

practised with the milk-weed, as with hemp in Russia and Sweden. After the first falls, about the end of December, the plants are spread on the snow, in meadow or pasture ground, and left there to be covered with other falls of snow until spring, when they are found to be sufficiently retted. When dry they should be put in the barn, and cleaned at leisure by passing them through the brake. This method entails very little labor or expense. It is only necessary to dry the plants well in the field after they are cut, and to put them under cover or in stack till after the first falls of snow. Thus the labor which water-retting and grassing necessarily impose upon the farmer, is done away with. Even the milky juice, which was an obstacle in the steeping process, seems to aid in the separation of the filaments in snow-retting. The strength of the fibre also, which is more or less affected by fermentation, is preserved, and the epidermis, or outside skin, instead of being firmly cemented to the fibres, as in watering, falls from them when passing through the brake, and leaves them in a clean state. Should future experiments confirm those already made, this plant will the sooner take its place among the productive resources of the country.

OTHER USES.

The pods of the milk-weed, on bursting, display a quantity of silky down attached to each seed, which floats them about like those of thistles and dandelions. This double product makes this plant the more valuable, as it is useful both for its down and for its fibrous stem.

Mr. Moncton, C.S., has made use of the downy substance contained in the follicles of the Mudar, another species of the *Aselepias* family growing in India. He has had paper made of it, as well pure as when mixed with two-fifths of the pulp of Sunn, or Jute. As the glossy and silky but comparatively short fibre is difficult to spin, a mixture of one-fifth of cotton was made, in order to enable it to be worked. A good wearing cloth, which stands washing, and takes a dye, was produced.

At the Fair of the American Institute, held in New York in 1863, a Bronze Medal was awarded to Mr. Thomas J. Dunkin for a cloth made from the down of *Aselepias Cornuti* combined with silk or wool.

In the Transactions of the American Institute of the City of New York, for the years 1864-5, there is an interesting report of some experiments by Dr. Guernsey of that city. He exhibited a variety of specimens of cloth, some plain-colored and some dyed, made from the pod fibre of the milk-weed. Some of the specimens were of the pure fibre, some mixed with six per cent. of cotton, and others with a small amount of silk and wool. It appears that