

## FLAX.

*To the Editor of the Canadian Agriculturist.*

SIR,—

In these days of free trade progress when we encounter its operations even in the wilds of Canada, and when the palmy days of a dollar per bushel for wheat takes its place among the records of the past, it becomes needful to cast about for all fair and possible means of recovering lost ground. Various schemes suggest themselves to our consideration of which I shall only at present advert to one, that is the introduction of new agricultural products suitable to our soil and climate, and easily attainable by Canadian farmers:—

The culture of Flax forms an important item in this class. By an ingenious combination of chemical and mechanical sciences Chevalier Claussen has succeeded in converting flax into a very fair sample of cotton wool, well calculated to form an important adjunct, if not a perfect substitute for that article in various manufactures. No man will deny that flax may be readily grown, with ordinary care, upon any farm in Canada, and with average crops, it is equally certain that profitable returns will result. The introduction of this plant into our rotations, deserves our best attention and will be productive of the happiest effects. How difficult do we find it to raise turnips upon anything like an adequate scale, and who cannot testify to the loss occasioned by the absence of that precious root? In rearing and fattening live stock, a cheap and abundant supply of oil cake in combination with the offal of our flour mills, will go far indeed in supplying the blank and in improving the quality and supply of animal food and of dairy produce in our markets. It is also perfectly evident that by a free use of oil cake our farm yard manure will swell in bulk and improve in quality to an extent which it would be difficult to estimate, and which by its natural tendency to raise the amount of grain per acre, will in some measure compensate the farmer for reduced prices and enable him to meet the change of times.

My object at present being only to awaken attention, I shall refrain from entering upon details. The Canada Company with wise and patriotic energy have entered promptly and zealously into this important subject, and already premiums from that body have been announced. It is consistent with my own knowledge that every facility and encouragement will be afforded by the Directors; and there can be no doubt that a like spirit will actuate our own Board of Agriculture. It is probable that at the earliest

meeting of the Board, arrangements will be made for testing in a satisfactory manner, the expense and returns of raising flax upon a portion of that land, so handsomely placed at the disposal of the Board, by the University Council, and which will be open and accessible to all the farmers of the Province to inspect.

Before concluding I may add, that a mass of useful and valuable information will be found in a small pamphlet published by Chevalier Claussen and to be procured from Messrs. Armour and Ramsay, Toronto.

I remain, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

ADAM FERGUSSON.

MR. TYE'S REPLY AND CHALLENGE TO MR. PARSONS  
ON THE RELATIVE MERITS OF DURHAM AND  
DEVON CATTLE.

*To the Editor of the Canadian Agriculturist.*

SIR,

Your remarks on my query, form by no means so satisfactory an answer to it, as Mr. Parsons, in his letter in your last number, would imply. I wished to know why more premiums were allowed to Durham, than Devon and Hereford cattle; these being the breeds allowed the higher awards at the Royal Agricultural Society in England.

Surely it is not because a few individuals of high standing and influence, imported Durham cattle in the first instance, they being then considered the most fashionable breed; it is probable most of these gentlemen came from counties where Durham are propagated, and are ignorant of the qualities of other breeds. I contend that to improve a native stock, is to introduce male animals of some similarity, altho' superior; for in no other way can the progeny be depended on. No experienced breeder would recommend more than one cross with the Durham and native, for with animals so decidedly opposite in character, nothing afterwards but a mongrel brute could be expected. I would as soon expect it might be recommended to breed from half-bred Down and Leicester sheep.

I do not conceive that Durhams being larger in quantity deserve this preference, when it is ascertained that other breeds are better adapted to the colony; and this opinion is rapidly increasing, both here and in the States. At the two shows—those of Buffalo and New York—I observed the *Devons* not only the most numerous, but fetched the higher prices. My friend,