

Hemp and Flax Culture.

This subject is again resumed in this paper, with a view of urging the farmers of this Province, whose soil is adapted to the growth of these plants, to grow them extensively, and to introduce the most labor saving machinery for preparing the fibre for market, that is used in other countries. Our readers will doubtless recollect, that we published a very elaborate report from David Myerle, Esq., of Missouri, about four years since, in which every branch of the hemp growing business was illustrated in such a clear manner, that the greatest novice in such matters could obtain a pretty correct knowledge of the business, by carefully reading the report, or essay in question. Mr. M. was employed by the United States Government, as agent to instruct the farmers of Missouri, the nature and operations of hemp growing; and at the period he commenced his operations, the article of hemp produced in the Western States was of a very inferior description, so bad indeed that it was only used for the most inferior purposes, and the entire quantity grown in the Mississippi Valley, in the year 1841, amounted to only 4000 tons. In the space of six years, through the instrumentality of Government Agents, the hemp crop of the Western States, has been increased from 4000 tons to 30,000 tons. About three millions of Dollars annually, have thus been retained in the country, which would otherwise have gone to Russia. There is now every reason to believe, that the Western States will supply, not only the markets of the United States, with the article of a superior quality of hemp, but that Great Britain will also draw a very large share of her supplies from this quarter. When we look at the trifling amount of business in hemp growing that has been done in Canada, in comparison to what has been done in the Western States, we are disposed to make a bitter complaint at the indifference, that our men of influence evince, in relation to all matters of a public interest, and especially to such as would have a tendency to increase the product and wealth of the country. Canada should supply the British market with some hundreds of thousands of pounds worth annually of hemp and flax, and as we have repeatedly stated, the only reason why this cannot be done, is the fact that it is next to impossible, to get the deep rooted prejudice of our farmers removed.—The best method that we are able to suggest, for

stimulating our farmers to engage in the growth of hemp and flax is, for Government to adopt a similar course, to the one pursued by the United States Government. Farmers not only require information, but efficient machinery to prepare the raw material of these plants for market.—Labour here is high, and to counteract the prejudicial influence of high labour, efficient machinery should be employed to lessen the costs of preparing the article for market. A few hundreds of pounds expended by Government, in the purchase of machinery and in premiums, would secure a successful beginning in the hemp and flax growing business. With the trifling sum of one thousand pounds, models of machinery could be imported into the Province,—and the business under notice could be placed upon such a footing, that some hundreds of tons would be brought into market the following season. If Government could be induced to encourage this interest, we feel confident that the exports of hemp and flax in a very few years, would nearly equal that of wheat, besides a very considerable amount of money could be kept in the country, for the supply which is now required of flax and hempen goods purchased in the British markets. We shall once more do our utmost to persuade the Canadian farmers, to turn their attention to the growth of other crops besides wheat, and among the many that might be grown with much profit, are hemp and flax.—The following extracts are taken from the monthly *Visitor*, which clearly illustrate the improvements that are made in hemp and flax machinery, in the United States:—

Hemp and Flax Rotting and Dressing Machines.—As connected with the growth of hemp and flax in this country, to become probably an extensive substitute for cotton, and an article for export, Z. C. Robbins, Esq., Mechanic Engineer and Agent, for procuring patents at the city of Washington, has called our attention to the hemp and flax dressing machines, for which through him letters patent have been lately issued. These machines are the invention of Messrs. G. W. Billings and John Harrison of Missouri. They were exhibited at the fair of the New York American Institute in 1835, and received the flattering award of a gold medal.

Their first patent is for a method or process of water-rotting hemp or flax, which they perfectly accomplish in from three to four days, without