

land should be ploughed, harrowed and sown with rape, at the rate of 6 lbs. to the acre: this will come in very opportunely about the end of September for the woaned lambs, and if a little clover-chaff with a few pease be given in trough, the lambs will soon be ready for the fall-sales.

Fodder-corn, for silo or green-meat, may be sown at any time after the land has got warm. We do not pretend to be an authority on corn, but, from what we have seen, we do not think it wise to sow this crop too thin: bulk is what is wanted more than quality, which latter can be supplied very easily by any of the nitrogenous feeding materials, such as pease, cottonseed cake, &c.

By the latter part of month, the mangels and carrots should have been sown, and some of the swedes as well. The difference in weight of crop between early and later sown swedes in this province is something remarkable. We do not in the least exaggerate when we say that the difference is quite 25%. We have watched the swede-crop on M. Séraphin Guévremont's farm at Sorel for so many years that we are thoroughly convinced of the truth of the above assertion. The quality is not so good, of course, but only conceive the addition of 25% to his average yield of 1,000 bushels an acre: 1,250 bushels are not often seen on an acre of the best and best farmed land in Scotland, and, in our own part of England we should call 600 bushels a good crop.

The *mizens* in the field intended for roots will have been, of course, well pressed down by the carts that draw out the dung being passed over them while building. Ten days before they are needed for use, they should be turned; and while turning, all the outside should be thrown into the middle, and every lump broken up with the fork. One great reason for the quantity of weeds to be seen on our farms is the omission of turning manure-heaps: a sharp heat kept up for two or three days, will settle the bash of most seeds: the process pays.

If you have not rolled and brush- or chain-harrowed your meadows, do it at once, always provided the land is dry enough. A heavy roller, though not many are to be seen here, is one of the most valuable implements on a farm.

When the swedes and mangels come to the hoe, do not be afraid of cutting deeply into the ground. (1) If they are sown on drills, pull the drills down level with the space between them, and leave the plants as nearly naked as possible. But this will be work for a later month.

THE ADVANTAGES OF A VARIETY OF CROPS

(Continued.)

By THE EDITOR.

Flax.—If we are to sow flax, we must first make up our minds for what purpose we intend to grow it: for its seed alone; for good fibre and a fair yield of seed; or for fine fibre, for the manufacture of linen, cambric, &c., and an inferior yield of seed. Upon these three points will depend the quantity of seed used to the acre.

We may as well say at once that we have grown this crop very successfully in England, and what we shall state here in describing its cultivation is entirely derived from our own practice.

(1) This does not include the sugar-beet. Eo.

Soil for flax.—The best soil for flax, as for pretty nearly everything else, is a moderate light loam. The best crop of this textile we ever grew was on a fine gravelly flat; alluvial deposit; on the banks of the river Cam on the borders of Essex and Cambridgeshire; the previous crop was wheat (44 bushels to the acre), but the land was full of dung and had never been hard worked. The rule used to be never to manure for flax directly, but if a dressing was considered necessary it was given to the antecedent crop. The flax we are now considering was sown for the 2nd purpose mentioned above, viz., for a fair crop of seed and a good quality of fibre, though not so fine as the lace-makers of Valenciennes, &c., require for their delicate work. It is probably a superstition, but the great Belgian and French-Flanders flax growers persist in asserting that no good flax can be *retted* except in water from the river Lys.

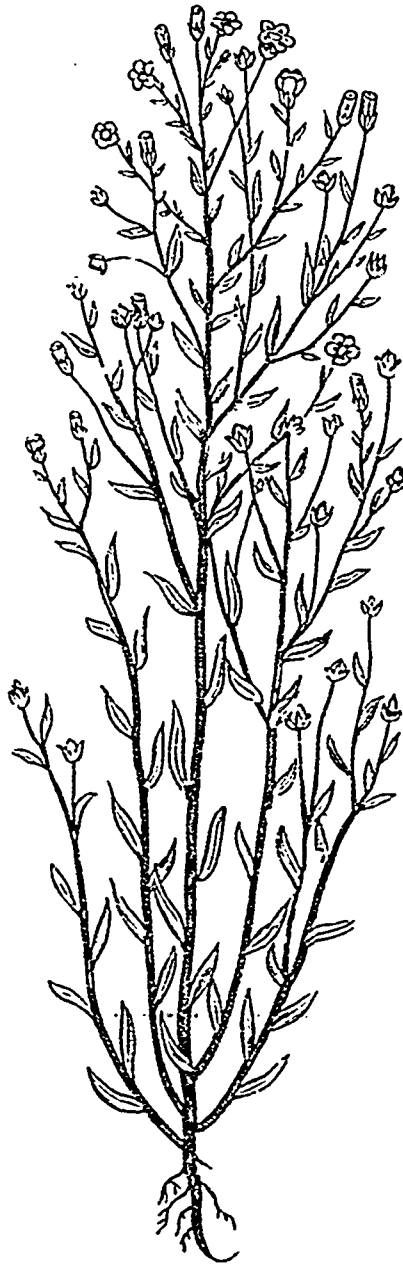


FIG. 1.

Preparation of the land.—As we said above, no dung should be applied to the land for the flax-crop when good fibre is desired. Perhaps the best precursor of this plant would be a heavily manured crop of potatoes or roots. After the removal of the roots or tubers, the land should be ploughed a moderate depth, say, six inches, the ridges as wide as possible, being made quite flat, that is, not rounded in the least, and the water furrows most carefully drawn out. As in this high-waged country hand-weeding is out of the question, we must do our best to clean the land thorough

ly before sowing; therefore, when spring arrives, we must work the grubber and not the plough, by which means the stale-furrow surface will be kept constantly in its place, and no fresh weed seeds be brought up from below. Grab two or three times at intervals of a week or so, and in this way what seeds of weeds lie near the surface will sprout and be destroyed as fast as they show their first leaves.

We may do well to mention here that the reason we advise the ridges to be made broad and flat is, that it being a very important point at harvest to keep the flax as much as possible in bundles of the same length, if the ridges were ploughed narrow and rounded, the plants growing on the lower parts of the ridges next the open-furrows would be much shorter than the plants on the crowns, and it would give no end of trouble to obtain anything like uniformity of length in pulling the crop.

Seed.—A great deal depends upon the seed: the best we used to think



FIG. 2.

was Riga seed, once sown in Belgium. It should be heavy, plump, and bright. We have seen very good linseed at Sorel, but more care must be taken in cleaning it than the farmers there seemed to think worth while.

As for quantity, if rather fine fibre is wanted, 2½ bushels an imperial acre will not be too much, but for both seed and moderate fibre, 2 bushels may do. What you want is to prevent branching: it gives seed, but also coarse fibre.

Season.—When the maize is sown is about the time for sowing flax: the land should be warmed first.

Sowing.—Flax requires a firm seed-bed; after the last grubbing, harrow till the land is pulverised all over, no holes or rough places must be left; roll when the harrowing is finished, and then sow: but here comes the trouble. Linseed is, as every one knows, the most slippery of all grains; it must be mixed with something that the hand can catch hold of, and the best thing, we think, is road-dust well sifted. The seed should be moistened before mixing with the dust; it must be sown broadcast at any rate—never drilled—and perhaps the ordinary broadcast sowing machine would do, but as we never tried one of them for this purpose we cannot say. At all events, the hind grubber teeth of this machine, if it is used, must be taken off, as the seed must not be buried deeply.

When sown on the freshly harrowed surface a pair of light seed harrows will bury the seed deep enough, and a good heavy roller finishes the job.

Harvesting.—When the straw, next the ground, begins to turn yellow, and the seeds to change to a pale brown colour, the flax is ready to pull. In pulling, the same lengths of straw should be kept as nearly as possible together, and the sheaves should be made small, say, about six inches through, as it makes the after-process of "rippling," i. e., pulling off the seed-bolls, more easy, the small sheaves not requiring to be opened out for that purpose. The sheaves should now be put into shocks, like wheat, to dry.

In England, we used our ordinary machines to thresh the flax; but there, the mouth of the feeding place is made 5 feet 6 inches wide, so the straw to be threshed is fed in at full length sideways, and is delivered utterly unbroken and as straight as an arrow. Here, our machines would smash it up into tow, and make it worthless for any fine manufacture. We must *ripple* it thus: the small sheaves are repeatedly pulled through an upright iron comb with round teeth, about a foot high and ¼ of an inch apart, with blunt, tapering points. The *ripper*, seated, spreads the small sheaves, draws the ends through the comb, as his assistant hands them to him, and the bolls falling to the ground or into a box arranged handily, can afterwards be threshed, and the seed put away after being winnowed. The flax itself is now be considered ready for the after process of "retting," beetling, and scutching, though it would be much improved by being kept in stack till the warm weather of the next season arrives.

Where the *linseed* is consumed at home, as it ought invariably to be, there is not use in threshing out the bolls, as if mixed with a fair amount of oats and pease, they will grind up famously, and help to prevent any of the oil from escaping. About 2 bushels of pease, 4 bushels of oats, and 2 bushels of the bolls, make a good mixture, which, after turning up with chaffed straw, damped, will make good milk, or fat, tender beef and mutton.

In our time, we sold the flax in the sheaf to a London Company that had a factory fitted up after the plan of the Chevalier Claussen, a Belgian. Here, the flax was *retted* in warm water, beated, scutched and finished off by machinery. If we remember, the price was \$15.00 a ton, and seed and straw brought us in about \$45.00 an acre; but it is a long time ago—1854—and we have no notes on the subject. Here we should think, at first, what is called "dow-rotting" would be the easiest plan: the flax spread