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THE

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

Containing the freshest Advices Foreign and Domestic.

FRIDAY, July 26, 1745.

From the ESSAYS by the DUBLIN SOCIETY.
N^o. XLV. *Containing an Abstract from several Letters relating to the Dressing of FLAX.*

IN the following Directions to the Flax-Dresser, we suppose that he is properly provided with Conveniencies of every Kind, as large Ponds of standing Water, capacious Barns, stanch Granaries, good Working-Rooms, Ovens, Fining-Mills, and Instruments such as our Correspondent has described; they must otherwise have been as voluminous almost as the original Instructions, and a Transcript of them rather than an Abstract.

'Tis of Importance to the Flax-Dresser to buy his Flax betimes, directly from the Field, and early in July, that he may have sufficient Leisure to dress it before Winter.

RIPLING comes next. Two Men may work at every Instrument by fixing it on a Bench, that one may sit at either End: Let them take small Handfuds at a Time, and draw the Flax through the Ripple without Violence. Two Women are necessary to every Bench, to hand the Flax in Bundles to the Rippers, to receive it from them again, to sort it according to it's several Degrees of Length, Strength, Ripeness, Fineness, and to tie it loosely in little Sheaves.

AFTER Rippling the Seed must be carried to the Granaries, and the Flax laid down to water; if possible dispose of the whole into your Ponds together; the Summer which draws hastily towards an End is your fittest Season, and should be husbanded with Care; however let nothing tempt you to use Bog-holes or running Waters, 'tis better to be delayed 'til the next Season, than discolour or damage all your Flax.

COVER your Flax, to keep it down, with the Slutch or Mize at the Bottom of your Ponds; or 'til that be gathered in sufficient Quantities, with Clay, Rushes, Fern, or Timber. From 4 to 12 or 13 Days is the Time requisite for watering. After the 4th examine your Flax daily, and be particularly careful not to let it lie too long: 'Tis a Mistake on the safer Side to draw it off the soonest.

IN grassing, the shortest Grass should be prefer'd. Dry Sand banks do well: On either the Flax must be turned every second Day, and generally lies from a Fortnight to 3 Weeks.

To dry your Flax, heat your Oven thoroughly; then let it cool 'til a Man can stand in it without Uneasiness, fill it over Night, and your Flax will be ready for the Break next Morning. The Dirt and Straws scutch'd out of the Flax in one Day, will heat the Oven for the next.

WHEN you break your Flax, take Sheaf by Sheaf out of the Oven as you use it: It comes strip under the Engine, works

better and more easily. 'Tis an Error to lay the Flax, as we do, as far as may be from the Joint; the nearer it is placed to the Centre of Motion in the Break, the more readily it splits, and the less Damage it receives.

IN Scutching, choose the broad round Scutch, the square and narrow one, in Use among us, cuts and destroys the Flax.

By the Time the Flax is scutch'd, and about the Middle of October, it will be Time to thresh the Seed.

THIS may be done by driving Horses backwards and forwards on the Boles, or by drawing over them a heavy Rolling-Stone upon a smooth hard Floor.

CLEANING it requires more Nicety; to do it thoroughly it must first go through the Winnow, which separates it from the Boles: Through the Riddle next, to take out Straws, Stones, and larger Dirt; then successively through two different Sieves, the first bored with oval Holes to let through the Seed, and nothing else of greater Bulk; the second closer to retain the Seed, and afford a Passage to all smaller Bodies: And lastly through the Screen or Wire-Harp, which frees it from all Dust.

WHEN the Flax-Dresser has thus cleaned his Seed, he should return to his Flax, and put it through the Fining-Mills. The Wheel in these turns alternately from right to left, and from left to right, twice each Way; and according to the Number of these double Turns the Flax comes out the finer, the smoother, and the softer; fourscore such Turns is the most that any Flax requires, and probably as much as it will bear.

IN Hackling, Women and Children should be employ'd from Choice. They work with greater Gentleness than Men, and Care and Tenderness are the main Excellencies in this Business. For the best Flax four Sets of Hackles will be requisite, each of them of a different Fineness. Through these it may be drawn successively with proportionable Caution: The last whose Teeth are like the finest Needles, requires the utmost Skill, and should be trusted with few Hands.

THESE Directions, if they answer no other Purpose, will at least be an useful Index to our Correspondent's Letters. We hope indeed a farther Use from them; but were it otherwise, as they have been drawn up in Compliance with the Opinion of many Gentlemen, we shall think our Trouble well bestowed in an Attempt to oblige them.

THE following Letter will conclude this Paper properly, and we shall give it to the Reader without any Alteration of Apology.

It is but a small Mite I have to offer to your Appreciation, but I am loth it should be lost or buried without imparting, having seen the good Effects of it. It is an Invention of one Rigby, in the Service of the Right Hon. the Lord St. George.