

MESSRS. NESBIT'S ACADEMY, KENNINGTON, LONDON.

In the month of December last, a numerous company of ladies and gentlemen assembled at the above establishment, to witness the examination of the pupils, and the chair was taken by Wm. Shaw, Esq., Editor of the Mark Lane Express, the true friend of Agriculture, supported by many other gentlemen connected with agriculture and science.

The Chairman, after some preliminary remarks, said:—

But I am sensibly impressed with the conviction that we are not at all times to consult our own feelings, but that, as citizens of the world, it is incumbent upon us to take upon ourselves any duty which we can perform, assuming, of course, that its performance is calculated to promote the general good (cheers). Mixed up as I have been all my life with agricultural pursuits, there is no occasion on which I could be called to take part in the proceedings of an evening like this, without a feeling of high gratification; for I consider that in agricultural, as well as in other pursuits, a vast deal depends on the first moulding of the human mind; indeed, I have ever been of opinion that the shortest course to an improved cultivation of the soil is that which begins with the cultivation of the mind; and I am exceedingly glad that Mr. Nesbit has set an example of that course of action, which I believe to be the best adapted and most likely to introduce a better system of education in reference to agriculture. (Hear, hear.) I know that there has been established a seminary of education, entitled the Cirencester Agricultural College; and a friend of mine, who is a zealous supporter of that institution, is present on this occasion. I, for one, rejoice in the establishment of that college, as I rejoice in the establishment of any institution which is calculated to promote sound education; but it has ever been my conviction, in respect to the effecting an improvement in the cultivation of the minds of youths who are intended for the pursuits of agriculture—I speak of improvement in relation to their peculiar business—that the only chance of attaining that object was by the introduction of a new, an improved, and a better system, specially adapted to that particular object, into the schools in which youths are now educated. (Hear, hear.) We have not yet arrived at that point when we can induce the tenant-farmers of this country—and I would go beyond tenant-farmers—I would desire to include the sons of landlords in the improved sys-

tem of instruction (Hear, hear.)—I say, we have not yet arrived at a period when we can induce farmers to send their sons to new establishments. We must bring information home to their doors, instead of sending them to other and new institutions to obtain it—(Hear, hear.)—and I believe that the best and only mode of doing this, is by seeking to bring about a system of education especially adapted to their pursuits, in those schools throughout the country to which they are in the habit of sending their children to be educated. In this way, we shall be setting into motion a thousand established seminaries for improved education for one new one, even if we could succeed in inducing some farmers to send their children to any such new institutions, (Hear.) In these days a great deal of interest is attached to the education of the future agriculturists. From a variety of causes agriculture has become, I may say, the topic of the day. And really it is not surprising that it should be so; on the contrary, it is astonishing that it has not been so long since, inasmuch as you may trace almost every important article which we daily use and enjoy, to the soil for its origin. We do not sufficiently reflect what a large proportion of the articles which we consume, whether as food or otherwise, are derived from the soil, and may therefore be correctly termed agricultural products. While we speak of the food which is raised for our sustenance, and of the wool with which we are clothed, we forget, perhaps, that coffee, sugar, and cotton are also articles of agricultural produce, and which we regard now as necessaries of life; and if you scrutinize the various other articles which enter into our clothing and our food, you will find that by far the greater proportion of them may with propriety be called purely agricultural. At the present moment the education of the future farmer is a subject of redoubled interest, because there is a prospect of our being placed in a situation different from that which we have heretofore occupied. Whatever may be our respective opinions with regard to a certain question which it would not be right to introduce on this occasion, it is, at all events, quite certain that under any conceivable circumstances it is highly desirable that every available appliance should be used to improve the mind of the future farmer, and to enable him to apply the principles of those sciences, a knowledge of which, although it can never be sufficient alone to make a good practical farmer, must, in combination with practice, prove exceedingly valuable. (Hear, hear, and cheers). Without implying for a moment that the practical farmer ought to become so scientific as to vie with the chemists of the day, it appears to me that it cannot be denied, with respect to chemistry, botany, and geology, that it is highly desirable that the youthful mind should be imbued with the prin-