

thereon manure, coal, lime, ashes, and salt. Instead of applying large quantities of quick lime at distant periods, it is far better to apply a less quantity and often, to make up for the loss that occurs from its being dissolved in water and carried with it into rivers and the ocean.

Leached ashes are valuable, when applied to grass lands; and are far from being worthless on wheat, rye, oats, and barley—all of which need their silicate of potash to give them a good firm stem. Grass and wheat know well how to convey the apparently insoluble elements in leached ashes up into their organic structures, as did the trees from which these ashes were obtained.

D. L.

Buffalo, Dec. 17, 1843.

New Genesee Farmer.

EVERY FARMER SHOULD TAKE AN AGRICULTURAL PUBLICATION.

MR. EDITOR:—I have for a long time entertained the opinion that farmers generally are not interested enough in agricultural publications. It may be true that many of our most intelligent farmers fully appreciate them; but there are others who know not the value of the information these publications afford, and who are ignorant of their own ignorance and need of information. There are prejudices in the minds of some farmers against all agricultural reading, or "book farming," as they term it. They have known some fanciful theory to be advanced in an agricultural paper, which, from their own experience, they are confident is unsound; and from this, are ready to condemn any thing thus advanced as void of practical utility. Some writer has recommended that lime be applied to certain soils as a dressing for corn, whereupon they have dropped their corn into lime, or have dropped a handful of lime upon their corn. The consequence is, their corn never comes up, and "book farming" is by them ever after despised. I have heard of instances something like this. I will not deny that there have been erroneous opinions widely circulated in agricultural papers—that certain articles and practices have been recommended too highly to farmers. But notwithstanding this I am fully confident that the influence of these publications has been good—that they have been instrumental in improving our agriculture, and consequently of benefiting the farmers. There is *chaff* in the literary and agricultural as well as in the vegetable world, but he must be unfortunate indeed, whose harvest is all *chaff*.

I do not believe that any practical farmer who will subscribe for such a paper (the *Maine Farmer*, for instance,) pay for it and read it for a year, will at the end of that period be any poorer in consequence. It hardly seems possible that any sensible farmer can read your paper, containing as it does, the matured ideas of some of the best practical and theoretical farmers in the country, without deriving some hints for the improvement of his own practice, which will amply repay him for all the time and money expended. He may be much benefitted, even if he does not follow precisely and throughout the directions of a single article. In reading and applying the best directions, a share of common sense is necessary. What may apply to one farm may not to another so well: differences of soil, situation and climate require a different management; and a person who expects to be profited by an agricultural paper without any thought on his part, is laboring under a mistake. These publications are valuable, for they tend to encourage thought and investigation, and to give the farmer an increased interest in his occupation, as well as to impart knowledge.

That instruction is best which not only enlarges one's own ideas but contributes to mental activity. By becoming acquainted with the ideas and practices of others, our confidence is increased in whatever we have in our own management that is really good, while our errors are quite likely to be discovered when brought into contact with what is superior in others.

Some have said that they already know how to manage a farm better than they are able to manage their own. I would ask such if they do not think it possible, with greater knowledge, and only their present means,—the same labor and capital,—to carry on farming more successfully than ever before? It requires not a little knowledge to manage a farm in all its departments, laying out a given amount of labor and capital, in the *best manner possible*. And I do not think it is doing injustice to the farmers of our State to say that there is not a single farm in Maine which is thus managed. I will go farther, and say that I do not believe there is a person in the State who has the requisite knowledge to do it. There is, however, a great difference in the management of farms among us; but let the best conducted farm in the State be pointed out, and perhaps every intelligent farmer would see something about it which he *knows* might be done better and to greater profit. If the best farms are susceptible of improvement, then all are:—if the best informed farmers need to progress in knowledge, then all have something to learn: and I know of no more efficient helps to the farmer in this work than our well conducted agricultural journals.

Farming is a complicated business. It embraces a wide field, which it requires time and deep study to explore. Some have turned their attention to one branch, some to another, and every intelligent, thinking farmer is capable of giving useful information upon some branch of his business. Let them exchange ideas and impart information to each other as they are able. He who imparts is not impoverished—he who receives is enriched.

The above communication we copy from the "*Maine Farmer*," and we recommend it to the attention of our subscribers. We can do this without hesitation, because it is not our own production.

THE ADVANTAGE OF SCIENCE TO AGRICULTURE.

MR. BRECK—I recollect seeing in a recent number of your well-conducted journal, an article commenting on an extract from one of the agricultural papers, in which the writer treated in a spirit of ridicule the idea of any advantage accruing to agriculture through the agency of "ammonia, alkali," &c.

It is strange, passing strange, to me, that men of apparent intelligence should be disposed rather to tickle the prejudice and bigotry of the illiterate, than to commend and encourage the enlightened efforts of those whose researches have resulted in developing such important improvements—or truths which are the elements of improvements—as those which have been brought to bear so successfully upon agriculture within the space of the last quarter of a century. I say it is strange that such should be the fact, yet it is not uncommon. There are those among us—writers for the public press, too—who, as soon as a principle of deduction of science is recommended to the farmer, for test, to see if it may not be of benefit to him in some particular case, are ready to prejudice him against it by the cry of "moonshine" or "humbug."

I frankly confess I have no charity for such persons. If they are sincere in their detraction, it is their igno-