

By the proper selection of seed and improved cultivation and preparation of flax, the quality is also improved, and flax which under the ordinary treatment is, when scutched, only worth 10 or 12 cents, might by skillful treatment be made worth from 25 to 35 cents. It is not unlikely that upon a review of the produce of the Canadian and Irish crops of 1865, it will be estimated that a greater return has been received from 20,000 acres in Ireland than from 50,000 in Canada, under the systems now in practice; though we know from the very best authority of Irish flax growers, who have narrowly looked into the capabilities of both countries, "that the soil and climate of Canada are admirably adapted to the growth of flax." "Flax grows in Canada luxuriantly," and in it "as good flax can be grown as in Ireland;" opinions which are fully borne out by the desire evinced at all times by farmers to grow flax, if they could only get machinery to dress it and a market in which to sell it—both of which *wants* it is now to be hoped will be supplied by men of capital and spirit, who are convinced as to the certainty of the profits to be derived from an investment in these branches of trade.

It may be thought by many that anything relating to the cultivation of flax is merely an agricultural subject, and that the farmer is the only one interested in it. Such is a very mistaken idea; for agriculture, manufacture and commerce, are so closely linked together in flax that no one of them can carry on its branch of the business without the aid of the other; nor are they the only branches which should exert themselves to encourage it—its uses are known in some degree to nearly every one, but neither its uses nor value are known to such an extent as they ought to be.

By the manufacture of Cotton, Manchester—Liverpool—Ashton—Stockport—Burnly—and other towns, with leading canals and railways, have been made in England.

By the Flax, Yarn, and Linen trade, Belfast—Lisburn—Ballymena—Coleraine—Bainbridge—Guilford—and other towns in Ireland, have grown in population and wealth.

By the cultivation of flax and the employment it has supplied, farmers have accumulated riches and earned independence in the Province of Ulster, which, though inferior to many other parts of Ireland in the fertility of its soil, stands out in bold contrast against its sister Provinces—evidencing the superior prosperity, comfort and happiness of its industrious population; and all this can be traced to its staple trade in flax. In 1824 Mr. Mulholland erected the first spinning mill in Belfast.

In 1841 there were 250,000 spindles working up 16,000 tons of flax annually; in 1851 they had increased to 500,000 spindles, working up 32,000 tons of flax; and in 1864 there were in Ireland 650,638 spindles spinning above 40,000 tons—89,600,000 lbs. of flax, which at the rate of 300 lbs. (the average in Canada) would require 298,666 acres to be grown annually to supply these spinning mills. In 1855 there were about 17,000 persons employed in the linen trade of Belfast; there are now about 25,000. The value of the Irish crop of flax of 1864 is estimated at £3,962,989 sterling. The total value of linens exported from the United Kingdom was, in 1863, £3,469,036 sterling. In 1852 there were no power looms in Ireland, yet in July, 1864, there were in it about 8,000, performing as much work as 70,000 hand looms. All this prosperity has grown up from beginnings as small as those which originated in Upper Canada a few years back, and with no more natural advantages in many respects than it possesses.

It is said that in those parts of Belgium where flax is grown pauperism is unknown, because it gives employment to all by its cultivation, preparation and manufacture. Though the value of the raw materials of flax exceeds that of any other crop which a farmer can grow at equal expense, and under similar circumstances, yet its value is small when compared with the resources it possesses for profitable development of labour, industry, skill and capital. The only capital invested in it originally is for the purchase of the seed for sowing. The produce of an acre of flax may be manufactured into materials of ordinary fineness to the value of from \$600 to \$700, all of which, except a few dollars originally expended for seed, has been attained by labour. The farmer's share of its profits are but small when compared with the profits of others in the trade; but unless the farmers grow the crop there will be no provision of means by which these profits can be realized; it is therefore the duty and self interest of every class who is benefited by it to assist in the development of a trade in flax, and to encourage its cultivation, so as to keep up the supply of raw material—to see that the farmer is supplied with suitable sowing seed imported from abroad, and to aid projects which may be set on foot for the erection of factories for the preparation and scutching of the flax to make it marketable. When the seed is cleaned it is ready for market, and there is no difficulty whatever in disposing of it. The same is the case with regard to fibre when the scutching of it is completed. Were the seed and fibre thus prepared, buyers would be found going to the very houses of the farmers to purchase it.