

Vol. I.

# VANSICKLE & BURROWS

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**VANSICKLE & BURROWS,**  
Andover, June, 1869.

### The Farm.

#### Agricultural Fairs.

We are in the midst of fall-time. The fairs are so long that we can give our readers only the dates of those which have wide interest, as being national in their scope, or as having the dignity of State patronage.

What are these fairs worth to the general population?

The old ideal of an agricultural fair was to bring cultivators together for a comparison of their products, and for a comparison of their views in regard to their stock, and different methods of raising cattle and different methods of raising sheep. It was rightly supposed that such a comparison of views would stimulate renewed enterprise, and give the cultivator of mental attention which (like every one else) need for doing the best results.

To a certain point, and more notably in connection with town and village fairs, this aim, with its accompanying advantages, holds good. But with the larger fairs there is great ground for apprehension that trotting matches and the juggling of betting men are expending an undue amount of their energies and talent which are putting the fair at a distance from its true position. The great aim of the fair is to attract the sympathies of those who are in most need of the fruits of agriculture, and whose interest in the fair is to be of the highest utility.

We have nothing to say against fine fairs, and have shown our regard for the public interest by giving the two best papers of the country; we believe, more over, in horse-races where rare prizes may be matched, and where our progress in this direction may be the fullest recognition. But we do not believe that any special interest should be made to overshadow the broad and general interests of agriculture, as a body at the annual fairs instituted for the public advantage.

Good fair roadsters and stanch draught-horses, with all that relates to the horse, should be a matter of great interest to farmers, and the fair should be held so early to see these good horses that a gaying and jockeying match, which is the usual feature of a horse-race, is a disgrace. It is a disgrace to the State fair cannot pay its debts on matches between "crack" horses which "crack" drivers.

In the case, vital religion goes to the soul, and in the other, the vegetable, the lead, the cow, and the horse, are the same way. There is a debauchment of this sort over the whole management of our large fairs, which earnest-minded farmers would do well to heed and check.

We are stating no new grievance. Practical farmers have felt the shortcomings we speak of for a long time. But, unfortunately, practical farmers are the men who have the least possible faculty for organization; they are, in all these respects, at the mercy of those who have. And those who have the faculty, direct matters for their own profit.

We can give no better advice to the rank and file of our farming population than to cultivate this faculty of organization. Let them begin by combining in a body of five or ten, to kill the wild herds or Canada thistle in their own

town. This will give them a profitable and unhard-of experience; in time they may come to combine for the carrying out of some common system of drainage; and, at last, they may possess the power of ordering agricultural fairs for their own improvement.

When they do this, we trust they will abandon the present system of inviting prominent politicians, or lawyers or literary men to deliver "orations" on the closing day of a fair. This is a sort of embroidery as showy and worthless as opera music in the churches. If farmers would only have the courage to abandon tradition in this matter, and sit down to a cold of the best mutton and the best vegetables and fruit on show, and call up the growers of them to tell how they did it, they would have speeches that would be good for something—which cannot be said of the bacalic orations with which our fairs usually close nowadays.

We wish well to fairs, but we wish better to farmers; and the sooner they have the courage to put the fast-horse managers and the distinguished orators adrift, and take the homely things which make to their own thrift in their own hands, the better for them and the better for our country.—Health and Home.

## G. M. ALLEN



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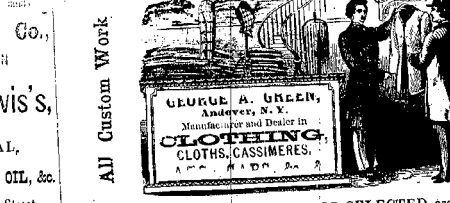
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