

to grow luxuriantly." "In the County of Hastings in 1851 there was produced 125 yards of linen—the climate and the soil seem to be well adapted, but the farmers will not go into the cultivation of it until they see some prospects of being able to get it scutched and prepared for market." "The Canada Company" in 1851 offered "handsome premiums to growers of flax, and had imported machinery for preparing it," and "it was hoped that the cultivation of it would be extensively undertaken and prove profitable" The President of the Board of Agriculture in the annual address delivered by him in 1851 makes favorable mention of the advantages of cultivating flax.

The census of 1851-2 shows 59,689 lbs. produced in Upper Canada, and 1,189,018 lbs. in the Lower Province, making a total of 1,248,709 which at 300 lbs per acre, would give about 4,000 acres to the latter and 2,000 to the former; yet we find larger importations of textile fabrics and the products of flax into the country, whose population was then about 2,000,000; and Mr. Kirkwood then estimated the use of linen in the Provinces at 1s. 10d. per head.

At the great International Exhibition held in London in 1851, only one sample of flax from Canada was exhibited, and it was from Lower Canada.

At the Provincial Exhibition held in Upper Canada in 1853, the President in his address made special reference to the importance of flax growing. The agitation of the subject resulting from the London Exhibition of 1851, led to an interest being taken in it for a time; and the Minister of Agriculture in 1853, sent Mr. Kirkwood as a special commissioner to Europe to make inquiries and report on the systems of cultivation and preparation of flax. He visited Belgium and the British Isles, and after completing his investigation made a report which was subsequently published in the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Canada, 1854-5, in which he estimates the flax produced in Lower Canada in 1852, at 1,867,016, off 3,426 acres; and in Upper Canada at 50,350 lbs., off 92 acres, making the total growth of flax in all Canada under 3,500 acres; notwithstanding which he showed that a large quantity of money was annually going out of the country for linens imported, viz., in 1850, £68,562; 1851, £113,637; 1852, £84,175; and that there was linen to the value of £180,000 yearly used in the Provinces. The commissioner reported that he had samples of Canadian flax prepared in Europe, and that the result proved Canadian flax to produce a fair average yield, and to be of good quality. In his report he goes largely into details pointing out the great value of flax

commercially and agriculturally, yet he did not advocate the cultivation of flax, but states, "many years will no doubt elapse before the introduction of flax into Canada." "If (he writes) a capitalist builds a mill he as naturally expects a supply of flax; here is the great difficulty, when this is surmounted the Gordian knot is cut."

About the time of sending this commissioner to Europe to investigate the subject of flax, another commissioner Mr. McDougall, was sent to the United States to enquire as to the state of machinery and agricultural implements, &c.; and in his report on the subject, when treating of flax machinery, he goes into the question of flax cultivation, and states, "The more general cultivation of flax might not be productive of injury to the soil or to the pocket of the Canadian farmer; but, it may be safely affirmed, that neither the one or the other has received much benefit from the cultivation of it; for textile purposes the experiment has not been confined to a few cases nor to a single township." At the Paris Exhibition held in 1855 two samples of flax, two of flax thread, and one of linseed were exhibited. Mr. Perrine, a gentleman from the United States, notwithstanding the discouraging reports of Mr. Kirkwood and Mr. McDougall, soon after that began to cultivate flax in Upper Canada, and set an example which is being followed throughout the Province. The reports of the Board of Agriculture inform us that "in 1852 Prince Edward county produced 55,121 yards of fulled cloth and flannel, but no flax or linen. Flax was cultivated in small quantities for domestic use. In the county of Welland flax was once extensively grown and manufactured; it has almost ceased to be cultivated; it, however, grows luxuriantly.

At the Provincial Exhibition held in Cobourg in 1855, the usual prizes of the Association were awarded for flax and flax seed, but there was only one entry for the Canada Company's prize for the best 112 lbs. of flax, and on this the judges made no report. The reports of 1856-7 make no mention of flax. The subject seems to have gone to sleep during those two years, but it was in 1858 awakened by the President, in his address delivered at Toronto, strongly recommending its cultivation. In this year the "Agriculturist" advocated the cultivation of the crop, but states "the great want is a ready market." Another paper, the "Protectionist," this year writes, "The great difficulty in the way of this crop in Canada was the want of modern machinery;" and that Ulster, in Ireland, by its flax and linen trade, maintained a population of 2,000,000; and that "four of the winter months spent in idleness in