

(From the Albany Cultivator.)

North Deighton, Wetherby, Yorkshire, }
 April 17, 1841. }

GENTLEMEN—Your polite favour came to hand yesterday, for which I beg you will accept my best thanks. That any effort of mine for the spread of agricultural science, should entitle me to the notice of those who are devoting their energies to its cultivation in a country so far distant as America, I do not for a moment imagine, and for this reason it is that I feel it as a compliment. But it is not as a personal compliment that your communication gives me greatest pleasure, nor is it for the sake of bandying unmeaning verbiage (for such is reciprocal "cawing" to use the Scotchman's term), that I lose no time in acknowledging it; but because I regard it as one more evidence of the diffusion of a spirit of citizenship (if I may use the term,) in the cultivation of agricultural science. And, indeed, it is only by an encouragement of this spirit, which regards not the boundaries of nationality, and confines not its exertions to either 'New' or 'Old' World, that knowledge can ever be surely promoted, or that agriculture can ever be what it ought, an universal science, as perfect in its principles as it is profitable in its practice. That it is entitled to consideration as a profitable science, none I think, can deny; for of all sciences it is the only one which can be fairly said to produce or create wealth. Such, however, it does; and the nation encouraging it is encouraging the very means which will best increase its wealth. That it ever will become as perfect in its principles as it deserves cannot be asserted—we may hope it; that it will, however, become much more so than it is, is certain,—and the most conclusive evidence of this is the spirit of intercommunication and of reciprocal assistance between the agriculturists of different countries, who, having different soils, climates, and manners, have different opportunities of observing phenomena and recording truths. But I am speaking enthusiastically. In this cause, however, you will excuse it.

I am glad to observe that you have established a "New-York State Agricultural Society." Of the advantages to flow from it, it is unnecessary for me to dilate to you. Nevertheless, I may say, that in my opinion they will be neither few nor unimportant. In England, these societies are doing much, and they will yet do more—in what way I have endeavoured to show in the "Quarterly Journal of Agriculture" for last month, which you have perhaps seen.

But I augur success to your societies on another ground. The great obstacle to agricultural improvement in England has been an apathetic affection to old plans, and an aversion to modern improvements as "new fangled notions." This feeling you have not to contend with. A great proportion of American farmers, especially those who have emigrated from Europe, have no hereditary prejudices—they are men who have some Quixotic spirit in them—they have broken from the beaten path of their fathers—have risked their all in a country, to the climate, customs, and soil of which they were strangers, and they are, therefore, ready to seize upon every information, and to test every system which will increase their knowledge or improve their farms. Or, to speak plainly, they come as strangers, feel that they are ignorant, and are not above receiving instruction from any source. In England, very often, men inherit the farms upon which they were born, and with the property of the parent inherit, too, his prejudices. To them these prejudices are proverbial, and they practice them in spite of all the opposition that modern science can make. Education, however, is fast dispelling this cloud which has so long darkened the horizon. Even now, in Scotland, and the North of England, it is no bigger than a man's hand.

I cannot conclude without saying a word on the 'Cultivator.' Till its arrival, I had no idea that the American farmers could boast of such a journal—for, with all our advantages, I must say that we cannot show a journal likely to be so practically useful. Our journals may be, and are highly useful, but then their price, and the high tone in which they are written, confine them amongst the educated farmers who least require their aid. Was there a journal established here, and conducted in the practical manner that the Cultivator is, and at the same moderate charge, I have no more doubt of its complete success than I have

of its usefulness amongst that class of farmers who require enticing to "adopt" improvements. I have written at length, (and probably not intelligibly), for I must say, (and I am not ashamed that it is so), my zeal in the cause of agriculture is greater than my ability. As brother-labourers, however, in the same field, I know you will excuse my prolixity, and believe me to be, gentlemen,
 Your obliged servant,
 JOHN HANNAM.

JOHNSTOWN AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

We have before us an address delivered before the "District of Johnstown Agricultural Society," by Wm. O. BUEL, Esq., and which both in matter and manner is worthy of the important subjects discussed. These relate to agriculture itself; to its condition in the district embraced by the society; and the suggestion of such means of improvement in husbandry as seemed best adapted to the country. We should be pleased to extract liberally, but our limits forbid. As specimens we give one or two detached paragraphs. In treating of the best methods of improvement he says:—"But agriculture too is progressing by the assistance of science in good old England, as also in the United States. The efforts made by the learned, by agricultural associations, by experiment, are working wonders. The spirit has not yet prevailed our own beloved land. The way to begin the work is to get up and encourage a cheap periodical publication, and let every man feel it his duty to extend its circulation. This is a most powerful and effective means of doing good; it is no experiment it has been tried, and bears the impress of wisdom upon the face of it. Meanwhile the farmer—every farmer—no exceptions—should be supplied with an agricultural paper." After naming the Albany Cultivator as a valuable and cheap publication, he adds, "there may soon be a Canadian Cultivator." This last is an important suggestion. The farmers of the two Canadas ought to give such a paper an efficient support, and we know there is talent enough to make a most able and interesting journal.

There is much truth in the following remarks. Let every farmer read and remember. "It is easy to tell a good farmer by the appearance of his place, and it is always a blessing to a neighbourhood to have such in its midst. People will learn many things from him, without being, as it were, aware of it; they will learn in spite of themselves; his example and success will influence them. Now what I wish to say is, that whenever you hear of a good farmer, inquire all about him, about his farm, what stock he keeps, what grain he raises, how far he is from market, of his whole management; ask about his family; in short in your own minds, become thoroughly acquainted with him; and if you find any thing worth remembering, which cannot fail to be the case, remember it; any thing worth following, follow it. You need not wait to hear of a man of this kind, but when you meet with another farmer from a distant neighbourhood, ask who is the best farmer, and so on. Every neighbourhood, your own for instance, has some farmers better than others—now, why are they better? make the inquiry; trace the thing to the bottom—it may do you much good."—*lb.*

The following has been extracted from a very recent English publication of merit, written by A. Walker, and forwarded for publication in the Cabinet.

CATTLE.

The best cattle have the face rather short; the muzzle small; the horns fine; the neck light, particularly where it joins the head; the chest wide, deep and capacious; the tail broad and flat towards the top, but thin towards the lower part, which it always be, when the animal is small boned; the lower part of the thigh small; the legs short, straight, clean, and fine boned, though not so fine as to indicate delicacy of constitution; the flesh, rich and mellow to the feel; the skin of a rich and silky appearance; the countenance calm and placid, denoting the evenness of temper, essential to quick feeding and a disposition to get fat.

Every breed of animals which has, through a few generations (two or three is sufficient) been

overfed, requires similar feeding; and the offspring of such animals require and can digest more food than others, who have lived upon little.

All growing animals, including mankind, ought to be sufficiently well fed to preserve health and strength, but never to be stimulated by excess of food. The children of parents, however, who have, through many generations, been well fed, would perish if given no more food than would be sufficient for an Irish or Highland Scot's peasant child.

The chief qualities sought for in cattle are the tendency to fatten on little food, and that to yield abundance of rich milk. The tendency to fatten is indicated chiefly by the capacity of the chest. Animals of all species, says Mr. Knight, all other qualities being equal, are, I think, capable of labour and privation, and capable of fattening, nearly in proportion, as their chests are capacious; but the habits of ancestry will operate very powerfully.

It is the width and depth of frame, says Mr. Berry, which confers weight, and not the mere circumstance of great height. While equally great, if not greater weights, can be obtained with shorter legged animals, they are, independently of other recommendations, generally found to possess better constitutions and greater propensity to fatten.

Mr. Knight says, the constitutional disposition to fatten, is certainly hostile to the disposition to give milk. Cows which give little milk often present large udders, which contain much solid matter; and, to inexperienced eyes, a two year old Hereford cow would give a promise of much milk, where very little would be given. A narrow forehead, and a long face, nearly of the same width from end to end, as in the Alderney cow, certainly indicates much more disposition to give milk than the contrary form, which I have pointed out as indicative of a disposition to fatten.

Fat animals are more generally those of the north, where cold diminishes sensibility. Fat indeed, appears to be the means which nature very extensively employs to lower sensibility by interposition between the skin and the central parts of the nervous system. Fat animals, accordingly, have not only less sensibility and irritability of the skin, but of the organs of sense generally. Thinner animals, on the contrary, are more generally those of the south, and have more acute sensibility and exquisite sensation.

In reply to this observation, Mr. Knight says, I do not doubt but you are right respecting the use of fat in cold climates; all sleeping animals, through winter, go to sleep in a fatted state. I do not think that breeds of cows, which give much rich milk, are very hardy. The Alderney cows are what the Herefordshire farmer calls very nesh, that is, very incapable of bearing hardship of any kind, and particularly cold, consequently of greater sensibility.

Cows which give much milk have the power of eating and digesting much food, and they require, whilst they give much milk, a very abundant and good pasture. The breeds of cows which give less milk, and present greater disposition to become fat, are generally less nesh, and will fatten upon less food. The influence of the feelings is very considerable. I have observed that whenever a young Hereford cow disliked being milked by the dairymaid, she soon ceased to give milk; and I do not doubt that, in all cases, if the calves were twice every day permitted to suck after the dairymaid had finished her labour, the cows would longer continue to give milk and in larger quantity.

This tends to corroborate what has been said as to greater sensibility being favourable to milking.

If this led only to distinction of these two kinds as to milking, namely,—that of fatness and thinness, and that of smaller and larger organs of sense and greater or less sensibility, it would still be valuable, as showing, either at a later or an earlier period, what we may expect in this important particular. But perhaps its utility may extend still further, and enable us to improve the race.

It may form a basis for our determining whether, in endeavouring to improve a breed, fatteners may most easily also become milkers, to some extent; or milkers may, to a similar extent, become fatteners; and what are the circumstances which would most favour such partial interchange, if not absolute improvement.