

circumstances, he can by any means beat his fellow, let him by all means have a hope to sweeten his labours and pains taking, that *merit within time*, by whatever means, shall be rewarded; or at least, merit, by whatever reasonable means, shall not be disqualified. As to the latter part of the clause, viz:

That no person shall be allowed to instruct or in any way aid the ploughmen—look at the rationality and consistency of it with the designs of the Society.

On-lookers can see flaws which the ploughman cannot always timeously see, and is it contrary to the best interest of any individual connected with the ploughing—especially with a view to adhere to the true spirit of the Society for Diffusing Agricultural Knowledge and Skill, without stereotyping its influences by pernicious rules subversive of its object—to allow any to give a useful hint or word, which may be useful to any hearing or observing it. A young ploughman may be at the side of the person giving the instructions, he may see and profit by what he hears. Everything but a spirit of selfishness makes it proper to “do good to yourself and others;” but is the Society to limit the collision of opinion and exchange of thoughts necessary to improvement, which is professedly the object of all such gatherings, in the greatest possible manner, through selfish whims?

Let any friend or person of skill give a useful word to any ploughman *openly* if he will without dread of being collared by any officials on the ground. Instructions can be given when parties will it, in defiance of all species of watching offenders. But let the Committee be disinterested and encourage by a vote of thanks rather than disqualify, any who has the liberality to give advice and any who thankfully accept it. Encourage the patriotism and disinterestedness of any who will proclaim secrets worth knowing and advantageous in their application to all, by a premium if you will, but hinder not and oust not any in his zeal for proficiency. The field is the best lecture room, and let each be a teacher if he will and the benefits will be mutual. Some find fault with the judges being present on the day of the match as by being there they may be biassed in some degree, almost insensibly, to some one independent of his ploughing qualifications. A judge may think

“there’s a neighbour of mine a good ploughman at home and he’s good to-day, what do you think of this man, he’ll be in the books.” Here’s another one that I knew long ago he’s a fine fellow, he’s done me a *gule* turn afore noo, he’s ploughing well too, &c.” &c. Such is a specimen of the objections on this point and sometimes these may happen in some degree unintentionally; for I would be hard to be made believe, that any one would go to act as judge without the desire of having for his motto, “Let the best win.” Of course having the judges to examine and decide on the day after, would obviate these objections, but then by such, that interchange of opinion, which is the chief object of improvement would be lost, and spectators would have no opportunity of examining the decision of the judges.

Just as at a Cattle Show, many learn points from the decisions which had they only seen the cattle without the decisions *before them*, would have awarded the premiums differently.

To learn judgment in such matters is the object of such meetings at all. Therefore, the greatest possible publicity and openness should be given, as public opinion also is the best subordinate safeguard to fair play or justice being exercised.

I have been intentionally diffuse in this communication, which may in some degree apologize for its length for your columns, but if any steps through it be taken towards amendment in the subject, the loss will be compensated.

A PLOUGHMAN.

EXTRACT FROM THOMSON’S LECTURES. ON BOTANY, ON SOILS, MANURES, &c.

It is a wise provision of nature, that as plants are not endued with volition and locomotion, nor guided by instinct nor reason, they are subject to more regular and unalterable laws than the animal creation, at least than that portion of it which possesses those functions which have been enumerated. Their food is always placed within their reach and they enjoy good health, and arrive at perfection in their growth, independent of external accidents, to which animals are equally liable, when they are situated where the soil contains those principles which are best adapted for the various purposes of their economy. The consideration of this question suggests the questions—What is the composition of soils? What part of soils are taken up as food by the roots of plants? To answer them has long em-