

m, I find, by going through the soil twice or three, will effectually move it the requisite depth. I am found Bental's cultivators to answer well that purpose; and in preparing the land for it I much prefer them to ploughing it. The quantity of work can be done in one day with the same number of horses with the cultivators, than with ploughs, the soil is much pulverised, and all weeds are brought to the surface. The plough turns the weeds under, if they are in the surface of the soil, which must afterwards be found, and only with considerable labour got out.

This deep tillage I should advise being done in the autumn, or as early in the spring as circumstances will admit of, being governed by the state of the soil; for the land generally becomes towards the middle of March, and from that time to the middle of May. The sowing of flaxseed may, therefore, take place in the month of April, that being the month in which sowing is most extensively carried on throughout the United Kingdom.

If the soil got its first tilling in the autumn, long previous to the time of sowing, the cultivators, or grubbers, as they are termed, large fine harrows must be freely used, and rollers as well, if the clods are hard, in order to bring the surface to as fine a tilth as possible; but the tilth cannot be too fine. If the soil after the several harrowings be still hard and heavy, the rollers used cannot be too heavy. When the soil is very hard, two or three horse rollers will be required, and if used most frequently after the harrowing, will produce the very best results, in speedily pulverizing the soil sufficiently fine for the reception of the seed. The surface should always be rolled the last thing done before the seed being sown with seed drills or seed barrows (so called in some parts of the country), at the rate of two bushels per statute measure. Two men, with a couple of these machines, will sow from 20 to 30 acres a day. I should insist on their going over all the ground, one of them wheeling his machine, and the other from east to west, or from north to south, the other from east to west, each man being provided with marking pegs to guide the width and to which he should go quite straight to each, sowing after the rate of one bushel per acre with each machine. The reason of this cross sowing is for the purpose of having the seed distributed quite regular over the rolled surface of the soil; as a most important point is, by this process to obtain an even good quality, as well as a full average of the fine flax. When the two men have completed the first square of a few acres, the other two men and boys will commence harrowing and so finish with, first harrowing in the seed with the finest seed harrows that can be procured, and if fine seed harrows cannot be had, the common harrows in most cases will answer the purpose as well. The seed does not require

being covered more than one inch beneath the surface by the seed harrows. I would suggest rather less than more, as the surface must be well rolled afterwards, if the land be dry, such being the last process of sowing. If the land be very dry, the heavier the roller the better; the dry or moist state of the soil must be the guide for the rolling, whether light or heavy rollers be used throughout the whole process of working the land during the sowing.

Flax is sometimes drilled an inch deep and six inches wide, at the rate of from 1½ bushels to 2 bushels per acre: this method affords an opportunity of hoeing the weeds with very small and narrow hoes; not more than 2 inches wide. When the ground is perfectly dry this last operation should be performed. When the flax crop is under a foot in height a good number of hands should be put at the work (that is, when the weather and soil permit of the hoers and weeders executing their work), as all the flax sown otherwise than by the drill must be weeded by the hands, and not with hoes. I scarcely need to mention that all the weeds that are accumulated on the surface of the ground under preparation for the reception of the flax seed should be gathered up and taken off; the implements found most useful for that purpose are chain-harrows, horse-rakes, hand-couch rakes and 3 and 4 prong forks—the latter for putting it into the carts. I have described the preceding operations as being performed by manual and horse labour; but the preparation of the soil for the sowing of the seed can be more fully carried out by steam cultivation.

I prepared, in the year 1861, more than 100 acres by the use of steam, and upwards of 82 acres by horse and manual power, for the flax crops produced at Horton, Wilts. The crop there was very superior, indeed, both as to quantity and quality, and for a specimen of which a first prize of £15 was awarded to T. L. Henly, Esq., of Calne, Wilts, at the R. A. S. show at Leeds in that year. The crop is fit to pull in the month of July, or early in August, which takes place when the seed balls are found to turn from a green to a pale brown colour, and the stalk turned yellow two-thirds up its whole length. The cost of pulling flax is from 10s to 20s. per acre; but the cleaner the crops are from weeds, so much less will the charge of pulling it be than the latter sum named.

The flax, when sufficiently ripe, as before described, is pulled by holding the tops of the flax in one hand, the other being placed about half-way down the handful of flax straw; it is pulled with a jerk, and if any dirt adheres to the roots of the flax a blow or two against the leg of the person pulling, in most cases, will cause it to drop off, a very desirable thing, as dirt amongst the flax and seed is very injurious. The handful of flax that is pulled is laid on a band of 9 or 10 flax straws—handful succeeding handful until a sufficient quantity is on the band; then when