

It is impossible to state the benefits which result from an extensive practice of this system. I have been able to steam hay that has been perfectly white with mould, and have ultimately brought it into as good a state as any hay that you can get out from the middle of a rick. (Hear, hear.) I am using the system rather extensively, and find it of great benefit. I have pigs on my farm which, during the last month have been gaining weight at the rate of 20 lbs. a week. (Hear, hear.) I do not mean to say that this is very extraordinary, but it shows what the system is calculated to effect. The other matter is, the cultivation of mustard. This many persons have tried, and have found it to answer exceedingly well; but I hope to see the day when it will be as common to sow mustard after the corn is cleared off, as it is to follow it with turnips. (Applause.) Many benefits arise from it: it keeps down the weeds, and is profitable, while the outlay upon the ground is only about 4s. to the acre.

L. F. ALLEN, ESQ.,—HIS FARM STOCK, &c.

In our first number (of the *Agriculturist*), we published a communication from Mr. Allen, of Black Rock, New York, addressed to us when Editor of the *Canada Farmer*, relative to some observations which we made in that Journal, upon his farm, buildings, stock, &c., at Grand Island. We had written a few remarks explanatory of two or three points in Mr. A.'s letter, which were intended to accompany it, but by some mistake their omission was not discovered till the *form* had gone to press, and being so far behind with our first number, we were unwilling to delay the press a single moment to make alterations, not absolutely required.

The readers of the *Farmer* will probably recollect the drift of our remarks, upon what we saw on visiting Mr. A.'s farm last fall. They will be able to understand the force of Mr. Allen's observations, and the true questions at issue between us, if we can properly be said to be at issue at all. Those who have not taken or seen the *Farmer*, will not so well appreciate the points under discussion.

There are generally two extremes to subjects like the present, into one or other of which a large proportion of those who think, talk and write about them are apt to stray. The man who has given his attention, and spent his money in selecting and breeding an improved variety of any of the domestic animals, will be very likely to think highly of them, and extol their merits a little beyond their real deserts. If he has had tolerable success he very naturally feels proud of it, and besides if he has spent much money he will be anxious to get it back again. The result is, that he wishes to make every body else take the same exaggerated view that he does himself. On the other hand, there are those who doggedly adhere to one course, because they have always followed it. They have no desire for improvement; the old way answers their purpose; tell them of any thing new that is worthy of their notice, and they regard it as a direct imputation upon their knowledge and practice; just as if they did not know every thing worth knowing, and did not do every thing in the best possible manner. Such people will never acknowledge the superiority of any thing over what they possess, and consequently they go to the other extreme. Now we have endeavoured, and in the conduct of our paper, shall always endeavor to take a straight forward, common sense, practical and just view of all subjects liable to these extremes. We may err, we may not be sufficiently acquainted with the question to argue it aright, but nevertheless we shall try. We are satisfied that no substantial good can be accomplished, in attempting to promote improvement in agriculture by misrepresentation or humbug. We shall strive to discuss every matter fairly; to examine it in all its aspects.

It was in this spirit and with this object that we made the following, among other observations on the subject of "improved breeds" of cattle, in the article to which Mr. Allen refers:—

"The truth is, the best breeds of domestic animals, as well as the best varieties of grain and vegetables, require the best management; a constant application of skill and care to maintain, and perpetuate their superior qualities. The man who lays out large sums of money to stock his farm with Durham, Devon, or Hereford cattle, Berkshire pigs, and South Down, Leicester, or Cotswold sheep, and then pursues the same old system of neglect; leaving every thing to take care of itself; or, when he does interfere, obstructing nature's efforts instead of helping or taking advantage of them; allowing the butcher to cull his flocks of the best—the conservative individuals, whose superior character would keep up the general standard, had much better invest his capital in some other way. No: but that the improved breeds will, even in bad hands and under the operation of degenerating causes, still maintain a superiority over the common kinds in like circumstances, but the difference will not be sufficient to justify their original expense. The tendency of everything of this kind is *downward*. It would seem to be a part of the "primeval curse," that those products of the animal and vegetable kingdom essential to man's existence, should demand his constant care, and the exercise of his highest skill to prevent them from 'running out.'"

After showing the unsoundness of the doctrine, that the difference between the "improved breeds" and the "natives," is wholly owing to blood, or ancestral and physiological superiority, and that the natives are incapable of improvement by any process, we added the following:—

"But it may be asked what need then of importing Durhams, &c., at great expense, and paying high prices for their stock? For the simple reason that in them we have ready to our hand what has cost long years of labor and skill to produce, and what can not be accomplished by any shorter method now. Their good qualities as far as they can be, are established. We have a vantage ground to start from, and thus time and expense, and an exercise of skill that very few of us have, are dispensed with. The practical conclusion that we are driving at is just this: Let us have good stock, the best we can get, because they are the most profitable. The 'improved breeds' are the best, the several kinds according to the purposes for which they are wanted. Therefore, let us procure one of the improved breeds. But without spoiling our syllogism, we must add this conclusion; where we are not able to stock our farm with Durhams, Devons or Ayrshires, let us not neglect the natives; especially let us not do so under the notion that they are incapable of improvement that between them and the former there is an 'impassible gulph.' Time and care will enable us to cross it."

We hold the same opinions still, notwithstanding the clever and apparently clinching arguments of our excellent friend. He must not speak so contemptuously of the "scrubs or natives as you call them," or when he pays us a visit, which we expect some of these days, we shall take him to see some "natives" that will "astonish" him, or if they do not we are certain he will "astonish the natives."

He gets the better of us altogether, when he asks us to tell him "by what process, and through what combinations the different breeds of the Short-horn, Hereford or the Devon cattle were produced." The noted breeder and author of the *American Herd Book* should not have imposed so "deep" a subject upon a mere amateur—upon one who can hardly say more than that he "desires to look into these things." We fear Mr. A. that as the beggar said to the gentleman of "blood," who was boasting the great exploits of his ancestors for many generations, if we go deep enough into the matter, we shall find that about the time of Noah, our ancestors were very nearly related, and so of the improved and native breeds of cattle. It surely rests upon those who assert the affirmative, to adduce the proof of it. The Short-horn writers are fond of claiming for their favorites a very high antiquity, and thence argue the inherent distinctiveness of the breed, and the absolute permanence of their superiority. Now we admit the superiority, and urge the advantage of procuring them as stock, but we deny the correctness of the arguments or proofs by which that superiority is in part made out. This is the difference, if there be any, between us and Mr. Allen; Mr. A. in his *Herd Book* (extracts from which we shall take the liberty of publishing hereafter in our paper), strives hard to make out the claim for his Short-horns, to a long line of distinguished ancestry, but when he gets beyond the time of