

had always supposed wood ashes, leached or unleached, were beneficial to the land, or perhaps I should say, to the crop growing on it; and I cannot help thinking, that there were some conditions of the soil that escaped the observation of the person who related the facts stated by your correspondent. I will just mention two instances in which the use of ashes proved highly beneficial to the crop. When we purchased the farm on which I now reside, there was at the back of the house a large heap of leached ashes, say three or four cart loads. They were carted out on a piece of grass land, perhaps about three acres. It is more than twenty-five years since, so that I cannot be very exact as to the quantities of either the land or ashes; it was an old soil, nothing except a little Timothy and June grass growing on it. Another part of the same yard was dressed with barn-yard manure. I cannot remember if plaster was sown or not. The piece that had the ashes was covered with a luxuriant growth of white clover, so thick, that it was hard to get the scythe through it; the other part on which the manure was put, was but little benefited. I do not think there was a ton on the whole of the three acres. The other case was one in which a dressing of plaster and ashes was applied on wheat. I had that season ploughed part of my summer fallow early, before it was thoroughly dry. This we could not get to the same condition as the rest of the fallow, though we gave it extra work with the drag and cultivator; and when the wheat came up, we could see all through the field the line of the early ploughing. The wheat was thin, and did not seem to grow like the rest. I had some plaster and ashes left from the spring, and told the man to sow what there was on the wheat where it looked so bad. Now for the result. In the spring the wheat began to show the effects of plaster and ashes, and at harvest we could see exactly where it had been sown. The wheat was more even in height, and the ears larger and better filled than on the other part of the field. Both these cases prove that there is some benefit from the use of ashes on the land, and I, for one, shall not hesitate to use them to the extent of my ability to procure them.

### Hydraulic Stumping Machine.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER.

SIR,—The ordinary stumping machines which I have seen are, many of them, inefficient, others, again, so clumsy and unwieldy, that, as a general rule, I believe there is but little to be gained by using a machine at all. So many more hands, horses, and other equipments are required, the progress made is so slow, so much trouble and time are required in cleaning off the soil from roots and so forth, that a couple of stout men accustomed to this kind of work will undertake to stump, burn, and level per acre quite as cheaply as can be done by a machine. I speak of this township, where our stumps are chiefly pine. I have myself paid from \$25 up to \$40 per acre for taking them out.

I have often been surprised that some wide-awake inventor never tried the water or hydraulic power principle for this purpose. Any one who ever saw this kind of press at work could not fail to perceive the special adaptability of its principle to pulling up stumps. It is used in England for a great variety of purposes, chiefly in compressing bale goods, and in a variety of linen and other manufactures. Any given amount of pressure can be applied according to the power of the press;—five hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, or twenty thousand tons! It makes no difference. A few gallons of water does the whole business.

Without a diagram, it is not very easy to convey to persons who have never seen it a clear conception of the form of this machine. Most people, however, have seen a large cheese press. Suppose this and the pressure applied upwards—a box below for the water, and the power worked by a sort of piston something after the manner of a small pump. This principle could very easily be applied to pulling stumps. Have a brace of very large and massively-strong wheels, axle to correspond, a pair of shafts, to admit a horse and the machine or press, fixed on the axle, so that the wheels allow it to be placed over the stump to be extracted; fix the hooks and chains firmly; next apply the power, and the work is speedily accomplished; indeed, as easily and quickly as a man, in the fall, can pull up cabbage roots. A strong horse would move the machine from stump to stump, a couple of men would first apply the power—and then clear off the soil from the roots as they went along. By this means the work could be accomplished very much more expeditiously, as well as at much less cost than by any other method at present known

The next consideration would be the matter of expense. That would vary according to the power of the machine. A very powerful ordinary press can be had in England for from £50 to £80. I should say that for a matter of some \$500 a machine could be furnished complete ready for use by which two men and a horse could take out, with ease, 6 to 12 stumps per hour. The cost per acre, my impression is, would thus be reduced fully one-half. Can no one be found with ingenuity and spirit enough to construct this machine? A handsome thing might be made of it; while a great boon would be conferred upon the country.

Woburn.

W. S.

### A Flax Puller Invented.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER.

SIR,—This subject of flax culture is exciting some interest in this section of the Province, and during the past season 75 to 100 tons of the scutched fibre has been grown in Compton County, principally in the Township of King and vicinity, where the Commission of the B. A. Land Company has taken great pains to introduce it, by supplying the farmers with seed and agreeing to purchase the flax at the fair market price for exportation. The past season proved very unfavorable, as much of the flax lodged. In an article on this subject in your first number, you say:—"A Flax Pulling Machine which will supersede the necessarily slow hand process, is greatly needed. The inventor of such a machine would be sure to make a fortune by his patent." I have much pleasure in informing your readers that such a machine has been invented and tested by practical use. Mr. James Ward, a very intelligent farmer of King, in Compton Co., sowed two acres of flax last season, and after he had put in his crop set himself to thinking how he could manage to harvest it without resorting to the slow process of hand pulling. The result was that he has invented a machine, to be worked by hand, which will enable him to pull three to four times as much in a given time as by the ordinary process. He pulled his two acres at the rate, when it was not lodged, of an acre a day, and when lodged, of half an acre a day. This Flax Puller has been patented, and a sample will shortly be forwarded to one of the agricultural warehouses in Upper Canada. Its price will be from \$5 to \$6.

J. S. WALTON.

Sherbrooke, February, 1864.

[NOTE BY ED. C. F.—The above letter has laid over longer than it ought to have done but for the great pressure of correspondence on our columns. Our correspondent has just informed us that a sample of the Flax Puller above referred to has been sent to J. Fleming & Co., of this city. He also describes a machine in course of construction by the same party, for the purpose of preparing flax and hemp for incorporation with wool, to be manufactured into cloth. It is expected that this machine, if successful, will prepare from three to five hundred pounds of fibre per day, and make it fit to be carded with wool by the woollen manufacturer. When completed and tested we shall be glad to give a fuller account of this machine.]

### Sowing Plaster, &c.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I have a quantity of plaster to sow, and it is a slow process to sow it by hand. Will you or some of your correspondents please inform me if there is any machine for sowing it more quickly?

That was a good hint in the second number of THE CANADA FARMER about farmers having a "neglected corner" which might be turned to good account. I had a "neglected corner" of two acres, that laid idle for twenty years. It was a rough, wet piece of land, sloping away from the barn. I summer fallowed and drained it well, and now it raises more than five acres of some of my land. It is so situated that I can let the liquid manure from the barn-yard flow over it in furrows, which makes it very rich.

I wish to encourage my brother farmers to raise root crops. Last year I sold \$400 worth of hay, and wintered my stock better by the help of turnips than I could have done by feeding them all the hay I sold. I could not keep half the stock I do but for the turnips. I raise about four acres every year, and for the last three years have had 1,000 bushels per acre.

I have laid out much money in draining, and I have derived great benefit from it. At first I made stone drains, but if I had had the experience ten years ago I have now, I would have put all the stones in the stone wall that are now buried in drains, and have put in wood pipes. These do well, are cheap, and I believe will last fifty years. I get lumber sawn at the mill two and four inches wide, and one inch thick, and make pipes five feet long, beveled at the ends, to fit in.

JOHN BLESARD.

Otonabee, Feb. 27, 1864.

NOTE BY ED. CANADA FARMER.—There is a machine designed to sow plaster, ashes, lime, guano, salt, or any fine fertilizer,—the invention of Mr. Pierpont Seymour, of East Bloomfield, Ontario Co., N. Y. It can be made to sow any desired quantity per acre, The Rural New Yorker, in a recent number, describes and commends it. The price is \$45, American money. Greenbacks, which are legal tender in the United States, can now be bought at rates which would greatly reduce the cost of the machine to a Canadian purchaser.

### How to Get Change of Seed.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER.

SIR,—In your last issue appears a letter from a correspondent on change of seed. I believe there is hardly a farmer, either in Canada or elsewhere, but is aware of the importance of this subject. But the great question is how to obtain it. Changing with our neighbours is well, so far as it goes, but there is a limit even to this. What is wanted is an importation of fresh seeds—not a few pecks, but, say a thousand bushels—from a climate similar to this. Such a climate may be found along the shores of the Rhine and Danube.

There is an extensive plain in Lower Austria extending from the last spur of the Alps to the Carpathian Mountains; the district has a climate similar to Canada, the soil varying from a light loam, with a gravelly subsoil to clay of more or less tenacity. Great crops of very superior winter wheat are raised in this district. This I know from experience, having travelled the entire district many times, in all seasons, and on foot. What I would recommend is, that the Canadian Government should, through Her Majesty's Consul in Trieste, procure samples of grain from Lower Austria, and from any of the numerous Consuls on the Rhine, of samples from Upper Rhine or Central Germany. And while about it, I would recommend that samples should be had from Leghorn, of wheat grown in Tuscany, and from the valley of the Arno: this may be done through Wm. McBean, Esq., H. M. Consul at Leghorn. The Tuscan wheat is celebrated as containing a greater amount of starch than the wheat grown in Britain and is bought up by the English manufacturers to be made into starch.

Yours respectfully,

G. RICHARDSON.

Arva, March 16, 1864.

### Canada Thistles Again.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER;

SIR,—I see you have received different communications on killing Canada thistles, and I thought I might as well send you my way. I plough them about six times during the summer;—five times might do if it was a dry summer. I plough them the first time about the beginning of May, and so on near the first of every month till October. I always harrow them the same, or next day after ploughing them. The harrow drags a great many of the roots out of the ground. These must die. Sometimes you must plough sooner than a month, and other times you may let them go a little longer, according to the growth of them. My rule is never to let them up. Keep the air from the main root one summer, and they will die. I assure you I have proved it. Some will say, "what an immense lot of work to kill thistles; it won't pay." Well, if it don't pay to kill them, it won't pay to grow them. It might not pay a tenant on a three years' lease, but it would on a five years' lease. At any rate, it will pay a freeholder. The land, after such a course, will grow anything and everything. I generally sow barley and seed down; wheat might pay as well, only for the midge. When there are but a few patches of thistles in a field, it is better to work them separately three times, as three ploughings are enough for the rest of the field.

York Township.

G. W. D.