

mentality of the advantages which he possesses over them.

We have observed the same thing in agriculture. When a thorough practical farmer goes into a neighbourhood of "worn out" farms, and engages in the work of reclaiming and improving his new purchase, his success is sure to awaken a spirit of inquiry, and his example can but exert an improving influence upon all who witness or hear of it. He is seen to grow better crops than his neighbors on a soil which has been comparatively sterile heretofore, and the methods pursued are sought out by those around him. It is found that he does not grow crop after crop of wheat, corn or grass on the same field, but he grows good crops of these products upon different fields in a series of years, entering at once on a system of rotation. He introduces new and improved varieties of grains and seeds, the products of which are seen at a glance to be better than those commonly grown—at least they command a better price in market. The same is true of his orchard and garden. Better fruits and finer vegetables are introduced, such as at once attract the attention of the observer. The improved breeds of live stock with their better care and feeding, cannot fail to gain the notice of all around him. With improved plows and other implements of tillage he accomplishes a more thorough cultivation of the soil, giving a deep and mellow seed bed, insuring the crops against the excess of drouth or moisture, and bringing abundant crops despite "the season" so unreasonably complained of by the careless farmer. But as the real basis of improvement, he is particularly careful in making and saving manure, seeking in every way to increase the fertility of his soil—to feed his crops, that they may produce large and profitable returns for his care and labor. An example of clean culture is also given, and it is seen how much more the soil can do for the farmer's crop if no self-sown intruding weeds are allowed to rob it of its proper sustenance.

These improvements, and many others we might particularize, as remarked before, exert an influence on the farms of those who witness or hear of them. Their owners may cavil for awhile, but the unmistakable signs of prosperity—of the paying nature of the new system of management—will generally influence the most incredulous into some sort of an imitation, which is nearly always followed by better returns, encouraging further progress—and thus the work goes on until the whole neighborhood shows the influence of the example. In this way, and by the constantly recurring lessons of an enlarged experience, a better system of culture has been in part introduced, and thus also diffused and extended.

Those who learn by hearsay, we remarked, are also influenced. The agricultural fair has its part in this teaching; but its great apostle is the newspaper, filled in large part by the writings of experienced and skilful farmers, who can not only tell how to work profitable results, but draw their illustrations from their own experience. Though no period in the history of agriculture has been without its examples of productive farming—at no period, on the

broad acres tilled by American industry, have so many bright spots shone out to gladden the hearts and encourage the hands of the friends of improvement. As much room as there evidently is for advancement, a comparison of farming now with that of even ten years ago, shows marked progress. May it go on until *thorough work* shall make our land team with golden harvests, with the finest flocks and herds in the world, with peace, plenty and universal liberty and intelligence.

HOMES AND PEOPLE.

A man's home is a truthful index of himself. With his house, his yard and his fields, he publishes his autobiography for the world to read.

When we pass buildings which are neat and tasteful, with vines hiding all ungraceful angles, and flowers all about; when we hear the music of the mowing machine in the meadow, and the sewing machine in the parlor, we know just what sort of people we shall find—industrious, cheerful, and generous, poor in purse, it may be, but rich in heart treasure.

Up street a little way is a frigid looking house, well built and well painted. There are fruit trees and a vegetable garden behind it; but in front the unfenced "lawn" slopes in nature's roughness to the road. In one corner, a little patch of ground is spaded, and a few consumptive-looking sweet-peas and asters are striving to bloom, perhaps in competition with the heliotropes and geraniums in the window above. Who needs an intimate acquaintance with the proprietors thereof, to be convinced that the woman alone has a tender, loving heart, and a taste for the beautiful, and that she has no sympathy from her husband in her efforts to make the "wilderness blossom as the rose?"

Something of the inside atmosphere we may learn from the quantity of sunlight which is admitted. Happy faces and dark rooms seldom go in company, (except in "fly-time.")

From my window I can see a low, unpainted building—the roof is unpainted, as perhaps it ought to be the remainder I "guess at," for it is entirely hidden by tall lilac bushes. I never looked inside, but I know: it is dark, and gloomy and still. One summer morning as Abbie and I were passing, we spied two blush roses outside the rickety fence, and with no thought of trespassing, we stooped to pick them. The lilac bushes parted, (there must be widows behind them!) a gray head surmounted with a black cap appeared, and a harsh voice called out, "Here, gals, [let alone o' those roses!] We "skedddled!" But what better could we expect, where there was no sunshine? Somewhere, however, in her desert heart there was a green oasis, for she cared to save her roses. And they, poor things, were trying to escape her and her shadows, seeking the common highway, where sunlight and somebody would smile upon them.

Let in the good sunshine. God only knows how we need it now, in our homes and in our hearts, while such great shadows of grief hang over us, and in nearly every household the hourly prayer is, "O, save my soldier!" "God