

delineated. With this primitive but very effective tool he can rapidly draw the stalks into bunches of the proper size for sheaves.—In operating he throws his rude hook forward its full length, and suddenly draws it toward him, each motion making a bunch; this he raises quickly from the ground, and, with his hook by a few well directed strokes, divests the plant of its leaves; he then binds his sheaf with its own stalks and passes on to repeat the operation. Other laborers follow and place the hemp in neat close shocks of convenient size, securing the top by a neat band made of hemp stalks themselves after the manner of shocking corn. Here it is suffered to remain until the whole crop is thus secured; as soon thereafter as possible, selecting clear dry weather for the operation, the whole crop is to be secured by ricking or stacking.

The same rules are to be observed in stacking as with grain—the object being to keep the crop secure and dry until the proper time for rotting arrives; in the latitude of Kentucky about the middle of October is the proper time. The crop must be in the rick or stack, until the summer heats and rains have passed and frost appears instead of dew, the whole crop is then removed from the rick, and re-hauled back on the same ground on which it grew, there to be spread in thin swaths for rotting, where it remains without turning until properly rotted. This is indicated by the fibre freely parting from the stalk, and the dissolution by the action of the elements of the peculiar substance that causes it to adhere thereto. This stage is only to be learned to perfection by practical experience, yet the novice must have some information to enable him to begin to learn, and it is easily acquired by any one the least observant. When the operator finds his hemp sufficiently rotted, the wooden hook is again brought into requisition for drawing once more the swaths in convenient bunches. The hemp will have lost much of its weight, and can be bunched and shocked with less labor than at first, besides, at this last shocking, the binding is to be omitted entirely; the hemp is to be carefully and neatly handled, all tangling to be avoided, and placed again in neat shocks and firmly bound at the top. Then comes the last and crowning operation—the breaking and dressing the fibre or lint for the market. The peculiar brake to be used, like the knife or hook for cutting, needs no description; they are manufactured in the old hemp regions at a cost of about \$5 each, and from long experience have been perfectly adapted to the uses required. The new beginner would save time and money by ordering a sample brake, from which any carpenter can manufacture as desired. The crop is broken in this climate directly from the shock in the open field by the removal of the brake from shock to shock

as fast as broken. In Iowa, owing to the severity of the climate, it would probably be necessary to remove the rotted hemp to the barn, where the labour of breaking could be more certainly performed. The coldest and clearest weather is the best for this operation—in fact, excess of dampness in the atmosphere suspends this latter altogether. The breaking process is laborious, yet more depends on the skill than the strength of the laborer.

I have endeavoured to describe the whole progress as practised by the best growers in Kentucky. The same mode will certainly apply to Iowa up to the rotting process. With her advantages, steeping in soft water is entirely practicable, by which she will produce an article of water-rotted hemp perhaps in no respect inferior to the highest-priced Russian, which is fully double the value of the American dew-rotted, the only sort produced in this State. The writer is apprehensive that seasons are too short in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa, for the successful growth of seed, a defect easily remedied by the purchase of seeds grown in more Southern latitudes, but not a shadow of doubt exists in his mind that they can, at the very first effort, produce better hemp than any territory South. Time, he thinks, will demonstrate that Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin compose the TRUE HEMP REGION of the American continent.

FLAX CULTURE.

[An esteemed correspondent sends us the accompanying article addressed to the *St. Mary's Argus*, by Mr. Black, an intelligent and enterprising farmer, formerly of Northumberland in this Province, but now a resident in the county of Perth. The article is somewhat long for our columns, but the importance of the subject, and its able handling by a practical man, justify its reproduction in an unabridged form. *Ens.*]

DEAR SIR:—I have for some time been urging upon the Agricultural Societies with which I am connected, to consider the importance of endeavouring to induce the Farmers in this locality to try the cultivation of Flax. From what I have observed of its culture in Ireland, and having cultivated Flax for twenty years in this Province, I am convinced that Flax growing can be profitably introduced as an article of exportation into the rotation of cropping in this country.

The Blanshard Branch Agricultural Society, at their late annual meeting, invited me to read an essay on the cultivation and management of Flax at our annual fair in April, which I reluctantly agreed to do, in connection with the cultivation of wheat; but since then, Mr. Forrester and myself having concluded to erect a