

position, "As straw contains only from 14 to 17 per cent. of moisture, there is in it about as much solid matter as in meal and other kinds of dry food, although it is considered to be worth only from 20s. to 30s per ton.

"The bulk of straw, however, includes a large proportion of woody fibre, which, if digestible at all, is only partially assimilated in the system. Still, assuming that not more than one-third of the weight of straw is digested by cattle, and probably less by horses and sheep, and granting that the assimilable part is not food of the most nutritious character, straw will still have to be regarded as a more economical feeding material than any other which can be supplied. It is undoubtedly a fact that some practical feeders are in the possession of the secret of converting considerable quantity of straw into beef. What this secret is, perhaps, is not known to themselves. It may be that the combination in which straw is given, or the preparation to which it is submitted before it is placed in the feeding-troughs, has something to do with the success that attends its use; but it is yet more probable that on farms where straw is largely and economically cut into chaff and given to cattle, its condition, from early harvesting and other influences, is better than in other localities where the practice prevails of allowing corn to become over-ripe before it is cut. In consequence of this mischievous practice, straw gets more woody and less digestible than it would have been had the corn crop been cut earlier. Several analyses" of the Professor's, to which I shall presently refer, "show how much the composition and nutritive value of straw depend on the condition in which it is harvested. Indeed, the differences in the composition of somewhat under ripe and over-ripe wheat or oat straw, are greater than the variations which may be noticed on comparing with each other the composition of wheat, oat, and barley straw. It would appear that in certain districts each variety in its turn becomes superior as food—each kind is preferred and exclusively retained for that purpose; whilst in other districts each is consumed for litter. Moreover, the natural preference shown by stock for one kind or the other affords a practical evidence that the farmer in each case may have a good reason for the choice which suits his locality. We must therefore always expect to meet with great diversity of opinion amongst practical men respecting the nutritive value of wheat, oat, and barley straw. That pea-haulm is too good to be trodden into manure is admitted by all. When properly got a pea straw is, indeed, a valuable feed substance. With respect to the nutritive properties of bean stalks, again, great diversity of opinion prevails—some considering them almost as nutritious as clover hay, and others only fit for litter."—*Farmer's Magazine*.

(To be concluded in our next.)

## English Agriculture:

AS SEEN BY AN AMERICAN.

We find the following interesting sketch of English agriculture during winter and spring in the *Chicago Prairie Farmer*:

EDS. PRAIRIE FARMER:—The first impression of an American of English agricultural life is exceedingly interesting. No doubt it would be as much and more interesting for an Englishman to look for the first time upon an Illinois prairie in its state of nature, a sea of living green, and to look upon the same scene again in a state of cultivation, upon a field of corn of a thousand acres, inclosed by a pine board fence instead of the English hawthorn hedge.

The thought has occurred to me that I should like, now and then, to give you my impressions of rural and agricultural life in England, as they may first be formed and as I may mature them from after observations and more reliable information. There may be something profitable to be observed from the contrasts. Two such nations as England and the United States cannot thrive within the knowledge of each other, without furnishing profitable lessons from their respective experiences, if they are willing to take lessons in that way. There are certain ideas which each nation, from the nature of their circumstances, must more thoroughly work out; thus England understands better the use of coal and iron, the working of the mines, the art of pottery, &c., because they are within the range of the nation's calling. For the same reason we are ahead of the English in the use of timber, its manufacture from the tree in the forest to the last finish of it in the beautifully constructed house. England knows nothing of our magnificently constructed machinery, such as the saw mills of Saginaw and Green Bay, and the multitudinous inventions for planing and manufacturing of the lumber into doors and sash, mouldings, &c., simply because she has not the timber thus to manufacture. But she has led us in the tubular bridges, crystal palaces, and iron ships, simply because she has the iron and glass, and not the wood.

Thus in agriculture, England has been forced to the highest perfection of science, in the art of production, in order to wrench from the overpopulated soil the capacity to feed the people. The United States must more and more imitate her in this regard, not only to develop our productive capacities, but for the profit of labor as well. It has been the necessity of the case which has made the West call for the reaper and thrasher, and the grain elevating warehouses of Chicago. It was the necessity of the case, high price of labor and great demand for clothing, or the use of the needles, which called for the invention of the sewing machine in America. The low price of labor, the easy supply of the demand of the needle, from the poor women who