

tion, is both troublesome and expensive, but the question which has to be answered is, "Will it pay, and leave a greater profit than any other crop?" If this question can, on a fair trial, be answered in the affirmative, the trouble and expense will be disregarded by industrious farmers in Canada as well as here.

Some objections may be made to the steeping, on the ground of its tainting the water and the air and possibly those acquainted with it may think that the smell, which is disagreeable, may be also unwholesome, but it has never been found so either in France, Belgium, or Ireland, and no healthier women can be seen than those who are employed during the whole flax season in pulling, spreading, and lifting it.

The objection as regards the water applies in an especial manner, or rather it is confined to the owners of Fisheries; but I do not know whether the Fisheries in Canada are owned by individuals, or are common property, and on that would turn the validity of the objection, if made.

In estimating the profit of Flax cultivation some allowance should be made for the employment it gives, and the increased or additional crop it introduces into the rotation, by which variety the land is enabled to yield more in a given number of years than by confining it to the growth of any class of crops exclusively. Employment too, in working a succession of crops as Flax, Hay, Wheat, Oats, &c., is more continuous and certain.

You have seen what the Linen manufacture of Ulster, which has its root in the growth and preparation of the raw material, has done, in raising it to its present state of wealth and comfort, as compared with the other provinces so much more favored by nature, in soil and climate, and which has made Belfast the manufacturing and commercial metropolis of Ireland; and, looking at the soil, the minerals, the lakes and rivers of Canada, with the origin of its population, its free government, and its educational establishments, I see enough to indicate a bright future for it too, if you but go to work with a fixed determination to succeed.

Wishing you a safe and pleasant voyage and happy reunion with your family.

I remain, dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

ROBERT MCCREA.

Grange House,
Strabane, Aug. 29th, 1861. }

The *Elodea Canadensis*.

The following letter from a Dutch correspondent recently appeared in the *Canadian News*, published in England. We had previously heard of the mischievous effects of this curious

aquatic plant in British waters. Is it known in Canada? If so, can any of our readers give us some account of it?—Ebs. C. A.]

Amsterdam, Sept. 1, 1861.

SIR,—That singular aquatic plant, the *Elodea Canadensis*, brought by chance from the waters of North America to England, is well known to have increased in that country to an alarming extent. The phenomenon has now made its appearance in the rivers and canals of Utrecht and its neighborhood, and great and well founded fears are entertained that it will extend all over the kingdom. It appears that not more than two or three years ago a specimen of the plant was introduced here by way of experiment, and it has unfortunately succeeded but too well, as it has propagated itself with such extraordinary rapidity, forming at the bottom of the water an impenetrable tangle of grass of considerable thickness, that it greatly impedes the work of cleaning out the canals. It may now be termed quite an indigenous plant, possibly to the satisfaction of the botanists, but it is certainly an abominable plague for the Government of a country like Holland, intersected by canals in direction.

Mons. Miquel, Professor of Botany at the University of Utrecht and editor of the *Journal de Botanique Neerlandaise*, has expressed his opinion that this plant will in a short time overstep the frontiers of this kingdom and advance into Germany by creeping up the bed of the Rhine. With the exception of some particular varieties of the Lemna, it far exceeds all the aquatic plants of this country, not only in quickness of growth and gradual dissemination over large districts, but also for the wonderful extent and power of its reproducing faculties. The stem of the *Elodea* is very delicate and easily broken, so that by the natural motion of the waters minute branches and fibres become detached and are carried to a distance by the current, whilst others, coming in contact with the barges and boats, attach themselves to their sides and are carried away by them, which also partially explains the rapidity of their extension to distant parts.

It is quite clear that the astonishing power of reproductiveness of this little plant cannot be ascribed to the dissemination of its seed, for the flower contains no properly developed petals, as Professor Miquel satisfactorily ascertained from some specimens gathered last summer by Mr. Hartsen, Candidate of Philosophy at the above named university. As soon as the branches are broken off they make rapid shoots and thus produce fresh plants. On the approach of winter the brittleness of the *Elodea* increases so much that in simply lifting it out of the water it breaks to pieces in the hand, and as is generally the case with plants about to reproduce their species the detached fragments are found to contain