

Correspondence.

Mind and Labour on the Farm.

To the Editor.

SIR,—I wish through the medium of your Journal to say a few words to my brother farmers. The time is come for us to try and raise the standard of our occupation, and show that agriculture is capable of being ranked amongst the most important branches of industry of the world. Farmers are often so engrossed with work as to lose sight at once of their own true interest, and the advancement of their calling. Now, I well know what state a farmer's mind gets into, or any other man's who labours hard. I have felt it often, and very many times I have had hard struggling to rouse myself to action. Every man whose muscular system is actively employed more than his mental, loses the natural activity of the one in the too great use of the other. A tired body makes a sluggish mind; and a sluggish mind surely makes a poor farm. But you will say, men must work constantly and hard, or the farm will not pay. Very true in some respects, and for the most part, in busy seasons, but very far from truth for many months in the year. There can be no profit in any man who conducts a business, such as a large cleared farm, so devoting himself to hard labour at every season as to be physically unable to think or reason out consequences, cause and effect. The utmost any farmer can save by devoting himself from morning until night to the hardest and most continuous work on the farm, is about \$210 a year, without board—that is the cost of hiring a good man for that period. Now, we will suppose that out of that time the farmer will be hindered two hours each day (one hour, morning and evening) to do "chores," and this would be a small allowance; and we will further say that he is hindered one hour, on the average, each day to look after the farm stock that may want attention, and repair accidental injuries to fences, get up horses, &c. &c. and one hour each day, on an average, to go to market, attend sales of articles, purchase supplies, go to the blacksmith's, haul wood, and do all the hundred and one things that some one must do on a farm. We have thus shown that at least four hours each day is hindered of the necessary work of the team and farm, in fine as well as wet weather; whilst the farmer is, as is shown, quite busy. The value of this time is just four-tenths of all the working time of the year, each day reckoned, *vet or storm*, at ten hours. We see, then, that the time is worth just 29%, leaving only 71% to be made by outside attention to everything else to enable the farmer to pay a hired man. He will then be fully at liberty, if he does all the small jobs above enumerated, to turn his attention to improvements, and acquiring knowledge of what others are

doing. He will, in addition, have plenty of time to sow the grain, help at harvest and haying, attend to stock, and be generally useful, as his man, meanwhile, will keep steady at work all day long. If personal attention is requisite, he can give it, and help all that may be required. All this will be saved without having every hour in the day devoted to such hard work as to incapacitate him from any mental exertion; and another source of economy will be found in the saving \$1 a day and board for haying, and often \$1½ and board for harvest, when men must be had, no matter what you have to pay for them. Ten days' haying and ten days' harvest will save \$29 10, supposing that the man does the same work hired by the year as the day. There is no room for supposing that there can be any business of the extent of 90 acres of cleared land, and the stock required on it, in which the labour of the farmer, if forced to do what a hired man can do, will pay as well as his personal attention to other matters which would then be neglected.

What I would try to impress on the farmer's mind is this: not to suppose that his calling is necessarily one that any fool can profitably conduct provided he has only a strong pair of hands. The hands are, no doubt, very useful, but not essentially more so than indifferent bodily strength and a clear head. Depend on it, there is just as much opening on the farm for head-work as anywhere else. No man ever made himself wealthy simply by the work of his hands alone. He may make the first few hundred dollars, and save them; but he must, after that, become comparatively a capitalist, and seek for labour other than his own, to render profitable his small accumulated capital, and no sooner does that time arrive, than he must look round at the doings of others, read and reflect, reason and act, if he would keep pace with others who do so. Without thought and comparative ease of body, a farmer will never have his buildings and fences in order, nor will he ever have any ornament about his homestead, or have an inclination to try new experiments. He may have enough to eat and drink, and wear; but these supplies, although very acceptable, will never alone raise the man above a machine to do work. It is for the million I am now writing. I leave out of my category the few favoured ones who have capital and thorough-bred stock. We must use for our lands the improvement of the means that lie within ourselves, and our own power to obtain. We must adapt our present means to ends to be reached. We must not say "such land is worn out and worthless," and refuse to try its regeneration. If such were indeed the case, and land was virtually worn out, and absolutely destroyed, how is it that lands cropped 500 years before the knowledge of chemical manures, bears crops to this day as well, and perhaps better, than it used to do? Don't try to amend too much at first: do a small piece each year, reason on it, and use such means as you have within reach, and *never despair* or believe that land is absolutely worn out, notwithstanding all that chemistry and book-farming may tell you.

C.

Labour-saving Machinery.

To the Editor.

SIR,—Unquestionably this is a great age in which we live; its rapid strides in the arts and sciences are unprecedented. Wonderful have been the achievements of the nineteenth century; and labour-saving machinery will compare favourably with any other of the great inventions. The day is past when any argument was needed in favour of the employment of machinery in preference to exclusive hand labour; and in this country especially the agricultural interest needs its mighty aid to progress. Some farm hands are demanding two hundred dollars and board per annum, a few are even securing it, which is more than the labourer can earn or the farmer afford to pay. Look at the outrageous prices demanded during last harvest; in this section of the country—as high as three dollars a day were paid. Now, what we want (for we are not satisfied with the improvements great as they have been), is better machinery for harvesting our crops, so that we shall not need much extra help during harvest. The "Marsh Harvester" comes another step in this direction, if it only proves what its manufacturers describe it to be. Do not suppose that I despise the old Canadian reaper; all honour to it! But let "Progress and improvement" be our motto. Some of our machinery is labour-saving but not durable; and farmers are under the necessity of purchasing a new machine every few years, very soon coming to the conclusion that if it is *labour-saving* it is not *money-saving*. Our inventors should try to combine simplicity with durability, if they wish to be successful in this branch of machinery. We have our mowers which have allowed the scythes to hang up to rest, and our horse-rakes have come to the relief of the boys, and various other machines which are too numerous to mention here. It is true some farmers are so credulous that they invest in nearly every machine that professes to be labour-saving, whether the agent is a reliable man or not; when of course some machines prove worthless, and the farmer over the way points at his neighbours and says, "Here is a scientific farmer for you!" In this way the use of machinery is occasionally brought into undeserved discredit, and useful inventions are sometimes slow to be recognised and established in public estimation and patronage. Certainly people should be careful how their hard earnings are invested, for there are still some *new* persons who will "take in" an honest farmer, just as quick and with as little remorse as any other man.

In another communication I will offer a few remarks on in-door labour-saving machinery.

CULTIVATEUR.

York.