

such of it as was attended to grew up as strong a crop as could be desired.

In all countries the securing of a sufficient supply of food is the primary concern of society; and, accordingly, even among the rudest tribes who are in any degree dependent upon the fruits of the earth for their sustenance, the different operations of agriculture, as regulated by the seasons, have always excited especial interest. Theoretical writers are fond of talking of the natural progress of the species to the agricultural state, from and through the pastoral, as if the one were a condition at which it was nothing less than impossible for a people to arrive, except by first undergoing the other.

In countries circumstanced like New Zealand, at least, the course of things must have been somewhat different; inasmuch as here we find the agricultural state begun, where the pastoral could never have been known, there being no flocks to tend. Cook, as we have seen, found the inhabitants of this country extensive cultivators of land, and they, probably, had been so for many ages before. Although the fern-root is in most places the spontaneous produce of the soil, and enters largely into the consumption of the people, it would yet seem that they have not been wont to consider themselves independent of those other crops which they raise by regular cultivation. To these, accordingly, they pay the greatest attention,