

## THE POTATO DISEASE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "EVENING TIMES."—  
SIR,—Permit me through your valuable columns to say a few words about that excellent root, the potato. Much has been said and written on the cause and the cure of the potato disease, and premiums have been offered for many years by the Agricultural Societies of Great Britain for the best essay on the subject; and many an antidote has been suggested, both in Great Britain, Canada and the United States; but all, in my opinion, have failed to effect a cure.

I recollect, some 17 years ago, of reading in a Scotch newspaper, an essay on that subject, written by a clergyman, who had made the potato disease his study for many years, and he explained the cause and cure more to my satisfaction than any other who has written on the subject.

He says we have been working against nature all along in propagating from the root, instead of raising new potatoes from the seed; that the potato, like other vegetable plants, and even the human species, lived to a certain age and then died. Like an apple tree, or a laying hen, they would live after they had ceased to bear; that is, the apple tree would live after it had ceased to bear apples, and the hen after it had ceased to lay eggs. That the age of the potato was 30 years: that it took five years to mature it, and the next five years it was in its full vigour, and would continue to carry its seed until the twentieth year, but ceased to do so after that period, and all the plants raised from the root after that period were weak and subject to disease.

So far as my experience has demonstrated, I must say I have found his theory correct. About four years ago I commenced to work on his plan, and I got two potatoes, just five years from the seed, and planted them in my garden. The produce was about a peck; next year I had a goodly quantity; the next year I had about fifty bushels, and this year I had them growing in a very unfavorable piece of ground, being very low and wet, and they have been almost under water for a period of twenty days; but, notwithstanding, there was not one of them diseased, and during the four years that I have raised them I have never discovered the least blemish or symptom of disease, nor have any of my neighbors, a number of whom got them from me. They go by the name of *Chilis*; are of a dark purple color, very floury, and bear an excellent crop, being large sized and fine flavoured, with no small ones amongst them.

Now, Sir, as I am convinced that the clergyman's theory is correct, so far as I have experienced, I thought proper to communicate with you on the subject, as I consider that anything

having a tendency to promote the public welfare cannot be too widely known.

I am, with respect,  
Your most ob't servant,  
A FARMER.

Township of Blanshard, Nov. 22, 1852.

## THE LANCASHIRE RELIEF FUND.— FLAX VS. COTTON.

TO THE EDITOR.—It might have been opportunely suggested at the meeting held to relieve the destitution in Lancashire, that the growth of flax by the farmers of this district, would, though not immediately, yet hereafter, permanently contribute to the end.

We know that flax affords the best material for mixture with cotton, at a cheap rate, and creates employment for a large population engaged in agriculture and manufacture, enriching both by reciprocal supply and demand.

The townships of Yarmouth and Southwold comprise 144,000 acres, divided into farms varying from 50 to 300 acres. Now allowing 5 acres in flax culture in every 100, these two townships would alone yield a very large quantity of raw material, and of the value to the grower, in straw and seed, of \$300,000.

The farmers account on this crop, exclusive of interest on land, tillage, &c., would average per acre:—

3 tons of straw, at \$8	\$24
20 bushels of seed for feeding, at \$1 per bushel.	20

Total. . . . \$44

His expenses would be:—

Two bushel of clean seed, at \$1.50	3
Pulling, stocking and tying	4
Threshing the seed	1
Balance	36
	\$44

The farmers, I am aware, have not the opportunities or conveniences for preparing flax for market, but they can grow good flax by using clean seed and fine tillage.

In my efforts hitherto to promote the culture of flax, I have shown that the business of preparing it for the market, must in this country as in France and Belgium, fall into the hands of the "linier" or flaxman, who purchases the straw from the farmer and makes it a business to ret and scutch it.

For the purpose of showing that flax could be readily prepared for the manufacturer and a market thereby opened to the grower, I imported during the summer from Belfast two of Rowan's patent scutching machines, one of which may be seen in daily operation at Wilson's plaining factory in this town.

I anticipate the time will shortly arrive when reterries will be established in convenient