

flax entirely for its seed, which product is used in the manufacture of linseed oil. The actual straw of the plant, which in all other countries is of the greatest value in the manufacture of all kinds of cordage and twine, has been entirely wasted owing to lack of efficient means for its practical and economical treatment.

If linen were as cheap as cotton who would want cotton?

Cotton is an inferior substitute for linen. Hardly anybody used cotton a hundred years ago. But as the population grew and the market for "white goods" increased, the demand for linen outran the supply. It took so long (sixteen to thirty weeks) to prepare linen for use that it could not be made fast enough for the wants of the people. There was not enough of it to go round. Prices went up. Soon the majority of people could not afford linen for common use, and yet "white goods" were necessary to their health, comfort and happiness. As they could not get linen they had to put up with the next best thing.

If our raw flax as it comes from the field can be converted into binder twine, bagging and beautiful bleached linen fibre ready for spinning, or paper, by the new process, the capital invested will make enormous fortunes for those who engage in the business.

I have in my investigations during the past three years received excellent samples of the products of Western flax straw. These samples range from the raw flax fibre slightly crushed, the fibre after it has been decorticated by the mechanical process, and also after degumming. The finished products of yarns, crashes and other useful commercial materials are splendid specimens. If brains, capital and machinery can separate and extract our Western flax fibre from the straw by these purely mechanical means, and without having to resort to what is commonly known as "Pit retting" and "dew retting," a great industry will surely result.

This would seem possible, as seen from the following extracts taken from a recent preliminary prospectus issued after experiments from Western Canadian flax had been carried on in Great Britain.

"The ordinary processes for treating and recovering flax fibre are costly and almost prohibitive in Canada, on account of the high level of wages, and the restricted period for labor involved between the harvesting and the coming of winter. The result being that