

enclosure may be practicable under such circumstances. The land which adjoins the habitation of the owner, and which produces the grain and vegetables for himself and dependents, and fodder for his cattle in winter, is enclosed; but as stock are never permitted to enter the *in-field* while the crops are growing, interior division fences are not required. Fencing is there reduced to its minimum. Again, where the land is parcelled out in small quantities to different proprietors, as in the eastern parts of France, fences are seldom seen. The owners are too poor to spare the land which would be occupied by them, or the money and labour that would be required to construct and repair them. A ditch, a row of trees, a few march stones, or particular single trees, serve to mark the boundaries of these small estates, and stock, if kept at all, must be confined, and their food brought to them. It is cheaper under such circumstances, to fence in the cattle, than the crops. In some parts of the valley of Connecticut, a system of *non-fencing* has been practised for many years. The annual overflow of that river compelled its adoption, and it is said the system proved so economical, that it has extended to the uplands in the vicinity, and some American writers strongly recommend the same system for other parts of the country. To preserve the crops, all animals running at large are placed under the care of a responsible person, who gives bonds to the town, or as we would say here, the township, to make good any injury they may commit. Every owner of animals pays this person so much per week for taking care of them. "It is," says the Editor of the American *Agriculturist*, "a pleasing sight to see a large herd of cows under the superintendence of one man, a couple of boys and two dogs, quietly browsing over open fields through the day, and as they return to the village, regularly stop at the domiciles of their respective owners for the night, and again gather together the next morning to renew their feeding abroad."

I need not stop to argue that such a system would be impracticable in most parts of this country. The social habits of the people, as well as the system of husbandry universally practised, would not tolerate it. The modern improved system of agriculture, demands the presence of stock. No farm can long maintain its fertility without a fair proportion of the domestic animals. "Whenever" says Mr. Stephens, "it was perceived that grain was more productively raised by the meliorating influence of grass on the soil; that grass land supported more stock when occasionally cropped with corn, and that the exuviae of stock could manure land better than the art of man, the system of *out-field* and *in-field* was broken up. The ancient ring-fence that only surrounded the cultivated land, was then removed to the boundaries of the possession, and in its stead were constructed suitable enclosures, for the different crops raised in regular succession." As we have not yet discovered any practicable plan by which a dozen head of cattle, four or five horses and colts, fifty sheep—to say nothing of pigs, which outside of the pen, are a great nuisance and a very small profit,—can be kept upon an ordinary farm without fences, and as these animals cannot be dispensed with, it follows, that fences in this country at least, are a necessary evil.

2. We must then, direct our attention to the possibility of alleviating the burden of the evil, since we cannot remove it altogether. Now, sir, it appears to me, that we make many more fences than even our system of mixed husbandry requires. If one-fourth or even one-sixth of the fencing now considered necessary on our farms were dispensed with, it would save millions of dollars to the country. Perhaps sir, some members of this club never sat down and calculated the probable cost of the fences of Upper Canada? I have done so, and the amount is absolutely startling. Take the common rail fence as the standard. A farm of 200 acres, supposing, as the law requires, that your neighbors make half of the division fence, will take 560 rods to enclose it. I speak now of lots laid out as in the adjoining townships, 80 rods front by 400 deep. A more rectangular shape which has been adopted in the later surveys, would not require so much. If half the lot, or 100 acres, is cleared and divided into fields of, say, 10 acres, with a lane through the middle, 800 rods more must be added,—in all, 1360 rods of fence, on an ordinary 200 acre lot. A good rail fence should be nine rails high, including riders, with 2 stakes at each corner. Two lengths or panels will lay a rod. 1000 rails and stakes will make about 45 rods of fence; therefore 30,000 will be required to enclose and fence a 200 acre farm, half being woodland, in the ordinary way. A man will lay up and complete about 10 rods a day. Of course a man *can do* much more, but I speak of what usually is done.