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THE MARYLAND GAZETTE

Containing the freshest Advices Foreign and Domestic.

FRIDAY, July 5, 1745.

From the ESSAYS by the DUBLIN SOCIETY.
No. XLIV. *Containing Extracts of several Letters on the Culture and Making of FLAX.*

WE have been frequently sollicitated, while our Correspondent's Letters upon Flax-Husbandry and Flax-dressing employed the Reader, to prepare an Abstract of them. Several Gentlemen of the best Sense concurred in thinking, that the bare Directions, independently of the Arguments and Illustrations, by which they are so happily and ingeniously supported, were better fitted for the Use of the Farmer and the Manufacturer, might be disposed into more Hands, and become in a shorter Time universal Rules of Practice. They observe that many of our People are not capable of Conviction from any other Source than Example and Authority; and that to them nothing was requisite besides a clear System of plain short Rules recommended by the Example of the *Dutch*, and enforced by the Approbation and Authority of better Judges, who from a curious Perusal of the Letters, had satisfied themselves of their Expediency in a different and more regular Method.

In Compliance with so many Sollicitations, and encouraged by the Hopes of being serviceable to the meaner Sort, who ought to be the peculiar Object of our Care, because they particularly want it, we have accordingly drawn up the following Abstract of Directions, which begins as the Letters with the Culture, and ends as they do with the Dressing of the Flax.

STRONG moist and clayey Loams are the best Land for Flax; they yield great Crops, particularly of Seed, which in the present State of the Linen Manufacture of this Kingdom ought to be first considered. Light Lands afford fine Flax indeed, but in small Quantities; little Seed, and that indifferent.

WHEN Flax-Ground requires Manures, those should be preferred which throw up the least Weeds; of this Kind are, among other, Marle, Lime, and Sea-Wreck.

UPON the same Account Ley is the fittest Land for Flax, which succeeds best always on fresh Grounds, provided they are tilled sufficiently.

THESE ought to be broken up in Spring, that they may receive the Benefit of the next Summer's Fallowing, as well as that of the succeeding Winter. Three Ploughings will be requisite to bring them into proper Tilleth, and if more are bestowed upon them the Farmer won't repent his Labour.

In the second Ploughing at the Approach of Winter, the Ridges may be well thrown up high and sharp, to turn off immoderate Rains. But in that Ploughing which immediately precedes the Sowing, they must be laid as flat as possible; and much broader than for other Crops.

THE Choice of Seed is of great Importance, and the thickest, oylest and heaviest is the best; changing it from any Soil to another, keeps it from degenerating; from lighter Soils to heavier, considerably improves it; constantly sown on the same Ground, it fails in a few Years.

THE true Time for sowing is in *March*, the first good Season in that Month.

EVEN Sowing is of great Importance, and best attained when the Seedman goes up the Ridge in a strait Line, and delivers the Seed with his right Hand, and then returns in the same Path and throws it with the left.

FOUR Bushels is the full Allowance to the *Irish Acre*; if you sow much thicker, your Ground will afford you little Seed; if much thinner, your Flax will probably be coarse and stubborn.

WEEDING can be spared but seldom; few Crops are clean without it, and no Flax-Crop will be a good one, which is not at the same Time a clean one. You may weed Flax when it is two Inches high, and you may defer it without Danger 'til it is five; sitting on it will not injure it, but treading will destroy it.

By the latter End of *June*, or the Beginning of *July*, Flax sown in *March* will probably be ripe. A ripe Crop inclines to a bright Yellow; and the Seed, upon Trial, will be found firm and full, and of a lively Brown. 'Tis then Time to pull your Flax, except it be designed for the finest Kind of Yarn. In that Case it may stand a little longer, 'til the Seed of some Boles begins to shed; for the ripest Flax works always best in the *Dutch* Method, and turns out finest from the Mills.

To make your Flax, lay it by Handfals on the Ground, in little Heaps a Foot and a Half high, and turn the Heads of every Handful to the South, to receive all the Action of the Sun. In 18 or 20 Days it may be bundled for Carriage, and drawn home.

THERE it must be laid safely, and under Cover, 'tis a needless Trouble and an unnecessary Charge to stack it. The Flax-Dresser should set about it in all Haste, to prevent the Loss of the next and the best Season.

To these approved Instructions to the Farmer, we shall add the following Directions taken, each of them out of a Letter sent to this Society, by Correspondents who were pleased to conceal their Names.

As it is agreed that the lightest Loams and the thickest Crops afford the finest Flax, it may be of Use to let the Farmer know how he may save such Crops from lodging, as they generally do. The Method is a little expensive, but if it answers well, 'tis quit Cost very well. When the Flax is in the Ground, divide your Field into equal Squares, the Sides of which may be 4 or 5 Feet long, and at each Angle thrust a forked Stick near