

## SCIENTIFIC FARMING.

The value of Scientific Farming has been discussed until the question is threadbare, and yet it is one which may well bear a little further consideration. The success of Agriculture is a subject in which all are interested, whether they are farmers or not. Any improvement that will enable the wheat grower to raise larger crops is a blessing not only to the farmer, but to every poor beamstress and to every news-boy that occasionally indulges in the luxury of a penny loaf. The subject may have been worn threadbare, but it has not lost either in interest or in importance. Our attention has been recently called to it by some remarks which have appeared in the *Agriculturist* from the pen of the author of "Walks and Talks." "It would require," he says, "pretty conclusive evidence to make me believe that any purely scientific man had made farming pay." Further on, he remarks:—"It will not be long before every State has its Agricultural college. We ought not to ask or expect too much from them, or we shall be disappointed. The farms connected with them cannot and will not pay."

What is a "purely scientific man?" Is it a man who is most thoroughly acquainted with one or more sciences, and who is acquainted with nothing else? If so, then of course, a purely scientific man cannot make farming pay or anything else pay. Farming is an art as well as a science. If a man does not understand the art of farming, he had better not undertake to farm. But the same is true of science itself. Chemistry is an art as well as a science and we have seen men who could talk glibly about nitrogen, phosphorus, and carbon *et id genus omne*, and yet could not make an analysis, if their lives depended upon it. Mr. Harris tells us that Watt, (not Wattis) would never himself have succeeded in manufacturing steam engines with a profit. Very likely! for Watt tells us that he would as soon "have faced a loaded cannon, as settle an account with a man." But how was it with Wallaston? He was a member of the Royal Society; he was acknowledged by all to be one of the first chemists of the age: he has left his "foot-prints on the science, in the shape of numerous discoveries, and yet he was engaged in the business of manufacturing chemical vessels, and made \$150,000 by purely business operations;—not by stocks, nor by petroleum, nor by shoddy, nor by cheating. Fairbairn is a man that has "manufactured steam engines with a profit." Is he not a "scientific man?" Is Nasmyth, the inventor of the steam hammer not a "scientific man?"—and yet we believe he conducts a heavy business and makes money. How is it with Whitworth, with Stephenson, and others? It strikes us that these men are none the less scientific because they are practical, and none the less practical because they are scientific.

In regard to the farms attached to the Agricultural Colleges we would like to ask if the Michigan College Farm does not pay? We understand that it does, and the only farm of the kind within our knowledge that has not

paid, certainly cannot accuse science of its failure. On these farms there will always be large expenses for experiments. These will not pay directly in cash, and of them a separate account should be kept. Moreover these farms ought to be in a large measure, managed with a view to instruction. Good specimens of the different breeds of domestic animals should be kept, and this to an extent that a mere money-making farmer would consider injudicious. The same is true in regard to crops, and for all these peculiar necessities ample allowance ought to be made and we have sufficient faith in the good sense of the public, to believe that it will be made. But if the general farming operations of our Agricultural Colleges do not pay, then they will fail in one of their chief objects, for they will fail to teach that kind of farming which alone can be adopted as a business—the farming that pays.

But the point in Mr. Harris' article to which we chiefly take exception, is the following:—"Some time ago I was reported as saying that we wanted young men of capital, intelligence, and enterprise, who should engage in farming with a determination to make it pay. If I said so, I spoke thoughtlessly, for it is not my idea at all. We want intelligent educated men, who love farming, and who are determined to adopt it as the business of their lives, and who shall follow it with all the skill and science and energy they can command. A manufacturer who should engage in making woollen goods with a determination to make it pay would probably soon furnish nothing but shoddy. A grocer whose only object was profit would be tempted to give us more peas than coffee. And the young man who engages in farming, determined to make it pay will probably skin his hand, or advertise 'Japan spring wheat that will yield 60 bushels per acre,' or go into the chicken business, or sell grades for thorough-breeds."

We doubt very much if Mr. Harris means what he says. To us it seems more probable that his mind has been following some out-of-the-way line of argument to which we have no clue. In other words he has been indulging in a day-dream of which he has given us a few unconnected fragments. We can hardly believe that he thinks that every man who is anxious to do a good business would cheat. His article considered as a homily on the text "Beware of covetousness," is most excellent. But when viewed as a "Talk" from one "good" farmer—or at least from one farmer who "means to be good"—to another, we regard it as decidedly objectionable.

Our belief has always been that money is one of the main springs that drive our factories, our farms, aye, and many of our churches! Our grocer stands behind his counter for—money; our manufacturer furnishes us with goods for—money; our preacher preaches to us and prays for us, in a measure at least, for money. And yet they are all honest men. The first does not put peas in our coffee; some of our garments at least have not been shoddy, and our pastor is an earnest Christian man.

And yet he works for money; he has a large family and his determination must be to make his calling "pay," for he has before him the fear of the text—"He that provideth not for his own household has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." And we hold that the man that accuses him of wrong doing therein is either a fool or an atheist.

Talk as we may, no business will be followed by those who can get out of it unless it will pay. And in our estimation we do want active, energetic, scientific young men who will make farming the business of their lives, and this they will do only upon condition that it will pay—for they were fools else. We want men who can furnish wheat for half what it now costs, so that the pittance of the poor may go twice as far as it now does; men who can make beef and mutton cheap, so that those who cannot get it now may eat and be strong. And this can be accomplished only by the application of science.

We extract the above from Moore's Rural New-Yorker, one of the best papers that come to our office. We have expended considerable money in experimenting, and are fully satisfied that no investment could be made more profitable, or more beneficial in Canada, and to Canada, than the proper establishment of an experimental seed farm, in connection with an Agricultural paper and a seed ware room. There may, must and will be, some losses on some kinds of seed; also considerable expense is necessary to establish a paper, but the profits on seeds that can be depended on are very great. It matters but little about the price paid; the farmers all want a continual change of seed, they want a place in the country where they can depend on being supplied with a genuine article. The profit will amply pay all the losses and experiments; but it takes a series of years to canvass, introduce, experiment, and establish such an institution. But once established and conducted by honorable men, its influence and utility become wider known, and better appreciated year by year. We would recommend the leading farmers of each section of the country, to form a business connection with such an establishment, to enable themselves to obtain the first varieties of new seeds that may from time to time be tested and approved of. Every farmer must now be convinced of the necessity of a continual renewal of our cereals.

We have now an agent travelling to different parts, examining and reporting to us about crops and stock, and if any of you have any superior kind of grain, roots, grass, stock, plants, or fruit, and consider it of value to the country, send word to us, giving full particulars. Should we consider it of importance we might call and examine for ourselves or send our agent, as we can speak of things that we have seen, with greater confidence than otherwise. He has lately been to Prescott and the Province of Quebec.