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& WASHINGTON ADVERTISER

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

It is probably well known to most of our readers, that Mr. Custis has for a number of years past been zealously engaged on objects well fitted to call forth the resources of our country, and to place it on the independent footing which the fluctuating state of the foreign world so forcibly recommends. He has more especially directed his attention to the rearing of sheep, on the importance of which he has emphatically insisted in a late address to the people of the United States on encouraging Agriculture and Domestic Manufactures. From this tract, we extract the following interesting account of the sheep on Smith's Island:

"I come next to speak of the Smith's Island wool, a discovery which will accrue in the happiest effects to my country, and yield the most grateful sensations to myself. This island lies in the Atlantic ocean, immediately off the eastern cape of Virginia, and contains between three and four thousand acres. Its name is derived from Smith, the permanent settler and improver of the colony of Virginia: the soil, though sandy, is in many parts extremely rich and productive of a succulent herbage, which supports the stock at all seasons.—About one half of the island is in wood, which is pierced with glades, running parallel with the sea, and of several miles in extent. These glades are generally wet, and being completely sheltered by the wood on either side, preserve their vegetation in great measure throughout the winter, and thereby yield a support to the stock. Along the sea coast are also abundant scopes of pasturage, producing a short grass in summer, which is peculiarly grateful to the palate of most animals, and particularly sheep. The island is very long, being estimated at fourteen miles, which gives the variety and change of pasture, so necessary to the system of sheep farming. Within it, are various shrubs and plants, which the animals appear to browse on with great relish, particularly the myrtle bushes, with which the island abounds. The access to salt also forms a material feature in the many attributes which Smith's Island possesses. The stock are wild cattle, and sheep principally; hogs have been prohibited, from their destroying the lambs; and of some horses put on to breed many years since, but two or three remain.

"The origin of the Smith's Island sheep cannot be precisely ascertained but are supposed to be the indigenal race of the country, put thereon about twenty years since, and improved by the hand of nature. When we come to compare the Smith's Island wool with the native wool of the country at large, we are lost in astonishment at this wonderful interposition of Providence in our behalf, which serves to shew what a benefit we enjoy, and how little we have estimated the gift.

"The Smith's Island wool is, without question, one of the finest in the world, and has excited the praise and astonishment of all who have seen it. To recapitulate the various opinions given of its merits is unnecessary. It only remains to be judged in Europe, whither a specimen has been sent, to determine its value, when compared with the famous Merino, hitherto the unrivalled material in the woollen manufacture. The Smith's Island is a great deal longer than the Spanish, being, in full growth, from five to nine inches in length, and in some instances much more. In quantity it is also vastly superior, as the sheep yield at least twice as much, and in some instances still more. And, lastly, the size and figure of the animal admits of no comparison, being entirely in favor of the Smith's Island.

"The only question remaining is the texture. If the Merino is finer in grain, the Smith's Island is so fine as to answer every purpose to which the other can be appropriated, and so much larger in quantity as to yield a better profit to the breeder. No cloth which the Merino manufactures will be disgraced by the introduction of the Smith's Island: and many fabrics manufactured by the one, at a great price, can be formed by the other at a much less. The Smith's Island is as white as snow, and perfectly silky and soft to the touch, and of delicate grain.

"It is to be remembered that the specimens which have been shewn to the world, were sheared from an ewe, promiscuously seized on the island, and sent to Arlington. If such be the product of an indiscriminate choice, may we not expect a much more superior sample, selected by the eye of judgment and experience.

"The sheep on Smith's Island are perfectly wild, and so unconscious of the care of man as to fly his approach. They are taken twice a year, in spring and fall by certain stratagems, and sheared at each time, after which they are again given to liberty and uncontrol. The growth of wool must certainly be very rapid, since the period of a few months produces a second harvest for the shears.

"The number of sheep formerly on Smith's Island amounted to between five and six hundred, but depredations, and other casualties, have very much reduced this quantity. The number which the island would carry, when fully stocked, may be computed from the stocking of similar pasturage in other countries. From two visits made in 1800 and 1804, I supposed the prime pasturage consisted of twelve or fourteen hundred acres, that is, the glades in the interior, and the flat ground on the west end; but added to this is a vast range extending from the termination of the wood on the east, to the Ship shoal, or eastern extremity. The sea shore, in many places, also, produces a short and pleasant herbage, much coveted by the stock.

"It would not be too great an average to allow four sheep to the acre, but for the sake of certainty in the calculation, four thousand sheep might fairly be allowed to the whole. The wild cattle would in no wise interfere with this arrangement, for it is always deemed a good system of grazing, to intermix the beasts, so that the one may destroy what the other would refuse, and those which are close biters should always follow the lighter feeders.

"The wild cattle are so very shy as to be approached with great difficulty, and are exceedingly fierce when wounded. Their size is not large, but the flesh well tasted, and sometimes very fat. The sheep are by no means so wild, being more timorous from nature, but cannot be approached without much circumspection, & when wounded or taken, shew every symptom of fear, at beholding the great destroyer man.

"It may be rather adviseable to retain the stock of Smith's Island in this primitive state of nature, since it affords a partial security from depredation, and no doubt contributes to their health, and the superior quality of their fleece.

"Animals, if left to themselves, teach us many lessons, derived from instinct, which puzzles our superior reason. Smith's Island will afford a vast school in the science of breeding, which may give a tone to our domestic arrangements in that respect, and contribute to rescue many valuable mementoes from the obscurity of past ages.

"In vain does the philosopher resort to study and letters to acquire truths which nature alone chooses to reveal. Man may acquire much knowledge from the efforts of his genius and his researches in science, but nature alone unfolds the works of God, and points, with the finger of truth, to the history of the world.

"When we consider the wonderful improvements made by climate and soil in the sheep of Smith's Island, unimproved and unnoticed by man for so many years, we are convinced that nature is the surest guide in the promotion of all her works. Had her designs been thwarted, and these sheep, instead of being left to roam at pleasure, been cooped up in hurdles, and crossed and intercrossed with other species, they would have degenerated, from the same cause which has promoted their improvement. The idea long cherished in the agricultural world, that by crossing various breeds you alone combine their various estimable qualities in one animal, has been happily abandoned since the days of the great Bakewell, whose system has taken place of these absurdities, and who has at once perpetuated his fame, while he has benefited his country.

"The Arabian horse, while roaming in his native desarts, gathers strength and activity from the quantity of exercise necessary to obtain his food. He exults in his native freedom and is unconscious of the power of man, yet, when subjected, he bows his lofty crest and resigns his libery to a master's will. The chieftain who subdues this haughty tyrant of the herd, takes care to preserve his former habits, to convert those habits to his own use. He is not immured in close stables covered with cloths, or submitted to the farrier's care, but rests, in ease and happiness, at the door of the tent, cheered by the attentions of his friend, and participating in the hospitalities of the family. Thus fitted for service, and preserved in those habits which nature at first had formed, the Arabian horse outstrips the wind, and bears his master in triumph to the field.

The breeder, like the physicians, should endeavor to assist nature and not to counteract her laws; and by studying the manners and habits of animals in their native state, he may find data from which better systems may be drawn, than from all the hypotheses extant.

The practice common in Europe of immuring animals in close houses, called shelters, is very detrimental to their health and vigor. Those which are intended for the knife may, with some propriety, be treated in this way; but such as are to form the breeding stock should never be denied the air, and exercise, so essential to all constitutions.

Sheep are particularly delicate in some respects, and are very liable to be injured by an wholesome atmosphere. We know that those which frequent the mountainous parts of most countries are a very hardy vigorous race; those again which resort to the salt marshes are unconscious of diseases common in other parts of the country. As a proof of the salubrity of our sea islands, in this respect, I remember shooting a ram on Smith's island so very old as to have worn his teeth entirely away, and his eyes were almost obscured from age. Perhaps he had numbered fifteen or twenty years, and from his size had, no doubt, been once master of the flock.

The rot, a disease fatal to sheep in all countries, is unknown upon Smith's island, and is not incident to any salt pasturage. The island, being of sandy soil, affords dry places on which they can repose; and from its insular situation, is not capable of receiving contagion from abroad.

The sheep of Smith's island will answer, I believe, in all parts of our country, particularly in the Southern latitudes of Virginia, the states of Tennessee and Kentucky, the Mississippi and all southward thereof. Upon the sea islands of the Carolinas and Georgia they might be pastured to great advantage, and very many situations now lying idle and unprofitable might be turned to use by the introduction of this valuable race of animals. They are so very active in pursuit of their food, as to cover a great space of ground in a very short time, and will brouse upon many plants which are at present converted to no use whatever. In situations similar to their native island they will be supported without any expence; and where the climate is colder, and the pasturage less abundant, they will be found to subsist at least as well as any other species.

During my visit in 1804, I had great opportunity of judging of the mutton, and can affirm, that it was truly epicurean, and very high flavored; whether this would continue if the animals were domesticated, I much doubt, since the flavor is as much derived from the habits as the food of the animal. The bone is remarkably small, which will cause them to weigh well, and to fatten sooner, than those of a different description.

The difficulty of obtaining fresh water upon the Sea islands is not so great as may be imagined, for in digging four or five feet in the sand it rises in abundance, and perfectly fit for use. The persons who live upon the island form ponds of this description for the use of the stock.

It has been doubted by many whether the Smith's island sheep, removed from his native soil, would not degenerate, or, at all events, lose in part the quality of his fleece. Time has not yet permitted me to ascertain this fact by experiment, having as yet removed but two to Arlington, & that only within the last year. For three months from the time of their arrival at Arlington, they retained so much of their native wildness as only to be taken with great difficulty, and would in no wise associate with their brethren at the farm; at the approach of winter they began to become more reconciled to the change, and at length submitted to their fate.

The only cause I have noticed to create apprehension, is their propensity to feed in low moist places, which in clayed lands generally produce the rot. As all writers, however, agree in this particular, it is only necessary to state, as a remedy, a speedy removal to high and airy grounds, and a frequent change of pasturage."

FOR THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

HATRED OF ENGLAND.

The Republican party, and the administration itself, have been charged with cherishing the criminal passion of inveterate hatred to England; and the accusation has been extended by malignant men so as to indentify with that imagined hatred an inextinguishable desire for the destruction of the British nation. Indeed, there are individuals who have been presumptuous enough to aver that so fervent are these anti-Britannic affections that the government of the United States has been willing to commit the peace and prosperity of the country to the fortune of war, by a belligerent league with France, in order to insure the extermination of the name and power of G. Britain.

The charge is true neither in form nor in substance. The wildest enthusiasm of the most extravagant politician of the republican party, has never transcended the reasonable bounds which terminated the wishes and the hopes of the illustrious Fox and the enlightened lord Erskine, and which limit the expectations and views of virtuous and philosophical Englishmen. The temper of several of our public writers may hurry them into the use of inflammatory phrases, but their arguments extend no further than to a demonstration of the propriety of a Parliamentary reform, and the renovation and purification of the British monarchy. And surely, the expression of a wish to that effect is in strict conformity with the most rational spirit of humanity. Connected as we are with the people of England by the most interesting ties, how is it possible for us to avoid feeling, and feeling acutely, for their own oppressed, degraded, and forlorn situation! Happy under our mild form of government, we should be kindless & cruel were we not actuated by a benevolent sympathy for their abject condition and unhappy sufferings. If there be Americans whose sublimated imaginations mislead their judgments into an approving admiration of British naval glory, which is founded upon the wretchedness of the mass of industrious population, they cannot be animated by the holy genius of philanthropy, nor justified by the precious doctrines of the Christian gospel. The candid portion of the community will decide whether the republicans, who advocate the amelioration of grievances for British subjects, are greater enemies to the English name and nation, than those politicians who recommend the adoption of the British ministerial system in the United States.

But the administration has not sanctioned the ideas in relation to the British government, which the latitude given to the freedom of the press in this country has permitted republican writers to discuss and disseminate. Our rulers know too well what is due to their own dignity and to the independence of foreign nations, to permit themselves to interfere, either directly or indirectly, with the theory or practice of the British constitution, however anomalous it may be in its structure or corrupt in its general operation. When English ministers have manifested an equivocating disposition, or demonstrated a perfidiousness demoralizing to the good faith which ought to exist among nations, it is natural that the American administration, governed as it is by the purest principles of probity, should perceive with a sentiment of profound regret that the fate of England was committed to the guidance of men who sport with her honor and sully her fame. That regret is embittered by the thought that the peace of two nations, naturally and essentially qualified for reciprocal friendship, is endangered by the levity of temporary expedients, and the separation of their [illegible] munion prolonged by pretences which engender diffidence [illegible] procrastinate the return of genuine harmony.

Sensations like these are as beneficial to Great Britain as the United States. They are proofs of sincerity, which, properly understood, are invaluable; and, if England were governed by minds of a wise forecast, would be met and acknowleged with corresponding fidelity and [illegible].

From these considerations, calmly weighed, it may be concluded with fairness, that with respect to the British nation American writers have only exercised their constitutional privilege of investigating and denouncing the errors and corruptions of bad governments; whilst our administration confines itself to its legitimate prerogatives, inrequiring the observance of established maxims and the fulfilment of solemn contracts.

REGULUS.

FOR THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

Dr. Franklin's Fable of the Eagle and the Cat, imitated in verse.*

One morning as grimalkin sat
Hard by a barn to watch a rat,
An eagle hov'ring in the air
There spied him squatting like a hare.
"Thank Jove!" said she, "good cheer at last,
"Upon a hare I'll break my fast."
Then cow'ring through the welkin came
Headlong, and pounc'd upon her game.
Grimalkin to a rude attack
Was never known to turn his back.
With foremost claws he fiercely clings
Forthwith on both the Eagle's wings;
About her sides the hinder ply,
At every stroke the feathers fly.
"A truce, Great Jove!" the Eagle cried—
"No truce I'll grant;" the Cat replied—
"Ah cease dear Puss! and you'll receive
"Quick from my talons a reprieve."
"No," said the Cat, "your carcase shall
"From this great height now break my fall;
"Unless you ease me to the ground,
"And leave me just where I was found."
Then at her throat he forward sprung,
And like a fury there he hung.
Jove's bird, before remark'd for sight,
Was never caught in such a plight;
No choice was left her but to choke,
Or bend her neck beneath the yoke;
So, stooping from a fearful height,
She downward tamely takes her flight,
And leaves grimalkin free to roam
About the barn, his ancient home.—†
But in the battle, it was found,
The bird receiv'd an ugly wound,
Which, tho' pretending oft to hide,
Still rankles in her royal side.

APPLICATION.

Thus Britain thought in Seventy-six,
Her talons on a hare to fix;
But ever since her pride hath griev'd
The ugly wounds it then receiv'd.

* The original in prose was lately published by Mr. Adams in the Boston Patriot.

† The Fable in prose ends here.

FROM THE AURORA.

RAIL-WAYS.

We do not know, that we can render a more important service to the public, than by laying before it, and earnestly calling its attention to the following interesting paper relating to an experiment lately made by *Mr. Thomas Leiper*, of this city.

Those who, from observation, have had an opportunity to remark the vast utility and improvement produced in Great Britain by the employment of rail-ways, need not be told how much more useful they would be, if introduced in this country; on the other hand, those who had no personal experience, need not require a more satisfactory evidence, than they will find in the subjoined papers, of their incalculable advantages—the facts stated in these papers speak more than a volumes of explanation or admonition, and we therefore hope that they will stimulate our countrymen to engage with their accustomed activity in adding this new source of wealth and improvement to the other advantages and blessings we enjoy.

Nor can we close this brief notice of an interesting work, without paying a merited tribute of applause to the patriotic enterprize of the gentleman, who has been the first in America to engage in it, and he hope that he may derive as much advantage from it as such an example to the public fully entitles him to.

It will be seen from an advertisement, in a succeeding column, that Mr. Leiper intends to complete what