

composed of all those who believe in *progress* in husbandry, as in everything else, and have the personal direction of their farms. The farmers of this class do not believe that the earth gave up all her secrets at once to the tiller of the soil. They do not think, like the Chinese, that they are precisely in the centre of the world, and all others are *outside barbarians*. They see that the soil of the country has been exhausted by injudicious cropping, and feel the necessity of improvement.

They listen attentively to the chemist, or man of science, who tells them what are the components of the soil, and of the crop, and in what way they can best restore to the barren field the elements of fertility. They are willing to hear about subsoiling and draining, and to think upon the reasons given why those operations should be beneficial. They can conceive, and believe, upon paper evidence, that there may be manures besides what are found in the barn-yard. In short, they are willing to "try all things" that they may "hold fast that which is good," or in other words to expend time and money in making experiments for the benefit of their neighbours. These men are emphatically *Practical Farmers*—practical as opposed to the mere *theorist*—practical in the highest sense as men whose labours are of practical use to themselves and their fellow men.

There is still another class, who, as cultivators of the soil, are *practical* men. We refer to the gardener and horticulturist,—from whose experiments have been derived many of the most important improvements in the arts of cultivation. Witness the labours of those, both in Europe and in this country, in the production by hybridization, of new and valuable farm products, for the apple, the pear and the peach. The beet, the turnip, the cauliflower, and even the strawberry and raspberry are as much agricultural products when grown within, as without the pale of the garden fence. These are the men who have uniformly urged the necessity not of shallow plowing, but deep and thorough tillage; not guess work in the adaptation of soils, crops and manures, by a scientific knowledge of each; and should the farmer use the same precision in the adaptation of the constituents he uses for his various crops, as the gardener does for his various tribes of plants, it would need no seer to predict the beneficial effects resulting from it.

A practical cultivator is not necessarily a man who daily holds the plough, or drives a team, or shovels manure, or digs ditches. He may or may not put his own hands to such labours; and if he finds it more convenient to devote his time to the general direction of his affairs, while a foreign labourer, who can do nothing else, is hired for such work, he does not forfeit his title of *Practical Farmer*, nor the labourer merit that appellation.

If to be a practical farmer is merely to labour with the hands, then the farmer who has extended his practical operations on his farm so far that his whole time is required to direct them merely, is no practical farmer, although practical results may have multiplied indefinitely around him—an absurdity which can never be tolerated.—*New England Farmer*.

LORD SPENCER'S RULES FOR THE SELECTION OF MALE ANIMALS FOR BREEDING.

The first things to be considered in the selection of a male animal are the indications by which it may be possible to form a judgment as to his constitution. In all animals a wide chest indicates strength of constitution, and there can be no doubt that this is the point of shape to which it is most material for any breeder to look to in the selection either of a bull or a ram. In order to ascertain that the chest of these animals is wide, it is not sufficient to observe that they have wide bosoms; but the width which is perceived by looking at them in the front should be continued along the brisket, which ought to show great fullness in the part which is just under the elbows; it is also necessary that they should be called thick through the heart. Another indication of what a good constitution is, that a male animal should have a masculine appearance; with this view a certain degree of coarseness is by no means objectionable, but this coarseness should not be such as would be likely to show itself in a castrated animal, because it thus might happen that the oxen or wethers produced from such a sire would be coarse also, which in them would be a fault. Another point to be attended to, not merely as an indication of a good constitution, but as a merit in itself, is, that an animal in itself should exhibit great muscular power, or rather that his muscles should be large. This is an usual accompaniment of strength of constitution; but it also shows that there will be a good proportionate mixture of lean and fat in the meat produced from the animal, the muscles being that part which in meat is lean. A thick neck is, in both bulls and rams, a proof of the muscles being large, and there hardly can be a greater fault in the shape of a male animal of either sort, than his having a thin neck. I am inclined to say, that in the new Leicester breed of sheep, which is the breed to which I am accustomed, a ram's neck cannot be too thick. Other indications of muscle are more difficult to observe in sheep than in cattle. In a bull there ought to be a full muscle on each side of the back bone, just behind the top of the shoulder blades; he ought also to have the muscles on the outside of the thigh full, and extending down nearly to the hough. It will seldom happen that a bull having these indications will be found deficient in muscle. As I am writing for the use of farmers, it is quite unnecessary for me to attempt a description of what is considered a well shaped bull or ram; it is also obviously impossible to express in words what is meant by good handling. It is sufficient to say, therefore, that no male animal is fit to be used at all as a sire, whose handling is not good, and the more perfect his shape, the better.

FRENCH SHEEP-DOGS.—An English traveller speaks of the dogs which are used in Normandy, in the management of sheep, as being uncommonly valuable. He thus describes one:—"The animal was some cross of the breed commonly known in England as lurchers; and the quick sparkle of the eye, and the ready and eager intelligence of his face as he watched his master, and flew round and round the flock at the slightest gesture, or merely mumbled word of