

remark which has somewhere been made, at a meeting of this kind, that an ounce of experience is worth more than a whole ton of advice. Nevertheless I feel that societies of this kind are made chiefly useful by each contributing to the common stock of information that which by his opportunities and abilities he is best fitted to impart. I have this year travelled considerably abroad for the benefit of my health, and having thereby had an opportunity of instituting a comparison between British and foreign systems of agriculture, I have no hesitation in saying—and I believe I shall be borne out by all great authorities—that within the last half century, British agriculture has made an enormous advance over that of foreign countries. In many important respects the foreigner is woefully behind us. The power of steam, as applied to agricultural pursuits, seems to be entirely unknown to him. I heard the old flail going by the road-side, and I believe that if a thrashing machine or steam plough were suddenly landed on any of his farms, he would regard it as the result of supernatural agency. I saw also that for the purpose of winnowing he resorts to the novel expedient of placing the corn on a large sheet, and leaving it to the four winds of Heaven to separate the chaff from the grain. But what struck me more, perhaps, than anything abroad was the extent to which female labour is employed. That may arise, in some degree, from the complicated state of society in foreign lands, and to the system of conscription—or its equivalent—by which men are taken from the farm at an early age and converted into soldiers. As a consequence the land is obliged to be cultivated by women, who, at the age of twenty, when they ought to be better looking than at any other period of their lives, appear to be between forty and fifty. There is no kind of labour which women do not perform in foreign lands. They weed, they hoe, they sow, they till the land, they load the carts and even drive them—such is their habitual occupation. Now I am glad to say that such labour is more the exception than the rule in this country. There are several other features of contrast between English and foreign agriculture, but it is unnecessary for me to waste your time in explaining them. Suffice it to say, that I am convinced that the English system is one which not only contributes in a larger degree to the wealth of the nation than that of foreign countries, but also to the social attainments of the people—to the maintenance of healthy relations between tenants and proprietors, and to that happy constitution of society which will ever make us the envy and admiration of the world. We are not, it is almost unnecessary to remind you, working alone, for I believe there are no fewer than four hundred Agricultural Societies and one hundred-and-fifty Farmers' Clubs in the United Kingdom. I say success to one and all of them, for we must recollect that in promoting the progress of agricultural improvement, we are not only lightening the national burden, and alleviating the distress of the poor, but that we are also engaged in one of the noblest and highest tasks that can be conceived—namely, that of improving the condition of all classes in this country.

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## THE INTRODUCTION OF STEAM-POWER INTO COMMON PRACTICE.

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BY A PRACTICAL FARMER.

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The chief topic now under discussion amongst the farming community, is the modern introduction of steam power into ordinary farm practice; and the advocates of the different systems of culture, or application of the power, are alike equally sanguine as to the important change and ultimate benefits. That this gigantic power will be so modified, so simplified in its general character, as to become applicable to the common routine of modern farm practice, I do not entertain a doubt—it is merely the work of time, and engineering, and mechanical skill.

I shall not attempt to compare the various systems of cultivation, or even allude to them further than to show what may be the provable alterations in the management of those farms where this new system will be introduced; and the power of steam is adopted in lieu of horse and manual power whenever it can be found practically beneficial. My own impression is, that the order of culture will be so surprisingly improved, that the enhanced produce it will achieve will be so considerable, that the inducements continually opening out before the steam-power farmer, of still greater results, will so satisfy him; that he will be readily disposed to employ both more horse and more man-