

THE GLEANER.

AND NORTHUMBERLAND, KENT, GLOUCESTER, AND RESTIGOUCHE
COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL.

New Series, Vol. II.

Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

No. 5.

Miramichi, Friday Morning, November 10, 1843.

Agricultural Journal.

A FEW QUERIES.

Have you your barns, racks, yards, stables, feeding troughs, &c. &c., in order, that your domestic animals may be well fed and sheltered? An animal kept warm and comfortable requires much less food to keep him in equal condition, than when exposed to the winds and rains of winter. If you study economy then, you will see that all is right in these respects.

Is every loose board on your barns and sheds secured? Have you no broken panes in your windows? Look about and see. If you have any of the first, take your hammer and nails, and make all sure at once. If the latter use some glass and putty forthwith. A broken pane of glass will cost you half a cord of wood at least, during the winter, and give you as many colds as you can desire.

Are all your farm implements taken care of, and secured against the weather for further use? Do you think it looks well to see your plow left in the furrow; your cart and wagon in the street; your harrow where it was last used; your hay rack thrown upon the ground with the rake, and chains, axes, and other implements, where it would take a week to hunt them up? Every tool, when you have done with it, should be placed where you can put a hand upon it at any time, and every implement where it will be secure from weather. Most farmers suffer much loss annually from neglecting these precautions.

What preparations have you made for adding to the stock of manures? In the manures is your gold mine, more valuable than the Carolina ones; and should be anxious to increase them accordingly. When the yard was cleaned in the fall, did you cover the whole with muck, or peat, or even loam, to absorb the liquid parts of the manure that so often run to waste? Don't be afraid of laying out labor in this manner; it is money at compound interest.

Are the children at school? and what have you done to provide for them, and for yourself, the means of acquiring that knowledge so essential to success in life? On this point negligence is a crime; parsimony is ruin. If you are able to do nothing else for your children, you are at least able to secure them a competent education. The state guarantees the means of this; it is for you to use them. Destitute of education, wanting ordinary intelligence, the man enters life with all the chances against him. He may succeed; but the odds are fearful. Let it be impressed on the mind that in this free country intelligence is better than wealth.

What have you done to advance the interests of Agriculture in the town where you reside? What to aid the funds of the county or state association? What to disseminate agricultural information? There are few men so mean as a farmer destitute of public spirit. The means of the intelligent farmer may be limited; but his disposition will be good, and that will produce its proper results in action.

He will do what he can; and no more asked. His influence will always be on the right side; he will be no drone.

What experiments have you made the past year in farming? and what has been the result? If favorable, you should let it be known, that others may practice the same methods; if unfavorable, that others escape the error, or be saved the useless expenditure. Every farmer can do much through experiment, to advance the cause of agriculture, if well conducted, and the results given to the public.

Do you receive, and read, an agricultural journal? If not, go at once and subscribe for some good one, and pay in advance. The merchant, the manufacturer, the doctor, and the divine, all have their journals, and if they understand their true interests, read them too. And so must the farmer do, if he would not be behind the age, or ignorant of his profession.

There is a somewhat prevalent idea that the farmer has nothing to do in winter. This is a great mistake. If he has improved his time well; if he has everything right, he will have his time during the winter more at command than otherwise; but he will have no moments for idleness. The improvement of the body and the mind will furnish ample occupation; and the attention bestowed will not lose its reward.

From the British American Cultivator.

CULTIVATION OF FLAX.

Flax may be raised on various soils, but the one most proper for this plant is a deep rich friable loam, neither too dry in summer, nor wet in autumn or spring—in short, the best soil that can be found, as roots strike deep, and are said, by those who have had much experience, that they sink into the soil to a depth equal to half the length of the stem above ground. It is obvious then that flax requires not only a deep soil, but a porous subsoil as well, or one that is well drained. It is needless to add, after what has been said in former numbers of this journal, that large tracts of land in this country might be made to produce as much flax per acre, and of as good a quality, as the so much celebrated article grown in the neighbourhood of Courtray, in the Province of Belgium, without one-half of the cultivation which is expended in that country,—notwithstanding a less quantum of cultivation and care would be required in this, than in the country just mentioned, owing to the virgin state of our soil, still the vast amount of labour that this crop would, in many cases, require, would tend to deter many from entering into the business. It would, therefore, be advisable for only those to engage, at present, in this branch of farming who have lands of the description just mentioned. On most farms there are certain fields that have been under grass for a number of years, and which have collected a great amount of vegetable and animal matter, which have become intimately mixed with the natural earth by absorption, and which is, in fact, an

accumulation of humus. This is the best possible food to produce a good crop of flax. The most suitable period for plowing such sward for this crop is in the early part of spring. The depth of the furrow should be well ploughed, and the furrows so closely packed that there would be no possibility of the grass starting before the season for sowing the seeds. Before the seed be sown, which should be about the first of May, or when the season would admit the twentieth of April would be preferable, the whole of the ground intended for flax should be so completely harrowed, that it would have the appearance of a well prepared onion-bed. The seed is then sown at the rate of a bushel and a half per acre. Two bushels, in many cases, would not be too much, as the plants should be very abundant on the ground to prevent the fiber from becoming too coarse and grassy. The seed should be slightly covered with a bushy-harrow, as more than an inch of earth over it would prevent its evenly vegetating.

An acre of good flax, in Flanders, is worth from £20 to £25, sterling, per acre, without including the seed, which is from £4 to £5 more, and the article is so much prized that merchants come out of France to buy it as it is pulled and tied in bundles. They have it steeped and dressed, at their own expence, by regular steepers and dressers. It should be remembered, however, that the article for which this high price is paid, is converted by manufacture into the finest qualities of bleached linens, and is worth, when prepared for the spinners, from £120 to £140, sterling, per ton.

It will require years of long experience for the Canadian population to arrive to the same degree of proficiency that the Flemish flax-grower has arrived to. The Canadian flax will therefore have to be converted into coarser fabrics. We have lately conversed with many of the German settlers residing in the Township of Markham and Vaughan, who are most willing to engage in the cultivation of flax and hemp, if a certain and profitable market could be established for the above article in their raw state. We shall do our utmost to open a market for the article, and shall give timely evidence of the success of our endeavours by advertisement through our columns.

The farms in the township of Waterloo, Genesee county, State of New York, sowed last spring one thousand acres of flax, upon the recommendation of an individual who guaranteed to erect an oil mill, and pay one dollar a bushel for the flax seed brought to his establishment, and eight dollars per ton for the flax, without any preparation, further than thrashing the seed; and we learn by the *New Genesee Farmer*, that the business has proved a most profitable one to the farmers who engaged in it. Similar steps might be taken in this country, especially in such sections where the soil is too richly supplied with vegetable matter for autumn wheat,—and oil mills might be established in a very short time, in every district of the Province. The man-

ufacturing of linseed oil is a branch of business that cannot possibly overstock the market, as the English market is quite open to colonial oils, there being only a nominal duty of ten shillings per ton on colonial oil, whereas there is a heavy duty on all foreign oils, equal to four pounds ten shillings per ton. If Canadians were wise they would look to this matter. We trust every Agricultural Society in the province will look to it, and give that encouragement to the cultivation of flax, and the manufacturing of oils, as the subject justly deserves.

The following paragraph, referring to a new Grass found by Capt. Ross in the Flankland Islands, we extract from 'The Cultivator' for January.

NEW GRASS.—Captain Ross, in his narrative of his Southern Expedition, describes a grass found on the Falkland Islands, which promises, according to the account given in the *New Farmer's Journal*, to be a valuable acquisition in all maritime districts. "Every animal here feeds on it with avidity, and fattens on it in a short time. It may be planted and cut like the Guinea grass of the West Indies. The blades are about six feet long, and from 200 to 300 shoots spring from one plant." A man will cut about 100 bundles in a day, and horses and cows would eat the dry grass from the thatched roofs in preference to good grass of other kinds. It loves a rank wet peat bog, with the sea spray over it. What is to hinder this grass from taking possession of the large tracts on our coast, now producing only worthless coarse salt or bog grass? It is called the "Tussack Grass."

SOAP MAKING.—As soap making is a matter of no small interest to every house keeper, a few suggestions on the process of manufacturing will be of utility. Soap, as every one knows, is made of alkali and fat or oil of almost any kind. Although grease and ley are common in every kitchen, yet few can combine them with accuracy; and frequently much more labor is bestowed than necessary. The first consideration is the obtaining a sufficient quantity of alkali.—This requires good wood, green is best, and if it be cut in the winter, or while the sap is down, the ley will be much stronger. Old rotten wood should not be burnt when the ashes are to be used for ley.

The ashes being ready, put them into a hogshead, barrel or old fashioned hopper, and put on water until the strength is exhausted. Next commence boiling to evaporate the water, and concentrate the potash. To be assured there is enough potash, made a trial with an egg. If an egg is supported, all is right, but if it sinks to the bottom, the boiling must be continued.

But often it occurs that the ley is sufficiently strong and yet soap cannot be made. This is generally owing to the fact, that the potash of the ley is not sufficiently caustic, or capable of corroding the skin. This lack of causticity is owing to the existence of too much carbonic acid, in the combination with the potash. To