

NATURE'S TESTIMONY.

I have just been feeding my stock – horses and colts, cows and calves, hogs and pigs. I feed them all with hay. They all ate it greedily, for it was good hay; and they all seemed to be doing well. While they were eating I was thinking. And as it is too wet to plow this morning, I will write my thoughts. These colts are growing. Growing means more bone, more muscle, more fat, more teeth enameled, more hoof, more hide, more hair, more mane, more tail, larger eyes, more tendons, lengthened arteries and veins, a proportional enlargement of the heart, the lungs, the digestive organs, the viscera, etc., etc. It takes a thousand things to make a colt, and there must be something added to each of these thousand things every day, as the colt increases in size, and becomes a horse. Now where does the colt get a little more all the time to add to these thousand things? All out of the hay. The dried grass that I feed him furnishes him bone and flesh and skin and hair; and it goes just where it is needed. It goes to the different parts of the animal in just the right proportions. It does not make too much of any one thing, or fail to make enough of any.

Now take the dried grass to the most skillful chemist. Tell him to analyze it, and see if he can get flesh and bone and hair out of it as the colt does, and he will tell you that he cannot do any such thing. The wonder to me is that my colts, and every body else's colts the world over, can do what these men of science can't do.

But there is something stranger yet: The calves eat the same hay, and they make out of it differently shaped bones and hoofs, different flesh and fat, from that which the colts make. They make horns, too, and the colts don't; and the cows, feeding beside the horses, make milk out of the hay, and milk is a very curious liquid. It contains caseine and albumen, and ever so many other ingredients, all of which come from the hay. Isn't there something strange about this? It seems

to me that if I had in my barn at feeding-time one of the wise men who think they can explain everything; that we don't need any God; that their theory of evolution, and their laws of nature, are sufficient for making the world and for keeping it a-going, – it seems to me that I could puzzle him by just pointing to my horses and cattle.

Now suppose I had three machines; that when I put hay into one of them and turned the crank awhile, out would come carpet of perfect texture and beautiful colors. Then, if I put the same kind of hay into another machine, and turned the crank awhile, out would come sets of porcelain, plates, cups, saucers, etc., – all perfectly shaped, enameled, and painted. And, finally, if I should put hay into a third machine, the result would be books, well printed, elegantly bound, and profusely illustrated. What would the scientists who know all about making worlds say to my machines? Wouldn't they think there was something about them that was never dreamed of in their philosophy?

But I have in my barn yard a score or more of machines fully as wonderful. They are working up the hay into hundreds of different things, and into just the right proportion of each, while I write. Did a law of nature make these machines? and do the laws of nature keep them a-going! Yea, verily, and herein is proof that a great First Cause, a wise and powerful Being, established these laws and superintends all their operations.

It is said that Robespierre, when he saw the effects of atheism in France, exclaimed: "If there is no God, we must make one; for we cannot get along without him." So must every man feel who has not permitted that "dangerous thing," a "little learning," to magnify his self-conceit and minify his common sense.

The tendency of positivism, and of all the infidel philosophy of our day, is to sheer atheism. Men want to get rid of the idea of a personal God – a great, wise, and good Being who made, upholds, and governs all things. But grand, solemn and mysterious as that idea

is, it is the simplest explanation of the wonders that we see around us. The grass is growing now all over our hills and plains. Why? The soil was full of seeds, we are told, and the rain has made them germinate. But water can't make grass out of seeds. Here is a chair factory all complete, and lumber piled up in it. And now fire is kindled [R1151 : page 7] under the boiler, and the wheels revolve; but no chairs are turned out. Why? The chair-maker has not come to put the lumber into the lathes. Nature during winter or a drouth is like that factory, full of lumber but without steam. Nature, when the sun shines and the rain falls, is like that factory when the steam is up, and the wheels are in motion. Nature is God's workshop. It is the grand factory in which he is making all the while the many, the numberless things that we speak of as growing. In everything that lives, and moves, and grows, and blooms, we see proof of the wisdom and the power of an omnipotent God.

– *Selected.*
