

have a tendency to accumulate in these hollows, and will probably be buried more deeply; hence the crop will not be so uniform. On the other hand, if the soil contains a considerable amount of clay, the practice of rolling after sowing the seed will tend to make the surface crust even more readily after rain.

SEED.

The seed used should be that of a fibre-producing flax, and not that of a flax grown solely for oil. If possible, Russian or Dutch seed should be obtained, or the produce of such seed grown in Canada. It would be advisable for a farmer to allow a small portion of his crop to ripen its seeds fully for next year's sowing, sacrificing the fibre, or, at any rate, keeping it separate from the rest. Various varieties of flax are grown, some being blue-flowered, others white-flowered. Blue-flowered flax is considered to give a better quality of fibre.

Flax seed often contains immature seeds and weed seeds; and it is very desirable that these should be got rid of by re-screening and re-cleaning. It is usually impracticable to do much weeding among a growing flax crop, and weeds are a great nuisance at harvesting time. Not only is time lost in disentangling them from the flax stems, but weeds such as Canada Thistle with prickly leaves inflict serious injury on the hands of the pullers. Flax seed that contains Dodder should not be sown.

After the seeds have been re-cleaned, a sample may be sent to Ottawa to be tested for germination, but any farmer can do this readily for himself in the following manner: Take two flower pots, each measuring 8 inches in diameter across the top; fill them to within one inch from the top with sifted garden soil, which should be moderately damp and level on the surface; count 200 flax seeds taken at random, and scatter 100 on the surface of the soil in each pot; with a small piece of smooth board

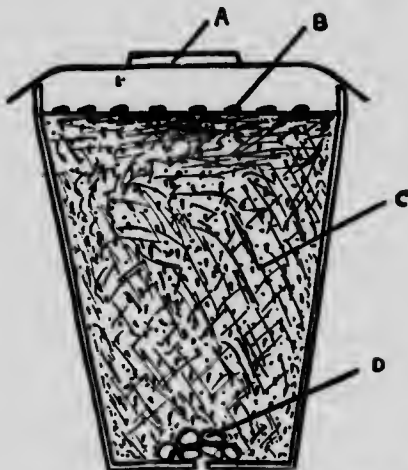


FIG. 5.—Simple apparatus for germinating seeds. A. Plate. B. Seed. C. Soil. D. Small stone.

press the seeds gently into the soil, but do not cover them; place a large plate bottom upwards over the surface of the pot to keep in the moisture (fig. 5); place the two flower pots in a moderately warm kitchen, taking care that the soil does not become too dry. After three days remove on the point of a needle the seeds which have germinated, and count them. The average of the two lots will give the percentage of germination.