STUDY ON THE FARM.

More exercise of the mind in observing and reflecting upon the course of nature and the processes of cultivation, would be of vast benefit to most farmers and to their sons. Some few among them do pass over their grounds and along the roads with their eyes open. They notice the adaptation of different crops to the different soils; they observe the effects of the different processes of cultivation. Such farmers find work for the mind as well as the body; they thus keep themselves bright and contented. The tediousness of hard labour is lessened by the activity of the mind. Nor is the good result confined to themselves alone: their sons and their hired labourers catch the same spirit of observation and reflection, (if they have been created capable of such things,) and thus they become more intelligent and more efficient labourers. The sons are more contented with home and with the work upon the farm.

Where the various crops in the fields are made matters of study, they possess an interest and a value distinct from the amount of money they may bring in. They become one's teachers; they give him lessons to be treasured up and to be used. And it is those only who seek to learn and to profit by these lessons, which are furnished by the growing corn and potatoes and fruits of various kinds, who really are intelligent and exemplary farmers. A few, by dint of unwearied toil from year to year, and by a soul-pinching parsimony, may yet get money; —and this too, without observing any lessons, excepting a few brief ones which were inculcated by others while they were young. But those who stick to the old way in every thing, through thick and thin, and for no other reason than *because it is the old way*, are not *men*, and are not good farmers;—they are little more than brute laborers, who by dint of perseverance get some money, but get little else that is worth having. We are not ridiculing the *old ways*, but are only saying that they should be compared with new ones, before one can with any propriety maintain that they certainly must be the best. That the old are in very many cases the best, is undoubtedly true; that new ways are sometimes better than old, is also as undoubtedly true. It is only by comparing them, that one can satisfy himself fairly and properly which path will lead him most directly to the desired object.

The matters upon which farmers, and good farmers, differ, are so numerous that no one can expect to settle them all for himself in one year, or even in one life. This is matter of rejoicing, for every farmer may be assured that he can never exhaust his opportunities for learning something new.

The pleasure of *acquiring* knowledge—and this is one of our highest pleasures—is always to be possible with the tiller of the soil.

Is your corn best when planted deep in the soil, or when put near the surface? Does the cornfield yield a better crop when you spread all your manure, or when you put it wholly, or in part, in the hill? Is this crop best when you make no hill, or when you earth up around it? How many hills, or how many stalks upon the acre give the largest amount of grain? Is it best to plant in hills or in drills?

For potatoes—is it best to spread all the manure? or will you put it in the hill? If in the hill, will you have it above or below the seed? Are hills or drills best? Do you cut the seed, or plant it whole? Do you put the seed deep in the earth or keep it near the surface?

Is grass seed best sowed with grain in the spring? or will you plow up the stubble and sow in August and September? Or will you seed down to grass with the corn crop? Or will you simply invert your bound-out fields, top-dress, and put on the grass-seed immediately? Which of all is the safest or most profitable?

Shall your manure be plowed down under the sod, or will you, after ploughing, put it on the surface and harrow it in? Do you find the most benefit from it when you use it fresh from the barn, or when you let it ferment and pulverize before it goes upon the land?

These and a thousand similar questions are disputable, and the correct answers to most of them you must learn by observations upon your *own lands*, and the lands of your neighbours. Books and papers upon agriculture are valuable;—they give many correct general principles and many useful hints; but they were not written with especial reference to the soil and subsoil of *your own farm*; and their teachings need modifications which your own observations and experience must point out. If you will but use your experience and your common sense in connection with the books, you will find the books valuable aids; but it is only when you let what you have seen, qualify and explain what you read, that you can profit much by reading

We come then to the point from which we ought to have started—that *the farm, your own farm*, is a place for *study* and observation; and that in order to learn with correctness and satisfaction, you must keep something like a regular journal in which your doings and observations must be noted down. Most men are apt to forget. The daily record will at all times enable you to recall past observations, and to bring them up to bear upon your future practice.

SPECIFIC MANURE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES.—Many farmers suppose that all manures are similar in their nature, and have the same effect upon plants, whatever may be the structure, design, or use of those plants. Most farmers are unwilling to believe that any thing is manure, except what may be of animal origin. We have long labored to convince them of the fallacy of this idea. As long ago as 1832, in an address delivered before the Kennebec County Agricultural Society, we ventured to hold the following language, which an honest old farmer told us, afterwards, did very well "*for a flight*," but he did not think much of it in practice. "If you want a large, succulent, growth of any thing, use animal manures plentifully. If you want to raise pumpkins, squashes or roots, grass, or any thing which is naturally pulpy and succulent, animal manure is the ingredient necessary. But wheat is by nature very different in its structure and composition from those. You want a comparatively hard, flinty straw, and you want a full and hard, flinty, dry kernal.—Lime, alkilies, and such substances, are the proper materials to produce such crops."

We are pleased to find that Mr. J. E. Teschemacher—a practiced and scientific Horticulturist of Boston, in experimenting upon manures, and especially upon guano, the manure which is now brought from the coast of Chili, and is exciting much attention—has come to the conclusion that particular manures are adapted to the promotion of different parts of the plants. That if you wish to grow foliage and stem, certain manures will effect it. If you desire seed only, other kinds must be used in greater quantities than the other. In a very interesting communication, which he has published in the last (April) number of Hovey's Magazine of Horticulture, speaking of the action