

AGRICULTURE AN HONORABLE AND ANCIENT EMPLOYMENT.

Agriculture is the science which explains the art or means of cultivating and improving the earth, so as to render it the most fertile and productive; and to mark the difference between the two, we define *husbandry* to be the *mode* by which cultivation is effected.

We say agriculture is honorable because it gives in its results sustenance to all other classes of mankind in the civilized world. None so high, polished, or refined—none so low, rough or degraded, but depend upon and receive their subsistence from the fruits of agriculture. It then has the honor of sustaining all other classes, however refined or delicate. Agriculture is honorable because it is the most *ancient* profession. The sacred oracles inform us that immediately after the violation of the divine injunction the denunciation was, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." It is, moreover, added that "Thou shalt eat of the herb of the field." And to Cain it was said, in consequence of his wicked and fratricidal act, "When thou tillest the ground it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her increase." These facts show that agriculture was actually the first employment of the human race; and more than that, it can boast of greater honor and higher origin than any other human art—its antiquity is coeval with Adam, and its author is God himself.

Agriculture is not only honorable *now*, but was so five thousand years ago.—Then the first men of the first nations of the earth, Kings not excepted, were proud to be ranked as promoters of agriculture. All history teems with evidences of the fact. The Egyptian, Phenician, Carthaginian, Grecian, and Roman histories are filled with evidences of this fact. By all those nations it was practised with attention and fostered with care. Indeed, it was the hurthen of the poet's song—the subject of the legislator's care—the retirement of the successful General from the theatre of blood and strife—the Elysian fields of the learned student—the honor and delight of Sovereign majesty.

Igorant, indeed, must that man be of the histories of times past who does not know that Dui-zanes, Homer, Epictetus, and Virgil, all direct the "enchanting witchery of song" over the bending corn, the purple vine, and the golden harvests of their time. Who does not know that Numa Pompilius, and the immortal Cato, the Censor, turned from the cares of State to the composition of works on agriculture? Did not the wise, the profound Seneca, captivated by the charms which the successful culture of the soil presented, quit the elevated and sublime study of the laws of nature, and devote his attention to the science of agriculture? Who does not know that twice when ancient Rome was in her greatest exigency, her Councils baffled, and her very wall invaded, that when all was terror and consternation in consideration of the wretched state to which they were reduced, that they all turned

toward the immortal *Cincinnatus*; and when the messenger was despatched to invite him to be chief counsel of the State, this illustrious patriot, this saviour of his country, was found at the HANDLE OF HIS PLOUGH! Are any ignorant that the custom has obtained during the last five hundred years that his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of the "Celestial Empire" annually, on the return of his birth-day, goes to the field and holds the plough as an example to his subjects, and as a token of his regard for agriculture?

Although agriculture was anciently carried to great perfection, and a high degree of honor bestowed on it, during the ages of darkness which immediately succeeded the dissolution of the Roman Empire, little or no attention was paid to agriculture. Wars and tournaments became the order of the day, and pleasure and chivalry absorbed the public attention, and the cultivation of the soil was left to the ignorant vassals of the great alone.

During many years agriculture was uncared for, left unprotected, and the art held in disgrace. But from the time of Leo X. learning began to revive in Europe, and science received again its votaries; from that time it became honorable as an art, and may now be considered as a branch of science of the first importance.

We have been led to make the above remarks with a view to show the eminent claims of agriculture on all classes of the community for honor and respectability; especially, as we know some who look down on agriculture and the agriculturist with a sort of contempt, that bespeak their ignorance of its claims to *honor* and *precedence*.

HEMP.

Hemp, *cannabis sativa*, is a vegetable of great value in commerce. Its outer coat is very flexible, and of great strength and durability, used chiefly for cordage and coarse cloths. It is supposed to have had its origin in Egypt, though at present it is generally diffused over the civilized world. Hemp grows luxuriantly in either warm or cold climates, though it flourishes best in a warm one. In this climate it grows from five to seven feet high, but in warmer climates from ten to twelve feet.

It is diœcious, that is, the male and female flowers are produced on different plants. The leaves of hemp are powerfully narcotic, and the seeds are nourishing, and produce oil which is used in many works of art. It prefers a rich vegetable soil, but it is not particular in the kind, it will grow in sand, clay, or peat soils, only let them be made rich with manure. And here let it be remarked that hemp will grow on the same spot year succeeding year without degeneracy, which I believe no other crop is known to do.

*Preparation for hemp.*—The land should be prepared in the same manner as for flax, but with this difference, that hemp may precede or follow corn, but flax may not, the reason being plainly this, that flax is known

on the contrary, will smother and run out all other plants. This furnishes the reason why grass seeds cannot be sown with hemp—they would dwindle and die under its thick foliage. David Low, F. R. S., says that "hemp may be introduced into the rotation of crops in the manner following: 1, fallow or green crop; 2, wheat; 3, sown grasses; 4, hemp; 5, oats. Or, 1, fallow, manured; 2, wheat or other crop; 3, sown grasses; 4, oats, 5, hemp manured; 6, corn crop. But if the case require it, hemp may succeed hemp, provided always there be abundance of manure once in two or three years.

*The land* designed for hemp requires to be ploughed in autumn, if it be late, to receive the influence of the frost, and at least two ploughings in the spring, so as to pulverize the soil as much as possible, and free it from any remaining roots of the last crop.

*Time to sow hemp.*—It will not do to sow hemp as early as you do flax in this country, as the late spring frosts will be likely to affect it. But it will be safe to sow in this climate about the 10th or 14th of May. Great care must be taken that the seeds be fresh. An indication of fresh seeds is, that they be of a bright color, plump and heavy.

*Quantity of seed* to be sown to the acre should not be less than two bushels, and not more than three. The best method of sowing hemp is broadcast, though we know many who sow it in drills, which method undoubtedly possesses the advantage of tillage, which, unless the land is free from weeds, is a great one, and also of freely admitting the air, which are valuable considerations. If the plant be drilled, the distance between the rows may be from twenty-eight to thirty-two inches. The cultivator may be used as well as the hoe. After the first hoeing about six weeks should elapse, then another hoeing should follow, which will be all the cultivation it will require until fall, when it will be gathered in. Though it may not be improper to observe (unless it should give encouragement to idleness,) that in some districts in England all the culture it gets is merely to pull up the larger weeds, and trust to the rapid growth of the hemp to outstrip all the other weeds. But it must be remembered that in such cases the land is very clean when the seeds are sown.

*Mode of gathering.*—The hemp after hoeing is allowed to stand until fall, when it is pulled up. But the circumstance of the male and female flowers being on different plants gives rise to the peculiarity of the method of treatment which exists in the case of no other of our cultivated plants. The distinction is this, that the male plants may be known from the female by the male producing a great quantity of flowers. These, after they have stood long enough to discharge their pollen, are pulled up, the female plants being allowed to stand several weeks longer to ripen their seeds. Thus there are two harvests of hemp, one about six weeks earlier than the other. This is the case where the object is to save seeds. At the time of the first pulling the male plants are easily known by their yellow color and faded