

Society has established, at Albany, an Agricultural Museum which already contains a large collection of objects illustrative of the history, progress, and present condition of the art in that State. It is open to the public and is daily visited by persons interested in agriculture. Nearly all new inventions in agricultural mechanics, that have stood the test of experiment, may be seen here, either in the shape of working models, or, as is generally the case, in the shape in which they left the hands of the manufacturer. Fruits, seeds, grain, vegetables, of every variety, are collected, labelled, and, in such mode as may be practicable, preserved for exhibition. Mr. Johnston, who was present as the agent of New York State, at the World's Fair, London, brought from Europe on his return some forty varieties of wheat. These were distributed among the members of the Society in different parts of the State, for the purpose of being tested.

The results will be carefully noted. Mr. Johnston promised to collect and send to the Board of Agriculture, samples of those varieties which might prove to be valuable.

I may mention as a matter of some interest, and as indicating the probable advantages of the intercourse recommended, that Mr. Johnston received from a Russian gentleman, whose acquaintance he formed when in London, seed of a new variety of flax. It is represented to be a winter flax, and is expected to prove of great value especially in the Northern States. Its character and advantages are set forth as follows:

1st. "It has the advantage to be sown in the fall; not subject to be sown too early or too late, as this is often the case with the spring seed, and has always a failure of the crop in its train."

2nd. "The winter seed shoots sooner and before the weeds come out, which latter are kept back by it; it is earlier ripe and can be brought in before the hands are wanted for other agricultural operations."

3rd. "In order to prevent the shooting in the fall, the seed must be worked in by the ploughs as early as possible, and then the seed is not damaged, neither by 20 degrees of cold. (Reaumer.) In the spring as soon as the field is dry, it must be slightly harrowed. It shoots with the first rays of the warm sun, and is already in flower when other spring seed is sown, and before the insects can do it any harm."

4th. "This seed is glossy, but dark and mixed with black grains, yet all shoot. It is a great deal more oily than the common seed."

The seed of this flax was to be tested this present winter, and if Mr. Johnston's expectations are realized, it may be well worthy the attention of the Canadian flax grower.

At Rochester I procured and forwarded to Professor Buckland, 12 bushels of seed wheat, comprising the three varieties of most repute in Genesee Co.

This wheat has been sown on the experimental farm at Toronto.

PATENT LAWS.—During my examinations at the Crystal Palace, I came in contact with a number of American inventors, who complained loudly of our illiberality in granting patents for inventions. They accuse the Canadians of short-sightedness, as well as injustice, in not affording to American inventors encouragement and protection upon as favourable terms at least, as those accorded by their laws.

From the facts which came to my knowledge, during these enquiries, I am convinced, though formerly of a contrary opinion, that a change in our Patent Laws by which the inventors of valuable machines

in the United States, could obtain the protection of a Patent in Canada for a short period, say 5 or 7 years would be the means of readily introducing numerous American inventions which under the present system are not introduced at all; or only by individuals who hearing of them by chance possess sufficient enterprise to become their own importers. It is now the interest of the American inventor, to keep as far away as possible from the Canadian frontier. If the character of his machine is such, that it cannot be 'pirated' manufactured in Canada, and clandestinely sold in the United States in violation of his patent, the produce of that machine may be imported in such quantities and at such prices as to reduce very much the value of his patent. Indeed, so common has this practice become in the case of wooden manufactures, that a bill was lately introduced, and (if my recollection serves me) passed by the New York Legislature, making contraband all manufactures proved to be the produce of Canadian copies of American inventions.

The difficulty of discrimination may prevent the effective operation of such a law, but the existence of a wrong which was felt, is proved by the attempt to remedy it.

It was probably supposed that by leaving the whole field of American discovery open to the enterprise of our machinists and manufacturers, they would hasten to appropriate every thing valuable for reproduction at home. But this expectation has not been realized. A considerable outlay is required to procure patterns, and make the necessary preparations for manufacturing heavy and valuable machines; and when a man's next neighbour may set up in the same business and under sell him the moment he has introduced and established the value of the article, it is very plain that the enterprise is attended with some risk.

The consequence is, that Canadian manufacturers have not shown the alacrity that was expected in "pirating" American inventions. In the case of cheap machines or implements adapted to common use, the evil is not so great; though even in regard to this class, I believe their introduction would be much facilitated by holding out inducements to the inventors to occupy the field themselves.

All foreigners are excluded from the benefit of our Patent Laws, while, "any person a subject of Her Majesty, and resident in this Province," may avail himself of their protection, not only for his own inventions, but for such as he "may have discovered or obtained a knowledge of" in foreign countries, except the "United States and Her Majesty's dominions."

A Canadian may obtain a patent in the United States upon the same terms as a citizen, except that he must pay a somewhat higher fee. So may an American obtain a patent in England. Why should we be less liberal? To profess a desire for "Reciprocity," while our Patent Laws are a standing proof of hostility to the principle, will not add to our reputation for consistency or honesty.

If, therefore, these laws expose us to the charge of inconsistency—if they display less international liberality than the patent laws of any other civilized country—if their effect be not to promote the prompt and general introduction of important new inventions but to obstruct and delay their introduction, it seems to me that no time should be lost in revising them.

I strongly recommend the subject to your notice, in the hope that you will agree with me in thinking that it demands the attention of the legislature.

I beg to conclude this report, the result of a short mission of twelve days, with the following *resumé* :