

FARMING IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

The following compact comparison of the agriculture of these two countries, found in Mr. Howard's letters from Europe, will be interesting to many of our readers :—

The change in the rural scene is particularly striking. Instead of the large square fields of England, divided by green hedges, and each field devoted to a particular crop, we see but few fences, except those along the road side; the land occupied by different crops, consisting of long narrow strips, which, particularly where the surface is uneven, gives a singular aspect to the country. It is not uncommon to see a strip of wheat, one of oats, one of lucern, clover, or grass, and one composed of patches of different kinds of vegetables—neither strip being more than a rood in width—all belonging to one occupant. Sometimes, but rarely we pass a farm where cultivation is pursued more on the English system. The absence of domestic animals is noticed at once. In England, the numerous flocks and herds add greatly to the interest and beauty of the landscape. In France we pass for miles without seeing a sheep or a cow. Herein is a difference which forms an important distinction in the agriculture of the two countries. The one strives to produce all the meat it can, and in so doing provide for the support (and even the increase) of the fertility of the soil, and the greater production of breadstuffs. The other keeps the smallest number of domestic animals that it can get along with. The statistics of the two countries show the immense advantage of the English system.

Instead of the turnips and other root crops of England, we see the exhausting crops of hemp, sometimes of tobacco, and the cereal grains, without a proper supply of manures. The grain crops are evidently much less in yield than those of England, and what grass there is, much less luxuriant. Lucern is largely cultivated in some sections, and appears to flourish well. Along the Seine and on other alluvial deposits it affords four or five cuttings in a season. Under such circumstances it is an admirable crop. It would be a fine thing in America, if we could cultivate it with the same results; but I think numerous experiments have proved that the extensive drouth and extreme cold of our country, during the first year of its growth, are too severe for it.—*Country Gentleman.*

HORSES v. OXEN.

Which is the most profitable team for the farmer—horses or oxen? The question has been variously debated, but we have seen no better statement of both sides of the case than that given by Thaer, in his *Principles of Agriculture*. He (in substance) says :—

Horses are capable of all kinds of farm labour; they adapt themselves to every road and every degree of temperature. When horses are kept, there is no occasion to select their particular kind of labour; they may be employed in any work, and be attached to any vehicle or implement of the farm.

Horses perform all kinds of work expeditiously as well as continuously, thus keeping those who labour with them more fully employed than is the case in working with oxen.

Horses though less steady at heavy draught than oxen, have the advantage of spirited, rapid motion, enabling them to overcome all obstacles of short duration, and such as would frequently stop oxen.