

Of course it is useless to start the growth of hemp, on a large scale, where you are not prepared to dress it. In Europe, they dress it by hand. Labour is too expensive here for such a slow process. We must have recourse to machinery, as they do in the States. A hemp mill worked by water, such as I put up at Lotbiniere last fall, given the motive power (water-wheel, steam or other; it appears that in Kentucky they use horse-power, in the absence of water power) and a shaft on which to hang two pulleys, one for the break and one for the scutchers, will cost from three hundred to three hundred and fifty dollars, at the most.

The whole machinery consists in a six roller break—Sandford & Mallory's pattern—manufactured by Mr. Wm. Moody, at Terrebonne, near Montreal, and sold by him for \$240, and of two scutching pulleys, with five knives on each,—the pulleys made of birch and pine, and the knives of well-seasoned maple or spring steel. Hemp requires much less scutching than flax, I think two scutching pulleys, with five knives each, will be sufficient for the former, where five such pulleys are required for the latter. Put over the machinery a covering, consisting merely of a roof without sides, so that the dust will not trouble the men.

The scutching pulleys with the knives attached to them, must be raised off the ground a good deal higher than for scutching flax. The shaft of those pulleys ought to be at least four feet from the floor of the mill, the men who scutch standing on stools. The reason is, that if you leave your scutching knives as low as for flax, the ends of the hemp will lie on the ground—it is often eight or nine feet long—where the knives, in their swift revolutions, pick them up. The hemp then gets entangled, and ultimately rolled up round the shaft, and is lost, as I found out to my cost.

The outlay of \$300 to \$350 for the machinery of a hemp mill, though not very considerable, is more than one would like to incur for the simple experiment of a new thing, especially when undertaken with some doubt as to the final success. But without incurring any expense, the trial can be made—as I made it before building the hemp mill—either at any flax-dressing mill, or in the absence of such a convenience, with the common old-fashioned flax-break, worked by hand, so well-known to every farmer. If there be a flax-dressing mill at hand, you can make use, for your experiments, of the flax-break, taking care to slacken a little the screws that keep down the upper rollers. Hemp being thicker than flax requires more room between the rollers. If your flax-break is not very strong, to avoid injuring it, it will be well to cut off the roots of thick hemp before

passing it through the break, but you are not obliged to go to that trouble with a regular hemp-break. Once broken scutch the hemp with your flax-scutching knives, on revolving pulleys, taking great care that the long ends do not get entangled; or with a common hand-scutching knife. Six pounds of retted hemp at the rate of one copper a pound, cost the manufacturer five cents, and will produce one pound of clean dressed hemp. The cost, delivered at Quebec, of Russian hemp of the same quality as our Canadian hemp, was, last fall, about 9c. per pound, which, I am told, is not a very high price in this market. This would leave a margin of four cents a pound for dressing and delivering here; and I think we could give it cheaper than the Russian, hemp requiring much less scutching than flax. It is indispensable that it should be sufficiently retted, whether that be done by soaking in water or exposure to dew.

We are now beginning to dress our stock of hemp at the mill, for Mr. Onslow's rope-walk at Quebec. By the spring, I shall be able to state with more accuracy the cost of dressing hemp, and the yield of retted hemp in dressed hemp. I should not be surprised, if, on an average, I took something less than six pounds for one. Some people tell me that they have found it to be five pounds for one. Experience will show.

I earnestly trust that the results of these experiments will be such as to encourage the cultivation of hemp on a large scale, and that it will be found profitable both to the farmer and manufacturer, in Canada, as it has been found in so many countries.

Quebec, Feb. 12, '69. H. G. JOLY.

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