

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.

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

great deal less food to finish them to a given weight than others, and I commenced reading up on the subject; and, after reading of the experience of Mr. Bakewell, I was struck by his course of raising stock, which led him to adopt a method of improving his breed of cattle. It is related of him that when he went to London with a drove of three hundred cattle and fifteen hundred sheep, that when he got there he sold his cattle by the score, and his sheep by the hundred, to the butchers. When he allowed the butcher to go into the herd and take the first score, he paid well for it; I do not now remember the price, but, for example, we will say a shilling a pound. When he sold the last score, they often did not bring six-pence per pound; or, in other words, the best of his drove brought him twice as much per pound as the poorest. This was repeated so many times in his experience that, when he was going home, and in talking of his sales to his neighbors, he was led to reflect that there was certainly something foolish in raising the inferior or lower-priced cattle. After he had reached this point, he was careful, in his purchases, to throw out all "culls," and to buy only such as, in his estimation, would bring the best prices in the London market. The next time he went into the Highlands to buy cattle, he purchased a good bull; he next bought a lot of first-class cows, and took them home with him for breeding purposes. He followed the same course with his sheep. In all cases, he selected his bulls and bucks from the man who sold him the best cattle, or who raised cattle, having the largest proportion of first-class animals. In four years after he commenced this systematic breeding, he was renting his bucks for two hundred dollars per year, and, in a few years more, was selling his stock at fabulous prices.

Reading of his experience in this line set me to thinking that it was better for a stockman to make his selection of breeding animals as Bakewell did his. I went to our fairs; I went to our State fairs, and to the State fairs of New York; I examined all the stock which I came across, and I soon noticed that there were certain animals which were much more profitable to farmers than others. The Short-horns were then fashionable, and I selected a first-class Short-horn (Durham) bull as a starting-point. My dairy of twenty cows was producing one hundred and sixty pounds per cow per year, beside the buttermilk and cream needed by my family. By the careful use of this bull in connection with these cows, I raised my average yield of butter per cow to two hundred and thirty-five pounds. I increased the prices of my cows, and my habit was to select my poorest cows for sale, and put on better animals each year, or at least at all times when a change of animals was made. I increased the value of my cows from thirty to one hundred dollars per head, all of which was due to the careful inspection of cows and bull, and yet it cost me no more to feed these better cows than it did the same number of the original stock.

Mr. Russell, who is an old and experienced farmer of our county, (Warren,) gives me his experience of forty years ago about as follows: Four of them purchased a thorough-bred bull, (Short-horn.) They used this bull, and by the time he was four or five years old, he was able to purchase one on his own account; and, in 1860, he told me he had increased his farm from one hundred and thirty acres to two hundred and forty-four, and had eleven thousand dollars in bank, and attributed every dollar of it to the improvement of his stock, and the use to which he had thus put his hay and pasture. These reasons have

led me to compare some statements that have been made before our Board in reference to the price of cows. By the purchase of one animal, I raised twenty steers each year for five years in succession, with no other feed than hay, corn-fodder, and pasture, and I sold them in the fall, at two years old, at an average weight of twelve hundred pounds. In traveling over our State, you will find nine tenths of the stock that we see that will not reach that weight. I sold them at from seventy to eighty dollars per head.

We read of butter-tests of other breeds, and these tests would not be valuable to the farmer, because the expense would be larger than the market value of the butter produced. Take the Jerseys as an instance; yet dairymen will persist in using common stock when good stock, that will produce from ten to twelve pounds per week, are within their reach. It shows that this thorough-bred stock, if properly utilized by the farmer, will increase his butter product in the same proportion that the Durhams did the beef product. Col. Buford, of Paris, Kentucky, when returning from a New York sale of blooded stock, was asked if he did not think that the prices obtained at the sale were far beyond the intrinsic value of the stock, or whether he thought the cow which brought thirty thousand dollars would ever pay back the price. He answered, "I am now seventy years of age, and, hence, am not a young man. When I was a boy, I inherited a farm that was capable of turning off one hundred steers annually, all raised from calves, and large enough to keep the necessary cows for raising this amount of stock. On this farm was a herd of cattle called "The Seventeens"—Long-horns, Hereford, and Short-horns mixed—and when Mr. Alexander went to England to purchase the first Duke, he looked at him, but he thought him too small. He afterwards purchased Duke." He says that when he commenced to use that class of animals he doubled his beef product. He said that he wrote to his broker, and wanted him to come down and purchase his two-year-old heifers. He came down, and he sold him two hundred and twenty from the same farm that produced one hundred—sold them at six and one half cents per pound, which amounted to over twenty-six thousand dollars for the lot. He said that the farm had more than doubled its beef product. "No; those cows were not sold at too high a price. Wherever any one uses that family of bulls, the beef product will be doubled. In traveling over the State of Pennsylvania, I have thought that if the people would use pure-bred animals, at an expense of only fifty or one hundred dollars more, they would more than double the beef product, with the same amount of provender and food. I say that with the experience of thirty years."

I will not say much about the butter product, because there are those here from our dairy counties who know more about it than I do; but I do say that the same principle, if applied to other breeds, will hold just as good with dairy stock, and that the butter product may be increased in a similar proportion.

High taxes and high rents in England compelled the farmers to look around and devise some means to make everything on the farm marketable. Their straw and chaff alone would not fatten stock, but used with turnips and a little concentrated food, they were enabled to fatten their cattle, and in this way they turned everything into money.

To illustrate the rapidity with which thorough-bred cattle will take on flesh, I would state that three years ago I turned a cow into pas-

ture in May, with a weight of twelve hundred pounds. In September, she weighed sixteen hundred pounds, gaining, in four months, four hundred pounds. If thorough-bred cattle will do this, would it not be of benefit to every farmer to get some of the blood into his stock?

Cases similar to those which I have given can be found in every State in the Union, and more or less of their results are attainable by any one who will invest the necessary capital, and give the matter the requisite attention and care. A few hundred dollars is all that is required for a commencement, and the rest will slowly, but surely, follow. All cannot start with thorough-bred stock upon both sides, for that would cost too much; but this is not necessary, for, with thorough-bred blood on the side of the bull, and a careful selection of the cows, the work is easy.

WILL BETTER FARMING PAY?

BY JOHN I. CARTER, *Chatham, Chester County, Pa.*

[Read at Lancaster Meeting.]

Naturally, the answer to this question will be an affirmative one. Yet there are many farmers, who, if asked to do better farming, would assure you with much sincerity that they now labor all they are able, and that they now employ all the capital they can spare or command, without apparently dangerous risks. And when we consider the comparatively high price of farm labor and the low price of farm products—when we figure the cost and selling price of our main crops, we cannot wonder at this caution on the part of the prudent farmer.

It is natural that he should hesitate, when the praises of high farming, blooded stock, and improved machinery are sung in his ears. These all mean the employment of more capital, more labor, and more experience, and very properly should be introduced slowly, and with adequate caution. Anything like a radical change in a system of farming, or much of an innovation, like the wholesale introduction of blooded stock, or unusual applications of commercial fertilizers, or large purchases of new machinery, are all doubtful betterments, unless directed by sound judgment and thorough experience—more, perhaps, than the average farmer usually possesses.

But the farming of a community can be greatly bettered, in a way, too, that is entirely safe, by a closer attention to many of the minor details of farming that are too frequently overlooked or neglected, and although each neglect may be small in itself, yet their reform will aggregate a wonderful change in the appearance and wealth of a farming neighborhood.

Take, for instance, the improvements of our waste lands, (and probably three per cent. of the farming districts of Chester and Lancaster counties might be termed waste lands,) and quite a field for improvement will be presented. On the average farm will be found the unreclaimed swamp, the thicket of bushes, or the sparse and unprofitable piece of timber-land.

We pay taxes and interest on this unproductive land. It must be fenced, and receive more or less attention of some sort. It makes a harbor for vermin and a hot-bed for noxious weeds. It is an eye-