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AN
INQUIRY
INTO THE
Connection between the present
PRICE OF PROVISIONS,
AND THE
SIZE OF FARMS.
WITH
REMARKS ON POPULATION
AS AFFECTED THEREBY.

To which are added,
PROPOSALS
FOR PREVENTING FUTURE SCARCITY.

By a FARMER. *W. Walker*

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P R E F A C E.

SO many different opinions having of late been offered to the public concerning the cause of the present advanced price of provisions, some attributing it to the engrossing and monopolizing of land, others to luxury, others again to regraters and forestallers; I cannot forbear giving my sentiments on these subjects, as I think the different arguments I have met with are by no means satisfactory; but such as, in many instances, may tend to mislead my countrymen, and inflame the imaginations of that class, who, on such occasions, often become riotous, and dangerous to a state. When this is the case, it is surely incumbent on every one who thinks he has it in his power, to set such authors right where it may appear they have been misinformed; I shall therefore not scruple, though unaccustomed to the press, to refute these arguments

P R E F A C E.

ments in the manner which my profession enables me to do. Accordingly, I shall in the following sheets endeavour to point out the real causes of scarcity, and at the same time offer such remedies as appear to me capable of producing the desired effect; I mean regular and moderate prices of provisions.

I shall begin with the article of monopolizing land, as that seems to be the most general topic of the present times. The evil tendency of this has been attempted to be explained by several writers, whose plausible arguments may mislead those who are not conversant in the nature and management of different soils, and who therefore give credit to every absurdity; for if the subject favours of compassion, it is popular, and carries conviction, though it is not understood.

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I N T O T H E
Connection between the present advanced
P R I C E O F P R O V I S I O N S,
A N D T H E
S I Z E O F F A R M S.

CHAPTER I.
ON MONOPOLIZING LAND.

TO proceed with all possible candor
in my investigation of this subject,
I shall enumerate the many evils which are
said to arise from the monopolizing of land,
whereby it is supposed the present scarcity
is artificially produced. A cool examina-
tion of facts will probably shew us, whether
this practice bears any, and what share in
the calamity we complain of.

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It is said, *First*, That large farmers, by growing opulent, become negligent of their business; that they, consequently, do not cultivate their lands to so much advantage as they might, and that by this means their produce is less than that of an equal proportion of land in the hands of many small farmers, who, with their families, did the chief of the work themselves.

Secondly, That large farmers, being opulent, are not under the necessity of bringing their corn to market, but retain it, to the great distress of the poor.

Thirdly, That our markets are not so well supplied with pigs, poultry, butter, and eggs, as when there were small farmers, whose wives attended the markets with those articles, which rendered the price of butcher's meat cheap.

Fourthly, That large farms are the occasion of depopulation, whereby the number of labourers is so much diminished, that, in some places, there are scarcely hands sufficient to till the ground; consequently, that the cropping of the land is neglected, and the harvest badly got in; both which must diminish the quantity, and enhance the price of corn.

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SECTION I.

The national benefit of proper sized farms.

IN answer to the first of the foregoing objections against large farms, I shall set out with laying down a principle in which I am confident all parties will agree; it is, that the produce of the earth, whether in tin, lead, iron, corn, or wool, is the riches of our nation; and therefore, that however those articles may be obtained, it is the quantity that is the only national object. Farther, that whatever the article is, the surplus of what is wanted will be locally a drug in real value or estimation, till converted to its proper use; if lead or iron, it will be sold to purchase necessaries; if corn, we shall consume what is necessary for our support, and the surplus will be sold for other commodities which we may require: at all events, it is the quantity to be produced which the nation should attend to. This being granted, it remains to prove by what means the greatest quantity is to be produced.

The advocates for small farms will say, By the industry which is so conspicuous among small farmers, who, being obliged to struggle for their livelihood, can neither

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commit waste, nor be guilty of neglect. I say, that it is by the industry of those who, being easy in their circumstances, can attend their business with spirit and cheerfulness, and who, by daily tasting the sweets of their labours, are encouraged to redouble their activity. But let us consult facts, and see which argument they will best support.

It has pretty generally been laid down as a maxim, by the gentlemen I allude to, that farms of one hundred acres are the proper size *. This they say without specifying the kind of soil; a circumstance, surely, somewhat material to be known. However, I will assist them in that point, which I am enabled to do, by finding others, or perhaps the same under another signature, talk of 50% a year.—We will therefore suppose the land at 10s. an acre; and as we must take the average price of England, I will call it good loam; and to assist their argument, I will tell them what are the necessary requisites for such a farm. First, it is absolutely necessary that the farmer should have in ready cash at least 500%.—When I mention this sum, I am
far

* Viz. Author of Political Speculations, and others.

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far within bounds: had he more, he and his country would reap the benefit of it. I shall not enter into the minute detail of every instrument to be purchased, and every operation necessary to be done, but only chalk out the great outlines of the economy necessary on such a farm.

He must keep at least 4 horses; 5 would be better, but almost too much for his capital. He must keep

- 1 Ploughman,
- 1 Boy,
- 1 Thresher,
- 1 Maid,
- 1 Odd man.

Now, without entering into the management of his farm, or considering whether he is a good or a bad farmer; I mean to prove, from the above circumstances, that three hundred acres of such land in the hands of one man, will produce more, and consequently that such a sized farm, considered in a national view, is more beneficial. I shall not be thought unreasonable in allotting my farmer on the three hundred acres, a proportionate sum of money, cattle, and servants.

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Thus

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Thus he will have 1500 *l.* in money,

12 Horses,

9 Men,

3 Boys,

3 Maids, or the labour of three women.

Previous to what I am now going to say, I must mention some facts which are necessary by way of explanation to some of my readers, *viz.* that there are operations on this, and indeed almost every kind of soil, which, at different times, require different strength of horses; for example, sometimes six horses will be required in one plough, to break up a piece of ground for fallow; thus, in this instance, the farmer of three hundred acres will have two ploughs at work, when the little farmer cannot have one, but must wait till it is perhaps too late to recover his season; or at least he will have lost all the benefit of the roasting weather, which is to make his fallow. On the other hand, there are many operations in fallowing, and in seed-time, when three-horse ploughs are sufficient; in which case the farm of three hundred acres will have four three-horse ploughs at work when the other can have but one. To this some will say, why not in the one instance hire, and in the other work with two-horse ploughs, in which case they would be equal, as in

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part of Yorkshire, Norfolk, Essex, &c. I answer, that at the one time, perhaps, his neighbours are equally busy with himself; and as to the latter, I will agree there are times when two-horse ploughs are useful: but if horses go abreast when there is any moisture in this sort of land, the damage done by their trampling the surface of the ground, will not be recovered in a twelvemonth. If what I have said be truth, it is as evident, that the farmer of three hundred acres, with a proportionate capital and number of horses, is able to do more than his proportion of work in the same time; and the doing of it at the critical juncture, is of so much the greater consequence; thus his ground is naturally in better tilth, his fallows, seed-time, dung-cart, in short, every operation performed better, because they can be dispatched; and his ground being in better order, it will not be denied but that his produce must be greater. There is also an advantage in the proportion of servants, which will not so easily be understood but by practical men; for it is natural to say, As one is to four, so are three to twelve: but this will not hold good in practice; for, in harvest-time, and many other operations which require that kind of dispatch, by throwing many hands together, the work is better and more expeditiously

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peditionously done : for example, in harvest ; two drivers, two loaders, two pitchers, two rakers, and the rest at the rick, or in the barn, will dispatch double the work that the same number of hands would do, if divided into different gangs on different farms. Howsoever unintelligible this matter may appear to some, it is fact. But the circumstance of the great farmer's employing an equal number of men may be denied ; in answer to which I can only say, that daily observation proves it, and shall add moreover, that reapers will flock to him, when the little farmer is not able to get a hand : the reason is evident, namely, that labourers will always prefer that master who is most likely to employ them longest, that they may not lose time in shifting. But as I mean to confute by facts, and not by arguments, I will appeal to the farmer, whether what I advance is true or not.

The great farmer will also have a considerable advantage in respect to his carts and waggons ; for he will not require above two waggons and four carts, whereas each of the little ones is obliged to have one waggon and two carts ; thus there will be a saving of the expence of one waggon and two carts on an equal spot of ground ; which surplus may be expended in stock
or

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or labour : the same will hold good with regard to harrows, rollers, and many other implements.

There is likewise a national advantage attending this farm, which cannot be on the small one ; I mean, the keeping of live stock ; oxen, or sheep, or both. It may be asked, Why ? and whether an equal number of cattle may not be kept on the three small farms ? The reasons why they cannot are many : The purchasing of stock, and providing artificial food for them, not only requires capital, but the resolution of a man in an extensive business : for though 500*l.* are the proportion for one hundred acres, yet supposing a part laid by for such purposes, I will say 50*l.* out of each 500*l.* my argument is, that 150*l.* in the hands of one man, will encourage him to do more than 50*l.* in those of the other. For the truth of this I will appeal to the feelings of farmers, or indeed of men on the Royal Exchange. However, there is a yet more substantial reason ; which is, that the little farmer cannot do it with so much profit ; for suppose he should have a flock of one hundred sheep, which is a great many for such a farm, that flock will not maintain a shepherd, though it requires as much
care

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care and attendance as triple the number, which would be very easily tended by one man; nor is it sufficient to make a beneficial fold; even if there is a common, the small farmer will not reap an equal advantage with the larger; for his sheep must struggle by themselves, and the shepherd who attends the large flock will always take care to have the best feed, while the others are drove among bushes and furzes to seek a miserable livelihood; losing perhaps half their wool before sheering time; and thus they become of less benefit, either to the owners or to the nation. With oxen, it is nearly the same: there must be artificial food provided for them, which is rarely seen on small farms; nor indeed will the little farmer easily be induced to go into such a culture: his capital is too small, and he trusts to his corn to pay his rent, though the benefit of the dung of these cattle would be very considerable. This is one of the great advantages which attends the farmer who at the same time is the grazier; and who is of so much more value to his country, as he can, by the assistance of artificial pasture, bring cattle to market at a cheaper rate than when fed on old pastures and hay; with the additional benefit to the nation, of employing more hands in procuring that food for the cattle,

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cattle, though they can be brought to market cheaper, and will be of course when the practice becomes more general.

In opposition to these arguments, I hear some say, that corn can be raised cheapest by the small farmer, because the chief of the labour is executed by himself and his family, whereas the labour on the great farm is done by others, whose wages must be paid out of the profits. Those who argue thus are little acquainted with husbandry affairs; for it will appear upon inquiry, that there neither is or can be one servant less kept on the three small farms, than there are on the three hundred acres in the hands of one man. However industrious the small farmer may be, it does not exempt him from keeping one single servant the less; he must have, as I said before,

1 Ploughman,
1 Boy,
1 Thresher,
1 Odd-man,
1 Maid.

If his sons and daughters are grown up, and able to do the business of the farm, they seldom remain at home; and if they do, they are not maintained for so little as hired servants: but we will suppose that matter equal. I only mean to prove, that the

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the farmer cannot rely on his own labour ; and if he does, I will maintain that he is a loser by it. His employment should be, a general attention to the whole : his thresher must be watched, or he will soon lose his wages in corn not threshed out ; his mowers, reapers, &c. must be looked after ; he must constantly go round his fences ; he must see there is no neglect ; which would be the case if he was confined to any one spot ; if he chances to have a few sheep, they will require as much attendance as a larger flock ; yet he cannot afford to keep a shepherd : thus there are three men employed to look after three hundred acres, which would be at least as well managed by one man on his horse. To this it will be said, No ; the great farmer growing opulent, becomes negligent, and of course, his ground is not so well managed, and his produce is consequently less. This is a contradiction in terms ; for if he grows opulent, in what manner did he acquire his riches, but by having a greater return for his capital, and thereby being able to lay up something annually, which the small farmer seldom or ever has it in his power to do, unless indeed by a very uncommonly spirited husbandry. There cannot be a clearer proof that a certain tract in the hands of
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one man produces more than in the hands of many : for was it otherwise, and that he was carrying on a losing trade, it is a known fact, that the greater his undertaking, the sooner he would be ruined : but on the other hand, if there is ever so small an annual saving, that will soon accumulate ; and I will venture to say, that the man who finds he is carrying on a profitable business, will attend it with infinitely more spirit, than the poor dejected wretch, who is always labouring against the stream.

But this calculation of the comparative advantage of labour on the great and small farms, only regards the common business of a farmer, without taking in the several great works of marling, land-draining, &c. by which such considerable improvements have been made, but which there is rarely, if ever, an instance of on small farms, for want of a sufficient capital for such an undertaking ; and when I mention this advantage, let it be remembered that I consider it as a national one, as I cannot admit a distinction between the profit of the farmer and that of the nation, each depending so intimately on the other.

SECTION II.

That the large farmers retaining their corn, under the present laws, is beneficial to the nation.

THE general outcry which has been made against the great farmer, for keeping his corn from market, has not failed to inflame the minds of almost all ranks of people. The arguments made use of have been plausible, and could not but have weight with those among us who are neither acquainted with husbandry, the nature of markets, nor the corn laws. It is the language of men compassionating the miserable state of the distressed Poor, and consequently one of those popular topics which must affect the religious good man. But when we come coolly to examine the state of our husbandry, markets, and corn laws, and who are the present purchasers of corn, we shall perhaps find, that it is a most happy circumstance for this nation, that there are a set of wealthy farmers who have it in their power to retain a part of their growth in those natural and best of granaries, their ricks. Was it otherwise, as the corn laws now stand, we might often,
even

even with a most plentiful harvest, be in the utmost danger of famine.

The argument made use of is, that the little farmer is, through necessity, obliged to thresh out his corn and bring it to market; but that the opulent man will not produce his, until it comes to a certain price. The first fact I will allow; for true it is, that the little farmer is obliged to bring his corn to market before Christmas, to enable him to pay his rent; and therefore it is at that time that corn is cheapest: but what is the consequence? Their little portion is soon gone, and you have no reliance but on the ricks of the great farmer to afford you a regular supply. Had their corn likewise been threshed out and brought to market, what would have been the consequence? the Poor could not have consumed it; but it would have been cheap, and so cheap, that Bear-Key, which is esteemed the barometer of our produce, would have pronounced corn plenty this year, at a time, when, I am confident, England had the greatest reason to dread a scarcity; and, in this case, your corn might have been exported, perhaps with a bounty, without a possibility of receiving a single grain back again. What would then have become of your Poor at Midsummer? This is a real fact, and lucky
it

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it is for us at present, that either the great farmers wilfully retain, or by some other circumstances have it not in their power to send corn to market in such quantities as would gratify the spleen of ignorant, discontented people: for my own part, I am apt to suspect that some have not in their power to do it: for I will confess that there is in some instances an evil attending great farms, which is, where landlords, when they lay many small farms together, destroy barns to avoid the expence of repairs. Thus the want of threshing-floors, added to the bad yield of the crop, may, in some places, prevent the great farmer's sending to market what he would otherwise do. Some there may be, who greedy of gain, may wait a higher market; but they as often outstand it. Wheat is now near 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ l. per load: do not imagine that farmers in general are not content with such a price. The fair trader in London would be satisfied with such a profit: yet there are scheming speculators who ruin themselves and their neighbours. So it is with farmers. They are men like yourselves; and let them stand on the same ground, for their occupation is full as honourable, and infinitely more beneficial to a nation. In plentiful years they must sell cheap: let them then, when they have scanty crops, have a price equal to the loss
in

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in their quantity; treat them as you would be done by, and cease such illiberal abuses against men who deserve every encouragement, and who should be considered by a wise nation as it's bulwark and the source of it's riches. Let these declaimers point me out a number of merchants, who, at the approach of a war, when a heavy increase of taxes is to be laid on the Poor, would not monopolize hemp, though the enhancing its price to government must necessarily add to the weight already laid on the Poor? How few are there who will not engross a commodity necessary for the manufacturer, and thereby render the national advantage of exporting his labours abortive, by raising the price so that we cannot sell upon an equal footing with our neighbours? How very few are there, who, in the greatest dearth at home, will not export our beef and corn, if they can do it to advantage? But if the farmer retains his corn but a day, applications are made to parliament, to force it if possible out of his barn. Let these declaimers, among whom there are many who, to get money, will think no scheme too wild, turn their hands to the plough, and see what plenty they will produce to their families. They will, I suspect, though too late, discover that more ingenuity is requisite in that, than in fabricating
C a bill

a bill upon the Royal-Exchange, and that close attention and hard labour are the price of the comforts which the farmer enjoys.

This subject has also been illustrated by the Author of the Considerations on the Exportation of Corn.

SECTION III.

Of the different supply of markets from large or small farms, in regard to pigs, poultry, butter, &c.

ANOTHER national evil which has been pointed out as proceeding from the present custom of monopolizing land, is the want of that supply of pigs, poultry, butter, and eggs, with which markets were so well stocked by little farmers, and which greatly tended to lower the price of other provisions. In answer to the two first of these articles, I shall briefly observe, that they are not objects worthy the attention of the legislature; for few will conceive that dainties should be brought to market to reduce the average price of provisions: but was it otherwise, I will say, that no small farmer can raise pigs and fowls in the same district at so low a price as butcher's meat,
no

no more than he can afford to sell veal and lamb at the same price as beef and mutton; and therefore, especially, when provisions are dear, it is better that such delicacies be kept from market, and that what they cost in cramming, be expended in rearing up live stock.

But as some may differ with me in opinion, I shall inform such, that it is not the little farmer who can rear either to advantage. If he is a suckler, not one drop of milk can be spared to the sow which is to fatten her pigs, and if he has only one cow for the use of his family, the milk will be more advantageously consumed among them than in his sty: farther, unless he has constant threshing going on, that the pigs and poultry may always have to pick up the corn which is left in the straw thrown out at the barn door, he will find that they will want the many handfuls of corn thrown to them, which are never taken account of, and not missed, because they are taken from the great heap, but which, if measured out to the good housewife, whose perquisite they are, would startle her at the end of the year. So thoroughly is a neighbour of mine satisfied of the truth of this, that he is determined never to rear another pig; convinced that he can buy store pigs to put
C 2 up

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up for fattening, cheaper than he can rear them; being well assured that they do not cost him less than 8*d.* per pound before they are put up: much less will he be able to sell a sucking pig at the price of butcher's meat. Those who are acquainted with the fattening of sucking animals, know the truth of what I say.

It is only the cottager and large farmer who can rear them to advantage; the first, by letting a sow with her litter of pigs run in the lanes, or rather, under that pretence, in the fields and meadows of the neighbouring farmers. Yet this cannot be deemed a national benefit. The only person who can rear pigs to real advantage, is the farmer who sows fields of clover purposely for their use, (but this must be at a distance from large towns, where hay does not fetch an extraordinary price) or the dairy-man who makes butter and cheese. These are likewise the only people who can supply us with butter at a reasonable rate, and that by dint of capital and close attention to that one article: nor are these men seated on what are called arable farms.

Here I will inform my opponents of a practice they are probably not acquainted with, which is, that in Denbighshire and

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Flint-

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Flintshire, it is no uncommon thing to see hundreds of pigs, for which they grow clover on purpose, and which graze on the grass lands adjoining the beach, and when the tide is out, they go down and feed on the sea ooze, where they find shell-fish, &c. These pigs are as regularly folded at night as sheep. They are bought up by the distillers, &c. By this means pigs, or what is more proper for the farm, pork, is reared to most advantage. The person from whom I had this information, and who has been long a dealer in hogs, assures me of this fact; and that it is not uncommon to see five thousand in one market; and he confirmed to me what I have advanced, that it is the great farmer only who can rear them to advantage, and that by this practice.

As to eggs, they may indeed, at particular times of the year, have been brought to market by the small farmer: the same may also be done by the cottager's wife: not that it is such a supply as will answer the purpose. It is the quantity which comes from Scotland, and other cheap countries, that can affect the market.

With regard to fowls, it is a known fact that it is the great farmers who chiefly supply

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supply

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supply markets with them; for they only can do it to advantage.

One Shallcroft, who had a farm of 400 acres, and who lately died worth 10,000*l.* supplied Croydon market with fowls; and what is remarkable is, that it is chiefly the great farmers who have supplied that market with poultry and butter for many years past, and their wives have attended that market as regularly as the farmers did the corn market. That of butter cannot be doubted; and the other is as evident to those who are the least conversant in the matter. The threshing-floor of the great farmer is always open, and it is the corn thrown out in the straw that fattens the barn-door fowl; whereas the little farmer, whose threshing-floor is not constantly employed, must at times feed them, and the wife, whose perquisite they are, will not let them starve while there is a grain of corn in the heap. If this is the case at Croydon, which is so near London, and from whence so much straw is carried to support the London market with all this grain in it, which would be picked out of the straw by pigs and fowls; how strong a proof is it, that the markets, at a distance from great towns, must be more easily supplied with fowls

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fowls in the neighbourhood of large farms, than where they are all small ones?

I am almost ashamed to have given a place to these answers; but the loss of pigs, poultry, butter, and eggs, has been so general a topic in all companies, and in every pamphlet which has appeared, that, insignificant as the subject is, I could not avoid exposing the fallacy of the arguments made use of on this occasion.

Let me now, in my turn, ask, Who is it that supplies our markets with beef and mutton? It is the great and opulent farmer. Who is it that furnishes the Poor with cheese, and such butter as they ought to eat, good potted Cambridge butter? It is the great dairy men.—But among the various lamentable complaints with which we have been pestered, I have not heard a syllable of the want of veal or lamb; No! there is plenty of them. Let these declaimers, if they really feel, as they pretend to do, for the Poor, blush at the sight of it on their table. This is one of the real causes of the high price of meat. When a calf or a lamb can be made to fetch as much at three months old, as they would be worth when a steer or wether at two years old in the ordinary method of feed-

ing stock, this may sometimes become a real evil; but not the want of other luxuries of the same kind.

SECTION IV.

Of population, as affected by large or small farms.

THE last charge against the great farmer, or, as he is called, the monopolizer of land, is depopulation. The absurdity of the assertion has often amazed me: but what makes it more ridiculous, is, that the same writer who tells us there is apprehension of famine, laments that there are not more mouths to eat the little we have. When indeed I consider that the quickness of the conveyance in post-chaises has induced many gentlemen to travel for their amusement, who, quitting London, where perhaps they were bred in a crowd, are struck with the utmost astonishment at the vast size of Salisbury Plain, without a house in view, and wonder how agriculture is carried on upon the Dorsetshire Downs by some scattered shepherds with their flocks, or in the grazing countries, where they see nothing but fat oxen and a few scattered houses, I am not surprized that the country has made such an impression on them; but were they to visit the manufacturing

manufacturing towns which border on those tracts, they would perhaps return with far different ideas. To these, I should not think it worth the while to give any answer: but when I hear gentlemen who pretend to some knowledge in agriculture assert, that the holding large tracts of arable land is the cause of depopulation, I can no longer be silent. I have, indeed, frequently intended to give my opinion on this very interesting subject, and am now the more particularly induced so to do, as I mean to avail myself of the very arguments made use of in a pamphlet lately published, under the title of, *Uniting and monopolizing Farms plainly proved disadvantageous to the Land-owner, and highly prejudicial to the public*; so perfectly do they agree with those I had before laid down to enforce the very contrary opinion.

The writer of that pamphlet supposes, as I would, a tract of land of eight hundred acres, or 400*l. per ann.* in the occupation of one man, and a like quantity in the occupation of eight men. The only circumstance in which I shall differ from him in his calculation is the number of servants in general, and the proportion of them that are kept in the house. My estimate

mate will be from my own knowledge, corroborated by the intelligence I have picked up on that subject in the different counties through which I have passed. But as the alteration I shall make in the number and distribution of the servants will rather make for this author's argument, he certainly can have no objection to it.

He sets out with saying, that if the tract is in the hands of one man, his family will consist of himself, a wife, three children, twelve servants, and ten labourers, each with a wife and three children; in all fifty.

Thus, the farmer's family	— —	17
The ten labourers and their families		50
		<hr/>
The whole number depending on the large farm in one occupation	—	67

Then, on each of the eight small farms, he supposes the farmer, his wife, and three children, and two servants, that is, seven in each family; and that each farm should have a labourer, with five persons in each labourer's family. In this case, the number of persons depending on these lands thus divided into eight separate farms will stand thus:

A far-

A farmer and his family	— —	7
A labourer and his family	— —	5
		<hr/>
		12
Multiplied by eight	— —	8
		<hr/>
		96
Subtract	— — — —	67
		<hr/>
		29

Thus there are 29 persons more dependant on the tract in the occupation of eight farmers.

The manner in which I shall state it will be as follows, supposing the tract divided into eight farms.

To each farm:

The farmer, his wife, and three children,	5
(one of which I shall allow to be a plowboy)	
Thresher, his wife, and three children	5

Multiplied by 8

In consequence of wedlock,	—	80
Statute servants {	Plowman 1 } Single and	} 24
	Odd man 1 } must re-	
	Maid 1 } main so	
	3 multiplied by 8	<hr/>
		104

Now it is reasonable to allow the same number of labourers on the tract in the possession of one man, as there is on the eight farms: but whether it is allowed or not, I know that there is the same number of hands employed, though perhaps more advantageously disposed of.

- This there will be
- 8 Plowmen, six of whom are labourers capable of holding plow.
- 8 Threshers } of these { 1 Shepherd
- 8 Labourers } perhaps { 1 Oxherd
- 8 Maids, or women working on the farm.

The eight plowboys, and the two for the shepherd and oxherd, shall be taken out of the cottager's family, as I have included the plowboys on the eight farms in the farmer's family.

But the oeconomy of this farmer's family will be very different.

The farmer, his wife, and three children,	5
Statute servants in the house	{
Plowmen	2
Thresher	1
Shepherd	1
Oxherd	1, or odd man
Maids	2
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	7

Day-labourers 19, (among these are the remaining occasional threshers and plowmen) each with a wife and three children —

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In consequence of wedlock	—	100
Statute servants remaining single, only	— — —	7

As to the six extraordinary maid-servants, I shall take no notice of them, supposing them to be better employed in weeding and picking up stones, than in scrubbing and dressing victuals for the single men on the small farms. I will therefore throw them into the number of cottagers wives, supposing some of these to be dead: but surely I have a right to claim seven men for the seven supernumerary farmers; and their work ought to be reckoned as something; consequently their labour allowed on the large tract in the occupation of one man; or else they must be considered as useless bailiffs, and consequently as an incumbrance on the estate. However, as this author lays so much stress upon the labour of the small farmer, we will admit them on this farm; and, supposing them likewise married, and with children, they will amount to — — —

	—	35
Dependant on the large farm	—	142
Subtract the number on the others,		104
		<hr/>
Remains thirty-eight souls in favour of population on the one great farm.		38
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But to examine it a little farther. There are, out of the

104 on the eight farms,	married men	married women	children	single men	single women
142 - -	16	16	48	16	8
	27	27	81	only 5	only 2
In favour of the large farm in point of populat.	11	11	33		

I have taken this mode of calculating the inhabitants from the Author's own plan: but allowing the seven supernumerary married men to be single, and deducting for their wives and children 28, there would remain 114, among whom there would be 20 married men instead of only 16 on the 8 small farms. Had this Author stated the fact otherwise, and made the comparison on pasture land, I should have agreed with him: but on arable land, nothing is more contrary to the fact than what he lays down. Now we have each of us told our tale, and the fact only must determine who is right. At all events, I would advise gentlemen to make very strict inquiry into the truth of the matter before they suffer themselves to be led away by every publication that appears. I will acknowledge, that there is a management of land which may tend to diminish the number of people in that particular parish where it is practised; it is indeed what rarely happens in old farms,

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but it may be an attendant on some of the new-inclosed common-field land, where, perhaps at the instigation of the landlord, too great a proportion is laid down to grass. A sensible tenant will be glad to meet with old meadow; but few, I believe, will court new pastures, since the introduction of clovers, &c. I will likewise say, that there are circumstances when it may be prudent for both tenant and landlord. For example; suppose common-field land on a moory soil, best adapted to pasture land, and which with good management will, in a very few years, become equal to the best: or suppose chalky land, excellently well adapted to sainfoin, but by the barbarous custom of common-field tenure, rendered almost useless to the tenant. Are those tenants who sensibly pay higher rent for such land when inclosed, to be precluded the liberty of converting it to what it ought to be, merely to gratify the whim of a few theoretical farmers; or should the nation be deprived of the increased produce, by its not being put under proper culture? and yet, if this is done to a great extent, it must diminish the labour, and consequently drive away some of the inhabitants. But where do these gentlemen-writers think they are gone to? Perhaps to other spots, which once were poor stinted commons, but now are covered

covered with sheaves of corn, instead of the few starved sheep which were maintained there in the summer, for the winter food of crows and ravens. It is indeed certain, that large tracts of pasture land must keep a district thin of inhabitants: it could not well be otherwise, when, as formerly, grass and hay were the only method of fattening bullocks: nor was that a branch which used to be carried on by the little or middling farmer: it was done by people of capital; and to turn it to the most advantage, or indeed to employ their capital, large tracts of land were necessary. It is, and must continue to be, the same in breeding countries; and on the downs, where our flocks are bred, large tracts are requisite for a sheep-walk. Best maiden down will not carry above two sheep per acre to fold, without clover or good meadow to bait them on: but let it not be imagined that this is waste; these little animals doubly earn their value before they come to market, by their fleeces, and by the many adjoining acres which they manure; and on this account it is, that in these and such-like spots, large farms are indispensably necessary: and the advantage of a large fold is so well known, that in parts of Wiltshire where there are small farms which have but small flocks, it is a common practice to throw

throw them into one fold, each man having them for as many nights as are equal to the proportion of his flock: nor indeed do I know any tract of country where excessive large farms, such as have been alluded to, prevail, but in downy countries, where sheep-walk is so necessary, and where often many acres are rented for a few shillings, Norfolk and Essex farms excepted: but in Norfolk I hope our author will not say the country has been depopulated by large farms, for by the sensible and spirited culture of the inhabitants of that country, nobly inspired by Lord Townshend, who quitted the office of Secretary of State to become the useful husbandman, they have converted a barren sand into the most fertile spot in England. View their fields of turnips, barley, clover, wheat, and shew me such management in a country inhabited by little farmers. But how have they done it? by industry, and a sensible attention to their business; by the landlords sensibly dividing the country among opulent men, who, by dint of capital, were able to cover their soil with clay or marle at the expence of the then fee-simple of the land, and not by becoming indolent because they grew opulent: and I will say, that it redounds much to the honour of those landed proprietors, that they suffered the sons to enjoy the fruits of the

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the labours of their fathers: not but that their rents are now properly increased.

This leads me necessarily to hint at another observation of the author I allude to, who seems to lay so great a stress on the national advantage of increased rents, and of the old method of calculating the profits of the farmer by the three rents. In the infancy of agriculture, it was a conscientious and equal partition of property; such as is now practised in the less enlightened parts of the world; in most parts of France, Germany, and in some of our American colonies: the one finds land and capital, the other knowledge and labour: but on a well-cultivated and good soil, the rent is now the least object: it is the sum which a man can sink in stock, and in the annual expence of his labour, on which he is to reckon the interest of his money, or income. —The subject has already led me beyond the intended limits of this Chapter: but in answering the author of the above-quoted Pamphlet, on the topic of depopulation, I was naturally led to point out some other circumstances in large farms, in which he seemed to be equally misinformed.

Let it not, however, be thought that I am so absurd as to propose that all England should

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should be divided into large, or indeed any particular-sized farms. I have only endeavoured to refute the absurd doctrine of those who maintain that large farms have brought on a ruin to the nation, and that the only remedy is to divide the land into small farms. I say that there should be, as there are now, farms of all sizes, to suit the different capitals of the people who engage in farming. If such writers as I am speaking of were at all conversant in husbandry, they would know, as I have already explained, that the proportion of land, which is in some degree governed by its value, should be equal to a given capital; and if they were acquainted with the nature of the most valuable trade of a nation, they would consider agriculture in this country to be the first object of commerce, and therefore they would see that it is as absurd to confine a farmer with 10,000 £. to one hundred acres, as to place a man with 500 £. on one thousand acres. To say that a man, who, by industry, has increased his capital in farming, shall cease to be a farmer, is as great a contradiction to common sense; for such prohibition it would be, not to permit a man to employ his capital in the business he has been brought up to and understands. Whatever may be the opinion of these gentlemen, I will maintain, that the produce

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of the earth is the only wealth of a nation: if corn is our natural produce, corn should be our trade, as gold is that of Peru; and perhaps it is the only trade that cannot be over-done: we do not want instances to prove, that artificial trade is often extended to the ruin of a nation: that cannot be the case with the produce of the earth: manufactures have a limited consumption; besides which, that nation which will not wear your cloth, will eat your corn. Let this manufacture then go on in its usual course: it is in the hands of men who understand it better than you do, and, believe me, their own interest will tell them what is most proper to be done.

C H A P. II.

On Jobbers, Foretallers, and Reqrators.

AMONG the many who have assigned causes for the present advanced price of provisions, there are a set of men who do not attribute the scarcity to either of the aforementioned causes, nor do they confine their compassion to the Poor only, but extend their pity even to the farmer. Their complaints are poured out against jobbers, foretallers, and reqrators; though I am confident that many of them do not understand

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stand the particular occupation of either of these, but confound the whole in one mass. I confess that there are many instances in the sale of cattle at Smithfield, which must confirm these people in their opinion: a very recent and remarkable one happened on the 16th of November last, when oxen sold at 2*d.* per pound; and yet there was no visible alteration in the price of butcher's meat. This would naturally induce them to believe that there is plenty, but that it is withheld by art. It must, likewise, be observed, that sheep were dearer that very day, than had been known for some time past. However, as tales are told imperfectly, and too often that part of them only which makes for an argument, I am not surprized that well-disposed men are frequently misled. I shall not say but that there may be, and is, craft in that business, as there must be in every other where the least restriction will always give the attentive artful man an advantage over his neighbour: at the same time, it must be conceived, that there is in this, as in all other articles, a fluctuation in the price: nor will it be difficult to explain that this fluctuation must operate by greater strides in live cattle, than in any commodity which can be deposited in magazines. All that the wisdom of legislature can do, or ought to attempt, is,

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to let those streams of plenty flow from their source in their natural channel; for the dam that occasions still-water above, is sure to create a torrent below, which carries every thing before it.

To investigate the truth of what is here advanced, I shall explain the natural causes of this fluctuation in the price of live cattle: this will account for the sudden fall of beef on the day abovementioned, and prove that it neither could have, nor ought to have, any great effect on the price of butcher's meat: I shall then proceed to point out the channel in which the supply of live cattle used to flow, till it met with a check, which, I believe, has given some foundation for a part of the complaints we have heard. In doing this, I shall describe the different occupation of each man concerned in this traffick; and from thence it will appear, that the abolishing of either must eternally produce the evil complained of.

First then, I shall inform the Reader, that the fluctuation in the price of live stock does, and ever must, depend on the quantity there is of the different sorts of food necessary to support those cattle in their different stages of age and degree of fatness. For example; if after-pasture, fodder and
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turnips fail, lean stock must be cheap, because there will not be purchasers for them at the fairs; and fat beasts will, for the same reason, keep their price, because the grazier knows it will turn to better account for him to bestow the food he has upon the stock which is nearly fit for market, than to divide it among many, which would keep the forward ones too back; nor would it bring the lean stock forward enough to make off in the spring with any moderate degree of profit. Thus he will consume the whole with his fattening beasts, by which means there will not be a succession to supply the market, and those beasts which would have come in the spring, must be kept lean, to another year. This circumstance, and the scarcity of food, which will not allow him to have so great a stock to employ his capital in, must naturally, and ought to give him a greater profit on the few he has. Thus will the course of market generally be governed; and I believe it was as generally expected that what I have related would have been the case this year; for there was in the summer little appearance of grass, fodder was evidently scarce, and cabbages and turnips had failed almost every where; but a most providentially fine autumn furnished the Essex and Kentish men with such abundance of after-
D 4 pasture,

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pasture, that they gave great prices for all cattle that were forward enough to be brought on. This naturally induced them to make off all their stock on hand that was fit, or nearly fit, for market, in order that their new stock might have sufficient plenty to push them on before the winter set in, when they could be able to finish them on oil-cake, &c. To this I impute the great and unexpected glut that there was at Smithfield on the Monday alluded to; and what strengthens me in my opinion is, that it was immediately after Kingston-Fair, where a great number of Welch beasts were bought up by the Essex and Kentish farmers. The present high price of hay and oil-cakes might indeed have operated in some degree, by inducing many graziers to send up such of their beasts as were fit for market, rather than keep them back for the regular supply: but as it is not natural to suppose that this last reason should have operated with all on the same day, I cannot but think my suggestion right; and what confirms me in it is, that sheep were dearer that very day than they had been for some time past. This last circumstance is one reason why this extraordinary fall in beef should not have had an immediate effect on the price of butcher's meat: for it is the average of the profits which must govern the butcher in his sale.

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sale. But supposing mutton had been equally cheap, no butcher in London would have purchased more than was necessary for the demand of his usual customers: he could neither keep his beasts nor his sheep alive; and if he slaughtered them, he ran the risk of having a great part remain to spoil on his hands. Thus the overplus of what was wanted for the usual consumption, would be naturally bought up by those who had an opportunity of keeping them on; and was it not for such men, from whence should we now expect a regular supply, till those beasts are brought forward, which are not yet fit for market? Let it not, however, be imagined that all their dealings are attended with such profit; they have severe blows, as well as men in other trades: it is the average profit of the whole year on which they count their gain; and however it may be the fashion to stigmatise these dealers with odious appellations, it is on them alone that we can depend for a regular supply. Yet, whilst I am thus speaking in favour of these dealers, I will confess that I believe there are among them some who, as the laws have lately been enforced, have given too great foundation for the clamours of the people; I mean, when the salesman is the dealer. I know that precautions have been taken to guard against this inconvenience,

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by prohibiting them from holding farms: but it is easy to conceive that such a law may be evaded: and I know that it is; and though it be a crime to act in violation of the laws, yet that crime is greatly lessened, if the enactors of the laws lay temptations in the way, to induce people to act in opposition thereto: and this they have done, by abolishing what were called Jobbers; the evil consequences of which I shall proceed to explain.

When there were those traders in cattle called Jobbers, Smithfield market was constantly and well supplied. They were people who had no fixed residence, but travelled the country in search of such cattle as were fit for market; and having no land in their own possession, as soon as they had bought a lot of sheep, or oxen, they immediately dispatched them to Smithfield-market, where they were consequently obliged to be sold. If several of these happened to meet at the same market, which was frequently the case, of course their cattle were sold cheap; but they were contented with their chance profit; and set out immediately on another journey. If the cattle were ever so cheap, the butchers could not buy more than for their usual consumption. This necessarily called in a set
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of men who had land within a moderate distance of the metropolis, and thereby had an opportunity of keeping them on, to supply the market regularly. These men naturally should have their profit; but that could not, in general, be great, as they were always liable to have great quantities poured in unexpectedly by the jobbers, whose motions were never known, and always uncertain. Thus were the markets always fully stocked; the grazier got rid of his cattle, at his door, without trouble or expence; and the butcher was always sure of finding a market well supplied by the jobber, or the intermediate man who had always by him a stock that had been purchased when the markets were glutted. This was a regular channel of trade, which went on uninterrupted: whereas, when the jobbers were suppressed, the grazier was obliged either to send up his cattle himself, or to commit them to the care of a salesman, who, of course, became his adviser when to send his stock to market; and by this means, being intimately acquainted with the demand and the supply, it is natural to believe that self-interest, which governs us all, would induce him to become a purchaser, who had it so much in his power to supply the butchers as he thought proper, and who, by the same knowledge, had it as much in his power to purchase his cattle at what
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price he pleased to set on them: for it required but the combination of a few, to order up the grazier's cattle whenever they wished to make a purchase. In this manner has the profit of the latter decreased so much, as to render it necessary for some of them to attend Smithfield themselves, though, when they came there, they could only look on; not having it in their power to sell to a butcher, who was perhaps as much in the clutches of the salesman as himself. By this means we have lost that intermediate man, so necessary to all parties, and by this means we have created a real forefaller. I will not charge all with being guilty of this practice: there are honest men, as well as knaves, in every profession. I have only endeavoured to point out the manner in which this may operate; and I am confident that it will, whenever there is the smallest restriction or interference of legislature in any trade; for, as Sir William Mildmay justly observes, a general liberty granted to raise our necessary provisions, will procure us a general plenty for sale; a general indulgence allowed to this sale, will reduce them to a general cheapness, &c. Happy am I to think we have a Minister, whose wisdom has induced him to listen to such men as can give him real information on a subject he cannot be supposed to be intimately acquainted with himself!

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CHAPTER III.

On Luxury, as affecting Provisions and Population.

AMONG the many writers who have favoured us with their productions on the subject of Provisions and Population, there are none who fail to attribute it, in part or the whole, to Luxury. I shall not attempt to say that Luxury has not an effect on the price of all commodities; among others, on provisions: but how far it is prejudicial or beneficial to a state, is matter of serious consideration, and should be handled with infinite delicacy whenever the subject is taken up by the Legislature. It is a known fact, that, in an infant-state, Luxury is a child which should be nourished to such a degree as to procure the conveniencies and comforts of life; for on that depends the improvement of agriculture, arts, manufactures, and commerce. It is as certain a fact, that Luxury is an attendant on wealth, and that, when it is not accompanied with vice, it is a benefit to a nation. By this it is that wealth becomes more equally diffused among all ranks of people: it encourages the manufacturer and artificer; and if it is confined to the table of the rich man, agriculture reaps the benefit of it, without any public detri-

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detriment: in short, in every instance, the poor receive their share of this scattered wealth; and in proportion to the luxury of the spot, the poor who inhabit are, by the diffused riches, enabled to bear their share in the price of provisions. In proof of what I say, draw the comparison between the labouring poor of the city of London and its neighbourhood, with those of Wales and other remote countries. I do not speak of the worthless abandoned poor: they always flock to large cities, and subsist by charity and theft, where they are not so easily detected as in the country. This leads me to point out a species of luxury which I have never heard arraigned, but which, I am confident, does much mischief, though proceeding from a laudable motive: I mean, that unbounded charity which, when kept within limits, and administered with prudence, is the noble characteristic of the English nation; but which I have known, in many instances, to do much hurt, and encourage idleness, instead of rewarding industry. I say, this evil proceeds from luxury, because I fear an ostentatious vanity is frequently the motive for many whimsical donations.

Why Luxury should be an attendant on wealth is obvious; it is, because money becomes cheap: but in such proportion all

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commodities rise in value. In 1307, when the interest of money was 45 *per cent.* all provisions were what we should now call cheap. In 1604, when the interest of money was 9*l.* 16*s.* *per cent.* provisions rose in proportion; and so on to this day, making proper allowance for the different circumstances which attended this country when divided by civil wars, or harrassed by foreign enemies. But as luxury is the constant attendant on wealth, it must naturally affect provisions in a greater proportion; for it will create waste; it induces people of fortune to keep a great number of domestic servants, who are fed on dainties, instead of the coarse but wholesome food they were before accustomed to; it increases the number of horses which are kept for pleasure; both which must considerably increase the consumption of meat and corn. It likewise certainly affects provisions, by the destruction of the numberless calves and lambs that are slaughtered for the London market, which must raise the price of beef and mutton, as they consume in three months the amount in value of food which would rear them to two years old. This is, indeed, an encouragement to agriculture, and, as I said before, disperses the wealth among all ranks and denominations of people, while the taxes

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taxes on luxury properly fall upon the rich, and the land is so far relieved of a part of that burthen which must be cheerfully borne for the support of a great and powerful nation, I mean that part of the taxes which lights on the consumer, which is all exciseable commodities. It will here be said, that the waste on the rich man's table, and the corn consumed by his horses, would feed many hungry mouths. I allow it:—but the evil points out a remedy; for if it is the real fact, as I believe it to be, that the consumption is greater than the produce, cultivate more land, and suffer not barren acres to stare us in the face when we are crying out for bread.

There is yet another species of Luxury, which is in consequence of wealth; it is, that the inhabitants of the country naturally flock to great cities, where they can enjoy the more refined amusements of a polished nation. The conveniency of trade indeed brings thither the most considerable part; the necessary calling together of the Legislature brings another part; and the attachment to courts and other amusements, brings the third. These necessarily carry with them a suite of attendants, which I cannot but think mischievous to a state; for the loitering life of a gentleman's servant not only debauches his own mind,
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but, by his attendance on the great, and his intercourse with the inferior class, makes him the vehicle of conveyance of those manners which ruin the industrious tradesman, though necessary accomplishments in the rich. If they unfortunately see a bad example, they retail it out with all its mischievous consequences; and in this manner does their appearance and example operate when they return with their masters to the country. They there debauch the minds of the rustic labourers, who envy their fine cloaths and lazy life; and by this means too many of the inferior class are drawn to towns, where, I must confess, they do not continue to be such useful members in point of population, as if they had remained in the country; for by all the calculations that have appeared, the lives of children in towns bear no proportion with those born and bred up in the country. This necessary evil, which attends all great cities, is the natural and inevitable consequence of wealth. Let us not, however, see things in so gloomy a light, as to think these people entirely lost to society, or even to that part which depends on agriculture. What I am going to relate is matter of fact within my own knowledge; namely, that in hay and harvest time, when labourers are wanted in

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the country, it is inconceivable what numbers of tradesmen and handicrafts flock into the country, and as considerable is the assistance we receive from them at the only time they are wanted there. Thus they become doubly beneficial to the nation. The fact is as I say, but their motives may be two-fold; the one, that they have not employment at that time of the year; and the other, that nature may dictate to them the desire of breathing the fresh air they were accustomed to in their youth, when they learnt the different branches of husbandry business, which they return to at a time when their town employment falls slack, and when, as I said before, we only want them.

I am far from being an advocate for wanton Luxury. There have been too many instances in history, to prove that Luxury, accompanied with vice, which is its last stage, must ever end in ruin to a state. All that I mean to alledge is, that Luxury will attend the wealth of a great trading nation, and that what was once a virtue, cannot be converted into a vice. Let those who exclaim against the evil effects of Luxury, keep a watchful eye over themselves, and they will not have cause to complain.

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Let those who reside in the country set a good example to the poor inhabitants of the village; let those who have it in their power diminish, if possible, at least not increase, the number of alehouses, which are perdition to the poor, and the real cause of their distress. I know many parishes in different parts of the country where labourers maintain themselves and families comfortably, even in these times, on six shillings a week; whereas in other places they are starving on nine in winter, and ten to twelve in summer. But where the former reside, there are no alehouses, and they themselves attribute their comfort to it: however, where they cannot be easily abolished, let the restrictive laws attending licences be enforced; prevent gambling, and do not suffer them to permit a labouring inhabitant of the parish to sit in their houses but at the stated hours of meal times; this every one has it in his power to prevent; and this I know to be one of the chief causes of the distress of the poor, as hath justly been remarked by the Reverend Mr. Powel, of Fakenham, in his *Real Grievances, &c.*

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CHAPTER IV.

On the real causes of the advanced price of provisions.

THE real cause of the present scarcity being, in general, too well known to need any formal discourse to ascertain its origin, it may, perhaps, be thought impertinent in me to undertake that task: and, indeed, I honestly confess, that the original intention of these sheets was only to shew, that it is not to be imputed solely to any of the various causes I have lately seen assigned for it in print. Most of those publications have appeared to me big with mischief, as blowing the trumpet of discontent among every rank of people; and, howsoever inadvertently they may have been suffered to creep into the world, they cannot fail to breed, especially among the lower class, that rancour and jealousy which are the mother of riot and confusion, and which may, if thus fomented, carry them to such lengths as may seriously increase the misfortunes we complain of. My only motive for thus offering to the public my opinion on this head, proceeds from an ardent desire to rectify, if I can, the strangely misconceived notion of my countrymen, by proving

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ing to them, that it is not to any individual, or set of individuals, that we ought to ascribe this calamity; but that it is the hand of God which has visited us, and that it is patience only, with a proper exertion of those means which Providence hath put in our power, that can afford us relief. But as I find the numberless complaints of the dissatisfied have reached the ear of the Legislature, and that the Parliament seem earnestly disposed to adopt such measures as shall appear to them most salutary; I think it the duty of every one who has considered this matter candidly, to lay his thoughts open to Government.

Previous to our entering upon this subject, it will be necessary to examine into the truth of what is daily asserted about the price of provisions, and to determine whether they are, or are not, really dear; and, if found to be dear, how far the price exceeds the bounds of what is deemed an equitable one for the farmer. The only method by which this fact can be ascertained, is to draw a comparison between them and other articles of consumption; for example, if the articles of cloaths, house-rent, furniture, luxuries of life, and provisions, have kept a nearly proportionate

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advance for any given number of years, we have the clearest proof that there is some one general extraneous cause which affects the whole; and if it appears that the rise in the price of all the various commodities bears a just proportion to the interest of money, it is as self-evident that the general cause is the riches of the nation: but to fix this with such precision as would carry with it universal conviction, would require many *data* not easy to be obtained. Thus, among other circumstances, to make a just comparison, it will be necessary that there should have been an equal demand for every article; for on that will depend the value of each. Now as I have declared that such *data* as I would only draw conclusions from are, in my opinion, not to be obtained, I may claim the same privilege as others assume, of grounding my facts on the general cry, that all the necessaries of life are at an enormous price, which, as I said before, must proceed from one general cause, and that can only be the cheapness of money; and therefore, that all commodities bearing that proportion are cheap, at least not dear. However, as an extraordinary demand for, or a scarcity of any article, must affect that article in a peculiar manner, I will acknowledge that there is an advance in
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the price of provisions, though not so great as is generally believed, nor such as ought to alarm this nation; nor will I scruple to pronounce, that this advance has been occasioned by a real scarcity of corn, proceeding from a failure of crops in general; and that, for these five years past, we have had, at one or other time of the year, the most unfavourable seasons for corn that have been known for a long while past. To this must be imputed the natural cause of the dearness of all commodities, and among them, of provisions.

It is the vast influx of wealth, which, though the great encourager of agriculture, brings with it an apparent temporary evil. This is the mother of luxury, which as certainly creates waste, and, by an extraordinary consumption, undoubtedly affects the markets; as was clearly proved to the House of Lords about nine years ago, in the examination of a person who had gone through all the various branches of the butcher's business, and who attributed the great rise in meat, in a great measure, to the luxury of the town, saying, that the tradesman who formerly was contented with a shoulder of mutton, must now have his fillet of veal, &c. and by this luxury's descending to the lowest class, there were

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not those customers for the offal-pieces, which were consequently in a manner thrown away. This might be the opinion of a single man; but certain it is, that the consumption of veal and lamb has increased to a prodigious degree; and, as I mentioned before, the expence of the food necessary to bring those young animals to market being as much in four months as would maintain them as a breeding flock for two years, that must undoubtedly have an effect upon all other butcher's meat, and this will as surely affect other provisions, in a certain proportion.

There is yet another manner in which luxury has operated: it has increased the number of post-horses within these twenty years, as ten to one. The increase of stage-coaches too has been very considerable, as has likewise the number of waggon-horses: these last, indeed, have been in consequence of internal trade: yet all these are, directly or indirectly, in consequence of luxury, which has established so many fashionable places of resort for people of all ranks and denominations, and in which list the city of London has furnished no inconsiderable part; for money, which, in a trading nation, puts all men on a level, soon teaches the tradesman and his family
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that they can associate with people of rank and fashion: thus servants, mimicking their masters and mistresses, as soon forget the prudent œconomy of the pantry and cellar, and vye with my lord's butler and my lady's woman in every wanton extravagance, which, fatal as it proves in the end, does not at first displease the good sober citizen: but this is the natural channel in which riches ever will and ought to flow. It is by these means that the wealth acquired by the trading individual becomes equally diffused among all ranks of men: it is extended even to the chimney-sweeper's boy, who, instead of the crust of bread which used to be his fee, now receives a morsel of meat: but at last, though too late, the tradesman discovers that he and his family have purchased a relish for pleasure and extravagance with a diminution of his capital. He feels with redoubled force every little blow in trade, because he dares not retrench, from a misconstrued pride, and fear of injuring his credit: he stretches every sinew to extend that credit and increase his trade: perhaps, at last, conscious that his own will not support his extravagance, he flies to that of his neighbour, who, at the same moment, may be getting into his. Thus has trade been over-done, and credit, so essential for a commercial nation, totally ruined.

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ruined. Stock-jobbing, and every species of gambling, have succeeded, and have now brought on a general bankruptcy among those people who were once improperly thought the chief support of this country.

But let not this picture deceive us. It only proves what common sense ought to have taught before, which is, that trade can be extended but to a certain degree, and that the only one which can be beneficial to a nation is the export of the produce of the earth. Such part of it as can be manufactured is undoubtedly doubly advantageous: it maintains a number of men who are the strength of a nation, whilst foreigners, who buy the manufactured goods, pay their wages, which, in fact, becomes an advanced price upon our corn and meat. But as the demand for goods may be limited, do not let us confine ourselves to the growth of so much corn only as will maintain them, let the surplus be exported, and though not attended with so much profit, it is always an addition to the other; the returns for which, in merchandize or specie, are our riches. Merchants, necessary as they are, are no more than the carriers of those commodities: take them in any other view, they are men preying upon one another: one individual is enriched, while the other is ruined; and whether the
trade

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trade is among ourselves, or with others, so soon as it exceeds the bounds of our produce and manufactures, it is gambling, and, as in all other games of chance, at the end of the year, the profits will only pay the cards. But miserable as the present scene appears, it by no means proves that the country is not rich; it only shews how money may be, and how it is, dispersed and divided among all ranks, and I could prove, happily for this nation, that much of it is sunk in the bowels of the earth, from which grateful treasury we are sure to receive ample returns. The new cultivated lands, and improvements in agriculture, with the great inland navigations, have swallowed up immense sums in the purchase of corn to feed the labourers. These are the real riches of a country. It would be wrong to imagine, that because some few individuals have over-traded themselves, and want money, therefore the nation is poor; look at the riches that are amassed among the farmers, and bless yourselves that it has got into the hands of men who will turn it to a national benefit; while they thrive, the interest of your funds will continue low, and land will keep its price: these are the only touchstones of the value of money.

But before I quit this subject, let me hint that I do not draw the distinction
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between agriculture, manufactures and commerce; I know them all to be so dependant on each other, that the prevalence of either is prejudicial to this nation: all I contend for is, that the source of the whole is agriculture.

Those who attempt to point out the distinct advantage arising from either agriculture, manufactures, or commerce, are little acquainted with the true policy of this nation; for if they recollect that the natural produce of this country consists in corn for the use of man, and other staple commodities for our manufactures, such as hides, wool, tin, lead, and iron, they will conceive that the labourers of the earth and the manufacturers are so mutually dependent one on the other, that to obtain the greatest national advantage from their reciprocal labours, would almost seem to demand that a just proportionate number of each should be preserved: I say, in point of the profit to be made on the produce of the earth, which is the natural riches of a country, this would seem to be the case, with an additional number in agriculture to provide food for their own body, and the third class, which consists of the navy, army, and idle people: but no advantage could arise from such a distribution without the assistance of traders, whose business it is to
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export our manufactured staple commodities, or the surplus of such as are not required for the different manufactures in their raw state: in return for these, the trader brings us back either specie, or, by way of barter, the luxuries of life, or raw materials for some manufactures, which we have not within ourselves, but are necessary for them. In this manner are these three classes so intimately dependant on each other, that neither can exist alone in this country, I mean to a national advantage; nor in this view is it easy to determine to which should be ascribed the preference in point of rank: for unless we grew our own corn, our manufactures would not be so beneficial to the country, nor without manufactures would our corn be exported to so great advantage; nor would either be nationally advantageous in point of riches if they could not be exported. This therefore calls in the assistance of the merchant, whose trade would not be beneficial to the nation unless his exports consisted in the produce of the earth; and in the proportion that such exports exceed the value of his imports, the balance is in favour of this country.

Let it however be observed, that the advantage arising from this chain of traffic is limited to a certain pitch, beyond which it
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cannot extend: it must be governed by the demand of foreign markets, which is always regulated by the consumption, but too often subject to the caprice of courts; therefore it is impossible to determine the exact proportion of hands proper to be allotted to each different class. It must then remain an established maxim, that, as Sir James Stuart has so ably shewn, each class will, from time to time, be supplied with the overflowings of the other, as exigencies direct: but it should be remembered, that manufactories can at no time employ more than are requisite at that particular time to supply the demands of trade; whereas the culture of the earth cannot be over-done. If the quantity of corn and cattle produced should, by being too great for the consumption, reduce the price below what is a reasonable profit for the farmer, that cheapness will create mouths to eat it, that is, men will flock in from different countries to that spot where there is the greatest plenty. This will make us formidable in point of people, and the taxes on what they consume will increase the revenue, so as to enable the Government to discharge part of its debt, at least enable it to protect its territories, without loading the Poor with a fresh burden. This argument would rather seemingly lead to give the preference to agri-

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agriculture: but I shall contend for no more than to call it the spring of the whole machine.

In contradiction to what I have advanced, I am aware that there are those who will say, that the whole of my theory is disproved by the instance of Holland. But let such remember, that what I have said relates to the policy of England only, and that though Holland has subsisted and become powerful by trade alone, it has been owing to the very particular circumstances which have attended the situation of the Dutch: they established themselves in a little swampy corner, hemmed in on all sides by enemies, whose reciprocal interest it was to protect them against each other: by this means their little spot became an asylum for trade to all parties, and thus they became likewise the carriers and bankers of Europe, and by these concomitant circumstances, art has supplied them with what nature furnishes us.

But to return to the subject of horses, which, I am confident, have helped to raise the price of provisions, for they must consume a great part of the produce of the earth, and in a much greater proportion than other cattle, which are not fed so highly. Therefore, unless it appears that the importation of oats during these last

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twenty years has greatly increased, it is evident that either the quantity of other corn grown, has decreased, or that more ground has been cultivated, and as certain that unless the quantity of grass land has increased in the same degree, there cannot remain the same proportion for the feeding of young steers, as there was before the breeding of these additional horses. With regard to the number that have been exported, as much as it has been exclaimed against, surely no man who considers the matter coolly can see it in any other light than as being greatly beneficial to the nation; for whether we export the corn, or the cattle that feed on it, the money received is for the produce of the earth.

We all know that more land has been taken into culture, and that the inclosing of common-field land has increased the produce: but, I am apt to believe, not in a proportion equal to the consumption; and I am farther of opinion, that a greater part has been devoted to the growth of food for horses: for the extraordinary rise in the price of oats within these twenty years past, in which that grain has exceeded all proportion with other corn, and the uniform and steady price oats have kept at, are such inducements to a farmer, that it is scarcely
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possible to believe he would not attend to the growth of that species of corn, as well as, in the breeding countries, to the raising of colts instead of steers: for a serviceable colt, at three years old, with the assistance of a few pecks of ground meal, will fetch as much as an ox at seven, with a whole summer's fattening. By these methods, I believe, luxury has operated in the rise of provisions: but surely no man will advance so dangerous a doctrine, as to say that any thing which encourages agriculture can be prejudicial to a state.

When I consider the present state of this nation, it is evident to me, that our produce, in a middling year, is but barely equal to our consumption: it is certain, that by the great concourse of the poorer sort of people to great cities, the consumption of wheaten bread is greater than it was when many of these fed on barley, rye, or oats: nor has this species of luxury failed to diffuse itself thro' many country places. It has likewise been demonstrated by many, but particularly by the ingenious author of the Corn-Tracts, that the consumption of wheat has been nearly equal to the growth, and that, even in the most plentiful years, our exports have not amounted to above the value of 947,000*l*. Let those who doubt this fact,

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consult Sir James Stewart's Enquiry into the Principles of Political Oeconomy, vol. I. page 58. If these are facts, it is pretty evident to me, that our average crops do but barely equal the consumption, and consequently, that, when crops fail, we must feel that deficiency. It is therefore not to be wondered at, that if after five successive bad years, we should be apprehensive of want; at least that provisions must rise. The evil points out its own remedy. If your consumption is greater than, or but equal to your produce, increase the latter, and plenty must reduce the price: for though other causes may operate in a certain degree, plenty or scarcity must govern the price of all provisions. This increase can only be produced by a sensible encouragement to the farmer, by convincing him that his interest is concerned in it, by securing to him a constant consumption for his grain, that he may not be subject to ruin by his trade being over-done. As the means of doing this are evident to me, though perhaps not to every one, I shall point them out in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

On the means of procuring plenty.

MY principal aim in the foregoing pages has been to prove that the present advanced price of provisions is not occasioned by the supposed increase of large farms, and to explain to the Legislature, that though Luxury and Foretallers may bear some proportion in the cause, the chief one is real scarcity. For the truth of this, I most sincerely wish the Parliament would examine such men, from the different counties of England, as they think they can rely on: for a few partial examinations cannot determine the point; as local circumstances will ever misguide. The average of the whole will, I fear, prove what I assert: and I am still more concerned to say, that it is not susceptible of any present relief. All that can be done by Legislature, as the laws now stand, has been put in force; I mean, the opening of our ports: But where is the corn to come from? In Holland, it is as dear as with us. The ports in Flanders and France are shut. In the Baltic, they have been open and shut several times within these twelve months. Sicily is shut, except for a limited

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quantity to be exported for the use of the Pope's dominions. In America, wheat is now 5 s. 6 d. sterling the bushel, and cannot be imported here at our price. If these facts are true, it will be allowed that there is no great prospect of immediate relief. Patience is our only resource. We have had five successive bad crops, and this last more generally so than any of the former. It has been nearly the same all over Europe: therefore, till there is a plentiful year, corn cannot be cheap. All that the Legislature can do, is to endeavour to guard against such an evil befalling us again; and this, in my opinion, is in their power: but, salutary as the measure may be, it cannot be effectually accomplished till corn is plentiful, and nearly at an equal price all over Europe.

But corn is not the only article in provisions that is thought too dear: meat bears a just proportion to it, and till the latter is reduced, it will be vain to expect a fall in the former: in fact, they are, and ought to be, so dependant on each other, that the same cause will produce the same effects in each; and it is clear to me, that more land is wanted both for pasture and the plough; for it is not to be disputed that the number of horses kept in this country, and

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and the number necessary for breeding those that are exported, must consume the produce of many of those acres which would be allotted to other purposes. This is undoubtedly one of the causes of provisions being risen in price: but it is an evil attended with so great benefit, that it ought to be endured; for it is an encouragement to agriculture, and by whatsoever mode this is encouraged, it will operate every way to the advantage of this country, which ought to consider husbandry as the source of her wealth and strength.

The case is the same in regard to the destruction of lambs and calves, which certainly consume as much food as would maintain a much greater number of rearing stock: but this is a species of luxury which, though attended with some present inconveniencies, must be complied with; excepting in particular times, as when a murrain alarms the nation: for, exclusive of the political sense in which the national advantage of agriculture should be considered, it is dangerous to check the innocent luxury of a free and wealthy people. The extraordinary incentive which Britons have, beyond all other nations, to exert their ingenuity and industry, is a perfect security for their enjoying the fruits of their

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labours as they please, uncontrouled by any thing but the laws of the land, which should be, and are, a check on those only who wish to go beyond the bounds of civil society; for surely every one has a right to enjoy his own inherited possessions; and how much more so is that man entitled to such security, who acquires his by industry? Yet this security encourages luxury, which, in some measure, increases the supposed evil. Against this there is not, in my opinion, any salutary remedy. A government may indeed avail itself of the folly of men, and raise a considerable sum by levying a severe tax on post-horses, and other different species of luxury; but how far that is adviseable, I humbly submit to Legislature. I am confident it would increase the revenue, for I am certain it would increase the evil, as every man is proud of vying with his neighbour in extravagance; but if it is an evil, let it not meet with such encouragement, and let us attend to those points which only can afford real and constant plenty, I mean, the cultivation of more land; for though many waste acres have lately been brought into culture, it is evident from what has been said above, that the quantity is not equal to the increased consumption: was it otherwise, provisions would be cheap, because they would

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would be plentiful; which is the only thing that can counterbalance the effect of riches and luxury. In evidence of what I say, let me remind the reader of the price of provisions, and even dainties, at Bath, to which, though a place of dissipation, many resort in order to live cheap.

This being my idea, I shall not scruple to point out, as the first necessary step to be taken, the inclosing and parcelling out of all the King's Forests and Chaces, which now lie a disgrace to a Minister who wishes to be thought to listen to the complaints of a nation. Let corn supply the place of those miserable pollards, and let flocks and herds supplant the half-starved deer which prowl about to tempt poor wretches to the gallows; for it is deer-stealing that induces those who are born on the chaces to lead an idle life, which corrupts their morals, and makes them the terror of every honest man in their neighbourhood. Their example likewise corrupts many who might otherwise, probably, be useful industrious subjects. By this a minister would entail immortal honour on his administration, and at the same time that the poor would be employed and fed, the coffers of his Royal Master would be filled. The task is not in reality so very arduous as some may

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imagine, nor need the Minister who undertakes it fear the resentment of those who derive to themselves emoluments from the present useless and desolate state of those otherwise truly valuable lands. Pensions for their lives, far superior to what they can ever make by their forest-tenures, may be secured to them, and yet a triple residue be left to their Prince, who, in the present state of those lands, can reap no other benefit from them than that of providing for a good servant, and that too in a manner which no good man would wish.

To answer the intended good purpose, the undertaking must be conducted with judgment, and a strict attention to justice. Let then the first step be the bringing a bill into Parliament, to oblige the several parishes and persons who have right of commonage, &c. upon the King's forests, to ascertain those rights, and to mark out such boundaries as shall be equivalent for them, and let the turn of the scale be in their favour; for the purpose of the public will be equally answered if these lands are but appropriated: they will then by degrees come into culture. Such rights as shall not be ascertained within a certain limited time, to be settled by commissioners appointed by Parliament; and what shall afterwards

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afterwards remain to the Crown, may be disposed of in the following manner:

Allot to each cottager his few acres, and to each little farmer such proportion as he can conveniently add to his farm; if many of these two classes are near each other, they will form an useful village: then let the more open parts be divided into lots of one hundred acres, and be put up to auction on such terms as the Crown can grant, either for three lives, or upon leases of thirty-one years, renewable every seven years. When I say, lots of one hundred acres, I do not mean to confine every purchaser to a single lot: let every man purchase what tract he pleases; for, certainly, it is from the opulent man that the greatest benefit is to be expected; but to secure that benefit, let it be a condition, that within a certain number of years, the whole of each man's purchase shall be in culture, on pain of forfeiture of his whole purchase, with every partial improvement that has been made thereon. This will secure to the Crown such purchasers as can accomplish what they undertake, and will prevent the land's being bought up by any rich individual who may wish to preserve it for deer and moor-game: these are truly monopolizers of lands, and not those who, employing

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employing 10,000 l. in agriculture, can, and do, make land produce more than the little farmer who can barely subsist: however, both are necessary; for as I have before said, every man's farm ought to be in proportion to his capital, and thus both are equally useful to the community. I repeat this to shew, that though I think the little farmer necessary, I would not wish the opulent one to be excluded; and under the restrictions I have mentioned, no evil can ensue; for though these laws are not enforced at the distance of America, yet here they might with ease. Let every possible encouragement be given to the undertakers: let the first fine be in lieu of so many years rent, which should not commence before the seventh year; let these lands remain for ever free from tythe, &c. making a proper provision for the church by an allotment of a certain number of acres; and for the encouragement of cattle, let those who work oxen be exempted from a certain proportion of rent: that may once more introduce the use of those noble animals. Encouragement may prevail; but taxes and restrictions operate too hastily and too harshly, and will never answer any good end in a free country. Let but the experiment be made in one single chace or forest, and by the effect of that let the rest be governed.

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Let an accurate survey be made, and the different lots delineated: this will be the only expence that will attend it; for each lot will find its value. The only restriction I would annex to the tenure should be, that those lots which were converted into arable land should, within a certain number of years, have a barn and two cottages erected on them; or, if intended for grass, sheds and cottages suitable to the quantity of land. Let all the trees, excepting only such as might be picked out for his Majesty's yards, and which should be previously marked, be included in the purchase-money of the lot on which they stand. This will be a reciprocal advantage to both: it will, on the one hand, save the expence of removing them, and it will enable the tenant either to preserve some in case of pasture land, or he will have wood on the spot to erect the necessary buildings. If such a plan as this should ever take place, it would bring in a considerable revenue to the Crown, and set a noble example to gentlemen of landed property to convert their many barren acres into useful pasture or corn-fields.

A better authority can no where be produced to support my arguments on this occasion,

occasion, than that of the illustrious Mr. Evelyn, in his *Sylva*. His advice on this subject does honour to the country that gave him birth. His description of our forests, in a quotation from Lawson, points out their deplorable state in too lively colours; nor have we reason to think they have been improved in the course of these last hundred years. "In our forests (says he) you shall have for one lively thriving tree, four, nay sometimes twenty-four, evil thriving, rotten, and dying trees; and instead of trees, thousands of bushes and shrubs. What rottenness, what hollowness, what dead arms, withered tops, curtailed trunks; what loads of moss, dropping boughs, and dying branches, shall you see every where!"

On this Mr. Evelyn justly observes, that the condition they are in speaks them to be the property of a broken and decaying freeholder; and adds, "Let not then the Royal patrimony bear a bankrupt's reproach."

But when I quote such an author, let me here give his opinion of the mode in which he thinks those tracts can be made most useful to the public.

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"There is not, says he, a cheaper, easier, or more prompt expedient to advance ship-timber, than to solicit that in all his Majesty's forests, woods, and parks, the spreading oak, &c. be cherished by plowing and sowing." He supposes the royal forests to contain about 200,000 acres, and after pointing out the method of improving them, concludes in the following words: "The care of so public and honourable an enterprise is a right noble and royal undertaking; and I do pronounce it more worthy of a Prince who truly consults his glory in the highest interest of his subjects, than that of gaining battles or subduing a province."

Mr. Evelyn has so properly recommended a provident care of timber for the navy, and so judiciously pointed out the method in which it should be managed, that I cannot but hope some attention may be paid to the instructions of so justly-celebrated a man: therefore all that I shall propose to myself here will be to make my plan coincide as much as possible with his ideas. He tells us, that to procure good timber, every oak should stand single, and that the frequent plowing of the ground will cherish and nourish the roots so as to make the tree thrive amazingly: but, though it is with

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the utmost diffidence that I shall venture to offer an opinion in competition with him, I cannot help remarking, that if his plan is properly executed over the whole forest, all thoughts of converting it into arable must drop, for the shade of those trees disposed as he recommends would render it unfit for corn; and it is as certain, that if they were confined to hedge-rows they would not become such fine timber, for the ditches, which would naturally be close to them, must prevent the extension of some of their roots, and the bushes and briars would injure them by excluding the air from their trunks. I would therefore propose, that half of the land be dedicated to pasture, where the trees might stand scattered over the fields, and the distance which Mr. Evelyn allots them would rather benefit than prejudice the pasturage, as well as afford shade for the cattle. By constant feeding, the ground will certainly be enriched, and if it is likewise kept free from bushes, I cannot see why the trees upon it should not thrive nearly, if not quite, as well as if it was cultivated by the plough, which operation could be almost solely for their benefit, as the crops that might grow there would, I doubt, scarcely repay the expence of labour. The remaining half of the ground would be sufficient to grow corn
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for the inhabitants of the forest, who could not be very numerous under this culture, together with cabbages, turnips, and fodder for the beasts in the winter: thus, supposing, as Mr. Evelyn does, that there are two hundred thousand acres of land in the forests, &c. one hundred thousand of them will be pasture. To the four trees which he allots to each acre, making in all 400,000 trees, I shall add in the intermediate spaces, an equal number for succession; and I would have all the pasture land be surrounded by a nursery well secured with double fences.

This is the way in which, I think, the forests and chaces may be converted to the greatest use: for whether they are employed in breeding and fattening of cattle, or in growing of corn, they will equally answer the intended purpose of producing plenty; and in this manner a valuable treasure will be kept up for the navy. As to the mode of accomplishing it, that requires only determination; for the business is then done. Let the conditions of planting, fencing, and preserving, be annexed to the lease, under a forfeiture of it upon non-compliance with the terms; and in consideration of the trouble and expence of preserving the trees and nurseries, let there be
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a proportionate deduction in the rent. An annual survey, by an honest man, would easily enforce the execution of whatever might be proposed.

If what I have thrown out on this subject should either coincide with the general opinion, or afford any hint for a better plan, I shall think myself happy. But at the same time that I deliver these as my sentiments in regard to the advantage which would accrue to the Public from the inclosure and cultivation of the royal forests and chaces, I confess that it is without even the smallest hope of ever seeing any part of this plan put in execution. Many difficulties, which must be obvious to every one who knows the distribution of places dependant on these forests, seem almost insuperable.—I therefore beg leave to offer another plan, one that is practicable, and which cannot fail to do honour to the administration of the Minister who shall effect it. Let a sum of money be voted to his Majesty, to purchase a tract of land on the moors, and let this land be put into the hands of an intelligent industrious man, to improve it; and let the profit be his reward. The sum thus sunk will be the only expence incurred by Government; and such an

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an example to men of landed property will be truly worthy of a great King.

When I appear so strenuous an advocate for cultivating waste lands, it may readily be believed, that I shall recommend as strongly the giving of every possible encouragement to inclosing bills. Let not the mistaken zeal of well-disposed, but ignorant people, persuade the man of sense that it is prejudicial to the Poor. Create but work for them, and their numbers cannot be too great; nor will they want bread. The benefit which they are supposed to reap from commons, in their present state, I know to be merely nominal; nay, indeed, what is worse, I know, that, in many instances, it is an essential injury to them, by being made a plea for their idleness; for, some few excepted, if you offer them work, they will tell you, that they must go to look up their sheep, cut furzes, get their cow out of the pound, or perhaps say they must take their horse to be shod, that he may carry them to a horse-race or cricket-match. The first is plausible; but I am sorry to say merely so, because the benefit which the sheep are of either to himself or the country is not an object worth notice: the little care that such people can take of them, frequently occasions the loss of their lambs,

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and the difficulty, nay indeed impossibility, of supporting them in the winter, is the death of the few scrubby things which have been eating the grass that would have maintained an useful flock: but if there is a farmer in the neighbourhood who does keep a flock, then the benefit which the cottager would have, even in the summer, must vanish; for if there is a shepherd to this flock, he will take care that his sheep have the best of the feed; and what is more remarkable, though true, is, that if a large flock are daily turned out on a common by themselves, they only will receive the benefit of it, and the common sheep will fly before them to seek their miserable sustenance among the bushes and furzes. It is on this account that our commons, circumstanced as they generally are, without limitation, are advantageous only to the most considerable men of the parish; whereas, if they were inclosed, they would produce twice the quantity of food if reserved for pasture, because the furzes would be grubbed up; or if they were divided, they would produce their proportion of corn. I mention these trivial circumstances in answer to some gentlemen who, I am convinced, oppose inclosures from a laudable spirit of taking care of the Poor, which I would propose doing in a much more

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more effectual manner in all future inclosures.

My plan is, to allot to each cottager three or four acres, which should be annexed to it without power of alienation, and without rent; but under the covenant of being kept in grass, except such small part as should be necessary for a garden: this would keep the cottager in more plenty than a very extensive range of common: he and his family must then cultivate the garden, or suffer as they ought to do: and to obviate the plea of their wanting fuel, let it be fenced and planted with ash and other quick growing trees, at the expence of those who are to have the property of the common. This would be a real benefit to him, as it would employ his wife and children, and help to support his family whilst he is at work for the farmers in the neighbourhood, instead of depending, as they too often do, upon the supposed profits of their commonage. The commons in the parish of Chailley in Suffex afford remarkable instances of what I advance. Mr. Young observes, in Vol. iii. p. 153, of the Farmer's Tour, that in that parish the rates are 9s. in the pound; and on enquiry into the cause of it, found, that it was owing to the extensiveness of the commons, which

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induced many to rely on the cows and sheep they could keep, to exempt them from labour; the consequence of which was their coming on the parish upon any loss they suffered in their cattle, having acquired that idle habit which would not permit them to work. Instead of this, an industrious life leads them to a knowledge of those real and reasonable comforts which I wish them to enjoy; such as, a good dwelling decently furnished, they and their children well fed and clad; and if these last are early brought up to honest labour, instead of pilfering, there cannot be a better security for their not becoming a burden to the parish.

I am aware that there may be objections started to what I have now proposed, by saying, that though this land may be secured to the present occupier, yet it will be in the power of the landlord, provided it is not the cottager's own, to raise the rent, or that, when the cottagers families grow up, and more cottages are built, the ground being all disposed of, there will not remain any to annex to the new cottages. In my opinion, these difficulties are easily obviated; for as the landlords are to be benefited by their proportion of the common, they may, by the same act, be restrained from raising the rents of the old ones; and
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as the land-holders are the only people who will build, or grant building leases, they may be obliged in future to annex to each new-erected cottage an equal proportion of land.

There is indeed one other restrictive clause which I would add to these inclosing bills, I mean when commons are to be converted into arable land: it is, that for every hundred acres of arable land, the proprietor should be obliged to erect a barn and threshing-floor; for confident I am that there are frequently large tracts of land which have not a sufficient number of them, and that by this means the farmer is often accused of retaining his corn, when in fact he cannot thresh it out so fast as he would wish to do.

Another improvement in which legislature can interfere, is the inclosure of common-field land, which I know requires their cordial assistance as much, if not more, than the commons I have been speaking of; for, in the present state of those lands, they are not capable of producing half what they would otherwise do, unless indeed the whole belongs to some very few, who are sensible enough to agree among themselves on a good mode of culture; but

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this is rarely the case: and though it may appear ridiculous to some of my readers that I enter so minutely into the little detail of farming, I cannot refrain from enumerating the many disadvantages which attend their present situation, that I may be the better able to point out the benefit that would accrue to the nation if they were inclosed and properly divided. The general face of such common-fields, being divided into narrow slips, makes it obvious to every traveller, whether conversant in farming or not, that they belong to different tenants, and it is a certain fact, that, frequently, a man who rents one hundred acres will not have ten acres adjoining to each other, but, often, scattered over the whole tract in small parcels, sometimes so small as half acres, but often in single acres. It will not require much rhetoric to prove, even to a man not conversant in the business, that this must occasion great loss of time in sending the horses and men from spot to spot, in plowing, carting, or in harvest time; nor is it necessary to demonstrate, that waste of labour is waste of produce. Besides, by these small divisions there is generally a real waste of land, and in many countries a very considerable one, commonly called *balks*. These balks are of different widths, from two to sixteen feet: they

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they are never ploughed, but are kept in grass, under pretence of their being common-field pasture. They are, literally, of no benefit to either the occupier or the Poor; for they are too narrow either to mow, or to graze without a boy to attend each beast with a halter; and when the corn is off, their grass is too old to feed: nor ought the common-field to be kept open till it is consumed, for that must prevent putting in wheat in the proper season, and is a total prohibition of turnips and cabbages, often so necessary to the farmer, and consequently to the country. Likewise, the encouragement which the plough gives to the sides of these balks encourages the grass and other weeds to run into the farmer's corn-land. In many instances too, where a bad course of husbandry prevails, and while the common-field tenure is such that the whole must be governed by the custom of the field, it prevents all improvement let an individual be ever so industrious: it will be said that he has his land accordingly; but that is what I lament.

Can there be a clearer proof of the national advantage of inclosing and properly dividing the land, than that the farmer will cheerfully give double the rent for the same land when inclosed? Does not this point out, that he can make it produce

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more; and is it not as clear that the nation must be benefited by that increase?

I should not have dwelt so long on this tedious subject, but that I am persuaded plenty is wanting, and that these are the most likely means to procure it: when that is done, then, and not till then, is the time for the legislature to take up the great object of a free port for corn: then, let every act that regards the corn laws be repealed; make the trade free and open for export or import at all times and on all occasions, without the least restraint; abolish every port-charge, nay even the smallest incumbrance: let corn flow like water, and it will find its level. Then, and by that means only, will be introduced a set of traders which this country never knew; I mean, *Corn-Merchants*, who will most cheerfully embark in a commerce where so quick returns are made. Watchful of their neighbours, and attentive to their own interest, they will not miss an opportunity of supplying the market that is in want. If corn is plentiful here and scarce abroad, they will export: that will naturally give a start to the market, and the rise of the market will as naturally stop the exportation. Thus will the price of corn always be nearly on an equal footing, and not subject to the great variations which must

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must ever be the consequence when the opening or shutting of the port depends on the price at Bear-key, where an artificial rise or fall may ever mislead the Legislature, while a few individuals will reap the sole benefit of what is calculated for a national advantage; not without danger, sometimes, of bringing on a famine: whereas if the corn-trade was perfectly free, men of capital would engage in it, and the price of corn would be as well regulated and as well known as the price of exchange, which is alternately in favour of London, Amsterdam, Hamburgh, and Cadiz, as circumstances direct, and in which there cannot be any craft. The balance would, from time to time, be in favour of the exporter. This is a fact, and as well known as that the course of exchange points out in whose favour is the balance of trade; which is, in other words, that the country which exports most of its own produce, must have the greatest remittance made to it.

The dread which some may have of monopolies, cannot bear an argument; for, by the account lately laid before the House of Commons, the yearly produce of wheat alone is said to be 4,000,000 of quarters, which I believe far short of the reality*; but

* See *Young's Northern Tour*, vol. IV. p. 349.

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but even that quantity, at 30 s. a quarter, would amount to 6,000,000 *l. per ann.* Will any man, or set of men, dream of such a monopoly? especially as, if it should take place, it could not fail of being doubled in a few years; for as it is the steady and uniform price of a commodity which engages the real merchant, such as this country once knew, to embark his capital, believe me, the same would operate with the farmer. Let us not run away with a notion that the growth of corn is not to be adopted as a system of trade, as much as the growth of rice, or sugar-canes. Whatever may be the opinion of men in great cities, I know it ought to be, I know it is; for there is not a good farmer in any country, who has not a regular system in his business, and who does not adopt an uniform course of crops. In confirmation of what I say, look to Norfolk, where the course is regularly turnips, barley, clover, wheat: Does not this prove, that the farmer prefers a regular certain profit to the chance-gain of speculative husbandry? Is it not then as evident, that the farmers would prefer the reasonable profits of a steady market, to the present uncertainty which keeps them in constant alarm? and with how much more pleasure would they deal with the open fair trader, from whom they could not fail
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having the price of the market, than with the present speculators, of whom they are ever jealous, and always suspicious that when such buyers appear in markets, some sudden rise is expected? But without allowing them this degree of common sense, and even suspecting them of the practice of retaining their corn, the freedom of the trade in which such capitals would be engaged would force their corn to market: exportation would induce them to send it thither; and importation would render their scheme of retention abortive. I have just mentioned these few circumstances relative to the farmer, to prove that the freedom of the trade must encourage agriculture, and that the natural consequence must be an increase in the produce: if so, it is as evident that England must always have a surplus to export, and the national advantage that will accrue therefrom cannot, I believe, require explanation.

To those whose views do not extend beyond the bellies of the poor, I shall produce a stronger argument. Look up to Amsterdam, and wonder how that city, with every natural disadvantage that can attend the corn-trade, has, for many years past, been the magazine of Europe; comparatively speaking, without a blade of corn
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growing in its country, with one of the worst ports in the German Ocean, the *Texel*, and with a mud-bank within two leagues of the city, namely the *Pompus*, which will not float a vessel even of two hundred tuns, except in spring-tides; wonder, I say, that this city should supply all Europe. The reason is, that there the trade is free, and there the most wealthy people of the country are corn merchants. I speak within bounds when I say, that one half of the trade of the city of Amsterdam is corn. Corn was as plentiful there, and as cheap as it had been for some years before, when, in 1767, England was under the greatest apprehensions of a famine; and when it was necessary to take, during the recess of Parliament, a step which this country cannot yet have forgot.

In answer to this it may be asked, By what accident then were the Dutch in such distress for corn the last year? The reason is obvious: too great security will sometimes put men off their guard; unused to know the want of corn, they might inadvertently go too great lengths before they perceived the mischief; the intended monopoly of the courts of Vienna and Berlin, added to the distress of Poland, might increase the general scarcity, and prevent their

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their usual supplies. The like could not probably befall us, who are naturally so averse to the idea of monopolizing, and consequently would be ever on the watch. Besides, our supplies are within ourselves, and would, I am confident, annually increase.

I am aware that there is another sort of men who would oppose the free exportation on a more plausible foundation, namely, the danger of our manufacturers wanting bread, and being thereby rendered useless subjects, as the raising of their prices would fix a prohibition on their goods in foreign markets. To these I shall reply, that profuse plenty in manufacturing towns does not produce more labour, but the contrary. It is a fact well known to those who are conversant in that matter, that scarcity, to a certain degree, promotes industry, and that the manufacturer who can subsist on three days work, will be idle and drunken the remainder of the week. I shall proceed yet farther, and say, that those manufactures in which foreigners cannot vie with us, will go abroad under every disadvantage that may attend them in regard to price; such as Sheffield and Birmingham hard-wares—France must and will have them at any rate. In proof of what

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what I say, we have continued to supply that country with them, notwithstanding their threat when Mr. C. Townshend was Chancellor of the Exchequer, that unless we would permit the importation of cambricks, &c. they would prohibit the use of our hard-ware, and some other of our manufactures. So it will ever be with our woollen manufactures of Norwich, Leeds, Exeter, Colchester, and Salisbury; consisting in bays, druggets, long-ells, shalloons, duroys, flannels, &c. these will go to Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Germany, and even into the South of France through Genoa. Russia and the Northern parts must have the Leeds manufactory; and Holland and Flanders some particular articles in considerable quantities. And let it be observed, that these articles are the most beneficial objects in our woollen manufactory, being made of all English wool, whereas broad-cloth must be part Spanish. As to the trade to the Levant, which we have lost, it has not been owing to the price, but to the cloth being of an improper quality. France, which has been long in the use of making the thin cloths which are required at that market, must have the trade; whilst our manufacturers, ignorantly and obstinately persisting in making that strong cloth which we pride ourselves in,

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cannot sell a piece. Many attempts have been made to obtain the thin cloth; samples have been sent over to our merchants; the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, throw out premiums, but all to no purpose. Not that this was the only cause of our losing that part of the Levant trade, for, notwithstanding the precautions at Blackwell-hall, frauds were committed by our traders that did dishonour to this nation. However, allowing every advantage which attends the exportation of our manufactures, in which the corn that fed the manufacturers is exported to double advantage, by feeding those men whose labours we export, it will be agreed, that the demand for our manufactures is limited, and that, under particular treaties of commerce, or ruptures with states, a total prohibition of them may take place. That never can be the case with corn; a remarkable instance of which appeared in the year 1748, when the French, though at war with us, contracted for 400,000 quarters. There cannot be a more glaring proof than this, of the great national benefit that would attend the free exportation of grain; and if that can be done, with as great a certainty of having corn cheap at home, is not that country mad, who have it naturally in their power, and will not
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adopt the scheme. That plenty, and a more equal price, which I will maintain is the great encouragement to the farmer, has been produced by exportation, no man who has read the history of this country can deny.

In 1689, an act passed to give a bounty on the exportation of corn, with repeal of customs on exportation. The wise intention of the Legislature is evident; it was to increase agriculture, I mean the plough, for that had ever been neglected; the natural consequence of a continued scene of intestine broils. What was the consequence? Corn became cheaper, and was reduced from 2*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.* to 1*l.* 15*s.* 1*d.* in 1756. The wisdom of this law, and its salutary effects during a course of seventy years, sufficiently proves the strength of my argument, namely, that exportation, which is consumption, will encourage agriculture, that this will produce plenty, and that plenty must naturally reduce the price. The facts which I allude to have been accurately stated, and the advantages arising from the exportation of corn clearly proved by the author of the Corn Tracts, from whom I differ in opinion only with regard to retaining the bounty, and allowing any restraint whatever in the corn-

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trade. A perfect freedom is all that is now requisite; but that freedom ought to be without the least check or controul: the very motive for instituting the bounty, proves that it is now needless.

In former years, when England was divided into many little principalities, and consequently in eternal warfare, flocks and herds were the natural riches of the people, as being easily removed: the plough was of course neglected. In the year 1537, the size of flocks was limited to 2000, and in 1547 it was reduced to 1550. This was done to encourage the plough; and to the same end commons were inclosed. In 1563, the exportation of corn was allowed, and this continued in force, under different modes, till 1688, when a bounty thereon was first granted. Thus was agriculture first nourished; and of such consequence was it deemed in a national light, that a bounty was given to the farmer to indemnify him in an undertaking which might afterwards prove beneficial to the nation. In short, that wise legislature knew that the produce of the earth, whether gold, lead, or corn, was the riches of the state, and it was a sensible encouragement to the subject to search for those riches in the bowels of the earth. In no other light could it

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be seen: for if it was supposed that the husbandman could only continue to support himself by his labour, and that there would be no surplus to export, or that foreigners should be bribed to purchase that surplus at an equivalent to the value of the national gain, what benefit could ensue? It was evidently meant, as in the whale and herring fishery, to indemnify adventurers in a hazardous undertaking: but when that undertaking ceases to be hazardous, and the trade is become beneficial, the encouragement is no longer necessary. Such is now the situation of our agriculture; and happily for this country it is in so flourishing a state, that all the farmer requires is perfect liberty to sell when and where he pleases: but that cannot take place, unless the same free liberty be given to people to become purchasers, which can never happen so long as the least restraint hangs over the trade. The merchant, who engages his capital, must be as uncontrolled in the sale as in the purchase, and the benefit which the nation is to expect from the interference of the merchant naturally is, that he will settle proper correspondencies abroad, as well as that he will be intimately acquainted with the state of our markets at home; in short, he will be in corn, what the great remittancer is in bills of exchange: but if we
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are to expect the merchant to import when he finds the nation is in want of it, a security must be given to himself and his correspondents, that their property is safe, and that if their corn comes to a bad market, they shall have liberty to take it back again, and not be treated in the manner they were in 1767: for when their cargoes then came into the river, the factors took the alarm, and sunk the price below what the foreign corn could be sold at: nor were the importers suffered to carry it out again; but here their corn lay till it was damaged, and sold to feed hogs. This must ever be the case with a partial opening or shutting of the ports. An artificial price, made for the purpose by designing schemers, may ever misguide; nor can legislature rely on the information they are likely to obtain, at least not in so short a time as may be requisite; and under these circumstances, depend on it, foreigners will ever be averse to send us corn; for if, as in the abovementioned instance, they are only to be made use of as tools to check the villainy of our own traders, they will not submit to it; but if the trade was perfectly open, they would deal with us in that as in other commodities.

How much more favourably are we situated than the Dutch to supply all Europe
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with corn! But to do that there must not be the smallest incumbrance whatever on the trade; not even the slightest port-charge. Let freight and insurance be the only burthen. These, for exportation, are, in time of peace,

	Freight.	Insurance.
To Lisbon, } Cadiz, }	from 12 to 15s. per Ton.	— from 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ per Cent.
Barcelona, } Alicante, } Malaga, } Genoa, }	— 15 to 18s. ditto.	— 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ per Cent.
Marfeilles, } Leghorn, } Naples, }	— 17s. 6d. to 20s. ditto.	— 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ per Cent.

Thus the average of freight would be about 16s. per ton, or 4s. per quarter, exclusive of from 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. insurance. A saving of this to the exporter, with any rise of our market, would naturally stop too great an exportation. To prove the probability of what I assert, let any one examine Mr. Cook's corn-tables as published by authority of parliament. It will be found, throughout the whole of them, that, all along the coast where corn has been shipped off to supply the London market, and under that pretence, with still greater advantage to France, corn has been uniformly cheaper than in the inland counties. There may, indeed, likewise be other reasons for it; but I am confident the chief one is,

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that

that there being a constant demand, a constant source of plenty flows in; and though the temptations to ship off have been great, a saving of freight and insurance has been thought an adequate profit to the merchant.

I am aware that, though there may be some who will agree with me that exportation will encourage agriculture, and consequently produce plenty, yet others will say, that free importation may be as great a check, and under particular circumstances ruin the farmer, and thus affect the landed interest; that is, if by chance crops should fail in this country, and there should be universal plenty every where else, corn might be imported at a much lower price than the farmer could afford to sell it for; this might occasion a loss to him, which this country cannot wish, nor ought to permit; for it would naturally be a total discouragement to tillage.

Let us see how this matter is likely to operate. The only country, in my opinion, from whence we can apprehend such an importation is America; where, some say, they can afford to export at 20s. but to this must be added, commission, freight, insurance, wharfage, waste, and damage.

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Thus

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	l.	s.	d.
Thus then suppose wheat	1	0	0
Commission $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. -	0	0	6
Freight - - -	0	8	0
Insurance $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. -	0	0	6
Wharfage - - -	0	0	6
Waste and damage, 10 per cent. -	0	2	0
No average is paid by the underwriter for damage to the corn, unless the ship is stranded.			
To this must likewise be added the difference of the value between the corn grown here and that which has been so long on board ship: this cannot be less than			
	0	2	6
	<hr/>		
	1	14	0
	<hr/>		

On the other hand, I am informed that the average price at which wheat has been brought from America to our market is nearer 48 s.

However, let us consider at what price the farmer can afford to sell under the different circumstance of good and bad crops, in which I shall make some allowance for the improved culture of this country, which is, that of sowing wheat on clover lays instead of a dunged fallow. This will enable him to sell at a lower price, as I shall

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endeavour to explain by the following calculation, supposing his course to be turnips, barley, clover, wheat.

This is indeed a very profitable course, and indicates good land; but it would be endless to take all the courses that would suit different soils; nor will it be difficult to form a general opinion from the following calculation.

I. Turnips.

	l.	s.	d.
Average Rent - - -	0	12	6
Plowing 4 times - - -	1	0	0
Harrowing - - -	0	4	6
Seed - - -	0	1	0
Hoeing - - -	0	7	6
Tythe - - -	0	3	0
Rates - - -	0	1	6
Dung - - -	4	0	0
Fences - - -	0	1	0
Wear and tear - - -	0	1	0
Extraordinary expences } on the farm	0	1	0
Water-furrowing - - -	0	1	0
	<hr/>		
Expences	6	14	0
Product	2	5	0
	<hr/>		

The product's being valued at 45 s. may be deemed too high, because the best turnips are often sold in distant countries at 30 s. but it

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must be observed, that is when there is great plenty, and in districts where plowing and labour is much cheaper than the average I have stated it at; likewise it must be considered that 2*l.* 5*s.* is far short of the profit that is made by feeding them off with their own flock; and within 10 or 15 miles from London they are often sold at 3*l.* to feed off on the land, and 6*l.* or 7*l.* per acre to draw: under all these circumstances I cannot think I have over-rated them.

II. Barley.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Rent	0	12	6
Three plowings	0	15	0
Harrowing	0	3	0
Seed, average 3 bush.	0	9	0
Striking furrows	0	0	6
Water-furrowing	0	1	0
Mowing	0	1	6
Carting and stacking	0	4	6
Tythe	0	3	0
Rates	0	1	6
Threshing, 4 quarters	0	6	0
Fences	0	1	0
Wear and tear	0	1	0
Extraordinary expences	0	1	0
Carting to market	0	5	0
	<hr/>		
	3	5	6

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	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Product, 4 quarters,			
at 24 <i>s.</i>	4	16	0
Straw	0	15	0
Sheep feed	0	2	6
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	5	13	6

III. Clover.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Average rent	-	-	0 12 6
Seed	-	-	0 6 0
Mowing and raking twice, carrying and stacking			0 14 0
Tythe	-	-	0 3 0
Rates	-	-	0 1 6
Extraordinary expences, Wear and tear			0 3 0
Cutting, binding & carting	0	15	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2	15	0

Product, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ loads, at 40 <i>s.</i>	5	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Or,

Rent	-	-	0 12 6
Seed	-	-	0 6 0
Tythe, rates, &c.			0 7 6
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Product when fed	1	6	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2	0	0

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<i>Expences.</i>		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>Product.</i>		
		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
When mowed		2	15	0	5	0	0
When fed		1	6	0	2	0	0
Average		4	1	0	7	0	0
Average		2	0	6	3	10	0

IV. Wheat.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Rent - - -	0	12	6
One plowing -	0	5	0
Harrowing and fowing -	0	2	0
Seed 2 ½ bushels -	0	15	0
Striking furrows -	0	0	6
Water-furrowing -	0	1	0
Weeding -	0	2	6
Reaping - -	0	6	0
Harvesting - -	0	4	6
Tythe rate -	0	4	6
Threshing - -	0	9	0
Wear and tear, &c. -	0	3	0
Carting to market -	0	5	0

		<i>Expences</i>			<i>Product.</i>		
		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
		3	10	6			
3 Quarters at 46s. 8d.		7	0	0			
Straw - - -		1	0	0			
		8	0	0			

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<i>Total Expences.</i>		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>Total Product.</i>		
		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1st Year, Turnips		6	14	0	2	5	0
2d Do. Barley		3	5	6	5	13	6
3d Do. Average } clover }		2	0	6	5	10	3
4th Do. Wheat		3	10	6	8	0	0
		15	10	6	19	8	6
					15	10	6
Profit - - -					3	18	0

By the foregoing estimate, which is indeed on an excellent course of husbandry upon land that is proper for it, it appears that the farmer may, by great care and with good luck, obtain about 25 per cent. per ann. but to do this he must sell his wheat at 46s. 8d. and his barley at 24s. It must likewise be observed, that it is not every soil that will admit of a course attended with so much profit. However, the conclusion to be drawn from the above seems to be this, viz. that to obtain this profit, the produce of an acre of wheat should sell for 7l. His expences will always be nearly the same, but his crop may vary, therefore his wheat should sell in proportion to his crop; for example:

When

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When he has	5 Qrs.	he can sell at	28	—	7/.
	4½	about	31		
	4	—	—	—	35
	3½	—	—	—	40
	3	—	—	—	46 8 d.
	2½	—	—	—	56
	2	—	—	—	70

Here it is worthy of observation, that by the above table it appears that when the farmer has three quarters he can afford to sell at 46 s. 8 d. and as the average of the various opinions of the produce of an acre is between 3 Q. and 2½ Q. which would require a price of about 51 s. it seems to account for the bounty having been extended to 48 s. as supposing that a price the farmer could not afford to sell at; for tho' at that price there appears now to be a very handsome profit, it must be remembered, that agriculture was in those days in a very unimproved state, and attended with much greater expence, which must have rendered a much less profit; however, it is evident that the fixing the bounty at 48 s. was the work of upright and intelligent men, but proves that in the present improved state of agriculture, the farmer can afford to sell much cheaper, and that indeed no bounty is requisite; but if any, that it should not exceed

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exceed 40 s. It likewise proves, in my opinion, that we need not dread the effects of importation from America; for though land there is cheap, labour is dear, and therefore there is little cause to believe that they can underfell us in Europe: nor is it reasonable to believe that agriculture is there so good; and though that climate may be, and is fine, it is not to be expected that they should always have plentiful harvests when we have scanty ones, without which they would be but on a par with us; for supposing the advantage of climate and cheapness of land to be in their favour, the expence of freight, &c. will always make an addition of at least 14 s. per quarter. But there is yet another reason, which is, that if corn should be very dear here, we may rest assured they would have a profit in some proportion to such dearth. The truth of this is pretty evident from the present price of wheat in America, it being now 5 s. 6 d. sterling the bushel there, and cannot be imported here at our present high price: but were it otherwise; suppose the farmer should be curtailed in his profit for one year, it would not be his ruin. As to any quantity that may come from other parts of the world, I am confident they cannot prejudice the English farmer: it is true that
Holland

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Holland has formerly imported great quantities of wheat from Poland, and rye from Russia: but when we consider the present division of Poland, and that Dantzic, thro' which it must pass, is in the hands of Prussia, there is greater reason to believe that the Dutch will come to us for their supply, than that we need fear an influx from Poland.

SECTION IV.

On Markets.

WHEN I appear so strong an advocate for free import and export, it will be conceived that I am not less strenuous for a perfect freedom in markets: every restraint in the sale of a commodity, is a check on the trade, and must necessarily enhance the price of the commodity.

The absurd law of obliging farmers to bring their corn to market, and not sell by sample, can answer no good purpose: as often as it has been attempted to be enforced, it has done mischief; it has prevented the farmer from exposing his corn to sale: for can it be imagined that the grower will submit to be the dupe to the crafty purchaser, or is it reasonable that he should?

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Real plenty, or real scarcity, will fix the standard price, and as he must submit to the one, it is as reasonable that he should reap the benefit of the other: but supposing it could be enforced, the line of the law can admit of deviation in the defaulter; thus, suppose a farmer and a miller to be next-door neighbours, with a market at ten miles distance; is it agreeable to common sense, that the farmer should employ a team of horses which may be wanted in the plough, to carry to market that corn which he or the miller must bring back again? must it not naturally enhance the price? and must not that fall upon the Poor, for whose sake the law was supposed to be made?

To enumerate the many inconveniencies that attend restrictions in the corn-trade, would be endless. Turn but your eyes to France, and view the inconveniencies they laboured under for so many years, by adopting that barbarous feudal system in their corn laws! Happily for that country, a set of worthy virtuous men, who are as able politicians as they are truly patriots, have, by their publications, opened the eyes of their Government, who are now making great strides in revoking those restrictive laws, equally absurd and injurious to the nation and the individual. Our laws indeed
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have not been so rigid; but such as they are, I hope the legislature will totally abolish them. Let this be their first step; it may be done without danger of lessening our corn-trade, and is one of the necessary preludes to the great work of making free ports, which neither can or ought to be done till corn is plentiful, and at nearly an equal price all over Europe.

*A short Account of the CORN TRADE
of AMSTERDAM.*

OF all the arguments that can be urged in support of a free corn trade, none will carry with it that conviction which is to be obtained by a candid inquiry into the state of that of Amsterdam. It is indeed my knowledge of some circumstances, relative to that branch of commerce, which makes me so strong an advocate for the freedom I recommend. I shall therefore, in support of my opinion, give an account of the nature of the trade of that city, and the circumstances that attend it in consequence of its situation.

I shall begin by informing my Reader, that the most considerable merchants, and most opulent people of Amsterdam, are engaged in this trade: it is not indeed well possible to ascertain the fund employed in it, as that must vary with the annual growth of the countries from whence it was supplied, which was chiefly Poland, by the way of Dantzic, with some small quantities from Riga; though this last indeed has consisted mostly in rye. Since the disturbances in Poland, Amsterdam has re-
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ceived large quantities of wheat from Archangel, Petersburgh, and several other ports in the gulf of Finland; but they have not been sufficient to preserve the usual plenty, and evidently account for the scarcity that city experienced these two last years.

So thoroughly are the Dutch convinced of the national advantage which attends the freedom of their corn trade, that though there was at one period so great an appearance of scarcity that they would not permit the exportation of potatoes, roots, or any other kind of provision, yet they would not suffer the freedom of their corn trade to be infringed. Exportation continued as free as their importation, though wheat was then 240 gold guilders *per* last, or 168 current guilders *per* half last, equal to about 16 *l.* sterling *per* load. It is true indeed that there are some small duties and port charges, such as 6 guilders *per* last, which is about 13 *d.* *per* quarter for import, and about one half of that for export, to which is to be added one half *per cent.* admiralty duty, or what we should call port charge. I have indeed recommended the abolishing every charge, and am confident it is necessary so to do in this country, where it cannot be denied but that the delays and difficulties to which our traders

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are subject from the behaviour of custom-house officers, are such severe checks on trade, as ought to be abolished, especially in a trade which consists so much in coasting voyages. However, if the abolishing them cannot be complied with, let us at least adopt the sensible mode of the Dutch, who have fixed their duties at one regular standard; well knowing that if it was left dependant on the market price, the trade would even be subject to frauds, which can so easily be practised by a few men, who always have it in their power to make whatever artificial price may suit them.

As a yet stronger proof of the advantage of a free corn trade, I can inform the reader, that the wisdom of the corn laws of the Dutch, which were founded on sound policy, has been confirmed to them by experience: for, some years ago, when they were under great apprehension of scarcity, they laid an embargo on corn, but after three months trial were obliged to open their ports; nor have the States suffered it to be attempted since, not even last year, when the universal appearance of a dearth in Germany might seem to require it, if any thing could: the experience which they had acquired by the former attempt, convinced them of the folly of such a step;

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for in consequence of the embargo here alluded to, they soon discovered they were in danger of being deprived of that supply which enabled them to be the warehouse keepers and carriers of all Europe. By this wise regulation they have had the supplying of France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, nay even Germany, by the way of the Rhine: but what is very remarkable, and the strongest proof of the advantage of free trade, is, that Amsterdam, from a long habit of carrying it on, enjoys it to its full extent, notwithstanding every natural disadvantage that can possibly attend a country. In proof of what I now advance, I can inform the reader of two remarkable instances; the one is, that corn was shipped at Amsterdam for France, but from an apprehension the ship would not get time enough through the Texel, the remainder of the quantity was sent by inland navigation at a considerable expence to Rotterdam, to be shipped off there; and the fact is, that the last ship was returned again from the coast of France, before the Amsterdam ship got out of the Texel. The other instance, not less striking, and more pertinent to my present subject, is, that the same house shipped a cargo from Amsterdam and London at the same time, both bound to Leghorn; the English ship returned into the river, and the remittances

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tances were made, before the Dutchman got out of the Texel.

The two abovementioned examples are, I hope, sufficient to prove the natural advantages we have in point of situation; nor can I think that people will be so blind as not to see the great national advantage that would attend such an export of the natural growth of our country. It is true, indeed, that according to the information given by the ingenious author of the Corn Tracts, the greatest quantity ever exported here is too trifling to be thought an object: but let it be remembered, that all I mean to prove is, that this is entirely owing to our trade's not being open, and that we might naturally command the whole of it; especially since the division of Poland, the growth of which must now come through Dantzick, which at present belongs to the King of Prussia.

Here I must inform those who do not think the corn trade can ever be a great object to England, that the capital which is engaged in it at Amsterdam is far beyond belief. Let them judge of it when I tell them, that, on an average, there are seldom less than 20,000 lasts, which make above 200,000 quarters, lying in their magazines. The value of this quantity cannot be much less than

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400,000 £. sterling. So considerable a sum as this lying always locked up in an artificial trade, proves the advantage of it, and demonstrates that we need only create the trade, to have the traders. I have before observed, that the trade which is really beneficial to a country must consist in the exportation of such articles as are the produce of that country: but, in contradiction to this idea, it appears that a sensible policy has rendered the most unnatural branch of trade highly beneficial to Holland; for, without a blade of corn growing in their own country, excepting a very small quantity in Zealand and East-Friesland, the magazines of Amsterdam have always a supply for every port in Europe, brought in and carried out through the most tedious and dangerous passage into the German Ocean, or the Channel.

The necessary result of what I have been saying is, that if we, who are so well situated to supply those markets, were to adopt the policy of the Dutch, we should enjoy their profits in a much higher degree than they can with their bad navigation, and this in addition to the great advantage of a natural trade, which is that of exporting the produce of our own country. Can there possibly be a clearer demonstration of the encourage-

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couragement it would give to agriculture, or do we want a stronger proof that we should always have plenty at home for our own consumption, when the people at Amsterdam, who are obliged to purchase it, have their magazines always full, notwithstanding that the port is never shut?

As what I have advanced on this head may perhaps not be credited, but deemed the phantom of a wild brain, let me intreat the legislature to consult that able and upright minister at the Hague, Sir Joseph Yorke. He can give indisputable information on this subject, information which may be depended on; and upon his opinion I will rest mine.

A P P E N D I X.

AFTER I had finished the foregoing Essay, the third edition of the Rev. Doctor Price's *Observations on Reversionary Payments, &c.* was sent to me from town. His deservedly respectable character made it necessary that I should take particular notice of what he says on monopolizing farms and its consequences. I am sorry to find myself under a necessity of differing widely with him in my opinion on this subject; and cannot help lamenting that a gentleman of so much knowledge, and who is so clear and demonstrative in all that he says on those matters which come within the sphere of his real studies, should, so inadvertently, enter into a popular error, and join in the cry which has been artfully kept up to irritate and inflame the minds of men.

My expressions on this occasion may seem too strong; but so sensible and candid an antagonist requires to be very pointedly refuted. I declare, that I highly revere and esteem his character, and am persuaded
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that it was his very love of truth that has led him out of the way: but at the same time I hope this instance of his having undesignedly promoted the present uneasiness of a misguided people, will be a caution to him, in the future, to keep to such subjects as really come within the line of his particular studies; and that he will not so readily give credit to reports propagated by designing men, the circumstances of which he is not perfectly acquainted with; for an opinion of so much weight as his, is more dangerous than the declamations of an hundred scribblers whom I have not thought worthy of notice. This, I hope, will be an apology for my pointing out to him the true state of the facts concerning which he has been misinformed.

As to the authority of Mr. *Muret*, and his reasoning on the subject of great farms, (quoted by Dr. Price, p. 373.) it has very little weight with me: not that I mean to doubt his veracity, for I believe he relates and argues as he thinks; but speculative productions seldom carry conviction. If the village that was converted into a demesne, was made a park or pleasure ground, I can suppose the fact; or if it was a nest of houses thrown down and converted into corn-fields, I will allow that it could not lodge

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so many inhabitants; or if it was a number of small farms taken up by some rich man, who, though merely a speculator, thought himself a farmer, I will believe the produce to have been less; but if it was put into the hands of an intelligent husbandman, I think I have shewn in the foregoing pages, that the produce could not but be greater. Our country abounds with facts of this kind, and I hope their number will increase.

When it is done by landlords, to reduce the repairs of cottages, I abhor the idea, and have accordingly exploded it: but the speculations which the great farmer is able to make, put it in his power to draw more riches from the bowels of the earth, and thereby he becomes a more useful member of this great and powerful nation. Perhaps Mr. *Muret* would have rejoiced to have seen an instance of industry which I met with in Flanders, a dozen men mattocking up a field of stubble to put in wheat; but the man who knew the use and benefit of the plough, lamented the lost labour of eleven of those poor wretches, who might have been employed more beneficially for their country in manufactures, whilst one might cultivate with a plough as much land as would support the rest. This would be a public

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public benefit, and not a calamity:—nor is it a consequence that there must be depopulation, because men are not seen wasting their labour in the open field.

In regard to the many calculations which have appeared, and by which the depopulation of this country has been attempted to be proved, I can say little; nor would it become me to enter the lists with the many ingenious men who have made that a part of their studies; but I shall not scruple to say, that the *data* on which these calculations are made are, in my opinion, too slight to establish certain consequences. For example, the residence in London of those who are deemed its inhabitants is by no means regular, and the number who come from different parts to London and its environs within the bills of mortality, for advice in their last stage, must swell the list of deaths. On the other hand, as the list of births is only taken from the christenings, the number of born must be much greater, as neither the Dissenters nor the Quakers are christened in our churches: thus the whole is erroneous. Again, when we consider the number of great manufacturing towns which have arisen within this century, and see every where not only an increase of culture, but also that it is

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carried on in a much more spirited manner than formerly, (circumstances which must necessarily employ a greater number of hands) I cannot see on what foundation we can determine the number of the inhabitants to be less. As to forming the calculation from the number of houses, so far as my observation has extended, that cannot be done: but if any medium is to be taken, I should rather fix it at six persons in a house, which would make our whole number amount to about six millions. But when we consider the numbers of poor that inhabit one house in manufacturing towns and great cities, nay even in country villages, there can be no doubt but that six millions is far under the mark. However, neither of these doctrines can have any relation to the scarcity of corn, which, in reality, is scarce or not scarce in proportion to the consumption of it. If there are more mouths, there will be more corn, because there will be more hands to till the earth; and if there is more corn, there will be more mouths, because plenty will bring people; and thus, by this happy connection and dependance one on the other, I am pleased to think the world will go on as it has hitherto continued to do. If any of the ingenious literary world agree with me in opinion, I hope to see

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some of their productions calculated to ease the minds of men, by convincing them that industry and chearful sobriety are the only requisites to acquire that happiness, which despondency, with a disposition of exclaiming against the times, precludes them from.

Dr. Price's distinctions (p. 379, 380) between the wild and the civilized state are well drawn, and his observations on them are very just: but when he knows that the natural progression from an infant colony to a powerful and free nation is always attended with a proportionate degree of luxury, why does he lament in print what the art and power of man cannot prevent? It is a thesis for a school, but should not have flowed from the Doctor's pen.

I perfectly agree with Dr. Price (p. 381) in his opinion of the fatal consequences that have attended the accumulation of property in this kingdom, and most sincerely regret the loss of that set of men who were called yeomen: but let not the accumulation of property be blended with the renting of large farms; its tendency is just the reverse.

By the quotation (p. 381) from Sufmilch, one would imagine it was proposed to adopt the law of Licinius and Romulus. That policy

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licy of the then Romans was wise; it was when they were a small state, and confined by their enemies to a small extent of country: it was then necessary that the little quantity of land on which they were to depend for subsistence should be portioned out in small parcels, in order that each family might have sufficient to maintain itself; for then it was not a disgrace to handle the plough or the spade, though the very men who did it were to be called out to command their armies. In a nation like the Romans, not depending on its manufactures and commerce, and whose only care is to provide corn for itself, perhaps Mr. Muret's observations, and Licinius's law, may be the best institution. Upon this principle too it was that the Spartans did not aim at raising more corn, though by the hands of their slaves, than was necessary to maintain a warlike people. But to adopt such a system in a commercial nation, whose very commerce depends upon agriculture, is by no means of a piece with the Doctor's sentiments on other subjects; for supposing the farmers restricted to seven *jugera*, or five acres, what could be the produce? The land would be too little for a plough, and too much for the spade, as hath been shewn in p. 3 to 14 of the foregoing sheets, where the beneficial size of a farm is explained; and in p. 83, the Doctor will be pleased to observe, that

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that equal care was taken to provide the seven and the two *jugera* for the cottagers, who, though not farmers, are, when disposed of in their proper sphere, equally necessary and beneficial to a state, as there will be a greater increase of produce by their joint labours in one farm, than when each is to toil for himself on a little spot better calculated for the labour of his wife and children. The certain weekly income of the husband's labour, not attended with the anxiety of the little farmer, will procure more real comfort in his little cottage, and therefore will be more likely to promote population. As to the supposed advantages of the commons, and the means of the cottager's procuring subsistence from them, that matter is fully explained in p. 83 and 84; and if by converting the little farmers into a body of men who must work for others more labour is produced, it is an advantage which the nation should wish for: the compulsion will be that of honest industry to provide for a family, which by that means is less liable to become a burden to the parish, than that of the little farmer, whose labours, being attended with constant anxiety and distress, seldom prosper.

I agree with Dr. Price that more bread will be consumed, and therefore that more
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corn will be grown: but that will be likewise a benefit to the nation; for it will be by the assistance of the cottager and his family who are employed in the culture of the land, instead of loitering away their time in tending a few starved sheep on the commons, and cutting furzes. It will enable him to go to market to purchase what food he pleases, and by the produce being greater when their joint labours are employed on one farm, there will be a surplus for manufacturers, and by this means manufactures, one of the mines of this nation, will increase, in proportion to the quantity of corn produced; but wherever numbers of men are employed, there will be among them idle and debauched, who, thanks to the poors' laws as they now stand, will load the parish, though not real objects of charity.

This is the way in which the renting of large and moderate-sized tracts operates, (see p. 3 to 14), and this is the way by which this country has for many years past been becoming the most powerful in Europe.

I shall grant with Dr. Price, (p. 383) that what has been suggested will promote tillage; but how it is to account for the fact which he immediately alludes to in 1697,
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namely, that when wheat was at 3*l.* and exportation went on, and yet that there was no clamour, I know not; unless it proves that the exportation of corn, which then first took place in consequence of the wise law that was passed in 1689 for granting a bounty, inspired the Poor with industry, which kept their minds peaceable and sober; whereas there now prevails among the lower class of people a licentiousness which has been, in a great measure, occasioned by the numberless publications on the causes of scarcity, too evidently calculated to inflame their minds.

Dr. Price attributes the abovementioned patience in the Poor to the then cheapness of other food. I allow that this might naturally enough have been the consequence, had the fact been so: but, from the best authority I can procure, which is the account of the prices of beef as contracted for from time to time by the Victualling-Office, it appears, that in 1697, the time alluded to, the commissioners of that office contracted at 25*s.* *per C. wt.* which is nearly the same they do now; but what is more remarkable, is, that the average of the five preceding and five following years was only 23*s.* 1*d.* *per C. wt.* and in 1697, Pork was at 31*s.* *per C. wt.* However, this was undoubtedly cheaper

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cheaper in proportion than bread: but it was a natural consequence, for agriculture at that time, I mean the plough, was but in its infancy; herds and pasture still prevailed; and from the uncertainty which the people had been accustomed to in the great variation of the price of corn, it is no wonder they were in the habit of living more on meat, which had ever been plentiful, as herds and flocks had been their riches; and as little surprizing is it that they, in 1697, still continued in the use of meat for their chief support. The very same custom still prevails in the islands and all along the North-West coast of Scotland.

In regard to the Doctor's observation on the great difference there was in the price of meat and corn during the last century, when he acknowledges that corn was dearer than it has been at an average for these last 40 years, but that meat was about half its present price; it only proves, that his argument can have no reference to the present times, and that that great difference in the price of meat and corn was occasioned by this country's having been, during almost the whole century, distracted by civil wars, which must be a check to the plough, and encourage herds and flocks, the only moveable riches of the people.

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The Doctor says, that beef and pork were sold at $2\frac{1}{2}$ and three pounds for a penny at the same time that wheat was sold at 7s. and 8s. per quarter, and that bore the same proportion to the price of corn as it would bear now were this at about 4l. per quarter. This assertion must certainly be intended to prove, that either corn is too cheap, or meat too dear; but, in my opinion, it proves neither; for every commodity will bear a value in proportion to its plenty and the demand for it. It is incontestably proved in history, that the plenty of meat was in proportion to the scarcity of corn; consequently the price must vary in the same proportion; but when a demand for each is equal, and the plenty of each is the same, the value of the one must fall, or that of the other rise, till they come on a par, and that value will always be according to the value of money: if therefore the price of corn is nearly what it ought to be, which can only be determined by the proportion that the value of land bears to the value of money, it is as evident, that meat ought to rise in the same proportion: but the only method of ascertaining what should be the price of the one for it to be in proportion to that of the other, is to allot a certain sum of money to the raising of corn, and an equal sum to the rearing and fattening of cattle; an equal profit

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profit will determine the real value of each. If this was done, I am pretty certain it would appear that the present prices are nearly equal, and that meat has not risen in too great proportion; nor will it be found, if we consider the value of money and of land, that provisions are greatly above what they ought to be. Indeed this is pretty clearly demonstrated by the Doctor's own tables: I call them his, because I cannot find the corn-tables carried down lower than 1766 on any other authority than his: he extends them to 1772, and makes the average from 1766 to 1772, 2l. 6s. 6d. This is evidently higher than the preceding average; though not so much as I should have expected. However, this difference is clearly accounted for by a very remarkable circumstance, which is, that it is the exact period during which this country has had successive bad crops. It likewise shews, that scarcity is the real, as it is the natural cause of the present high prices, and that these are therefore not to be attributed to the various causes which some have as wickedly, as others have ignorantly, pretended to point out. Whichever of these may have been the motive, both of them are fraught with the same evil tendency of stirring up riot and confusion. That the prices are too high for the Poor at this moment, I confess;

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and the cause of their being so is evident; it proceeds from the general calamity that has attended trade during this last year; a calamity which has occasioned a general consternation among all ranks of people. The general diffidence that now prevails, and the doubt which the merchant has of not receiving his remittances, makes him cautious in giving fresh orders, and tardy in his payments to the manufacturer: the manufacturer must, in consequence of this, in the same manner treat those from whom he purchases his materials, and cease to employ so many hands as before. By this chain of circumstances, the hardship must ultimately fall upon the labourer dependant on such manufactures, who, though he could afford to maintain himself and family well at the wages he now earns, if he was in constant employ, must certainly feel the weight of the present prices of necessaries, which are on this account, and on this only, too high. What I have said of the manufacturer, may equally hold good with regard to the common labourer; for undoubtedly the late scanty harvest has deprived many threshers of their winter's work, and I can believe that many hands which before found employment in supplying the luxuries and pleasures of life, both in town and country, may, in consequence of the ap-
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prehension that has seized every one, now want work: but this is a momentary evil.

I cannot quit this subject without pointing out one glaring fault: it is, that the average which has occasioned this clamour does not arrive at the price when exportation is allowed with bounty; and it must be supposed that the bounty's being fixed at any price, must imply that such price should be under the general average of the whole country; whereas Dr. Price's elucidation of this matter clearly demonstrates, that the opening or shutting of the port, and the giving or taking off the bounty, depend solely on the artificial price of Bear-key. There cannot be a clearer proof than this, that restrictions in any trade must ever subject the Legislature to be misled by interested designing men: it likewise proves, that restrictions naturally create the very monopoly which they are meant to guard against; and thus shews the absolute necessity of a perfect freedom in trade in general, but most especially in that of corn.

In regard to what the Doctor says (page 388) on the inclosures of the common-fields in Leicestershire, from whence he concludes that the increase of tillage there is

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at an end, I shall briefly observe, that it greatly surprized me, as being diametrically contrary to every day's experience. I make no doubt but that the Doctor had that information; but I would advise a cautious inquiry into the validity of the authority, before he, whose character as an author is in such high repute, ventures to assert so palpable an absurdity: but granting the fact, the only observation I can make upon it is, that the land is in very unskilful hands. In regard to Northamptonshire inclosure, I can speak with some degree of knowledge, and notwithstanding the remarks of the sensible author alluded to, I know farmers who have chearfully submitted to have their rents doubled on the inclosure of the common-field land, though intended to be kept under the plough, saying, that they must now become better farmers, and not continue such slovens. That laying down many of these inclosures to grass has prevailed, I shall not disallow, and such tracts must consequently bear the face of depopulation: however, the men are not lost, but perhaps, with the ground, better employed; not but that, as an individual, I should, upon my own estate, lay a certain restriction in the allotment of pasture and arable; but how far commissioners ought to be intrusted with such a charge, I shall not presume to say.

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With regard to the quotation from Lord Bacon, it is not applicable to the present times, and I think I have sufficiently exposed, in the foregoing sheets, the absurdity of owners holding the plough themselves, at a time when corn is, or ought to be, esteemed part of the trade and wealth of this great nation. Dr. Price's farther quotations (page 391 and 392 of this work) are fully answered by the history of the times. Herds and cattle were formerly the only riches, and the free exportation of wool occasioned those monopolies of land and sheep which were found to be of evil tendency; a few men could tend great numbers, and the rest of the rustic tribe were unemployed; for, by the exportation of the raw wool, there could be no woollen manufactories. On this account it was, that in 1537, flocks were stinted to 2000, and tenements were to be erected on a given number of acres: but yet were people so averse to agriculture, that it was necessary to set a fine on laying down arable ground to pasture. In those days agriculture, I mean the plough, was esteemed of such consequence to the nation, that it had not only every encouragement, but was even enforced; whereas now that it has arrived to a degree of perfection, it is the fashion of the times to be jealous of its prosperity,

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prosperity, and to load it with every incumbrance; in short, all the acts which passed, and are here alluded to, were intended only to people a country laid waste and depopulated by civil wars: but such restrictions now would be altogether absurd. In regard to the Doctor's observations in page 393, I shall say, that every one was cultivating for his own wants, as our author justly observes is now the case in the interior parts of America: but I am happy to think that in these days this nation will vie with Holland to supply all Europe with corn, either directly, or through the bowels of our manufacturers. As to the proportion of the price of labour, it can bear no comparison; for if no labour was wanted, there could be no price; nor is a comparison to be drawn with the present time, when, owing to successive bad crops, corn has risen a little. But it may not be unworthy of notice, that in the circumstance of the price of labour's not being increased in the proportion of the price of provisions, the Doctor's assertion corroborates what is said in the valuable works of Mr. Arthur Young, and will, I hope, pacify the minds of those who imagine that the dearness of provisions must ruin our manufactures.

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As to the circumstance (page 394 of Dr. Price) of the ranks of men being altered, I agree and lament the fact with the Doctor; but perhaps we do not mean the same class of men. I most truly lament the loss of our yeomenry, that set of men who really kept up the independance of this nation; and sorry I am to see their lands now in the hands of monopolizing Lords, tenanted out to small farmers, who hold their leases on such conditions as to be little better than vassals ready to attend a summons on every mischievous occasion.

With regard to the class called Hirelings, I believe they are mostly in the same state as they were, with the benefit of work at present, instead of being prowling about commons and wastes; and as to the luxury which the Doctor talks of, it has been and ever will be an attendant on a wealthy free people, and, with the riches, diffuses itself through all ranks of people; it is one of those evils which cannot be avoided, and therefore is needless to lament.

It is true that the lower people pay their proportion of the taxes, that is to say, of those taxes which are levied by assize, for then they fall always on the consumer:

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for example, the carrier who pays the tax, charges it to the shoemaker, and the shoemaker lays it on the labourer, who, dealing in an article that is not affizeable (his labour) cannot raise the price of it to the farmer; therefore the tax falls on him; but though it may not appear visible to every eye, I will maintain, that an equal proportion of it falls on the wealthy; for the rich man, who spends the whole of his income, by consuming a greater quantity of affizeable commodities, pays his just proportion of the tax.

It is likewise true, that the lower people fight the battles of a nation: but, as Sir James Stewart rightly says, it is from the free hands, the manufacturers and artificers, that our armies are recruited, and not from the cottager and small farmer that such drafts are, or ought to be made.

The reasoning of the author of *The Enquiry* concerning the comparison which ought to be made between the prices of corn since the bounty, and during the reign of James I. cannot be just, because they are founded either on false or imperfect facts: he thinks the latter period should be taken, because it was peaceable, commerce increased, and all the influence which the
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riches of America could produce on the prices of corn and provisions had taken place: but the reign of Charles I. excepting the years 1642, 3, 4, and 5, (the prices of which do not come into his account) ought for the same reasons to be taken: they also were peaceable, and commerce had increased. The average of these two periods should therefore be taken, and in that case the foundation of our author's reasoning falls to the ground. But in the conduct of it he contradicts himself: under the reign of James I. he says, *the influence of American money had taken full effect*; under that of Charles I. *that the great plenty of money had risen the price of superior provisions*; consequently the increase of money had *not* taken its full effect. But whether the reign of Charles or James should be taken is not essential, since, in just reasoning, we should take neither; for no comparison can be made between periods in which the *interest* and consequently the *quantity* of money is so extremely different, being more than 50 per cent.

The Author of the *Enquiry* (p. 93) speaking of the bounty, says, employing so large a proportion of our cultivated lands must straiten the means of raising every other
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kind of provision to such a degree that the utmost exertion of the Poor cannot reach them, and the people must be obliged either to desert the country, or enhance the price of labour.

Upon this I shall observe, that the most material fact in the whole Enquiry is against him; I mean, the fall in the price of corn since the bounty was given, a fall which every one of his tables sufficiently proves, and of which we see the consequence in the people's not having deserted their country: on the contrary, we have received great accessions from every quarter of the globe; and as to the rise in the price of labour, it has risen all over Europe, as well as in England, and ought to rise, as well as all commodities, with the increase of money.

But as our author attempts to enforce the result of his tables by an estimate drawn up of the farmer's expences, produce, and profit on 10 acres, which he would prove to amount to 68 per cent. per ann. for four successive years; he will permit me to set him right, in some essential points, which can only be done by stating a true account of the expences and product of such a course as he lays down.

Rent

(143)

	l.	s.	d.
Rent on one acre fallow	0	12	6
Ditto, second year,	0	12	6
Plowing 6 times, at } least 5 s. each time }	1	10	0
Harrowing three times	0	6	0
Dung - - -	4	0	0
Seed, Wheat 2 ½ bush. } at 6 s. and sowing }	0	15	0
Water-furrowing - -	0	1	0
Weeding - - -	0	2	6
Reaping - - -	0	6	0
Houfing and stacking	0	4	6
Tythe, two years	0	6	0
Rates - - -	0	3	0
Threshing of 3 ½ } Qrs. average }	0	10	6
Fencing - - -	0	1	0
Wear and tear, and } fundry other un- } specified expences }	0	2	0
Carting to market -	0	5	0
Expences	9	17	6
<i>Product.</i>			
Mean crop, 3 Qrs. at			
46 s. 8 d.	7	0	0
Straw - - -	1	0	0
Loss	1	17	6

(144)

As is almost ever the case with wheat on dung fallow; the profit being on the subsequent crops.

3d Year, Barley.

	l.	s.	d.
Rent as before, -	0	12	6
Plowing thrice, at 5s.	0	15	0
Harrowing - -	0	3	0
Seed and fowing, 3 bush.	0	9	0
Striking furrows -	0	0	6
Mowing -	0	1	6
Carting, houting and } stacking }	0	4	6
Tythe - - -	0	3	0
Rates - - -	0	1	6
Water-furrowing -	0	1	0
Threshing, 4 qrs. -	0	6	0
Fencing, wear & tear, &c.	0	3	0
Carting to market -	0	5	0

Expences 3 5 6

Product.

4 Qrs. at 24s.	4l. 16s. 0d.
Straw,	0 15s. 0d.
	<u>5 11 0</u>

(145)

4th Year, Oats.

	l.	s.	d.
Rent - - -	0	12	6
Plowing once	0	5	0
Seed, 4 bush. at 20s. per Qr.	0	10	0
Harrowing and water- } furrowing, &c. }	0	2	6
Mowing - - -	0	1	4
Houfing and stacking	0	4	6
Tythe and rates -	0	4	6
Threshing 4 Quarters	0	5	0
Fencing, wear and tear, } and carting to market }	0	8	0

Expences 2 13 4

Product.

4 Qrs. at 18s.	3l. 12s.
Straw - - -	0 14s.
	<u>4 6 0</u>

General Expences.

Wheat	9 17 6
Barley	3 5 6
Oats	2 13 4
	<u>15 16 4</u>

General Product.

	8 0 0
	5 11 0
	4 6 0
	<u>17 17 0</u>
	15 16 4

Profit - 2 0 8
L

(146)

By the above estimate, which I believe nearest the truth, it will appear, that the farmer may clear about 12 *per cent. per ann.* in four years: but from this should be deducted the interest of his money for the greatest part of the expences of the wheat crop, which was expended the first year; and I will venture to say, that with such an execrable course of husbandry, it is full as much as any farmer makes: but this does no more than prove that very little dependance is to be made on such calculations. All that is meant by this refutation, is only to expose the fallacy of such calculations, from whence such false arguments are deduced. Whether done by design, or through ignorance, they have the same mischievous effect of inflaming the minds of men; and as the whole of this author's arguments depends on such false principles, I shall not think his subsequent observations worthy my notice, but conclude with a hint to those who are biased by his reasoning, to enquire carefully into the truth of the facts which serve him for the basis of his arguments.

F I N I S.