

a "Thistle Bill" like that noticed on page 89 of your paper. It must be admitted, I think, that such a Bill ought to be in force in Canada. It will be, before long, doubtless; and the sooner it is, the better for all parties concerned. It is, therefore, to be hoped that something will be done in this direction during the next session of Parliament.

On the other hand, the premises of the man who gives no attention to the arts and practices which go to make up the management of the successful cultivator, are an index of the system carried on there. Let us enter the precincts of this farm, and see for ourselves. Here is a field that seems to have been seeded to some variety of grain, a nearer inspection reveals it to be oats, half buried in thistles, and other weeds which overshadow it. Their luxuriance gives proof that some of the elements of vegetable growth still exist in the soil, although we happen to know this field has been cropped for years, without any intermittent period of rest, by being stocked to grass for meadow or pasturage. Perhaps this land may have been manured previous to the sowing of grain—yes, here is a portion of half-rotten straw, indications showing that it may have seen the farm-yard at no distant date. This may account for a part of the weeds, and their luxuriance. The soil seems to be fast "getting light, and is running to stones."

However, here is a hoed crop, which may show evidences of better cultivation. It is potatoes; they, too, are smothered with weeds, thistles, of course, predominating. There are evidences of their having been hoed, but the thistles have grown thicker than ever. No, my friend—proprietor of the potatoes—you need not expect the thistles are to be exterminated in this manner so easily. I know a thing or two, and one is that this is not a practicable mode of doing it; this field should be "stocked down and mowed, and they will soon disappear." Do you imagine you will get a crop here? If you do, it will be a small one. What with the thistles, and the efforts to get them out, there will be very little life left in the potatoes. You will find it so, at the digging time, or at any rate, you will find very little of that life-sustaining principle, sometimes termed the "crutch of life."

There is the field which the proprietor says is his pasture. We believe it to be a piece of land that, in the spring, finding himself in an unusual hurry, by reason of not having any fall-ploughing done, the wetness of the season, &c., he concluded to let lie idle, until he could find an opportunity to resume its cultivation. He has probably heard land is benefited by being allowed a period of rest. Its surface bears witness of repeated scratchings, commonly termed "ploughing," and is well wooded with a dense growth of what the proprietor styles the "cursed thistles." If the scythe was put, and kept in during the season, it would soon rid the land of the crop, both root and branch, but, allowed to ripen, it will seed his neighbour's farm as well as his own. I could go on *ad infinitum*, citing such examples as this, but enough. It is easy to see that such a state of things is doing an immense amount of damage to the country, and will always exist until we get some such "Thistle Bill" as heretofore mentioned put in force.

I will close by again remarking, that thistles, in common with other weeds, are foreign to all good systems of farm management, and to the premises of the farmer who is alive to everything pertaining to his profession, and are easily exterminated by the arts and practices which go to make up the best systems of agriculture. J. F. C.

L'Original, Oct., 1864.

## How to Introduce Flax Culture into New Localities.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER.

Sir, At this season of the year, the weather and the crops are not topics of such general interest as they were a few weeks ago, your weather and crop correspondents will, therefore, have to supply matter more suited to the intellectual wants of the community. So, according to promise, I will endeavour to open a discussion of the question, how can the culture of flax be best introduced into localities in which nothing of the kind at present exists? Notwithstanding that the present is a most opportune moment for the introduction and extension of flax culture in Canada, the most ordinary observer cannot fail to see that there are many difficulties to be grappled with, before it can be extensively introduced into localities such as I have mentioned.

In the first place, farmers will scarcely engage to any extent in its culture, without the prospect of a

convenient and remunerative market for the crop. And in the next place, in a country like Canada, where there are so many opportunities for the profitable investment of capital, capitalists would scarcely think of erecting machinery for its manufacture, without first having a fair prospect of being able to obtain, at reasonable rates, a supply of flax sufficient so to employ such machinery as would render them a fair return for their investment.

It is thus obvious, that to introduce its culture extensively, either the farmers in a certain locality must mutually resolve to grow flax in such quantities as would induce parties possessed of the necessary capital, to engage in the erection of machinery for its manufacture, or capital must first be expended by the manufacturer, and a market created, to induce the farmers to engage in its culture. As a first step towards this most desirable object, the latter presents the most feasible aspect, for the reason that it may be carried out by an individual, whereas the former would require the mutual and combined effort of a large number, and is consequently less likely to be carried into effect. In regard to the latter, there are many difficulties to be overcome. I believe the way in which the Messrs. Perine and others have established this important branch of business, in localities in which it is now carried on, has been (previous to commencing the erection of machinery,) to distribute seed among the farmers, to use their influence with them, so as to induce them to engage in its culture, and to guarantee them a market for the crop. And this, it seems to me, is the only way in which success is at all certain, but it evidently requires not only a large cash capital, but to have any prospect of success it can only be undertaken by parties who have had some experience in the matter, and in this lies the principal difficulty.

There are, no doubt, numbers of men in the country who are well qualified in every respect to carry on such an undertaking, but comparatively few of them are possessed of the necessary capital; and there are also men possessed of capital, but who (while the present demand for money on safe investments continue,) have no desire to engage in a business in which there are so many difficulties to be overcome.

Now, could not our legislature set apart a sum of money to be loaned (at a low rate of interest, say 3 per cent. per annum for 5 to 10 years,) to parties who might undertake to erect machinery of a certain specified description, for the manufacture of flax, and who might be in possession of a sufficient water privilege, or other facilities for the establishing of such machinery, such loan to be made a first claim on the property, and to be repaid by annual instalments or otherwise?

Something of this kind would enable many parties to engage in this business, who are unable from the want of means to do so; but who, with a limited amount of assistance might materially benefit the community, as well as improve their own circumstances. I am not at all wedded to this plan, but would like to see any scheme brought forward that would tend to advance the desired object, and I feel confident that if some of your more talented correspondents would put their shoulder to the wheel, and get the matter brought fairly before the public, and especially to bring it under the notice of the present Parliamentary Committee on the advancement of agriculture, that some scheme might be adopted that would tend greatly to extend flax culture in Canada. A CANADIAN FARMER.

Derby, Co. Grey, Nov. 5, 1864.

## Arboriculture.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

Sir,—The preservation of the forests," said the speaker who explained the reasons for a forest code in the Chamber of Deputies, "is one of the first interests of society, and consequently one of the first duties of government. Agriculture, architecture, and almost every industrial pursuit seek there the aliment and resources which nothing else can replace. Their existence, even, is an inappreciable benefit to the countries which possess them, in protecting and feeding the springs and rivers; in sustaining and strengthening the soil of the mountains; and in exercising a happy and salutary influence on the atmosphere."

These powerful interests which call for the solicitude of the Legislatures of European countries, require from our own some law to protect the forests against abuses having their origin in disorder and speculation. It may therefore become necessary to

give to the administration of the forests, as well as to the administration of the lands, a new organization.

Hitherto all swamp and rocky tracts have been granted, indiscriminately with the best agricultural lands, in free and common socage. But it is for the interest of the State, and consequently of the public, that they remain in the Crown, as part of the public domain, and that their use be subject to the provisions of a forest law, under which also those who possess natural forests or plantations would have all the rights of proprietorship, subject to certain restrictions.

As our natural forests are fast disappearing, their renewal is a matter of private interest, as well as of public importance. The formation of plantations on lands suitable to the different varieties of timber must soon become a special duty to landed proprietors, and even to the small farmer. Lands now considered worthless would, in a few years, become most valuable. Some may be found suitable for the oak, others for the elm, ash or maple, while varieties of the pine will find a habitat on the poorest sands. Our rocks, swamps, and sands will thus be made productive again, and will furnish wood for fuel, for shipbuilding, for architectural purposes, and the various requirements of commerce.

The white pine, although so valuable, is considered inferior to some of our other varieties, and to the pine timber of the North of Europe. But the quality of timber of every kind depends very much upon the age of the tree and the soil on which it grows; the timber grown in river valleys near the sea, and still more, that grown in the mountains above tide water being inferior to that from the hills in the interior.

Many species of American trees are now cultivated in Europe, and many European varieties might be profitably introduced here. The European larch would thrive well in Canada, and would be extremely useful as well as ornamental. In suitable situations the timber arrives at perfection in forty years, or in about half the time required by the Scotch pine, and it is found to grow best in poor sandy and rocky soils where scarcely anything else will survive. The wood is capable of receiving a degree of polish superior to that of the finest mahogany. The log cottages constructed of its squared trunks in Switzerland last for centuries; and for vine props, it is found the most durable of all kinds of wood. Venice turpentine is one of its products. Its fine grain, as well as its durability, have long recommended it to painters for their palettes, and for painting panels; and Evelyn remarks that several of the paintings of Raphael are on larch wood. A. KIRKWOOD.

## Markham Ploughing Match.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

Sir,—I send you an account of a ploughing match that came off on Wednesday, the 2nd of November, on the farm of Mr. John Welsh, 2nd Con., Markham. At first it was intended to be confined to ploughmen residing between Lots 5 and 25, in the 2nd and 3rd Concessions, but our worthy representative, Amos Wright, Esq., having very liberally made a present of one of Wilson's Improved Fanning Mills, value \$30, and the friends in the neighbourhood responding cheerfully to the call made upon them for contributions, \$56 were raised, and the ploughing thrown open to all who had never taken a prize at any previous match. The day was beautiful for the occasion, causing a large number of spectators to be on the ground to witness the match, which was, on the whole, a very successful one. The competition in the first class was very close and keen, especially between the three first-prize men, Campbell, McKinnon and Coxworth. Some of the unsuccessful competitors ploughed well, held as true and even as the winners, but their ploughs not being so good, they failed, through that cause, to take a prize. One very interesting feature in the match was a prize (a handsome whip) presented by W. H. Myers, Richmond Hill, for the best dressed team in any class, which was carried off by Wm. Armstrong, Scarborough. The following gentlemen kindly acted for us as judges, (and all being first-class ploughmen, their decision gave general satisfaction).—Messrs. Wm. Rennie, Wm. Hood, and Dugald McLean for the first class, iron ploughs; 2nd class, wooden ploughs, Messrs. John Welsh, J. L. Patterson, and J. Robinson; and for the boys' class, patent ploughs, Messrs. Simpson, Rennie, G. Morgan, and Andrew Hood. The plough-