

every reason to believe flax could be made one of the best paying crops in Canada. He also corroborated the statements made by me, from time to time, and concluded his remarks by saying he and his brother intended putting in 4,000 acres this season.

In the county of Simcoe, I also visited several other places, showing the samples from the manufactory of Messrs. Parline, Bro. & Co., Doon Mills. At the village of Churchhill, near Lefroy Station, a meeting was held, where there were nearly a hundred farmers present. After hearing explanations, a subscription was raised to the amount of \$175 for the purpose of assisting any party who would erect a scutch mill, and several parties pledged themselves to put in from three to five acres each.

At Woodstock, I also attended two large meetings, and found in this section of country, a great deal had already been done. A Mr. Brown has had two scutching mills at work during the last two years, and has there given out seed enough to sow from 800 to 1,000 acres. He also stated at the meeting that he could get any quantity sown, as the farmers had felt the benefit they received from this crop. The Hon. Mr. Alexander, Doctor Cottle, and several members of the Agricultural Society attended on both occasions, and perhaps no part of Canada is likely to go more extensively into the growth of this new crop than the farmers in the county of Oxford. An oil mill is in full operation here and doing a large business.

On Saturday week I attended a large meeting in the Town Hall at Brantford. The mayor filled the chair, and a number of the most enterprising farmers in the neighbourhood were present. Two parties, present at the meeting, stated they intended putting up mills this summer and were then prepared to offer seed to the farmers who were inclined to commence operations. Mr. Finlayson, one of the parties, stated he was not only prepared to offer seed on the same terms as others, and wait for pay till after harvest, but he would advance money then, on account of the crop, and would pay as liberal prices as any other party in the country. Mr. Lyous, from the town of Simcoe, county of Norfolk, who intends putting up a mill, made similar offers. A lively discussion took place here among the farmers themselves. Several stated they fully intended to make a beginning this season, while others said they had already grown it. One party stated he had several acres, both last year and year previous, off which he had over 17 bushels of seed per acre.

A strong feeling was exhibited in favour of the project on all sides, and no doubt a large quantity will be sown. I have also answered numerous letters of enquiry, and on all occasions have found the farmers ready to make the trial, wherever a mill may be started.

JOHN A. DONALDSON,
Gen. Emig. Agent.

Toronto, 8th May, 1865.

Spring Seeding and Drainage.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—It being a general remark that wheat is looking very well, I have just been taking a stroll over a few farms in this neighbourhood, to cheer my eyes with a sight of returning prosperity to the farmers. But hope rather gave way to sadness as I proceeded. Many fields that look well in the distance, on nearer inspection, prove very spotted. Furrows stand full of water, often reaching some feet on the adjoining ridges, and everywhere large patches where the plant is not quite dead, but struggling for existence in a soil waterlogged, cold and heavy, like a bed of putty. Some progress has been made with spring seeding; but farmers whom I have met, state that more than half is yet to sow, that the weather has been so unfavorable, that when the land is ready for working another rain comes, and causes another week's delay. One farmer, who has ten acres of barley to sow, commenced with the cultivator on Friday, 25th April, when it was just dry enough for working, and got one half of it in fine order, intending to sow it next day; but a heavy rain fell that night, and next morning it was under water. On Friday, the 5th May, the other five acres were dry enough, but the five that had been cultivated, having the furrows all closed, could not be touched; so he cultivated the other five, and got them in good condition, intending, as before, to sow next day; but on Saturday it again rained heavily, and now the whole ten acres are farther back, and in worse condition, than they were a fortnight ago. He is not alone in this experience.

Many are in the same predicament, and will be sowing till near the end of May. The result is likely to be the same as last year: before the plant is large enough to shade the land, the hot June sun will scorch the one, and bake the other, and the crop prove a failure. Had these ten acres been under-drained they would have been dry on the Wednesdays instead of the Fridays, and been sown and harrowed in good order.

In THE CANADA FARMER, of August 1st, you made this remark, "The great lesson of the past season is the vital importance of thorough drainage." As far as this locality is concerned, that lesson has not been learned. It has scarcely been begun to be learned. It may be safely asserted there are not twenty-five acres of drained land in the Township of Clinton; and there is not a township in Canada that would be more benefitted by draining. It, in common with the other townships of the County of Lincoln, stands at present rather low in its average productions, but the soil is naturally of the first order, and with thorough drainage, the whole of it, particularly that portion lying between the mountain and the lake shore, would not be surpassed in the wide world. My first impulse, on returning from my walk, was to write to you to complain of the little attention given to the subject of draining in your columns; but on looking back over them, I perceive this would have been unjust, as many articles, both original and selected, have appeared, and so much to the purpose, that instead of attempting to give anything new on the subject, I will content myself with recalling the careful attention of your readers to the articles and communications on the subject, in the numbers here indicated: Vol. I., No. 5, page 67; Vol. I., No. 11, page 162; Vol. I., No. 15, page 226; Vol. I., No. 17, page 259; Vol. II., No. 3, page 34.

In the number last referred to is a letter from a subscriber in Nelson, who makes use of the following emphatic language. "The advantages of under-draining cannot be over-estimated," and "I believe it to be the foundation of all good farming," sentences worthy to be printed in capitals at the top of every page of your journal. I will merely add, as well might farmers expect their cattle to thrive if the action of bowels and kidneys were suspended, and the food, after being retained for a time in the stomach and partially digested, spued out by the mouth, as expect crops to come to full growth, when the rains, their natural food, instead of being digested by percolation and filtration, are spued from the surface in their natural state. Nature has, in some localities, furnished these channels in gravelly subsoils, but where they are wanting, it is the very first function of the farming art to supply them.

But draining is very expensive, many say. Of course it is. So is clearing a farm. So is building a house, or a barn. So is a carriage and a fine pair of horses. So is any improvement. But drainage has this advantage, no other improvement, and no other outlay is so sure of a good return. It would pay to borrow money even at ten per cent. for this purpose, but money should be had at a much lower rate. Were the government to adopt some measures to create a loan fund for this special object, that would not cost over five per cent. it would be an immense advantage to the country. The Legislature has chartered banks which furnish ample accommodation for commercial purposes, but no provision is made to furnish means for conducting landed improvements, although of far more importance. The merchant, who imports dry goods to be worn by farmers' families, can get his paper discounted at a bank, and buy exchange to pay for them; but the farmer, who wants money to pay labourers for draining his land, to create the means to pay for these goods, can get no discounts. And yet the final result in the former case is the rags of the worn out clothing—in the latter, a great increase in the productions and wealth of our country. If the government cannot see its way to move in this matter, the next best source, that I know of, is the *Canada Landed Credit Company*, who lend money to farmers at one per cent. more than bank rates, and will receive payment of the principal in yearly instalments of two cent. If there are any farmers who are resolved not to go in debt even for this purpose, I would advise them to sell as much of their land as would enable them to drain the remainder; and they will be happier, wealthier, and more independent men.

Mr. Sutton's advertisement of tile making machines is a sign of progress in this work, in the County of Peel, at any rate. I sincerely hope those who have bought machines have had more encouragement than Mr. Little of this village, who some time ago got a machine, chiefly on my recommendation, and now offers to furnish 3-inch tiles, in lots of five thousand,

as low as \$10 per thousand; and yet, during the past year, he has not sold as many as would drain a single acre.

By way of contributing a little to a work so important, I beg to make the following proposal. If fifty farmers will deposit with you one dollar each, I will add fifty more, to make a premium of one hundred dollars to be awarded at the Provincial Exhibition of 1866 to the farmer who will put in the greatest extent of tile drains during the year, from 1st Sept., 1865, to 1st Sept., 1866. The tile to be not less than three inch bore. The depth of drain not less than three feet, where the digging can be done with plough or spade; nor less than thirty inches in any soil. Competitors to provide, as the work progresses, proof that will be satisfactory to the judges, of compliance with these conditions. To be open for competition to all farmers in Canada West.

I purpose making a similar proposal to this Township (Clinton), to the extent of twenty-five dollars. That is to say, if twenty-five farmers of this township will deposit with the Treasurer of the Township Agricultural Society one dollar each, I will add twenty-five more, to make a premium of fifty dollars, to be awarded at the Township Fair in 1866, subject to the same conditions as named for the Province, open for competition to the Township of Clinton.

J. B. OSBORNE.

Beamsville, 8th May, 1865.

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—We sincerely hope the challenge given by our correspondent will be accepted. Send in your names, gentlemen, for the Drainage Prizo Fund of 1866. There will be no objection if more than the amount specified is pledged. Indeed, it would be well to have second and third prizes, as in other classes.

MANURE—THE FARMER'S CAPITAL.—A correspondent of the *Country Gentleman* says:—"I would suggest, what has often been maintained before, that 'manure is the farmer's capital,' and that all of it which is so frequently wasted around the privies, the barnyards, hog-pens, &c., be saved, and judiciously applied to the orchards, gardens, and farms, and a great increase of wealth, health, and happiness, would result therefrom to the people of this country."

THE BEST KIND OF POTATO SETS.—A correspondent of the *Albany Country Gentleman* gives the following result of his experience:—1. From all my examinations I came to the conclusion that the eyes of any single potato have different degrees of strength or germinating power, and that this difference extends to the plant, giving it a greater or less degree of vigour and growth. 2. That the strength of growth is greater in some kinds of potatoes than others. 3. That there is a greater difference in the strength of the eyes of some kinds of potatoes than in others. 4. That this difference is in degree marked by its external or apparent development. 5. It would seem that the best eye of the smaller potato is less vigorous than the best eye of the larger one of the same kind, but that is not yet proved by experiment. The writer also adds that in some kinds the eye is very faintly marked; in the better kinds the eye seems a more important feature, and in the best kinds the eyes are strongly marked, appearing to be only a mass of deep set eyes.

GROWING CLOVER AND CLOVER SEED.—The editor of the *Genesee Farmer* remarks:

I bought six bushels of clover seed to-day and had to pay \$17 per bushel for it. But clover, on a grain farm, is indispensable. It is the only really renovating crop we have. JOHN JOHNSTON, now that he has made his land so rich, may think clover does not pay, but on most farms we must grow clover or we shall grow little else. In fact, one of the means Mr. Johnston used to bring up his land was by raising large crops of clover and making it into hay to be fed to sheep in winter. The manure from clover is much more valuable than from timothy. Clover may not pay directly as well as timothy, but when we take into consideration the fact that it impoverishes the soil less than timothy, while it makes better manure, and is, theoretically at least, weight for weight, quite as nutritious, clover must be the main reliance of wheat-growers for keeping up the fertility of the land. I have always recommended the farmers in Western New-York to "grow their own clover seed, and sow it with an unsparing hand." I will for the future endeavor to conform my practice to my preaching. I think it will be some years before I again pay out \$102 for six bushels of clover seed. It is an excellent plan to have a piece of young clover near the barn-yard, and give it a heavy dressing of well rotted manure in the fall. This will start it very early in the spring, and give a great crop. It is just the thing to cut green to feed horses at noon in the stable. And if the second crop is allowed to go to seed, a large yield may be expected, even in such a dry season as the last.