

## FLAX—ITS CULTURE.

Next to food, the chief physical want of man in every state of society, is raiment. This, in all civilized countries, is produced from Flax, Silk, Cotton and Wool. The increasing extent to which Flax enters into the clothing of the civilized world, is truly astonishing. Even in our own country, its use pervades every class of society, and it enters largely into the daily clothing of over twenty-five millions of people.

During the year 1854, the importations of Flax into the United States far exceeded the enormous sum of seventeen millions of dollars, for our own consumption alone; and the amount of importations is annually on the increase.

We are glad that the agricultural community in our own country are at length turning their attention more particularly to the cultivation of Flax; for it is certainly an article which we largely consume at home, and one which will command a ready market abroad. Why then can it not be more abundantly and extensively cultivated? Surely nature has thrown no insurmountable obstacles in our way. We are nearly, or quite, on the same parallel of latitude with the principal Flax-growing countries in the old world.

The plant we know, will flourish here, because its growth has already been extensively tested. Especially have experiments been made, within the past few years in almost every State throughout the Union, relative to the cultivation of Flax; which experiments have uniformly resulted in large profits, and the production of an article of Flax as beautiful in lustre and texture, and as strong in fibre, as produced in any foreign country. Our soil and climate are particularly adapted to the growth of Flax.

Is it for a moment to be doubted, that an amount of Flax can be annually produced with a little extra expense and pains, which will equal, if not exceed the yearly importations? It has been said, (and we hope it may be realized) that in ten years hence the United States will be able to export Flax to an amount equaling that of their present importations.

We can grow Flax just as certainly as we can grow Corn, Wheat, and other grain. But the question arises, Can it be made a *profitable* crop—will it pay? Most assuredly it will. In some parts of our country Flax has already been cultivated for the Seed alone; while the Flax Straw was considered of little or no value. Then it afforded the producer a fair remuneration for his trouble and expense. How much more profitable, then, will it be to the grower, when he can at the sametime realize an amount for the Straw equaling, and in most cases exceeding, that received for the Seed.

There is no more conservative class of men than the farmers; and yet, cautious and distrustful of innovations as they are, they stand ever ready to act on demonstration and conviction—and it is for them to say whether this article, Flax, shall be more extensively cultivated, and become one of the chief staples of the country.