"The seed-vessels or capsules are of a globular form, with the top surface slightly drawn up to a point. On opening them, from six to ten, (more commonly the latter number) cellular divisions are seen, each occupied by a seed, which at first is a colourless integument, envel oping a watery mucilaginous matter. On examination in a day or two, it will be found to have assumed a more solid consistence, and the seed to have changed to a pale green colour. This the first point to be noticed, and not a day should now pass without observing the changes that take place, as these changes form the criteria by which the period of harvesting the crop should be regulated."

In Belgium, where flax culture has long been practised with distinguished success, the mode of proceeding may be briefly stated as follows:—A full-grown plant is selected, and the best matured and ripest capsule is taken. This is cut across with a sharp knife, and the section of the seeds examined. If they have become firm inside, and the outside has assumed a good deep green colour, the plant is considered fit for immediate pulling. At this time the entire plant will exhibit signs of its approaching maturity, —the bottom of the stalk will be seen to have assumed a yellowish tint, and have become much harder to the touch than it was before, good indications of an interruption to the circulation of the juices of the plant. If this altered condition be allowed to go on by the plant remaining in the ground, the change of colour will rapidly make its way up the stem until it reaches the capsules, and then the seeds will be found to be fully matured, quite hard, and to have assumed the dark colour with which we are so familiar in the market samples. The next stage of the plant, wold be the bursting of the seed vessels and disjection of their contents, and the decay of the entire plant; but to preserve both seed and fibre, the plant should be harvested at the earlier stage, at which time the fibre is at its best condition. If left until the seeds are quite matured, the stems get hard and woody, and the fibre is apt to get much broken in the subsequent process of separation. Long experience has proved that this is the most profitable time to pull the flax; for although the seeds at that time are not fully ripe, yet if allowed to remain in the sheaf, they will absorb from their integument a quantity of sap to render them sufficiently mature for the purpose of vegetation, though perhaps for commercial purposes their market value may not be so high as if allowed to stand a little longer in the field.

In order to get the greatest length of fibre, which is a matter of great importance, flax, unlike all other cereal crops, is pulled up by the roots; an operation performed by hand, and unless the operator is accustomed to the work, it becomes tedious and expensive. "The flax is pulled, each hand singly grasping a small handful carefully by the neck, just below the seed vessels, and drawing it up out of the soil, and laying it in rows across the other. These are allowed to remain lying open on the ground for a certain time, generally one or two days; they are then collected together, and bound into small-sized sheaves or bundles, care being taken that the band shall be placed just under the seed-heads of the plant, and the bottoms or butts left unconfined and open. If the crop has been irregular in its growth, and the stems are of unequal lengths, it is desirable, as far as it can be managed, to pull them in different bundles, according to their length, as both in steeping and scutching much fibre is otherwise lost. It is also desirable, in binding them, that the butts should be gently pressed on the ground, in order to regulate the length of the different stems. After the sheaves, or "bundles," as they are termed, are bound, they are arranged in small stooks, usually of four, five, or six each, placed in a circle, the butts being well spread out, so as to admit the air freely to their centres,—the weather, and the condition of the crop when pulled, of course regulating the period they have to remain on the field."

We have heard of a machine worked by horse power, for pulling flax, in the western States, but no information as to its efficiency has come to our knowledge. In the case of level land and the surface left rolled down after the seed, a good careful mower, with a scythe suitably equipped, might cut the flax close to the ground so as to leave but little fibre behind. The cost of hand pulling is considerable, even in Europe, varying from 15s. to 25s., sterling, per acre, and in this country the cost will be high, particularly where people are unaccustomed to the work. A more expeditious and cheap