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An Extract
Of a Letter, Written from Holland, about Preserving of
Ships from being Worm-eaten.

This *Extract* is borrowed from the *French Journal des Sçavans* of Febr. 15. 1666. and is here inserted, to excite Inventive heads here, to overtake the Proposer in *Holland*. The letter runs thus:

Although you have visited our Port (*Amsterdam*) I know not whether you have noted the ill condition, our ships are in, that return from the *Indies*. There is in those Seas a kind of small worms, that fasten themselves to the Timber of the ships, and so pierce them, that they take water every where; or if they do not altogether pierce them thorow, they so weaken the wood, that it is almost impossible to repair them. We have at present a Man here, that pretends to have found an admirable secret to remedy this evil. That, which would render this secret the more important, is, that hitherto very many ways have been used to effect it, but without success. Some have employed Deal, Hair and Lime, &c. and therewith lined their ships; but, besides that this does not altogether affright the worms, it retards much the ships Course. The *Portugals* scorch their ships, insomuch that in the quick works there is made a coaly crust of about an *Inc*h thick. But as this is dangerous, it happening not seldom, that the whole vessel is burnt so the reason why worms eat not thorow *Portugal* ships, is conceived to be the exceeding hardness of the Timber, employed by them.

We expect with impatience the nature and effect of this Proposition. Many have already ventur'd to give their thoughts concerning it. Some say, there needs no more, but to build Slups of a harder kind of Wood, than the usual. Others having observed, that these Worms fasten not to a kind of wild *American* Pear-tree, which is highly bitter, do thereupon suggest,

gest, that the best Expedient would be, to find out a Wood having that quality. But certainly there being now no Timber, fit for Ships, that is not known, 'tis not likely that any will be found either more hard, or more bitter, than that, which has been hitherto employed. Some do imagine, that the Proposer will, by certain *Lixiviums*, give to the ordinary Wood such a quality and bitternefs, as is found in the already mention'd *Indian Pear-tree*. But this also will hardly succeed, since it will be requisite not only to make *Lixiviums*, in great quantities at an easie rate, and strong enough to penetrate the thick sides of a Ship, but also to make them durable enough, not to be wash't out by the Sea. Yet notwithstanding, in these matters one ought to suspend on's judgement, untill experience do shew, what is to be believed of them.

So far the Extract. To which it may perhaps not be unseasonable to add, that a very worthy person in *London*, suggests the Pitch, drawn out of Sea coles, for a good Remedy to scare away these noysome insects.

An Account

Of a Book, very lately publish't, entituled, The Origine of Forms and Qualiitiës, illustrated by Considerations and Experiments, by the Honourable Robert Boyle.

This Curious and Excellent Piece, is a kind of *Introduction* to the *Principles* of the *Mechanical Philosophy*, explicating, by very Considerable Observations and Experiments, what may be, according to such Principles, conceived of the *Nature and Origine of Qualities and Forms*; the knowledge whereof, either makes or supposes the Fundamental and Useful part of *Natural Philosophy*. In doing of which, the Author, to have his way the clearer, writes rather for the *Corpuscularian* Philosophers (as he is pleas'd to call them) in *General*; than any
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