

prove upon this description. The poles of which it is formed are either small firs, or oak fliterns, split into two or four. They are about twelve or fourteen feet long, and are laid almost at right angles, the ends projecting a foot or two beyond where they lap over. It is evident that the rise can only be gained by the opening between each layer of poles, the width of which opening is dependent upon the thickness of the poles themselves. The fences are generally about twelve bars or poles high. The consumption of wood in such a fence appears, therefore, at first, to be three times as much as it would be in a four-rail English fence ; but when we measure the extra quantity required on account of the zig-zag lines in which it is necessarily placed, and by the lapping over at the two ends of each rail, we find that the length of fencing, necessary to enclose the same space, is double what it would be if laid straight ; so that, in real fact, six times as much wood has to be cut, split, hauled and built up as would be required to make the four rails of one of our straight fences. But an American will tell you that he

saves the posts; that he saves the labour of digging holes in which to plant them; that he saves the labour of cutting mortices in which to insert the rails, or of shaping and nailing them; that the timber is worse than worthless to him, as he wishes to get rid of it; and that, during the winter, he can do little else. Jonathan is a shrewd calculator and, I daresay, he is right in this instance. According to his own proverb, "America will be an everlasting great country when it is all fenced!"

I now began to study the agriculture of the lands I passed through with great interest; not only on account of my views for the settlement of my children, but also as an amateur and practical agriculturist; for I had been called away from our home unexpectedly, for reasons that will hereafter be told, and, at this very time, I kept in hand and farmed by my bailiffs about two thousand acres of our estates in different counties of England. I was, therefore, competent to form an opinion on what I saw.

The soil, as I have said, improved greatly as we advanced into the interior of the State of

Ohio ; we had left the fir forests and entered a country of fine oak timber ; and the clearings were consequently more frequent, although in different stages of progress. In some, the trees had been hewn down and left on the ground to decay. In others, an attempt had been made to burn them : their smaller boughs had indeed been burnt off ; but there stood the blackened trunks, throwing out the stumps of their great charred limbs in angry desolation. In some places, the plough was at work, amid stumps as thick as ninepins, turning and twisting about as only an American plough can. In others, the stumps had been partially dug up, and the ploughman could sometimes draw a straight furrow. In some places, separate fields were even enclosed by worm fences, and all the stumps had been grubbed up and cleared away, or at least they lay amid the corn ready to be drawn off next winter ; a few great trees being left here and there for ornament. This showed that immense progress had been made ; that the farmer had had spare capital to lay out, and that he was employing it with spirit ; while, at the same time, he had an eye to the

beautiful, and would not denude his location of all timber. But the spirit of progress, the spirit of money-making was at work; and in the more cultivated and improved parts of all, even these last memorials of the primeval forest had received notice to quit. They had been ringed, as we woodcutters say in England; the bark had been stripped all round from their great boles just above the earth; their boughs were bare; no leaves intercepted the sun and air from the crops beneath; and there they stood in their giant nakedness, the last of their race, and soon to topple over at the feet of the conquering intruder.

Meanwhile, the residence of the conqueror rose upon the field of his triumph, or beside the forest that still stood untouched, and covering, probably, nine-tenths of his farm. Small frame houses, neatly painted white, with green Venetian blinds, dotted the country pleasantly. Sometimes rising at a distance upon some elevation amid the forest, and surrounded closely by square farm buildings, they looked like gentlemen's seats from the old country, "bosomed high in tufted trees" of an ancestral

park. But, in general, new buildings were placed near the railroad, as affording the easiest means of communication ; some few were of brick ; but frame building was preferred as cheaper and quite as durable. Bricks are badly made in the backwoods, and fall to pieces within half a century.

At Bellefontaine—why the place has such a pretty name, I know not ; but at Bellefontaine, Yellow Springs, (where are some mineral baths,) and Xenia, the country is very pleasing. I cannot say beautiful and picturesque ; for the forest produces a strange effect, and appears to level the landscape by filling up the hollows, and hiding all the broken ground. One would have supposed that, as it mantles the hills as well as the valleys, the relative elevation and depression would have been the same. The effect, however, is quite different ; and looking at the clearings amongst the woods, we are surprised to see a prettily-undulating country where all around seems to be level. From Bellefontaine to Xenia, the soil is a rich loam ; I was told that it improved even towards Columbus, the capital of the state : a fine