

FARMERS' POSITION AND REQUIREMENTS.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

While acknowledging the receipt of the last year's volume of the *Agriculturist*, and also the first three numbers of the present volume, I cannot forego expressing the pleasure and profit I derived from perusing your useful paper. Every man, as he is tied down to a little spot of earth, must remain absolutely ignorant, without a medium through which he can obtain information suited to his circumstances in the vocations of life. This sentiment applies to every department in life, but to some departments more than others; and, as a matter of course, it applies to those departments which have the largest field of operation. On looking around, then, upon the pursuits of men, and taking necessity as our guide, what field of operation are we pointed to but that which may *emphatically* be said to sustain life? It has been truly said, that a knowledge of the sciences alone will not help a man to live. No, I answer, nor yet a knowledge of the arts alone, but a knowledge of both, combined with physical power, will help a man to live, and thrive too. Speaking of agriculture, which produces the staff of life, the mind is led to ask, what does it embrace? I answer, both art and science. Some men who are trying to climb to the temple of Fame, with no better foundation than a few musty manuals, and supposing that they have monopolised the whole circle of the sciences, may perhaps look down from their proud eminence, with surprise and disdain, at such an idea; but tarry a moment before you proceed.

The earth with all its productions exist, and are governed by well directed laws, both absolute and relative; the earth and its products are connected with agriculture, therefore it embraces natural philosophy. The influence good and bad exerted upon agriculture, by the conformation of various strata and soils, embraces geology. The matter of the earth, which contains the essential principles of vegetation, embraces chemistry. The calculations, computations, &c. necessary in well organized agriculture, embrace mathematics. The working of the various implements used in husbandry to keep them in proper order, and to work them to advantage, requires some knowledge of mechanics. The management of stock, which is indispensable in farraing pursuits, demands at least some knowledge of anatomy and physic. We might also say there is full scope for the florist, the horticulturist, and the botanist. But how foolish am I to stop here enumerating one thing at a time in full detail, while agriculture embraces every thing under the sun!

But a question has often sought—nay demanded a direct answer. Although agriculture embraces all the above branches, and more, are they all absolutely essential to its prosperity? I answer, I know not how to dispense with any of them. Well, then, for the medium. Your efforts, gentlemen, are praiseworthy, and long may those efforts continue to bless community! but will those efforts suffice to furnish the medium? No doubt

they will, if agriculturists by means of these can be taught one thing, and that is, their *proper position in society*. Why, I ask, is the farmer to be called a mere creature of toil, any more than the mechanic? Why less capable of filling important and responsible offices in the state, or in trade, than the merchant and the lawyer? Why are the farmers' sons or daughters to be put off with the mere skin and bones of education, any more than the children of a prince?

It is necessary that farmers should cultivate a feeling of self-reliance, and bring to their aid the various means of extended knowledge in bringing out the great resources of the soil. A suitable education would prevent their being subjected to impositions from other classes, and consequently promote their own interests and those of the country.

D. G. FLETCHER.

THE HIGHLAND AND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND.

The Directors of this national society, to which the agriculture of the civilised world is deeply indebted, have decided that *Tenant farmers* shall be admitted members thereof at the reduced charge of 10s. per annum. This will no doubt contribute materially to the already great influence and usefulness of the Society,—“Of the benefits of which (as the *Scottish Farmer* observes) to the agricultural industry of Scotland, it is unnecessary to speak. Its district shows and competitions,—its valuable publications—its premiums and prizes; and, we may add with reference to later times, its Veterinary College—its Chemical Department—and the speeches and discussions at its periodical meetings,—have had a powerful influence in stimulating improvement; and in fostering and encouraging that spirit of enterprise by which so great and such rapid advances have been made in every department of rural economy in this country during the last fifty years. It set the example for, and gave rise to, our various local clubs and associations, and it is acknowledged also, to have given origin to the Agricultural Society of the sister kingdom—a society which, in many respects, speedily surpassed its parent, and which has already been of essential service to the Agricultural industry of Britain.

ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF ENGLAND.—The annual exhibition of this important national society will take place this year at Exeter, about the middle of July. In 1851 the exhibition will be held in London, forming a part of the proposed display of the industrial production of the whole civilized world. The meeting for 1852 will be holden in the South Eastern district, comprising the counties of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. Already the principal towns in those counties have begun to vie with each other to obtain the show, and large sums of money have been subscribed. This society we are glad to observe is in every respect in a most healthy condition, maintaining a state of constant progression.