

which are annually imported, in addition to that made at home, for feeding purposes. The quantity of flax fibre necessary to supply the demand of the United Kingdom would consume the produce of 500,000 acres; while in Ireland, during the year (1853), only 136,000 were cultivated, and, probably, not a fourth of that quantity in the rest of the kingdom." (Wilson.) The seed is imported from India, Egypt, Russia, Sicily, Prussia, and Holland; and the oil-cake from France, Germany, and the United States.

Mr. Fane is of opinion that—"Under proper arrangements, the whole might be home-grown. If all were, the money result would be enormous, because every ton of fibre involves the growth of eight tons of flax straw—eight tons of straw being required to produce one of fibre; and every ton of straw involves the production of six bushels of seed, worth at least 6s. 6d. a bushel. These would give the following money result:—

|                                                                |             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1,680,000 tons of straw, producing six bushels of seed to each |             |
| ton, at 6s. 6d. a bushel, would give .....                     | £2,496,000  |
| 160,000 tons of fibre, at £50 a ton, would give .....          | 8,000,000   |
|                                                                | £10,496,000 |

Without advocating, or considering it desirable, that all the increasing quantities of flax required by the manufacturers of the United Kingdom should be grown in that country, we may take advantage of the information collected as applicable to our own. It has, indeed, been objected, by Mr. H. S. Thompson, that if forty stone of flax (value 7s. 6d. per stone) is the average produce of a reasonably well-cultivated acre of flax, 70,000 tons of imported flax would require 280,000 acres of land for its cultivation, which is "clean and in good tilth," i. e., "precisely in the state in which it is best fitted for producing corn," and, "on an average, at least four quarters." "The 280,000 acres required to produce the flax imported, would therefore produce, if cropped with wheat, 1,120,000 quarters, worth (at 7s. per bushel) £3,136,000; which approaches tolerably near to the estimate given by Mr. Nichols of the value of the imported flax, viz., £3,490,000." But these objections are made to the occupation of good land in a country like England, where the whole quantity is but limited, and do not apply to countries like America, where there is an unlimited extent of fertile land. (Royle.)

"If we refer to the statistics of British and Irish exports, we find that in 1813 there were shipped from the United Kingdom, in round numbers, 91,000,000 yards of linen, and that the exports of 1853 reached nearly 180,000,000 yards; the total value of all kinds of linen and yarn exported in the former year being £3,702,052, and in the latter £5,910,355."—*Belfast Mercury*.

Though the culture of flax is considered by some as not particularly eligible for the best cultivated lands of England, it is yet in other countries accounted a most desirable object of attention, being in Belgium called "the Golden crop," and in Ireland "the Rent-paying crop." In Russia, it is one of the principal objects of culture, and has been much extended by the continual advances of English capital; while in Egypt, the culture was re-established by the vigorous but despotic policy of Mehemet Ali. In Canada, it is to be hoped that we may be induced to cultivate it in suitable localities. In such situations it will be found an eligible crop if the population is numerous and labour abundant. Mr. Nichols says:—"The quantity of flax which ought to be cultivated in any locality, must, in some measure, be governed by the quantity of labour there obtainable. One acre in a hundred, and one in fifty,