

for the establishment of a General Board of Agriculture that Board may take the management of the subject. We copy a part of the Report submitted to the meeting, which we think may be interesting, and instructive to ourselves. It appears that from 600 to 700 lbs. of flax is the average return to the acre, and the value £43 per ton:—

MANAGEMENT DURING THE PAST YEAR.—"Early in February, your Committee had the regret to receive the resignation of Captain Skinner, whose able discharge of his duties, as Secretary to this Society, had been fully appreciated by your Committee, and by the public at large. No time was lost in appointing a successor; and the choice fell upon Mr. James MacAdam, jun. who has fulfilled the duties of the office. In June, an application was made to your Committee, by Mr. Hardy, one of the Society's agriculturists for a grant of money, to enable him to visit Courtrai, for the purpose of learning the system there pursued of stacking up the flax crop of one season, for treatment in the following spring. As your Committee deemed it advisable that this system should be fully understood, which had not hitherto been the case here, they acceded to Mr. Hardy's request, who visited Courtrai, and has drawn up a report of his observations, which will appear in the printed appendix. The Society's four chief agriculturists have been most actively engaged in giving their practical instructions on the estates of subscribers, in parts of every County in this Province, and in some parts of Leinster. As your Committee were strongly impressed with the great utility of these trained instructors, they thought fit, in Spring, to select six young men of intelligence and ability, accustomed to the management of flax. These were placed with the chief agriculturists, and accompanied them in their rounds; they are now competent each to take charge of a district, next season. Mr. Lawson, who had formerly been sent to Belgium, by the Society, was also engaged this season; and three trained labourers were placed in different parts of the country, where their services were required. The active superintendence, and the practical instructions of all the Society's staff, have been fully testified to by those with whom they have been located, and a marked improvement in the growth and handling of flax, is manifested every where they have visited.

SAVING OF FLAX-SEED.—"In allusion to this most important topic, your Committee have the liveliest feelings of satisfaction, at having been instrumental in bringing prominently before the farmers the great utility of flaxseed, as food for all kinds of live stock. A prejudice had formerly prevailed against saving the seed, from an idea that it would injure the quality of the fibre. This had been heightened by an injudicious manner of rippling, by which the ends of the flax were considerably injured and frayed. Though the printed documents which your Committee issued, and especially, by the practical instructions of the Society's agriculturist, the farmers were taught the proper manner of rippling. Almost every where through the country, this season, a large portion of the crop of seed has been saved, and the flax fibre has not been at all deteriorated, when the operation was performed with care. Your Committee have reason to believe, that fully one-sixth of the flax grown in Ireland, this season, has been rippled. The seed has either been used for feeding, or has been sold for the oil mills; and the total value of the above-named quantity, reckoning it at £3 or £4 per acre, cannot be estimated at less than £60,000 or £80,000. In concluding this part of their subject, your Committee have to record

their conviction, from the results of the past season, that, in a few years, *all* the seed of the Irish flax crop will be saved, and an addition thus made to the resources of the country (even supposing flax-culture to remain stationary,) which would amount to nearly half a million per annum.

MACHINERY.—"Among the most pleasing features, in the progress of improvement, which your Committee have to notice, are the strides towards perfection that have been made, during the past years, in the adaptation of machinery to the breaking and scutching of flax. The prizes offered for machinery, by the Society, last year, gave an impetus to the ingenuity of machinists, which continues still in full force. Your Committee have heard, with pleasure, of new inventions, or improvements on former adaptations, which have been very successful, when practically applied; and the most marked superiority in the manner which flax is at present handled, is the consequence. Several large landed proprietors have, at great cost, erected scutch-mills on their estates, for the benefit of their tenantry, containing the most approved machinery; and they have thus conferred a boon, which does honour to themselves, and is fully appreciated by their tenants. Your Committee have every reason to hope, that, in a short time, flax-breaking and scutching machinery will be brought to a high state of perfection, and that the Society will no longer have to lament the inefficiency and waste which characterised the Irish scutch-mills, before the commencement of the Society's labours.

HAND-SCUTCHING.—"While your Committee are satisfied that machinery is more suitable than hand-work for the preparation of flax, in the greater part of this province, they have reason to think that hand-scutching will prevail in the poorer and more densely populated agricultural districts, in other parts of Ireland. They have, therefore, established a school for hand-scutching, under Mr. Patterson, one of the Society's agriculturists, who fully understands the Belgium method, where the assistant-agriculturists are being trained, and rendered competent to instruct the people in this process, in those districts of Ireland where they may be in in future located."

THE FACTOR SYSTEM.—"It has been the desire of your Committee to introduce and foster the trade of purchasing flax on the foot, as they conceive that this would at once obviate the objections to the trouble of managing the crop in districts of Ireland like the adjoining counties, where the agricultural population is fully employed. The gentlemen who engaged in this new branch of business, last year, from taking too much in hands were unable to realize any profit, as much of the flax was greatly injured by their inability to have the different processes, on so large a quantity of flax, managed by their infant establishments. This season, however, those who have purchased flax on the foot, have expressed themselves well satisfied with the result of their enterprise; and the claimants for the prizes, which your Committee offered to these gentlemen, can testify that such is the case. Mr. Galbraith's establishment at Lifford, has been of the most essential service, not only in giving profitable employment to numbers of persons in that neighbourhood, but in holding out such an example to the surrounding farmers, in the neatness and care with which the flax is handled, and the consequently vast improvement in the quality of the fibre, when ready for the market. That the system of flax-factorship will ultimately prevail in the North of Ireland, your Committee have every reason to think; and meanwhile, their best thanks are due to the enterprising pioneers, who though without profit