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THE CANADIAN TEXTILE DIRECTORY

A Handbook of all the Cotton, Woolen and other Textile manufactures of Canada, with lists of manufacturers' agents and the wholesale and retail dry goods and kindred trades of the Dominion, to which is appended a vast amount of valuable statistics relating to these trades. Fourth edition Price, \$3.00

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WILD CLOVER FIBER.

Canada grows wild hemp, wild flax, and a number of other wild fiber-producing plants, but so far, none of them have been utilized on a commercial scale. Among the common weeds of Quebec and Ontario is the sweet or wild clover, which grows rankly and yields a fiber of some strength, but not equal in fineness or strength to flax. A year ago, Edward Kenny, of St. Vincent de Paul, near Montreal, sent the editor a sample of this, roughly treated by hand, and another sample retted and twisted into cords of strength sufficient at least to make a very good quality of binder twine. We sent these

samples on to two manufacturers of twine, in Ontario, and they reported that if the material could only be laid down to them in sufficient quantity and at a reasonable price, they could work it up successfully into binder twine. Mr. Kenny also sent, through the Minister of Agriculture, samples to the Imperial Institute, London, to be reported on. These were taken in hand by Professor W. R. Dunstan, F.R.S., director of the Scientific Department of the Institute, who has made the following report:

A sample of sweet clover fiber, *melilotus alba*, received by the curator of the Canadian section of the Imperial Institute from the Minister of Agriculture, Ottawa. The sample as received has been somewhat roughly prepared; it had not been cleaned and apparently had not been treated by the retting process (consisting in steeping the fiber in water for some time), which is usually carried out in preparing a fiber for commercial purposes. As received, it was submitted to a complete examination, but the results were not wholly satisfactory, chiefly owing to the method of preparation and especially to the absence of retting. Since, however, the fiber appeared to be strong and particularly satisfactory in its length (6 to 18 inches), a rough approximation to the process of retting was conducted in the laboratory, the fiber as received being soaked in water for a week at a temperature of about 18° Cent. After this it was dried, recombined and hackled. The fiber now showed very much better results when submitted to our usual examination, and it appears very probable that if properly treated it might be worth while to put this product on the market, as I conclude, from the letter addressed to the Minister of Agriculture by Mr. E. Kenny, of the settlement of St. Vincent de Paul, that the plant is very abundant, in fact almost a weed, in some districts of the province of Quebec. I therefore suggest that information should be obtained as to the proper method of treating the fiber in the manner alluded to and that other samples so treated should then be submitted to this department. They shall then be chemically examined, and a commercial valuation obtained from our expert referee on this subject.

Mr. Kenny writes us that he has treated further quantities this year, and says: "I am satisfied that a commercial value can be arrived at, though owing to want of time and not getting the necessary encouragement, I did not attempt to place it on the market this year. Yet I did not neglect to continue experimenting. If you can find a market for it, I will be in a position next year to have collected a large quantity. I am just preparing a small quantity at the request of a French