

FLAX WOULD PAY HERE

**Experiments With the Puget Sound
Product Fully Justify That
Conclusion.**

A Large and Increasing Demand at Home Now Supplied by Importations.

TO THE EDITOR:—It is with a considerable degree of pleasure that I avail myself of the opportunity, through the columns of the COLONIST, of directing attention to the possibility of making the production of flax and the manufacture of ropes, twines, etc., as well as the finer class of linen fabrics, one of the most profitable industries of this province in the near future. I am aware that

many wisens we have such a small population our home consumption would be insignificant, and we cannot compete with old established linen goods manufacturers in the markets of the world. For the information of such I would enquire to compete with foreign manufactures in outside markets, at all events until we have supplied the requirements of our own. What are the facts? I find that our country has the vast Columbia fisheries (practically undeveloped) we import ropes, twines and other fishing gear, manufactured from foreign fish products, and the value of between \$200,000 and \$300,000, to say nothing of what is expended on the finer qualities of linen goods used in the household and in the office. I have not time to observe that we have no considerable

home market awaiting exploitation, and in connection with present requirements, if we consider the rapid development of the world market, it is not unlikely that what will doubtless occur in the not distant future, the above amount multiplied several times will be required to supply our own requirements. To meet these desires, that we make an effort to prevent the constant drain upon our resources from this cause, and at the same time preserve the home market for our own people, we must endeavor to conserve our agricultural resources by encouraging the production of the raw material, retaining a very large sum of money here in the province that will be required to develop the fisheries, and to continue the present order of things; say our fisheries produce a many millions in value annually, but expend a very considerable proportion of the supplies that can and ought to be produced at home.

Having demonstrated the fact that there is a most valuable home market ready to be occupied, it would perhaps be surprising that the great water power of superior quality can be profitably produced here in British Columbia, and that our soil and climate are particularly adapted to the production of such some of the most important products of manufacture.

While the writer does not wish to assume that he was the first person to take up the idea of settling in this location, he can truthfully state that many years ago, when first settled on his present location, he was convinced that would thrive here (having had some experience in both in England and also in Eastern Canada). Hence he undertook a series of experiments, which have been eminently successful, establishing the fact that the soil and climate are of a very superior quality, the

staple is long and exquisitely fine and
silk-like when properly rolled and
dressed. The crop is not difficult
to grow, and while there is a great
amount of labor necessary to produce
the staple, the production, unlike
growing there is no expense attached
thereto, such for instance as for sowing
and threshing, etc. It is, to put it in
other words, eminently a poor man's crop
and, as is well known, the majority
of our farmers are poor and uneducated
and unimproved and established,
and believe the production of flax will prove
a veritable mortgage-lifter as well as
a factor in promoting the clearing, set-
tling and development of the timber
districts, and of those districts that are
remote from markets, for the reason that
it is a crop that can be raised with
little cultivation. Such soil as

generally free from weeds, and almost invariably the surface will be rich and friable. The return would be from one hundred to one hundred and fifty bushels of wheat per acre. The crop matures in from ninety to one hundred and five days, and except for the small expense incurred for the seed and the labor of the farmer, the farmer can grow the crop to the scratching mill, without the expense of a flax mill, as noted above. Unlike grain growing, the farmer and his family can perform the labor themselves, and hence the expense of the flax culture is small. The farmer will receive it. Another thing when the crop is ready, it is at a time of the year when the roads are at their best, and the farmer can take the crop to the bad roads is avoided, and as flax is a crop grown in countries where grown, the marketing of it will place money at the disposal of the farmer. It is a crop of the most necessary character. According to the experience of the writer the va-

of the crop would be from \$20 to \$80 per acre on the average. This is, of course, dependent on the quality of the soil and the weather. Should the industry become developed to the extent that the fact that it will do the retting and scutching and spinning at home, the product would be made in the United States, and the great advantage of manipulation to prepare the fibres for manufacture, and this is labor that can be done at any time, indoors, when or where it is desired. The value of the fibre is worth from \$50 to \$400 per ton, and besides the fibre there is the value of seed, \$5 to \$15 per acre, additionally.

It is said by some that fax cultivation is not profitable. This is due to the ignorance of the writer the impossibility of the soil is not greater from a crop of fax than from a crop of oats. It is well known fact is the effort of the farmer to grow fax is not based heavily on the fertility of the soil, in fact, fax is grown for fibre, the seed is not all used to fully mature, hence

Some years after the writer commenced his experiments the United States government inaugurated a system of experiments in flax culture in the State of Washington, some few

