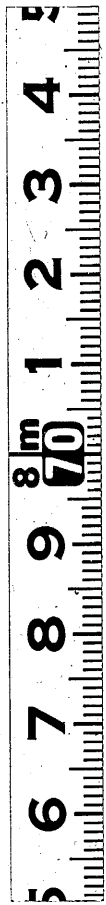


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CURSORY REMARKS
ON THE
IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE
IN ITS CONNECTION WITH
MANUFACTURES AND COMMERCE,
ADAPTED TO THE PRESENT SITUATION OF
G R E A T B R I T A I N.

By WILLIAM LAMPORT,
HONORARY MEMBER OF THE BATH AGRICULTURAL
SOCIETY, AND AUTHOR OF APPENDIX, No. I. TO
LETTERS AND PAPERS LATELY PUB-
LISHED BY THAT SOCIETY.

*Ab aratro arcesserant qui Consules fierent; suos enim agros studiose
colebant, non alienos cupide appetebant: quibus rebus, et agris et ur-
bibus et nationibus, rempublicam atque hoc imperium et populi Ro-
mani nomen auxerunt.*

CICERO.

L O N D O N :
PRINTED FOR J. BUCKLAND, PATER-NOSTER-ROW ;
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M, DCC, LXXXIV.

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P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following remarks writes not for fame: he wishes to have it considered, that they are offered to the notice of a candid public with the view of being, in some degree, serviceable to his country in its present situation: he imagines that no time is to be lost in putting into execution whatever may be thought conducive to so good a purpose.

On this account they are styled *Cursor*; and, indeed, it was never his intention to enter minutely into the subject of political œconomy; there is no need of it: it has been done in the most copious and masterly manner already;

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may, so copiously that, for this reason, ~~some of the authors have not been read,~~ except by very few: his design, therefore, was to bring one (and that the principal part of it into as short a view as possible, for the notice of the various classes of Britons who may consider themselves interested in the welfare of their country, and may be disposed to peruse so small a work.

Whatever deficiencies, therefore, may be found in it, for want of public records and the authors above referred to, which were not at hand; yet, he hopes, that the *speculative* remarks are founded on just principles, and presumes to assert, that those of a *practical* nature are derived either from past experience of his own, or from close observation on the transactions of others; and that they are or may be realized by practice in every part of the kingdom.

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With regard to the authors he has had an opportunity of perusing, he has generally referred to the places from whence their remarks were taken.

For the digressions of a *moral* nature, which are interspersed, he makes no apology; because they need none.

HONITON, Jan. 1st. 1784.

(By the same Author.)

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CURSORY REMARKS, &c.

NO Briton can look with an indifferent eye on the change which has taken place in his country: he cannot avoid turning his view towards the probable consequences of such an alteration: he must enquire, with some degree of anxious concern, how far it may effect the welfare of the empire.

The subject which will first occur to his thoughts, and gain his principal attention, is the *burden* both of accumulated taxes and the national debt. To prevent his mind from defining,

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pair, he will enquire, How is it to be borne? In what manner can it be alleviated? What resources have we? The answer will be—Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce.

Let us consider in what manner they operate in themselves, and may be made to co-operate to the best advantage.

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S E C T I O N I.

General Principles.

AGRICULTURE claims our first notice from its seniority, and from another much more weighty reason, the pre-eminence it has above the other two: they derived their existence from it, and cannot long subsist without it.

The territory which any nation possesses, is the original property, fund, or capital stock, from whence it is supplied with the necessaries of life: and since by means of industry and skill, the productions of such a territory * as Great Britain may be made capable of providing an overplus beyond the immediate wants of the nation; that overplus becomes a *new* capital, which may be employed in

B 2 trade,

* These, and most of the following general remarks, equally apply to the productions of the fisheries on our seas.

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trade, and answer the demands of foreign countries; in other words, the kingdom becomes possessor of property received from other nations in exchange for what it does not immediately stand in need of. Hence the origin of COMMERCE.

But as the wants of men increase in consequence of civilization, the conveniences of life must be sought after: the materials of these are likewise to be derived from the earth, and they must be fitted to answer their end by the powers of the mind and the labour of the hands. Hence what is styled MANUFACTURES.

If a greater quantity of these can be procured than are necessary for home consumption, the surplus may become a *further additional* capital, and provide new articles of commerce; which will add their quota likewise to the general stock of wealth.

Agriculture is therefore the foundation, the *vis motrix* of the other two; while it is, when duly encouraged, a most advantageous article of manufacture and commerce in itself: and although the
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latter of these may be disposed to attribute its principal vigour, and acknowledge its most grateful obligations to manufactures, yet it should never be forgotten, that husbandry is the parent and support of both. Nay, in proportion as these are found to be on a decline, the evil, unless it can be remedied by increasing the productions of our lands, must eventually fall and fix itself on them at last; these being the basis either of national prosperity if regarded, or national calamity if neglected.

Since the earth must bear the burden, it is a pleasing circumstance of reflection, that of all other funds it is the most capable of doing it, either in the maturity or apparent decline as well as the infancy of a state. The arts and manœuvres of individuals and communities, both at home and abroad, may cause a continual fluctuation in the value of commodities exported or imported; which may occasion a rise and fall in the value of lands; the commotions of war may drain a kingdom of its secondary property arising immediately from manufactures and commerce,
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but originally from the ground ; and with regard to trade, it resembles reputation ; so much credit so much power ; but if once lost it is difficult to be regained : while the earth is always the same ; its powers of reproduction regularly return with returning seasons, always possess a certain value, because they are always necessary, and increase in proportion to the industry and skill applied to it. We possess in our lands a *fixed* fund, to which, when we are *absolutely obliged* to it, we can have recourse, and from which we can at all times draw to an amount sufficient for the revival of a drooping trade ; provided a constant respect be paid to our munificent parent.

A prudent government will, therefore, so regulate commerce as not to check or retard the operations of husbandry : for, if agriculture be on the decline, if it do not even keep pace with manufactures and commerce, they will shortly fall into decline, and suffer with it ; and the kingdom must inevitably be impoverished. A truly

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truly oeconomic legislature will also take care that the territory it possesses be improved to the utmost, in order to increase the materials from whence manufactures and commerce may continue to operate for the permanent as well as temporary benefit of the whole community.

Survey the surface of our lands ; it is from hence we procure timber, cordage, and sails for our navy ; flax and wool, hides and tallow, madder and other dye-stuffs *, all of them articles of trade for home consumption and foreign markets : employment is hereby found for a considerable part of our very valuable labourers and artificers. Penetrate into the interior part of the earth ; and we find in most places, either limestone, marble, or other nutritive substances for invigorating its surface and rendering it constantly prolific. It is likewise from the bowels of the earth that we raise copper, lead, tin, iron, &c. and coals for carrying on the

* The reasons why the well-known productions of our lands are here particularized, will appear occasionally.

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the hardware manufacture; and thus find employment for another part of the community equally valuable. But the remark, which of all others requires our closest attention, is as follows: *It is by cultivating the surface and raising as large a store of provisions as possible, that we enable our labourers, manufacturers, and artists to live comfortably on the allowed price of their labour; and thus proceed with spirit in their respective occupations, that commerce may extend its sails to the greatest distance, and foreign nations be prevented from underselling us.*

As long as it shall continue a maxim in political œconomy, that the most substantial wealth of a nation must arise from exporting articles of its own produce; so long ought we to strive with vigour that our lands may, if possible, furnish an overplus in every article of necessity and convenience, and that we export each of them, after we have exerted all the labour they stand in need of previous to their consumption: but not to export any thing in its raw state, if it
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can be avoided. Let us likewise import in their raw state, and that only, if we can, all the articles we really want, and cannot produce ourselves. We shall then find the balance to be constantly in our favour, and our manufactures continually in a thriving state; especially those for which there is the most regular demand at foreign markets: provided the productions of the soil are made to increase in proportion to the thriving state of our manufactures, the number of persons employed in them, and the general demands of the kingdom at large. But so far as any neglect in this particular shall be permitted to prevail through the kingdom, or in any part of it; the vigour of the manufactures will decline, other nations undersell us, and we lose our foreign markets, especially those at a distance.

To preserve a market, the articles of trade must be of a good quality, be well wrought up, and be moderate in their price. They cannot long possess the *first* of these properties, if the materials of
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which they are composed be not procured at a reasonable rate ; nor the *second*, if the price of labour do not increase according to the price of provisions ; and if this circumstance take place, it will entirely destroy the *third* good property : for a great part at least of the additional price of labour must be charged by the manufacturer to the merchant, who will be obliged to enhance the price of his purchased commodities on the consumer : and then——farewell to the market. The price will likewise be enhanced if timber, cordage, &c. for building ships of burden, become dear ; which must ever be the case, when agriculture and planting are not closely attended to.

If, on the other hand, the manufacturer be determined to dispose of his goods to the merchant at a moderate price, either they must be of an inferior quality, and not have so much labour bestowed on them, or he must keep down the wages of the labouring poor, however dear the necessaries of life may be, thro' the weight of our taxes and other circumstances.

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stances. If he acts in the former line of conduct, the fatal effects of such a procedure in promoting a decline of foreign trade, will be the same as that arising from an advance of price : if, in the latter, the poor will emigrate, and not only subtract from the national wealth, but enrich other countries by their arts and industry ; or they will riot, or become a most heavy burden on landed property ; while the manufactures will be so impeded as not to be duly and seasonably prepared for finding their way to any proper market. Yet, in the mean time, taxes must continue, that the springs of government may be kept in motion ; although there must necessarily be a decrease in the value of lands and the rental of them, towards the payment of the taxes : foreign markets, where heretofore we had free access, we shall not be able to command ; and——‘ let our enemies tell the rest with pleasure.’

The grand preventative of these evils seems to be this : let government interest itself in encouraging, by all possible means,

means, the improving our lands of every description: this will incline the nobility and gentlemen of landed property to imitate so laudable an example: for, 'what-ever receives most encouragement from 'the state, is sure most to prosper;' and agriculture, of all other modes of wealth, seems, in its own nature, to stand in most need of encouragement from the state: its rewards, though equally sure and always more permanent, are nevertheless more out of sight, do not appear to flow in so rapid or so large a current as those arising from commerce. However, it may be remarked here, that the body politick of England resembles one of its oaks, the strength and glory of our nation; agriculture may be compared to the root from whence the trunk receives its nourishment; manufactures and commerce are its spreading branches: in proportion as the root increases, though in a concealed manner, in the earth, will be the strength and stability of the tree, and the flourishing state of its branches, which will extend themselves from sea to sea, and *from the rivers unto the ends of the earth;*

earth; according to the bold and beautiful metaphor chosen by the inspired eastern poet to illustrate the power and prosperity of the Jewish nation.

From the warm encouragement which ought to be given by the legislature to spirited undertakings in husbandry, we may hope not only to confirm the remark made by foreigners, that "it is a right attention to agriculture which gave rise to the greatness, riches, and power of England *;" but to add to it, by observing, that it tends equally to preserve that greatness, and restore it when on a decline, through a concurrence of untoward accidents. By no means, therefore, must we suffer any *foreign* nation to gain the start of us, or to rival us in agriculture: if we do, their manufactures will increase so as to raise them above the want of many articles they now purchase, if not to enable them to meet our manufactures on equal, perhaps, better terms,
at

* Harte's Essays, p. 47.

at those markets where we have hitherto enjoyed an almost exclusive privilege †.

The above appear to be general principles in the political œconomy of such a commercial nation as this ; and to apply equally to the fisheries on our sea coasts. That they tend to operate, as hath been asserted in this section, will, perhaps, appear more fully from a few historical facts; if so, no one will hesitate in granting that they call loudly for the attention of Great Britain, in its present situation.

† That this does not respect Ireland, see p. 25.

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S E C T I O N II.

Facts relating to the influence of Agriculture on Trade and Commerce.

THAT a spirited husbandry will sustain any shocks less than those of an earthquake, hurricane, or deluge, is evident from the great excellence of the Flemings in the management of their lands: “ We learn from history, that these provinces were cultivated in a manner much superior to the rest of Europe, so early as their being first considerable for their woollen manufactures, which is between six and seven hundred years ago, ever since, the Flander husbandry has been proverbial; and it is now as famous as when the rest of Europe was almost covered with marshes and sandy deserts: this great excellency of their management has stood all the attacks of the violent civil wars in the reign of Philip the Second, it being the common theatre of most

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most of the wars in Europe, from the Duke of Parma's time in 1580, &c. to 1748.—*Their trade and manufactures both fled, but the industry of their peasants never failed* *.

The Dutch, finding themselves imprisoned within the boundaries of between seven and eight millions of acres †, and that their territory could produce but little for their support, were, like other prisoners at large, under the necessity of accepting such a supply as chance and their particular circumstances threw in their way. What their *land* could not do for them, though they made it perform as much almost as possible, they sought from their *seas*; yes, and ours likewise! which proved in the event a most excellent substitute. Their fisheries were to them what our lands were to us, the grand basis of rising prosperity: the overplus of the inexhaustible stores of the ocean were given by them in exchange for the productions of other countries: they

* Marshall's Travels, Vol. 2. p. 65, 66.

† Great Britain contains about seventy-two millions, and Ireland about twenty-five.

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they were the original, the necessary, and indeed the most expeditious causes of their becoming maritime states and a commercial people. In proportion to their industry they increase in wealth, which flowed in with an amazing rapidity.

The growing greatness of the United States was beheld with the eye of envy or emulation by neighbouring kingdoms. What Holland did by commerce, thro' necessity at first, was eagerly pursued by others in circumstances very different from hers. England and France spread their sails in order to participate with the Dutch in the large mass of wealth, which was supposed to be the more valuable because it was at a great distance; and both of them did it to the neglect of their agriculture. The eyes of government, in each kingdom, were dazzled by the brightness of the distant prospect: every one was to turn manufacturer, artist, or merchant; not duly considering that the people were to eat as well as work, 'till they found that they could eat, though

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they idolatrously worshipped, the works of their own hands, and “*bowed down to the golden calf which they had set up.*”

When Colbert was steering the helm of state, the powers of his mind were extended in giving, not a regulated, but a free and unlicensed scope to the *operation* of manufactures: he saw, in imagination, the future grandeur and dominion of his country; he animated the merchants and tradesmen throughout the kingdom with his own spirit: every thing flourished for a while equal to his wishes, and in some respects beyond his sanguine expectations: when lo! in the midst of that elastic sprightliness so characteristic of his nation, the Frenchman sends for the principal merchants in Paris, gayly enquires of them in what manner he could farther assist them in promoting their interest, and receives from one of the oldest of them this chilling answer, “*Laissez vous faire.*” The statesman, strong as were his abilities, had not foreseen how far the *operations* of trade and com-

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commerce might extend, nor in what manner the ship was to proceed when all its fails were crowded, and there was not sufficient ballast to keep it steady; in other words, when the first born child of the state “*was disinherited* in order to “*adopt trade.*” Experience, however, soon taught the merchants that peasants were wanting to provide food for the artists at the cheapest rate; but this could not be done by importation from other countries, but by raising it in their own.

From beholding the external prosperity of the Dutch, and the supposed necessary causes of it, their deeply laden merchantmen; and from the glittering appearance of a Spanish galleon, my much respected ancestors became so infected with the contagion of the *auri sacra fames*, that “*they had all the dispositions in the world*” to consider their lands as of little value in this comparative view: and, if the ministers of Charles the Second, with the assistance of some few of deeply penetrating insight into the real welfare

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of the kingdom, had not interested themselves in stopping the progress of the fever which was spreading almost universally; had they not enacted the most salutary laws for the encouragement of tillage; and had not Evelyn in particular, by his "Terra, or Philosophical Discourse on Earth," and his "Treatise on Forest Trees*," preserved numbers from the infection, or recovered them in the infancy of its attack; it is impossible to conceive what ravages it might have made on the health and strength of the political constitution of England.

But notwithstanding the good effects of their efforts, and the happy consequences of their agrarian laws, yet several millions of acres once under tillage, were, for the reason already mentioned, suffered to return to their original state: nay, some of them continue so to this day, although it is well known now, and pro-

* A most elegant edition of this work has been lately published by Dr. Hunter, of York.

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probably was not unknown then, that the *heaviest* wheat is raised in the driest and highest countries*. This is mentioned in order to assign the chief reason why many hills, downs, and moors, once under tillage, are now a meer waste; and to obliterate the mistaken notion that these lands did not pay the expence *then*, and consequently will not *now*: they ever did compensate, till we heard of Mexico, Peru, &c. and of the methods of gaining an abundance on a sudden by trade and commerce. However, it does not break my heart to reflect, that, in our present circumstances, we have so much waste ground remaining, because hereby we have more internal resources than we might have thought of.

The avidity of gain is very apt to gain firm hold of the human heart, and thereby to blind the judgment of the wisest men so far, as sometimes to prevent them from profiting by the experience of past ages, and looking forward into the probable

* Young's Tour to Ireland, vol. 2. p. 274.

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bable effects of present plans on the future welfare of the kingdom. Witness the injurious system lately adopted in Ireland, through the unlimited encouragement given to the linen manufacture. Never did a legislature more fully prove in political discussions, what Horace had observed to be true in most concerns of human life ;

Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines
Quos ultra citraque, nequit consistere rectum.

For, among other causes justly alledged by a very able investigator into the consequences of political transactions, is mentioned, " the mode of conducting the
" linen manufacture, which, by spreading over all the north, has annihilated
" agriculture throughout a fourth part
" of the kingdom, and taken from a
" great and flourishing manufacture the
" usual effect of being an encouragement
" to every branch of husbandry *." And, because promoting that manufacture in such an impolitic method was not sufficient in itself to retard the prosperity of the

* Tour to Ireland, vol. 2. p. 370.

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the kingdom, there must needs take place certain prohibitory laws against emigration : provisions became dear, the *Roman Catholick* husbandmen had but little employment, and none must emigrate ; some of them rioted. The *Protestant* manufacturers also supposed that starving in the midst of full employment would be rather disagreeable, and that the necessaries of life ought to be ready for them to purchase at a moderate price, as soon as they received their wages : but this was not to be effected ; because a great part of the provisions were to be brought from distant parts of the kingdom : some of these also clamoured and rioted. Had agriculture been promoted, if part of the national bounty had been granted to improvements in it, which were appropriated solely to the linen manufacture ; both would have flourished, the latter to an extent far surpassing what it has ever effected : emigration and riots would have been the last things seriously thought of.

Every government, therefore, will proceed on sure grounds, when it animates huf-

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husbandry to the utmost possible exertions. Manufactures will make their own way ; sometimes with too much spirit at first, if the legislature should suffer them to prevail over their foster parent ; or, rather, if it do not give to husbandry a vigour equal to that which the trading part of mankind are ever ready to bestow on their favourite object. When neither scale preponderates, then only can we hope to receive a chearful welcome at former markets, and gain access to new ones.

If this short view of past transactions require any assistance for answering the purpose of this essay, the following quotation should be attended to.

“ Some of our markets are lost, others
 “ are rendered difficult of access ; Ire-
 “ land, without a proportionate load of
 “ national debt, will meet our manu-
 “ facturers of wool at home and at fo-
 “ reign markets : and every one who is
 “ accustomed to commercial questions,
 “ knows that one third, at least, of the
 “ value of every piece of goods finished
 “ in this nation arises from taxes ; per-
 “ haps

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“ haps considerably more. This is the
 “ weight that our manufactures of all
 “ kinds have long existed under. It
 “ operates as so much duty on the ex-
 “ portation of them.”

On this quotation two remarks may be made.

I. Out of regard to my native country, I should rejoice to see the time when Ireland shall effect what is above asserted, being fully convinced that when the two kingdoms become competitors in manufactures, *conducted on the general principles already laid down*, they will be united together by ties of the strongest obligation and amity, will be mutual assistants in the support of their most essential interests, and raise both the kingdoms above the power of our enemies to injure either of us. Different *countries* rivaling one another in trade is always productive of general benefit to the community : it excites industry, invention, and skill, and keeps a market open. The effect will be the same in larger societies, when under the same government, and enjoying the
 E same

same advantages. The continual emulation of the United States of Holland is the source of their common emolument.

II. Among the various methods of lowering the price of labour mentioned by this very ingenious writer, there is one which, perhaps, * he has not mentioned, namely, increasing the productions of the earth, which, it may possibly appear as we proceed, may be effected one fifth part more than hath hitherto been done : this, if thrown into the favourable scale for the more easy subsistence of the manufacturers, would reduce the burden or duty of one third now laid by taxes on every piece of finished goods to about one tenth duty or burden ; so that every yard, &c. which cannot now be exported for less than two shillings and eight-pence, (instead of two shillings, if there were no taxes,) may then be sold at foreign markets under two shillings and two-pence

* I have seen only an extract from the pamphlet in the Monthly Review,

pence halfpenny; or twenty per cent. cheaper, if necessary. If this be not of national importance I know not what is : and I rather mention this method of lowering the price of labour, because all other modes of doing it to any considerable advantage by the invention of machines, &c. for expediting the work, seem to have been carried nearly as far as possible.

From the above recital of facts, it appears, that the legislature has ever been in some danger of falling into an injurious deficiency of conduct with regard to the true spirit of husbandry. How far the subject is interesting to us in our present situation, may be seen in

S E C T I O N III.

Present State of Great Britain.—Inquiries recommended.

SINCE the last mentioned author wrote his pamphlet on the plan of shortening the price of labour, the national

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tional debt, which has been long operating as a slow fever, is so increased as to discover symptoms of malignancy: taxes have accumulated, to make one suspect a complication of disorders; all of them rendering the case the more dangerous: but heaven forbid that we should any of us, resemble a nurse grown callous by custom and constant attendance on patients seized with the small-pox of the *confluent kind*; who looks with indifference on the *millions and millions* of eruptions discovering themselves on the surface of the body, and reflects within herself, that "since there are so many already, and it cannot be helped, a few *millions* more will not make any great difference:" neither should our regard for our country suffer us to fall into despair; and, like dutiful and affectionate children, lament, in silence, over our much respected parent's dissolution, hurrying ourselves into a conviction that it must shortly be inevitable. Would it not be more advisable to apply unto the most skilful and humane among our state physicians, those who, content with fees

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fees proportionable to the circumstances of the patient, would readily, and with a proper feeling, consult on the case, search for and prescribe the most salutary medicines in the *materia medica*, which may enable the sufferer to struggle with the disorder, may give it a favourable turn, bring the almost innumerable eruptions to a proper crisis, and in due time restore the patient, if possible, to her wonted health and strength? An *hæmorrhage* in any stage, and especially in the height of such a disorder, is confessedly a bad symptom. However, we are not to despair; something must be attempted, and that immediately. One of the most established remedies is that, which, with all deference, is recommended in this essay.

Since it has happened in the course of human events, that this nation does not possess so large an extent of territory as it lately did, ought it not to be among the *first* of our enquiries, whether the lands which it still possesses cannot be rendered more fertile, and capable of supplying the

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the inhabitants of every description, particularly husbandmen and manufacturers, with sufficient food and employment; and lend their aid towards paying the taxes, and lessening the load of the national debt?

We have seen the grand causes by which Holland arose so speedily to become a maritime, commercial, and powerful people. Imagine the scene changed in that country; and let us make this supposition: if Holland, from a too eager desire after the wealth of distant countries, should remit in its strict attention to the produce of her fisheries; or, if by any unlucky event, she should lose any considerable part of them; what, according to every principle of common prudence, would be her wisest course? Certainly to apply with double diligence, in order to obtain the greatest possible produce from those she is still in possession of: or, should she find her taxes severely burdensome, and her national debt increasing through luxury and a love of pleasure, would she act wisely in looking
above,

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above, even the most inferior part of that source from whence she first derived her national importance; because it may now appear too mean and laborious an employment, and because its profits may not appear to come in with a rapidity equal to that eagerness for large gains, which is always the concomitant of former opulence, luxury, and grandeur? If this supposed instance be applied to Great Britain, it may not, in any eminent degree, be to her credit.

The *inquiry* proposed in this section, adverts to most of the productions of our own soil; particularly oak, hemp, madder, and grain; and will be attended with circumstances of pain and pleasure; of *pain*, while we are looking into their present state; of *pleasure*, by looking forward to the advances which may be made in them, by future prudence and industry.

Oak and Hemp.

Although these articles of English growth are equal, if not superior to any
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in the world, yet a provident care has not been taken for their increase, according to that increase of our navy which hath regularly taken place ever since we became a maritime power, and which, in all probability, must be increased in nearly a duplicate ratio to what it ever did in any equally given period of time before; if we would expect to preserve that determined superiority so long envied us, or even support our independence. It greatly grieves one to think that we must pay Russia some hundreds of thousands annually for *hemp*, and so needlessly rely on the precarious tenure of a treaty with that rising and aspiring empire, when we ought not to have had the least occasion, of applying to any people for an article so necessary to us, and so easily to be cultivated: for a considerable part of our waste lands are well adapted to the growth of *hemp*, which stands but in little need of the stercoreary, and would gladly give the preference to good tillage.

Here, therefore, let it be particularly noticed, that if it were once the best of policy

policy to encourage for our use in the American colonies, the growth of all the commodities we import from Russia; how much more necessary is it for us to encourage the growth of them in our own country? It would be madness now to omit it any longer, even though government was to be at some considerable expence at first in promoting the important work. The expediture would not go out of England as it now does to purchase hemp of Russia; but would find subsistence for many of our poor; and “ a trading nation should never regret parting with its money” (especially at home) “ when she thereby adds to her industry*.” “ In fact it is only lending money at the best interest with a certainty of payment, or rather placing it in the best of funds, the LAND of England.

This subject, therefore, earnestly solicits the support of the state to give it a proper vigour, for I am informed that the candidates for the liberal premiums of-

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* Marshall's Travels, vol. 2. p. 114.

ferred by the Honourable Society of Arts, Manufactures, &c. to encourage the growth of hemp, have been very few, or next to none*.

Madder.

WHEN our woollen and linen manufactures are in a flourishing state, the Dutch call on us for upwards of two hundred thousand pounds per annum †, for the sale of this root cultivated and prepared in their small territory; a root once the common produce of England when we possessed their patience of industry, and for which we could find ample room, if our waste lands were restored to corn, or improved by natural or artificial grasses.

It is particularly necessary to extend our inquiries to

Grain.

* For the reasons of the little effect of premiums, see my Appendix Passim, particularly p. 23, to p. 29.

† Complete English Farmer, p. 408.

Grain.

ON a just calculation † of the produce for nine years together, it appears, that although the exports of this kingdom at large, have usually more or less exceeded our imports; yet, with regard to *corn*, our exports have fallen short of the imports to the following disagreeable amount.

Total and average of grain exported and imported from the year 1770 to 1779 inclusive.

	<i>Quarters.</i>		<i>Quarters.</i>
Imported	4,953,627	} Average,	550,403
Exported	1,913,373		212,597
	3,040,254		337,806

In proportion of more than two quarters and an half imported for every quarter exported.

The average price of grain in general during that period, was one pound nine shillings per quarter.

† Made from the Custom-house register by order of the House of Commons.

The following are the average sums we paid for corn imported annually, and received for corn exported, after deducting the duties received on the former, and the bounties and drawbacks paid on the latter.

	l.	s.	d.
Paid annually for corn imported	790,249	4	2 $\frac{3}{4}$
Received ————— exported	252,011	7	0

Average balance against us, 538,237 17 2 $\frac{3}{4}$

It may also be observed, that when the average price of corn in England was one pound nine shillings, we paid for the difference of the imports above the exports, nearly one pound twelve shillings per quarter. With regard to wheat, the imports were two thirds more than the exports, and as to oats upwards of nine times as much.

From whatever cause or combination of causes, this generally unsuspected difference may have arisen, nay, although the chief of them might not have been unavoidable, they will not be scrutinized here. The task would be more disagreeable

able than difficult; and it will be more to the purpose to observe, that if our lands had been encouraged to produce such a quantity of corn as to have rendered the exports equal to the imports, there would have been a saving to the kingdom of more than half a million annually.

Let it be sufficient to give one caution; since the difference in our disfavour did not arise so much from bad seasons as from the intemperature of the political atmosphere, trust no longer to the appearances of good conduct, or of plenty, displaying itself in *large mansions, capital cities, and a few trading towns*; nor trifle any longer with those real resources with which bountiful nature has blessed our highly distinguished island. The Roman politician, quoted in the title page, a man of the most enlarged mind, judged of the power of the empire from much more extensive views: he formed his idea of the power of the state from the appearance of prosperity among the farms, villages, and distant districts; *et agris et urbibus et nationibus*: he laid the foundation of the Roman grand-

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grandeur in the cultivation of the lands. A kingdom may not feel any ill effects from the prodigality of a few private individuals; it may withstand for a considerable time, the more baneful influence of such a conduct, when found in higher ranks, and among persons of a more public character: but it cannot long withstand the depredations of a prodigal ministry, lavish of the public money, and let alone to ring their changes on our internal resources, till the strength of the kingdom is so far exhausted that they can no more operate to any good effect than the best restoratives on a person in the last stage of a consumption.

No less could be said by any one who carefully considers the present state of Great Britain, as to its finances, &c. &c. and it cannot at any time be unseasonable to bring the good people of Great Britain to a sedate inquiry into their real situation, or to point out where their danger and their security lie, and what are the most likely methods of recalling us into
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the path which leads to the restoration of national strength and prosperity.

From the imaginary wants which our national manners are continually creating, every person, employed in supplying them for those who suppose themselves unhappy unless they are indulged, will be sufficiently disposed to advance in his demands, in consequence of his procuring whatever is fancied to be essentially requisite to human felicity. Hence it is that the wages of the artist are from double to five times as much as those of the husbandman; which is one reason why such numbers are continually deserting the villages of their fore-fathers and flocking into towns: the parents, likewise, whether day labourers or small farmers, by frequenting market-towns much more than usual, have gained some idea that a better education might prove advantageous to their children; and, with this idea, having united a shrewd suspicion that greater profits are to be derived from trade than their own profession, look with rather an invidious eye on the more showy

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showy appearance of town's-people ; and bring up their children to any other employment than that of husbandry : a circumstance which I am sorry to say is every day increasing, at least in this part of the kingdom. Some remedy for this is at hand.

Those boys who become in their infancy a parish charge, should be brought up to works of husbandry : they begin to be useful in this business as early as in any other : inured in their youth to cold, heat and hard labour, they grow up to be some of the most useful members of society. To see a young, well-made fellow, or rather one who might have been well made, in a loom where a woman will generally earn as much, what a sight, what a perversion of masculine strength ! women can bear confinement and a domestic life much better than men : not to mention that however numerous the families of husbandmen may be, their manners, the nature of their employment, their habitudes, in short every circumstance relative to them, prevent them,

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generally speaking, from becoming so soon or so heavy a charge on the parish as manufacturers ; that is, not such a drawback from the national wealth.

Let not this be thought a subject too inconsiderable for public attention : it would not have been deemed so, a few centuries back, when the saving of *pence* was regarded : but the sight of our most sacred Majesty's countenance on *gold* has become of late so familiar, and we have treated it with so little regard ; nay, Britannia herself, when engraved as the *water-mark* on the most flimsy of all substances, for the continued support of national power, certain pieces of paper with this inscription *PAY TO THE ORDER OF, &c.* that, unless great care is taken, we shall find ourselves under the necessity of paying somewhat more respect to both their august impressions, even on the *copper* coin.

In fact, the subject is very far from being of a trifling nature ; for, could an exact table be formed of the sums paid by different parishes to husbandmen and their

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families, compared with the charges of manufacturers, in proportion to the number of the labourers in each class; were an estimate taken of the quantity of the labour performed by each; perhaps the balance would be found to amount to above a million annually, a drawback from the profits of the lands caused by the intemperance of the manufacturers, especially in the unbounded use of spirituous liquors*.

If the strength of a kingdom consisted in the quantity of *specie* it possessed, Spain would have been one of the most powerful kingdoms in Europe; but she finds the contrary; she begins to see the fallacy of her speculations concerning the real value

* It may be recommended to the overseers, &c. to insert in their register of paupers, not only the names, but the occupations, ages, number of persons in the family, how long and to what amount they became chargeable, with the apparent causes of it.

This would be attended with but little additional trouble, and would be productive of many salutary effects: it would shame many out of their present indolent and vicious courses, and prevent them from being so bold and frequent in their application for parish support.

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value of South America; she is returning to the only infallible method of obtaining permanent opulence and power, namely, that which arises from the *industry* of the inhabitants: she is cultivating her lands and increasing her manufactures. The conquest of Mexico by Spain, subdued Spain by undermining her internal strength, which was gradually wasting away through indolence and inaction: so true is the observation made by one of our countrymen, above a century back; “the improving a kingdom in matter of husbandry, is better than conquering a new kingdom*.” And if the governors of every state knew what they would be at, they would think so too; and would find it no bad policy to *beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks*: however, till that happy time arrives, now under the direction of inspired prophecy, which is leading it forward by gradual advances, Great Britain will ever find, that her best strength, and truest policy, lie in sedulously attending

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* Hartlib's Legacy, p. 42. an. 1655.

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to the bounties which kind nature has afforded her in her territories. This will strengthen her sinews for war during the intervals of peace; for it is indisputable, that whatever raises a kingdom at first to power and prosperity must be the RENOVATOR of it in a temporary decline.

Recur, therefore, my dear countrymen, to first principles, to the causes of your rise. Your encouragements are most animating; additional to your landed possessions, ye have, in your sea coasts, a source of wealth equal to the Dutch; and where is the European kingdom which can boast of both these, and so many other advantages, in equal perfection, for paying taxes, lessening a national debt, promoting population, and preventing emigration?

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S E C T I O N IV.

Encouragements.

FROM the principles already laid down, it appears, that an additional capital may be raised from the territory, for the purposes of trade and commerce. Land-owners may likewise create to themselves a new income of from five to ten per cent. on monies expended in inclosing and improving waste lands. Facts prove this in every part of our island where the expence has been conducted with judgment.

The soil, the extent of territory, the insular situation of Great Britain, are exceedingly favourable to improvements: the same may be said, with a very little restriction, concerning our sister kingdom.

Great Britain may justly be compared to the land of Canaan, which was not in itself like Egypt, so fertile from the overflowing of the river Nile, as almost to supercede

perfecte the necessity of industry and skill, nor yet so barren as to be a bar against it; but possessed that happy medium which animates the cultivator, by insuring a reward adequate to his exertions; that happy medium which finds continual employment for the labourer most conducive to health, population, and prosperity. “ *For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land—where thou shalt eat bread without scarceness—a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.—Not as the land of Egypt from whence thou camest out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; but a land of hills and vales, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven* *, &c.”—improved by continual plowing, and exposing the soil to the influence of the atmosphere.

If our modern travellers † had all of them chosen to have made themselves acquainted with the true spirit of this account of Palestine, in its ancient state of high

* Deut. viii. 8, &c. chap. xi. 10, 11, &c.

† Messrs. Voltaire, &c.

high cultivation, the world would probably have been deprived of the remarks which they have now made on its present rude state; and what a loss would this have been unto us, as their lively and spirited observations were written, no doubt, with the benevolent design of increasing the hope and comfort of Christendom, under the unavoidable disappointments of the present life, by endeavouring to prove that antiquated writer, Moses, a liar, and the sacred writings a fable.

The history of all nations has informed us, that those countries which afford at first view no promising appearances of fertility in a state of nature, where the inhabitants find some difficulty at first to gain a subsistence, and which require no small degree of labour in the management of the soil, prove, in time, the most populous, are most blessed with fruitful autumns, abound most in cattle and all the real comforts of life, and, in every respect, become the most flourishing and powerful. “ A single uncultivated

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“ vated acre is a real physical evil in any state.” For my own part, I would rather undertake the cultivation of those lands which have not had a furrow made in them for a century past, than be tormented with such as are filled with weeds from a long continued mismanagement.

Concerning England, it is asserted, that it originally produced nothing but fies; and William of Malmesbury thus writes of the soil around the city of Exeter; “ The ground about is wet and filthy, and will scarce bear a crop of bad oats, often yielding empty ears without grain *.” What will not improvements effect on bad soils, when most of the ground which environs that city would now rent at thirty shilling an acre, even were each acre at the distance of ten miles from any considerable market-town!

Such is the temperature of our climate, and so strong is the power of vegetation, when called forth into action, that it hath excited the admiration of foreigners when they

* Camden's Britannia, vol. 1. p. 39.

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they have beheld the growth of our crops and plantations: yet, if we were to judge of the husbandry of the kingdom from the number of its agricultural societies, and the liberal premiums offered by them, with their supposed effects; or from what is discernable in the neighbourhood of capital cities; or from the gigantic advances of a few noblemen and gentlemen of a truly patriotic spirit; it might indeed be supposed that England has nearly performed its utmost. But I rejoice that this is very far from being the case. Agriculture, as to the particular part of it, is as yet but in its infancy. However, from the laudable exertions lately made on our wastes, one may venture to assert that there is scarce an acre of ground, if not perfectly barren by nature or situation, which may not be brought amply to repay the improver, either by draining, tillage, or planting; *provided the expences attending the cultivation do not exceed the natural powers of the soil, and its internal capacity of production* *; and if the lands be afterwards let on an improving lease.

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* See more on the subject in the next section,

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Harte observes, that this last circumstance was the grand secret of the Flemish husbandry.

The bleekest and most rocky hills in Scotland produce firs much more solid in their timber, though slower in their growth, than those which are planted in our richer soils.

The lands of Great Britain are computed at seventy-two millions of acres; Mr. Eden estimates the *rental* of them at twenty millions: according to Mr. Young, the average rent of an acre is eleven shillings and four-pence to the land-owner. From these data, it appears, that we have between thirty-five and thirty-six millions of acres under cultivation; either meadow, pasture, or arable: to which add (which is a great deal too much) twenty millions for houses, gardens, woods, parks, lawns, rivers, swamps, roads, and barren spots, and there will remain, at least, sixteen millions of acres, nearly one quarter of the kingdom, capable of improvement; though, at present, in the same state of nature in which they were found

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found by Julius Cæsar, when he came over, at a vast expence, to take a *general survey* of the lands, &c. of Great Britain*; for, in fact, this was the greatest part of what he effected. It is to be observed here, that the *rental* of the estates in cultivation would not amount to any thing like twenty millions of money, were it not for the right of *common* annexed to many of them in the lease; so that in reality the farmers do pay rent for the waste lands: a detriment to *them*, and a much greater evil to the kingdom; for reasons which will be mentioned hereafter.

The cultivated lands are supposed to produce three rentals, or sixty millions; and though I suspect that farmers seldom find this to be the case with regard to themselves; yet, that they do in the event, is past a doubt, when considered only a very little more at large in the support which they afford to the millar, the baker, and the butcher; for I say

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* For his account of the reports which he returned to his employers, the Roman Consuls and Senate, vid. *Comment de Belle Gallico. lib. 5.*

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nothing here of the profits arising from wool, flax, and a long list of etcetera, when considered as articles of manufacturers and commerce.

If the whole lands may be brought to produce one fifth part more, as they certainly may, the rental to the land-owners will then amount to twenty-four millions, and the produce to the nation, at three rentals, to the additional sum of twelve millions; what may not this effect in the article of taxation, &c. especially when all its operation has been exerted in trading with it! And, if sixteen millions of acres will not produce this, they will produce nothing.

But the advantages do not rest here: farmers will not only be enabled to keep a greater number of cattle; but raise each of those they rear to a size almost double to what is at present effected by keeping them almost starving, especially the two first years, on heaths and commons: for when once impeded in their free and regular growth, from want of a sufficient quantity of wholesome food, they

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they will never recover their proper size, tho' fed afterwards on the strongest lands. Young stock kept on turnips in the cold months till they are two years old, scarce know their having passed through a couple of winters. By a sufficiency of nourishing food, with an agreeable variety, the lands on which they are kept will be insensibly improving, the cattle will be less liable to disorders, and throw off at their death hides and skins, to say nothing of the tallow, of a far superior quality as well as size; requiring less expence likewise in the dressing of them. They will, in every respect, yield the greatest clear profit to the farmer who rears them, to the grazier who fattens them, to the butcher, the tanner, and in fact to the whole community: for while young they must grow in some parts of the body or other; if kept half starved, they will grow unshapely; and it is a maxim among graziers, that the handsomer the cattle the quicker they fatten. From these, and other circumstances, I am satisfied as to a question concerning which I was for a long time in doubt; whe-

whether the farmers themselves, on an average, ever gained a shilling a-year clear profit by their supposed advantageous right of common? For, as observed before, the rents of their estates is raised on this account: I am convinced they do not in general; and it is indisputable that the kingdom has been a very considerable loser by the *waste*, as it is very justly styled in every sense of the word. It may be supposed that there are some few exceptions to this general rule; particularly where the soil is remarkably good: but it is a disgrace to common sense to say, that *such* lands as these should be neglected; especially since our benign and most gracious Sovereign has condescended to grant the greatest part of his royal forests to his parliament: an act more beneficial to the kingdom, and a more animating example than the laudable one among the Chinese emperors, who annually plow a furrow with their own hands: for a precedent, however good, is apt to lose its force, when time and custom have made it sink into a *form*: but a precedent, as beneficial as it is uncommon, excites to ac-
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tion every one possessed of the least ambition or liberality of mind. The best of consequences may, therefore, be expected from the above royal grant.

The benefits arising from spirited husbandry, it appears, are so obvious and numerous, that they infinitely outweigh any objections which may be started against their being put into immediate execution. Inclosure bills have stood the test of clamour, and convinced thousands how improperly they acted in opposing them: let them increase, or rather let a general inclosure bill take place, and every one will in time reap the benefit. "Inclosing" (says the great Linnæus) "is the only means of having any
"valuable improvements carried on ef-
"fectively; but our landlords and farm-
"ers are equally averse to any expences
"beyond those certain ones of the day,
"which they cannot escape; now this
"can only be remedied by the legislative
"power, which ought to oblige all pro-
"prietors to inclose all their fields in
"some substantial manner," (and the
pre-

present wastes likewise) “ and to enable
“ them, at the same time, to raise their
“ rents upon their tenants sufficiently to
“ pay good interest for the sums expend-
“ ed.—This measure would very much
“ promote the good husbandry of the
“ kingdom *.”

Most difficulties when encountered give way; so it will be with all the impediments against good husbandry, when the legislature is once in earnest to give all possible vigour to the operations of internal resources arising from agriculture, on the secondary ones derived from manufactures and commerce.

The remarks already made may possibly assist in pointing out the proper course to be pursued.

* Marshall's Travels, vol. 2. p. 324.

S E C-

S E C T I O N V.

Methods of Improvement.—Estates already Cultivated.—Waste lands.

DURING the above-mentioned nine years, the average bounties and drawbacks paid on exported corn, and the duties received on the imported, were as follow :

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Average { Bounties, &c. paid	24,364	14	0
{ Duties received	7,924	2	3 $\frac{3}{4}$
	16,440 11 8 $\frac{3}{4}$		

Whether this annual sum in our disfavour be a part of the 538,237 17 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ * or not, is not so very material; neither would it have been mentioned, were it not to hint at an illicit practice of some corn-factors and merchants in exporting our corn, receiving the beneficial bounty, and then importing it as foreign: this is deceiving the legislature, and cheating the

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the nation. However, it appears, that the doctrine of exportation is so well understood, and the good effects are so generally acknowledged throughout the kingdom, that there seems less reason why government should allow so large a bounty on it, or lay so small a duty on importation as formerly; because they are now become articles of commerce, which, as before observed, will always make their own way. Would it not, therefore, be more proper, at least for some time, to transfer part of the bounty allowed on exportation, to the encouragement of our waste lands? Corn-factors who make a trade of grain, pretty well know, by long custom, where to find a foreign port; and would export on their own account: while this transfer of the bounty would prove a stimulus to the farmer to raise more corn; and there is not the least danger of their not finding a market for it at home. The manufacturers, likewise, can sufficiently inform us how necessary it is that provisions be rendered as cheap as possible to their labourers, in order to make them contented with their pre-

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present wages, and prevent them from thinking of emigrations.

This transfer of the bounty is proposed on the supposition, that it may not be thought eligible in the present state of our finances, to grant an additional bounty for inclosing and improving waste lands: which, however, would most certainly answer the best of purposes if adopted.

The present prevailing custom of throwing several small farms together, in order to save trouble and uncertainty in receiving the rent, is become an evil of so enormous a magnitude, that, in many instances, it is out of all proportion; it is the surest method which can be taken to oblige the present race of small farmers and husbandmen to emigrate, and prevent future population*: it is equally detrimental to the productions of the lands, and the preservation of the corn, during harvest. An instance or two will illustrate this.

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* See my Appendix, p. 36.

On a journey, some time since, I enquired of an husbandman I met, the size of a farm then in my eye, which I supposed to be occupied by one person, as there was but one house in view for several miles: his answer was, "About three thousand a year, I suppose."

Q. Where is your parish church?

A. "On the other side of the hill; and it is worth going to see; for the church has taken a walk from the middle of the village up to the farther end."

Q. If then, one half of the village has lost its former inhabitants, how do you contrive to get your corn into ground in a proper manner, and in due season?

A. The best they can, but it is not done so well as it should be, to be sure.

Q. And how do you order in a catching harvest?

A. Much the same as is done in sowing-time.

At another time, and on another of these overgrown farms, I observed a man spreading on the swarth the farm-yard dung,

dung, which another was bringing to him in a cart: it was in the month of June; the weather scorching hot. After some enquiries into this procedure, I gained from him answers to the following very edifying purport: "Master designs this field for wheat as soon as he can after harvest; we shall then plow in the dung, and directly sow; and 'tis a leisure time now for casting abroad the dressing; and we shall be so busy by and by, in hay and corn harvest-time, that we should not have time to do this work then, because we have not hands enough, and we had need sow to wheat as soon as we can on these high grounds."

The public are interested in a matter of such importance: "for, if in any other profession, a man should act wrong, or spend his fortune, it is possible he may be the *only* sufferer; but it is not so in agriculture. Every field is, in some respect public property; and, if his crops fail through unskilful management, what-

“ whatever is lost by the owner is, in
“ some degree, a loss to the community
“ at large *.”

Here, therefore, let it be more particularly noticed, that the evil arising from such monstrous farms, if it be suffered to prevail *now*, will be an irretrievable loss: for there is a country once ours, and which yet may be ours to all the purposes of national and real benefit, if we be wise enough to prefer substance to shadows, sounds, and charms; that country is at present, and will, for years to come, be so circumstanced as to encourage the emigration of husbandmen from hence, in preference to almost any other class of workmen: she offers them nearly double wages to what we do in England: yet, by a false taste, they are driven from their native soil, especially if in the vicinity of a large mansion, and will be received with open arms by America.

The effects of those evils are not indeed so apparent as some others; but, like all latent poisons, operate the more fatally,
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* Appendix, p. 46.

because they are latent and slow in their destructive influence: surely then it ought not to be beneath the notice of government to regulate the size of farms.

Our agrarian laws stand in need of revival with regard likewise to farmers being permitted what ought never to be permitted, to exhaust the soil at their pleasure, by holding estates without an improving lease; and sometimes without any lease at all *: they are not under sufficient regulation as to the course of cropping, neither have they due encouragement to plant timber or to grow hemp, &c. With respect to planting, the defect appears more strongly where the tenant has an estate on a long lease by lives: under such circumstances, if a certain part of the timber planted by the lessee were allotted him, his heirs, executors, &c. and likewise part of the expence attending it at first defrayed by the lessor; this would tend to promote the growth of timber in
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* If it were enacted, that no lease should be binding unless on stamp paper, it might be of service in more respects than one.

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a very considerable degree, and prevent a scarcity of it on those estates at least.

The hints given by Linnæus on the employing inspectors into the state of agriculture in Sweden, cannot be omitted without manifest impropriety: only it may be previously observed, that whatever excellence there may be in his plan in general, it is peculiarly applicable to the inclosing and improving large tracts of waste lands, particularly the royal forests, where the soil may be continually varying; and which variety should be particularly noticed by the inspector with reference, first of all, to the place where any particular field should be bounded: for no single inclosure should (if it can be avoided) contain in it very different kinds of soil; as they require different kinds of plantations, different courses of cropping, and a different management in every respect.

“ Another, which I think would also
 “ be necessary, would be to appoint in-
 “ spectors of the husbandry of the king-
 “ dom: one might be appointed to every
 “ large

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“ large province, and one might inspect
 “ two or three small ones.—Memoranda
 “ should be made of those farmers
 “ who seemed to excel in any branch of
 “ their art, and also of the comparative
 “ degree of such excellence. In conse-
 “ quence of these accounts, I would have
 “ premiums distributed to all farmers
 “ who excelled; and the best that could
 “ be devised would be sums of money
 “ given, or in cases where larger sums
 “ were requisite to lend it at low interest.
 “ It is surely of very great consequence,
 “ that an industrious peasant who would
 “ cultivate his lands better, and in larger
 “ quantity, had he more money; it is
 “ surely of great consequence to the na-
 “ tion, that such a man should have the
 “ money he wants, even if it was raised
 “ by a general tax to give it him.—By
 “ this means the government would dis-
 “ cover the real state and condition of
 “ every province in the kingdom, &c. &c.
 “ —Such an annual survey of the king-
 “ dom would give them a clear insight
 “ into every evil, its nature, and its
 “ cause; the remedy then would be easy
 K “ and

“ and sure ; and they would further discover where improvements were possible and practicable, where they would pay the nation nobly for the expence, and in what manner they would be most advantageously undertaken, &c. *”

Whatever remarks have been or may be made or recommended in this essay, they are submitted, with all deference, to the wisdom of the legislature ; when they shall be at leisure to look into the internal policy of Great Britain, once the envy and the dread and at all times the admiration of Europe.

I have avoided as long as I could, touching on the present system of tythes ; a subject most disagreeable in itself, an eternal barrier against spirited improvements in husbandry, and attended with most unhappy effects on the religion and morals of the lower classes of our yeomanry. As a friend to religion and the religious orders, I am sorry to see the old system so long continued ; a system so

* Marshall, vol. 2, p. 325, &c.

contrary to the feelings of many of the clergy themselves, who, nevertheless, are sometimes in such circumstances that, in justice to themselves and families, they cannot but endeavour to gain at harvest as much as they legally can from the parish. But it is such a grievance to the farmers, regularly reviving every year, that it raises and fixes in their uneducated minds, ideas very unfavourable to religion, because of the conduct of the rector and vicar, against whom they entertain a secret grudge ; whose instructions, therefore, are absolutely slighted ; the church is forsaken, the ale-house crowded, the sober precepts of religion are lost first, and the common principles of morality insensibly slide away afterwards ; and in the room of that simplicity and innocence for which they were formerly distinguished, we perceive the substitutes are, in general, ignorance and cunning. Cheat a common farmer if ye can ; rather take care he does not cheat you. Surely taking tythes *in kind* may be abolished, and some suitable compensation substituted in its room.

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May a digression in favour of the inferior clergy, be indulged without incurring the danger of a capital crime? The following circumstances, applicable to numbers among them, excite the utmost pity: with a numerous family and a small income, with a liberal education, abilities strengthened by study, feelings refined in a progressive degree according to their acquirements in polite literature; with souls so far exalted above all mean requisitions as their learning, abilities, fine feelings, and experience have advanced; they are conscious of their merit; and yet being so circumstanced as not to be in a capacity of raising themselves and family above the reach of poverty, and the contemptuous slights of the proud and unfeeling part of their parishioners; their spirits sink, the ardour of their minds is quashed; the man of genius, whether poet, philosopher, mathematician, or divine, is sunk and lost in the man of penury. Alexander Pope would never have risen to half the fame he did, if he had not possessed an independent fortune; and, if Dryden had lived when Pope did,

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and had he been in similar circumstances with Pope, most probably he would have far excelled even the author of the Rape of the Lock. But this is by far the least distressing effect of their situation; they cannot complain openly; they suffer in secret, and sometimes end their best days in silent resignation, under the hope of a reward at death: were it not for the comforts of the Christian religion, they would indeed, like their predecessors the first apostles, *be of all men most miserable*. Their circumstances do, therefore, justly claim the most affectionate attention of the legislature.

This digression does not arise from any extraordinary degree of *sentimental feeling*, which it is so fashionable a dress to appear in, since Yorick first brought it into vogue: it is to be accounted for on a principle much better adapted to the general state of human nature, and which has a more universal and powerful influence. I mean that principle which Virgil so strongly felt himself, though he put it into the mouth of Dido to express it.

Me

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Me quoque per multor, similis fortuna, labores
 Jactatam, hac demum voluit consistere terra.
 Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.

ÆNEID, I. l. 632, &c.

To return to rural cultivation. Where the right of *common waste* is divided among a number of proprietors, they may be obliged to agree to one or other of the following proposals; either to agree to the general inclosure of the common; each person contributing a proportionable part towards the expence, according to the size of his estate or the right he possesses in the common; or to inclose his own part, if known, at his own expence; or, lastly, to accept of a certain sum proposed to be paid, at a fair estimate of the value of the right, by any person or persons who should be disposed to purchase it.

Surveyors or inspectors of proposed improvements, should be men of skill in the *practical* part of agriculture, as well as men of integrity: they should be obliged to make regular minutes of all their proceedings, for the notice of the public, and

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and for general information; particularly with regard to the quality of the lands inclosed, their course of cropping, and the success attending all their operations. This would prevent them from inattention, and render them every way deserving the annual sums granted them for their trouble.

For sandy soils of the worst quality, provided there is any fertility in them, it will be most requisite to search for marle, limestone, &c. If easily procured, there is no need of any remarks on the proper mode of procedure, as it is in general pretty well known throughout the kingdom, except to give one hint with regard to the operation of lime, which seems in general to produce good effects in proportion to the vegetable food there is in the soil, or to those substances growing on it, which are reducible to vegetable food, such as weeds, grass, heath, fern, &c. But when these have produced all their effects, and the soil is exhausted by long tillage, lime proportionably loses its influence. This may tend to reconcile the

the seemingly contradictory accounts given by different writers concerning the benefit of lime.

If neither marle nor lime, &c. can be procured at a reasonable expence, it may not be adviseable at first to do any thing more than as follows; erect and plant the external fences, spine off the surface with the spine-plough, and either cover it with a second plowing in the same furrow, if the staple of the soil will admit, or burn the surface; if the former, sow buckwheat to be plowed in as a manure, sow turnips with Dr. Hunter's oil compost *, and then a crop of oats or barley; as much with a view of sheltering the grass seeds in their first springing up, as any advantage from the crop of corn. If the surface be burned, then turnips, &c. as above. Whatever be the crop of grass, it should, on such a soil as this, be fed off with sheep; their wool will be of a better staple, and preserve an equal degree of fineness as when kept on the same ground in its original state; the soil will be gradually

* See my Appendix, p. 24, 25. note.

ly improving; and a profit of at least ten per cent. accrue to the owner. This, or a somewhat similar mode, will cut up by the roots, not only the weeds which ought not to have grown there, but all the objections which have been made against paring and burning. By this mode, the improver will meet with sufficient encouragement for erecting internal fences, dwelling-houses, &c. The nature of such a soil seems to dictate this least of all expensive methods of improvement. Plantations may likewise be ventured on without danger of disappointment.

On wet boggy soils of a coarse and bad kind, draining must be the first thing attempted; and perhaps the only one, for some time, except planting aquatic timber trees. The effect of draining will discover itself in the different kind of herbage spontaneously produced; which will regulate the future process.

On soils of a quality in any degree superior to those already mentioned, farm houses and other buildings, may be erected

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ted at once, without any danger of their not answering the purpose of the proprietor: and in doing this, perhaps there is no better guide to be followed than "the Complete English Farmer *:" only it may be observed, that the walls of the dwelling-houses, and most of the other buildings, may be erected, at a *small expence*, with clay and barley-straw well worked together, according to the Devonshire practice: they are durable and healthy, and make a decent appearance, if well plaistered.

Should the lands be over-run with furze, they will require to be in constant tillage for a few years, as the seeds of the furze will be continually springing up; the internal boundaries should therefore be made and planted with white thorn, &c. immediately after the outer fences have been erected: during the tillage, the fences will be grown sufficiently strong to be out of danger from cattle.

The grand object to be kept in view as a national concern in the improvement of
waste

* See Part I. of that excellent work.

waste lands, is to find room for the growth of oak and hemp for our shipping, madder and other dye-stuffs for the woollen and linen manufacturers; and to find subsistence for the poor labourers under the unavoidable decline in the value of money, in order to make home agreeable to them, and prevent them from becoming a burden on the landed interest. By those circumstances, the quantity of land allotted to any family, the course of cropping it, and indeed the whole mode of proceeding is to be regulated.

But this is not all. In many places, manures will be unattainable at first: of cattle the greatest number possible must be kept in a thriving state, for the raising of manure and other most essential purposes. This likewise will have its influence in directing the improver. Potatoes will, therefore, claim a principal share of his attention, especially in the neighbourhood of manufacturing towns.

But it is not the purpose of this essay, to write a system of agriculture: much

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may be said on paper; but a great deal more must depend on the nature of the soil, a variety of local circumstances, and the professional skill of the improver.

Neither is this designed to be a *treatise* on the importance of agriculture in a political view: it consists only of *hints*, which, with much diffidence, are submitted to the superior judgment of those whom they more especially concern, and who are more capable of digesting them into a proper plan. However, so fully am I convinced of the great benefit which would accrue to the nation from adopting the chief of them, that I would most readily come forward, if called upon, and assist, as far as lies in my power, in putting them into immediate actual execution.

C O N-

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C O N C L U S I O N.

SUCH, as we have represented, being the present state of Great Britain, it only remains for us to consider what inducements there are for any of its inhabitants to emigrate from their native country, which do not equally weigh for their continuance in it.

“ There are large tracts of land to be cultivated in America, which may be had for a trifle,” says one.

There is almost a quarter part of Great Britain remaining uncultivated, and which may be had reasonably, say I. With this difference in our favour, that you are certain of selling the produce of them at a good price; whereas America will not spare you any of her lands which are in the neighbourhood of her towns, or where the productions of them have an easy or short conveyance to a good market. You may live by yourself if you please; but what will you do with the overplus of your corn, &c. which will bring you in but a trifle at your farm,
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and the conveyance of which to any advantageous market will eat out great part of the profit?

“ But we want to encrease our trade by going to America,” say others.

Do ye know for certain, that America will or can permit you to increase it with Great Britain, according to your expectations, fettered as she is at present by France? Stay then till ye are certain of it, and until ye are also well assured of carrying on such a trade through your partners and connections here, as may unite the two countries together in those strong and reciprocal bonds which France cannot break asunder: then indeed, perhaps, none of your friends and countrymen will violently object to wishing you a good voyage.

Another company are exclaiming,
“ What with taxes, &c. our situation here is very ineligible.”

And

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And where is the situation that is altogether eligible to discontented minds? Remember the old proverb,

Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.

For, from the independance of America must arise a variety of national wants hitherto unthought of there; for the supply of which, every individual of her inhabitants must contribute, at a large expence, by taxation: she must raise a navy, which must be maintained, not by Great Britain, as heretofore, but by herself: her debts due to France and other powers must be paid; and ye must help to pay them: a large army must be kept; and for want of coals and wool of a good staple, she has not, and cannot, have much of a manufacture to defray the expences she must contract. If happiness be attainable from any *local* circumstances it is yet attainable in Great Britain, much more easily than in America, where every thing is in the most unsettled state; with regard to her internal policy, her form of government, her
foreign

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foreign connections, her finances, future wars, and almost every thing respecting her. Whither then, my dear countrymen, are ye going in such an hurry?

F I N I S.