

of larger grains, emitting a fetid smell, and is the more destructive of the two. We should strongly advise not to sow smutty wheat, if it can possibly be avoided.

Wheat affected in this way should be put through the fanning mill several times, and afterwards thoroughly washed in a cistern or tub, with clean water; the light and smutty grains will rise to the top, and can be skimmed off. Soaking the seed in a strong brine, sufficient to sink a hen's egg, and afterwards drying it with lime mixed with hot water, pouring the mass over the heap, and thoroughly incorporating it with the grain, is an old practice, much to be commended. Sulphate of copper (blue vitriol,) forms a much approved solution for the steeping of grain; using about 2 oz. or more, to a bushel. In this case it is best not to dry the grain with quick lime, as it impairs to some extent, the powers of the mixture, by decomposing the sulphate of copper.

How to Destroy Thistles.

EDITORS OF THE AGRICULTURIST. GENTLEMEN.

I am induced to trouble you, for the purpose of asking the best mode of extirpating thistles. I mean those that are commonly called Canadian (a graceful, slender plant) in contradistinction to the Scotch. My reason more particularly for wanting to be informed, is, that a person has been soliciting, and with some success, for customers, at a premium of \$10 to be paid at the end of two years—the term allotted for their extinction, and a forfeiture of \$1000 if his secret, or information, is divulged, by those who subscribe to his terms. All this appears to me to be a mixture of stupidity and imposture. If it is not, I shall be glad to be set right. The little disclosure that has been made, is connected with the moon's age, and other lunar mysteries; and I dare to say, with many it has not been without its attractions. Any opinion that I entertain on the subject, is not worth a thought; labor and good tillage is all that I should employ. But something is demanded as far as the high roads are concerned; supposing, as I do—that they are propagated by seed. I will take up no more of your valuable time, feeling assured if you can correct a tendency to delusion, that you will do it, by giving all the information on the subject that can be known.

I am Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

JOHN LESLIE.

Guelph, Aug. 18th, 1851.

P.S. A portion of the Eramosa Road is covered on both sides with thistles, and I suppose it is the same every where. J. L.

Our correspondent will find the opinions and

experience of several farmers relative to the extirpation of thistles recorded in the back numbers of the *Agriculturist*. We agree with him that "labor and good tillage" involve the grand remedy, and the lunar theory should be left to those who choose to adhere to the superstitious practices of past ages, rather than abide by the dictates of careful observation and common sense. When once the Canada thistle has got undisputed possession of the soil, it requires both time and perseverance to effect a dislodgement. Plants may be weakened, and, indeed, ultimately killed by repeatedly stripping them of their leaves. In pasture land thistles may be got rid of by cutting them off with a sharp instrument, technically called a thistle-spud, a little below the surface of the ground, whenever they make their appearance. In this way we have seen pastures entirely cleared in a few years. For arable land a thorough summer fallow; that is deep ploughing and frequent scarifying, bringing the roots to the surface, will give the thistles an effective check; and by subsequently pulling up what may appear a cure will be gradually effected. We know of no specific. Clean culture, and not allowing thistles to seed in waste places and on road sides, against which, we believe there is a statute, involve the general principles of prevention, which every farmer has, more or less, the means and opportunity of applying.

Important Invention—New Flax Scutching Machine.

We were yesterday, in common with several gentlemen connected with the flax trade, afforded an opportunity of witnessing the practical operation of a new flax scutching machine, invented and just patented by the Messrs. Rowan, of the York-street Foundry. Already it has been pronounced, by competent judges, the most successful mechanical appliance yet designed for scutching purposes; its great recommendation after its utility is the cost, which is moderate in comparison with that of other machines—so moderate, indeed, as to bring it within the means of the ordinary flax-growing farmers. A single machine requiring the attendance of one person will not cost more than £20; while a double machine, to be worked by two persons, may, we believe, be made for about £25. It is an advantage, too, that the machine does not require the attendance of skilled workmen; it can be worked by any ordinary farm labourer the space occupied is little, as the extreme dimensions do not exceed 5 feet by 3—not a fourth of the size of ordinary threshing machines. No extra amount