

Agriculture as an Occupation.

A correspondent of the *Albany Cultivator* thus discourses upon the choice of a profession.

A sentiment has prevailed, and I fear yet prevails to an alarming extent, that the practical farmer occupies a place in society a grade lower than the professional man, the merchant, or than many other laborers. Many of our youth have imbibed this sentiment, and have been encouraged in it by the fond but injudicious parent. Thus, not a few who might otherwise have been useful members of society, have been thrown upon the world, mere pests to the community. I have certainly no antipathies to the learned professions, the mercantile business, or mechanical employments. These are all necessary and important: but I insist that agriculture is neither less important, or less honorable less useful.

The difficulty is not so much in the several kinds of business, as in the fact, that an *undue proportion* of our fellow-citizens are engaged in the former, to the neglect of the latter; and more than all, that the sentiment which I have suggested, prevents multitudes from engaging in either.

From my own observation, in a life of more than 45 years, and looking back and following the history of my early associates, and from a somewhat extended acquaintance with the world, I am fully of the opinion that that sentiment is one of the most fruitful sources of idleness and crime, of any that can be named. And yet, what multitudes of young men and guardians act, or seem to act, under its influence.

I knew a man in my early boyhood, who had a profession, but very little else, (except a numerous family) who was often heard to say, that his sons should never be farmers, let what would come. Those sons are now vagabonds, except one, who has already come to an untimely end. His daughters married gentlemen, and are both living in abject poverty. This is only one among the multitude of cases which might be mentioned. Still, men will pursue the same path.

I know a farmer with two sons—smart, active lads enjoying good health, who, not long since, rented his farm, that he and his boys might live easier. I was inclined to say to that father, take care, sir, that you train not those fine young fellows to idleness, dissipation and vice.

God made man an agriculturist, and while in a state of innocence, his first business was to till the ground. And in every age of the world, some of the greatest and the best men have been farmers. Job and Abraham were farmers; Washington and Jackson were farmers—as also a multitude of worthy names and noble spirits, who, like them, have blessed the world with examples of greatness and honorable deeds. And I rejoice to know that many in our own time, of highly cultivated intellect, and enlarged views, and worldly competence, are proud to be ranked among practical farmers.

Far better had it been for the world had the number been ten-fold greater. Far better were it for

the present generation, if in the choice of an employment, parents and their sons would view the subject as these have done; and let those sons be directed in their choice to the same wise results. Thus, much of the idleness and crime which are exerting such a fearful influence upon us, would never have existed. Many of the temptations to vice would have been avoided.

I know a father, engaged in a profession, who has an only son, for whose interest he has ever felt the deepest solicitude. When that son was 16, like many lads of his age, he manifested a strong desire to engage as a clerk in a store. The father felt that agriculture was an *equally* honorable business—much safer, and more free from temptation; yet he did not wish absolutely to compel to a course averse to his own choice. He therefore engaged a place for him with a merchant of his acquaintance, to be occupied in a few months, on condition that the son should still persist in his determination. He then took the son alone, and informed him that he had procured such a place, at the same time pointing out, in a kind manner, the disadvantages of the mercantile business, and of agriculture. He told him that he was now of an age that he must choose for himself. That which ever way he should now decide, he would be aided as much as practicable—that that decision must be final—that he might reflect upon the subject one week, and then let his decision be known.

At the close of the week, he decided “to be a farmer,” to the joy of his father. From that day onward he has pursued steadily his course—is now pleasantly situated on a comfortable farm, and is proud, at home and abroad, to be known as a farmer.

Would it not be wise for many a father and son to imitate this example? R. A. A.

The British American Cultivator.

(FOR 1847, NEW SERIES)

Published by EASTWOOD & Co. Yonge St. Toronto.

Edited by W. G. EDMUNDSON.

Terms—One Dollar per year; Four copies for Three; Eight for Five; Twelve for Seven; and Twenty for Ten Dollars. These are the Terms when the above numbers and no more are ordered; but in case a person orders any of the above quantities, and remits the amount, and afterwards remits a further sum, amounting in the whole to Ten Dollars, as many copies as will amount to that sum, will be forwarded, at Half a Dollar each; and any subsequent orders, in any quantity, at the same rate.

All payments to be made invariably in advance and free of postage, addressed to the Publisher.

Printed for the Proprietors, by J. CLELAND, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER, Post Office Lane, King Street, Toronto.