other labors of the farm, and with reference to future convenience and benefits, perhaps there is no individual crop that will give more ample remuneration for the outlay, or requires less skill and attention. An occasional breadth of flax would yield to the farmer as profitable a return as roots, hay or grain, where due care is had in assoilment, rotation, good tilth, with the proper manuring for cereal crops of a healthy vigorous growth.

In order that the crop may become more generally cultivated, and take its proper rank in agriculture, the old modes of preparation, rotting or steeping the straw, drying, etc., and divesting the fibre of the woody parts by breaking, scutching, etc., should be transferred from the farmer to the manufacturer, who is supposed to be especially qualified with the requisite knowledge, skill, necessary fixtures and appliances, to do the work more successfully and economically, thus relieving the farmer of the trouble and risk liable to be entailed on the subsequent manipulations of the crop. It might be well for capitalists and agriculturists to give this subject of division of labor the attention its importance seems to demand; by so doing manifest and important benefits might be derived; new resources would be added to the country; a more diversified and improved agriculture would necessarily result; labor, agricultural and mechanical, would derive great advantage, while manufacturers, merchants and others, would be equally profited by their industry and investments.

The flax plant is a hardy annual; when growing wild, attains a height of about eighteen inches, but when grown to perfection under proper culture, attains a height of two to four feet, with slender, tapering roots, running deep into the ground; a slim stalk, hollow near the root, and branching near the top; the bark of a greenish brown color, containing the fibre, which when dressed out is usually called flax. The leaves are linear-lanceolate, and with the stem smooth. The flowers which grow in loose panicles, are about an inch in diameter, of a beautiful pale blue; the parts five in number, and very regular; these are followed by yellow globular capsules, divided into five cells, each cell containing two seeds, which when ripe present a smooth shiny appearance. The stem consists of the cuticle, covering a close network of fibres held together by a glutinous substance, which incloses the pith or woody part, called by flaxdressers the "boon." The cuticle is composed of a resinous or gummy substance similar to that which holds the fibres together, and is nearly insoluble in cold water, but when the water is warmed suitably it separates readily; this process is commonly known as "rotting." For this reason steepers usually select a pool unsheltered—exposed to the mollifying influence of the sun's rays—in which to steep their flax straw; the object in steeping being to soften or separate the filaments to the greatest extent, which makes fine flax. Too long steeping tends to weaken the fibre, and too little gives it a coarse and harsh appearance. The fibres are quite unlike those of cotton—resembling capillary glass tubes, while cotton fibres present an appearance not unlike narrow, twisted ribbon, with occasional joints. There are three qualities usually recognized in the length of the fibre—the middle, root end, and the top of the plant. That at the root is coarse, harsh, and strong; the top is fine and weak; that taken from the middle of the stalk is best, neither coarse or fine. Sometimes the fibre is thus divided and assorted for convenience in manufacturing.

Time for Sowing the Seed.

As flax naturally requires a rather moist atmosphere, it is desirable to sow the seed at that season of the year when the atmosphere will furnish the greatest quantity from the sowing to the maturity of the crop. Early spring and summer seem to be best adapted in this respect in a northern climate; therefore seed should be put in the ground as early as it can be worked and well prepared, after the fear of hard frosts is past. The plant being quite hardy, light frosts do not seem to affect it as less hardy ones are.

Soils.

As shown, the flax plant has an extended range of climate; so also it may be cultivated in a variety of soils, especially if new to it. The soil generally conceded as best, is a deep rich loam containing the greatest possible variety of ingredients, dry, and friable, free from weeds and seeds, or made so by previous culture. A departure from a loam so as to allow a wide range is allowable, and very good crops may be realized. Heavy wet soils, with retentive subsoils, as well as dry sandy ones, are illy adapted to it. On the former the flax is apt to mildew and rot; on the latter to dry up before attaining full growth; therefore on neither should its culture be attempted. A natu-