

the water is very low, as the odour is very unpleasant; and the water thus impregnated is poisonous to fish, and contrary to law.—See Fisheries Act, cap. 62 sec. 36.

SPREADING.

Select, when possible, clean, short, pasture-ground for this operation; and mow down and remove any weeds that rise above the surface of the sward. Lay the flax evenly on the grass and spread thin and very equally. If the directions under the head of rippling have been attended to, the handfuls will come readily asunder without entangling. Turn it two or three times while on the grass (with a rod about eight feet in length, and an inch and a half in diameter), that it may not become of different shades by the unequal action of the sun, which is often the case through inattention to this point. Turn it, when there is a prospect of rain, that the flax may be beaten down a little, and thus prevented from being blown away.

LIFTING.

Six to eight days, if the weather be showery, or ten to twelve, if it be dry, should be sufficient on the grass. A good test of its being ready to lift, is to rub a few stalks from the top to the bottom; and when the wood breaks easily, and separates from the fibre, leaving it sound, it has had enough of the grass. Also, when a large proportion of the stalks are perceived to form a *bow and string*, from the fibre contracting and separating from the woody stalk. But the most certain way is to prove a small quantity with the hand-break or in a flax-mill. In lifting, keep the lengths straight and the ends even, otherwise great loss will occur in the rolling and scutching. Let it be set up to dry for a few hours, and afterwards tie it up in small bundles; and, if not taken soon to be scutched, it will be much improved by being put up in small stacks, loosely built, with stones or brambles in the bottom to keep it dry and allow a free circulation of air. Stacks built on pillars would be the best.

DRYING,

By fire, *is always most pernicious*. If properly steeped and grassed, no such drying is necessary; but to make it ready for breaking and scutching, exposure to the sun is sufficient. In some districts it is put to dry *on kilns* in a damp state, and is absolutely burned before it is dry; and the rich oily appearance of the flax is always greatly impaired.

BREAKING AND SCUTCHING.

If done by hand, should be on the Belgian system, which is less wasteful than that practised in Ireland. If by milling, the farmer will do well to select those mills in which the improved machinery has been introduced.

THE COURTRAI SYSTEM.

This mode of preparation requires to be very carefully executed, as inattention will reduce the value of the straw, and yield inferior fibre. When made up for drying in large sheaves, the straw is much injured, the outside stalks being much discolored by the heat of the sun before the inside of the sheaf is dry. The flax-stems should be put together in bunches, about one-half larger than a man can grasp in one hand, spread a little, and laid on the ground in rows after each puller; the bunches laid with tops and roots alternately, which prevents the seed-bolls from sticking to each other in lifting. It