

## BOUNDARY LINES.

N. F. UNDERWOOD, *Member from Wayne county.*

Boundary lines, in the broad sense of the term, are those divisions, natural or artificial, which separate nations, states, and their lesser sub-divisions from each other. When applied to the holdings of individual land-owners, they are the lines which divide one man's land from the lands adjoining it. Among natural boundaries, the most common are mountain ranges, sea and lake coasts, and rivers, and these, which may be called geographical lines, are necessarily crooked and irregular. Parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude furnish a convenient means of designating points of separation, and by the aid of the surveyors' art result in straight lines and right angles, giving to districts or counties so divided a more orderly appearance when represented upon the map. In parcelling out lands for individual ownership, various terms are used to designate the plots into which it is divided, and the size of these plots varies in different localities. In the Western States and Territories, the unit of division is the section, which is one mile square, and contains six hundred and forty acres. Thirty-six of these sections constitute a township, and each section is designated by its proper number. In Pennsylvania, the original plot is called a tract, and to each tract, the title to which was originally in the State, is appended the name of the original purchaser or patentee, who is termed the warrantee. These tracts vary greatly in size, and while, perhaps, the majority of them range between three hundred and four hundred and fifty acres, many are much smaller, and some larger. In shape, squares and parallelograms predominate, but so little regularity has been observed in making the original surveys, that a warrantee map of many townships and counties bears more resemblance to the modern "crazy quilt" pattern, than to the regular chess-board arrangement of the Western land map. In designating sub-divisions, or parts of a tract, the terms "lot," "piece," or "parcel" are in common use. The boundary lines of land should be accurately and definitely established, and must be specifically and exactly set forth, at length, in the instrument of conveyance, or title deed. There must be a fixed and clearly understood starting point. From this line must run, and must be described in conveyance as running, either in a certain specified course, for a certain specified measured distance, or along some previously established line, to some definite boundary, corner, or landmark, or along the margin of some stream, lake, or other natural boundary, or along some road, or street, from one fixed point to another, and so along the several sides thereof, which must be at least three, if the lines are straight, and may be many, to the place of beginning. It is important that these lines should be correctly run, exactly measured, and plainly marked, that no disagreement may arise, between adjoining owners, as to their exact location, as disputed boundaries are one of the most prolific causes of ill-will and litigation between neighbors. These boundaries once determined and the landmarks established, they may not be changed unless by the mutual consent of the adjoining owners, and a passing of title by a legal conveyance, and the law attaches a penalty for will-

fully removing, destroying, or effacing any landmarks duly marked, set, or placed. Within the lines described in his deed, the owner has absolute control. He may clear it of timber, or leave it in forest. He may cultivate it, or leave it uncultivated. He may inclose it, or leave it uninclosed; but if his cleared land adjoin the cleared land of his neighbor, he must contribute one half of cost of building and maintaining a line-fence. He may call himself a farmer; yet it is entirely optional with him whether he shall grow good crops, poor ones, or none at all, and the only restriction put upon him by the law, in this respect is, that he must not allow certain noxious weeds to ripen their seeds upon his land, to foul the land of his neighbor. Aside from this, he may be just as good, or just as poor, a farmer as he chooses to be, may make his land, and all its appurtenances, a model of neatness and thrift, or an example of ugliness and slovenliness. At the line of his land, his authority stops, and beyond it he may not go, or he becomes a trespasser. On the other side of it, his neighbor is just as much an autocrat as he on his side. It was said by some ancient rulers, that they set their boundaries where they would by conquest. The modern land-holder, though he may crave possession of all the land that joins him, can only extend his boundaries by purchase. As no boundary, once duly established, can be varied without the owner's consent, so his title cannot be taken from him and vested in another, except by due process of law, founded upon his own agreement or obligation. His title deed, duly entered upon the record, guarantees to him that the grantor, not only "against himself and his heirs," but "against all other persons whomsoever, \* \* shall and will warrant and forever defend." Besides the lines thus briefly considered, there are others which no surveyor has run and no chain-bearers have measured, yet they are no less real and tangible than those whose location is marked by blazed trees, and attested by witness marks, and stakes and stones. They are the lines which divide, not the land, but the cultivators of the land, from each other. The classes into which the tillers of the soil might be divided by these perhaps eccentric lines, may be many; but for our present purpose only two need be mentioned. They are, first, those who have a genuine love for, and an abiding faith in, their chosen occupation. It is needless to add that this class does not include the majority, however much we may regret that facts warrant the statement. Secondly, those who follow it perforce, because they see no present door of escape from it, to some other which they imagine would be more congenial. The first are ready to say with the wise man: "Truly the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage;" while the other class feel, if they do not express the thought in words: "Truly it is hard lines for us that we plod through all this drudgery, and find such meager reward for our toil." I believe that few farmers are willing to admit that the land on their side of the line-fence is more sterile or less valuable than that beyond it, in the field of neighbor A, or brother B. The farmer naturally feels a commendable pride in his own particular acres, and resents the imputation that his farm is not as good as anybody's. In fact, while he does not like to boast, and would be sorry to give offense, there is not a farm in the whole neighborhood he would trade it for, you know. But it is a fact that he is too apt to imagine that away beyond his farm, and his neighbor's farm—somewhere on the border of the domain which separates his occupation from that of the lawyer, the parson, the shop-keeper, and

the printer, there is another line-fence, higher and stronger and closer from top to bottom than that described in the venerable "fence law of 1700," and that he is most unfortunately on the wrong side of that fence. He knows nothing by experience of the difficulties which beset those in possession of the fields beyond, but to his mind the sun always shines there, unless rain is needed; it is never too dry to plow, not too wet to plant, and no untimely frost ever cuts short the promise of a bounteous harvest. If he could only have the chance to till the fields of these fortunate ones on the other side, what crops of contentment and enjoyment he would raise. Thus "distance lends enchantment to the view," and the viewer pays an exorbitant rate of interest in regular installments of discontent. That the farmer and his family have some disabilities and disadvantages to contend with, need not be denied, as no pursuit or calling is exempt from them, but the imaginary line, so often drawn, which locates all the desirable things in life—respectability, dignity, usefulness, culture, and happiness—upon the one side, and the farmer upon the other, is a most absurd misleading and senseless division of things. It is not the purpose of the writer, nor would it perhaps avail anything should he attempt it, to point out to his discontented brother of the grand army of agriculture, the privileges, the immunities, the opportunities, and the blessings which he enjoys, or which are within his reach, because he is a cultivator of the soil. It may be some consolation to him to know that the line above referred to is nowhere visible from any high ground from the other side. Should he decide to quit the plow, and seek some other occupation, as many have done before him, he will find among his new associates, the brethren of his new guild and craft, many who are looking with aching hearts and longing eyes to the blue hills and the green fields he has left in disgust, and wishing that some fortunate turn of fortune's wheel would take them out of the noise and din of the shop, the pent-up walls of the counting-house, or from behind the bars of the bank, and locate them in a quiet rural home. It is not to be assumed that every one who is discontented with farm life ought first of all to learn to be resigned to what seems to him an uncongenial occupation. If he have a clear and decided preference for some other calling, it may be best for him to cross the line, and try his hand at the business he prefers. This process of adjustment is always going on, and often, doubtless, with beneficial results. So shall some of the crooked lines of life be made straight, and some of the rough places smooth. Happy is he who, in the morning of life, discovers upon what lines his inclinations run. Keeping upon this chosen course, he shall find all its metes and bounds run parallel with his desires, and all its toils and tasks, labors of love.

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## THOROUGH-BRED STOCK FOR THE FARMER.

An address by EMERY DAVIS, *Member from Warren county.*

Some thirty years ago, when I commenced farming, I found that I could not market my hay and straw in any other way than by feeding them to stock. I found that certain kinds of animals consumed a