

this year, will furnish all the evidence necessary to prove the great benefit to be derived by the farmers in following up the culture of flax.

There is scarcely a county in the Western part of the Province, that has not taken the matter up, the demand for seed in the various districts, where the trial has already been made, has far exceeded the supply. Col. Mitchell, of the Norval Mills, Messrs. Perine Bro., Messrs. Black & Forrester, St. Mary's, and other mills in full operation, have distributed a much larger quantity of seed this year than ever before, in addition to the quantity kept by the farmers themselves for their own sowing. The number of new scutching mills about being erected, far exceeds all former expectations, and great activity will be exhibited on the part of the mill owners this fall. At Weston Mr. John Dennis, has commenced operations, and in addition to his woollen factory is now getting in machinery for scutching flax. At Stratford Woodstock, Brantford, Whitby, Newcastle, St. Catharines, London, Springfield, Lucan, Elora, &c. &c. mills are being put into operation, and at St. Thomas the enterprising firm of Messrs. Perine, Bro. & Co. have extended their works and have distributed from five to six hundred bushels of seed in their usual liberal manner.

The large quantity of raw material produced will furnish strong inducements to the capitalist to commence operations, in preparing to manufacture such goods as will meet a ready sale in the market. Already a company has been formed in Toronto for the purpose of starting an oil mill, another step in the right direction. The attention of some of our ingenious mechanics will also be called into requisition, to furnish all kinds of machinery in this department. The want of a simple brake, to prepare the flax for scutching, is much felt, it being now necessary to send to New York, or some other part of the States, pay duty and transportation, &c. which should be avoided if possible.

Flax requires little or no attention after sowing until harvest sets in, unless some strong weeds make their appearance, which ought to be removed. This is not likely to be so much the case here as in Ireland, and other flax growing countries. Vegetation is so much quicker, and flax of such rapid growth that weeds are likely to be choked, and if they appear at all will be of such a delicate nature as not to injure the flax plant to any extent. Much is required at the hands of the farmer when harvest arrives, in the handling of flax after being pulled or gathered into the stock—considerable judgment is necessary in the process of watering or grassing. Hints on this very important part of the management required, will doubtless appear in good time, in a future number of your valuable paper, for their guidance.

JOHN A. DONALDSON.

Spring Mount, Weston, May 16, 1864.

Growing Interest in Flax Culture.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR:—It is only two or three years since the subject of flax culture was much discussed in Canada. Since then it has grown into such unprecedented popularity (owing to the high price of cotton) that this year nearly every practical farmer in the Province, who has land in the proper state of cultivation for flax is sowing from one to ten acres, and several as high as fifty. Nearly every constituency in Canada West will boast by September, the possession of an approved Flax Mill, erected by some enterprising capitalist. Experiments are being made in the manufacture of this product which annually produce some new and important results. The last and most important of these is the process of cottonizing the fibre by which it is rendered fit for manufacture into linen in the numerous cotton mills in America, now lying idle six months of the year. I am not aware whether this process has been applied to any of the numerous mills in Canada at present.

Should cotton fall to its original price three years ago, farmers have become convinced from the financial returns of Flax culture, that it would be folly to diminish the culture of this valuable textile fibre; nevertheless, the farmers of this section are taking considerable interest in it this season, sufficient to encourage the firm of J. M. Holmes & Co. to erect a mill at Maitland. I also understand there will be one erected at Merrickville, by a company this season, providing they get sufficient encouragement.

S. S. S.

Frankville, Leeds County

How to Plant Corn Straight.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—Permit me to describe my way of planting corn, which, after trying markers of almost every kind, I have found to be the best. I use now an iron reel on which is wound a line, such as gardeners or masons use, say two or three hundred yards long, so as to reach over any ordinary field. Upon the line at every distance of a yard is a mark by a piece of white cotton twine sewed through the line and knotted. When the ground is fully prepared by the harrow, without any previous marking, I stretch the line across the field and plant opposite every mark on the line, keeping half a yard from the line up the one side and down the other by the sight of the eye. By setting the line pin on the one side of the field in a straight range and lifting the line six feet every two rows, the field may be planted straight both ways. Where two hands are employed planting, by their going in opposite directions so as to be ready at each end to lift the line at the same time, the work goes on speedily. Whether the hoe or hand planter is used I have found the plan to work equally well. As no gutter is made in this way of planting the young plants are not so apt to be covered with the cultivator the first time of hoeing, and when rows are straight both ways, as by this plan they may be, a careful hand can go very near the plants with the cultivator thereby saving much hand-hoeing. The line requires to be kept dry so as to remain about the same length. When corn is planted in straight and parallel rows the ploughman who follows for the succeeding crop, by counting and following the rows of the corn stubble, can lay out his ridges in regular order.

County of Essex

Planting Forest Trees.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—As the time will soon arrive for planting forest trees, for shade and shelter, a selection of trees for this purpose is a matter worthy of consideration. It is not uncommon to see along our roadsides sticks and poles that have been planted without any regard to soil. The maple, for instance, is one of the hardest trees to make grow where the subsoil is of a wet nature; silver maple is sometimes planted in wet soils, but to grow a fine specimen you require a fine moist tillable soil. If our forefathers had adopted "Uncle Toby's" plan of first clearing and levelling the land before planting their trees, we would not have the fine specimens of natural beauty that we now have in many parts of the country. One tree saved is worth half a dozen chances of planting and getting a tree established. It takes a life-time to bring these monarchs of beauty to perfection. I well remember, when a boy, sitting in the shade of a silver maple on my uncle's farm, growing on the bank of a small lake in a fine loamy soil, the admiration of all that saw it, and a landmark for many miles. Ellsworth's Big Maple was a landing place well known; its red bud in the spring and its crimson and gold leaves in autumn, and its symmetry of form made it a beauty seldom to be found. A big maple it was, but like those that cared for it, it is gone. But its beauty was not all, it afforded a great amount of sap, sometimes giving two or three pails in a day, making a pound of sugar each; thus making the maple a profitable as well as a pleasant tree to plant.

Returning to the selection of trees to plant, we would recommend the Yellow Birch as one of the finest trees for wet soils, the Basswood or Linden will flourish in all soils; the Poplar, silver-leaved, and balsam, are quite at home in all soils; European Willow is a fine tree and adapted to wet soils; the Larch or Tamarack is a splendid tree for shelter, growing in all soils; Arbor Vitæ, or White Cedar, is well adapted for hedges or filling up amongst deciduous trees for screens or shelter. Nut-bearing trees have been very much neglected, such as the Beech, Butternut and Hickory, being well adapted to any spare place around the homestead. With a proper selection of trees adapted to the soil, and space allowed for them to spread their branches, we may expect trees of great beauty and symmetry.

AN OBSERVER.

Cobourg, O W

The Peach Blow and the Potatoe Rot.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—One of your correspondents says peach blow potatoes are rot proof. The truth is they are the very reverse, because they grow a very large strong stalk which makes them more liable to take the disease. The kinds that have the lightest and smallest stalks, are the most free from the disease, and every farmer knows it to be the same with the wheat, the larger the straw the smaller the portion of rust, therefore, on light sandy or gravelly soils the rust on the wheat, and the disease on the potatoe are much less than on rich heavy clay land.

Mr. Peters, in the last number, has given us the best partial remedy spoken of as yet, although I do not approve of overly deep planting, because it never gives what may be called a heavy crop, although, I know from experience it is the safest to counteract the disease. Mr. Peters' plan of cultivation is good, but he may dispense with a few of his notions about planting whole seed, and cutting his rows into hills. Whole seed and the potatoe-apple seed, are equally liable to the disease. I have proved all these plans many years and I have found the small seed and the round whole potatoe to be as much injured as any crop I ever grew. I find the only plan to counteract the disease, is to plant deep. I do not know the cause of the disease, but believe it to be in the atmosphere. I know how to save the crop when the disease first commences, and it may be as well to give my practice: Always have a small patch in the garden as near to the house, for early use. They, of course, will take disease first, but if they are not done, and I think there is danger, I take my hoe to the field and dig for use every day, and if I find one rotten, in a painful I use all the force possible and draw the tops every one, and if any break off I dig around them and draw them out. I then remove the tops off the ground and it is as clean as when first planted. Every man of common sense knows that if you remove the cause the effect must cease. I do not say the top is the sole cause of the disease but is the conductor of it, therefore remove it at once and your potatoes will be sound. Then leave them in the ground as long as the weather in the fall will permit to season and dry out, and you will have good sound and wholesome potatoes. I have tried this method for eight years past and never failed.

ADAM GRAHAM.

Whitchurch, near Aurora.

Draining in Quicksand.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I notice a question on this subject in a recent number and will endeavour to answer it:—

To drain in quicksand I would recommend your correspondent to have pine boards sawn 3 inches and 5 or 6 inches wide. If 12 feet long two 5 inch boards and two 3 inch do. will measure 16 feet, and make a tube 3 inches square, which is larger than a 3 inch round tile. If 6 inch boards instead of 5 inches, they will only measure 18 feet and will make a tube 3 by 4 inches; a much larger addition to the capacity than to the price. These tubes are more easily and quickly laid than tiles and less liable to displacement, which is a decided advantage in working among quicksand; clay is another thing altogether.

If you come upon the water at once, begin with a box with a hole at one end to admit the tube; leave the other end open; place a few stones at the mouth of the tube, then fill up with fine gravel or coarse sand to act as a strainer. In laying down wooden pipes, I have covered the ends with three boards nailed together to form a cap and then gravel over that. A little straw might answer to break joints, only it is as well to be sure and do that right at first which cannot afterwards be easily repaired. After a year or more you may be able to carry your drain further on or at a lower level. It sometimes takes months to drain off the accumulated wetness of adjacent land.

A FARMER.

Lefroy.

A GOOD CORN STIMULANT.—Two bushels of ashes to one of plaster. Apply between planting and hoeing, a small handful to the hill. If the application be soon followed by a gentle rain, the benefit will be more marked than if a drouth ensue. Some say, that by an application of the above mixture the value of their crop has been increased by one half. On some soils, no doubt, this difference would occur.—*Ed.*