

A FUNDAMENTAL ERROR.

One of the greatest errors in the system of practical agriculture in this country is attempting to cultivate too much land. Would the farmers of our country attempt to cultivate less land, and do their work better, they would no doubt find their account in it. But the principal farmers of this country possess large farms, either by inheritance or by direct purchase when lands were cheap. There are those who have large farms who have but little capital for carrying them on. Unwilling to confine their labors to a portion of those lands while they possess so much, they go over one hundred acres but do not properly till one. Were this custom adopted with reference to stock farmers only, the evil would not be so great; but great expense is incurred in preparing lands for grain, and in the end reap but a stunted crop. We know that in unfavorable seasons grain will not grow even with the best of tillage. But it is equally plain, too many of our farmers plough and sow some seventy-five or one hundred acres, and do not reap, even in good seasons, as much as they might with good management on forty or fifty.

Many there are who plough their lands which lie in favorable locations, and crop them year after year, unmanured, till the vegetative and nutritive qualities of the soil are so far exhausted that little or nothing can be produced. It seems almost incredible that a farmer should allow the manure to accumulate in his barn yards and about his cow houses until it becomes indeed a nuisance, while he is ploughing and sowing, and reaping but stunted crops from his land. Notwithstanding, such is the case in many instances in this Province. By saying this we do not mean that all do so—far from it. We have farmers among us who do their work neatly, and in all respects as farmers should do. It is not of such we are speaking. It is not for such this article is written. We write to make, if possible, an impression on those who have been bred up to farming—have practiced tilling the ground and the art of husbandry for years, and though possessing every facility for improving their lands and increasing their stock, but by improper management, by tilling too much and not doing it well, or in the proper time, the profits of the farm are lost, slovenliness and decay are visible in every department.—Where a farmer strives to do more than his means will admit, all is done in a hurry, consequently ill done, and often not more than half done. The poor man who has not the means of cultivating a large farm should not attempt it. The man who has a large farm and equivalent means can do vastly more than another with the same number of acres with but little ready capital. In such a case he should only till ground in proportion to his means of doing it well. His own interest requires that he do this. No one can deny that a farmer's interest requires that he should remove his manure as often as once in a year from the yard to his fields, that his crops should be got in in time—that they be harvested in time. If the farmer carries on more business in the farming way than his

pecuniary means will enable him to do well and timely, he certainly is the loser by the excess of business he does.

Besides the additional profits derived from farming well, there is, and must be, a great pleasure in contemplating the fruits of well regulated husbandry, and also some pleasure in knowing that he has established a good reputation among his "brethren of the profession" for being a good, tidy farmer. This reputation he can never gain who allows his farm to be overrun by thorns, briars and weeds. We hope the time is not far distant when our farmers will consider this subject well, and make a trial of the different systems. We shall in some future number take up the subject and endeavor to show mathematically the sum in capital that is required per acre, calculating both for large and small farms, whereby to obtain the greatest profit by farming.

On Saturday the 4th inst. in the House of Parliament, the subject of the free admission of Canadian produce into Great Britain was brought up by Mr. Merritt. Although we have little to do in the way of political questions, yet, as this is a subject in which every Farmer feels interested, and as the subjoined remarks are made by a man who has had much experience in agriculture, and one who seems perfectly to understand the subject, we have taken the liberty of copying the speech into the columns of the Farmer & Mechanic, hoping that all the Farmers in Canada will attentively read it. Mr. Merritt said:—

Mr. Chairman.—I do not expect to arrest the attention of many hon. members on this subject. Its object is not to create new salaries, amend some existing law, or to change the method of collecting small debts. It relates wholly to agriculture and commerce. Nevertheless, as seven-eighths of the people we represent feel a deep interest in the measure, and as the prosperity of the Province, in my opinion, is based on its encouragement, it shall not pass over without a few remarks.

I had hoped one of the first measures submitted for our consideration by the Provincial Government would have been the promotion of this branch of our industry and wealth. Learning from the right hon. gentleman representing the government that no measure would be proposed, I moved for an answer to the address of the late House of Assembly of Upper Canada, & referred that answer to a committee composed of members of the government as well as from both parts of the Province.

This committee recommends a continuance of the policy prayed for by an address of the Assembly of Upper Canada as far back as 1834, an extract of which I will read, merely to show that the subject was as well understood then as at the present moment. [Here the hon. gentleman read an extract from the address.] Although I had the honor of submitting that address, the idea was first suggested to me by Sir Henry Barnell in 1828, who, by a continued application for fourteen successive years, had obtained the removal of similar restrictions for his countrymen in Ireland; and I feel a confidence that similar perseverance will obtain the same result for our countrymen in Canada. One extract of the address alluded to relates to an alteration in our present system of addressing the Home Government, to the practical operation of which I beg to call the attention of every hon. member. If we

require an alteration in the duty, or the removal of any restriction on any article we consume, under the provisions of an Imperial Act, this House first addresses her Majesty; 2d, his Excellency the Governor General transmits it to the Colonial Secretary; 3d, this Minister orders it to be referred to the Lords Commissioners of the Board of Trade; if a favorable report, it is returned; 4th, if no objection in the Cabinet, a bill is prepared and submitted to the Imperial Parliament—a proceeding resorted to by any Ministry with great reluctance. When passing this fifth order some political question may arise in the mother country which places all Colonial interests in the shade, as witnessed in the last session with regard to the removal of the prohibition on tea; consequently, with the best possible intention on the part of the home government, these numerous restrictions create obstacles beyond the power of the government themselves to remove; so that our measures are either rejected or postponed from year to year, until either lost sight of or they become inoperative from some other cause. These objections are not confined to the late Province of Upper Canada. They are most forcibly put by Messrs. Young and Huntingdon, delegates from Nova Scotia. In their report of December 30, 1839, I find the following extract:

"The great variety of interests entrusted to our care induced us to adopt a course of proceeding novel, we believe, but without which we could have effected little or nothing. So soon as we discovered that the decision of many of our affairs did not depend on the Colonial Minister, we asked and obtained permission to communicate directly with the different Departments. The complicated negotiation for opening the free ports exemplifies the inoperation of the system. An ingenious though unfounded objection at any one of the four Departments to whom this question was subjected, would have been enough to destroy it, and at the very last it was on the point of suffering shipwreck at the Board of Customs. The wonder is, that not the measures of Colonial Assemblies are sometimes defeated, but that they are ever carried, where any one of influence or talent on the spot has an interest in opposing them. Addresses or resolutions of a House of Assembly are seldom of much account, and we are both convinced that we might have gone on for ten years to come without accomplishing any one of the measures that have been carried, or acquiring one tithe of the information and practical knowledge the house will now have as a guide to its future movements. If we are deeply concerned in any measure conflicting with a powerful interest, it is in vain for us to rest satisfied with an address."

The trade of the mother country as well as this Province requires this change. For instance, from our peculiar geographical position every article consumed in the western part of this Province is introduced from sea by the ports of Québec or New York, the latter being under the control of a government subject to an active, vigilant, enterprising people. The duty on any article is changed from time to time to promote any real or fancied interest. When the duty on any one article is thus reduced below the duty imposed at Québec, they derive all the profit on sales, transit, revenue &c., after which the article is smuggled and consumed in Canada, whereas if our Legislature had the power they could at any time lower the duty at the port of Québec, and increase or diminish it at our interior ports, so as to remove all inducement for smuggling, and confine the trade to our own ports, and through our own canals and waters. No desire was entertained to remove the existing power from the Imperial Parliament; it should remain there, for the mutual protection of the interest of our fellow subjects in Britain, our fellow colonists, as well as our