

plemont of agriculture, which in England would be taken to the village shop, and be again ready for use in an hour. I say nothing (important as are such considerations) of the privations which scattered settlers necessarily undergo from the want of adequate means of religious instruction, of education for their children, and of medical assistance, and of the absence of all main advantages of civilized society. Looking merely to the pecuniary results of the existing mode of settlement, it seems to me impossible to doubt that it is highly wasteful, and that the same labour better applied and directed, might produce a far larger amount of comfort and advantage to the early settlers in a new territory, and exempt them from many of the privations and hardships to which they are now exposed. It is difficult to understand what natural obstacle prevents such a territory from being occupied, not by individuals, but by Societies properly organized for mutual support and assistance, carrying with them, as they advance, all the means and appliances of Civilization. For this purpose what seems to be most required, is to carry further than has yet been done, the principle of making all who obtain land, pay for it such a price as at once to afford the means of effecting those improvements, by the construction of roads and bridges, and by erecting schools and other public Buildings, which are necessary for its regular and systematic occupation. If no public lands were alienated but at a price sufficient to pay for such improvements, and if the money obtained from their sale were so expended, land would only be purchased where the improvements were already in progress, while the settler receiving in return for the enhanced price he paid for land, not only the land, but the advantage of those works by which its profitable occupation is facilitated, would not in reality pay more, perhaps not so much for the land, as when it is disposed of at a very low and almost nominal price.

Where the previous improvident alienation of large quantities of land presents an obstacle to the adoption of the system of selling land in this manner, precisely the same results are attainable by the imposition of a moderate tax upon all land whether wild or reclaimed, and applying the proceeds to the same sort of improvements. Such a tax is not felt as any practical burden upon settled land, but presents a powerful bar to the acquisition or retention of land which cannot be turned to some account.

THE DAHLIA.

Few plants have ever excited more general interest than the dahlia, and no exotic has been more universally or successfully cultivated. It is so generally a favorite, that we take this opportunity to give a brief history of the plant, and to state a few facts concerning it, which our readers may be interested to know.

The botanical name *Dahlia* was given to this genus in honor of the Swedish botanist, Andrew Dahl, a pupil of the celebrated Linnæus. The propriety of this name has been disputed on account of its similarity to *Dalen*, a name previously given to a plant of an entirely different character; and many botanists agreed to change the name to *Georgina*, in compliment to Georgi, a naturalist of some note. De Candolle and other eminent botanists, whose opinions are worthy of respect, adopted the appellation, and many efforts have been made to establish it generally, but the original name had become too universal to be superseded.

The Dahlia is a native of the sandy plains of Mexico. A friend of the writer has often seen it growing in its native locality, and represents it as a bushy, herbaceous plant, seven or eight feet high, with single purple or blue flowers, by no means remarkable for its beauty. This genus was first discovered by Humboldt, but in what year we have no special information. There are only three distinct species of this plant known to botanists—the *D. Coccinea*, *D. Cervantesii*, and *D. Variabilis*. The first two species are little cultivated. From the *Variabilis* nearly all the numerous varieties of the dahlia at present known among florists are produced.

About the year 1789, the dahlia was introduced from Spain, where it had probably not been long cultivated, into England, but it is supposed to have been lost soon after its introduction. In 1804 some seeds were transmitted from the Royal Garden at Madrid to London; but it attracted very little notice till the year 1814, though it had been successfully cultivated in the Royal Gardens in Spain, France, and Germany. During the

last few years, however, it had made rapid advances towards a state of perfection in England and the United States.

The varieties of the *Dahlia Variabilis* are almost innumerable, and each succeeding year is adding to the number. These varieties have all been the result of change of soil and climate, and a high state of cultivation. The most admired among them are all double, though, by the process of doubling, unlike most other plants, florists inform us that they are not entirely incapacitated from producing seed. The only sure method by which any kind can be reproduced is by the root. The seeds, should any be formed, will afford some new or uncertain variety. The same is true of the accidental varieties of any species whatever. Being the result of cultivation, and not the natural product of the plant, they are reproduced only from the root or from cuttings.

The numerous varieties of the Dahlia are the glory of the garden in autumn, and at that season of the year they are unrivalled by any one of their companions. Mr. Wilson, of the city of Albany, who has been extensively engaged as a florist for nearly twenty years, and who has accumulated much valuable information respecting the culture of plants, informs us that a dry yellow loam is the soil best adapted to the dahlia—that being the soil in which it grows naturally in Mexico and Brazil.—*Christian Parlour Magazine*

A VISIT TO GENEVA.

At length we reached the city of Geneva, whence I address you. The scene wears an aspect every way *winterish*. But if summer has surpassing charms in Switzerland, winter is not destitute of attractions. The numberless summits of the Alps and of the Jura have a peculiar grandeur, and even beauty, when covered with a thick mantle of snow. I seemed to be at home again, as soon as I had reached the borders of the Lemman, and especially when I found myself in the streets again of the city of Calvin, the Rome of the Protestant world. Pleasant souvenirs came crowding upon my mind as I beheld again the interesting objects which here surround me. For here I have spent some of the most interesting days of my troubled life.

I have now passed one week in this delightful place. And how rapidly have the hours passed away! Not one day has gone in which I have not met many of those beloved Christians whose acquaintance I shall always value, as one of the greatest sources of happiness to me and mine which I have ever enjoyed. At the breakfast, the dinner, the tea-party, hours of richest enjoyment have passed away in the company and intercourse—so eminently Christian—of such men as Merle D'Aubigné, Malan, Gausson, Pilet, La Harpe, Tronchin, De Loriol, Saladin, Scherer, Guers, &c. I know not where nobler or purer spirits are to be met with in this world.

One thing delight me in these little social meetings at Geneva—nor is this peculiar to that city; one sees it in Christian circles in England, and other countries—it is the practice of closing them with the reading of the Scriptures and prayer. So it ought ever to be. When shall we see this to be not only *occasional*, but *common* with us! What a treat it is, after an evening spent in rich social enjoyment of this sort, to listen to a portion of the word of God, and bow down to worship him, and plead for the conversion of the world. I like the piety of our dear Swiss Christians. It is simple, all-pervading, affectionate. It sweetly flows out in all circumstances, and yet there is nothing repulsive, there is no cant, no formality, no effort, nothing which is inconsistent with the very highest refinement. It mingles with the most elegant accomplishments, and why should it not?

I am greatly gratified with the *advance* in every thing that concerns the kingdom of God which I witness here. As I have known Geneva quite well for these ten or twelve years, I am enabled to judge of this matter. And I am happy to say that there is real progress here. Truth is gaining ground. Even the late revolution which has occurred in this city and Canton, is far from retarding the work. On the contrary, I think it will advance it. Messrs. James Fazy, Rillior & Co., are better than M. Druey and his friends in the Canton De Vaud. They have done some good things, and would do many more if they could. One thing they have accomplished, for which they deserve credit; they have shorn the "Venerable