

however, that the practice gained by slow experience is, in the end, the most valuable and enduring. Still a book expressly written to suit the circumstances of his case, might be a valuable instructor to the pupil, in imparting sound professional information.

Such a book, to be a useful instructor and correct guide, should, in my estimation, possess these qualifications. Its principal matter should consist of a clear narrative of all the labours of the farm as they occur in succession, including the reasons why each piece of work is undertaken. While the principal operations are thus being narrated, the precise method of executing every kind of work, whether manual or implemental, should be minutely described. Such a narrative will show the pupil, that farming is really a systematic business, having a definite object in view, and possessing the means of attaining it; and the reasons for performing every piece of work in one way, rather than another, will convince him that it is an art founded on rational and known principles. By the perusal of such a narrative, with its reasons having a common object, it will impart a more comprehensive and clear view of the management of a farm in a given time, than he could acquire by himself by witnessing ever so many isolated operations. The influence of the seasons on all the labours of the field is another consideration which should be attended to in such a book. In preparing the ground, and during the growth of the crops, the labour appropriated to each kind of crop terminates for a time, and is not resumed until a fit season arrives. These periodical cessations from labour form natural epochs in the progress of the crops towards maturity, and afford convenient opportunities for performing the work peculiarly adapted to each epoch; and, since every operation must conform with its season, these epochs correspond exactly with the *natural* seasons of the year. I say with the *natural* seasons, in contradistinction to the common annual seasons, which are entirely conventional. Such a necessary and opportune agreement between labour and the natural seasons, induces a corresponding division of labour into *four* great seasons, bearing the same names as the annual seasons. Each operation should therefore be described with particular reference to its appropriate season.

If, by a course of tuition from such a book, the pupil could be brought to anticipate results whilst watching the progress of passing operations, his pupilage might be shortened by one year; that is, could a *book* enable him to acquire the experience of the second year in the course of the first, a year of probationary trial would be saved him, and he would then learn in two years what at present requires three; and it shall be my endeavour to make *The Farmer's Guide* accomplish this.

*Ploughman.*—The duties of a ploughman are clearly defined. The principal duty is to take charge of a pair of horses, and work them at every kind of labour for which horses are employed on a farm. Horse labour on a farm is various. It is connected with the plough, the cart, the sowing-machines, the roller, and the thrashing-mill, when horse-power is employed. In the fulfilment of his duties, the ploughman has a long day's work to perform; for, besides expending the appointed hours in the field with the horses, he must groom them before he goes to the field in the morning, and after he returns from it in the evening, as well as attend to them at mid-day. Notwithstanding this constant toil, he must do his work with alacrity and good-will; and when, from any cause, his horses are laid idle, he must not only groom them, but must himself work at any farm-work he is desired. There is seldom any exaction of labour from the ploughman beyond the usual daily hours of work, these occupying at least 12 hours a-day for 7 months of the year, which is sufficient work for any man's strength to endure. But occasions do arise which justify a greater sacrifice of his time, such as seed-time, hay-time, and harvest. For such encroachments upon his time at one season, many opportunities occur of repaying him with indulgence at another, such as a cessation from labour in bad weather. It is the duty of the ploughman to work his horses with discernment and good temper, not only for the sake of the horses, but of the work he executes. It is also his duty to keep his horses comfortably clean. Ploughmen are never placed in situations of trust; and having no responsibility beyond the care of their horses, there is no class of servants more independent. There should no partiality be shown by the master or steward to one ploughman over another, when all do their work alike well. An invidious and reprehensible practice exists, however, in some parts of the country, of setting ploughmen to work in an order of precedence, and which is maintained so strictly as to cause the men to go and return from work in the same order, one being appointed *foreman* or leader, whose movements guide those of the rest. Should the foreman prove a slow man, the rest must not go a single bout more than he does; and if active, they may follow as best they can. Thus whilst his activity confers no superiority of work beyond his own, his dulness discourages the activity of the other ploughmen. This is sufficient ground for farmers to abolish the practice at once, and place the whole of their ploughmen on the same footing. I soon felt the evils attending the system, and put an end to it on my own farm. When one ploughman displays more skill than the rest, he is sufficiently honoured by being intrusted to execute the most difficult species of work, such as drilling; and such a preference gives no un-