

standing the length and usual severity of our Canadian winters, to make ample provision for sustaining his live stock, in a comfortable and improving condition.

ON PRACTICAL FARMING.

[The following article from the pen of a farmer in Elizabethtown, was originally addressed to the Directors of the *Johnstown Agricultural Society*, who have kindly permitted us to publish it.]

TILLAGE FARMS

Are the most profitable to the community, because they give employment to the greatest number of persons, and are the most productive of human sustenance, for although the quantity of fodder used for the support of the cattle employed in cultivating them, must be deducted from their produce, and the remainder is all that is available to man, yet that will exceed the largest amount of human food that can be obtained from an equal number of acres of the same soil, under pasture or meadow. In a private point of view, however, grass land, when of good quality, is of the greatest value, because it produces an abundant crop without the expense of cultivation. It is, also, for that reason, a more secure investment to the owner; and, therefore, unless seduced by the very high price of grain, they rarely allow such to be broken up. But in point of convenience, of general profit, and of pleasure, a farm composed of both arable and pasture is to be preferred to one of either alone.

It is still an undecided question whether farms of mixed soil are preferable to those of one equal quality. The advocate of the latter urge advantages attendant on a uniform system, fewer implements, and the consequent greater ease and economy of management; while the supporters of the former insist on their superiority in affording a wider range for experiments, a greater variety of crops and seasons; and a better division of labor and hazard; which remarks apply with peculiar force to stiff clays, on which the teams must remain idle during many days when they might be employed on land of more various quality. A bad soil it has been justly observed, is an exhaustless source of amusement to the possessor; an untoward one, the plague of autumn—the pest of his winters—and the never failing curse of spring. To which it may be added, that bad land is dear at any price. By bad land, however, is not meant poor land, from much of which, when of a kindly nature, money is to be made under proper management; but cold and

wet clay and gravelly soils should be carefully avoided; for although subject to heavy and constant expenses for draining, and of a difficult tillage, they are uncertain in their returns, and only fit to be laid down to grass. Rich soils are scarce, and not easily obtained, but a sound hazel loam, though not of the first quality, yet if deep enough not to be easily affected by drought, and both dry and friable enough to work kindly in the early part of spring, will seldom disappoint an active and intelligent farmer.

The choice of a farm is an object of the deepest importance to the man who depends on it for subsistence; but it is only rarely that he can select such a one as would prove in all respects desirable. Yet, although in most instances the competition for land may compel him to take what he can get, rather than what he would choose, there are still considerations which no one of prudence can overlook. The nature of the market, the cost of essential improvements, and the price of labor, are each deserving of serious reflections; in the aggregate they determine the requisite amount of that which demands the most especial attention, namely:—

CAPITAL.

Most farmers are anxious for large farms, and many are thus betrayed into the error of purchasing a greater quantity of land than they have the means of managing to advantage; some in the delusive hope of acquiring those means by future slaving; others from the vanity of holding more land than their neighbors.—Hence arises deficiencies of stock, imperfect tillage, and scanty crops, all the consequent train of evils, arrears, wages ill-paid, and debts unsatisfied, distress, and final ruin in many cases. Where, as he who is prudently content to commence only with such a number of acres as he has the power of cultivating with proper effect, is certain of obtaining the full return from the soil; while, not being burdened with more land than he can profitably cultivate, keeps his engagements within his means, and thus, while enjoying present ease of mind, he lays the surest foundation for his future prosperity.

There is no mistake more common, nor more injurious than that of supposing the more land a man holds, the greater must be his profits, for the profit does not arise from the land itself, but from the manner of using it; the best soil may be made unproductive while the poor may be rendered profitable by the opposite course; but without sufficient capital no land can be properly cultivated. There is nothing to which capital can be applied with greater certainty of