany, and parts of Lombardy, are somewhat in advance of the other portions.

The agriculture of Germany resembles in its general features that of England; and as I intend to speak somewhat particularly of the latter, I shall refer to the former only to state a few facts that may be of interest.

Labor is very abundant in all the German states. The agricultural laborer never obtains more than 15 cents per day and often receives but six or eight; and the price for a mechanic is 18 to 25 cents per day. In Prussia which is a protestant country and claims to have the most intelligent and best educated people in Europe, the usual price is 11 cents per day for the agricultural laborer and 21 cts. the mechanic. In Bavaria the same rates for labor prevail. I asked if a first rate mechanic would not often get 25 cents per day, and invariably received the reply, that a good one could get only \$1,25 per week, 21 cents per day, and that \$1,50 per week was very unusual.

In Austria the rates of wages are somewhat less, though from 500,000 to 750,000 (the latter number in 1850) of her working men are withdrawn from useful employment to supply her armies. The average expense of these men to the government (as I learned from a Colonel in the Austrian army) is \$80, per year which includes the wages rations and clothing. In Saxony, in the valley of the Elbe, where the soil is fine and apparently under a more intelligent cultivation; and also in Bohemia, I found the rates of wages did not materially vary from those of Prussia and Bavaria.

I felt a little curiosity when in Saxony to see how the Saxons of original growth compare with the English Saxon, and the American Saxon. They have the blue eye and

wandy hair—are hardly of what we call medium height, and are stout built. Their prominent traits of character are I think honesty, frankness, simplicity. They have much firmness and resolution too, judging by the many evidences still remaining of their revolutionary struggle. In Dresden, the capital of Saxony, the buildings about the principal square were literally battered with bullets, and in one small sign not two feet square I counted thirty bullet holes.

Dresden held out some time after Berlin. Prague the capital of Bohemia, Vienna and other German capitals had been retaken; and then those sturdy Saxons yielded only to overpowering numbers of foreign troops. I thought I discovered here very plain indications of the source whence John Bull and Brother Jonathan derive their resolution, their firmness.

Transplanting the Saxon to England has given him a little more height and weight of body; tinged his hair a little with the sorrel or red, increased his firmness to obstinacy; augmented his self esteem very much, and on the whole made more of a man of him, though a less agreeable one.

Transplanting the English Saxon to America has not diminished an iota of his firmness or his self esteem, but has modified them by an increase of his love of approbation, his hope, and his generosity.

It has also increased to monstrous proportions, his combativeness and go-ahead-iveness and has given point and edge to all his faculties, as if he had fed on *briars* and *razors*.

The American, as compared with the English Saxon, has gained an inch or more in height, has gained muscle, has gained nervous energy; has lost the sorrel locks and several pounds in weight.

In Holland and Belgium, though the land is highly improved, wages vary little from the rates already stated. Our young men are flocking to the wilds of the western country to make themselves homes, and acquire wealth amid all the disadvantage, and discomforts of a new country. If they could only carry their enterprise to Germany and be there

allowed free scope for it, amidst a superabundance of labor and raw material, they would be sure to turn it to good account.

Coal is abundant, labor at the lowest possible rates, and facilities for transportation unsurpassed; yet the Germans send their flax to England to be manufactured into all the finer fabrics; and there is not in all Germany a manufactory for the finer cotton goods or for the fine cotton threads which are so much used by them in making laces.

Notwithstanding coal and labor are cheaper there than in England.

I was often told that the man who had done more for manufacturing enterprise in Germany than any other, and perhaps than all others, was an American (Mr. Cockerell.) The immense establishment built by him at Seraing in Belgium still bears his name, though he died in 1843. He was once in partnership with the King of Holland.

France is distinguished from all other European countries in that her farmers can acquire title to the soil. They may own their farms.

This, as also the abolition of tythes and rents, resulted from the revolution of 1789, which in a measure delivered France from the old feudal system. Owing to political commotions, to the difficulty of breaking up old habits, and a variety of other causes, there are still many large estates in France, and many tenants. Yet this single right, the right to ownership of the soil, has done wonders for her people.

France is regarded, and in fact is, much behind England in the practical Art and Science of Agriculture; yet taking the mass of the population, there can be no question that those of France are in a better condition. They have in some degree thrown off the servility of serfs, and gained the independence of freemen.

France presents to the eye of the traveler a beautiful appearance. Her fields are not enclosed by fences, but bordered by rows of beautiful and neatly trimmed trees. Her soil is not rich, nor the cultivation of the most intelligent description, yet there is an air of neatness, of comfort, of cheerfulness which I saw

nowhere else in Europe. The laborer receives from 18 to 28 cts. per day and boards himself.

But I must hasten to England. I wish to present a sketch of her agriculture as resembling that of other countries in Europe, in its general features, and as being considered superior to that of any other. The English themselves think, or affect to think, there is no other country worthy of being compared to theirs on this point, and I might almost say, on any point. They claim superiority in every thing, but many of their pretensions are ridiculous, as they are arrogantly set forth.

Agriculture in England embraces three interests, which are entirely distinct from each other, and which from the very nature of the case they must be antagonistical.

First there are the owners of the soil; the Crown, the Nobility and the Gentry. In 1775 the number of land holders was 240,000, but in 1815 they were reduced to 30,000.— This diminution has probably been going on since that time, so that considerably less than 30,000 of all the 16,000,000 of England are now owners of the soil.

Next below the landlord is the farmer. He hires the land of the proprietors and superintends its cultivation, but performs no part of the labor himself. As a class, the farmers are quite intelligent in their business, and often possess considerable property.

Next is the laborer, who does the work upon the land. His condition is pitiable and hopeless. He is tolerably clad, compared with the laborers in the cities, in mining or manufacturing districts; but he is grossly ignorant, and as servile as the down-trodden Neapolitans for whom the English have expressed so much sympathy, and whose oppressor and king they have so lustily berated and indignantly condemned for inhuman cruelties.

He is poorly fed and cared for. He never gets a morsel of meat oftener on the average than once a week, and his meagre wages force him to live on the cheapest substitutes for it, oat bread and milk. He can have no more hope of gaining property, or rising above

the condition he is in, than he can hope to be seated on the throne. He is *degraded*. He is, perhaps well skilled in one branch or division of agricultural labor, and in this he toils and starves, that others, in classes above him may live and luxuriate in ease. These laborers compose the great mass, and by their sweat and toil a few roll in wealth.

These classes I have referred to mingle only with those of their own grade. The laborer never visits the farmer, sits at his table or associates in any manner with him. The same impassable social barrier, separates the farmer from the landholder.

You are doubtless all familiar with the extreme taxation in England. Every window, every fire place, every carriage, every horse and every thing, whether of necessity or luxury is taxed; but in addition to these there are taxes upon the land of a greater extent than I had been accustomed to suppose.

First, there are rents of the land which go to the landholders. These vary from \$1 to \$25, per acre, calculated to equal 1-3 the value of gross products.

Next are the tythes. Every tenth bushel of wheat, every tenth lamb, every tenth chicken and every tenth egg is taken, or the value in cash, paid to the tythers.

Tythes were originally established for the support of religious services, but rights to tythes have been sold and given away to friends, by the crown, to such an extent that the clergy now get only a small part of them. It is often so managed by the owners of those rights, that much more than a tenth part is obtained. It is said instead of ten per cent. they often get 15, 20, and even 30 per cent. of the products of the land.

The poor rates constitute another heavy tax. The tythes and poor rates, (taxes to support the poor) in ordinary times just about equal the rents which putting at 1-3 the gross products of the land make the three taxes, rent, tythes and poor rates equal to 2-3 the products of the soil; leaving but 1-3 to support the farmer and pay the laborer.

This is the case in ordinary times; but during the three years prior to 1850, I was informed by several landlords that the poor

rates in some parishes had actually exceeded the rents of the land. This pernicious system, so outrageous upon the great masses of the people seems to be working out its sad but natural results, to wit:—the destruction of the middle classes, leaving nothing but paupers and lords.

Connected with labor upon large estates are several systems, one of which I will describe. It is called the gang system.—The farmer upon a large estate often wants extensive jobs of work done in a short space of time. He applies to the gang master and agrees to pay him a certain price for every laborer he furnishes.

The gang master then employs the gang laborers, men, women and children; to do the job, receives the pay, and from it deducts his own commission, before dividing it among the laborers.

They often go five, seven, and even ten miles to work, and often one hundred or more of all ages and both sexes are assembled in the same gang. If they are some distance from their hovels, they sleep promiscuously in barns, under hedges or anywhere.

The moral condition of these gang workers is most deplorable, and their poverty next to starvation. They are compelled to labor in these gangs because the farmer will never contract with them; but only with the gang man, and they therefore must work for him at his price, or absolutely starve.

As the American agriculturalist will see little in the condition of the agricultural population of England to commend it to his judgment or his sense of right, much less to suggest improvement upon his own high position; so in the results which this system has wrought upon the land, will he find little, very little from which he can derive advantage.

The dividing of land into garden spots by beautiful hedges and expensive walls; the building of Castles; the laying out of Parks containing hundreds of acres, surrounded by stone or brick walls from ten to twelve feet high; the expensive ditching, draining and irrigating of lands peculiar to England, perhaps we should not object to, if they were

not to be had at the price of the poor laborers' comfort, intelligence and moral welfare.

Such things, if desirable at all (and it is a question to me if they are) we should never think of at such a cost.

We are accustomed to regard man as rather the most valuable animal we have—we think something, not only of his having enough to eat and to wear, with comfortable shelter; but we regard also the improvement of his mind and the education of his moral nature, as of some little importance. We believe he is immortal, and we would see him fitted for his high destiny. But not so in Europe. Not so in boasted England.

Their horses are well fed, they have good straw beds and comfortable stables. They are fat and grow to a monstrous size—have seen many that would weigh a ton each; So with cows and oxen. They have always enough to eat, are well cared for, but not so with poor laboring man. Many starve outright, millions have but a limited allowance of the horse's food, oat meal. They cannot afford to taste the flesh of the fine oxen and sheep they pamper, oftener than once a week, and then their scanty means enable them to procure only those parts which nicer tastes would cast away. As to his moral condition it seems hardly to be thought of. If the reports of their own committees are to be credited there are thousands who know no more of God and Heaven, than brute animals.

Humanity is indeed at a sad discount.

But horses, and cattle and sheep are fine, superior I think in size to any in the world.—The draught horses are immense, some weighing twenty four cwt. One Brewing establishment in London has 200 horses whose average weight is one ton each.

The draught horses of Pennsylvania, which are the largest in this country, are small compared with them. These horses are fed upon the horse bean and chopped clover hay.—They seldom move faster than a walk, but take two or three tons at a load. I don't think these horses would be of value to us except in the larger cities, and there I am by no means sure that smaller and more nimble animals would not be preferable. The Eng-

lish carriage horses are not superior to the German or our own.

As to neat cattle, I have no doubt our breeds might be improved in size by an infusion of their Durhams and Devonshires, and perhaps in quality; but I do not believe the pure breeds will answer our purpose. Our climate is more severe and our cattle must be more hardy. The Nobility of England offered high prices for beef nicer than could be obtained elsewhere, and in process of time they have that which is more juicy and tender than any other in the world; yet its flavor is not so *rich* as our New England beef.

The true policy for our farmers then is I think to improve their own stock by keeping it well and thrifty, raising only the best specimens. This course steadily pursued for a series of years will result here as it has in England by wonderful improvement.

The English excel in beef cattle, but it would be difficult even in England to find finer working oxen than our state affords. The finest oxen I have ever seen were raised in the valley of the Kennebec. This County affords some noble teams.

The English sheep is much larger than ours and their mutton the nicest in the world. Their largest mutton, however, which is almost entirely stall fed, is not the sweetest or richest,—like the beef, it is tender and juicy, but I had almost said tasteless.

Their richest mutton comes from the hills of Wales and the Northern Counties. The pastures are not rich, but the grass is very sweet. The wether turned out in those pastures, does not become very fat until the fifth year. Our mutton is too young, generally, and fattens too soon, to have the firmness and richness required.

But with our hill pastures, I have no doubt a little attention to the matter would give us mutton equal to the best of the English.

As to producing sheep of great size, there can hardly be a question that by raising only the most thrifty lambs and giving them good keeping, and extra care, our present breed of sheep might be doubled in size in twenty years. It however would very likely be at the ex-

pense of the quality of wool. The wool of the large stall fed sheep is all coarse.

But our farmers should improve both their beef and mutton. The price of a choice article of either will increase every year; and Western beef and mutton can hardly be bro't here to compete with our own for the retail trade.

The English butter is excellent, but no better than some of our dairies produce; no better than all of them might produce with a little care. A little more attention to keeping the cream clean and sweet, and after churning, to working it, (not with the hand, the warmth of which without great care is injurious,) but with a wooden instrument made for the purpose, until the milk is entirely out of it: and equal pains in regard to salting, that the salt be pure and perfectly mingled with the butter, and equalized through it so as to leave no particles of salt undissolved or portions of butter more strongly than others impregnated with it.

The English table butter is entirely free from salt, and you season it to suit your taste. I do not like that method, preferring to have the maker of the butter salt it, so that it be done well.

But the English mode was adopted to insure good butter, and it certainly enables one to detect impurities very readily.

It is a matter much to be regretted, and the more to be regretted because so easily remedied, that a large portion of the butter which goes into the market from this State is so imperfectly prepared that it is unfit for table use. It can only be used as a substitute for lard, in cooking, which reduces its price to about that of first quality of lard.

In England, and indeed in all the countries of Europe, females work almost as regularly in the fields as males.

This custom may do very well where the habitations require little care, and the cooking is but making oat meal gruel or the like; but I hardly think American farmers will deem the custom worthy of imitation. They will, I think, prefer that their wives and daughters continue to manage household affairs, leaving to them the care of lands and of cattle.

We are often found fault with for attempting to cultivate too much ground and not doing it thoroughly enough.

I am inclined to think there is much in this suggestion, but it is an evil which I hope will cure itself. When labor becomes less valuable in proportion to the price of land, every acre will receive a larger share, but it is next to useless to talk of our confining ourselves to garden spots, while land is so cheap and labor is so dear. If it be said we should get a greater return for our labor by such a course, it may be replied, that if such be the fact, our shrewd and intelligent farmers will soon find it out.

But if the small farm system be surely so much better, it may be asked how it happens that our farmers pay three, four, five, and often six times as much for their labor, and yet are able to undersell the English farmers in their own markets.

How is the American farmer able to live twice as well and twice as expensively as the English farmer, and yet at those prices make more clear profits.

But it would be well to try a higher cultivation. It may be that the English farmer is only enabled to live at all, under his many burdens, by so thorough a cultivation. It may be he would utterly starve by our method.

The subject merits consideration, and I commend it to the careful attention of our agriculturalists.

There are some other things worthy of thought. We have not a soil equal to the prairies of the west, and our climate is a little severe, to say the least. Now we should not, I think, attempt to go into the general market with articles that can be produced more abundantly in a mild climate and on a better soil, and which can with ease and safety be transported great distances. It is always best for the farmer to raise enough for his own use of everything of which there is a reasonable chance for getting a crop. It is easier to do this, than to pay out money for it.— Beside, a larger variety ensures a good harvest. Should a farmer plant all his land in corn and an early frost happen, he is badly off; but let him divide his land between five or six

species of breadstuff's, and then when one fails he still finds four or five left, and those probably good—better than the average; as, if the season prove too cold for corn, it may be all the better for wheat and potatoes.

So I would have the farmer raise enough for his own use, of the largest practicable variety. It is better for the soil as well as more sure to afford a good yield, though so much may not be made, as by a chance large crop of wheat or corn.

But the farmer wants to raise a surplus of something for market. It is not enough that he is fed and clothed, be it ever so well.— He must have a little spending money. He must travel about to visit his friends; he must educate his children, and lay by something for a rainy day.

Now with what shall he get this? My idea is that he can best do it with articles that cannot well be brought from afar.

Such as beef and mutton, for the retail market; poultry, eggs, butter, fruit. A hundred good turkeys will bring nearly or quite a hundred dollars the week before Thanksgiving, or a month after it.

All these articles if of first quality will bring a good price, and find a ready sale.— They must always be produced at not very great distances from where they are consumed.

The subject of raising fruit is one especially deserving the attention of our farmers, and I am happy to learn that they are regarding it with increased interest.

The apple is a more valuable fruit than the orange, and like it is becoming an article of commerce. Our climate and soil are peculiarly adapted to producing it in its greatest perfection. The sweet apple of New England has hardly a competitor. None are raised in the Southern States, few in the Middle States and neighboring British Provinces. In the valley of the St. Lawrence, owing it is supposed to some peculiar element in the soil, the apple tree does not flourish at all; and the completion of the Portland and Montreal railroad will open this market to our fruit.

Pears and Plumbs are also valuable fruits

which may be produced in great abundance.

The adaptation of agricultural business to the new facilities afforded by railroad for transportation, has in this County but just commenced. It is a subject that can hardly receive too much attention from agriculturists and business men. The advantage of a market within convenient reach, in all seasons of the year at moderate prices for transportation, and the effect which this will have in gradually enhancing the value of property, is probably not yet appreciated by this community. A few years, however, will develop the matter and demonstrate how great the advantage.— Yet great as I believe the agency of the railroad to be in promoting the pecuniary interests of a community, I have no doubt that when the fares for pleasure travel shall be reduced to the lowest paying point, its effect in improving the public health and enlarging the public intelligence, will far outweigh in importance, all pecuniary considerations.

But fearing I have already overtaxed your patience I pass to my last and most important topic.

I have already stated that the virtue and intelligence of the nation derive their chief support from the agricultural ranks. I believe it. Observation will confirm it. It is a remarkable fact that in the learned professions and in the business departments of crowded cities the most distinguished abilities sink to mediocrity, or below it, in two or three generations. Take the great men of the Country, go back one or two generations and you will find the ancestors of nine-tenths of them engaged in agricultural pursuits.— Take the business men, distinguished for integrity and ability in any of the avocations of life, and you will have a similar result.— I could point to instances without number, but time does not permit. Now what is the inference? what the suggestion? That you Farmers, you Fathers and Mothers, agriculturalists, have under your care and training the minds which are to rule our great country and to direct its destinies: the minds which are to honor it and make it more glorious or to paint the picture in reverse.

Our Country! Just consider for a moment.

Her boundaries extend from ocean to ocean across the entire continent, embracing one thirtieth part of the habitable globe. She has every variety of climate, every description of soil and inexhaustible stores of mineral wealth. She has ten thousand miles of sea-coast, indotted with innumerable harbors, and above all, is so situated, as if by express design of providence, almost midway between Europe on the East and Asia on the West, that she can extend her arms, the one over the Pacific, the other over the Atlantic, and gather within her mighty embrace the commerce of the world.

She has nearly as many miles of railway (11000 miles) as those of all other nations put together and more steamboats than they all.

She has 24,000,000 of intelligent, enterprising and energetic people. She has the only free school system in the world and the only really free civil institutions.

Still she is but a youthful nation. The stars and stripes which now float upon every sea were unfurled to the breeze, as our national emblem, but seventy six years ago (some here to day can almost remember so long) and yet I verily believe that in all the elements which constitute true national greatness she has no equal, and that therefore she is entitled to take her place at the head of the nations of the earth.

She is moreover the hope of the world. In 1848 many of the states of Europe tried to be free. France tried, Prussia tried, Poor Hungary tried, Rome, the two Siciles and several other states tried. But where are their Republicans, their Patriots now? They are slain, in prisons, or are exiles from their native lands.

The liberal parties are all prostrated, the constitutions of most of the States are abrogated, the school systems are broken up; and the voice of the independent press is hushed. The whole tendency of things is downward.

The destiny of our country on the contrary is onward and upward. At every step she has gathered new energy. In every contest she has triumphed without rising to the limit of her ability. Her twenty-four millions are soon to be 50 millions.

Now who are to be the men that shall guide this majestic ship of State?

If they be good men, if they be true men, the mission of our country will be as merciful to the world, as her future power now seems grand and overshadowing.

Let intelligence and correct principle stand at the helm, and some of us now here, will live to see her the peaceful benefactor and political regenerator of the down trodden millions of Europe.

Powerful representatives of the American character are even now to be found in all the principal cities of the world.

Go to Liverpool and ask who stands first among her merchants, who do an aggregate business of at least \$250,000,000 a year; and you will be told that James Brown, an American, is one of the ablest and richest of them all. Go to London, and ask who stands at the head of the merchants of England, and you will be told as I was told, that Mr. Bates, an American, the managing partner in the world renowned firm of Baring, Brother & Co., is the man. Mr. Sturgis, an American, is another partner in the same firm. Mr. Peabody, the renowned London Banker, is also an American, and all are natives of New England.

Take a look into France and you will find some of her principal men and wealthiest merchants are Americans. Mr. Winslow, of Havre, one of the richest merchants in all France, is a son of Maine. Mr. Thayer, the Post Master General of France in 1850, informed me that his father was a New Englander.

But I must not stop to enumerate. Inquiries in Italy and Germany will find a similar answer.

Every year a fresh band go out. They are true Americans at heart, and their intelligence, their enterprize, and I am proud to say their integrity give them position and influence wherever they locate.

The American name is already potent, and through the agency of these men, who are voluntary missionaries of republicanism and her usual diplomatic agents, our government will be able peaceably to compel the retrograde tyrannies of continental Europe to look after

the interests of the people, to educate them and then put them in the enjoyment of their political and social rights.

Now New England has an important part to act in this grand drama. She is a sort of mother to the rest of our own country. Her Sons are scattered thickly throughout the length and breadth of the land. Every field of enterprize, every path of ambition is marked by their energy and by their intelligence. Of these noble New Englanders Maine furnishes her full quota, and good old Oxford handsomely maintains her reputation. The latter had four Representatives in the last Congress, although in point of population she was only half entitled to one.

We are doing well; tho' true it is, our population is not increasing so rapidly as that of many other States. We should wish this otherwise, yet it is no cause for alarm.

Instead of being derogatory, it may be no slight compliment and honor to the Fathers and Mothers of Maine that so many of their sons are called to important stations abroad. It demonstrates, methinks, that they possess integrity and ability; that have been well educated.

And this is the point to which we must look with especial care; we must by every possible means encourage education. We must spare no pains to secure as a basis for this education an unswerving moral principle—an integrity that cannot be tempted out of its course. This is utterly indispensable to influence in society and to success in business. One of the most successful business men in our State told me a short time since that he had never known a man to get rich in any regular business who did not possess a reputation for the strictest integrity. To such an integrity, unite habits of temperance, of frugality, and industry, and there can be no danger.

With our excellent Free School system intelligence will now take care of itself; I have not the least fear on that point. New England character is stamped with a moral strength and an intellectual superiority which I never appreciated before mingling with the people of other of the most enlightened Nations. It is my sincere conviction that I can

select a hundred men in this county who could rule a State or lead an Army, with better judgment and success than any sovereign of Europe, save Nicholas of Russia.

And it is in this that the true pride and glory of a nation ought to consist; in her people, in a virtuous and intelligent people.

This has not been acted upon in times past, if it has been thought of. Statesmen have devoted their energies to developing and improving the material interests of nations, to multiplying physical comforts.

It surely is not now too soon for them to look above material and endeavor to improve to the mental nature—not that I would have them forget the lower object, but I would have them devote their chief efforts to the higher object, to the improvement of mind.

I take great pleasure in seeing the luxuriant crops, and fine cattle, which our farmers, the main pillar of the Republic, produce.

delight as much as most men, I think, to witness evidences of skill in our mechanics; and I recount with heartfelt pride every triumph of American enterprise. Yet how would these evidences of my country's progress sink into insignificance! how would my hopes fail, and my heart grow sick within me! If I thought she were not to rise above animal wants and material conveniences! If I could for a moment believe she were to stop here, midway in her glorious career. No! that must never be. Our country must not only produce the finest crops and cattle, but a nobler race of men than the world has ever yet seen. Men worthy of her and of the times in which they will be called to act then, and then only, will our beautiful and beloved country fulfil her holy mission, and mount upward to that high destiny for which Heaven has designed her.

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