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REMARKS

ON THE
CAUSE AND PROGRESS

OF THE
*SCARCITY and DEARNESS of CATTLE,
SWINE, CHEESE, &c. &c.*

AND OF THE ARTICLES
TALLOW CANDLES AND SOAP;

POINTING OUT

Divers Modes for Remedy, and to prevent such Calamity in future;
being the Result of great Experience, acquired by Dealing at
Fairs and Markets, &c. &c. during the last Thirty-seven Years.

HUMBLY DEDICATED

To the PRIME MINISTER of ENGLAND,

In behalf of the Community at large, more or less interested
therein: together with HINTS for the Consideration of Persons
having Landed Property, and Dealers in Cattle.

By J. MATHEWS.

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TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT,
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, &c. &c.

SIR,

OUR most gracious Sovereign
having been pleased to express his approbation of
persons coming forward with any circumstances
tending to benefit society; and much having been said
concerning scarcity and dearnefs of live stock, also
of the prices paid for their productions used for
human food, and for real necessaries, without dis-
covering to what it has been owing; information
of the true cause, (acquired by experience) and
remedy, may not be unwelcome to you.

As a plain-dealing man, I venture to say, I
believe the welfare of this country is your earnest
and unremitting study; also that during your being
prime minister of England, you have had greater
embarrassments to encounter, owing to great fall-
ings off of income to the revenue, and perhaps
greater out-goings, occasioned by scarcity and dear-
nefs of cattle, than any of your predecessors.

By real scarcity of full grown stock in western
counties, there has been a greater demand and
consumption of yongng meat for the food of the day

through the divers routs up to London, where sales thereof have exceeded by many tons weight weekly. Those prior to 1795, which may manifest to you a real deficiency of the former, and that very great difficulty to keep up sufficient supplies of provisions for the metropolis cannot fail to ensue, provided jobbing be not permitted in certain instances.

SUCH being the case, I humbly presume to dedicate the following sheets to you; hoping they will be found to contain matter worthy of your consideration; and also of your successors.

It has been said that every body should endeavour to assist his Majesty's ministers, to redress such grievances. That this my mite, may—through your means—effect its aim, viz. PLENTY, which blessing would produce general welfare; and most assist you, is the prayer of, Sir,

With proper deference and submission,

Your devoted, obedient,

And very humble servant,

J. MATHEWS

P R E F A C E.

AUTHORS have from divers motives written books; for we find that history, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, poetry, and other subjects truly valuable, have been penned for the entertainment or the use of mankind, by learned and experienced persons.

Improvements have been the result of writing on culture and implements for husbandry, whilst utility in crossing breeds of cattle, has been set forth, however contrary to nature and the true interest of the nation.

At this period, after a great out-cry concerning the scarcity of cattle, swine, articles of table food, as well as other necessaries, which are the productions thereof; a well meant attempt to shew the cause thereof, may not be deemed amiss.

Explanation the most satisfactory is likely to ensue from the pen of one greatly experienced in the affairs concerning cattle, swine, cheefe, and the qualities thereof; also with fair chance dealing at fairs and markets.

To explain the true cause of such scarcity and dearth, and to state the necessary and effectual remedy thereof, is worthy of the ablest writer's pen. But want of knowledge has hitherto prevented such an undertaking, or no doubt such a work would have been produced before the price of provisions, &c. had attained to such a pitch of enormity as the public have experienced almost generally since the year 1789.

New subjects, published by approved authors, have a claim on public attention, and are most likely to merit the public good opinion. I have no pretensions to either. Nevertheless, arrogating to myself nothing further than the boast of experience, gained in a situation, whereby alone can be obtained due knowledge for such a work, I presume for public good, and being an advocate for the distressed, to lay before the community, that cause, in hopes of being the means of augmenting provisions so effectually as to prevent such embarrassments in future, most respectfully entreating that a well intended narrative, or chain of circumstantial facts, may be so happy as to gain the candid reader's approbation, it being written on the ground of thirty-seven years experience, with a view of being useful to society, by producing future benefits, namely, permanent plenty of cattle, swine, &c. &c. for sufficient choice of animal food, at moderate prices.

War has been an object of consideration, but to increase provisions, which must be done by an increase of cattle to support war, and preserve us from distresses, such as a neighbouring kingdom as

exhibited (chiefly) on account of scarcity or dearth of provisions, is a still more important object. Newspapers have stated, that the scarcity and dearth of provisions, and articles made with tallow, were occasioned by salesmen buying up living fat cattle at Smithfield; also at distant fairs and markets, keeping back certain numbers from being exposed for sale, thereby producing appearances of short markets to enhance prices.

At divers fairs and markets, where chance threw me in the way of dealers, I have heard various opinions concerning the appearance of approaching scarcity and dearth, most persons agreeing in the necessity that its progress should be stopped, and many expressed a hope that some well disposed person would attempt to provide a remedy that might produce sufficiencies if but to permit of moderation in prices only.

Some have said that the increase and goodness of turnpike roads have been injurious, nay, had occasioned scarcity of cattle, dearth, &c. whilst others have given as their opinion, that such roads were beneficial.

Others have advanced, that the number of horses bred and kept in England and Wales, have occasioned those calamities. Others have supposed that advanced rents were the origin of dearth, but could not account for scarcity.

Others have asserted, that too many calves and lambs are killed yearly for food, and that the strong arm of Parliament could alone remedy such an evil.

Others have declared that scarcity and dearth of stock and grain arose from farmers occupying individually at one and the same time, over large or too many farms: others have attributed the origin of scarcity and dearth to jobbing, forestalling and monopolizing in the retail way, whilst at a loss for the ground work, the deep rooted cause which has been the means of introducing such practices long before the American war commenced.

War, the disuse of ox, steer, or heifer teams, and luxurious living have severally been adduced as the cause of such calamities. In short, observations have occurred, the enumeration of which would make this preface too tedious, and after all appear but little (if any how) to the purpose.

Seeing the acres remain, most persons agree that abuses do somewhere exist, and that remedy is needful: wherefore at a time of extraordinary embarrassments, I conceive that it would be a crime, were I to be silent, and that I do but my duty, by endeavouring to set right misguided minds, by shewing what I know concerning the cause of scarcity and dearth, as well as by adducing effectual remedies, which the heads of the nation and the public may adopt.

Laying aside ridicule, or offence to any party, I write, not doubting to set the public mind right upon the subject.

In additions to such observation it appears, that great scarcity of cattle was visible at Smithfield on the two market days immediately preceding Christmas, 1794, and that an insufficient number of living fat cattle appeared on those two particular days,

to supply the neighbouring butchers who came thither to purchase: upon which two said market days yearly, it has always been a custom for salesmen and graziers, to provide a greater number of bullocks than on any other days of the year, as it were to welcome Christmas, a time when the nobility, gentry, &c. of England, (as customary) observed hospitality, have bountifully given the comfortable remains of their tables to satisfy the appetites of their poor neighbours; which practice upon one or more days weekly throughout the year, was heretofore much used: whereas, real benevolent gentry, &c. inclined to keep up such laudable hospitality, by extraordinary dearth have found the same inconvenient, whereby their neighbouring poor have lost the sight and taste of meat many weeks together, a circumstance no doubt grievously afflicting to charitably disposed persons: wherefore, since there seems almost general departure from moderation, yet desire to find out the cause which has occasioned a scarcity of live stock, thereby affecting the London markets more severely, than country markets. Since no publication has come to my hand, treating candidly on a weighty national concern: viz. unreasonable diminution of calves and lambs, nor recommending the much wanted system of breeding and rearing stock, (God willing) I put together my remarks, hoping at my country's call to serve her, however difficult the task. Hoping also that criticisms will be spared, and that better scholars, approved authors, and the public will admit this attempt (which is meant for public good) laudable.

For that purpose, for quieting the minds of the people, especially those situated so as not to have the knowledge where the evils, which have produced such disasters have originated, I write, to point out the cause and remedy for the same. To shew sure modes for restoring herds, flocks, poultry, making of cheese, &c. being the true road towards plenty of provisions, common necessaries, and to find cheapness. Intending to state the times of plenty and cheapness, scarcity and dearness: the progress of the latter, to prove that rearing of cattle, will promote the rearing of swine, and the making of cheese and butter, may be confided in as practicable, and to be depended on, for a proper supply of food, &c. &c.

To accord with the works of dear simple nature, such a change cannot fail—like unawares—to promote the growth of wheat, whereby that most needful, will speedily appear as becoming plenty, faster than such fell off.

Omitting objects absurd or imaginary, I shall shew my contrivance, how more general stock rearing may best be set on foot, to produce permanent full shews of stock, and cheese, which when plenty will appear to have caused a cheap loaf, but when scarce the contrary, the community will find it best for certain, of all things patiently to abide the rest.

Considering the age, and growth of cattle and swine necessary for the best provisions, an alteration will appear at the markets and fairs, by the growing plenty of herds and flocks, in most counties of Great Britain; but particularly in those counties of exceeding fertility, viz.

Gloucester, Somerset, the west and north-west parts of Wiltshire, which parts have been admitted by writers and competent judges, for centuries past, to have furnished, not only a plentiful supply of fattened cattle, swine, cheese, and butter, for home consumptions but through the hands of various dealers, jobbers, &c. &c. an astonishing surplus for distant parts, markets, and fairs in other counties; namely, London, Hounslow, Maidenhead, Reading, Swindon, Winchester, Basingstoke, Romsey, Portsmouth, Wilton, and Salisbury, together with many other in either rout thither. Fat bullocks, sheep, lambs, and hogs, many scores of tons weight of various sorts of cheese, and good butter. But of late years the circle of forty miles around Bath, will appear to have depended chiefly upon Devonshire, and other distant counties, for supplies of lean stock.

Although a few words are sufficient to make known a too common practice, as the certain cause of the too great and unseasonable diminution of calves and lambs, whereby the native breeds of stock are become nearly extinct; also an infringement on the laws, with other causes of dearness, I must request my reader's patience to peruse a circumstantial detail of facts; because were I to send this book to the press, without proofs concerning cattle, swine and their productions, as sold at fairs and markets, not only judges, but persons so situated in life as not to be so well acquainted with the consequences, might be dissatisfied, might condemn my well-meant assertions as ill-intended; calculated falsely

to create alarm; or disturb the public; conveying impossibilities. Whereas by stating a variety of proofs, if seemingly trifling or tedious, the grievances which Englishmen have most need to repine at, viz. scarcity, dearness of food, and common necessaries, will appear to have sprung therefrom.

A removal of the abuses alluded to, will, I conceive, be generally deemed necessary, such having been the cause of greatly lessening the income of the revenue, and of drawing—as unawares—incalculable sums of money out of the pockets of the public. By such removal all may yet be well with Britons, and England be herself again.

To shew how prodigiously changes in appearances of stock, on the acres, has affected the London markets, country markets, and fairs, I shall state things relating thereto, chiefly as they came within my own knowledge: Prices as paid at divers times and places, in the neighbourhoods of Bristol, Bridgewater, Gloucester, Salisbury, Hereford, and Bath, about the beginning of the thirty-seven years last past; also Smithfield prices, and the retail prices in Middlesex, and advances there.

Prices, as paid at Bath forty-six years ago, for meat, having the advantage of books to prove the same. The low prices which wheat, barley, and malt, yielded; cheefe and butter, wheat straw and hay, and progressive advances.

That there are too many calves and lambs killed for food.

That the monopolizing of farms has produced evils.

How the strong arm of Parliament may most speedily remedy those evils, and keep up the best possible supplies for Middlesex.

Whether turnpike roads—the breed and uses of many horses—has not proved great national prosperity.

Disuse of ox ploughs—and why.

Wherein jobbers have been particularly useful, &c. &c.

These are subjects I shall enlarge upon, not doubting but the same will be well received by the public—as by me—it is well meant.

A nearly precise statement of the amount of a weekly consumption of beef, cheefe, and pork, in his Majesty's navy, &c. &c. having appeared, I shall notice prices I have obtained, that government has paid for such articles for victualling, at divers times during nearly the last half century.

Savings also, by calculations, which in future may take place, to the revenue, in purchasing articles of this kind, which calculations may serve for the consideration of other dealers; for the same holds good for merchants, &c. &c. who victual shipping.

I doubt not to make it appear, that the scarcity of cattle, swine, &c. at Smithfield; the extraordinary dearness of meat, cheefe, and tallow articles, has not been occasioned by any cause originating any or nigh to the metropolis; but that such are the offspring of dire abuses, prac-

tified many miles distance therefrom; whereby, to a certainty, will be found that the counties of Devon, and Cornwall, westward; Worcester, and Shropshire, together with great part of Wales, northward, have been so drained for supplies of stock, as to produce too great inconveniencies to the respective inhabitants.

I shall shew that dealers, men who in the cheapest of times have been found useful, buying and selling living stock—and who may be deemed jobbers—have sought cattle for several years past, for want of neighbouring stock, in different routs, even where their ancestors never sought either lean or fattened bullocks, &c.

It is but reasonable to imagine, that such endeavours to obtain live stock, may serve as sufficient proofs to convince parliament that cattle and swine are scarce in reality, in that extent of country, where such ought to be found. It may account likewise why cheese is not abundant. The advanced prices paid last year for poor stock, will appear beyond example out of reason, presaging dearer prices for meat, if not for tallow candles and soap; especially if graziers and butchers find such profits as have been esteemed but fair.

To ease or prevent worse happening, surely is proper, and cannot fail to be pleasing to Englishmen.

Seeing such calamities spring up—as it were—hidden from ministerial view, and out of the way of those persons, who are inspectors or regulators of the amazing markets of London, &c.

who may have earnestly wished to furnish parliament with the needful information, my endeavour is to unfold a practice, as being the chief—if not sole—cause of scarcity, and an infringement on well meant old laws; practised with seeming impunity, which—in an unfair way—has been the occasion of raising the prices of live stock; also a dire maxim, which has greatly tended to raise the price of meat.

The practice alluded to will appear so bad in its tendency, that, unless it be prevented, it cannot fail to occasion a still greater scarcity, and more rapidly than in its earlier progress—supposing to accord with last year's advances on lean stock, enhance prices, and create still heavier complaints.

The moment being precious, I hope persons in power may deign to think as I think, viz. That to put things upon a better footing cannot be too soon managed; and that to prevent the continuance of a practice, which by counteracting, or blasting—as it were—the works of Nature, the blessings and promises of spring, is but proper, seeing such practices, if longer permitted, will be found too dangerous towards completing the ruin of England.

Deareness has occasioned almost insupportable miseries and affemblages, that have produced great harm, and consequences affording no good.

I rest on Hope—the poor man's friend—trusting that the remarks herein contained, will be a faithful guide to whomsoever now, or hereafter, regulators of the amazing markets of London, &c.

may have to manage the affairs of the nation, to the owners of landed property, and to the public, at all times, who, by looking into this book, may find the true means how to keep the prices of such necessaries properly low—better than of late—to agree with the prices paid for labour to all descriptions of those persons who support themselves and families by their earnings, and are the props of trade and commerce.

This great work may be done without injury to the fair dealer. Plenty will be found to be the best regulator of dealings and prices.

E R R A T A.

- Page 18, line 6, For *roted*, read *rotted*.
 — 22 — 2, — *drovers*, read *drowes*.
 — — 26, — *effectually*, read *even*.
 — 91 — 27, — *could take place*, read *could not take place*.
 — 178 — 7, — *rafig*, read *raising*.
 — 195 — 19, — *muttoa*, read *mutton*.

R E M A R K S

ON THE

SCARCITY OF LIVE STOCK,

THE

DEARNESS OF PROVISIONS,

AND OTHER NECESSARIES OF LIFE.

IN consideration of the present distressed situation of those persons dependent on small incomes, or earnings, for the maintenance of themselves or families, as also the miseries of the poor, and the idea of having it in my power to communicate a matter of real moment, proper to be laid before the public, induced me, as a loyal subject and well-wisher to the revenue, to shew my love for my country and fellow subjects, in the attempt of writing a narrative concerning the prevailing scarcity of cattle and swine; of the prices paid for their production, man's common provision, also for the useful articles tallow candles, and soap, which Providence hath afforded me an opportunity of seeing bought and sold in divers parts of England, in the course of 37 years last past.

In the early part of my life, I was occasionally sent with a man-servant to farms, fairs, and markets, chiefly in the two counties of Somerset and Gloucester, to purchase fattened cattle for my mother's

use, an industrious widow of respectable character, who, for the maintenance of a large family of children, carried on the business of a butcher in the city of Bath; dealing chiefly with respectable opulent farmers and graziers, occupiers of divers sorts of farms, at perhaps the distance of forty miles, more or less, and frequently by myself, with considerable sums of money, to lay out the same in the purchasing of live fattened cattle, mostly oxen or steers, and wether sheep, under the direction of certain friends of my mother, who had kindly appointed to meet me for that purpose. Taking delight therein, and being blest with a retentive memory, I soon became acquainted to a great nicety with the value of the different sorts of fattened cattle, necessary for our shop, which supplied with different kinds of provisions those most honourable and respectable customers who then did my best of parents the honour of dealing with her.

Before one year had elapsed, I was sent with the servant to a respectable farmer's house in Gloucestershire, for the purpose of examining, and to purchase (if approving of them) one hundred fattened clean bred Dorsetshire wether sheep, the whole of which we bought at one guinea each sheep, guessing their weight when brought to the scale, would be upon the average eighteen pounds per quarter, nine stone each sheep, London weight; observing on our return home, that the said wethers were warranted sound, were excellently well fattened, and would not cost *in* more than after the rate of threepence halfpenny per pound, or two shillings and fourpence per stone London weight, allowing

for sinking the offal. Those true, clean bred Dorsetshire wethers died full of fat, and carried weight satisfactory.

At that time other butchers, who attended constantly at Bristol weekly live markets, and at fairs, taking advantage of dealing for ready money, bought by *hand* wether sheep, equally fat and weighty at as low as after the rate of threepence per pound, or two shillings per stone, London weight; allowing for sinking the offal; oftentimes considerably cheaper. Good ewes well fattened, such dealers bought for ready money by hand, to come into shop at little more than half the foregoing price. The graziers of the low parts of Somersetshire, around Bridgewater, Taunton, Huntspill, &c. were in the habit of sending at that time, hundreds of fattened wethers, chiefly of the Dorsetshire breed to Smithfield market, taking advantage of Salisbury and other markets and fairs in that route for sale; and were satisfied if after clearing the expences of the journey, such fattened wethers produced after the rate of threepence three farthings per pound, or half a crown per stone, London weight, allowing for sinking the offal; nay, such graziers or dealers, boasted of excellent markets, if their prime wether sheep sold at Smithfield as high as fourpence per pound, two shillings and eightpence per stone London weight, allowing for sinking the offal. Poor sheep were bought in at prices to answer the foregoing.

On a future day of the same autumn, being sent to a respectable grazier's farm in the county of

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Somerfet, to examine and to purchase (if approving of them) eight excellent home bred, or native Somerfetshire fattened oxen, which were bought at eleven pounds each; reckoning that the four quarters of beef of each of those oxen, when brought to the scale, would weigh eleven score and four pounds weight each quarter, which added together, the bulk makes forty-four score and sixteen pounds weight; eight hundred weight; or one hundred and twelve stone London weight, being somewhat less than threepence per pound; twenty eight shillings per hundred weight, or two shillings per stone London weight, allowing for sinking the offal. Those truly valuable Somerfetshire bred oxen were a sort which always carried a prodigious quantity of meat upon the bone, more than oxen of many other counties (if to appearance of the same frame when poor) carried not only an abundant weight over and above the weight required, but also upon the average, produced more than one hundred pounds weight of rough tallow, or fourteen stone London weight, for the use of the chandlers; as also remarkable heavy strong hides.

From crossing the breed with Somerfetshire cows, and other dire manœuvres made use of, I despair of ever seeing their like again. Such prime oxen as those I have mentioned, were in those days driven in lots or droves, perhaps from a score, to the number of a hundred weekly in autumn, more particularly about Christmas time, through the routes of Salisbury, Winchester, Basingstoke, and Hounslow, to Smithfield, from the rich pastures in the low parts of Somerfetshire, whilst the graziers or deal-

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ers, owners thereof, were satisfied, if after road expences were cleared, such excellent animals made a return of from twenty-eight shillings to thirty, or at farthest, thirty-two shillings and eight pence per hundred weight, or two shillings, and up to two shillings and fourpence per stone, London weight; allowing for sinking the offal. If such bullocks were sold at Salisbury or other markets or fairs in the route to Smithfield, the buyers experienced nearly the same cheapness.

Heifers not more than three years old, and cows heavily laden with fat, and full of tallow, were bought at that time chiefly by country butchers, at as low as after the rate of one guinea per hundred weight, whereby housekeepers, all descriptions of labouring persons, and the poor, were supplied with good beef on very moderate terms in town and country. It soon became part of my business to seek for and purchase fattened suckled staged calves, a small but regular supply of veal being at that time requisite for the shop. To find such at one time of the year, I rode to dairies, and other large farms, within a circle of ten or twelve miles round Bath, by which means I became acquainted not only with the situations but with the produces of most of the farms [as then cultured] in the villages and hundreds so encircled.

As I grew in years, I delighted in the study of farming, the nature of different sorts of cattle and stock; also the various methods used of weaning, rearing, and fattening them.

By attending to the produces chiefly of dairy and suckling farms at that early part of my practice, Pro-

vidence presented such things to my view as greatly surprized me; and after contemplating on the probable consequences thereof, I concluded that a day in all likelihood would arrive, when such things, if made public, might be found useful to society. A few years convinced me, that what I had previously considered wrong proceedings, had turned out *exceeding* hurtful to society; and having the good of my country and the welfare of the community at heart, I held a discovery thereof a debt due to the public, which I ought faithfully to discharge; and attempted it as I then thought best. About twenty-five years ago I offered to explain the nature of the growing evil to a gentleman high in office, and received for answer: "Sir, " I always subscribe to good things, but never " meddle." This rebuff vexed me: notwithstanding I still persevered in paying attention to the progress of the evil practice and infringement alluded to, making frequent offers to explain their causes to others, but in vain: I at length determined to publish my remarks for the information of those now in power, who perhaps will honour them with their attention, seeing how dear the necessaries of life are become.

Fat suckled staged calves at that time, when the calving season was a little advanced, were bought in lots of six, four, or one calf, according as a farm produced: the average prices then given for such kind of fattened calves [all by hand] were from twenty-seven shillings, up to thirty-seven shillings each, weighing from twenty-eight pounds upward to forty pounds weight per quarter, about from four-

teen stone up to twenty stone London weight, allowing for sinking the offal.

Staged suckled calves were mostly sold at eight, ten, or twelve weeks old, according to their growth, or to supplies of milk. There are at present many butchers existing that recollect purchasing fattened calves at divers dairies, when the calving season commenced, in lots per hand, at from fourteen pounds to sixteen pounds only per score. Let it be understood, although the latter were not staged, yet they were frequently equal in delicacy, with suckled staged calves; more certain to be juicy, by receiving their fill of milk from the dam, and would weigh on the average from twenty to thirty pounds per quarter, although taken to market at six weeks old at farthest.

Country butchers residing at six, or eight miles distance from Bath or Bristol, made a larger circuit, and picked up stage suckled calves *the best sorts*, at from twenty shillings to one guinea only each calf; which may serve to shew, lands nearest to populous places were then of more value than lands at a greater distance.

Such were the prices at that time, not varying more than sixpence or one shilling per calf, during the spring and summer months, *i. e.* from April until November.

After the month of November had commenced, although in the height of Bath season, throughout the winter months, the customary dearest time of the year, it was considered an astonishing price to pay for a fattened suckled stage calf, or calves, fifty

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shillings per calf, varying but few shillings, however good and weighty.

Young suckling calves were purchased by sucklers at that time from the month of April until September, from three to six days old, at as low as from four to five shillings each, frequently for less money; but from the month of September until the calving season following, at from twelve to fourteen shillings each suckling. House lambs at that period were bought by a standing custom yearly, at as low prices as from half a guinea each, up to thirteen shillings per lamb. The latter price was the utmost known paid in those days in this part of the kingdom by retailers. The few grass lambs which were killed at that time were in the spring and summer months only; such grass lambs, if weighing on the average from eight up to ten pounds per quarter, seldom cost the butchers, if retailers, more than seven shillings per lamb, but more frequently bought by hand, equally well fattened and heavy at five shillings per lamb, or five pounds per score.

The native breeds of lean and fattened stock were the chief produces found at that time in great abundance, most fairs and markets being thronged with large or small lots thereof, according to the size of the farms around.

Wales supplied in an astonishing degree, Bristol, Gloucester, Bath, and many other fairs and markets with lean and fleshy pigs. One or two fattening pigs were to be found at almost every small farm; at larger dairies in greater numbers; and were sold by a standing custom, almost generally by weight, at per score pounds weight, head and feet

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included according to prices fixed at Bridgewater, Wells, Bristol, Gloucester, or Bath markets.

Sometimes the prices paid for Wiltshire fattened hogs or pigs, exceeded the former nearly three-pence per score pounds weight, but it was no matter the size. If pigs were found fat and found, the prices were moderately low, as four shillings and sixpence per score pounds weight. Prime corn fed swine for bacon, not more than twelve months old, have frequently, in my hearing, been bargained for at four shillings per score pounds weight between the farmer and the hog butcher.

There are persons still existing, who dealt largely in hogs, that recollect, after a good acorn season, purchasing of neighbouring farmers in lots by hand, litters of young swine, as porkers for scalding, which had been turned out to range the fields, woods, brakes, or coppices, hard by, for out food, with the dam, and thereby got fat from three to six months old, which slips when killed and brought to the scale, did not cost more than seven farthings per pound, including the head and feet.

Fattened stock being bought in thus moderately at that period, the nobility, gentry, visitors, the inhabitants of Bath and its environs, enjoyed the agreeable satisfaction of knowing for a certainty of the morning attendance at market, either of the farmer, his wife, daughter, or servant, who had trudged thither with the different produces of the neighbouring farms, (as farms were then managed) consisting of best milk butter, whey butter, cheeses of various sorts, vast quantities of roasting pigs,

the choice pieces of a well country fattened bacon pig, or hog, namely, the fore chine, middle chine, tail chine, spare-ribs, sweet bones, with fillets hanging thereto, blade bones, with a portion of meat thereon, griskins, together with black and white puddings, abundance of lard, chitterlings nicely cleaned, and made up by the hand of a neat dairy maid; variety of poultry well fattened, fresh eggs, small birds, lean poultry for town fattening, fruits, flowers, herbs, honey, and the honey combs, &c. &c. &c. all which, when sold, produced a sum of money, which, if but small, served to make up rents, and afforded not only contented, but comfortable maintenances, rearing up most numerous families of children, which said rents were generally as well paid to the landlords as at this present dear time.

Land owners, who although they may be in the habit of letting out farms at the low rates, as paid either by the ancestors of the present occupiers, or to other persons (no matter to whom, were all regular farmers only) on the same good old moderate terms (which is well known to be the case in divers counties) or may be somewhat higher let than at thirty-six years ago, I venture to affirm, that such land owners have not made the like sums of money which served at aforesaid time, with a portion in addition thereto, seemingly adequate with their advanced rents, answer at the end of several years last past to clear off house-keeping expenditures. It will be found, on referring to house-keeping books, that for several years past, and a long time before the present war took place,

numerous genteel families have respectively been in the habit of paying double out-goings yearly, to the great discomfiture of the poor; since, in many instances, there has been a real necessity for even such families curtailing liberalities.

Such, in reality, has been the case. But if, hereafter, it is found possible for things to be put on a better footing than they are at present, and that landed property will thereby, with certainty, be benefited, rather than lessened in value, may not benevolence and charity again resume appearances equal to gifts experienced of old, seeing to produce again for futurity, the blessings of plenty, and moderate prices, is practicable shortly to be brought about?

Best milk butter was bought, summer mornings, even by strangers and chance customers, at so low a price as six-pence per pound; whey butter was bought at four-pence per pound; tubs of excellent Welch butter were frequently sent to this neighbourhood, to housekeepers and retailers, at so low a price as three-pence per pound:—per hundred, or per ton weight, retailers bought at cheaper rates.

On winter mornings, although in the height of Bath season, the best milk butter seldom cost so high a price as ten-pence per pound, or whey butter more than five-pence per pound; either was bought, frequently, nearly as cheap as in the summer months, occasioned by the then prevailing plenty of either sort. Thus artificers, and the poor, were supplied comfortably; who in

common preferred whey butter, expressing satisfaction therewith.

Farmers and butter-women, who attended market constantly twice or thrice a week, supplied inn-holders, shopkeepers, retailers, nay housekeepers, by the year, with best milk butter, at so low a price as seven-pence per pound.

About that time best milk butter at the city of Wells, and at places adjacent thereto, was bought considerably cheaper. For instance, a farmer with whom I was acquainted, (laboured hard, yet was content with cyder or malt liquor) residing not more than ten miles therefrom, assured me he sent his butter on a Wednesday to Wells market, but could get no more than three-pence per pound for it, wherefore it was brought home again, and the Saturday following it was sent thither again and sold, with other fresher made, at that price.

That the foregoing circumstance is a fact, can be proved, the person being still in existence.

It must be observed what rendered it thus cheap, viz. At that time most of the farms, situated within the circle of from ten to fifteen miles around the cities of Bristol and Bath, were cultivated by regular farmers: who, to make up rents continually as it were, kept those two great markets in a state of plenty, by which means jobbing in any way, but more especially in butter, eggs, or small marketings, was rarely known.

Best coward milk cheefes were brought to market, by such country marketing folks, and

fold as low as two-pence-halfpenny per pound; half coward milk cheefe, and skim cheefe, for the greater convenience of working persons, were sold by hand at proportionate and more moderate prices.

Cream cheefes, for which Bath market has long been famed for producing, were bought at eight pence each. In the height of the season, such perhaps rose in price to ten-pence each; but by the dozen were bought for less money per cheefe, certain months of the year.

Great quantities of poultry, excellently fattened, were brought by such neighbouring country folks to market, which were not only of larger size, but far superior in quality to the poultry which of late years has been retailed out by higlers, who have drained more distant villages and markets to supply the present demand.

Fresh eggs were bought from five to ten for two-pence.

Poultry, being rather out of my way, I shall say but little thereon, eggs excepted. Let it suffice, divers kinds of poultry were formerly brought, exceeding good, to market, and were purchased by the visiting gentry, who preferred marketing for themselves; also by the inhabitants, at very moderate prices.

The practices which, by unseasonable diminution, have caused a scarcity of stock of cattle and swine, have caused likewise a neglect of rearing poultry; consequently a scarcity and

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dearneys thereof, as will appear more fully hereafter.

Roasting pigs were bought at two shillings each, half-a-crown being a price rarely known in those days in Somersetshire.

Of the before-mentioned choice pieces of pig's meat, of a prime country corn fattened bacon-hog, commonly called broken pieces, the fore-chines, spare-ribs, sweet bones with fillets, were bought at two-pence-halfpenny per pound; those of more superior quality at three-pence per pound. If a farther advance of one farthing per pound took place thereon, it was chiefly at Christmas, when fore-chines, for a few market days only, yielded perhaps four-pence per pound. The reason assigned for such advance seemed fair: fore chines of such pig's meat, being considered as proper presents at that season, and frequently sent to very distant parts of the kingdom; as were cream cheese for the like purposes.

The griskins, as then cut out, were bought at from ten-pence to one shilling each, nearly all meat. The largest, however delicate, seldom yielded fourteen-pence, weighing from three to four pounds.

Excellent hog's lard was bought at four-pence per pound; by the lump cheaper. The black and white puddings, which were made better and considerably larger than what are brought to market at this time; the blade-bones, with a portion of meat thereon, as taken from the sides

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intended for fitches of bacon, the kidneys, midriffs, tails, and sweetbreads, though apparently trifling articles, served single persons chiefly, and were a convenient and comfortable part of the food of the day, were bought from one-penny to three-halfpence each, proving sufficient, with a frugal supply of vegetables and bread, for a moderate eater's meal.

The best cheese, made in Somerset, Gloucester, and Wiltshire, of various kinds, known at London by the names of Gloucester, double Gloucester, Wiltshire, North Wiltshire, Cheddar, &c. &c. was bought at that time, at the retail shops, as low as three-pence per pound. The most excellent of either sort cost no more, in common, than four-pence per pound.

At fairs, and great cheese markets, where cheese was bought up by the hundred weight, eighteen shillings up to twenty-five shillings were prices then common for the best coward first making; and if purchased by the ton at a lower rate. Contractors, who supplied government and other great demands, cheese-factors, great shopkeepers, &c. got credit therewith, and amassed handsome fortunes, even at considerable lower prices.

This statement of the prices of cheese, the navy books, hospitals, and books of parish houses, if examined, may prove more satisfactory. There are many persons yet living, who recollect purchasing good coward milk cheese, at the low price of fourteen shillings per hundred weight, at Landsdown, Weyhill, Reading, and other fairs.

There are also persons now living, who recollect the prices which Lammas and Poland wheats, barley, and malt, bore at that time.

From authorities which are not to be doubted, nor controverted, I have taken the following information, viz. A few years prior to the period of thirty-six years ago, best wheats yielded from three shillings and six-pence to four shillings per bushel, as from fourteen to sixteen shillings per four bushel sack, large measure.

For many years since town artificers, and the poor were in the habit of receiving twelve pounds of town-made bread—commonly called household bread—for one shilling.

Country bread, made more brown, perhaps more nourishing, of considerable more weight, was bought for the same sum of money.

Barleys were bought at as low as two shillings per bushel, and best made malt was bought at half-a-crown per bushel, same large measure.

Narrow wheeled waggon loads of wheat straw, from farms situated near to roads for a team and waggon passable, were delivered in to innholders, stable-keepers, and such like customers, at from eighteen shillings to one guinea per load. The latter price, when occasioned by a failing crop, or other distressing circumstances, was considered alarmingly dear; such waggon loads of wheat straw being nevertheless, at that time, equally large in bulk, and weighed nearly as much as those commonly seen delivered in now, at the present very high prices, chiefly by weight.

Hay was bought at low prices, as from thirty shillings per ton, rising in price according to the goodness thereof, or as the harvest turned out; until of late years three pounds per ton was a price seldom known to be given for hay, although in the neighbourhood of the cities of Bristol and Bath.

Speculating dealers, even farmers, would frequently in those days over stand the markets for hay, because Providence quickly changing the face of the earth, the appearance of things, and the fields changed. The same hay for which fifty shillings per ton had been offered, reduced in value at market, and was delivered in afterwards at less than two-thirds of such bidden prices. In the course of my experience I always found speculators in hay alternately found gain and loss chiefly owing to the works of Providence; one instance may suffice.

About thirty years ago a person in the possession of many acres of excellent pasture land, near to the hay and river Wye, in the county of Hereford, had the growth of many years hay by him, much of the said pasture land, (which in his way he cultured) producing according to the authorities and opinions of competent judges, and my own belief, nearly two tons per acre on the average lippant and dry seasons.

At that time I was informed hay sold to the innholders in the city of Hereford, at about fifty shillings per ton weight. Many persons made application to him, and would willingly have purchased nearly all he was possessed of, at fair and time prices, but he asked, or demanded five pounds per ton weight. So regardless was he, and cruel, as not to

hearken to the necessitous offers of his neighbours, or to the voice of reason. As a punishment to him, the face of things changed for the better, and great part of the astonishing number, nine score and one stacks, or mows of hay, many of which were estimated to contain ten tons weight, roted upon the face of the earth like dung heaps.

This book being intededly written to work reformations, I mention this extraordinary circumstance as a lesson for covetous persons, hoping it may have a good effect, and that from such principles the Lord will be pleased to deliver Britons.

I came by a knowledge and sight thereof as follows: at that period of time there was a great call for Welch mutton at Bath. The sort of Welch sheep which our shop had been accustomed to shew, were frequently picked up at Bristol live markets. A horned sheep of a remarkable small size, of which the hind quarters and the necks of mutton sold well, were greatly esteemed on account of their delicacy, and the tender quality thereof; but the shoulders and breasts turned to bad account, yielding very little money. The offal of that sort of Welch sheep was likewise of very trifling value; their wool to appearance, and its feel being hairy and coarse, which made the skins to be considered of little value, inasmuch to be disposed of to fellmongers at the rate of two Welch skins for one home bred sheep skin. This occasioned my making enquiry for a better sort of small, or Welch sheep, which might be likely to turn out more profitable; such were soon found.

A gentleman of most respected memory resided at that time at Bath, his servant was in the habit of frequenting the shop for meat, who, on hearing me propose to my mother the necessity of finding a better sort of small sheep, without hesitation justly pointed out the Rylands as best, and gave a written direction to a farmer at Foxley in Herefordshire, of whom might be got great numbers thereof. Accordingly I was sent thither, where I bought a lot of compleat Rylands wether sheep, at as low a rate as three-pence halfpenny per pound, allowing for sinking the offal. Now the offal of those Rylands sheep three years old, proved better, and of much more value than the offal of any Welch sheep before known in Somersetshire. Whereupon at their arrival, those good and pretty moulded animals were not only the admiration, but became the talk of almost every grazier, butcher, and epicure in mutton. Respecting the sorts and age for best mutton necessary to be chosen for persons who find themselves in the decline of life, I shall say a few words hereafter. I have observed it was customary to give two Welch sheep skins as one home bred, or Dorset, or Wiltshire bred sheep skin. The price for which the latter sorts were sold at that time to the fellmongers was fifteen pence each skin, the skins of the Rylands must have gone at seven pence halfpenny each of course: whereas the honest man who managed the business of farming at Foxley with great credit, of whom I purchased these Ryland sheep (after I had agreed for them) requested to know at what price the skins would be likely to be sold. Replying according to the manner already

stated, viz. two for one; he, knowing the goodness and value of the wool of that sort of sheep, desired that I carefully got the skins dried, which was done accordingly; and they were sent to him by way of Bristol, in a trading vessel; for every skin he allowed my parent considerably more than double the price which they otherwise must have gone for, although in a dried state.

This sort of mutton at that time at Hereford, Ross, &c. yielded per joint, or quarter, not more than three pence per pound, weighing from eight to ten, or eleven pounds per quarter; twelve pounds per quarter the right sort seldom amounting to, although the handsomest formed, and most excellent eating mutton known. Beef and other meats were sold equally cheap; at those places tallow, candles and soap, bore nearly the same prices as in Somersetshire, little more than six pence per pound in retail shops.

Before I return to the eastern side of the Severn, it may be necessary that I inform my reader of the wonderful supplies which this country received, particularly bullocks and swine from that part of Gloucestershire, from Monmouth, Glamorgan, Brecknock, Carmarthenshires, and other counties lying on the opposite side of its banks from England.

Persons in the vicinity, also the inhabitants of Bristol, other country dealers, who during the thirty-six years past, have been in the habit of attending Thomas Street live market, will no doubt admit that the numbers of poor oxen, steers, runts, heifers and pigs brought thither by useful Welch dealers, or drovers who may be stiled jobbers, were until of late years truly abundant and amazing, notwith-

standing native breeds of either Somerset, Gloucester, and Wiltshire stock were found many, weekly, but at times insufficient to eat and pay for the wonderful burthens of spring and after grass produced in the fertile pastures extending from the Severn to Cirencester, Cricklade, Calne, Devizes, Westbury, to Bruton, and down to Bridgewater.

That such numbers should have been brought there, need not be wondered at, since it is well known Welchmen after standing Bristol market on Thursdays, travelled with the unfold poor cattle and swine to fairs and markets, southward, eastward, and northward, having at that time markets for sale almost every week day.

Will not the same account for the vast supplies received at Smithfield heretofore from those pastures and farms, fattened?

I have known such drovers hawk about their stock to small town markets (of which to the injury of the community, divers have been cried off, or put down) almost through the county of Gloucester, to Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and farther towards the north. Others travelled through the upper part of Somersetshire, through Wiltshire by Salisbury, Andover, Winchester, Basingstoke, to Guildford, and onwards down into the rich vales of Suffex; whilst others have taken the more southward route from Bristol by Bath, Pensford, Wells, Castle Cary, Wincanton, sometimes touching Glastonbury, Somerton, and across towards Weymouth.

Much fattened goods likewise were formerly brought over to Bristol, and were found of vast service at that excellent live market, by being the

means of regulating and keeping prices moderate. The drovers of poor oxen, steers, runts, spayed, martins, and other heifers, that were used to be brought across the Severn from these counties and from lower down in Wales, by persons who went down thither from the rich pasture farms in the easternmost counties of England, were heretofore astonishing.

Eastern dealers who fetched up yearly, perhaps thousands of such cattle from Wales, used to turn most of them at late years into the strong pastures on and near the eastern and south eastern sea coast of England, where without one blade of hay, such black beasts got wonderfully fit, and came in seasonably to Smithfield, in spring months, at or about the time when stall fed beasts from most grazing counties of England were turned into money. But the practices and abuses which will appear, have for so many years prevailed in Somerset, Gloucester, west and north west Wiltshire, having spread into Monmouthshire, and onwards far into Wales, have almost deprived England of the usual supplies therefrom, found so truly necessary in these parts of old.

By such mishap, cheapness (which aforesime was every where found in those counties of Wales) is done away, and provisions experienced the following turn in prices there.

Quarters of mutton in Monmouthshire, less than twenty years ago, of ten or twelve pounds weight, nay, more weighty, were bought at eighteen-pence, or at farthest, up to two shillings each quarter, for several years past, have been raising there; five-pence per pound has been paid, and now the current price for mutton is higher.

Beef, veal, poultry, butter, cheese, as provisions for mankind, were there formerly all alike plenty, and cheap, but at this juncture are alike scarce and dear, in as much as the poor people in those counties have been heard to complain, viz. "Tis hard to have little bread for our money, but more, it is harder not to know the taste of meat for a fortnight."

Taking a view of things farther back, as fifty-eight years ago, to shew how remarkable cheap, meats were in Somersetshire, old shop books which I have kept by me, being regularly posted, makes it appear that the nobility, gentry, resorting visitors to Bath, with numerous or small retinues, were supplied with the most prime, of picked pieces of ox, steer, or heifer beef, wether mutton, the most preferred joints, or quarters of pork, at 3d per pound, veal was then sold by a standing custom by hand, viz. without weighing either in fides, quarters, or the single joint.

It is probable that the vast advances in the prices paid for this article of provisions, in but few years, may seem incredible; but facts are stubborn things, I have the advantage of books to prove, if required, the prices as then paid for it, by vast numbers of the quality of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, who purchased for themselves, or as purchased for their respective uses.

FOR VEAL AS SOLD BY HAND,

According with the weights of staged suckled calves as before mentioned!

A leg of veal weighing from 14 lb. to 20 lb.	4 6 to 6 9
A loin of ditto, from 10 lb. to 14 lb.	3 0 to 4 0
A neck of ditto, from 9 lb. to 12 lb.	2 6 to 3 6
A breast of ditto, from 8 lb. to 10 lb.	2 6 to 3 0

A shoulder of veal, however good or weighty, seldom cost more money than half a crown.

At Bristol and its environs, the same kind of articles were bought equally cheap, although cut up in different forms. But to return to a nearer period of time, the moderation which the inhabitants of Bath and its environs enjoyed purchasing the article veal, I conceive will satisfactorily appear by one fact which occurred within the space of thirty years last past, viz.

A tradesman yet in existence, a man of good repute, being at the town of Marshfield in Gloucestershire upon the market day, purchased of a butcher, three quarters of veal, delicately white, of proper age, and well fattened, for three shillings and six-pence per quarter, the whole sum amounting to half a guinea only; two were hind quarters and weighed twenty-two pounds each, the other was a fore quarter which weighed twenty three pounds; thus the bulk made sixty-seven pounds weight, for ten shillings and six-pence.

In Wiltshire, at Bradford, Melksham, and Trowbridge; also in Somersetshire, at Froome, Shepton Mallett, and divers other towns, nay, in most villages of either county, certain months of the year, persons bought equally good veal and cheap, in quarters, or by the joint, as best suited their pockets. In either county before mentioned of England, or Wales, if calves were killed under six weeks old, the carcases of such at market, frequently got condemned as carrion, unwholesome for food, and burnt.

About this period of time which came within my own knowledge, the country people were seemingly

the most happy of any of his Majesty's subjects, and of the hardiest constitutions; their children were healthy, and fed with wholesome food at every meal time.

Complaints amongst the laborious, even those of lowest estate, or the old, or infirm poor, at this period were seldom heard of in town or country; scarcity or dearth were not known, hours were conveniently spared to relieve the minds of the robust in performances, manly recreations, and exercises, encouraged for good reasons, by even those whom administered justice, living amongst such working persons of husbandry or other arts, revered, and as it were secure from theft or harms.

Inhabitants of London and its environs, who kept house there thirty years ago will no doubt allow, although they could not purchase meats in those days equally cheap, as did those country persons distant from them, perhaps an hundred miles or more, there was comfort and great consolation for Londoners by their various earnings, of from twelve shillings upwards, to one guinea per week wages, more or less; also for shop-keepers in the habit of turning much money, affording good and considerable profits, earning wages likewise; whereas many of these country persons in sweet content, reared up families by hard labour at tenpence per day wages only: however, be it remembered, the Londoners were plentifully supplied at that period with best provisions and moderately cheap considering road expences, enjoying not only comfortable livelihoods but amassing fortunes.

Many old graziers, in my early days of business, assured me, that, owing to distance of situation from grazing counties, Smithfield had been looked upon as the top market for prices; trade, &c. at London answering it; perhaps one halfpenny, or a penny per pound, which was conceived reasonable by them, and by me.

Quarters of house lamb, of superlative quality, were bought at Bath, thirty years ago only, from three shillings and six-pence, to four shillings and six-pence each. If at Christmas a quarter, more excellent than other, cost five shillings, it was deemed very dear, even for a fore-quarter.

Quarters of grass lamb seldom cost more than from half-a-crown to three shillings per quarter, perhaps ten or more pounds weight.

Best cuts of bacon were bought at six-pence per pound; inferior pieces at prices considerably lower; odd pieces of right good bacon, were frequently bought in lots at two-pence halfpenny, or three-pence per pound; fore-spurs for less money.

Persons are still living, who recollect their neighbours bringing up large families of children genteelly, by keeping boarding tables; that have boasted of purchasing, in the country market of Bath, a leg of veal for two shillings; and at Easter, or Whitsuntide, a quarter of grass lamb—either weighing twelve pounds—for the like small sum.

Advancing twenty or more miles from Bath, to Wells, Glastonbury, Somerton, Crewkerne, Ilchester, and nearer, as Shepton Mallet and Frome; also, at other large towns and villages in the county of Somerset, persons yet living recollect purchasing lots of meat, of the following descriptions, viz. sirloins, rumps, atchbones, rounds, flanks, fore-ribs, and briskets, of good beef; quarters or joints of veal; quarters or joints of pork; quarters or joints of wether, or Chilver mutton, excellent in their several kinds, as low as two-pence-halfpenny per pound.—Three-pence per pound, less than twenty years ago, in the dearest months of the year, was a top price.

In many of the towns and villages, in the counties of Gloucester, and Wilts, persons recollect having purchased lots of provisions, of the same description, at equally low prices as their neighbours of Somersetshire: nay, there are to be found persons who bought as low as half-a-crown per score pounds weight; lots rather inferior in pieces and quality to the before-mentioned, yet of good sorts of meat. But the inhabitants of all those towns and villages, for several years past, have been in the distressing habit of paying double, in many instances treble prices, for such necessary articles of life as will hereafter appear. What makes it worse and more lamentable is, that each sort has been found greatly inferior in quality.

On the evenings of market days, it became part of my business to attend at a stall in the country market, with the remains which were left

after serving shop customers, which consisted of what is esteemed good, and commonly called family pieces of meat, viz. middle and chuck ribs, tops of ribs, thick and thin flank, clods, or shoulder-pieces, stickin-pieces, legs, and shins of beef, &c. legs, shoulders, and breasts of wether mutton, shoulders of veal; likewise the small offals (of consequence,) viz. bullocks skirts, or midrifs, kidneys, hearts, cheeks, &c. which, if thought trifling articles, supplied numerous families comfortably.

By attending the shambles stall, I had an opportunity of seeing genteel residents, and boarding house-keepers, purchase of country butchers, best pieces of ox, steer, heifer, or cow beef, with joints of wether, or Chilver mutton, and pork, at as low as two-pence-halfpenny, and up to three-pence per pound, in lots of perhaps sixty, and up to ten or twelve score pounds weight, according to the demand of the family.

At that plentiful time, boarding tables were sumptuously spread with most excellent viands in the earliest season. The boarder in health finding what might almost be considered luxuries; whilst the invalid was inticed to partake, hearing daily at table, the pleasing and comfortable story of excellence and cheapness.

Visitors, shop customers, paid advanced prices, as three-pence-halfpenny, and on particular occasions one farthing more per pound.

Small marketings continued at nearly the before-mentioned low prices.

The family pieces of meat entrusted to my care for sale, in the country market, were chiefly purchased by master tradesmen, having perhaps large families of children; keeping, moreover, one, two, or more apprentices; by journeymen tradesmen; by farmers; by working husbandmen; other working men and women; by town and country labourers, and the poor, at the following cheap rates, viz.

A lot of one, two, or more such pieces of beef, one, or more such like joints of mutton, I have fold as low as two-pence per pound. If perchance a stickin, or throat-piece of beef, had hung unfold a few days, of twelve pounds weight nearly, a third part fat, the poor frequently got such a piece of prime ox, steer, or heifer beef, thoroughly sweet, for one shilling.

Shoulders of veal, fat and white; if such had hung unfold, perhaps not cheapened, I have seen fold at other shops, and at stalls in the country market; nay I have fold such, weighing eighteen pounds, thoroughly sweet, at from twenty-pence to half-a-crown each.

A poor person got a shoulder of capital wether mutton if dried—as preferred by epicures—yet sweet, at the low price of two-pence-halfpenny per pound; breasts of fat mutton, if six pounds weight, for one shilling, even when fresh.

Those comforts were experienced whilst town and country butchers attended strictly to the maxim of buying fattened cattle alive BY HAND.

The nobility and gentry, who, at that time, were in the habit of resorting to Bath, the spring and autumn seasons, were very numerous. They came thither, not only for the salutary effects of the Bath waters, or to partake of its amusements, but for the sake of cheap living, and enjoying what they then considered a treat, viz. to eat Bath mutton: which, indeed, at that time, was of superior quality to almost all other kinds, known either to the butchers or customers. Sorts were from Wilts, Somerset, Dorset breeds, fattened on Landdown, or in the pastures of neighbouring farms; Keynsham Hams, the North Marsh, and even to Bridgewater, together with Welch mountaineers.

Much of those good sorts of mutton was brought to market so good, as to be justly admired for its rich and tender qualities, although not all Landdown mutton: such being frequently sent as presents to the most distant counties of this kingdom.

I have killed capital Wiltshire wethers, there fattened. Experienced in their worth, I regret their falling off.

I have killed Mendip wethers, excellent; but the introduction of Ryland's, as before mentioned, did something extraordinary; the goodness of their meat gaining a preference.

It may appear extraordinary, but it is true, by crossing of the native neighbouring breeds of sheep, crossing of Ryland's, a novel puzzle prevails at Bath, viz. It is difficult for a tolerable

judge of mutton, as daily exposed for sale, to pick a joint thereof that will not offend the stomach of invalids, especially those subject to weak digestion. Were I to say its ill effects have not in many instances been fatal, I firmly believe would be to depart from truth.

The rage of late has been to produce moist fat mutton on the least bone, forced on the public for good, whereas such, without exception, turns out to be very bad fat mutton; a tough gross food for human beings.

Boarding schools were supplied with mutton, beef, and certain joints of veal, as low as three-pence per pound, yearly.

Country boarding schools at less money; hence scholars were boarded on moderate terms; whilst traders of almost every description flourished.

About the year 1760, when our present Sovereign began his reign over a then plentifully supplied happy people, the shew, the word of the day, in town and country, was unfeigned loyalty. Failures among trading people were seldom heard of, because housekeeping was cheap. Savings were possible; whereby money was with cheerfulness paid, not only for the necessaries of schooling, and clothing in a homely way, but were spared, with conveniency, for articles of dress, scorning to be in debt for whatever were the prevailing fashions to appear in.

Handsome sums of money were paid to first rate tradesmen, with children when bound apprentices; parents finding cloathing, pocket money, washing, &c. &c. during the term. It

was also found convenient to spare considerable sums of money to sons and daughters, to set up business; with the hope of seeing their beloved children flourish in trade, as had been their own former happy lot.

Not only handicrafts and town poor, but country labouring persons, and country poor, even past labour, on Saturday night frequently got conveyed home, a wallet well filled with good remains of marketings, viz. ox cheeks, legs, or shins; midriffs, or skirts, or kidneys of beef; hearts, heels, &c. &c. Also breasts of mutton, sheeps heads, stale loaves of bread, cheese, &c. &c. sufficient provisions for the week ensuing, for half-a-crown, being perhaps all the money that could be spared, for food, out of their weeks wages, at ten-pence or one shilling per day. Yet such people found means thereby to bring up large families of children, from six to ten or twelve, in number, without parochial assistance. Surely such living was perfectly conformable, and but accorded with the customs of their forefathers—not eating too much animal food.—But since the outcry of scarcity and dearth has been prevalent, both have erroneously been attributed to the eating of too much meat.

In the days of plenty, insatiable, hard-hearted, fordid persons alone, were those who begrudged the labourious part of their fellow creatures to partake of such comforts; but, alas, the day has arrived, almost empty bellies—want of animal food—has been experienced even in England.

In all climates, states, or counties, customs vary, yet are regarded respecting food, by rich and poor. In the east rice, in the west turtle, pepper-pot, yams; in parts of Europe, frogs, fallad, &c. But in England beef, mutton and bacon is required, with cheese and butter, either having been handed down as proper food for Englishmen, if used with discretion.

At country club meetings, politics, or contentions, of this or that, him or them having caused scarcity or dearth were not heard; good reason why, scarcity, or dearth having not appeared.

Such meetings consisting of almost all descriptions of working persons, when met they went cheerfully to church to hear Divine Service, then to a dinner, after which loyal songs, as For Folded Flocks, and Fruitful Plains; Hail British Isle, and God Save the King, were heard resound.

So lately as the year 1765, hard labouring colliers, men and women of Somersetshire and Gloucestershire, travelled to divers neighbouring towns with drifts of horses, as four, ten perhaps, more or less in number, which were laden with coals, and brought up by such industrious means families of perhaps six, ten, more or less children without parochial assistance. This account may not astonish when it is understood as fact, that it was common to see such colliers lade or fill a two bushel coal sack with articles of provisions of the before mentioned descriptions, of beef, mutton, large half stript beef bones, stale loaves of bread, and pieces of cheese. The whole of which did not cost them more than three shillings; but were purchased frequently for less

money. Colliers in rather higher station were in the habit of buying lots of good beef, with joints of mutton, at as low as from seven farthings, up to twopence halfpenny per pound. Their families at home were in the highest health, robust, and to appearance happy.

Such colliers bought bran, nay fine gurgins of wheat, horse beans, oats, malt grains at a very cheap rate for horse food, all sorts of grain being at that time in such plenty as to answer it; likewise bought hay nearly as before stated; for the best of hay, especially in villages near their homes, seldom cost more than sixteen or eighteen pence per hundred weight, few purchasing hay in greater quantities.

By means of enough of good food, with little care, colliers drifts of horses, vast numbers of which were driven to Bristol, Bath, Bradford, and to many other places, whereby the inhabitants experienced great comforts, were seen in high condition; one instance may not be amiss to insert of the value of animals so driven about. Three or four years prior to the year 1770, a nobleman being at the Hot Wells near Bristol, purchased a mare of a collier at the then esteemed high price of twenty guineas, which for a mare in pack saddle was considered wonderful, inasmuch as it produced conversation for dwellers in Kingswood for a considerable length of time, pleasant enough.

This mare was sent into Yorkshire for breeding of stock, being of good frame.

Many colliers rented small farms, and produced at markets much good provisions contributing towards moderation.

Tallow candles and soap, if bought by the dozen, a customary allowance was made on the moderate price of about sixpence per pound, which continued nearly the same time as whilst provisions, the productions of animals kept moderate, seldom raising an halfpenny per pound, except when the home produce of melted tallow became nearly out, rough tallow scarce at markets, or tax required.

Rough tallow was bought within my time of dealing at twopence farthing per pound, by town and country chandlers.

In the cities of London and Westminster, their environs, within the space of thirty-six years past, nobility, gentry, merchants, or housekeepers with large or small families, were well supplied by eminent butchers, with most excellent kind of provisions, prime pieces of beef and mutton at four-pence and up to four-pence halfpenny per pound yearly, or as chance customers, daily.

Many great families got beef, mutton, and veal at the latter price as three shillings per stone London weights.

Veal at the London markets was at moderate prices, if bought alone it was frequently lower than five-pence per pound, even on days of seeming scarcity of this article, more than six-pence per pound was seldom paid.

This circumstance I witnessed thirty years ago at St. James's market, where numbers of the nobility were supplied; likewise at the Borough market, where customers chiefly in trading ways, were equally well supplied. House lamb seldom cost more than five shillings per quarter, being at that time an article

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not to be found in several of the markets of the metropolis, which remark may serve to shew that the working people in London were content with more proper food, whilst to be bought within the limits of reason.

It is to be understood, that at Christmas time, for time out of mind, quarters of house lamb have yielded high prices for Christmas presents, sent to different parts of the kingdom. However few weeks produced then a return to moderation for the best. The butchers of Middlesex who attended Smithfield in those days to purchase living fattened cattle were in the habit of buying for certainty great bargains, especially those who dealt for ready money, all by hand.

At London, dealing by weight was at carcase markets or shops only, retailers who bought live goods scorned the pernicious idea of buying ox, sheep, lamb, or calf by weight. Retail cutting butchers at that time, who had not conveniencies for the process attending buying cattle alive, were in the habit of buying sides of veal, at less than two shillings per stone; lots of beef, and carcases of mutton proportionably cheap; risking but little money, yet found good and but fair profits, seeing such persons were at Leadenhall perhaps by two o'clock in the morning, to furnish themselves with supplies necessary for their customers.

At Smithfield short markets seldom prevailed until considerably later in the year than Lady-day, such continuing not more than a few weeks, because plenty of cattle abounded throughout the country, and grass beef before October was found there and ripe.

Overflowing markets at Smithfield were very common prior to the year 1780, inasmuch that the small

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articles, chiefly of bullocks and sheep supplied week days many thousands of persons comfortably on terms exceeding cheap, which I shall hereafter explain.

Prior to the year 1770, also about that time I knew dealers who were in the habit of jobbing fat oxen; also farmers, who at Bath fair 14th February, joined lots of beasts, and sent them to Smithfield; the returns producing less money than were given by the jobber, or than bidden to such farmers by the neighbouring butchers for the said beasts in Bath street the fair day.

The same was common to hear of at fairs, or markets more westward.

At the London markets, or shops, such prices for the most prime provisions were surely comfortably low, must be considered very reasonable, allowing for the great losses often sustained by dealers whose cattle frequently drop with fatigue upon the roads in the different journeys (considering likewise the vast expences incurred by industrious honest meaning men who may be called jobbers) but who by great fatigue have been known to rear up and maintain large families by attending fairs and markets, &c. &c. at vast distances, to purchase and send living fattened cattle as a supply for the wonderful markets of Smithfield, where otherwise too often short markets would have been certain.

Upon jobbing I mean to say a few words by and by. In the course of twenty-five years last past, divers extraordinary occurrences called me to and occasioned my residing for several succeeding years, four, five, or six months successively, in, and near the cities of London and Westminster, during which

time I had a good opportunity, of which I availed myself, and as often as possible, made it convenient, and attended Smithfield live markets, likewise the carcase, and the retailing markets, noticing shops in the different streets, taking great delight in the business, as dealing wholesale, or retail, I made observations, which will be of great use to me in the forming of that part of this book, intended to shew that the cause which has affected all the London markets, by occasioning scarcity and dearness, originated not in or near the metropolis.

I frequently entered into conversation at nearly all parts of London, with experienced trading persons, their topics turned as frequently upon the astonishing advances on the prices of different articles of provisions, also the necessary articles tallow candles and soap, as taking place progressively every year, but no person could tell me the cause thereof; sometimes their topics turned upon the manœuvres made use of on the grain wheat.

Many respectable butchers whom I hope are yet in existence at various markets, and street shops of London, assured me that the prices which I have before stated nobility, gentry, merchants, and other residents paid yearly for meats were just, for it came within their recollection of having so sold, I have no doubt but books can prove it.

Trading persons, captains of ships, of large and small craft, which lay below bridge, masters or captains of colliers, &c. assured me that it came within their several recollections of having bought within the space of twenty-five years last past only, lots of nearly the same sorts of family pieces of meat, of

good ox beef, wether or chilver mutton, such I have described were entrusted to my care, for sale at the country market of Bath, cheaper than I could have supposed London markets would permit of, even as low as from twopence farthing, up to three-pence per pound, or eighteen-pence to two shillings per stone, London weights; in the Borough market, and at divers other markets and shops of the metropolis likewise.

Sellers and buyers have assured me of having sold and bought shoulders, or breasts of mutton as low as four-pence per pound. Academy, hospital, parish, and other such like account books belonging to such places in Middlesex, or the metropolis, upon slight investigation, will, perhaps more satisfactorily prove, that such places have severally been supplied with nearly the same sorts of provisions at as low as eighteen-pence per stone weight.

From good authorities I have been repeatedly assured, that good cheese was bought at retail shops of London, for as low as four-pence per pound; fresh butter at eight to ten-pence per pound, salt butter six-pence per pound; tallow candles and soap on the average of the year, nearly alike, cheap as in the country, costing per dozen, little more than after the rate of six-pence per pound, but however cheap such articles may have been either bought or sold in London, it is my engagement to stick chiefly to my own knowledge of things, and to advance plain facts, keeping within the bounds of the real prices paid at that plentiful and cheap time, rather above than else, intending in like manner to keep under known high prices, as paid in 1795 and 1796 rather than exaggerate an atom, having no desire to aggravate.

I have observed, that the first part of my riding business for buying living fattened cattle, was to attend farms, fairs, and markets in the circle of forty miles round Bath.

At that blessed time when contentment sat upon the artificer's and peasant's brow; as I travelled to and fro, it was common to fall in with farmers or farmers servants, driving native breeds of weaned calves or yearlings, two year old heifers, steers, or young beasts intended for cows or oxen, small lots of sheep, wethers, yews, couples or lambs, lean hogs, fows with litters of pigs, a few cheefes, &c. &c. the produce chiefly of farms of small extent; likewise of those obscurely situated, seemingly hurrying to divers fairs, or markets, which every where abounded with plenty; moreover, upon the back of a breeding plow mare (being all of that sort of animal which many farmers were possessed severally of, using at that time, chiefly ox plows) a sack of wheat or other grain; part, or perhaps the whole of the overplus of what was thereon raised, and necessary for the family use, the reward of industry; small farms being as it were of necessity cultured for such a produce, which came to market without compulsory means, other than the want of money, by being pitched at market, needed not to be sold by sample. Thus abundance prevailed, and it was rare if at cattle fairs fattened wethers and lean wethers were not exposed for sale, that would not produce either immediately, or in few months, mutton full four years old; occasionally Bath had to boast of mutton six years old; the loss of old wether mutton is truly lamentable, since for certain, it not only

preserved health, but, (in great measure) prolonged the lives of those who had made too free with their constitutions in their juvenile days, who were careful either to keep in their parks sheep full aged, or to procure such mutton.

Most of the parishes or villages in Gloucestershire, or Somersetshire, at that time shewed divers small lots, or bargains: as small farms of perhaps forty pounds per annum, and up to perhaps one hundred pounds per annum, more or less; such small bargains in different hands, cultivated in various ways, produced exactly (whilst regular farmers held them) the sorts of stock I have mentioned, as common to fall in with in lanes or high roads, which afforded comfortable maintenances for such farming persons families, whether large or small, either one or other of whom constantly were found at neighbouring markets, with articles of provisions, &c. &c. but when such bargains or small farms, became to be caught up (a circumstance that has for about thirty years past been too prevalent) as four, five or six in number, by one monopolizer of farms (such as I am about to hold out to public view) it not only served to almost depopulate such villages, but in an imperceptible manner, to the inexperienced part of the public, for destroying unseasonably young cattle, and likewise to create neglect of breeding and rearing of stock; also of cheese making, and sowing; knocking up a part of the then business of the day, from whence great benefits had been formerly experienced by the community at large.

Being of an inquisitive turn of mind, where there were found bad high roads, and worse bye roads to

farm houses, I requested information how the produces thereof (cheese and grain in particular) had been turned into money; a carriage way thither, being, seemingly impassable, I found that for fifty years preceding, as at that time farmers had great advantages, markets being abundant here or there, met their dealers almost every day in the week, good shamble and market-crofs assemblages being numerous, were well attended, where marketings were abundant, viz.

At Bradford and Phillips Norton, Mondays; Marshfield, Tuesdays; Bristol, Bath, Wednesdays; Bristol live market, Thursdays; Shepton Mallet, Fridays; for Saturdays, farmers and dealers had great choice of markets for sale of articles, also to buy or talk things over.

Animals not sold at one place, were perhaps sold next day at another, but when sold, were generally delivered immediately; whereas cheese, or grain, sold or unfold, was frequently lodged in lofts or proper places kept for the purpose, that either might be exposed for sale next market day, or to remain therein until it was convenient, as agreed for by cheese dealers, bakers, or millers, to fetch it; besides the foregoing, there were markets at Keynsham, Pensford, Sodbury, and others in a more distant circle at small places, whereby whilst the country was full of stock, also of cheese and grain, farmers made it out well enough adequate for happiness, dealing for feed and all manner of farming productions, as it were one amongst another, venturing not to monopolize, job, forestall, or such like practices, but trying to sell, in

order to return to homes, with such returns of cash or Bank of England paper, which the good dame took care of for rent, &c. &c. safely depending on the home bank. But since the commencement of the last thirty-six years, such small farms have been monopolized (not altogether consolidated) and wrongly cultured, or managed for public welfare, as will hereafter appear.

Year after year, since that period, there has not been stock, or grain reared, or raised as in former time, sufficient to keep up such useful markets; therefore many of them are, as it were, blotted out of the page of business, to the great injury of the state, of numerous land owners, and of the community.

Such markets having been cried off, or down, I conceive might be cried on again.

Dealers who attend fairs and markets, but more particularly prying farmers, are the first persons likely to discover a growing scarcity of cattle, or grain.

Farmers manœuvring accordingly, occasioned appearances in their favour, as all men, perhaps, would do, finding a chance for it; therefore, it will appear fair to blame those only, whose practices produced a cause which first permitted of such chances. My engagement is to develop that cause.

Cattle, if plenty, would be seen on the face of the earth, but grain, as wheat particularly, I am sorry to say can be hid, with more certainty of keeping than other grain. Thus fictitious accounts of scarcity thereof may be given out—such has too often been the case—whilst af-

frighted consumers shamefully oppressed, paid for all; very few persons but felt its effects, in 1795 and 1796, in a manner, one would hope never to be experienced again, in such a country as England.

Government have paid at different times, for victualling his Majesty's navy, &c. &c. with beef, pork, and cheese, prices which I have gained from authority I had no reason to doubt. Merchants, victualling shipping, no matter of what burthen, who have been in the habit of paying much the same prices, for nearly the like articles, may find remarks of this nature interesting.

About thirty-six years ago, two respectable dealers in cattle, residing in Wiltshire, had the contract for supplying his Majesty's victualling office at Portsmouth, with oxen, and pigs, for that part of the navy which were victualled there. With one of the before mentioned dealers it was my lot often to travel, or to meet at fairs and markets, where I have frequently observed him purchase from twenty to fifty bullocks, or more, according as the fair or market supplied.

By frequent conversation with that worthy man, I had opportunities of knowing, and did learn, the prices for which he, with his equally respected brother, had at various times supplied the Portsmouth victualling office with beef and pork.

It was but a few years prior to that period, the price paid to them per contract for beef, was eighteen shillings per hundred weight.

Pork as low as thirty-three shillings per hundred weight, without head, feet, or flecks. But

at that period an advance had taken place; government paid one guinea per hundred weight, for beef; pork still continuing low as before-mentioned.

A gentleman whose late decease I greatly regret, a kinsman of the before-mentioned brothers, was engaged in government contracts, as partner with them. He travelling much to Welch fairs, also to markets and fairs in the counties of Gloucester, Wilts, and Somerset, I had the good fortune of getting acquainted with him, and was by him particularly noticed.

In the course of ten years, which brings forward the beginning of twenty-six years last past, or thereabout, beef was farther advanced: government paid, in that gentleman's name, twenty-eight shillings per hundred weight. Pork still continued at nearly the prices before-mentioned. Many thousands of oxen, &c. many hogs, went through the hands of these respected characters in the course of years, wherein they with great credit supplied government.

Books, perhaps, might be found, to prove the facts I have stated on this head.

Government has paid for cheese per the ton, as low as one guinea per hundred weight; books might also be found to prove that government was supplied at considerable less money within thirty-six years past.

To the latter gentleman I was much indebted for unsolicited instruction in my youth; which, being fatherless, I stood in need of at fairs and markets, where chance threw me in his way.

He friendly and in a fatherly manner advised me of my duty towards that parent I was endeavouring to serve; being then buying cattle for the use of her shop; assuring me, by honest argument, it would with certainty turn to my own advantage. He had likewise the goodness to point out to me the necessity of perseverance, to bring the carcases of every animal, which I purchased living, to the scale—previous to cutting up—by which means I should attain, almost to a certainty, what the quarters of an ox, sheep, or calf, would weigh at first sight. Moreover, carefully to avoid purchasing by weight.

By persevering strictly, as advised, I had the satisfaction of finding myself, as it were, compleat in this agreeable study, especially with the native breeds of cattle which it was safe depending on. It was known I was in the habit of guessing what the weight would turn out to be, of the carcase of any animal that fell in my way, whether ox, cow, steer, heifer, sheep, lamb, or calf, to the nicety of a very few pounds weight.

I have mentioned the foregoing circumstance as a lesson; which, if attended to, will not only prove useful, but valuable to youth, particularly to young butchers; and, in the end, infinitely benefit the community.

From about thirty to twenty-five years ago, was the time that many opulent farmers, &c. began first to discern a scarcity; whereby dearth of cattle and provisions daily gained ground, in their neighbourhoods. Of this they took advantage, and, more than had been the case or

custom formerly, every where possible monopolized farms, even at great distances from their homes, on that particular account, through their being able to foresee what was likely to be the case in future.

Since that time cattle, swine and cheese, in reality, has every year been more and more diminishing, in number and quantity, at all parts of the country; at all fairs and markets—taking a circle of forty miles round Bristol and Bath—every where advancing in prices. Certain it is that through this means of foresight, of cattle and swine becoming scarce and dear, grain—wheat in particular—has felt a severe neglect and diminution in growth, and thereby has become more than usually scarce, consequently has advanced even to the late, and ever to be deplored, enormous prices.

The practice of monopolizing farms, and progressive dearth, soon spread into distant countries: because it then became the business of monopolizers in general, and farmers in particular, to attend at all fairs and corn markets possible. The father at one market, whilst a son, sons, or servants, attended other markets; giving out every where the welcome news of advance, not only upon corn, as sold at such a place a few days before, by which means it, contagion like, spread, and became speedily known through the whole kingdom.

Can farmers, in this case, be the persons alone to be blamed, seeing agricultural reports now took place functioning farmers accounts? Thus as

corn advanced in price, there appeared less necessity for culturing to the utmost advantage every acre. Because by cultivating but a small part of such monopolized farm, or farms, the farmer found less out-goings, and considerable greater incomes of gold or bank-paper, by the rapid advances on grain—wheat in particular—which every year, since that period, has been wavering; but of late, by appearing more and more scarce, sold higher and higher, till at length the prices of 1795, more than trebled the former prices. Productions yielding to occupiers of farms—of every sort—some double, others treble prices; whereby the bank of England, and country bankers notes, got out in number, and to an amount, in value, incredible.

Again, farmers found great advantage by keeping at distant farms a less number of servants, which circumstance considered, accounts for the depopulation that has been experienced in many villages of England, and the dire convulsions respecting banks, which have been felt in many counties.

I have observed, that early in my life I discovered a practice as hurtful to society, and an infringement on well intended old laws, which, before the commencement of the year 1780, had afforded vast scope for monopolizing farms, forestalling, jobbing, &c. &c. and the multitude of evils attendant.

Whilst the twenty years, which had previously elapsed, were passing away, in the course of my

business I applied my thoughts to, and closely attended to the progress of the said practice, and infringement; every fair or market convincing me, more or less, daily of the sad effects to be dreaded, as likely in a short space of time to happen, and which unhappily has been verified.

By unseasonable premature slaughtering, the effect of such practice I found at that time a wonderful diminution of stock, and that the same was gaining ground to an astonishing and truly alarming degree daily, not only in the before mentioned three counties, but was spread in different other counties of England; furthermore, that its effects had spread to the counties across the Severn, from whence previously wonderful supplies had been experienced by the inhabitants on this side thereof.

A dire circumstance and calamity was this to Britons, because the sad effects thereof now begun to shew a spreading abroad into almost all quarters.

First I shall notice Devonshire westward, which I discovered by the following circumstance:

Recurring to about the year 1770, a period of time when Exeter butchers, or other butchers farther westward, were rarely seen at any of the fairs in the lowermost rich grazing parts of Somersetshire; but such dealers since that time I frequently found farther upwards than Bridgewater, seeking for fattened cattle, a circumstance I conceive sufficient to convince the reader such Devonshire butchers felt a draining off and loss of stock at their home neighbouring farms, fairs, &c. which was visible in

a surprising degree in that county, even at that time.

I knew an Exeter butcher who joined as partner with a respectable farmer and grazier near Bridgewater, in pasture lands, whereon were grazed few oxen, but chiefly heifers and sheep. Unexpected scarcity (except to experienced observers,) having for a length of time prevailed in Devonshire, was his motive for such an engagement, to have cattle for his shop certain months when such could not readily as at aforesaid be got near his home. This struck me as wonderful, because previous thereto, meat had been more plentiful, and cheaper at Exeter than at Bath, whilst it served to convince me my conjectures were well founded respecting the practice I have yet to disclose.

The same is to be observed respecting Gloucestershire, where before this time had commenced, a Birmingham butcher, or a Worcester butcher, were seldom known seeking for fattened cattle.

Respecting western and northern dealers I shall say more in proper places.

About the year 1780, graziers at farms, at fairs, or markets, sold their best fattened wether sheep in weight to be considered like those first described at the advanced prices of twenty-seven shillings, and to thirty shillings per sheep, being from four-pence halfpenny per pound, or three shillings per stone, London weight, to five pence per pound, or three shillings and four-pence per stone, London weight, allowing for sinking the offal, of which the head forms a part, which sold at from two to three-pence each. I reserve a few words on this particular article for

the supplement to this book. Clean Dorsets were becoming even at this time rare, for too frequently were found a sort of mixed breeds of sheep, which occasioned great complaints, not only by invalids, but by epicures in mutton, shewing the effect of dire crossings of native breeds of sheep, were it not as tho' the Almighty knew not best how to suit shape, &c. to climate? but it was done for gold, by many that have left behind them the dross, and food dangerous to swallow; sad proof of inexperience. The meat of such mixed breeds of sheep was speedily found differing in quality, having lost former delicacies, and become unpleasant in reality to eat and digest; it has been said difficult to describe the true Dorset breed of sheep. The pressure of the times demand of me to stick to the subjects scarcity and dearness, otherwise I could describe them, having been in the habit of seeking, buying, killing, and cutting up such in their true state.

During the twenty previous years, Gloucesters, Somerset, and Devonshire bred oxen, and heifers made up nearly equal parts of the produces of poor beasts yearly at Lansdown fair; but at this time the true Somersetshire breed of bullocks, likewise those known as true Gloucesters were by sad manœuvring, become nearly extinct.

This circumstance I deeply regret, it is truly deplorable, since the loss sustained by the revenue, but more especially the community, cannot with precision be figured, or hardly conceived. Honest persons experienced in the old western breeds of cattle, may regret to the end of their lives, that loss, because of the difficulty of such to restore.

A remedy in this case amongst breeders would turn to good account, produce advantages superior to crossings, would merit public thanks, and cannot be too soon sought.

Those sorts of beasts when fattened frequently agreeably surprized the buyer at the scale, by weighing perhaps half a hundred pounds weight, or more, over and above what the sellers were aware of, produced better hides, carried to almost a certainty from twelve to twenty stone of rough tallow each, (London weight) for chandlers uses, yet got up in the usual time allotted for grazing—See General View of Agriculture in Somerset, page 14. They are mostly, &c. &c. &c.

The sort of fattened beasts at this time produced at fairs and markets in Somersetshire, were chiefly of the Devonshire breed, vast numbers of that breed, having found their way into Gloucestershire, and into Wiltshire, which to reflect on is distressing, because the Devonshire breed of oxen, if well fattened, notwithstanding whatever may have been advanced by advocates for that breed of cattle, when brought to the scale, from a certain thinness in nature, seldom surprize the buyer, other than by too frequently falling short (if bought by hand) of the weight expected, producing thin light hides, slabs, and considerably less rough tallow on the average than true Somersets, true Gloucesters, the true Wiltshires, all weighty sort made up in hides, whatever they were deficient in tallow. This shews the goodness of Providence, by suiting beasts to divers counties. Wiltshire is colder than the vales of Gloucester,

or Somersetshire, strong hides seem adapted accordingly.

Eight hundred weight of beef was advanced up to the value, to cost in at fairs or markets, in either county before mentioned, and on either side of the Severn fourteen pounds, being three-pence three farthings per pound, or half a crown per stone, London weight, allowing for sinking the offal.

Fat suckled staged calves, weight and goodness like those first described, in summer months, as till September, bore an advanced price, costing buyers from thirty-five up to forty-five shillings per calf. The winter prices were advanced, as from forty-five shillings up to three guineas per calf.

At this period, the chances for purchasing lots of living fattened cattle, which town or other well skilled butchers of the aforesaid three counties, had been accustomed to buy to great advantage, of farmers or graziers, unaccustomed to sell cattle by weight, and which permitted of great bargains for consumers, and likewise compensated for incidental losses of butchers, were almost done away by the dire mishap of other butchers settling in this neighbourhood, who being incompetent judges, bought by weight cattle of any sort, whether good or indifferent, of the neighbouring farmers or graziers, who, in consequence parted with their good old dealers, for others who would give so much per pound. This was a circumstance which distressed good old dealers, and was very deplorable, seeing it will be very difficult to be got the better of; for it has caused a change in the system of dealing, set farmers agog for suckling instead of rearing or making of cheese,

whereby unseasonable diminution of stock has followed, by the article veal having risen to prices unreasonable.

In the neighbouring and most other markets in the kingdom, no wonder breeders kept not calves for old stock, prices paid for young calves, and which veal will hereafter appear to have advanced to, answered to them better. A circumstance, if duly considered, I conceive must convey to the mind that the public have sustained a very weighty injury thereby; for in the year 1780, veal bought with beef, mutton, and pork, if agreed for yearly by weight, cost resident or visiting gentry and other customers nearly alike dear, as from four-pence halfpenny to four-pence three farthings per pound. I declare that mode of dealing for live cattle has contributed very much towards dearth of meat.

A chance customer who bought veal alone paid for either leg, loin, neck, or breast, full six-pence per pound on the average of the year. Shoulders bore an advance, yielding four-pence halfpenny cheap months, other months six-pence per pound.

This was a rapid advance upon the public in a small space of time.

Young calves for suckling, if four days old only, were advanced to more than double the former prices on the average of the year. House lambs were advanced to eighteen shillings each, taking the whole number sucklers might bring forward yearly. Those butchers (dealers by weight, who had got in to deal for best of other goods, making thereby better shew, got encouraged by best customers) wanted lambs, of

course, gave any prices asked to get them from old dealers, consumers paying for that mishap.

More grafs lambs by several thousands were at this time killed in the neighbourhoods of Bristol and Bath in one summer than was at aforesaid usual.

Fat hogs were advanced in price to five shillings per score pounds weight on the average of the year.

By this time I was become acquainted with a much larger part of Wiltshire, where farms which were considered best dairies, similar to farms of Gloucester and Somersetshire, noted at aforesaid for producing good supplies of best cheese and butter, vast numbers of lean and fattened hogs; also much poultry, were now alike ill cultured by persons whose business would not permit of one single cheese, or rarely one pound of fresh butter weekly, or one fattened hog to be produced for neighbouring market uses throughout the year.

Furthermore, where the feathered race were nearly become extinct, farms, which for many preceding years I had known to be in the habit of supplying for the use of the community, from four tons weight to six tons weight of best cheese yearly, vast quantities of whey butter; and from ten to forty fattened and lean hogs, besides great quantities of poultry, where contractors, dealers in cheese who (were engaged to supply London, Bristol, or other great cheese dealers in divers towns and counties, factors, wholesale and retail dealers) for many years preceding had been accustomed to find a whole year's making of that article, which when bought

was usually delivered to them at Reading, Marlborough, Andover, Magdalen Hill, Giles Hill, Weyhill, Gloucester, or other great cheese fairs, or markets for the purpose of meeting, and to supply chance, London, or other dealers. Such contractors when approaching to such farms, expecting to find customary, and almost never failing supplies, whole year makings of cheese, were disappointed, nay, to their great astonishment, found NONE.

Other dairy men used to drive their teams to such fairs or markets with waggon loads of cheese to sell it to factors, or dealers, whom were useful, if to be deemed jobbers, for such came thither from different towns far eastward, and from the metropolis to buy.

Great dairy men, and other persons keeping waggons, used to take their neighbour's cheese from small farms, where team or waggon was not to be found. Thus the properties of little farmers got up and turned into money, before turnpike roads were found, as at this juncture. Such fairs being chiefly at good seasons, returns for the bulk of cheese, made in the year, even at small farms, were found before November commenced. Dairy men are still existing who sold their own and other peoples cheese at those fairs for less money than twenty shillings per hundred weight, and made good returns by lading back with hops, &c. &c.

At divers fairs and markets in either before mentioned west counties, but particularly at Bridgewater and Wells in Somersetshire. Both but few years before this time being much noted for immense quantities of cheese constantly stowed upon market days in

each market place for sale; a prodigious and lamentable falling off was visible.

The same was visible at the fairs and markets of Gloucestershire, where in former time cheese had been produced in very large quantities for sale.

Cheese dealers visited other fairs, unaccustomed to produce cheese, and were frequently known to make enquiries for it; ransacking and hunting the whole of either county, at farms even where it was certain cheese could not be advantageously made.

This account of cheese is extremely painful to me to pen down, knowing how much the working class of the community depended thereon, and how truly valuable an article of provision it is.

Prior to this period of time, if by a dry summer, or any other unprofitable circumstance, cheese rose in price, a lippant season restored, in a few months only, to the community, that article at low and moderate prices. But the time, appeared to me, had arrived for continual scarcity and dearth thereof. I conceive it will appear so to others, especially, and provided the means which will hereafter be pointed out, are slighted. Hitherto it has happened verifying my then thoughts and foresight; for, since that time, there has been a fluctuating movement upwards; and at length an astonishing advance. But at Landford fair, sorts of cheese, such as formerly sold at less than one guinea per hundred weight, in

the year 1780 were advanced, and yielded twenty-eight shillings per hundred weight.

The following statement of prices paid for cheefe, per the hundred weight, and for fattened pigs, per the score pounds weight, head, feet, and flecks included, may not be amifs; which I obtained from a perfon of respectability, who dealt many years in thofe articles. It will nearly accord with my ftatement thereof, gained rather in a curfory manner; thofe articles being lefs in my view, when at fairs or markets, than cattle.

Cheefe, at per hundred weight.

In the year		s.	
1772	—	31	per hundred weight.
1773	—	32	do.
1774	—	30	do. down to 25s.
1775	—	29	do. do. 26s.
1776	—	28	do.
1777	—	33	do.
1778	—	36	do.
1779	—	32	do. do. 30s.
1780	—	28	do.
1781			
1782	—	32	do. do. 29s.
1783	—	33	do.
1784	—	32	do.
1785	—	34	do.
1786	—	36	do.

		s.	
1787	—	30	per hundred weight.
1788	—	40	do. old 28s.
1789	—	40	do.
			And fince higher.

This fheweth, cheefe yielded, in 1789, forty fhillings per hundred weight.

Fattened hogs, at per fcore pounds weight.

In the year		s.	d.	
1772	—	7	3	per fcore pounds.
1773	—	7	0	do.
1774	—	5	10	do.
1775	—	6	6	do.
1776	—	5	10	do.
1777	—	6	0	do.
1778	—	6	0	do.
1779	—	6	0	do.
1780	—	5	3	do.
1781	—	5	0	do.
1783	—	6	0	do.
1784	—	6	6	do.
1785	—	7	0	do.
1786	—	6	4	do.
1787	—	6	3	do.
1788	—	7	0	do.

Since higher.

And for the laft time pigs fold, in 1788, as low as feven fhillings per fcore pounds.

The above ftatement is, in my opinion, alone fufficient to convince the public, that the prefent

war has not been the source of scarcity, or dearth of provisions.

At the period of 1780 wheat had risen, yielding from five to six shillings per bushel.

Barleys yielded about four shillings; malt four shillings and six-pence per bushel, at most grain markets, either in bulk, or by sample.

Still town artificers, town and country labouring men, got family pieces of meat, at from three-pence to three-pence-halfpenny per pound, and on the average of the year, eight pounds of bread for one shilling. Bacon from five to seven, pickled pork, four, five, and to six-pence, per pound.

Covetous people thought these prices moderate, but to my feelings it was a distressing advance upon the labouring poor.

Even that advance occasioned the gentry, trades people, and boarding housekeepers, to come to market grumbling; finding they were paying, for provisions, at least five shillings in a guinea, more than formerly, although for articles become then much inferior in quality.

At the London markets, sixteen years ago only, there was a great degree of moderation in the prices of provisions, compared with the prices paid in 1795 and 1796; for at almost every market in London, good lots of meat were then to be bought at as low as three-pence-halfpenny per pound, particularly in chance way, either by housekeepers, artificers, or poorer people.

I have observed, that by small articles, as heads, hearts, midriffs, kidneys, tripes, heels, &c.

many thousands of persons, in the metropolis, were supplied, who purchased them otherways than by weight; which articles I shall enumerate hereafter, to prove their importance to small families. Inferior classes of that multitude, who, on account of their number, I conceive first to be considered.

The quartern loaf had seldom been known to cost eight-pence, but had more frequently been bought as low as six-pence. Housekeepers of that day, if they will give themselves the trouble to recollect, or look over their books of housekeeping expences, I believe will find what I have advanced, respecting chance dealing at the London markets, or shops for fresh meats, are facts.

Bacon, pickled pork, tallow candles, and soap, were then retailed at nearly the same moderate prices I have stated to have been retailed at in the country, or with small addition.

Those who supplied even the royal table, at that time, did it not only with greater convenience, but at greater profits, than of late.—The same holds good respecting noblemen's families.

The next part of this narrative, however painful the task, is to shew, as nearly as possible—but not to aggravate—dearths.

In the month of January, 1795, it was found that mutton, fattened wethers as they walked, were worth six-pence per pound. Prime fattened wether sheep, of any county breed, or such as are now called Ryland's, in the western counties of England,

have sold since that month, at Bristol live market, at as high as seven-pence per pound, to sink the offal, being four shillings and eight-pence per stone, London weight.

Eight hundred pounds weight of beef, either ox, heifer, or old cow beef, at fairs or markets, in Gloucester, Somerset, or Wiltshire, cost the buyer, whether butcher or jobber, at least fifteen guineas, two guineas per hundred weight, or three shillings per stone, London weight, allowing for sinking the offal. But after that month, as without discretion, beef rose at fairs and markets rapidly in price indeed. For the sake of brevity, I shall notice the value of beef at two fairs only, namely, Bristol and Tewksbury, also Bristol live markets.

At Bristol fair, which took place Monday the second of March, 1795, on account of the Sabbath, prime oxen or heifers, exposed for sale, yielded, according to the estimation of allowed competent judges, the high rates, as from forty-five to fifty shillings per hundred weight. At Tewksbury fair, in the same month, for want of a proper shew of oxen, fattened heifers, and old cows, exposed for beef, yielded a higher price, as two guineas and a half per hundred weight; being somewhat above five-pence per pound, or three shillings and four-pence per stone, London weight, to sink offal.

At the latter place fattened heifers, and fattened old cows, were bought thus dear, by butchers from Birmingham, Worcester, and from other parts of Worcestershire; also from Oxford-

shire, and counties more distant. This shewed a want of fattened cattle more northward, and that such butchers depended not on hilly, or more barren counties, for fat bullocks, but rode downwards to parts, where their appearance raised the prices, which to reflect on is distressing.

It has been known that for several years prior to 1795, such butchers sought low down in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire for fattened beasts, catching up such at any prices. Because, even in Worcestershire, for their home consumption, a sufficient number of cattle was not to be found, which may account for short markets at Smithfield, and the markets and fairs on the road thither.

A vast tract of the fertile lands upwards, which had been accustomed to supply such butchers; also the low lands westward, being become in a manner barren of fat cattle. As for the few—compared with former times—exposed at these two particular fairs for sale, to fetch such prices was alarming; but how will this account appear, compared with prices paid in March, 1796, one year's advance only.

Preceding the year 1795, year after year, for want of the usual proper supplies of beef, mutton, and pork, at market, veal, little better than carrion, sold, to a distressed multitude, at from four-pence-halfpenny up to six-pence per pound.

In April and May, 1795, retail cutting butchers bought best staged suckled calves, at Bristol and at Bath, at about five-pence-halfpenny per

pound; prices continuing nearly thereat throughout the summer.

In November, 1795, such staged calves were sold, to retailers, at nine-pence per pound; nay, there were instances dearer, of course the flesh thereof, was vended accordingly to consumers.

In May, 1795, inferior, but tolerable good, calves were bought, by retailers, at from four-pence-half-penny to five-pence per pound; whereas best calves, and such as were but tolerable, in May, 1796, cost retailers from six to seven-pence per pound. Very poor carcases of veal were sold, taking the average of the summer months of 1795, at four-pence-halfpenny per pound; such, in 1796, till October, cost retailers six-pence per pound.

These circumstances considered, I conceive, must strike the feeling mind. To me the thought is terrible; because poor veal is bad food, a joint thereof producing scarcely any victuals when dressed. Moreover, such poor calves as these were bought by weight, and came to near forty shillings, but formerly were bought by hand at about half a guinea each. Thus artificers, and the poor are worked up to, and obliged to pay enormous prices, even for—as it were—a parcel of marrowless bones.

Alas! alas! persons may justly complain, who recollect buying whole quarters of well fed capital veal, twenty-two or twenty-three pounds weight, for three shillings and six-pence per quarter; other good meat proportionably cheap. I conceive that such persons cannot fail to heave

heart rending sighs, when they reflect how their offspring are to get through life. Moreover, if they complain, seeing the dearness is real, such persons may not be other than dutiful loyal subjects.

If it demands not the interference of a British Parliament, to get at the real cause why any part of the community, but more especially artificers, and the poor, who are the greater part of his Majesty's subjects, are brought into the distressing habit of paying twelve shillings—nay there has been many instances of much more money being paid—for an article of provision, which, less time than thirty years ago, either themselves or their ancestors bought, or could buy, at from three shillings and six-pence, to four, or, at farthest, five shillings. I am at a loss to know what, in future, Parliament may find worth while to attend to.

Young calves of not more than four days old, have been worked up to and sold at the abominable price of one guinea and a half each, which price, if one suckler—after forestalling for the first chance—has refused to give, then another suckler, a by-stander—whether or not the same sort of occupier of farms, seized the chance willingly, and why?

Permit me reader to claim your attention to the following remark, viz.—For many years past, as at this juncture, the chief number of sucklers of staged calves in Gloucestershire, on whom, and where the greatest dependance has been for veal, to supply Bath and Bristol markets, are

BUTCHERS. The ill consequences whereof surpasseth all ills respecting scarcity of living stock, and of course dearth of provisions that I have known in life; it is worthy of observation; for ills will appear to link together, although wrought widely, to enhance prices of food.

Carcases of veal were sold in Bath market, by sucking butchers since November, 1795, to retail cutting butchers at the out of all reason prices, as from ten-pence up to one shilling per pound; nay, to such a pitch is this practice arrived, were sucking butchers to demand mornings of the fair dealer one shilling and six-pence per pound, the retailers must comply, or by loss of customers for want of the commodity, shut up shop. Were it required, viz. Cannot fair traders find supplies in the country sufficient, so as not to be under the necessity of buying in this manner? I would reply No, it is impossible, which without a doubt is known already to many experienced dealers; hereafter the same may appear clearly to all my readers, and the public.

A quarter of veal was sold by a sucking butcher, in Bath shambles on an open market day at one shilling per pound, quarters of house lamb at one guinea each. Can want of bullocks, want of cheese and sheep be longer wondered at? Oh that the following remark of an author of good principle were scrupulously attended to. "I abstain from things sold dear, which cannot be purchased, but with repentance."

Injudiciously purchasing of articles not absolute

necessaries, is not to love one's neighbour as one's self.

When prices enormous are demanded, happy would it be for the necessitous, and the poor, (one's fellow creatures) were they reflected on as thus: If I comply with such demands, shall I not be the means of causing rumours to be spread abroad that diminish not in carrying, and which will for certainty prove injurious to my suffering neighbour, nay the community at large?

House lambs bought in common of butchers who suckle, are advanced so high in prices, that vast numbers have been sold to retailers at upwards of thirty shillings each. House lambs bought by the year of farmers who suckle (having not the advantages in butchering) have cost in upwards of twenty shillings per lamb.

The first coming in of grass lamb in 1795, was extraordinary. Grass lambs, small and thin, sold at nearly thirty shillings per lamb to retailers, farther on in the summer months, at five-pence per pound. In 1796, grass lambs sold equally dear at first coming, and through the summer months at six-pence halfpenny per pound, being three half-pence per pound advance in one year: fat hogs in 1794, were bought at eight shillings per score, some for less money.

Fat hogs in 1795, sold at from ten to eleven shillings per score pounds weight, heads, feet, and flecks included. In many parts of the kingdom twelve shillings per score has been paid, it being difficult, owing to the real scarcity of that animal, to get them at any price. Here we find an ad-

vance of nearly a third on pigs in one year experienced almost generally.

Cheese has been sold at divers markets and fairs in 1795 and 1796, by the ton weight, after the rate of fifty-six shillings per hundred weight, or six-pence per pound in the gross; whilst for smaller quantities, housekeepers and retail shopkeepers have bought in lots at higher prices, consequently consumers have paid, and continue to pay to retailers, prices, which though not affording more than fair profits, are out of reason.

Fresh butter has sold at eighteen pence per pound, and notwithstanding the uncommon produce of summer, and after grass in the month of September, 1796, fresh butter sold at fourteen-pence per pound.

Salt butter has sold dear in proportion.

Wheat in 1795, sold at fifteen shillings per bushel; in many parts much higher; barley sold at upwards of six; malt seven shillings per bushel; other grain very dear, according to the qualities, fulfilling an old adage, viz. with horn goeth corn, not with corn goeth horn, but the direct contrary. If cattle continue dear, corn will find its way to be dear also.

The former is an adage which experience convinces me, ought to be attended to, because in England, it is likely to be the case always.

Wheat straw, waggon loads thereof being at this time bought chiefly by weight, at half a crown, or upwards per hundred weight, although not larger in bulk than those before mentioned, as bought at considerably less than one guinea in 1795 and 1796, yielded the sellers from fifty shillings upwards to nearly three guineas.

In distant counties straw sold at four shillings per hundred weight.

The prices paid for lots of provisions by the inhabitants of Bristol, Gloucester, Bath, and the environs thereof; also for other necessary household articles retail since January 1795, were every where nearly alike, not differing here and there at distances of perhaps twenty miles, as heretofore, which in a great measure may be attributed to market chronicle reportings, or other, calculated to produce general dearth. Thus for prime pieces of beef, mutton, pork, and veal (if weighed together) persons paid from sixpence upwards to eight-pence per pound. If either article were bought separate in various ways more money per pound has been paid. Veal has been sold alone frequently at ten-pence per pound, beef alone has sold, picked pieces, to chance customers at prices never before remembered, as from six-pence to seven-pence per pound, before December 1795 arrived. Sure presage was this of the uncommon dearth experienced since March 1796, and of the dearth which has been experienced through the summer months, until Michaelmas, which has again passed away.

Best cuts of bacon have sold at one shilling per pound, inferior pieces at little less money.

Fresh scalded pork per quarter, or joint has sold at nine-pence per pound, pickled pork at ten-pence per pound.

Having to state high prices paid for favourite and useful pieces of pig meat in 1795 and 1796. Fore chins sold for eight-pence per pound, spare ribs and sweetbones at six-pence per pound, griskins as now

cut, coarse and boney, have sold at eight-pence per pound.

The half of a bacon pig's head salted, such as in my time and recollection sold at ten-pence, and to fourteen-pence each, of eight pounds weight, or upwards, which in town or at country cottages, &c. &c. gave content, with little bread, and a frugal supply of vegetables to a poor family of eight persons, more or less, are now sold by weight, and cost consumers much more than double prices; kidneys, pig sweetbreads, puddings, &c. which were heretofore bought for one penny, or three halfpence each, cost now nearly treble prices.

Hogs lard has been retailed at ten-pence per pound.

One egg, an hen's egg sold for four-pence, and continued to sell at that price for a considerable length of time, even to the sick and poor.

Quarters of house lamb sold in common from eight to twelve shillings each, grass lamb has sold by hand, or by weight, high as from six to eight shillings per quarter.

If visitors, or the inhabitants of Bath, or its vicinity chose to go to market early in the mornings, in expectation of finding a farmer, his wife, daughter, or servant, with articles of the like of those which such country persons were in the habit of bringing to market at aforesaid time, either description of customers (for years past have been) are now certain only of disappointment; it is rare to find farming persons with one article other than butter, greatly inferior to that of old, which may be (in some measure, accounted for) seeing the pre-

sent scanty supplies of butter and small articles, as before described, are now retailed by persons, the chief of whom are jobbers, higlers, &c. &c.

Tallow candles in 1795, and 1796, moulds, were retailed at from eleven-pence to one shilling per pound; common candles at from ten to eleven-pence per pound, both continuing to be vended thus dear. In short, almost every article in the shambles line, in the course of thirty-six years last past, are advanced in the afore-mentioned circle to double prices, in many instances treble.

Fattened cattle, and swine, either at farms, fairs, or markets, in the same space, appear to have risen in value so much, as to occasion such exorbitancies; which but answer prices of poor stock. At different fairs and markets, on the road to Smithfield, fat beasts have risen to much higher prices; going through different hands, travelling,—always the effect of scarcity. Wherefore to observe the following remark, may be useful to one class of the community in behalf of the other, viz.

Land owners who let farms, taking the generality of the before-mentioned three west counties, or in other parts of the kingdom, cannot boast of having been benefited by such advances on living stock, equal with out-goings for provisions and necessary articles of housekeeping, land owners have felt, may remember to attend to what I shall hereafter pen down for their notice.

The dearth of Bath marketings, have occasioned boarders to pay high rates, as eighteen shillings, and to one guinea per week each for boarding; prices, nevertheless, still inadequate to fair profits, or to answer the out-goings of boarding housekeepers; whilst, in addition to such advances, the former has the mortification of hearing at table a detail of scarcity and dearth. Moreover, the loss of the former excellencies of food, to entice or satisfy either the eye or the appetite; great inferiority in quality, of almost every article of provision, prevailing at this time.

Boarding housekeepers, and trades people, have failed of late, notwithstanding the utmost frugality was adopted. Truly memorable; dealers who paid their money cheerfully, who were strictly honest, and brought up large families of children comfortably, then placed them here and there in various occupations, in the handsomest manner; such have—oh! painful to relate—become spectators of their beloved children's incapacity of doing well in trade; although well-inclined and notable, for such heavy additions laid on the most common necessaries, especially on the prices of almost every article of provisions, has rendered their failure unavoidable. Fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, and grand-children, have, by hard fate, been hurried into poverty, sunk down in spirit, into abject wretchedness, become objects of pity—pining momentarily—at length have died in the most sorrowful state.

At country cottages within a few years last past, husbandmen, other working men, colliers, spinners, knitters of worsted stockings, persons concerned in manufacturing of cloth, with large families of children, whose parents formerly brought up equally large families, without parochial aid. It has been my lot to know and see large families at their only meal-time for the day, who have had nothing before them but potatoes without salt, a piece of bad bread, with water, for their repast; where a bundle of sticks, or the pit allowance of coals, a few scraped cinders, burning to warm the family, all of whom looked pale to a degree—seemingly almost starved—clad in rags, insufficient to cover what their modesty and innocence prompted them to endeavour to conceal. The wretched grandfather or grandmother, who but thirty-six years ago considered themselves in a state of happiness, I have seen pining at parish work-houses, which, in many parts of either counties before-mentioned, are shamefully managed.

Other cottagers, who have not consented to go into work-houses, although, incapable, by weakness, hunger, &c. &c. of doing much work, have assured me, viz. “Indeed and truth, sir, we have not seen or tasted a morsel of meat dressed, or broth from the goodness of a bone, these six weeks.”

Prior to 1770 paupers were rarely seen in country villages, where I frequented; parish rates seldom paid with grumbling; in many not known.

No circumstance has tended to produce paupers equal with the high price of provisions, and the usual articles wanted every day within doors and without. For as provisions, candles, and soap, progressively advanced, the poor fell in, and poor rates came on with a vengeance.

In villages of Gloucestershire or Somersetshire a poor-house with six paupers therein, was rare to be found; yet, in my youthful rides through such villages, I have seen bare walls of places, which formerly had been allotted for poor-houses, but without one living mortal therein.

As provisions became dearer, resolution to work, more through weakness than else, failed. In a few years the above-mentioned allotted places, or old walls became fitted up, and thatched, whilst a broken door, or slab, rags, straw, or hay, served—in the place of panes of glass—for keeping out the cold, from, perhaps, twenty almost perished old, and young men, women, and helpless children.

Of late, at country clubs, the scene changed, has presented murmurings and profaneness, people attributing their distresses to their superiors, and to other causes entirely wrong. Perhaps a knowledge of the true cause—moreover that remedy is at hand—may pacify all parties, more especially the misguided. Will it not be a great happiness to find the public mind reconciled to a belief that the great have had but a small share in causing a scarcity of cattle, swine, cheese, &c. &c. or dearth of late, felt by the great, but not so severely as by others.

Drifts of colliers horses, such as I have before mentioned were in common seen at Kingswood, Bristol, or occasionally far down in Somerset, or high up in Gloucester and Wiltshire, alas can no where be found. Not altogether on account of the dearth of horse food, but owing more certain to other expenditures, such as for human food and the common necessaries of life, by the great advances of prices which have contributed so heavily as to ruin many honest people in that calling.

If colliers drifts of horses were of late, or now are met upon the roads, the animals shew as unable to carry half loads, the owners followed by almost naked, hungry children, form a group of wretchedness extreme.

The winter of 1794-5, producing severe frosts, killed great numbers of horses, the properties of persons of seemingly great wealth; but almost all the horses the properties of such like horse drivers, especially poor colliers, died in divers lanes, &c. of cold and hunger, whereby many persons strictly honest, truly inoffensive, thoroughly industrious in Gloucestershire, and in Somersetshire, whole families have thereby been found destitute of the means of getting livelihoods in their usual way; consequently obliged, have become burthensome to their respective parishes.

That such families should not know the comfort of partaking of a leg, or shin of beef, pigs cheeks, bullocks, or sheeps heads, breasts of mutton, or broth made from the bones of animals; seeing but twenty-five years ago, nay, down to within eighteen years, such were bought from eight-pence up to

one shilling, which served a family, cooked in divers ways, nearly a whole week.

Surely all parties will agree, this is too severe calamity for British subjects. The liberal will allow that alteration is needful, the great will no doubt stand forward, and try to remedy, like Britons, evils which have so severely oppressed their countrymen, whose situations at this juncture are too miserable, the more piteous, because for having not brought the burthen on themselves.

Surely for our wickednesses such grievances have been permitted, yet it will appear in the course of this narrative, that scarcity and dearness of human food has not been altogether laid upon us by the hand of God, but are the effects of, and the works of covetous men; for which there has not been just call, or necessity.

Argument cannot draw me aside so as to believe that the truly noble, desire, or aim to make miserable the inferior classes of the people: nor can argument state the point which avaricious persons would gain, the former to appear, (God forbid) the latter if pursued may get frustrated, which God grant.

In the metropolis, and in divers country towns, are there not to be found persons seemingly more wretched, families destitute of means to obtain fuel, food, or raiment.

Taking a view of the mechanical world, there are in this kingdom many thousands of respectable, worthy, truly valuable characters, with large families, who subsist on earnings, &c. of from nine shillings to one guinea per week; for whose mainte-

nances let us consider what will one guinea at this juncture for marketings do—what less sums?

There are to be found traders, not only in Middlesex, but in towns of other counties; also shopkeepers with numerous families, that pay taxes, whose profits (perhaps takings in their occupations) do not amount to one guinea in a week. That there are is but too true, whose sufferings (if concealed) are no doubt more pungent, more pitiable than the sufferings of those who make a room do, and seemingly suffer the miseries of want, by neglecting work.

Such traders or shopkeepers situations in life, and modes of subsisting are more affecting to penetrate than the distresses of persons accustomed to endure cold or hunger. I am led to believe as certain that persons who most take to heart hardships, are the educated, such who with hard earned monies saved, or otherwise, begun trade, and in a few years found themselves surrounded with children, apprentices, or other servants necessary for conducting business, (seemingly well begun) but owing to fallings off of custom, by circumstances varying amongst neighbours, find odds, making daily appear as sinking their little properties, dismal prospect! children craving for food, whilst perhaps little or no money in the house, the first cash taken necessity demands it to be sent out for breakfastings; such family finding to dine, and sup necessary, little less than a third of one guinea, goeth daily out for food.

To describe the feelings of a couple so situated, perhaps tenderly brought up, and obliged (as it were) to keep up an appearance of respectability, or

their credit suffers, is a task I am incapable of performing, therefore that such distresses may be understood are not imaginary, but in reality prevail, and that remedy is needful, I shall proceed and state prices as paid at the London markets, shops, &c.

For pieces of beef, if parts of the bullock not the most prime, six-pence per pound; if prime were purchased, such have yielded retailers seven-pence, nay upwards to ten-pence per pound. For steaks of beef, one shilling per pound has been paid, veal has sold per joint at twelve-pence per pound. For pieces, and cutlets of veal, to think what prices has been paid for either, perhaps for the uses of sick persons, is grievous. Mutton has been retailed at six, seven, eight, nay, at nine-pence per pound, and in certain ways, at still higher prices.—Shoulders or breasts of mutton have cost consumers seven-pence per pound, best pieces of bacon have yielded fourteen-pence per pound, inferior pieces little less money.

For scalded pork fresh, or pickled, from eight-pence up to one shilling per pound, has been paid.

Cheese of divers sorts sold from six-pence up to one shilling per pound.

Fresh butter has sold from one shilling upwards to eighteen-pence per pound. Salted butter nearly as dear.

The quartern loaf at fifteen-pence. In short, a price too great has of late years been paid for every common necessary.

It may not give offence to state out-goings for one day, as not possibly to be done without, for a small family; not that I presume to dictate as proper, narrow living: no, my aim is to restore that sort of plenty that may permit of articles enough, and to be had at markets, in order to fill bellies at moderate prices, at the discretion of the purchaser of little or much.

As London prices I venture to suppose,

	£.	s.	d.
For tea morning and evening	0	0	4½
Sugar, suppose brown	0	0	2½
Butter ½, say	0	0	3½
Meat if but two pounds, or bacon if } but one	0	1	2
Vegetables	0	0	2
Milk	0	0	1
Bread at the rate of half a quartern } loaf at 7d. only	0	0	3½
Coals	0	0	4
Candles for shop and house	0	0	5½
For beer and such articles as salt, } pepper, soap, starch, flour, &c. } &c.	0	0	7½
	<hr/>		
	0	4	0
	<hr/>		

By this statement a sum amounting to four shillings appears daily expended; yet surely it will be considered insufficient; nay, too little. When the quartern loaf was dearer, a still higher sum went out. If a shoulder of mutton, or other part, or a bit of beef were purchased of six pounds weight only, to cost three shillings and six-pence, supposing it to

be divided for two days, more money, is at this time required : but who can continually live in such a narrow manner, debarring themselves from other more comfortable means of living, or liquors. Nay, were persons to persevere in such abstinence, one pound and eight shillings is consumed in one week, nothing reckoned either for rent, taxes, raiment, or the casual expenditures of the week, nor stored to answer at times of sickness, or lameness, possible unavoidably to befall mankind.

Larger families must consume more articles, of course more money. Can complaints, or affections of unpleasant nature be astonishing? such have undoubtedly been the result of scarcity, and dearth of the common necessaries of life, and for the want of a knowledge of the real cause of such grievances, sufferers have been led to attribute in error, and commit disastrous outrages thereby, doing more harm than good.

By such dearth of human food, and of the real necessaries tallow candles and soap, in the country, and in the metropolis, honest meaning persons, known to work hard every day, unwillingly, but unavoidably contracted small debts, the certain forerunners of larger debts : thus from demands for outgoings, such as rents, taxes, servants wages, house-keeping expenditures, many persons of saving dispositions obligated, have shut up shop, bankruptcies and other wretched circumstances have pursued such to the grave. If failures have happened owing to stagnation of trade, in great ways, such affect but a small part of the community ; let us keep in view the whole. House-keepers not having advantages

of trade suffer greatly, for small incomes which ought to increase, lessen.

What is to be expected by the inhabitants of Middlesex, and of all the towns northward, eastward in either road to Smithfield, who are dependant on low counties for supplies, seeing lean cattle cost in such prices as to presage that fat bullocks, fat sheep, their productions of course, if to pay for grazing, &c. in 1797, will be dearer than in 1795. Why if prices rise on lean stock, greater dearth for meat and other necessaries must consequently appear impending.

At towns in Somersetshire, formerly the seat of plenty, an almost heart broken woman, mother of perhaps four, or more children, all hungry, all dependent on the wages of a labouring man, amounting in reality to six, or no more than nine shillings per week ; or a more piteous widow, mother of such a family, has come to market, or shop, to get meat (where horrible to tell) such poor souls for several years past have severally paid for one pound of a breast of mutton six-pence, a third part thereof bone, being more than was found in such commodity before the disastrous crossing of the native breeds of sheep of home and neighbouring counties took place, which surely cannot fail to be owned injurious to the community. The following opinions of allowed competent judges, may confirm the same as truly disastrous : See Letters and Papers addressed to the Board of Agriculture. Page 67, " To describe the true Dorset sheep may be difficult," " Page 70, the same gentleman observes, " that the

original breed of the Dorset sheep is very rare to be met with, as most of the farmers have crossed their flocks with the breed of the Hants, Wilts, and Somersetshire sheep, which have certainly improved them as to size."

See page 163, another gentleman's words are, viz. "the pride of sheep stock, which must inevitably tend to the subversion of the sheep-fold, infected those counties first. It has already gone too far in Wiltshire."

Again, page 167, "The pride or vanity of stock has been almost as hurtful to the farmers of this district, in the article of horses as in sheep. In both instances the attention has been much more directed to get large, rather than useful animals."

Again see page 193, "sheep were formerly not thought eatable till four, five, or even six years old."

See page 226, another gentleman's words are, viz. "I say nothing of the comparative value of the carcases, to the butcher, or of the estimation the meat of the different breeds is held in, by the consumer. The most satisfactory intelligence on these heads may be obtained in Smithfield market."

Of gentlemen speculating in, or practising farming, more was not to be expected. But, had I time, I could communicate what might appear as perfect, as intelligence obtained at Smithfield, seeing the experience I boast of, was gained by theory and practice rarely exemplified.

At Bristol, which formerly was a more cheap city, or place to reside at (having the advantages of tides, shipping working in, and a weekly live market) than neighbouring towns, as Newport, Gloucester, Cirencester, Tetbury, Tewksbury, Cheltenham, Calne, Malmesbury, Chippenham, Devizes, or Bath, the inhabitants have paid nearly as dear for beef, veal, mutton, lamb, pork, &c. if not for other necessaries, as those dwelling more distant, notwithstanding they can boast of two such great advantages.

Westward, even down to Barnstaple, which formerly was reckoned a cheaper country, and place for meat, than any part of Somersetshire, or Gloucestershire, dearness has spread itself to, and prevailed. Five-pence per pound has recently been paid there for beef and mutton.

Northward, at Worcester, Upton, Birmingham, Warwick, Leicester, and Oxford, where formerly four-pence per pound was the top price, six-pence, seven, and up to eight-pence per pound has been paid for meat.

Eastward, dearness unusual has spread itself, to Salisbury, Rumsey, Southampton, Portsmouth, Andover, Winchester, Basingstoke, and other towns in Hampshire, onwards to Chichester, &c. Having again mentioned Salisbury, I shall say a few words relative to its live markets, to shew the vast extent of country which was, until of late years, well supplied therefrom, with fattened cattle—furthermore, where such cattle were chiefly grazed.

Persons unacquainted with Salisbury may suppose that its great fairs, and fortnight markets for living fattened cattle, were chiefly supplied with those, the produce of the county of Wilts; but I beg leave to assure such persons, Somersetshire has been its chief dependance, for the thirty-six years which came within my knowledge.

Moreover, there are dealers still living, who, like me, knew that butchers came from Southampton, Portsmouth, and other eastern towns or villages; also from more southerly places far distant, to Salisbury live market to buy cattle, knowing that to seek for fattening oxen, or fattening sheep, on Salisbury Plain, Marlborough Downs, or on Mendip Hills, would avail nothing. None are grazed on such sort of pastures, barren by nature.

Whereas formerly, out of my recollection, such butchers or dealers knew that such were to be found at those fairs or markets, the property of Somersetshire graziers or jobbers. Many of the latter description, old men, assured me, that perhaps for forty years, more or less, they had regularly supplied Salisbury, Romsey, and Wilton markets and fairs.

Unhappily, of late years, very short markets and fairs have prevailed in that quarter. An insufficient number of cattle, to answer the demand has been found, whereby the inhabitants, in all that vast extent of south and easterly country, have been grievously distressed, owing

certainly to a scarcity of fattened cattle, cheese, and swine, prevailing in Somersetshire: the result of which has been extreme dearth. The same falling off has been felt at Gillingham, Hendon, Chilmark, Ambresbury, and other considerable fairs, that depended chiefly on the rich pastures around Bridgewater for fattened goods.

It is too well known by dealers conversant in cattle, who traverse the counties of Gloucester, Somerset, and part of Dorset and Wiltshire, that a great scarcity of the native breeds of lean, growing or full grown bullocks, or young rearing stock doth prevail, and that the same is at most markets and fairs visible.

By dearth of provisions prevailing, traders lay on an advance upon every article dealt in, and not without cause.

If journeymen artificers, have struck working, to gain an advance of wages, have not such persons borne with great difficulties before they obtained, what perhaps is still far inadequate to the prices demanded for provisions, and the common necessaries of life? Are not articles of cloathing much enhanced thereby?

On necessaries, and on unnecessaries, addition on addition has been found. But the poor by exactions of extra farthings feel most.

The grain wheat, if scarce in 1795 and 1796, was not, on an average throughout England, as scarce as cattle and swine.

Arrived at that part of my narration intended to shew that scarcity of cattle, swine, cheese,

or wheat, tallow candles, and soap, or the dear-ness thereof, has not been occasioned by any cause originating in, or nigh to the metropolis. Be it understood extraordinary business occasioned my being called to London; engaged to attend there several months yearly, in the course of the sixteen years last past.

I have observed that prior to that period, I foresaw weighty ill consequences would befall us, wherefore I closely attended in the country to the progress of the practice and infringement alluded to, hearkening at fairs and markets to the observations of persons of different occupations, respecting dearnefs, which amongst farmers, graziers, and butchers, turned or run chiefly as follows, viz.

“ The dearnefs of beasts, sheep and pigs, which folk do complain of, is certainly occasioned by some sort of proceeding or other at Smithfield, between the salesmen and the butchers, but we cannot account for it, or how, or in what manner it is done.”

Dairy men, and cheese dealers, complained in like manner respecting cheesemongers, and factors of the London markets, &c.

Such hints becoming frequent, I had a great desire for an opportunity to attend Smithfield market for a length of time. However, from the knowledge I had previously acquired of farming business, of breeding and rearing stock, of cheese making, &c. my belief was fixed, viz. that no one thing, which had ever fallen in my way bore a likelihood of having been, or could be the cause of the then visible scarcity of

cattle, swine, cheese, and the progressive dear-ness, as worked up before that day on provisions, save and excepted only the cause which I have engaged to explain.

Providence ordained things so, that speedily called to, I arrived at London, where my business was such, that the mornings, before ten or eleven o'clock, were at my own disposal. Determined thereon I attended Smithfield market, taking particular notice of the modes of doing business; there disposing, for utmost advantage of distant owners, fattened cattle between the salesmen, and the purchasers, chiefly butchers.

Without partiality to either party, upon the sacred word of truth, I applied to every particular, which I then considered was necessary to be known, according to the skill I was previously possessed of.

I declare, the business between the salesmen and butchers, was done in the most fair and honest manner, according as cattle appeared there.

Astonished at the vast number of cattle crowded into Smithfield, which I thought must surely prove an overflow for one market day, although years previous thereto I had witnessed crowding in of overflowing markets, yet I could not discover the difference. But I was more astonished at finding the appearance early, so nicely judged by the salesmen, who are not only the readiest men I ever noticed in dealing—selling to a wonderful nicety, amidst such crowds of cattle—but act according to the trust reposed in them, by

far distant depending customers, graziers, or jobbers, &c. who expect returns according as cattle appear there.

Salesmen I found truly worthy characters—men to be depended on. Buffling men, who acted uprightly between two parties; who early of a morning amidst such crowding, hinted to me, as a by-stander, viz. this will turn out a short market.

Butchers in the habit of buying cattle alive, who retail the meat; or carcase butchers, judge with equal precision, and buy accordingly.

A few hours made manifest such salesmen's observations, because of such numbers of different sorts of bullocks exposed for sale.

Before the time arrived for my departure to business, butchers, &c. who came there to purchase, could scarcely find a fat ox, cow, heifer, sheep, or lamb, unfold.

My reader will observe, before this late period of time, if short markets at Smithfield prevailed for a while, occasioned either by a dry summer, a malady of any kind, or other circumstance, one, or two years at farthest put it to rights, when plenty again came to market. But since that period commenced, scarcity has more, or less, been in a progression at Smithfield market, consequently the prices have gradually advanced upon short numbers of cattle, and in the retail markets upon meat.

Of salesmen acting in a slavish laborious calling, I gained information, viz. we have not at Smithfield as many fat oxen, sheep, and lambs,

from your country, as we were used to be supplied with; many hundreds fall short yearly, which we miss, and regret the loss of, but cannot account for the same. Furthermore their opinions were, that it could not fail to be worse times, producing more and more dearth yearly, if there should appear a continuance of such a falling off of fat cattle from the West country, viz. Somerset, Gloucester, West and North West Wiltshire.

How such language was felt by me, knowing the truth thereof, whilst ruminating upon the effects of the distant cause, which on my return home yearly I found gaining ground, may easily be conceived. I have lived to see theirs, and my own predictions verified.

Many hundreds of Somerset, Gloucester, and Wiltshire bred bullocks having fallen off from appearing at Smithfield yearly, during so many years. Moreover, such not being to be found in the pastures, at fairs, or markets, of those counties in such numbers as in former times, has produced a calamity of great national concern, respecting victualling shipping with beef, which I shall more explain hereafter.

Convinced that the cause of scarcity or dearth of cattle, swine, and their productions, originated not in any cause at Smithfield, I determined and sought elsewhere, first at the markets where carcases were to be bought in the mornings, viz. Leadenhall, Whitechapel, Newgate, and Clare-markets, where I witnessed the strictest impartiality, and upright dealing between these

fort of salesmen and retailers, moreover an astonishing nicety of judgment with respect to prices asked and given.

To persons in almost daily practice, such business, or art, becomes easy, which, to a conversant by-stander, is readily perceived.

Carcass salesmen, one and all, determine prices honestly, and according to the trust reposed in them, observing fairly scarcity or plenty, as either appear, and sell accordingly.

Retailers, by experience, judged here likewise with equal precision, and seemed satisfied that they were dealt fairly by. They are a numerous and useful body of people, that would be greatly distressed if they were prevented from being so supplied.

Carcass salesmen with whom I have conversed, known or unknown as to my profession, have said, viz. "We shall not find things cheaper until more stock come to Smithfield market; we particularly miss horned crocks, i. e. West country sheep. We continually perceive vast fallings off of sheep and lambs from the farms of Wilts, Somerset, and the low parts of Gloucestershire, but we cannot account for it."

Finding nothing which caused diminution, or was the means of scarcity of stock at the carcass markets; that nothing might escape me, in a research of such importance for public knowledge, I sought farther, and attended at the different retail markets. Viewing also at different street shops, where, although I found every year an advance on the prices paid by chance

customers for such provisions, I found likewise a fair and seeming exactness, going--as it were--hand in hand with, and corresponding as near as possible, with the advances on living fattened cattle at Smithfield.

Where by cleanliness, or cleverness of dress, or cutting up, a commodity, has appeared better than others, the owners (I must own) gained greater prices from delighted customers, which is but fair, and should be the reward of neatness.

I will not take upon me to say in times of scarcity, especially such as lately experienced, and at a place like the metropolis, that reason may not have been forgotten, when wine was known to be but triflingly taxed, six-pence per bottle was laid on for wine-drinkers to pay. The public had more to expect from real scarcity of cattle. Wine can almost be dispensed with, but cattle produce common necessaries of life, not to be otherwise found, or done without.

At whatever part of the metropolis I conversed with retail cutting butchers, whether they bought cattle at Smithfield, or carcasses and lots of meat, the like observations respecting dearness were given, one and all agreeing that alteration for lowering the prices of meat effectually to moderation only, could take place, until more, and better stock do again come to Smithfield.

Wherever it hath been my lot to see markets, or butchers shops in England, I no where found more fairness in dealing, than at the shops and markets in Middlesex.

When overflowing markets were frequent at

Smithfield, which was the case about thirty years ago, I discovered a practice which afforded me much contemplation ; I observed great dealers in sheep bought surprizing numbers on one market day. One of these sort of dealers, a carcase butcher bought up between four and five hundred.

Supposing that no one person had demand for such a number of carcases, twice a week ; being intimately acquainted, I requested to know what number of carcases he sold weekly, I received a candid reply, nearly as follows :

“ On the average of the year I have an almost regular demand for three hundred carcases of mutton weekly, by persons who retail meat, yet they purchase living cattle seldom, or perhaps never. There are certain months when sufficient supplies of sheep do not come to Smithfield, therefore I am under the necessity, like as were my predecessors, of keeping distant pastures, and of purchasing several hundreds of sheep, when opportunity serves, to come in when I may be in want thereof.”

Other retail butchers, monied men, serving numbers of the nobility, had a demand for wonderful supplies of meat weekly. These sort of dealers knew short markets seldom failed to appear in the spring months, at a time when perhaps all their customers were in town, therefore when opportunity offered, they bought up sheep, and sent them to distant pastures, where if they improved not in weight, they afforded certain supplies when called for, by which means the inhabitants of the metropolis were never perplexed with the idea of famine ; nay, were seldom raised in prices.

Such practices were precarious ; sheep bought for such purposes as this year, perhaps paying for expensive keep, the next year failing so to do ; however I could not discover any thing in this proceeding other than fair, and of real utility.

At Bath, frequently hearing gentlemen, and great graziers, exclaim to my parent against that practice, observing, viz. I have a return and account of sheep sold last market day at Smithfield, which is considerably less money than was offered for them at home. This circumstance I state as happening in autumn, at a time of frequent overflow.

Other such like persons in spring months exclaimed loudly against practices at Smithfield, observing their returns, and accounts of sheep sold, fell considerably short of what had been offered at home previously for them by neighbouring butchers, or other dealers. Furthermore, observing they had previous knowledge of two short markets following, and seized the opportunity to send their sheep immediately, yet the return produced great loss, and disappointment.

Hearing such language, I conceived it was impossible to draw a line equal to that of chance, where vast numbers of cattle are required to supply such a multitude of inhabitants.

It struck me, if one gentleman, or grazier, in possession of lots of fat sheep, heard of short markets, the same might be heard of by others in every route to Smithfield. Thus, out-cry occasioned overflow, which seldom failed to happen at that time on such occasions ; in which case the salesmen

not having positive orders to return such fat sheep, or other order than to sell, sold according to the appearance of the day; by the bye, to return fattened goods to a great distance, might produce greater loss. The salesmen could not compel butchers of either description to give more money for goods than they were pleased to bid. I thought it would certainly have been better if those goods had been sold at home; but every man having a right to endeavour to make the most of his property, ought to know he is liable to error in judgment, and by grasping for the top of the tree may find disappointment.

I conceive it must have been much more mortifying for those who followed cattle to Smithfield, on such out-cry, to stand by, and find themselves obliged to consent to take low prices.

It has been owned that cattle have come younger, and in a thinner state to Smithfield than heretofore; wherefore I shall here notice rough tallow, which has differed greatly in quantities produced, and in prices during twenty-five years last past; at which time, and for several succeeding years, from and after the month of February, until July and August, it was common for butchers to purchase oxen, cows, or heifers at Smithfield, so well fattened as to yield or produce to twenty stone of rough tallow, London weight, more or less.

Tallow chandlers and butchers who did business at that time, know this remark to be a fact. The reason why, observe, at that time cattle were so plenty, that the largest bullocks, were allowed proper time, and were kept till ripe, then such animals

produced such quantities; but during the last fifteen years, from March until Michaelmas, the oxen, cows, or heifers brought to Smithfield for sale as beef, have been found in a thin state, seemingly more fitting to turn to grass than for killing; hundreds of such beasts when killed, produced not more than eight to ten stone weight of tallow; also many other hundreds still less, as perhaps not four stone of that useful and necessary article.

The aforesaid remark may in a great measure account for the vast rise upon rough tallow, tallow candles and soap; because if chandlers pay sevenpence three farthings per pound for tallow, found skinny, inasmuch as to turn out much greaves, instead of three-pence per pound, or less money, in its best state, it is accounted for.

By thin meat, consumers have sustained great injury, especially in the article beef; but it has been most severely felt by mariners; for instance, a piece bought has afforded the usual quantity of bone, according to the size of the animal, with little lean, and less fat meat thereon, although bought at double, or treble prices, compared with those of old.

It was about the year 1766, when in the course of my first visits at Smithfield markets, I gained information, that a supply for one market day, not to be deemed a short market, was eleven hundred bullocks, viz. oxen, steers, cows, and heifers, upon the average of the year, greatest numbers thereof appearing on Mondays, yet barely sufficient. But there had been frequent instances of double that number, namely, twenty-two hundred beasts sold on one market day.

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In times of plenty, grazing cattle gain more time to ripen than in times of scarcity; when scarcity appears only in a small degree, cattle from all parts of the kingdoms are hurried to markets in an unripe state, consequently lightly laden with tallow. Tallow was bought in the country, and without a doubt at London, at as low as two-pence halfpenny per pound. Tallow has risen in price to seven-pence three farthings per pound; in the progress of its rising, benefits were frequently experienced, by seasonable supplies of Irish and Russia tallow imported. Experience has convinced me it is from home produce alone, and plenty thereof, by which a reduction in the prices of tallow candles and soap can take place for permanent moderation.

If plenty be restored, it is unlikely tallow candles, or soap may again be bought at former low prices; as it is probable the taxes those articles are subjected to, cannot be dispensed with.

If plenty again abound, which with certainty is attainable, a general fall in the prices of rough tallow, tallow candles and soap may fairly be expected, adequately as hand in hand, the Chandler finding fair, and equal profits. This on account of the needy, magistrates ought to regulate.

CALCULATION ON ROUGH TALLOW.

Supposing eleven hundred beasts sufficient, and the average number for one market day, which doubled as for Mondays and Fridays markets the number make twenty-two hundred beasts weekly; wherefore counting one hundred fourteen thousand and four hundred beasts, the number (only) which have been sold at Smithfield, and slaughtered yearly

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in Middlesex, by taking twenty pounds weight only of tallow off each bullock, as from the former usual produce thereof, a deficiency for the use of the public, and the revenue, of two millions, two hundred eighty and eight thousand pounds weight appears to be the yearly loss.

Competent judges allow that London markets draw off not more than one-fourth of the bullocks grazed in this kingdom; by adding three-fourths, admitting such cattle have died equally lightly laden with tallow (which has been the real case generally where it fell in my way to inspect) there will be found a falling off in the income to the revenue by lack of usual produce of rough tallow, amounting to nine millions one hundred and fifty-two thousand pounds weight, which would have produced as many pence, amounting to thirty-eight thousand one hundred thirty and three pounds six shillings and eight-pence yearly.

If candles and soap produce to the revenue three halfpence per pound, this calculation will be found within bounds HALF, either sum to save I conceive an object worthy of parliamentary consideration.

CALCULATION ON BEEF.

Observing a statement of a weekly consumption of beef for the use of his Majesty's navy, hospitals, &c. &c. 1794, to amount to seven hundred forty and nine thousand pounds weight. Such a quantity at four-pence per pound (only) appears to cost government yearly, six hundred forty and nine thousand one hundred thirty and three pounds six shillings and eight-pence: whereas by reducing the price

one-fourth (only) as to three-pence per pound, a saving would take place to the amount of one hundred thirty and seven thousand two hundred and eighty-three pounds five shillings yearly.

Government paying considerably more than four-pence per pound in 1796, it is but fair to observe by the means of plenty restored, a reduction in the prices, as paid at this juncture for beef, of one-third may reasonably be expected, contractors or other dealers little (if any) injured thereby, who buy dear, employ more capital than when beef cost government three-pence per pound only; in which case a greater saving would be found.

On pork I reckon a saving would take place to the amount of forty thousand five hundred and seventy pounds yearly; upon cheese and butter a saving to the amount of forty thousand pounds yearly. Contractors, factors, &c. &c. finding equal profits, all things considered.

The bulk of savings added together appears to make, viz.

	£.	s.	d.
Supposed savings on beef	137283	5	0
on pork	40570	0	0
on cheese and butter	40000	0	0
By the same means additional income on tallow candles and soap, as from bullocks only	38133	6	8
	<hr/>		
	255986	11	8

Two hundred and fifty five thousand nine hundred and eighty-six pounds eleven shillings and eight-pence, at the lowest computation. By restoring plenty

of sheep, a farther sum may be produced by sheep tallow, &c. &c.

It is well known by persons experienced in the productions of sheep, that on the average of the kingdom, sheep produce, including the kidney fuet, from ten to twenty pounds weight of tallow each.

An acknowledged barely sufficient supply of sheep for ten miles around, and the market of Smithfield, fat wethers and ewes for one year are one million two hundred and fifty thousand; but good judges have computed that in times of plenty considerably more than that number has been sold there.

Upon the principle of Smithfield and ten miles around drawing off a fourth, the whole number of sheep slaughtered in the kingdom, ought to have been five millions. Now butchers in the country who are in the habit of killing but one or two bullocks weekly, kill from ten to thirty sheep, more or less weekly, which considered, the bulk killed in the country, must be by far more considerable. However numbers have reduced at Smithfield, &c. whereby of late a loss or falling off of nearly one-third are considered to have been experienced there.

The same has been nearly general; but however great may have been the loss or falling off, I shall take one million only less full grown sheep, supposing a fifth less killed yearly in the kingdom than at aforesaid, which I am convinced has been the case for several years last past; thus striking an average between twenty pounds weight of tallow, and ten, I set down as a loss to the revenue from sheep tallow the sum of fifteen million pence,

amounting to sixty-two thousand and five hundred pounds yearly. If three halfpence per pound be the assessment (which is pretty well known to be the case) this calculation falls short HALF.

If plenty of sheep, &c. are restored, a sum equal to the loss, may fairly be expected again to come in, wherefore not endeavouring to be precise as to number, or sum, it seems but fair to state that from sheep fat, wool, parchment, vellum, sheep leather, ox, steer, cow, heifer, hides, gloves and all other articles bearing a tax which are the productions of cattle, an additional income to the revenue cannot fail to take place, equalling the sum as before figured, viz.

255986	11	8
255986	11	8
<hr/>		
511973	3	4

Making a sum of money exceeding half a million yearly.

If I am blamed for these calculations, I believe it will be for keeping under the mark, which I prefer; but I stedfastly believe by proper management, few years only will produce to the revenue by savings, and addition, a million yearly, good British money.

The Agricultural Report for May 1796, states the average demand at Smithfield, and not to produce one overflowing market, to be at least two thousand bullocks for one week. If so, and plenty be restored, my belief may soon appear to be well grounded.

Those who may have revenue receipts to manage, may conceive a much greater loss than I have

stated has been felt, which must of course have greatly counteracted the best of schemes projected for public welfare.

But what are government savings compared with the unusual, the ever lost immense sum of money which has been paid by the community in the progressive advances on provisions, and necessary household articles, as meat, tallow candles and soap; many instances can prove treble prices, compared with those of old paid out for necessaries afforded us by our Almighty Creator, with the intent for all to have a share, as not to be done without.

The sum thus paid in a long series of years, to calculate is past my art, but what may be said, provided hereafter it appears to have been demanded, paid unnecessarily.

The idea of government savings, if useful, is of little weight with me, having witnessed (too frequently by being in the habit of attending markets and shops) the hardships, and just complaints of artificers, and the poor.

It is town artificers, poor working men, widows with families of children, whose interests I have most at heart, and am contending for; it is for their comforts, and for the comforts of their childrens children I write: for them to understand what has passed, and how necessary it is that plenty of living stock should abound, which will cure the present disasters. Surely, effectually REMEDY the growing evil of the day, and prevent severer, or the like calamities befalling Britons in future.

Plenty of stock is my hope to see abound, because plenty of stock will be the certain means of pro-

ducing plenty of wheat; without plenty of stock and plenty of wheat, the London markets cannot fail to continue high, found yearly in an advancing state, of course the vast multitudes, inhabitants of Middlesex, cannot fail to feel themselves worse situated, and likely to find, at a future time, severer calamities than those of 1795, which befel them.

I would not be considered as having lost sight of the country poor; an augmentation of provisions is wanted for all.

That country poor suffer, provided my assertions are doubted, the public may feel greater satisfaction, and rely more on the words of one of the foregoing authors, see page 211, same publication; where it is said, "The dearness of provisions, &c. &c. have unfortunately broken that independant spirit, which, in a very peculiar degree, formerly kept a Wiltshire labourer from the parish books." Again, "The farmers complain, and with reason, that the labourers do less work than formerly; when in fact the labourers are not able to work as they did, at a time when they lived better." Again, "Every landholder in the county knows it too well."

I conceive a picture equally melancholy may be given justly of the situations of country poor, in all the west counties of England.

Wherefore, seeing the vast extent of country formerly abundantly supplied with provisions, southward and eastward, by the graziers, or regular farmers of Somersetshire, by jobbers occasionally useful. Seeing the vast extent of country

more northerly, which was supplied by Gloucestershire, north and northwest Wiltshire; also how much the inhabitants in either rout, but more particularly those of Middlesex have been found dependant thereon for cattle, swine, and cheese. I request the attention of my readers to an idea which may not give offence.

Middlesex I venture to suppose a canal, unto which all streams in the kingdom freely should run, to keep it not only brim full, but running over—yet not to waste; as markets full has been the case heretofore.

If from unpleasant, unforeseen circumstances, or from art, distant streams cease to afford the usual supplies, the grand body thereby affected by degrees lessens, when unawares and speedily calamity appeareth.

In the year 1795, to support a multitude, by new residents, &c. greater than heretofore, the calls for navy victualling, for merchants shipping, &c. instead of two thousand beasts, said to be absolutely necessary for the weekly demands of Smithfield market; certain days, for many months, produced; alas, little more than six hundred head for beef, if the market chronicles are to be relied upon. The supply of sheep appeared in equally small numbers; which severe calamity hath been in direct motion for this point at least half a century; but under my view thirty-six years. Proving at length, the sad effects of the real scarcity of cattle, and the productions of living stock, in the western, and perhaps most fertile counties

of England, which I have before shewn, spared of their vast, chiefly native breeds of cattle, with other produces an almost incredible surplus, as a supply for the people of London, and of the towns in the different routs thereto, wherein dwelleth so great a part of the community.

Cattle, swine, and cheese, should be driven to London, to supply its markets, at the pleasure of the owners, from any, or all parts of Great Britain, subject to no restraint other than turnpike and toll; no matter whether by grazier, farmer, or jobber; because, above all other, the London markets, which guide those of the country, as to prices, should, if possible, be kept filled. But how is that to be expected, when numerous occupiers of the best dairy, and grazing farms, are daily unreasonably destroying calves and lambs, producing not that which is most proper for markets, by manœuvring entirely contrary to right, every other turn infringing on well meant laws, made to preserve the people from such calamities, but not sufficiently restrictive, otherwise the late calamities would, in all probability, not have happened.

Furthermore, whilst many thousand acres of the best arable lands are so ill cultured, as to produce little or nothing of that they were intended for, and produced of old; therefore the time, like the distressing year of 1795, was to be expected, when little more than half the quantity sufficient was found at market, or could be procured in the country, for market uses, for money.

CALCULATION RESPECTING SMALL ARTICLES OF MEAT FOOD.

The calculations before stated on tallow, beef, pork, cheese, and butter; also the calculation which I shall here insert, on small articles of good food produced by every bullock, and every sheep, omitting those of swine, may be interesting, and serve to shew the necessity of endeavouring to promote a more general system, than is prevalent at present, of breeding and rearing of stock. Also the great importance of full markets of oxen, steers, cows, heifers, and sheep, constantly at Smithfield, for a sufficient supply of such small articles, since it will appear that many thousands of persons, in the metropolis, were supplied with their week, or working days food—as meat—therewith.

Such small articles forming a chief part of the food of the week in every part of the kingdom, the remark may merit the attention of the higher orders of the people in behalf of the inferior classes; who found it convenient, and of course preferred, to purchase those sort of articles, little known by the nobility, or rich housekeepers, to whom perhaps the idea may seem trivial, but, when considered, may appear of vast moment.

The same may convince magistrates, and the commonalty, that to promote the breed of cattle and stock, seeing the consequence of such articles to society, merits the interference of a British Parliament, seeing it may have the happy

effect of preventing, in future, the seeking imports of wheat.

Three thousand bullocks and upwards, have been sold at Smithfield in one week.

In every bullock, male or female, there are found, viz.

Cheeks	—	—	—	2
Kidneys	—	—	—	2
Thick and thin midriffs, as	—	—	—	2
Heart	—	—	—	1
Tripes, as	—	—	—	1
Heels or feet	—	—	—	4
Burrs and rumps, as	—	—	—	1
Inside piece of lean, from the 8th rib to neck end	—	—	—	1
Sweetbread	—	—	—	1

15

Fifteen articles, which, upon the average, produce not less than thirty pounds weight of good meat food.

Whatever Scots, small cows, or heifers, produce short of weight, larger oxen, steers, cows, or heifers, abundantly make up.

Three thousand multiplied by thirty, giveth ninety thousand pounds weight weekly of good solid food.

Purchasers of such small articles, cooked them different ways to please themselves, and made more comfortable messes of food, than persons, otherwise situated, may possibly conceive.

My situation at London, in either season, afforded me time for rambling the streets, to

observe the various ways wherein such articles were useful to the venders, persons keeping small shops, &c. Also those who were the consumers thereof. After short markets of cattle, I contemplated on the loss, and its weight, which perhaps were more sensibly felt by me, than by persons unacquainted with their utility.

If, by charitable means, stews or broths are given, the appetite may pall; not that I would set any against it, God forbid. But amongst the needy weakness prevails; whereas such small articles, bought fresh, cooked at pleasure, were as pleasant to the eye, on the table of artificers and the poor, as the surloin on the table of the great, and full as hearty food. Providence, all-wise, having ordained such parts of animals to afford a stronger gravy; which renders it more grateful to the stomach, and, of course, proper food for laborious men.

By ninety thousand pounds weight of meat, it were fair to conclude that one hundred and eighty thousand grown persons were satisfied, as cooked with flour and vegetables. Half that number in addition of children weekly; all having variety for each week day.

Such small articles served certain families without bread, by choice; but when they became scarce, it made an inconceivable difference in the consumption of bread.

Many artificers bred in the country, where eating fat or strong parts of meat with potatoes, without bread, had been with them habitual, were not only content, nay, perhaps, preferred to live in London in the same way; but, the meat removed, how were

such persons to live! alas! chiefly on bread, morn, noon, and night, unlike their forefathers; for many industrious persons, in town and country, have not tasted meat for many days together, which fact is horrible to me.

In the year 1795, market chronicles stated that few more than twelve hundred bullocks were sold in one week at Smithfield.

Twelve hundred multiplied by thirty, viz. 1200

30

36,000

give only thirty-six thousand pounds weight; an astonishing falling off from ninety thousand pounds weight of meat, viz. 90,000

36,000 deducted

54,000

producing a deficiency of fifty-four thousand pounds weight of meat weekly. This serves to shew the importance of cattle, and the necessity for removing the cause which has occasioned a scarcity thereof; and which still prevents cattle being seen in abundance on the face of the earth.

Sheeps heads, (as cooked chiefly for broths) hearts, and trotters, supplied likewise a multitude of persons occasionally.

All proceedings should be frustrated, that tend to make scarcity prevalent, in or near the metropolis.

Surely the community will see, by the latter calculation, the real necessity and propriety for all farms to be properly cultured, for the purpose of keeping live markets and fairs fully

supplied with living stock; also shambles and other places with meat, cheefe, and provisions of every description; articles which, of late years, have been unfairly prevented from appearing at proper places.

Londoners and others, deprived of such small articles, who would perhaps have preferred to purchase a midriff, kidney, or heart, by non-appearance thereof have been obliged to buy other parts, which would have supplied higher tables, wherefore the other joints of meat have been caught up at any rate.

Scarcity has greatly affected persons who frequent, and also those who keep eating-houses, &c. &c. places where much money has been turned, that served for the encouragement of breeders, and graziers, whose returns, from Smithfield only, have been amazing.

By scarcity of cattle many good things have been lost; also numerous evils created, in their nature and consequence, most likely, abominable in the eye of God.

One evil grain rooting, its produce may become a national burthen; which, in this case, has been sorely felt.

I would farther observe respecting solid food.

If, at any time, so many thousand persons were supplied with such small articles in Middlesex, (preferring them for their week day food), in one week the number supplied in England, in the same manner, if accurately calculated, would appear astonishingly great. The returns made, and profits found, by persons in London, who deal in neats tongues,

sheep tongues, &c. I cannot ascertain; but I know their dependence for these articles is on cattle and live stock.

If breeding and rearing bullocks be considered the solid basis to depend upon, surely that proceeding will be found necessary, in order to remove, most speedily, the cause which has reduced, and prevented home plenty, in order to restore that blessing, seeing that imports of grain tend not to produce either more cattle, swine, or cheese, but rather to the contrary.

To the point.

The calamities, so generally and severely felt, which I have laboured herein to set forth in their true colours, hoping for a peaceable remedy to be the result, have been chiefly—if not solely—brought upon the community, by country butchers—that dwell not in London—carrying on, at one and the same time, the different arts or businesses of farming, suckling, and grazing. Moreover, selling live cattle, contrary to and in violation of the laws, whilst using the art of a butcher, or butchering.

An accurate survey of acres, and farms, monopolized by such persons, and badly cultured, laying in different counties at great distances, would be attended with great expence, and take up much time.

But provided an accurate survey thereof were found necessary, in order to be laid before Parliament, the means for doing it can easily be found; whereas I have already been at great expence, and have endured much fatigue in pur-

suit of the matter contained herein, and set forth for the public good; which at length enables me with safety to add, viz. what I have boldly advanced in behalf of necessitous sufferers can be sufficiently proved.

Ye who are the inhabitants of Bristol, Bath, or the vicinities thereof, (since the eye to witness seemeth best) by taking a view through the villages, hamlets, and parishes but few miles around, you cannot fail to discover numerous farms, large and small, cultured at this time by butchers, which will afford you satisfactory demonstration, to prove my remarks are founded in truth; impartially judge; for provided you mark how the farms which used to supply you with great abundance of the good things of this life, greatly surpassing my description, are at present handled, (it were a crime to say husbanded) and how proper produces are withheld from you, the few now exposed for sale being out of the reach for either taste, or smell of artificers, the needy, or the poor, it will so appear: for in many villages, or hamlets, nay, in towns, such persons dwell who now occupy, as viz. either one, two, three, four, or more bargains, or farms in one parish; likewise occupying distant farms of more or less acres, which severally at aforesaid time, whilst in the hands of regular farmers, produced on the market days abundance of provisions. At this juncture may be found too many large and small farms, which produce scarcely an article for the comforts, and common uses of either nobility, gentry, the clergy, Town, or country artificers, or the poor, by things reared thereon,

or even for the advantage of any person, the occupier alone excepted, which hereafter I hope to clearly make manifest.

Examples if bad in nature, are followed more frequent than examples for goodness; thus their manœuvres, occasion divers other farms, whether dairy wholly, or dairy and arable farms near by, to be cultured in nearly the like manner, even by regular farmers; all of which farms, more or less, according as the parishes extend, at length evidently produce scarcely a third part of that kind of stock, and produces for human food, or common necessaries, which most farms were used to produce (or at this time would afford) provided all farms were cultured by regular farming persons only, in the good old way. I have observed, that in the early part of my practice almost daily travelling to and from large to smaller farms, seeking for fattened cattle, I became acquainted with the management, culture, and produces of most farms within the circle of forty miles around Bath, where I procured commodities fitting for my parents purposes for one year, it was natural to expect a like supply the next.

Approaching thither, I too frequently found the last year's tenant removed, the farm occupied by a person perhaps without advance of rent, of whom I inquired, "Have you such, or such goods for sale?" for answer it was rare, if I received other than "Yes we have, and you are welcome to handle them," *i. e.* feeling certain points for fatness, &c. &c.

On the price being required, I found to my astonishment an advance, as from eight to ten shillings per head, more or less, put on fattened calves, with

a farther reply, that startled me, viz. "If you will not give the price I ask, you shall not have them, because I don't fear making the money of them; I can kill them for market, where by the carcase and offal I shall make more money."

In this case necessity often obliged a compliance.

The same I found proportionably on oxen, sheep, and lambs. Thus rapidly ensued in my practice of dealing for fattened cattle, an amazing advance, without reason, but entirely from avarice. Wherefore all kinds of articles of provisions at market became set a going towards dearness; at length approached the enormous alterations of late experienced.

If I purchased of this new comer a part of his stock (no matter the sort) it was natural to look forward for proper profits, but perhaps the next market day, he being a butcher, and in the habit of killing cattle, brought to market of the same kind of commodity, and under sold our shop perhaps an halfpenny per pound, more or less; nevertheless, by the flesh and offal more money was obtained for the animal he retailed at market than for those sold living; all the while he laughing in his sleeve, whilst more fair traders got turned off by inconsiderate deluded customers, much injured, whilst endeavouring for a fair character, and maintenance; moreover, were too frequently deemed extortioners. Why I say deluded customers, is because it will appear persons who encouraged farming butchers, by dealing with them for meat, from the idea of purchasing cheaper, have by them, without excep-

tion, been worked up to pay from ten shillings to perhaps five pounds per week for meat, according to the size of the family, more than needful, or than otherwise would have happened; truly ensnared, whilst inadvertently aiding in establishing an evil with weighty consequences.

Many well meaning traders, to whom proper profits were due, I have known ruined, dwellers at the cities of Bristol, Bath, and in the vicinities thereof, dealers who had no alternative divers months of the year, and dealt with farming butchers for cattle, which could not elsewhere be found fitting for their purposes.

On inquiring for the former occupier, I gained information nearly as follows: "You will find him, or her, at what's it farm." In very few instances at few miles distance, but too frequently such removed regular farming persons were found in deep affliction out of business, ruined, reduced to servitude, and to earn bread at statute labour.

Approaching to What's it Farm as directed, in search of goods, disappointment was too often my reward, finding the industrious farmer upon his entering on his new farm, had been obliged to sell great part of his stock, because the soil of the farm he was now occupying would not admit of his keeping more than perhaps two-thirds, or a less number thereof; moreover, inclining to keep on dairy business, necessity had obliged him or her, to have laid down to green sward for a walk for the remaining few kine, the best situated arable fields of the new farm, yet found the labours in a great measure vain

and unprofitable, the cheese made, subject to heave, or other distressing circumstances, well known unavoidable effects of divers soils; acres so laid down to pastures used to produce wheat, &c. &c. in abundance.

In many parishes land owners have laid much of their estates down to green sward; for why, is not for me in this work to say. Let it suffice, it is so.

Such extraordinary changes and advances were the occasion of my early studying the differences of produces at farms diversely cultured, and of making those remarks which form this narrative.

By such unhappy removals of regular bred farming people, I declare a real loss to the community of the produces in grain of many thousand acres of best arable lands in Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire; what is more lamentable, a loss of cattle and stock reared to the amount of thousands yearly, of oxen, cows, heifers, sheep, and pigs, less than usually were reared when regular farming persons only occupied farms: furthermore, a loss of several hundreds of tons weight of cheese and butter, because regular farming persons so removed, finding to make good cheese impossible, have been obliged to adopt suckling, and thereby pursue continually a draining off of young stock from distant country of perhaps thirty or more miles, changing the face of business at the new farm from that of the old, and producing the following weighty and distressing circumstances: premature and unseasonable slaughtering, a loss of cheese and butter, a loss of poor oxen

and cows, a loss of pigs, a loss of wheat; also variety of attendant ills arising from those evils, as will hereafter appear.

Ye that are the inhabitants of the metropolis, and its environs, as the greatest sufferers, hearken, I write not to alarm you, but to appease your minds: for although ye are, and long time have been experiencing the sad effects of such management of farms; altho' you long have been at a loss for proper supplies of provisions and necessary household articles, such as your ancestors received abundantly, moderately cheap, from a less number of acres than are already inclosed; you may discover by the following remark, that there is a remedy, and if sought with propriety, speedily to be obtained, especially respecting wheat.

Within few miles of Bristol or Bath, lies a parish where about the year 1780, the parishioners did not pay twenty shillings per annum poor rates; at that time the inferior parishioners picked up by leazing in harvest, one or two sacks of the grain wheat, which served them nearly through the winter. Here men, women, and children were numerous, in employ, healthy, and happy; but before 1795 had commenced, six hundred acres of that parish were laid down to green sward, two hundred pounds per annum paid as poor rates.

In an adjoining parish seven hundred acres has been laid down; calamities have attended of course, numerous other parishes shew nearly the like sad prospect, whereby little farmers have been terribly burdened with taxes; for the poor leaze not corn from hedges, nor in dismal lanes; but for want fall in on

parish pay. But how has such manœuvres affected town people; why, observe, this happens to be the case by sad example in the heart of best lands, which produced heavier crops than poor higher hilly lands, whereby the demand for wheat has far exceeded the growth yearly, working out the old stock; and thus at length reduced the inhabitants of England to a state of unnecessary alarm. But may it not again occasion such another alarm, when imports are worked up. This is worth consideration, for although agricultural writers seem to study the farmer only, I study the welfare of industrious farmers, town housekeepers, traders in little way, artificers, and the poor; for I see no reason for throwing into the lap of one to distress a multitude, (liberal farmers require it not) for there are, who foresee the consequences of too high prices at farms.

By such ill management at farms, vast streams have almost ceased to run towards the supposed canal; in other words, vast herds and flocks necessary for sustenance, have failed to come towards, or arrive at Smithfield. Thus scarcity, and dearth of meat, cheese, bacon, &c. &c. has been severely felt; not only by Londoners, but by dwellers in the various routs towards London; even nearer dwellers by the fountain head, who were comfortably, seasonably, and plentifully supplied at aforetime, by or from the extreme fertile acres of Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, the rich north and west vale of Wiltshire have felt dearth severely.

Having declared that scarcity and dearth of cattle, swine, cheese, butter, &c. originated in, or by country butchers farming, suckling, whilst butcher-

ing, it is necessary I shew for why; wherefore to manifest it as seemingly in the fairest way, I shall next state impartially, (after a few hints may be useful) the produces of a regular farmer on a dairy farm to milk thirty cows, with acres arable nearly as such were managed thirty-six years ago; afterwards the produces of a farming suckling butcher, to prove my assertions.

A regular farmer, when he had engaged for an estate, farm, or bargain, for a term of years that would permit of milking thirty cows, with acres arable, I found most applauded, if he had first consulted its situation, how it was exposed to the ravages of tempest, adapting the acres accordingly, if he adhered to ocular improvements in husbandry; if absurdities were strictly avoided, if careful attention had been observed purchasing in his stock of cattle, in the choice of which the greatest care I found at that time was generally deemed necessary for placing thereon the best sorts of the native breeds of the county wherein the farm was situated, such that appeared most handsome, if likely to produce the most money, either into the pail, or for breeding, rearing, or for sale as lean stock, or for beef, or mutton.

Why I say native breeds, is because it had previously been tried, and found that capital stock bred in one county of England, removed to far distant, dwindled even to skeletons, particularly sheep, although not baned, *i. e.* not stricken with the liver rot.

That such was the case of old, I could shew, but a recent experiment in Somersetshire may suffice:

See Letters and Papers, Page 358, respecting the Leicester breed, the words run thus: "The change of food and climate appeared to affect them." &c. &c.

Supposing Lady-day passed, after the calving season appeared as far on, that two-thirds of the thirty cows had calved. The calves, if to be hand suckled were chiefly staged, the kine milked mornings and evenings, when the suckler attended to the calves, which in eight or ten weeks, more or less fattened. were sold (a chosen few excepted) otherways managed to be weaned, meanwhile, the utmost hurry prevailed in order to get to cheese making. After cheese making commenced, if the remaining ten cows calved, the smallest and most indifferent calves were either hurried upon the stage for suckling, or suffered to run a few weeks only with the dam, and then sold to the butcher, whilst the remainder and better formed, seldom failed to be weaned, the farmer preferring to have the additional ten cows milk in the cheese tub as soon as possible.

At other dairy farms, farmers pend their calves, the cows were turned into the pen at certain hours of the day, that the calves might suck.

Here a greater degree of hurry to get to cheese making was visible, those dairy farmers preferring to sell off their calves at five or six weeks old.

At farms where cheese was made from such a number of cows milk, a vast produce of whey was found, which not only produced whey butter, but served as the chief food for growing fattening swine.

At dairies where thirty kine were milked, six or more large pigs were found in the styes fattening;

in the farm-yard other fleshy pigs were snuggling that would come in to the sty immediately after the first fattened were disposed of; also one, two or more fows, with litters perhaps twelve in number, the extraordinary prolifickness of that animal I need not enlarge upon; one instance may suffice: a sow from March 5, 1794 to March 1, 1795, farrowed fifty-seven pigs.

Acknowledged good farmers observed to keep, (as necessary) sufficient pasture lands for change.

An essential part of a farmer's study is change for cattle, and change of grain.

Acres arable were ploughed, whereby supplies of corn of various kinds turned in: thus the family were supplied with bread, the fattening swine with grain in due season, to harden them; but when meat was plenty, reasonably bought, with vegetables, it served without bread, either at farmers houses, or country cottages.

Millers, or bakers, to a certainty knew where to find wheat for supplying neighbouring towns and villages with bread.

At such farms higlers, poulterers, found abundance of poultry, chiefly fed from the barn floor, with grain that otherwise might have been wasted; and by this means returns to the farmer towards rent-day were sure.

When the kine became nearly dry, they were carefully bedded up with straw in bartons, there to remain the winter months, until calving season returned, all the while a little of the tops, or bottoms of hay stacks, or ortings mixed with divers sorts

of straw, answered sufficiently for their food, producing much good manure, and permitted of felling better hay.

To manure the arable lands a considerable flock of breeding ewes, or wether sheep walked; hence in the course of the year small lots of such flocks, or offspring of the former became fat, and yielded a supply for neighbouring towns and villages, of mutton or lamb, that came to table weighty.

One instance of the prolifickness of sheep may suffice; five ewes yeaned seventeen lambs this season, 1795.

Such prolifickness serves to shew, that in a short time plenty of sheep and swine may be produced.

A good farmer suffered not one lug of useful land to lie uncultured, but by grubbing up thorns from banks, &c. made of seemingly wastes, good land; by gripping, &c. made wet lands drier and more useful; planted potatoes in wastes, raised plants for orchards hedges, and carefully fenced them from the natural enemy, keeping his farm neat as a garden, the sure road to profit.

Where the acres of arable lands were adequate, two or more ploughs of growing bullocks, chiefly steers, or oxen, four or six, nay, eight in number at each plough, all reared from such weaned calves, were in common seen wherever ploughing was discovered; and here neighbouring graziers knew for certain might be found a regular supply of grazing beasts, from four to eight, more or less of the true and valuable Gloucestershire, or Somersetshire breeds yearly.

Farmers in those days preferred ox ploughs, and found one or two draft mares sufficient for a supply of heavy horses.

In Wiltshire, striking across from Hindon to Swindon, it was common to meet dealers, if jobbers, who had selected from its farms variety of young and full grown stock, driving the same to very distant fairs and markets, which every where in that extent shewed of such stock great abundance, and proved that such dealers were useful.

I frequently observed at a regular dairy farmer's house, and at farms not altogether dairies, the neighbouring poor came in for a share of milk, whey, &c. &c. for their penny, or had it given to them, producing great relief, and greater satisfaction to the hospitable donors.

If the plough-man's wife, the thresher's, or the shepherd's wife lay in of child-birth, I have seen the hands of the good dame, mistress of the farmhouse, employed distributing to such labourers, or to their children (capable of carrying) trifling, but comfortable necessaries, saying, "Be sure to tell your mother I am glad to hear she is likely to do well, be sure to tell her to send for any thing wanting, and that I'll soon come to see her."

Such kindnesses were not only boasted of by the receivers, but were merited, by attention, grateful acknowledgments, and surely repaid, by future exertions of industry, and care.

Where the soil admitted, orchards for apples, cherries, &c. were planted, and attended to; by

which means vast sums of money, especially (by such as were deemed fruit, or cyder years) were sure returns to the farmer, whilst it was rare to find a farmer engaged in more than one farm.

The benefits which arose from small farms, at that time, were great. The country, to appearance, by such being in many hands, had a far better appearance, because, at small farms, the most compleat farming work shewed itself in every respect: and for a good reason, it was chiefly the work of the occupier's own hand. If but five, four, or three cows only, were the stock, the supplies, for market uses, of good provisions were wonderful. On small farms, small flocks were found, which, in common, produced perhaps half a score of fat lambs for the butcher, or lean for rearing; likewise at late year fattened ewes; two or more fattened pigs in a season; a few staged, or otherwise fattened calves, others at pasture for rearing; also several months of each year, supplies of milk or whey butter, with divers small articles as before mentioned.

Where such management prevailed, it was very rare if families were not found brought up, or comfortably bringing up, of perhaps six children, more or less; learning or compleat in the different manoeuvres of farming; fitting for and generally found good servants if placed out in towns or at large farms.

One, two, or more loads of straw or hay were conveniently spared for neighbouring towns

uses; likewise a few measures of oats, beans, peas, clover seed, vetches, and seed wheat: almost every small farm producing a wheat mow, if but small.

Thus the markets were generally full stocked, and constantly kept, in a manner, overflowing with provisions; farmers gladly accepting moderate prices.

This was the true state of the country thirty-six years ago only, and thus situated were most regular farmers, who lived in a flourishing state of happiness; accumulating riches abundantly—thought light of dress or frippery—carefully attended (however extensive or few the acres, heavy or light their crops);—

To secure, or house well;

Thresh their grain, and early sell.

Farmers persevering in the modes they were accustomed to formerly, merit the utmost bounties of Providence, particularly whilst allowing common rights to their dealers—fair living profits.

To give and take is to study real happiness.

Having lived to see a sad reverse of things, my next account is to shew the productions of extensive or small farms occupied by butchers, whilst butchering and retailing meats, &c. &c.

By butchers using the different arts or callings of farming, suckling, and grazing; also the art or mystery of a butcher, at one and the same time, a sad reverse of things will appear; and not only at the farms butchers occupy, but at

most other farms, the sad effect of bad example, of which I shall briefly give a true account; the pressure of the times, and the sufferings of my fellow subjects requiring it—moderation, and reason being rare to find.

Taking the same breadth of land, supposing a butcher to occupy a like extensive farm, admitting of thirty milch cows, and a like portion of arable acres,

When his calving season takes place, the custom, with farming butchers, has been, and still is, to stage or otherwise suckle and fatten every calf as fast as they come in. Hurrying them to become fit for the knife as early as possible, having an eye to the dear time of veal, of which every advantage has been taken to keep up the price; hurrying and destroying the whole number, thirty calves, his cows offspring, without weaning one.

Not hurrying in order to get to cheese-making to help to keep up a sufficient supply at market, but for what is more to be lamented, viz. when a few—as five—more or less, of the thirty calves were killed, to purchase young calves from far and near, in every direction, throughout nearly the whole year; contriving to have milk for continual suckling, by which means the country has become drained of that kind of young stock. The suckling of calves for veal, contagion-like, spread abroad to a vast extent, producing thereby unseasonable slaughtering too great numbers thereof, which, otherwise to a certainty,

would have escaped the knife yearly, and soon become beef.

The same is to be observed respecting lambs, because butchers, carrying on the business or art of suckling house lambs, soon dispose of their first lambs, which fell from perhaps fifty or an hundred ewes, customarily at eight or ten weeks old, more or less, after which the neighbouring and more distant farms became drained, to furnish them with supplies of other young lambs, purchased at perhaps three days, or a week old. Those to be pend up till meal times, were taught to suck the dams of the lambs before disposed of three times a day; by this means, during thirty-six years, the country has been yearly, more and more, stript of this kind of young stock; either of which may not be wondered at, since such sucklers of calves and lambs, have demanded and received of retail butchers, for calves per head, to the amount of from five to seven pounds; one guinea and an half for one small lamb. In certain instances much greater sums.

By those practices, which have had an amazing run, the alarming scarcity of cattle, swine, and cheese, so justly complained of has been brought about.

Numerous farms are occupied by butchers in Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire; nevertheless we find neither cheese, butter, whey, or pigs, for sale.

At such persons farms one solitary sow may perhaps be found, kept for the purpose of eating offal, and for one, two, or more litters of pigs, chiefly sold as roasters. Those gone, the dam is fattened chiefly with such unwholesome food.

Seeing it is chiefly for the use of the house, it is no great matter to other consumers of bacon, who study to preserve health by eating bacon or pig meat corn fed.

If factors, or other cheese dealers, apply at a farm, occupied by a butcher, in order to find his usual supplies—perhaps a whole year's making of cheese, the consequence now is, and for several years hath been disappointment: such dealers finding not one cheese for sale, instead of being accommodated, as heretofore, with several tons weight thereof.

My readers will, no doubt, afford the foregoing remark time for reflection; it merits consideration, because cheese is a weighty necessary; one of the best articles of man's provision, and above all other more accommodating to working persons, and the poor.

If a higher applies where farms are cultured in this manner, for poultry, eggs, &c. &c. he in like manner, is certain only of disappointment, whereby the adjacent markets exhibit a scarcity, and dearness of course.

At this distressing time, when all hands should be employed, and every possible means used for plenty; suppose thirty cows the stock, the whole

number were found to have been drained throughout nearly summer and winter; and if at barton, fed with the best hay to afford supplies of milk, which circumstance has tended to exhibit an appearance of scarcity of hay, and to enhance the value thereof.

Here we find little or no bedding up in bartons for manure; of course valuable estates are impoverished, exhibiting, alas, no weanlings, nor young beasts rearing, neither to come in as cows, or for oxen.

A farming butcher ploughs little or none of the land he renteth, particularly at small farms, because to attend to it were not to make acres equally lucrative as pastures, such a year as 1795 excepted only; acres that before he took them were ploughed perhaps by one or more ox ploughs.

Not wanting for his own use ox ploughs, there has been none reared—not one bullock, either to supply persons inclined to make use of that animal, nor for the use of graziers, to produce beef, tallow, hides, &c. &c. male and female have, indiscriminately, been sent, year after year, unhappily to market for veal.

By this practice two of the best breeds of English cows and oxen, namely Gloucesters and Somersets, are become nearly extinct; a loss greatly to be regretted, because none other in the kingdom, according to frame when lean, produced in quality better, or on the bones, when fattened, more beef. Their produce of

tallow was amazing, with hides in common sufficiently strong to raisebens.

True Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, and Wiltshire bullocks having fallen off, smaller bullocks (chiefly from the north of England and Scotland) have found their way to Smithfield; where, supposing equal numbers appeared—say, two hundred only in one week: a loss of at least two hundred pounds weight of beef, on the average, of every animal, has been experienced there.

Do people who go to markets to purchase animal food, seek bone to eat? if an unprofitable part has been chosen one day, such was to be avoided other days: but by cattle coming to Smithfield, and to other markets and fairs, small and thin of meat, contractors in want of bullocks, having not proper choice, have been obliged to buy such as appeared for sale, animals that have turned to such dealers a very poor account: but mariners who cannot market, or chuse, yet expect good salt meat to eat, have been so unfortunate as to have at meal-times, perhaps day after day, a piece for a mess, nearly all bone; which calamity cannot be so well remedied as by breeding, and rearing large and more fleshy bullocks than have been found in common the last fifteen or more years.

A farming butcher's chief dependance has been, and now is, on suckling calves and lambs, on grazing a few oxen or heifers, sheep also far fetched, besides calves drained from out of Berkshire, Oxfordshire, north, east and south Wiltshire; or the distant parts of home counties ac-

ording to his residence; but chiefly ewes, weathers, and lambs, the produce of Dorsetshire, rearing none of the fleecy race himself. Moreover, upon extra profits gained by killing and conveying such cattle to sell at shambles, wholesale and retail, or by selling alive, although contrary to law.

Surely such practices, advantages, and infringements, to turn them calmly in the mind, are the circumstances which all persons will hereafter allow to have caused bullocks, sheep, and their productions, progressively to become scarce, and to attain to the enormous prices prevalent, more than any other circumstance whatever.

Fat bullocks, in July 1796, when walking, were worth upwards of three pounds per hundred weight, or four shillings and four-pence per stone, London weight; fat sheep considerably more than six-pence per pound to sink the offal.

Poor stock, every where, found dearer than recollected—and advancing. Marketing commodities yielding prices, for a length of time, if not wholly unprecedented, it was but to ask high prices and have them.

Farming butchers by exulting, and boasting, of what prices their stock and retailings were vended at, occasioned neighbouring farmers and graziers to enhance; but many declared, that had not such been divulged, they should not have required such high prices for their stock, it was but natural, they took the hint, asked after the same rates, and got them, whilst it served as a

cloak for farming butchers proceedings, consumers paying for all.

At farms occupied by butchers, if sheep were found, such were not kept for rearing, but to sell living, although in defiance of the established laws of this realm; or to kill, in either way those infringers gain nearly double profits, compared with fair traders.

Wherever fat stock has been sold of late, farming butchers, regular graziers, and regular farmers gained nearly alike prices, weight and goodness considered.

At a butcher's farm too little spare hay, or straw has been found, of course could not be bought at moderate prices either by innkeepers, public stable keepers, or private keepers of horses: whereas had all farms been cultured by regular farming people only, sufficient no doubt might have been had for all purposes, much more reasonably than of late.

Moreover, moors, commons, wastes, &c. would have continued to appear crowded with young growing stock as of old.

Graziers to stock their lands, formerly found near home, lean cattle enough; but of late have drained by necessity distant countries, far east, west, north, and south, in England and Wales, to stock the pastures of Somersetshire, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.

By such unseasonable diminution of young cattle, and for want of lean stock nearer home, graziers and dealers have fetched lean bullocks for graz-

ing, from Buckingham, Hereford, Oxford, Warwick, Berks, Devon, Dorset, and Hampshires, by which draining off, scarcity of such stock has been visible and severely felt in reality here and there.

A farming butcher possessed of oxen, cows, or heifers, if grazed through the summer in a regular way, or bought in at the latter end of the year, to eat superfluous grass, if he kills them, his double profits enables him to make up his rents as it were slothfully, all while plodding thus: why then, till arable lands? or why study the public advantage? My profits make rent, and rent again. Veal a shilling a pound, lamb a guinea a quarter, beef, mutton, pork, &c. &c. high, and rising.

Rents which probably may seem paid with a greater degree of ease, and cheerfulness to the landlords than heretofore by well skilled tilling farmers, who probably lost the farm by malicious calumny, or by its being represented less repairs for barn, &c. &c. would be wanting; but it follows to be remembered, if such rents have been advanced, and paid with cheerfulness, the landlords have paid double, in many instances treble prices for provisions, by the mistake of letting their lands to a butcher.

The foregoing remark may merit consideration, before leases in future are renewed, or granted.

Noblemen, and other owners of landed property, would do well not to listen to those who manage for them when calumny may offer, it may occasion the removal of one person addicted to industry, and improvements in husbandry, and let in a tenant to

impoverish and lessen the value of the farm irrecoverably.

Where landlords may have gained an hundred pounds per annum advance for rents (even where circumstances, such as improved lands, &c. merited it; had it been to regular farmers, moderation would have been the result) whilst for provisions and household expenditures they pay two hundred pounds per annum more than were their former yearly accounts, the balance is much against them; it would be well perhaps to reflect on past, and present sufferings of millions of people who pay scot and lot in cities and towns, and neighbouring poor; also on not finding it convenient as at aforesaid to relieve.

Observe further, that in the autumn season, and Christmas turned, farming butchers attend fairs, and markets, to catch up bargains, purchasing fattened cattle, or nearly fattened, to kill, or keep on, by which means regular graziers farms become the sooner drained, whilst the chief of the fattening stock upon the farm occupied by such farming butchers live perhaps until Lady-day, or after (if this is not monopoly, I say by such advantages the community is injured greatly) for if a town butcher, or other country butcher, a renter of fields (only proper to cool driven cattle) in want of fattened goods seek such as are suitable to their purposes, which by the means aforesaid, perhaps are not to be found elsewhere; on inquiring at a farming suckling butcher's residence, they hear of prices that cannot be afforded, prices demanded which permit not of

profit; what to do in this case distresses the mind of the chapman, to comply dearness follows at his stall, to bid lower, avails nothing, the owners inflexible stand out.

Supposing the goods in question not purchased, the owner holding out until finding no chapman to purchase to his mind, such stock living having an alternative, at length killeth his goods, which if he selleth at market to retailers, it is just at what price he pleases; or if he vend the commodity by retail, (having few or no yearly customers) it is considerably dearer than common retailers, or than those who buy living cattle to kill and retail engaged to supply families yearly, where any advanced price were not to fulfil engagements that ought fairly to be observed. Thus retailers destitute of other means for a livelihood, have to encounter difficulty, loss of money and credit, all while the farming butcher having done his part towards thinning the country, is the first person heard complaining of scarcity and dearness, observing, viz.

“There is little, or no goods in the country;” thus an alarmed multitude of consumers worked up, give more money for their food than reasonable, or than requisite to be demanded.

April and May 1796, proved the foregoing remark in Bath market, in the following manner:

Farming butchers were then almost the only persons who produced at market, beef for chance sale, such insatiable dealers sold lots of beef to retailers at six-pence halfpenny per pound, coarse and prime pieces.

Visitors, resident housekeepers, paid prices out of reason, inferior classes scarcely finding chance for the coarsest bit, the poor scarcely any to live on: provided the best of men were to understand this, Britons hereafter may speedily enjoy plenty, happiness; moreover by unanimity inseparable would protect him and those, blessings.

Thirty-six years ago, butchers were not driven to the necessity of being thus dependent on each other, neither should they. At that period country butchers with no more than sufficient acres to cool their cattle, and by skill in dealing among regular farmers, all by hand, found profits adequate for rearing numerous families, saved fortunes, plenty of cattle and swine abounding; but of late well meaning industrious butchers in town and country, endeavouring to get maintenances for their families by doing business in seemingly proper way, have failed and become wretched.

Wise men of old foresaw weighty ills would be the result of butchers attempting what ought to be farmers or graziers work, or by using certain other businesses.

Man's understanding is weak, nevertheless time and experience help; and may convince that more coercion than was deemed needful centuries past, at other seasons, and in certain cases may be found necessary.

That our forefathers did, in cases perhaps similar to the present time, I conceive will appear well meant.

Statutes at large shew the laudable care persons in power formerly took to prevent butchers making

strides too widely in certain businesses that might prove injurious to a neighbour, more particularly to the community at large.

Statutes at large pronounce, viz.

See 3 and 4 E. 6. c. 19. "Butchers not to buy cattle to sell again on pain of forfeiture."

See 21 Jac. 1 c. 22. "Butchers not to use the trade of a tanner under the penalty of 6s. 8d. per day."

"Butchers may be guilty of offences against the law, 1. In buying. 2. In killing. 3. In felling cattle."

See page 271. cap. 8. of statutes at large, from the first year of king James the first, to the tenth year of the reign of king William the third, an act to prevent the felling of live and fat cattle by butchers.

"Whereas by an act made in the third and fourth years of the reign of king Edward the sixth, it is enacted, that no person using the craft, or mystery of a butcher should buy any fat oxen, steers, runts, kine, heifers, calves, or sheep, and sell the same again alive, upon pain of forfeiture of the cattle so sold, which law hath not wrought such effectual reformation as was intended, by reason of the difficulty in the proof of such buying and selling being for the most part at places far distant, if not in several counties, by means whereof the parties so offending have escaped unpunished.

Be it therefore enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons in this parliament assembled, and by the au-

thority of the same, that no person using the trade of a butcher, shall at any time from and after the feast of St. Michael the Archangel next ensuing, sell, offer, or expose to sale in any market, or elsewhere, either by himself, or any servant, or agent whatsoever, any fat oxen, steers, runts, kine, heifers, calves, sheep, or lambs alive, upon pain to forfeit the double value of the cattle so sold, or offered or exposed to sale as aforesaid, the one moiety of which forfeiture shall be to the King's Majesty, his heirs and successors, and the other moiety to him or them that will sue for the same in any of his Majesty's courts of record, by bill, plaint, action of debt, or information, wherein no essoin, protection, or wager of the law shall be allowed."

Farming and other butchers, dwellers in Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, and Wiltshire, and in other counties during thirty-six years last past, sold with seeming impunity, immense numbers of fattened and lean, young, and full grown cattle alive, contrary to and in defiance of the aforesaid statute, which (if in force) is not sufficiently restrictive: however, a recent circumstance, which happened in London may serve to shew its power:

A butcher for selling a living ox for nineteen pounds, forfeited thirty-eight pounds. All butchers ought to know they stand in a like predicament, provided they sell one, or to an hundred of either sort of cattle alive, and that gold gained by so doing is gained in an unlawful way.

It may be urged, (of which I am aware,) that I hereby tell too much: persons may not only disap-

prove of my story, but may pique at me for coming thus forward. Authors do not always make to themselves friends; foes, right or wrong, may ridicule my asseverations,—why, let them. Miseries call aloud for redress—call for one person or other to explain the cause thereof however simply, if by honest facts. Mine is that lot; and whether I am applauded, thanked, slighted, chastened, rewarded here, or not, I do it, seeing “to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

Hereafter the eyes of Britons may be open, hereafter may acknowledge these my remarks essential; for it has been said, all persons should assist to bring about a remedy at a time of such calamity. This is my mite offered to effect public good.

The idea of prejudice bears not weight sufficient to cause me to withhold my pen in a cause that concerns the public to know. In the counties of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Somersetshire, in divers parishes, butchers occupy from one to six in number, extensive and small farms, which severally at aforesaid time were occupied by regular farming persons, who in their little way shewed content on portions of lands, rented at from forty to perhaps one hundred pounds per annum, more or less, either producing a barn, or the like, stored properly, owing to the then culture of such little farms.

By certain produces from industry done, husbandry for neighbours, some at home spinning, others knitting, &c. &c. made maintenances for numerous families, all employed, produced supplies of marketings prodigious.

The exact contrary doth now prevail, small farms being for the most part cultured, managed in other ways.

Ploughmen, shepherds, and threshers, in many parishes are become rare, not altogether owing to the war, but more owing to such practices at farms.

I declare no vestige of a barn is left on numerous small farms; whilst (if found at one) it is used as a slaughter-house; at another used for suckling calves, or lambs, or both; thus for want of grain raised at either, alas! ploughman, thresher, or shepherd there, appear as almost useless.

This being the case in reality, more especially where small farms have been so monopolized, or consolidated, can depopulation, scarcity of cattle, swine, cheese, butter, grain, or dearth thereof be wondered at?

Of those sorts of labourers, most useful persons, provided one or more are here or there found with a laying-in wife, neither can boast of kindnesses such as were hospitably given at their birth.

In many villages it is difficult to procure for money (for the sick or well, old or young) even a pint of milk, because the suckling calves must not be stinted; they suck up, or spoil every drop.

Thirty years ago it was common with regular farmers, occupying small farms, &c. particularly in Somersetshire and Gloucestershire, to take in poor growing young stock to winter.

This practice was of great utility to the community, which practice all farming suckling butchers finding inconvenient, avoid.

This circumstance has tended greatly to the alarming diminution of stock; that loss having been many years experienced by Up Hill, chiefly Wiltshire farmers, has prevented the rearing of many thousands of sheep yearly.

Farmers possessed of from ten to twenty or thirty, nay, more lambs, for want of that chance, and proper fodder, fold off the same to be killed.

That small portions of lands have been monopolized in Wiltshire; that putting out young stock to winter was common heretofore, in order to more fully satisfy, see Letters and Papers, &c. page 120. where, with other good information, the words run thus, viz. "and frequently many of them occupied by one person." Again, see page 128. "and put out the ewe lambs to winter either on pasture lands, or turnips in other parts of the county, and frequently in adjacent counties."

Ye who are the inhabitants of Middlesex, but more particularly of the metropolis; also of Portsmouth, of Salisbury, and other towns and villages eastward, have the goodness to understand, that such monopolized farms, small or extensive, in High Wiltshire, were of little consequence as to produces of animal food, &c. (when separately occupied) to you, the great evil or cause of your and our sufferings originated in, and is the result of ill culture, wrong management of small and great farms of Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, west and north west Wiltshire.

Again, see page 208, same publication.

"It is undoubtedly for the interest of the community that cattle should be grazed somewhere," &c.

Such were, such ought now to be found sufficiently abundant in the fertile pastures of the west counties before mentioned. Pastures allotted by our Almighty Friend, for grazing for our uses full grown oxen for best beef, cows and heifers; full mouthed sheep for best mutton, chilvers, &c.

The same is to be observed northward, from Birmingham across to Smithfield, because the bleak hills of Derbyshire, nor the Cotswold hills abound not with fattening oxen, or fattening sheep; parts of Cheshire and Shropshire may be added.

By the vast diminution of young stock for food for the day, by the loss of native breeds of cattle in Gloucestershire, Somersetshire and Wiltshire; eastern counties, as Suffex, Suffolk, Kent, and Norfolk, which used to supply Smithfield greatly, have been so drained of native stock, and so scantily supplied from the north, from Wales, &c. with lean beasts, that when fattened, few more than necessary for home consumption has been found, unlike aforesaid; the prices enhanced of course.

With respect to monopoly, or what is commonly called jobbing of cattle, taking first Middlesex, where its consequences are most severely felt. I conclude as certain, that no salesman, nor speculating dealer would monopolize at Smithfield, nor any where in the neighbourhood of London, provided plenty of cattle were known either by letters, or else, to abound in the country. I pronounce that

business occasioned by scarcity, having first discovered itself.

No salesman, or dealer, in his senses, knowing the leading roads to the metropolis crowded with cattle for Smithfield, would venture and buy up the produce at market, as to-day, seeing for certain sufficient supplies were at their heels, for the next market day. Surely to job in this case would be madness; for no person could have other than a very dubious prospect of making it worth while.

Monied men speculate in times of scarcity, and to an almost certainty get the good looking guinea, however distressing to the community.

Even less time than thirty years ago, owing to almost continual overflow at Smithfield, complaints of salesmen monopolizing of cattle were seldom or ever heard.

Few persons in times of plenty, attempted jobbing of cattle in the country, but such as were unacquainted with other businesses, who by making profitable hits five times out of eight only, probably made livelihoods.

For certainty to the inhabitants of the metropolis, to those of other towns widely situated, jobbers, even in times of plenty were found useful: it follows to be understood likewise, that in times of scarcity, jobbers, farmers, and graziers have the advantage of the public, may have left (by far too frequently) conscientious moderation out of the question.

Such dealers have had every possible chance thrown in their way; one and all know how (particularly in times of scarcity) to keep things up, make such a

quantum suffice to obtain even enormous prices: plenty in this case being most desirable, should be aimed at for a turn of the scale.

Had this book been published, as was intended about the close of the year 1794, much of the calamities since then experienced might have been attributed to its appearance, and have caused me unhappiness; but I now feel affliction unspeakable, on account of artificers and the poor, my fellow subjects, thinking on what has happened, and what is likely still to befall them; because before now many thousands of young cattle and pigs would doubtless have been found rearing; supposing cow calves, such in two years only, would have produced heifers with calf, and shortly milk into pail; heifers, which if suspected as not likely to become good milkers, might otherwise have been fattened; such before three years had expired, supplying upon the average from five to seven hundred pounds weight of beef, best hides, good tallow, &c.

If male calves, such as steers, in the third year, better beef, of much more weight—if kept for oxen, six years old is universally admitted the longest time needful to produce the best ox beef, affording upon the average, from six to ten hundred pounds weight of beef, more or less, according with the sorts of breeds; and if allowed to ripen, at least three quarters of a hundred pounds weight of tallow each; but such when killed for veal, afford a light skin, and rarely four pounds weight of tallow for chandlers uses: whereas in their best state, steers, or oxen, would have afforded heavy hides, &c.

By the taxes on leather, buttons, horn, tallow candles and soap, the produce of full grown bullocks, an immense sum to the revenue.

If lambs, two years old only would have produced vast flocks, if of ewes, thousands of such ewes in that small space of time big with young.

If wether lambs, three years were sufficient time to have filled England with mutton.

If preserved longer, four years is an age the utmost allowed as necessary for the best mutton, and in that time three full fleeces of wool.

To have published growing scarcity ten years ago, would no doubt have been deemed madness; to have published it in 1794, might have been condemned as wicked; or as conjecture, put together with an ill intention to disturb the people of England: but it cannot at this time fairly be so condemned. That which might have been stiled idle predictions, holding out scarcity and dearth as likely to come to pass before Michaelmas day 1795, has unhappily been verified with a vengeance at London, and most other places; notwithstanding there has been found jobbers, dealers in cattle, swine and cheese, trying to supply the London markets in every part where fat goods were to be bought.

I shall mention certain instances wherein jobbers, heretofore were found useful.

I knew a man a native of Huntspill in Somersetshire, who was many years in the habit of buying up near his home, and at distant fairs and markets, oxen, steers, heifers, sheep, and lambs, according to the season of the year, with which he travelled, and either, occasionally sold, through the route of Hindon,

Chilmark, Wilton, Salisbury, &c. eastward, even to Smithfield.

This man was found useful, especially in months when dearth by short markets prevailed, which in that route at most places were known, and their consequences pretty severely felt in the spring months thirty years ago.

His business was to supply: he took necessary care and did it.

He bought up a yoke of fat bullocks, or two yokes, or the single heifer, or steer of distant persons, who otherwise would not have ventured so far, or even ten miles with a trifling commodity.

The same is to be observed by small lots of sheep, large droves were made up: thus he kept his customers together, although at perhaps road expences, or if but at prime cost; even Portsmouth, Southampton, and Rumsey butchers depended on him certain months for supplies, and were by him well served.

Another considerable jobber in the west country, was many years in the habit of supplying at Bristol live markets weekly, several hundreds of fat sheep, and many fat bullocks: he dealt for sheep and bullocks as low down in Devonshire as Bow. This may serve to shew the then appearance of approaching scarcity in Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, and Wiltshire, which to experienced dealing persons of his day was visible in reality.

Little time prior to twenty-five years ago, a jobber was rarely known at Bristol market, it being well supplied from near farms: whereas, during his

time, butchers even from Devizes, Calne, Chippenham, Bradford, Trowbridge, Frome, Bath, and at the city of Bristol, several spring months, and during many years were dependent on him for supplies of fat cattle, particularly sheep: such butchers frequently observing, "Were it not for that jobber, we should not have fat sheep to kill, nor our customers any fat mutton to eat."

In this case, in his day he was a useful jobber.

This may serve to shew, that sheep have been becoming more and more scarce upwards of twenty years in the neighbourhoods where such a string of country butchers resided.

About twenty years ago, he gained certain information of short markets being almost constantly prevalent at Smithfield; and all the while he did so much business at Bristol, he bought up much other cattle, far west, and sent them through various routs to London. This circumstance may serve also as a peculiar proof to the inhabitants of Middlesex, that cattle have been falling off in appearances at Smithfield nearly as I have related.

Those who are inhabitants therein have sensibly felt the advances in prices. I herein have shewn the true cause; its foundation, which I make no doubt will be believed.

That there has for a considerable time been, and still doth exist, real scarcity of cattle, and other farming stock: and that that scarcity has been occasioned by country butchers farming, suckling, &c. &c. may be disbelieved, but it cannot with truth be refuted.

To get the better of scarcity, which has of course produced dearth of cattle, swine, beef, veal, mutton, lamb, bacon, pork, cheese, butter, tallow candles, and soap; also grain, straw, and hay: to remedy it effectually, were it not prudent to remove the evil? to do which, I conceive the taking away the power of committing it, best, wherein the interference of parliament cannot fail to be deemed necessary; for it can most speedily bring about a more general system of breeding, and rearing stock, perhaps for the welfare and glory of England, the only thing certain, because plenty of stock cannot fail by nature to promote the growth of wheats, chief staples of the nation.

Either of the above sorts will become speedily more and more plenty, of course more and more moderate for consumers, and government will find the good effects of it.

At a moment like the present, the inhabitants of Middlesex claim the thoughts of all honest dealers in cattle and grain, and ought to be kept in view in preference to all other, on account of their number.

To crush immediately that one evil, jobbing (an hanger-on only) requires nice caution; for by doing it too hastily, the multitude there would more than likely, too soon find themselves dismally situated. I have studied the arduous task, to do for all sufferers sufficient good, I propose means to keep up the largest supplies possible at Smithfield, and other markets, to do generally the good needful, the least injury; an idea for those in power not to loose sight of.

Sufficient will be done for the whole of the community in this case, by preventing, on any pretence whatever, country butchers farming, grazing, suckling, or felling living fattened or lean cattle, whilst carrying on, or using the art or mystery of a butcher, ten miles around London only excepted.

This remedy is but trifling to accomplish. Few persons, if any, would be found that could complain in the smallest degree justly, of being hurt thereby, farming suckling butchers only excepted, whose practices have nearly occasioned a removal of a nation's comforts for disasters which may astonish; but it is the case, seeing almost every calamity known, touching scarcity and dearth of food and common necessaries of life, which appertain to bullocks, sheep, and swine, may be traced thither for the origin.

The number of young calves drained from the northward and eastern borders of Gloucestershire, from most parts of Wiltshire, together with those picked up in Somersetshire, at and in the neighbourhoods of the cities of Bristol and Bath, by butchers who suckle; and by farmers who from example, have preferred suckling of calves to the making of cheese, on account of the enormous prices of veal, I have calculated to have amounted to at least ten thousand yearly, more than were destroyed on the average for that article, thirty-six years ago in that circle.

I do not mean to say, that ten thousand of calves yearly, more than at aforesaid time, have been eaten as

veal, in the aforesaid circle; for since the year 1776, perhaps a third, more or less of the number said to be killed, have been sent to London as veal, in the spring months, to answer as food, in the room of bullocks so fallen off at that time, owing to what had previously been done in the country, where in sixteen years prior to 1776, the practice of calf suckling had drained off from neighbouring counties, and had done so much mischief as to occasion short markets of bullocks at Smithfield, to be more frequent, and more and more sparing every succeeding spring than before known; which occasioned spring mornings at Newgate market, &c. a greater demand for young food.

Persons who had been long in the habit of sending veal from the upper parts of Wiltshire, during calving seasons, found their returns advance; wherefore they entered more extensively into the spirit of slaughtering calves to send thither.

This was soon discovered. Butchers in the towns and villages of west and north west Wiltshire, who customarily carried the bulk of those they killed, westward, took up the London business.

The number of calves slaughtered for that purpose, has been incredible: such veal has been conveyed up by the stage waggons in every rout therefrom, meeting to take it up at Melksham, Devizes, Chippenham, Calne, Swindon, Marlborough, &c. &c. and although every year more and more of that business has been done, greater prices have been returned, because every year less number of bullocks came to market, every market day more young food has been demanded.

Since the year 1776, the sides of bacon conveyed to London, owing to the same circumstances, from Somerset, Gloucester, and Wilts, have been incredible. At length, by such premature slaughtering, the country got thinned: cows, heifers, steers, and oxen, became scarce; likewise their productions, as meat, cheese, butter, tallow candles, and soap, swine also, and dearness of course.

Bristol and Bath markets soon experienced the falling off of veal spring months, by the foregoing dealers changing their routs to markets with dead calves; by which means sucklers, and butchers, who have produced fattened calves for veal, for Bristol, Bath, and their vicinities, have been enabled to demand, and gain their own prices.

The scarcity felt of late being the result of such practices, has come upon the public similar to the accumulation of interest upon interest—still advancing—which, being certain, to alter it for the better as speedily as possible, would be doing right.

The consequence of such a reform would be a certain produce of much good provisions, whereas no man can for a certainty say, that poor veal, which has been killed, and that too young, and eat for the food of the day, has not killed a multitude of people; those in years, in particular; moreover, there would be less call for house or grass lamb, particularly late in the year, and thereby many thousands of sheep reared.

Formerly either sort of lamb, at late year, was considered of little use to the commonalty, the former sort always above their pockets; the latter sort, as affording little nourishment. Even the heads of the nation made game, poultry, &c. &c. serve at table instead of veal and lamb, from late year, until calving and lambing season came round. Good beef of oxen, steers, martin heifers, old wether mutton, and buck venison were certain friends to longevity.

Of late too many house lambs have been slaughtered; but the number of grass lambs slaughtered, and substituted as a chief article of food, for want of older in spring, summer, nay autumn months, for several years past, has been beyond conception, and out of my power to calculate. Let it suffice, that the conversation at fairs, &c. runs thus, viz. "There is not half sufficient stock in the country."

The following lamentable fact is the result thereof:—

At West-Country fairs, since Palm Tuesday 1796, poor sheep have been bought in, to graze around Landsdown, at as high as fifty shillings each; sheep, when fattened, that at best will produce but a few pounds more of mutton, per quarter, than those I first described, were bought, compleatly fat, at one guinea per sheep.

This presageth future dearness, with a vengeance, for purchasers of mutton.

RESPECTING CONSOLIDATED, OR MONOPOLIZED
FARMS.

Those persons who, during the last thirty years, have been here and there monopolizers of farms, by discovering the speedy effect of such a reform, viz. a more general system of breeding for rearing stock; the making of cheese more prevalent; and grain springing up on every farm, would quickly discover, likewise, that the holding or occupying many farms, would be to err.

On reflection, perceiving the approach of plenty, they would doubtless say, "It will overcome my pursuits—it will overcome my efforts—planned seemingly sufficiently wary, so as no art of man could subvert, or to defeat even the wisdom or power of parliament—efforts planned to keep up prices; but, alas! the farms which I managed with ease, in the time of scarcity are clearly a burthen to me.

"I found it worth while to monopolize farms; to half or scantily culture them; I kept but few labourers, yet the extraordinary high prices, obtained at markets for the productions got in with trifling outgoings, afforded me such profits, that with great ease I could pay the rents, and accumulate heavy bags of gold.

"The productions which for years past I made suffice, reducing in value at market, more work must be done; more workmen must be em-

ployed as necessary to till my farms, to raise more extensive crops; wherefore, I find I am not likely to make answer the holding as heretofore many farms."

That farmer, in corn counties, found occupying three farms, if in a ring-fence, might fairly be expected to give up one, if not two, finding enough work to do upon one good farm, as perhaps did his forefather.

More may be expected from farmers who have occupied five or six farms, distant from each other, perhaps twenty miles, more or less; to manage which, of late, one husbandman at each farm, perhaps proved sufficient to overlook a few under-labourers, whilst scarcity gained ground: but a new face of things appearing, would so much affect, that such farmers, rather than wait the expiration of their leases, would prefer and quickly let the more distant farms to other persons, who, to make up rents, and to provide for themselves or families, would not only work every lug, nay, perhaps every foot possible of such farm; and by so doing, help to keep neighbouring markets well stored with meat, poultry, and grain.

With respect to there having been too many horses bred and kept in use in the kingdom, and fewer ox ploughs used than formerly, my readers will observe, that in stating the divers produces, according as farms were cultured, I have observed, that farming butchers, speaking of them generally, rear no ploughing beasts, although they occupy numerous farms, lets, bargains, extensive and other: wherefore, I first declare a loss to the community of

plough beasts, oxen, and steers, considering that when those farms, lets, and bargains were severally cultured by regular farming persons, from two to four, six, eight, or ten young beasts were heretofore found yearly on one small bargain, reared, and fitting for sale, equal to four on the average; whereby the number of oxen on supposition not reared as heretofore, I conceive is fairly to be named half of the before stated number of calves unseasonably destroyed yearly. Farming butchers, and sucklers, have taken care to get into the possession of farms of deep rich lands, strong enough to produce milk nearly the whole year through; such farms where mild seasons young beasts were known to have picked a livelihood with little fodder; yet surely found at spring in a thriving state: whereas, the removed farmers, who used to rear plough beasts on each, or this identical farm, when got into the possession of thinner lands, if his dependence has been to make cheese, he failed of profit, by reason as before described: if he would wean calves, and rear that kind of stock, his thin lands admit it not; either for advantage or safety—if he would plough with oxen, he cannot raise such provender as should afford proper nourishment to keep oxen strong and healthy. Thus, for ploughing his lands, instead of poor oxen, &c. &c. necessity has occasioned horses either to be reared or purchased; consequently, horse corn sown or planted instead of wheat, which otherwise for many reasons would not have been preferred.

By such manoeuvres, the farms of rich lands, and the farms of poorer lands, instead of exhibiting to

travellers or dealers, oxen, steers, and heifers, and full aged sheep for best provisions; or young growing sheep, or producing good cheese, have produced little of any sort of commodity, other than veal and mutton. The former affording trifling income to the state, little nutriment to man in its best state; more especially as it is often killed too young.

Forty years ago only, when turnpike roads were not so general as at present, those when frequented were chiefly narrow and bad.

The nobility who kept coaches were seldom seen therein, except on or about their own territories; or in direct roads for the metropolis.

Merchants, &c. if seen in carriages, it was near their residences; or on roads leading to places of fashionable resort for health or pleasure, drawn by heavy horses.

Cattle and wheat, the chief sources of trade and commerce, wine and cheese, being at time plentiful, means were found, and large fortunes accumulated here and there: thus carriages became more numerous, which occasioned a spirit for extending and improving the roads, in most parts neighbouring persons sharing in the expences thereof, and advantages.

Expedition followed, by the use of more horses, the rearing of which paid them well here, or there, and served to promote trade, and to enlarge the income of the revenue.

Places formerly deemed obscurely situated, became more in the way of travellers, dealers, &c. &c.

infomuch, that in vast tracts, where, perhaps one peasant had been the only mortal seen in one day, numerous dealers, &c. have daily passed, whereby adjacent lands improved in their value, inasmuch many instances have permitted of their having been more than doubled.

Such plenty has heretofore abounded, that exportation was found necessary to dispose of the crops raised on the lands already inclosed, much of which, ere turnpike roads were improved, and become more general; ere horses were bred in such numbers; lay uncultivated, good roads; and the more than usual breeding of horses brought in dispatch: elegance followed, making good for trade in divers cities, and places; whilst travelling introduced money into remote towns, and villages, and occasioned in divers counties astonishing broad plats of oats, beans, and other grain to appear on newly cultured lands; their value increased of course, but unhappily richer acres cultured perhaps several centuries prior thereto, in more fertile parts, which ought to have continued to us supplies as of old, in order to have confirmed the advantages reasonably expected from such increase of culture and extension of trade, &c. kept not pace, but contrariwise, instead of aiding by means of good roads, furnishing at markets, increase of supplies, or even bare sufficiencies of grain, or proper and usual numbers of young and full grown stock; also cheese and butter, &c. &c. have shewn a falling off: thereby occasioning roads, and horses to be condemned as injurious to society: whereas the extension and improvements of turnpike roads, the more than here-

tofore breeding of horses appear to me great proofs of national prosperity—if such were not proper to be stiled blessings.

Persons whose wisdom prompted them to extend and improve turnpike roads, and promote the breed of horses for extension of trade, (which has been the result thereof) may conceive the high pitch this nation would have arrived at, provided the evil practices herein explained, had not undermined so good a work.

Those who departed this life, cannot have the happiness of becoming spectators of the good, or public advantages they foresaw were likely to attend their endeavours; but those existing, who still may incline to improve the country internally, may find success. Moreover, may depend safely, by such improvement, great welfare is still in store for England, and its inhabitants; provided things are rightly managed.

It is to be understood, that horses are not for the most part bred on the best lands.

Inferior horses were the inhabitants of moors, commons, forests, wastes, and poorest pastures in England and Wales, until fit for use.

Heavy horses, and those of superior value, inhabited better lands; and although one cow the less has not been kept, intirely owing to the breeding of horses, whole counties can boast of ten times the riches obtained by such measures. Rich pastures, allotted by the Creator of all things, for grazing oxen, cows, heifers, and sheep, here or there, have not been at all since my time, neither are such now over-run with horses. Such pastures are to be

found without horses rearing; without sufficient numbers of cows, oxen, steers, heifers, or sheep thereon. The acres that were inclosed forty years ago, produced plenty for home consumption, and for exportation likewise, and are adequate thereto (if properly cultured) without inclosing either forests, chafes, parks, moors, or commons; and to a certainty (by the blessing of God) would produce cattle, swine, cheese, butter, and grain; and also horses sufficient to promote trade, commerce, wealth and splendour. Moreover, introduce with the next century (so we seek it) happiness beyond example.

RESPECTING ADVANCED RENTS.

These have taken place, chiefly upon small estates, dairies, &c.

Dearness of produces, and improvements agricultural, have occasioned it; chiefly the former.

Persons possessed of landed property, as above ten thousand pounds a year, though dearness crept on, have not generally studied great advances on lands, in the manner like persons of smaller properties; yet there are to be found those whose landed properties thirty years ago, amounted to ten thousand pounds a year only, who at this time enjoy perhaps an advance of two thousand pounds. If such advances are found on farms far in inland counties, thin in nature, such became advanced chiefly on account of improvement for raising grain, gained by advantages afforded by good roads: but Smithfield seldom shewed, or bore the weight of an hoof from such farms.

The number of persons enjoying upwards of ten thousand pounds a year landed property, are few; of that few, to this hour, there are persons to be found, who have not advanced rents during the last thirty years.

There are persons to be found, who have gained great advances by consolidating farms, to save expences of repairs: nay, that have suffered houses, stabling, barns, cottages, &c. &c. to be destroyed, to make their incomes better for a while: but seeing, that consolidating of farms has not been the origin of scarcity and dearness, and a remedy thereof is attainable, small farms may again be in proper culture, whereby the issue of those who have consolidated, may hereafter feel more inconveniences than compensating for the aid such destructive measures has afforded towards dearness, when called upon to erect new.

Persons of five hundred pounds a year, and less, are very numerous; such by dearness unexampled, prevailing in their time, have been obliged to advance rents: many taking up dealings in grain, cattle, &c. &c. to increase their incomes, sufficiently to defray necessary expenditures, who, by inexperience in the value of the articles dealt for, have greatly contributed to dearness: this has happened chiefly in grazing counties, much inclosed, and mostly in small farms, lets, or bargains, from whence (the bulk of fattened stock came in to market uses) small farms being chiefly composed of lands most fertile.

Owing to infringement, and to practices unfair, as one taking away the bread of another, owing to in-

experience in the true value of living flock, grain, &c. &c. can it be fairly said that advantages too great has not been the lot of many such dealers? Can any mortal controvert such having been injurious, or even advance with truth, that (as unawares) consumers pay not for all? surely no one would be so bold.

But seeing, that consumers do pay for all, how many are to be found, as curates, &c. with large families, subsisting at this dear time, upon less than one hundred pounds per annum income. Perhaps, allowed not to traffick; to measure their sufferings I presume not—let it suffice, if at thirteen pounds each, or there about, six poor oxen were bought in at late year, 1795, and after working until midsummer 1796 had passed away, they yielded twenty guineas each: were not such advantage out of reason, whilst bare subsistences are the lot of fellow creatures, who are likely to labour under severer calamities, owing to the covetous disposition of this or that neighbour.

The meat of bullocks fattened in the course of the last year, that cost in upon the average, twelve pounds only, has yielded six-pence per pound, much of it considerably more money.

What must be the end of those, that this year cost in, poor, on average, nearly half as much more money, perhaps of the same frame. Why, any how to come near the desires of the avaricious, or to pay as deemed lawful and customary, the grazier and the butcher (fair dealers) the beef must sell at prices beyond example, out of the reach of housekeepers in

a little way, or of artificers, and perhaps, even the smell of the poor.

I mean not to aggravate, I wish not to heighten more than proper impending severities. We pray to God that it may please him to send us the kindly fruits of the earth so as in due time we may enjoy them. By the word *we*, is meant I conceive all mankind.

Such has been divinely given, but owing to practices at numerous farms as I have herein stated, such comforts have not, are not by all mankind enjoyed.

Ye who are in power, in the name of Christian charity think of this—attend to the next calving season, ere it be too late to ward off as much as possible the miseries otherwise to be expected.

Before the year 1780 had arrived, the farms occupied by butchers in Gloucestershire and Somersetshire were numerous, but not so numerous as at 1795. Nevertheless at the former period, that practice having spread as from farm to farm, through a vast extent of country to parishes, where prior to that period the whole business on farms were carried on in the good old way; employing all hands, men, women, and children, planting, weeding, &c. &c. producing plenty for every body's comfort and happiness: immediately after a butcher made a footing by getting into perhaps one of its principal farms, the whole system of culture in such parish or parishes, and the face of things changed: example run, and shewed itself speedily at almost every farm around. The result which has ensued, has fallen in as follows:

For several seasons past, as at this time, ride whither you may, the roads leading to fairs, or markets, are thinly lined with cattle, buyers have the prospect of few chances only, for laying out their money; consequently butchers of all descriptions hurry thither to catch up the few fat goods exposed for sale, which hurry being observed by sellers, a higher price is required, and necessity occasions compliance, especially by that butcher who has little or no stock by him (farming not) whilst consumers make up the return.

The same has been a prevailing calamity amongst regular graziers, one and all hurrying here and there, to fairs and markets to pick up lean stock, discovering their wants thereby to sellers, who knowing the reality of growing scarcity for years past, took advantage (as natural) and in like manner gained exorbitant prices, not knowing where to stop at, seeing such chances.

Surely the cause of all this, one would wish to extirpate from amongst us.

Respecting the reality of such hurrying chances, and of scarcity prevailing, to avoid being thought self-opinionated, I here insert the opinion of another person, which appeared in a public newspaper, May 14, 1795, viz. "Smithfield affords a very scanty supply of good meat; mutton of any age is hardly to be procured, and good beef is nearly as scarce, some precaution should be taken against the alarming diminution of our stock; for the high prices tempt the graziers to force every thing to market a year before its regular course, and even the

lambs, usually stocked for wethers, or for the flock, are now too generally swept off, to supply the pressing demands of the moment. The counties of Devon and Somerset are nearly stripped of their old stock of beasts, by this premature slaughtering, and can only replace them by green steers, all this must be severely felt hereafter."

The foregoing paragraph, which toucheth not the cause of the calamity, has so much truth in it, that I determined to afford it room for insertion in this book.

In 1795 it was observed, that "the poor in the neighbourhood of Calne, were deprived of such beef with which they were formerly comfortably supplied, even old cow beef; for such then was bought up, and driven here and there."

Again, "cattle were killed too young, or before half fattened."

These remarks were as drawing nigh to the point; and, by their nature, shew that great pains had been bestowed in endeavouring to get at the true cause, not only of the sufferings of neighbouring poor, but of all persons who have their bread to get by their labour.

About the same time it was observed, that "the produce of dairies had not failed."

Again, that "scarcity did not arise from the smallness of the crops, but from an increased consumption; meat as well as corn was scarce, which arose from a scarcity of food for all animals."

By others it was observed, " that the winter was severe, and the spring late, consequently cattle were brought to market lean, and more of them destroyed, which accounted for the price of meat at present; and that the war, no doubt, contributed to the scarcity."

Now such information as the foregoing, however deeply sought, has left room for other, and perhaps better information, gained by experience, and which hereafter the public may allow, more to the purpose.

It is true that old cows, in the neighbourhood of Calne, have been bought up and driven here and there, because a sufficient number of fat oxen, steers, or heifers, for many years past, have not, nor could be found; neither are such to be found in sufficient numbers now, that time has advanced to 1797, in that part of Wiltshire, like as at aforetime.

The few cattle killed have been, and now are, generally killed too young, before half fattened. And why? Because cattle are in reality scarce. I have herein shewn that the draining off of young calves from that neighbourhood, for so long a succession or term as thirty-six years, has occasioned cattle to be killed there too young, and before half fattened.

Admitting from six to eight pounds has been given for a fattened calf,—who would not give up the practice of suckling for the good of their country?

I have observed that formerly, as thirty years ago, the lean bullocks which were exposed for sale at Landsdown fair—on the 10th of August yearly—were of divers breeds, viz. Gloucesters, Wiltshires, Somersets, Welch and Devonshires, either part contributing nearly alike to make up a proper supply for a fair-day.

Of Gloucesters and Wilts, heifers and oxen were the chief sorts which made up their part; of Somersets, chiefly poor oxen and steers with a few heifers; of Devons, mostly oxen and steers. Of either county breed, the graziers bought poor oxen, at per yoke, from nine or ten guineas to twelve guineas, which latter was a top price and seldom found; steers and heifers proportionately cheap; which moderate purchasing of poor stock, answered to the prices I have stated fattened bullocks were purchased for at that time.

Many graziers of west and north-west Wiltshire, used to depend on Landsdown fair for supplies of such poor bullocks, as were true Somersets, or true Gloucesters, preferring Somersets while they were to be got, to eat the crops of after-grass, known, according to the season, to be in that vale astonishingly heavy.

The chief of such oxen, when fattened, went to Smithfield, or supplied the markets in the rout thither, and occasionally the navy slaughter-houses; whilst old cows, and good young heifers, supplied at home, at the cheap rates I have stated good pieces of beef were purchased at by the commonalty.

As the business of suckling of calves low down in Gloucestershire, and in Somersetshire, increased, to supply Bristol and Bath markets, and their vicinities likewise, with veal, the increasing demand, and draining off of veal, as before described, for the London markets, the vast draining off of young calves for suckling, occasioned a decrease in appearance of number of home breeds of bullocks, yearly advances, more or less in prices, of course took place; whilst Wales and Devonshire, producing more and more of their breeds, (very much affecting the markets there) by draining more and more bullocks therefrom. At length, in 1794 and 1795, few yokes of any county oxen, or steers, other than Devons; or any number of heifers, other than Welch ones, were to be found on the Hill.

The produce at Landdown fair in 1796, I own was of an extraordinary nature, which, with other occurrences that have transpired during the time of the delay of this publication, I infer, seeing it much concerns the public to have a just account thereof.

At Landdown fair, in 1796, the show of poor oxen were nearly all Devons; there were also a few Welch steers, cows, and heifers, but of true Somersets, Gloucesters, or Wiltshire bred poor oxen, or heifers—workers—ten yokes were not to be found on the hill.

Were I to say ten head of native bred poor oxen, steers, or heifers, of the aforesaid three counties, were

on the hill for sale, I verily believe it would be to depart from truth; which was an afflicting sight, as were the prices distressing to hear.—Poor Devonshire oxen yielding thirty six and to nearly forty pounds, per yoke, more or less.

The shew of Devons must have drained that county, so much as to preface an unusual dearth of meat there; but such were a providential good supply, in a country where scarcely any native poor beasts were remaining, of course could not be produced, for the dealers accustomed to come there to purchase poor stock—Does not so seasonable a supply of Devons, prove the usefulness of those dealers commonly called jobbers.

To me, accustomed heretofore to see Somerset, Gloucester, and Wiltshire bullocks, make up nearly equal parts on fair days, the appearance this day was a melancholy one: the case had not been so, had not suckling of calves been so much the rage; or were all the farms in the hands of persons who are regular farmers, not following butchering.

If Devonshire people delight in their native breed of oxen, why let them go on, and try still to improve them if they can; I would not presume to disturb them with argument thereon, but I cannot avoid recommending to the farming inhabitants of Somerset, Gloucester, and Wiltshire, for their own welfare, for the welfare of those of futurity, but above all for the good of

their country at this time, to endeavour to try to fill their own counties once more with original breeds: such would prove larger, better, and more profitable. However, it was a happy circumstance, as things stood in 1796, that Devons were found, or what would have become of us.

It was observed, "that the productions of dairies had not failed." Now be it understood, that for a certainty there are to be found numerous reputed best dairy farms, where formerly cheefe was occasionally found in great abundance, as several tons weight yearly, where of late, as ten years last past, not one cheefe has been produced for sale.

This remark being matter of fact, may serve to shew that the productions of dairies have failed to an alarming degree.

It is certain that less of that useful article has been lately made than formerly; and that the quantity which has been consumed was vended at enormous prices, affecting, more than any other, the lower classes of the people.

Again, respecting "scarcity doth not arise from the smallness of the crop." I would say, crops, particularly of wheat, have decreased, more or less, these thirty-six years.

Again, respecting "that meat as well as corn was scarce, which arose from a scarcity of food for all animals." I would say, cattle are scarce in reality, more so than corn, but the scarcity thereof has not arisen from a scarcity of food for all animals.

Because, were the food only scarce, cattle for that very reason would have been driven here or there, and have appeared more plenty at fairs and markets, if but in a lean state; but, alas! to experienced persons, it is too well known, that cattle and swine are in reality very scarce indeed.

Opinions amongst serious dealers at Smithfield are nearly unanimous. The cry for years past has been, and now is, viz. "More cattle and swine are needful, or the prices cannot abate sufficiently;" it would surely be better for a general idea to prevail, of the certainty of a return to moderation.

It was observed that "the winter was severe, and the spring late, consequently cattle were brought to market lean and more of them destroyed, which accounted for the price of meat."

The severity of the winter, 1794-5, was great; but it was not altogether on that account that bullocks came to market so few in number, or so lean.

Either calamity, as too few, or leanness, was owing to bullocks having been becoming scarce in England for many years preceding that frost, intirely owing to country butchers farming, suckling, &c. &c. and at length found scarce in reality, which affected the price of meat.

Furthermore, fattening bullocks, are known for the most part to be housed in winter, previous to Christmas, or to frosts setting in, before which season, such would have been seen somewhere or

other, eating grass upon the face of the earth, if in being. Therefore were cattle not scarce, fat oxen, steers, cows, or heifers, and sheep, would doubtless have made their way to Smithfield, at one time or other, notwithstanding frost or snow, either in spring or summer months, in sufficient numbers, full of fat; but not coming proves the disaster of scarceness.

The inhabitants of Middlesex have experienced great severities, owing to seasons of deep snow, that being the worst impediment known by drovers, who know but of few other accidents or impediments.

But cattle, on their way thither, have been so stopped, and a few short markets have been the result, even in times of plenty. This affected graziers and dealers alike, who afterwards were sure, and experienced overflowing markets by the delay, but such not being to be found for Smithfield, fat or lean, in numbers sufficient, month after month, or not at all, accounts for the high prices paid for beef, &c. &c. in Middlesex.

Cattle from February until August successively for at least fifteen years last past, have come to Smithfield, not only in less numbers, but thin of flesh and fat, in a fitter state for grazing than for killing.

Salesmen, butchers, tallow-chandlers, one and all, may safely ascertain the same, knowing that it has been the unhappy case, which surely no person can or will deny, in their moments of reason,

It has been often said, "That the war had—no doubt—contributed to the scarcity." Were I to say otherwise it would be a falsehood: inn-keepers, nor public-house keepers, grumbled not as of late, when formerly called upon to entertain soldiers billeted, and when good family pieces of beef, of capital oxen, &c. were bought at two-pence per pound; cheese, bacon, and other articles of provisions, equally cheap. Neither did soldiers complain of insufficiencies, or of being fed with bad food.

Complaints were seldom heard by either party, but of late both parties have complained;—the one on account of the scarcity of good and proper food, which has obliged the other to cook up messes for soldiers, of sorts that was formerly deemed more proper to be thrown to ravenous brute animals.

In this case, plenty of cattle, swine, and cheese, cannot be deemed other than desirable.

I conceive that no house-keeper would complain, or grudge paying taxes, necessarily collected to protect their little all, provided provisions, candles, and soap, also the article of bread, were one and all to be bought at moderate prices.

Yet house and shop-keepers grievously oppressed, who would scorn to complain unjustly, are not silent, and complaints are heard of course.

Supposing, at the London markets, all sorts of meat joints, parts could be bought, as average-

ly, at four-pence halfpenny, or five-pence per pound; cheefe, and other articles proportionably reasonable. And at country markets accordingly (situation considered; which used to admit of a difference of at least one penny per pound, road expences coming high) a saving would be found in most families in the kingdom, to an amount that would defray all taxes hitherto levied, leaving a surplus for other necessaries.

For instance, a family whom of late, during the time of scarcity and dearth, made twelve shillings per week answer for meat, cheefe, and butter, provided the same quantum could be procured for eight shillings per week, a saving of ten pounds eight shillings would be found in one year; such small family probably might not have two pounds taxes to pay. Great families, as of the nobility, gentry, merchants, innkeepers, boarding and other housekeepers, where out-goings in the most frugal way for meat and cheefe have exceeded twenty guineas per week: but at that quota, calculating one-fourth as took off at market only, a saving at the close of one year, would be found amounting to two hundred seventy and three pounds. In smaller families, where less is consumed, sums in proportion of course might be saved.

But how is this to be found, seeing the prices demanded and given for poor stock, are out of reason.—I conceive abominable to our heavenly Giver.

On account of my fellow-creatures, I grieve, having experienced good appearances, and other, as past springs, or autumns have shewn, also having

observed the bountifulness of Providence counteracted, and cut off: also endeavours of charitable persons defeated, which circumstances to me are extraordinary lamentable, well knowing what must be the result, where little money only can be boasted of. Moreover, knowing that one other matter of fact prevaleth: viz. hard-hearted persons make such a number of flock do. That number pay so much money, which was not the case in times of plenty, or before country butchers became so numerously farmers, sucklers, &c. &c. &c.

When such lean stock are vended as fattened, the fairest dealing graziers, will of course say to butchers, &c. &c. those beasts (whether oxen, steers, heifers, cows, or sheep) were bought in as lean, or fleshy at dear prices, I rent my lands so or so, therefore must sell them for so much money to make a return sufficient to pay rents, taxes, and for necessary expenditures which attend grazing; also for profits.

Such purchasers reduced to the extremity of scarceness, having no alternative, comply, which calamity ever falls most heavy upon such consumers, as artificers, dwellers in cities and towns, amongst whom poor persons in reality are to be found, that perhaps most merit contributions.

In parishes, where after harvest, about twenty-five years ago, persons had been accustomed to count fourteen or upwards to twenty wheat mows, varying as to size, in the small space of ten years succeeding, presented eight only; and as considerable, or small farms, or bargains became occupied and managed by farming butchers, (so called, al-

though chiefly sucklers) wheat mows, or stacks kept pace, and diminished in shew until at length in the year 1793, and 1794, many villages shewed less than four wheat mows, whereby dearth was fairly to be expected—it came on with a vengeance.

Very soon after wheat sowing 1794, it was published, that a broader piece of wheat was up than recollected. I own, that about the time of Lammas-day, 1795, the corn by the goodness of the season looked well upon the lands, when persons ventured to pronounce, that there never was a more plentiful year, or better crops of corn.

To persons inexperienced, no doubt, it seemed so; Lent corn proved abundant indeed, but experienced men, who knew the country well, knew also the crop of wheat would prove short—sadly deficient—(and why) it was not from lightness in the ear of wheat: on the contrary, the ears were generally heavy as usual, or at best known, and the grain good. The real fact is this: by far less wheat was sown year after year for thirty-six years successively, but more than of late usual—less in the year 1794.

Not to rest on my own remarks, on this score either, I insert a remark which was published previous to the harvest of 1795, viz.

“ I am apprehensive from the best enquiries, and observations in my power, that the crop of wheat collectively taken, will not amount to what is called by farmers a medium crop.” Again, “ it is well known, and has been ascertained, that with the exception of barley only, this country, which, in former times produced more grain than was necessary

for its inhabitants, has during the last twenty-five years been under the necessity of depending on the produce of foreign countries for a part of its supply.”

The foregoing remark was certainly the result of strict enquiry, and observation—was a remark, founded on the solid basis of truth; was, no doubt, sought amongst the truly experienced. I hope those who made such close remarks will hereby be convinced, that scarcity of cattle, swine, their productions, and the scarcity of wheat, originated in the practice of country butchers farming, suckling, and grazing whilst carrying on butchering. Moreover by the sad effect of example at other farms: provided my remarks satisfy those in power, the public, no doubt, will soon find good effect from it.

It was said, that the last crop failed one-third less of those crops immediately preceding: it were better to have said, that every year had produced deficiency in the crops of wheat for the thirty-six years last past.

Were it not prudent to remove the practice of country butchers farming, suckling, &c. which has occasioned such falling off of raising grain, especially of wheat, in order to prevent impending severities, to be feared more weighty than those laboured under in 1795, if not on account of wheat, are likely on account of meat.

The public can now judge of what effect imports of grain are towards reducing the prices of meat; although sought in wisdom, such are uncertain.

Shipping, which bring in wheat and rice from far, bring not into this land, oxen, steers, heifers, calves, sheep, or lambs, from such distant countries; neither are such given us like rain from heaven, infinitely good. God giveth rain, whereby grafs springeth up for cattle to eat, and thereby becomes fit for the uses of mankind; it is well known by weak mortals of maturity, that cows produce oxen for best beef, cows produce milk for cheefe, for cream, for butter, and for whey; whereby pigs are known best to get on at the farm-yard, or in the sty; but cows, and their produces are become scarce, and dear, by the endeavours of covetous unfeeling men.

It has been said, that thirty bushels of wheat, per acre, is about the average of the produce of the kingdom.

If one acre of land, taking the average of England, produces thirty bushels of wheat, twenty thousand acres would afford six hundred thousand bushels.

Such a supply to come in from like as unexpected acres, may, doubtless appear an object of consequence, and realized, would of course be deemed useful: furthermore, that such ought not to be withheld from the public.

If such be found hereafter in three counties, what may not be expected from reform and better management throughout the realm, seeing my statement may be half within the real number of acres laid down in that circle—thirteen hundred acres being so laid down in two parishes only. Ought acres

at this time to lie unploughed, in a manner useless, which if properly cultured, would, to an almost certainty, produce greater crops, being of the best arable lands? Much of the wheat raised in the last twenty years, has been on out-fields, and hill country poor thin lands: it is admitted that the grand dependence of Britons for provisions, and the chief of our commerce is home plenty of cattle, and home grown grain; for the sure means, and in order to obtain plenty of grain, breeding, weaning, and rearing of cattle must be adopted; in which case, cheefe, butter, swine and poultry would soon follow.

If breeding for rearing oxen become generally prevalent throughout the kingdom, the growth of wheat speedily would follow of course, because steers ere two years old, would be worked to earn their food, where of late no grain has grown. I conceive, that it must be allowed to a certainty, that bounties given for imports of wheat is not encouraging our own farmers to raise it. The high prices demanded for wheat in 1795, which certainly were reduced by imports in 1796, is sufficient proof of the utility of then importing wheat: provided few farmers only turn their hand to breeding and rearing cattle, farming suckling butchers still continuing to undermine and counteract such endeavours, it would probably produce ills, such as affording other farmers excuses for asking advances in prices for their corn. Moreover, keep the country, more or less, in appearance doubtful as to scarcity, and the community in a state of suspense.

If so, the most general system possible of breeding, for rearing of cattle (particularly bullocks) seems best to be preferred; more solid than to depend on what government may find needful to offer for uncertain imports. Moreover, if rearing bullocks and stock be a system that will with certainty create the raising of wheat, it would of course prevent future out-cry of scarcity of that grain: an object which may merit, and be allowed speedy consideration of parliament.

Raising greater number of plats, or pieces of wheat would be the certain means of rearing more sheep.

The acres of England remain, and are in number the same as of old; are without a doubt fully adequate to our wants. With me no doubt remaineth of their again producing (if properly cultured) sufficient of necessary marketings to be purchased sufficiently cheap to accommodate all parties, without lessening the value of landed property.

The aforesaid observations made by other persons respecting cattle and grain, however charitably fought, and for parliamentary information, indicate for certainty, that scarcity and dearth has been other than imaginary, and serve likewise (in great measure) to prove my remarks are founded in truth.

The CAUSE undiscovered by them, the NEEDFUL, provided herein it be explained, I hope the same will be deemed proper to be published. Moreover, that I have not said too much in the cause of Englishmen, who, at this juncture, with respect to meat, and other necessaries are unnecessarily op-

pressed. However, there remaineth for housekeepers, artificers, and the poor, consolations; for they may know such earthly sufferings are not the result of their own evil practices: wherefore, they may be rewarded with heavenly bliss. The covetous idolizer of fordid gain is not exempt from the hand of Him, to whom account must be given hereafter.

The account which I have given of a regular farmer's produces, &c. &c. also of the produces, and practices of a farming butcher, which I have stated from experience, without the least partiality, for public perusal: although evils attending the latter, might have been spun out in facts many pages, I conceive is sufficient to convince the reader, that the cause of the late scarcity of cattle and swine, the dearth of beef, veal, mutton, lamb, bacon, pork, cheese and butter; also tallow candles, soap, &c. or of bread, deemed the staff of life, was not occasioned by any cause originating in, or near to the metropolis, and to bring into one and the same way of thinking, all parties to abide by the following declarations as a rock of truth: viz. Butchers by farming, grazing, suckling of calves and lambs, butchering at shops and shambles, at one and the same time; selling living cattle, violating thereby well meant old established laws; rearing neither bullocks, sheep, swine, nor usual supplies of poultry, or by not making cheese, usual supplies of butter, &c. nor producing usual supplies of grain, although occupying numerous of the best dairy, and other large and small farms in divers counties of England.

By unreasonably destroying young stock, by occasioning the like practices at other farms, the result of error, and of example, have been the chief (if not sole) cause of creating that scarcity and dearth, which has produced miseries for length of time unknown of old; but surely justly complained of. Furthermore, of being the source of monopoly of farms, monopoly in retail way, of jobbing cattle, swine, cheese, and grain, together with their whole train of attendant bad consequences.

I publish not these my remarks to create, even doubts, or disputings, but to manifest to all understandings, by an honest plain story, how, and where the late, and still prevailing calamities originated, which have progressively gained ground upon the community, who, at length may judge for themselves, may rest safely on the idea of certain remedy being practicable, if sought properly, which pursuit cannot fail to appease the disquieted.

Provided farming butchers, other graziers, had not stepped out of the bounds of reason in dealing, I had never compiled it: but knowing there are butchers to be found, who, not lost to all sense of humanity and brotherly love, have feelings, (having not other dependence for livelihoods than butchering, yet content therewith) I could not avoid it, for such merit to partake of happiness, such sweets of life as may arise from profits fairly gained, in a truly laborious calling.

To amend the evil, farms already inclosed, need only to be properly cultured, *i. e.* by persons as regular farmers, sufficient of stock and grain would be the certain result of that simple remedy, and

speedily. On the contrary, whilst country butchers graze, suckle, farm, sell living cattle and meat at market, or elsewhere, the good expected to be derived from partial benefits cannot fail to be defeated. Seemingly good measures undertaken, although contrary to the wishes, or wisdom of the pursuers, must be found, as producing undesirable effects, instead of the chief relief, that is wanting by the community at large: *viz.* for meat, cheese, butter, bread, tallow candles and soap, to be bought at moderate prices.

Would persons in future time, be able to account certainly how things were at those farms, when otherwise occupied than by butchers? To begin to notice the management and produces of such farms as at present, were to begin with the present scarcity: whereas, my assertions, serve to shew my knowledge is founded in researches and experience, having seen such farms in their former state of culture; being in the habit of dealing for certain produces at numerous farms, before the present occupiers enjoyed them: and proves what was produced at aforesaid time incontestibly.

The unploughed acres of lands, which were heretofore considered arable, at extensive and small farms, in the hands of farming butchers; those also laid down to green sward, by removed regular farmers, obligated thereto; those also laid down by other farmers from example in the three west counties of Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire; either, as a walk for the stock of the one, or lying (as it were) idle in the hands of the other; on taking a proper view, or

actual survey thereof, would perhaps be found to amount to many thousands more than Twenty, best fields, which at aforesaid were frequently seen to produce abundant crops of wheat, or other grain, but of late produced little or none: wherefore, the calamity of scarcity of the grain wheat, may not be much wondered at, especially if we consider, that thousands of acres of out-lands, such as downs, hills, commons, &c. have been fenced in for culture, within the term of thirty-six years past. Light produces were only to be expected from poor acres, so broken up. It is well known amongst agriculturists, poor lands, far distant from the farm-yard, badly situated to be manured, in the space of fourteen years, are not likely to make more than three profitable returns by wheat, but too frequent less than to pay for seed, and expences. Moreover, to try often other grain, were still to pursue more fruitless measures. My hope and aim is for both sorts to be again brought into culture, at the discretion of regular farming persons only.

Provided a farming butcher prefers farming to butchering—why not conform, and put aside the apron and steel?

To the knife and steel, for too many years past, the plough has given way.

If butchering be preferred, why take farms for suckling, or culturing improperly, unseasonably to cut off the young stock? Why break in upon the fair dealer's bread, and disturb the tranquility of millions of subjects, that merit it not at such hands?

If butchers are in possession of leases—why not give up estates to regular farming persons, (who, no doubt, would gladly embrace the opportunity, and work such farms properly, to produce utmost numbers of stock, and the necessary quantity of grain) or to the owners?

It is clear, that the mind of our most gracious Sovereign was disturbed by the prevailing calamities of scarcity, and dearth, previous to October, 1795.

His Majesty's most gracious speech, as delivered to both Houses of Parliament, 1794, abundantly proves His parental affection for the welfare of His people.

To study the comforts of labouring husbandmen only, were not sufficient, but partial, tending to an almost certainty, to load more heavily the mechanical class, from the master to the most inferior hand. It is that class of the community, such as housekeepers, with small incomes, traders, working mechanics, that contribute towards taxes, who most want redress; dwellers in cities and towns, where are to be found scenes of neediness most affecting; veiled perhaps for many reasons by a pleasant countenance.

It has been urged, that Ministers should study the private interest of the people, which important business cannot be better done, than by Ministers adopting the true means for lowering the prices of human food, and the common necessaries of life, which I venture to declare from experience cannot be accomplished equally satisfactory by any earthly

means, other than that of preventing country butchers, whilst in the habit of selling dead carcases or retailing of meat, using, or practising the arts of farming, grazing, and suckling at one, and the same time. Furthermore, preventing any butcher whatsoever, from selling fattened, or lean living cattle. By this means, simple, as it may seem, the country may be restored to its former appearances, discovering here and there, plenty of living animals, which alone can occasion the markets likewise shewing plenty of provisions.

To dictate to persons how they shall sell will not produce happy, or the desired effect, all dealers, for their encouragement, ought to have fit places for sale, in fair trades way. Times and chance ought to be thine and mine in the idea of every mortal.

In divers parts of the kingdom the autumn of 1795, being productive of astonishing pastures of after-grass, which is known to lift grazing bullocks forward more expeditiously than other food; which said pastures lying here and there, the grass as it were wasting, it was published as follows:

“There are pastures full of grass, but cattle to eat it are scarcely found,” which remark appeared to be the result of traversing the fertile valleys of Oxfordshire.

Again, near Salisbury, it was spoken of as a great grievance: the multitude at that city, and the vicinity thereof, observing the pastures lying nearly in the same state, just complaints were heard; whereof it was published, “there were pastures as of old, yet a less number of cows kept,

a less number of fat cattle came to market, and less poultry were reared, although grass and provender were plenty.

I conceive that stronger proofs respecting scarcity, are unnecessary to be herein inserted; or that the dependance of dwellers in the Oxfordshire rout, also in that by Salisbury, towards, and on to Smithfield either way, were of old, and to the end of time must remain (as allotted by God himself) upon the more fertile counties of Gloucester, Somerset, the west and north-west parts of Wiltshire, somewhat assisted by Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, Wales, as northward; by Dorset, and Devonshire, westward, for the chief of their provisions, such as beef, mutton and cheese; also, for the articles of tallow candles and soap.

The loss of small flocks from small fertile farms, may have deceived the inexperienced; who by perceiving at hill country sheaf farms great flocks, could not reconcile to themselves the growing scarcity of sheep.

I conceive that the oldest persons in England, if blest with a good memory, cannot recollect the land in a better state of vegetation, or more promising for grass, than at Midsummer 1796, yet all must own, for it is a truth, that grass proved abundant on summer leases, and as emmoth. But who can call to mind lean stock, which should eat thereof, equally scarce, or so dear, as this year, at all fairs and markets without exception.

Dealers possessed of feelings becoming men, shudder at the idea of scarcity and its effects; but farming butchers care not what prices are demanded for fattened or lean stock; for this reason, dearnefs every way serves their turn.

Regular graziers, or farmers, for lean stock pay alike dear, but have not the same advantages.

Consumers of all descriptions are, in a manner, exempted from advantages arising, and to be expected from such a season; all persons are alike compelled to pay extravagant prices for meat, almost insupportable; but artificers and the poor, waste—as it were—their little stock of money, whilst buying their proper food and common necessaries.

I conceive that no one thing claims the consideration of parliament, (whilst in pursuit of good for the community at large) equal to the aforesaid practices, and infringement upon the laws, and the fair trader.

To make, or to amend laws I leave to my superiors. However, seeing that the aforesaid statute has not hitherto wrought reformation, it may be found necessary to make that statute sufficiently coercive as may to them seem best.

But provided parliament slight these my remarks—which God forbid—I must stick to my promise, and shew how the public may peaceably, though not so speedily, remedy themselves. In which case the inhabitants of Middlesex, will appear to be the longest sufferers, worst situated, and must wait for the remedy. They will dis-

cover that they must become dependant on their distant fellow subjects using caution in certain dealings, thereby to work out the evil, for the benefit of themselves, and of the whole of the community.

First great land owners may notice, that by a perseverance to compel their stewards, &c. who may have to let out their farms, and other landowners who let their farms themselves, would do wisely to seek persons unacquainted with butchering for renters, and tying down each tenant from using that calling; to keep in tillage arable acres, for corn, more or less, according to the size of the farm, which would work effectual remedy, but not a speedy one.

A strict attention and perseverance to adopt generally such a measure, would not reduce the value of lands, which, almost generally, by means of better road ways, for conveying various sorts of manure to amend them; by certain improvements in agriculture, by trade, by commerce, and by the common course of things in England, are of greater value than formerly.

Moderate prices only for farming productions with good agriculture and proper œconomy, will afford profits sufficient to pay highest rents in England, and adequate to the proper subsistence and happiness of renters.

Secondly, magistrates have it in their power to dispose of market stalls for retailing meat, so as to prevent a farming butcher intruding.

Magistrates, by so doing, would merit the thanks of all their fellow citizens. Magistrates would

probably hear the prayers of the poor and needy for their earthly and heavenly bliss; for this means would to a certainty work an effectual remedy speedily.

Thirdly, dwellers in all the distant counties of England, having an eye to the sufferings of those in Middlesex, must do the work for their their distant distressed fellow creatures in the following manner, viz. Rather than be deemed an abettor, or be thought as one aiding towards the infelicity of society, they may avoid purchasing meat of a farming butcher. The people of Middlesex cannot by such means remedy the evil; it were best and must be done where it first formed. Be it washed away: be the stream stopped or turned at the fountain head.

What personage, nobleman, gentleman, or gentlewoman, who keep house, but would lend an hand in an easy work?

Were it not preferable to root out an evil of so great an enormity, rather than to live and remain in suspense; now and then charitably giving donations, and yet after so doing find the needful undone. Not that I would presume to restrain the hand from giving at pleasure—God forbid—but to assist herein would be to set on foot universal benevolence, and comfort: as feeding the hungry, however wretchedly, obscurely, or remotely situated.

Such measures persevered in by the public would work an effectual remedy. It is but natural to conceive that all persons who keep

house, being more or less interested, will carefully attend to so salutary a means for that purpose.

Dwellers in the counties of Gloucester, Somerset, and Wilts, by first setting an example, would merit, and doubtless receive the thanks of thousands of artificers and poor persons, not only of Middlesex, whose distresses and sufferings, occasioned by the scarcity and dearth of human food and common necessaries, are surely worthy of a thought.

Further measures, which may help to bring about the desired end, I conceive I ought to state.

The publishing of this book having been unavoidably delayed, I am under the necessity of altering the time, but not the mode for certain restrictions, which if attended to may be found of use, and will not fail to produce supplies of food at the metropolis.

Whilst the remedy is working, I would recommend, viz. that immediately, and until the thirty-first day of August, 1797, every fifth female calf be prohibited to be killed for veal; and from August 1797, until February 1798, every third calf, male or female, be prohibited to be killed for veal: the same to hold good not less than six years.

That no yearling suckling, commonly called bobs, be permitted to be killed; nor any swine, be permitted to be killed during the dog days, or months of June, July, and August, for ever—ten miles around

London only excepted.—The killing of pigs was formerly prohibited during the hot months, within the last half century; which good old custom or law, put again in force, would prevent great waste, and probably infectious sickness.

By these means, the small space of six years would abundantly, and well stock England with cattle, swine, and cheese.

RESPECTING JOBBING OF CHEESE.

Jobbing may have evil tendencies; but far distant cheese-makers at remote farms, ill situated for carriage, found heretofore and of late, jobbers useful to take off that article. Jobbers have been of great use to the inhabitants of London, and other places, by producing them cheese, which otherwise would not have appeared so soon at market.

The inhabitants of Middlesex, even in times of plenty, would often be greatly distressed for many articles, were jobbing entirely put a stop to. But particularly fat beasts, as oxen, &c. sheep, and cheese, much caution at this juncture is necessary on that score.

Try to restore plenty of cattle.

Such, if jobbing be not prevented except in certain cases, would speedily be seen at markets, a sight which constraint would in a great measure frustrate.

Partial measures, or any thing other than fair open plenty, cannot produce full markets especially in Middlesex.

Without full markets the prices of food will not lower, not even to reasonableness; wherefore it were best that rearing stock should become more general than at present, especially in the fertile west counties before mentioned, or dearth cannot fail to continue: May it not too soon reduce Britons to the descriptions, only of rich and poor?

Surely then to eradicate the disasters of scarcity and dearth, for plenty and moderate cheapness, is most desirable; seeing house and shopkeepers, in little way; the mechanical working inhabitants of Middlesex, and of other manufacturing towns in England, whom I have observed are most in want of redress and relief, will not be likely to receive more than a partial remedy, by any thing other than plenty of cattle, swine, and cheese. But plenty of meat and cheese, or moderate prices at markets, will not be found in England whilst country butchers, or other town butchers—dwellers in the metropolis only excepted—are suffered to pursue the before mentioned practices and infringement.

Home plenty is the thing we want—home plenty has been reduced by such butchers, and by example, by other farming persons, unseasonably cutting off calves for veal, thereby (as it were) blasting the yearly returns, and gifts of Providence—lamb in like manner.

Providence never idle, having an eye to the sufferings of the people of this land, in all likelihood ordained now as the properest time to publish those remarks.

The sighs and cries of poor sufferers (who brought not so weighty a burthen on themselves) may have reached the ear of the Almighty, who, of his mercy may occasion an immediate parliamentary interference, to remove or prevent such practices, which will remedy the just complaints of his people.

Without the interference of Parliament, or the affectionate aid of the public, as herein laid down needful (if experience is to be depended on) such practices cannot fail to cut off every succeeding year, God's bountiful mercies, produces of stock (that would live, might they, for good purposes) until England's ruin (which God forbid) be unhappily completed.

Provided ocular demonstration be preferred, ye who are the inhabitants of Bristol, ye who are inhabitants at Bath, ye who visit occasionally Bristol and Bath, with impartiality, may notice how the farms in a small circle, which I shall take, viz. twenty miles around either city, were, or are cultured at this juncture. Ye, whose hairs discover years, may recollect—ye now in youth may inquire, what descriptions of managements were, or are carried on, by persons occupying numerous of best dairy, and other farms therein, during the period of thirty-six years last past; it will be found to a certainty, that very numerous extensive, and small farms have been, and now are cultured by butchers chiefly

in manner as I herein have described, of whom perhaps many are dead, whilst perhaps a son, or relation may now manage the same farm, or farms, as a regular bred farmer, or grazier, which is strictly fair; but such are well skilled in the chief of the practices of their predecessors, and well know how to create matter for dearness. Surely it were but as fair to point out matter for producing fairly, a turn of the scale, such a plenty as may permit of moderation in prices.

It will be rare if you find a parish, village, or hamlet in that circle, that has not, or that doth not at this juncture produce occupiers of farms, such as butchers farming, suckling, &c. &c.

From large, and from smaller farms, in a trifling matter, more extensive circle as first mentioned, I have observed, that heretofore the markets in the routes to, also of Smithfield were astonishingly supplied with bullocks, sheep, and cheese; and that the near home, or neighbouring markets were plentifully supplied with cattle and beef, and mutton of superior qualities; also with almost every necessary marketing, even to simple herbs, by persons as twice, or thrice a week constantly.

But of late, as ten years past, and at this juncture, you get from farms so occupied, house lamb, veal, grass lamb, a little mutton, and less beef, whilst for either article separately, or jointly, you are worked up to pay prices, not less than extortionate; add to this, scarcely one pound of cheese, or butter, a single drop of milk, or cream throughout the year.

I say extortionate, because much of the lands are let at old rents, from whence such provisions were so few years ago, produced at cheap rates, yet afforded profits, abundant riches, and seeming content on all sides.

That many of those particularly productive farms, and much lands, are let at old rents, see General View of Agriculture in the county of Somerset, page 11. "The lands in this vale are very fruitful, &c." Again, "From the best of motives have been long in the habit of letting their estates at the old rents."

I have nothing to do with how lands are, or ought to be let. The best of motives has no doubt produced content, a train of sweets in thought unknown to the avaricious.

Pursuits agricultural, especially if tending to advance rents of farms, are inferior motives of course.

Farmers would do well for their country, for themselves, for their issue, by keeping up such a plenty of stock for human food, &c. as would permit of moderation in prices at market. It would be the most certain means for preventing land owners of small incomes laying on advances of rent.

Advances on rents, give fairly room for pleadings for dearness.

When plenty abounded, small farms in that vale were managed neatly; but as scarcity, and dearness crept in, monopoly of farms, such or such herds and flocks, such or such work *shall* do, has unhappily been the word. Slovenly appearances have

followed of course. Those land owners kept in view their distant fellow creatures, despising gold, which to gain might be felt even at the metropolis. It is a great happiness that there are land owners who have not raised rents; for no mortal can tell what disasters would have arisen thereby, or the end thereof.

That cattle, swine, their productions, wheats were plenty, and as cheap as heretofore, as I have stated, no person will venture to gainsay, and that the same have become too scarce, and sold exorbitantly dear, is pretty generally admitted.

An Agricultural Report for May, 1796, stated, viz.

"Smithfield continues to receive very short supplies; the three last Monday's markets have not exceeded eight hundred head of beasts each, when the average demand is two thousand. Prime beef is very scarce, and worth five shillings per stone; mutton is likewise dear, and lamb very backward, though the fall has fortunately been large, veal is the most reasonable meat at market, store cattle and sheep of all kinds are hardly to be got for money."

This news, particularly for the inhabitants of Middlesex, and for those of all great towns was dreadful.

The writings of great men, old approved authors, are with reason to be first looked up to for information, but a new author may (if in inferior life) produce a valuable work.

RESPECTING THE ACRES.

See Address to the Board of Agriculture, May 24, 1796.

“ That a single additional acre cultured at home is more truly valuable than the most extensive possessions acquired abroad, at an enormous expence of treasure, and of blood, and retained with difficulty, and danger.”

Think then, my countrymen, think of the numerous acres, I tell you are to be found as almost useless in a small circle. Such acres are to be found in most counties.

I have mentioned, that thousands of more acres within the thirty years last past, have been cultured, than heretofore, when we exported, but they were chiefly acres of poor sorts of lands, that have yielded in many instances, little more than the seeds sown: whereas these acres, I declare (as it were) shut up from producing supplies of grain for the use of society, are of the best arable nature in culture, perhaps centuries, to know those to be again in full culture, would be joyful news; the result of it would be home plenty, said so preferable to foreign ever doubtful, and expensive to be gained.

Seeing monopoly of farms, jobbing, disuse of ox ploughs, the breed and use of horses in England, a neglect of cheese making, may each have contributed towards working up scarcity of cattle, and swine; to the dearness of provisions, tallow candles and soap, so complained of. My hope is, that satisfactory proofs, touching the circumstance, or grand cause which has given scope for such practices, and other foul play, will herein be found, with good and expedient means for effectual remedy: to the same source, the stoppage of the distilleries, the consequent loss to the revenue, may reasonably be attributed.

The importance of the distilleries, and income to the revenue arising therefrom, must have been very great, but to loose that income by any circumstance that might occur of power sufficient to effect so great a loss, appears to merit serious discussion. About twenty-five thousand hogs, fattened and turned out from all the distilleries in the realm, weekly, being the estimated number by good judges, may afford some insight as to the quantity of wheat which must have been used for spirits, drawn previous to the grains and liquid being given to the swine.

Twenty-five thousand hogs weekly, supposing them killed in the course of forty weeks annually, multiplying the number, make one million. Here the work of Providence was very great.

Provided according with the aforesaid estimation, the distilleries had been kept open, and such a number of lean hogs been sought, human understanding is not equal to ascertain what would have been the prices demanded for poor pigs.

Distillers could not afford to waste their pig food, farmers could not afford to waste their pig food; in which case either would have bought up, (seeing the few which were found lean, were grazed, and sold out at nearly twelve shillings per score, or the average) hurry, hurry (without discretion) at any price; the weight falling upon the consumer of course.

Scarcity of wheat was the cause of the stoppage of the distilleries.

Provided the proofs which I have stated, of the cause of the falling off, or neglect of raising wheat

be satisfactory, the cause of such a period being put to distilling for a time, the cause of that loss to the revenue, whatever may be the amount, it originated in that falling off, or neglect of raising the grain, the stoppage of the distilleries was not the result of one failing crop.

The war, without a doubt, has greatly contributed towards that extraordinary dearth, of late so severely felt, because it came on at a time when the live stock of the country was greatly reduced; it has therefore occasioned a more rapid advance of prices than would otherwise have been the case, but be it remembered for a long time previous to the present, or the American war, cattle, swine, cheese, all sorts of provision and common necessaries were rapidly becoming scarce and dear, one and all such to bargain for contributing toward producing weighty disagreeables for a minister to encounter more than ever before experienced.

May this my mite prove useful to the present minister, and to his successors. I hope that I have made clear that the cause of such grievances has been practised as hidden from ministerial view, wherefore seeing how numerous, weighty and distressing such evils; and the hangers on appear to be; if such are not removed, the needful remedy may be sought in vain.

The different acts, or statutes made by our forefathers to keep country butchers on proper ground, satisfieth me that in their day, injurious practices were pursued by butchers; wherefore in their great wisdom, foreseeing such practices were pregnant with

all the disasters, which of late have befallen us such were enacted, but have been grossly infringed on; now to me the circumstance most lamentable, was, that the King of England, our most affectionate and gracious sovereign, was offended, and most grossly. If about scarcity or dearth of provisions, I hope that I have proved that one nor the other could not, nor can be imputed in any degree whatsoever there.

Were his Majesty's subjects in the habit of getting plenty of food moderately cheap, no grumbling would be heard.

I firmly believe that every Englishman wishes to know the true cause of such disasters. I believe that one and all with their lives would freely shew their love for the best of monarchs, by protecting his Majesty from harm or offence; his royal family likewise, God bless them all. I must think well of the care and efforts of a minister, who amidst difficulties incredibly numerous, saved a million yearly, proving the flourishing state of trade in certain ways, but the vast fallings off and the additional out-goings of the revenue as herein stated, prevented perhaps more than double savings. Consider my countrymen what I have said, you have experienced scarcity and dearth 'tis true, but you may find speedily that I have told you truth respecting a restoration of plenty.

Consider, Man's real wants are but few, our greatest earthly wants are an augmentation of provisions. Markets sufficiently thronged with living stock, and articles of provisions and common necessaries to lower prices.

Almost half a century I declare a stream has roughly run the wrong way.

Patience must be regarded whilst cattle grow, but cattle do not grow or fatten in palace courts, nor the squares or streets of London. Observe, that all public outrage doeth more harm than good, ruination attendeth depredation, our own reason tells us if dealing persons buy dear they must sell dear, or sink into poverty.

Leave despair, stedfastly believe that provided one and all by unaffected loyalty, try to merit the name of Briton, and calmly wait for the remedy wanting, those in power will comply with your wishes, by seeking that remedy agreeable to his Majesty's affectionate desire. I hope the laws may not longer remain in a state insufficiently restrictive, those in power will surely crush every means that may tend to occasion scarcity and dearness hereafter.

The idea of limiting food in a land like this is very alarming, but it was spoken of in a year, such another to experience God forbid. God intended better food for the poorest Englishman than potatoes and salt, or therewith a light red herring only, God ordered wheat for bread, and that oxen, and sheep should be eaten; God giveth them in their due season for to grow, but man hath prevented the sowing of one and unseasonably destroyed the other; bread and meat were plenty, potatoes were not; as wheat fell off, potatoes were substituted, which with good meat pleased, but by want of wheat, and meat, health, vigour, means for savings, small portions of money, town or country has fallen off, likewise leaving us little other than wretchedness.

Supposing all butchers prevented farming more acres than sufficient to cool fattened far driven cattle, and it were required, viz. Will not such a measure create greater scarcity for a while? How will supplies of food be obtained for market uses, seeing compulsory measures are not recommended? moreover, that all farms are not occupied by butchers, and it be admitted that cattle are scarce in reality in those west counties.

To these I would reply. All butchers would stand upon more equal ground, the butcher with but small or light purse would again speedily find places to exercise his skill and abilities in fair chance dealing, and himself not deprived of using properly a small capital.

By cattle and swine having become scarce in the west of England, they are likewise become so nearly general, because, although all farms are not occupied by butchers, example has occasioned farmers to practise business nearly like them with the exception of not butchering, thus, contagion-like the evil has spread into divers counties; I believe its effects has been felt at the Land's End, and across the Tweed. On butchers being prevented farming whilst using the art of a butcher, large and small dairy farms will speedily be seen more properly cultured than of late, and found to supply proper and sufficient marketings, first in those western counties so much depended on for stock of old, then expanding, nature will shew her power, by working plenty in a manner as unawares. As business changed on butchers entering on farms throughout divers parishes to the wrong mode, the system of farming

(from the present) will shew, altered to the right, pointing towards plenty and moderation.

All farmers would, no doubt, conform to sell, at times, prices permitting of proper profits for butchers, rather than turn fattened staged calves or house lambs out to wean, rear, &c.

Provided a few farmers were found to hold out for a few weeks, being unwilling to conform to allow moderate profits and deal, one month is about the longest time that farmers would hold, or stand out for prices. If farmers stand out a longer time, nay at length might turn out calves or lambs, by the bye, it would be known, as not likely to turn to good account to the owners; because, let it be understood, such cattle might be expected in time to make their appearance at market, as full grown, such would not be lost to the community; their appearance on the earth would, by nature, soon work plenty and reduce prices, as time advances.

Perhaps every lug of land, especially where the industrious reside, would be found worked, because every small article would be found necessary to be raised, and of course brought to markets to make up rents.

Provided more markets are in future deemed necessary, those cried off, may be cried on again.

Knowing all this, farmers and graziers, would again seek and invite dealers as formerly: the scale would be turned.

Better inclined butchers, than those who purchase the chief if not all the weighable cattle

they retail by weight; better skilled butchers many of whom at this time beg to purchase, beg to sell, would (no doubt) meet with public encouragement.

The public—every customer—by assisting to extirpate such growing evils, would in return reap the benefit speedily.

Know then reader, male or female, not to assist to effect so great a work, meant to preserve laws amongst men, high or low personages, rich or poor, by disregarding measures which are easy to accomplish the blessing of plenty, which will to a certainty produce moderation, will appear as having complained of scarcity and dearth unjustly.

All persons have been, and all are, more or less, affected by the evils complained of; all are interested in the event, which may produce plenty, for it cannot fail to relieve the poor. May endeavours for that purpose meet with heavenly assistance, and a happy reward.

Covetous inexperienced persons have said, "There is no scarcity, but enough of every necessary if folks can find money to pay for them."

But what sort of enough doth it consist of? Why little enough. Persons persuaded that scarcity doth not prevail, will not believe agricultural reports, letters, papers, &c. &c. nor my remarks about their fellow creatures sufferings, herein perhaps described too faintly.

It is worth consideration, whether agricultural reports on certain occasions made public, are pro-

per. Fifteen years ago its buz passed by unnoticed by the inexperienced in country business, but the mischief done thereby since the buz of scarcity and dearness cannot be calculated, or even conceived.

The same with respect to market chronicles.

Whether, if such reports or chronicles answer the purposes of avaricious men, they do not tend more frequently to injure the community at large. Moreover, they have been a great obstacle in the way of the minister, in his pursuits for the general welfare which followeth, real national interest.

Whether, instead of using means for ascertaining the general price of stock, it were not better to attend to the means of promoting the breeding and rearing of stock.

Beef or mutton, with potatoes, is good food; without meat, milk, or butter-milk, potatoes are bad food, especially in the decline of life.

Of beef, mutton, pork, cheese and butter, I contend for that sort of enough, that artificers and the poor in town and country, may have choice. Moderate cheapness affording comforts on the one hand, and profits adequate to happiness on the other.

I contend not for prices which might appear as much too low as of late, and at this juncture found too high.

Money minded persons may wish for a continuance of dearness even to enormity.

If such a one or more doth exist, such should read the word of the Lord, by his prophet.

See Isaiah, c. xxxii, v. 8. "The liberal deviseth liberal things: and by liberal things shall he stand."

By the holy Psalmist we are told, see Psalm c, v. 3, "We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."

The poor are part of his flock of course, which the covetous and the liberal may have heard, and ought to know. Moreover, that the fruits of the earth were designed for the uses, and the comforts of all mankind, by the Almighty Creator of whom those holy writers spake, which cannot be disputed but for the sake of covetous wicked argument.

In the Ecclesiastes we read, see c. v, v. 9, "The profit of the earth is for all, the king himself is served by the field."

Seeing laws were made centuries past, when provisions were, no doubt, found scarce and too dear; which said laws, in their present state, appear as not being sufficiently restrictive by reason of infringement thereon practised, although to the known great detriment of fair trading, and the great injury of the community. Circumstances having again reduced man's food as to occasion the calamities of the last fifteen years; but more especially those of 1795 and 1796. In order to prevent severer calamities befalling Britons, or as much as possible to ward off those impending, owing to the excessive dear prices which lean stock bear, I conceive nothing can appear more prudent, or would give greater satisfaction to the people, than a parliamentary dis-

cussion to prove these my remarks, as touching the cause of such dearths, leaving to amend the laws, for remedy effectual, to their wisdom and power.

I hope Parliament may rely on my veracity and experience, hereby meant for their use as an humble guide. I would pilot Britons from scarcity and dearths, a sea of troubles, to the harbour of peace, plenty, and happiness.

Surely it must give great trouble to all well-disposed experienced or other men to know, that fat oxen, since January 1796, have advanced in prices so much as to cost retail cutting butchers upwards of three guineas per hundred weight, at great distances from Smithfield; and there much higher prices. Pigs to twelve shillings per score, head and feet included. Cheese to three pounds per ton weight. But above all advances on poor oxen, nearly half, as from ten to fifteen in one year only; will it not move their pity for their fellow creatures, who look up to parliament for the most speedy prevention of greater sufferings, which by the alarming rise on poor bullocks as stated in Somersetshire, also in Yorkshire, where lean oxen such as heretofore were bought at eighteen pounds per yoke, now yield forty pounds, owing to the more than usual premature slaughtering of calves. Last season, the scarcity and prices paid for lean bullocks, also for calves for suckling, presageth a greater slaughter of young stock next season, for food for the day, and dearths of meat beyond example.

Such being the case, the ensuing calving season demands the utmost attention to prevent a still greater, or even so great a number of calves from being destroyed as there were last year, in 1797.

Sheep being much dearer than they were last year, owing to a real scarcity, it will be found equally necessary to attend to the ensuing lambing season, viz. to prevent in the course of the spring and summer months, in 1797, more lambs as well as calves being devoured.

Prior to the lamentable event of veal being sold by weight, neither farmers, nor graziers were capable, as they are now, of ascertaining the amount of butchers profits, which I conceive they should have nothing to do with.— But unhappily since that event took place, farmers, and graziers have made the mode of selling fattened cattle by weight their principal study, endeavouring to fet the butchers profits at fixed rates, and to preclude butchers—as it were—from obtaining such bargains as they formerly did.

Profits ought to be the reward of fair dealing, skill and industry,

Butchers have nothing to do with the profits of sellers of fattened cattle.

The practice of buying cattle by weight, has proved a snare to town and country butchers, especially to those who farm not; for such it is worthy of profound consideration; for it is prejudicial not only as touching skill, and profits, but hurtful to

the community. It may be got the better of, by buying at fairs, or markets only, avoiding by wagers, or else to disclose the weight of cattle.

Men, rich, or poor, ought not to assent to measures likely to be hurtful to the existing community, or to futurity. Let it suffice, to persevere in dealing as much as possible by hand at fairs, and markets, an uniform attention to that maxim, would afford secret pleasures, profits weighty, and defeat schemes, which may be attempted for promoting dearth.

Bread being generally deemed the staff of life, I must own, that jobbers of wheat, are the jobbers most to be dreaded, because grain can be hidden.

A few observations I had made previous to the late happy fallings in the price of wheat, I cannot omit inserting; the intent of this book, being (if possible) to prevent in future, disasters such as lately experienced.

By the goodness of Providence, by the wise measures of parliament (that of obtaining imports of wheat in particular) at an alarming time, so much of that grain is in store, that even supposing the practices which were the original cause of the scarcity be suffered to continue its counteracting part, there may be no want of wheat for a few years.

My hope is, that hereby Parliament may be enabled to put things on such a footing, that wheat may never more be found scarce in England.

Were it possible to point out real advantages to the community at large, arising from corn dealers, commonly called meal-men, such should have passed unnoticed in this book; but seeing advantages

too great were unfeelingly taken on the late alarming out-cry about scarcity of wheat, of the community, I shall say a few words thereon.

Thirty-six years ago, farmers, who carried to markets grain, in manner as I have before described, especially wheat from small farms, disposed of it either to a miller baker, or baker. It was rare if a person acted between the farmer and miller baker, or the farmer and baker, because plenty of corn then abounding, persons although skilled in corn ventured not to monopolize or traffick therein, consequently were done without; but near, and at London, corn dealers, or meal-men at aforesaid, were found occasionally useful, as after failing crops, when west country bakers, at times were necessitated to apply to corn dealers at Newbury, Reading, or other distant markets, where they got supplies; but other years, meal-men rarely turned a guinea westward for wheat, or flower, other than for exportation.

Since that time, observing numerous farms to produce little, or no wheat, corn dealers judged with certainty the result; such took up to deal in corn accumulating astonishing profits by jobbing, transferring the article to perhaps five, or more hands before it came to mill.

In May 1795, wheat and flour were to be found, but not exactly where such ought.

Farmers, occupiers of small farms shortly after the harvest of 1794, disposed of their little, chiefly to meal-men.

Opulent farmers in corn countries, occupiers of

of large arable, or sheaf farms, had good stores by them when the out-cry took place of wheat being in reality scarce.

Of such farmers few by hearkening at markets what prices meal-men, millers, or bakers would give, took perhaps the first rise, thinking it a price would not be advanced on.

Others stood out, communicated bidden prices to distant markets; but the grand mischief was along with meal-men, who put on prices because they would.

In January, 1795, wheat was bought for eight shillings and six-pence per bushel. In February following, wheat was bought for eight shillings and three-pence per bushel at most great markets, which shews there was for chance sale at that time at markets in bulk, or by sample, sufficient to cause a falling in price.

Shortly after February, the alarm spread, wary dealers took advantage, brotherly love became an out-of-the-way thought.

Before Lammas day arrived, wheat sold at three guineas per sack. At divers places, at nearly one guinea per bushel.

But it is to be remembered, although farmers almost generally shared in such extraordinary gain, whereby they may have ensared themselves, or their progeny) the cause thereof originated in the error of country butchers farming.

Sad events were the result of reports; for as this market day, persons who sought wheat, were told, viz.

“Next week it will be dearer by ten shillings per sack, but no person had good reason to assign for it other than—Mr. Such-an-one says it will be so.”

Such predictions were verified by the error in judgment, of giving way, however such has been a lesson: it serves to shew reports may produce evils even of enormity.

Provided that sort of jobbing, or trafficking were put a stop to at great distances from the metropolis, the community would greatly benefit by such a measure. On the contrary, whilst suffered to be practised, the loaf of bread cannot fail to cost more money than absolutely necessary.

No mortal can guess the quantities of old wheat and flour that are still to be heard of.

Hidden stock has a right to be turned into money at fair market prices. To attempt at compelling persons to sell at fixed prices, or by sample, or bulk, were better avoided.

Meal-men should have fair play for sale.

I have stated, wheat had been falling short yearly; there was room for nice judges, especially the avaricious, to make out-cry—so fares John Bull.

In 1795, it was published, that a broader piece of wheat was up than for many preceding years.

Doth not publication manifest, that a falling off had been visible.

The plat was found less, and but for the imports received, Britons still were left in the dismal vale of scarcity. Scarcity and dearth's pray God banish, and in the place thereof give us home grown plenty.

It has been urged, that lately, as in 1792, plenty abounded in the country, and every circumstance of happiness and prosperity was evident.

Alas! neither one nor the other did generally so lately prevail; previous thereto were heard grievous complaints in divers quarters, or parts of England, of the enormous prices paid for meat and cheefe.

In 1795, the pen of an Agriculturist set forth that many hundreds of acres of wheat, with common manure at the late harvest (i. e. that 1795) produced only their seed, or less. This remark leads me to say a few words respecting inclosing waste lands, moors, commons, &c. which probably, provided plenty had continued to abound as of old, would not have become the word of the day.

If acres last year, which was a year of sunshine and rain, uncommonly fine, with common manure produced not more than the seed sown, what crops can be expected from acres more poor in nature, ill situated to be any how manured. To plough up wastes and such lands is stepping widely out of the good old way; better were such lands crowded as at aforesaid with young beasts, steers, heifers, and sheep; also with geese and horses; better were their owners provided with proper places hard by, and taught how best to secure winter provender, in case of such stock being unfold at late year.

Were the waste lands, and moor lands, in England well stocked with rearing bullocks, &c. &c. also the arable acres, which I have pronounced

like idle found in proper cultivation for grain, the prospect for Britons, notwithstanding war, would be wealth and happiness: on the contrary, dearnefs for food—miseries, not intended by the Creator, are more than likely to be the lot of all persons of small income, or artificers, and the poor.

To break up waste and moor lands, I conceive will serve for stamping a sort of standard price on lean cattle, and such like stock. The chief and best use of wastes and moor lands in my time has been found for rearing stock cheap; rearers of young beasts, or such as ought to rear them, if waste lands are broke up, will have room to say, there remaineth not proper places for to turn out growing stock to pick a livelihood cheap as at aforesaid time.

To rear poor stock will not pay; they must be kept on better lands, as dairy men and breeders we cannot afford to rear, unless such stock yield us high prices: in which case lean stock, if bought dear, continually will produce a sort of standard high price for meat likewise.

The same may be expected on other articles, seeing farmers study how to talk.

Home work perhaps neglected, delay, ill situation, expences attending distant husbandry, may afford scope for argument about doubtful crops, create suspense, and in the end dearnefs; better to try to restore plenty previously.

Country people, as moor and waste cottagers, long in the habit of rearing divers sorts of useful stock, cannot fail to be reduced to greater straits

than heretofore by such a measure: wherefore land owners, and those in power ought to consider such a business well, before it be too late, whether it will not lessen the value of landed property already inclosed; and be the means of creating greater poverty, discontent, murmurings, and disobedience in the country; moreover, compleat the ruin and wretchedness of town artificers, town and country poor. But monied men, it has been urged, cannot fail to make great fortunes by chances, arising from inclosing waste and moor lands; also may be said, viz. there remaineth hope, the God of the poor can frustrate. If it be good policy to cause part of his Majesty's subjects to become dwellers on lands, that bane even geese, more need not be said.

Observe, perseverance to restore plenty of cattle, and stock, which I have shewn is practicable, even without such a measure is best; in which case, monied men may purchase new inclosures, wastes, or moor lands, and place poor souls to work thereon; but the same would turn to very poor account. Remove the cause of scarcity of live stock, and evils that attend such speculation would vanish.

The taking of tithes in kind has been urged as wrong; that "a plan to accommodate all parties interested, might be found; for, if in a single parish some thousand bushels less produce be found by means of tithes being taken in kind, what would be the produce thereof through the land?" Too many of the clergy, (to whom the care of our souls are committed) have been, and still are to be found, who patiently have laboured on incomes

too unequal, insufficient to answer for the absolute necessities of the day: for such are covetously enhanced to prices even out of *their* reach.

To be the means of plenty of wheat abounding is not all that is wanting, or necessary to be done respecting man's food; proper provisions cannot be restored by means only of new plans for the taking of tithes, plenty, fair open plenty of cattle, swine, and cheese, at fairs and markets are the blessings generally wanted, without which all persons interested cannot be accommodated with plenty of provisions, and common necessities moderately. Liberal farmers have declared they could afford to sell wheat for seven shillings per bushel: whereas more than double that sum has been paid.

Farmers more liberal have declared six shillings per bushel for wheat, sufficient to pay for the dearest rented lands in England. Imports have nearly proved the same true, yet in March 1797, the assized sixpenny loaf, wheaten, at Bath was 2 lb. 13 oz. 12 dr. only.

His Majesty's home territories, if properly cultured, would produce plenty thereof for home uses, and to permit of exportation as at aforesaid they did, which would defeat all ills suspected, as possible to arise from selling by sample.

In my progress of dealing for bullocks, and retailing their productions, much argument transpired respecting oil cakes, on which I shall say some words.

Oil cake for fattening bullocks, may afford great profits; at the same time it may be understood, such bullocks generally produce great injury to the consumers of the meat therewith fattened.

Customers (who seldom bought such of me) exclaimed mightily against that provender, justly observing, that although oil cake caused bullocks to appear bulky, to handle big in their points, to fetch great prices for the feeders, also when killed to appear as well fattened, and to have afforded prodigious and uncommon profits to the butchers, advantages ended there. Persons who had been enticed to buy, owing to such false appearance, at, perhaps, extra prices, were loathed at table by bad taste, by bad look, the fat drawn out at the fire, a piece which raw, looked beautiful, came up to table a black, hard, offensive, bad piece of food, and reduced, not weighing what it ought after cooking, which otherwise it would, had the animal been fattened with the wholesome fodder of grass and hay.

I hope the minds of persons in earthly power will immediately be so disposed as to discuss these my remarks, and I hope the Almighty will prevent harm attending good intentions. War at God's appointed time will cease, but let it be remembered, whether it be war or whether it be peace, plenty of cattle for the needful uses as to support war, &c. &c. are not only the most desirable, but the most necessary.

Peace, wished for peace, will not bring with it animals for immediate food and common necessities which we want, plenty of the needful sort of animals which heretofore in England, Wales and Scotland were found, by iniquitous works of men are reduced to too severe scarcity.

Cattle must be waited for to produce meat, cheese and butter, also tallow for tallow candles, and soap.

To restore plenty most speedily, I acknowledge must be the work of parliament.

Seeing dearth of cattle, swine, their productions, has been the work of nearly the last half century, the liberal will allow the turn of the scale has been sufficient length of time against the needy and the poor.

Sometimes opinions alter, puzzled with divers appearances of things, so the appearances at markets (occasionally) also of the fields from the year 1760 to 1780 frequently urged me to think things would turn for the better, the evils seemingly having not gained the point for such extraordinary dearth; but since 1780 every year has produced considerable rise, the last exceeding all and the bounds of reason: at length thirty-six years experience has convinced me although there are many hanging-on branches, besides monopolizing farms, jobbing, forestalling, regrating, &c. &c. all have been the produce, the pernicious fruit of one, and the same evil grain, viz. country butchers carrying on butchering, farming and suckling businesses, which (for general welfare) ought not to be blended. Plenty and cheapness, which heretofore were of the pleasures of the day has thereby changed to scarcity and dearth.

Were the word of the day charity, the nobility, gentry, even traders have given charitable donations perhaps unexampled.

Were the word of the day to observe loyalty, it has been said, ministers should study the private interest of the people. I cannot believe but that his Majesty's ministers would secure the hearts of the people towards a most affectionate Sovereign, and

all his royal family, and above all secure peace of mind, for his Majesty, and content for his poorest subjects, by adopting the measures herein contained, for to lower the prices of provisions, is of all things the most interesting to the community.

Housekeeping esteemed heretofore noble, has erroneously been condemned, as having caused scarcity and dearth. Has not abstinence been used even by the great, for the sake of example with the view to work out the evil? but it was in vain attempted, as time doth shew, the evil has rooted deep, at the bottom alone will be found remedy—may this prove the instrument to root it out.

Are birthright incomes, or other riches spent, it maketh good for trade.

Persons in a trading way, who rail at luxuries, seldom refuse the employ of the great, but too frequent ruin themselves by false appearances. The great seldom lose any thing by observing courtesy in behaviour, whilst to infringe not on the laws, to oppress not of any class, to do common civilities with cheerfulness to a fellow creature, and to obey superiors will afford consolation under any roof.

Our Heavenly Father may dispose things so that his Majesty may deign and recommend to his Parliament that the remarks herein contained, may have parliamentary discussion, experience has convinced me the same will answer the affectionate desires of his Majesty, viz. the welfare of his people, and prevent similar embarrassments in future.

To conclude; things eatable having progressively advanced in prices beyond reason, at length prompted me to publish this book; on a subject which might

have been spun out to volumes, hoping that at least it may prove the key to the needful, wherein, if grammatical errors, or seeming incoherences appear, being my first attempt, I hope the candid reader will overlook, seeing my motive has been to stop the progress of the disasters, scarcity and dearth, that artificers or poorer people in town and country may experience comforts, nearly, if not wholly, like those experienced heretofore by their ancestors.

Respecting myself, I have considered the words of St. Paul, see Colloff. chap. iii. v. 23. "Whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord."

I have been actuated by motives of brotherly love, having been situated in life to see persons deal at markets cheerfully, and likewise to hear lamentable heart-rending sighs, complaints of objects in real distress. Furthermore, having communicated my ideas and intention to persons of virtuous principles, acquainted with the pains which in the course of thirty-six years I took to explain this business in another manner; as it gained ground, I made a promise that (God willing) nothing should prevent my accomplishing this the most arduous task of my life.

Having made free with my great Creator's name, I trust I shall find forgiveness; it is on account of the distresses of his people that I have so used it, in hopes that others may think as I do, viz. to augment provisions, is an object which ought to be taken into consideration in preference to any other object.

Ye practisers of the abuses herein unfolded, reflect on the situations of those near you, who suffer

cold, hunger, and the want of common necessaries of life. Reflect on the miseries of dwellers in Middlesex, and in other counties who were used to be comfortably supplied with food from the lands you occupy. Hearken, consider the promised rewards for doing good, or evil in this life. I dare say you know that to infringe on, or to disobey the laws (made to protect man, and property) is to do evil.

Oppressors of God's poor should believe "that it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," which passage of scripture, perhaps was intended to signify to such persons only, that danger, whom in life, heaped riches (under any cloak whatever) by means, which in the all seeing eye of God were prejudicial to his poor.

Who can declare the number of inoffensive persons in town and country, those who have died of grief, famished within the last six years. That many have died in that state is but too true.

The account of Dives and Lazarus I believe; also that the poor of this latter time, who thus have died, will be received, and found in a more fit state to meet the Saviour of the world at the great day of awful judgment than their worldly oppressors: nevertheless, contrition may gain the blessing, eternal salvation.

SUPPLEMENT.

It has been said, "The best way of judging of things is by the event of them."

In the foregoing sheets I have presumed to state, That unless the origin, root, or cause, of scarcity, and dearnefs, be removed, effectual remedy may be sought in vain.

The cause of scarcity originated in practices at farms, in the villages, in the circle of a few miles round Bath, which being developed truly, and removable, I have great hope that it will be immediately removed by means of the interference of parliament.

Dearnefs has been wound up by means of many errors; the depth of that malignity is great.

The mode for removing it, I shall state with impartiality, void of offence, hoping all parties will observe the same.

Thirty-six years attention to its progress on my part, may suffice for my advancing, that a remedy of such dearnefs as has of late been experienced, is practicable to be brought about, by

the body corporate, by those who visit, also by the inhabitants of Bristol, Bath and its vicinities.

Having the welfare of Bath and its inhabitants at heart, by way of supplement I shall say a few words, which may merit the consideration of the resorting visitors, resident gentry, the body corporate, and the inhabitants thereof, conceiving such necessary, in behalf of all, but more so of many, are my distressed fellow citizens.

In this my attempt to do the public good, although the adage says, even prophets are slighted at home, I venture to claim public attention—because one and all are interested—notwithstanding, according with common occurrences at Bath, the Lord knows who, from the Lord knows where, have too frequently over-stept natives, perhaps more worthy of public favour, whilst seeking the bubble fame.

Would time and circumstances permit, the original evil ought to be the first crushed, but hanging on consequences are requisite first to be attended to at home, in order most speedily to remedy dearth.

My manuscript, as submitted, in confidence, to J. Symons, Esq. whilst filling the office of Mayor of Bath, extended no farther than my statement of the different kinds of produces of farms, occupied by regular farming persons, or by butchers who farm, fuckle, &c. &c.

During perhaps the most pressing time history sheweth, it is but justice to say, that gentleman in his mayoralty fulfilled all that could be expected from an impartial, vigilant, magistrate.

To encounter cabals about scarcity and dearth of wheat, as well as meat, &c. was the business of that year.

The civil opinion which I had the honour of receiving from him, with respect to my Remarks, an undertaking, for the good of the public, that overwhelmed me with distressing ideas, sufficiently shewed his zeal for alleviating the sufferings of not only the distressed at Bath, but of the community at large, and that such were near his heart.

SIR,

“ I have read your Observations on the High Prices of Provisions with very great attention, and think they are well founded, but fear the laws in their present state, are not sufficiently coercive to correct the abuses pointed out in your book, which, if made public, may prove of infinite use to the community at large. I send you this as my own private opinion, and you are welcome to shew it to whom you like,

Wishing you success, I remain,

Yours,

J. SYMONS.”

Camden-Place, Bath,

Dec. 5, 1795.

Of others who instead of merely professing it, ought to have shewn liberality, I have not experienced common generosity.

Owing to greater length of vacation than heretofore, the high prices of provisions and common

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necessaries, the inhabitants of Bath were equally if not more heavily, distressed than those of Middlesex in that year.

I have observed, that visitors heretofore resorted to Bath, for cheap living, when few disagreeable topics interfering, the discourse of the day did chiefly run on the excellence, plenty, and cheapness of provisions.

The certainty of procuring provisions of sorts the most excellent, at cheap rates, drew company as early as September for autumn seasons.

Provided visitors, who frequented Bath thirty-six years ago, are now living, they may recollect that provisions were then to be procured in the greatest perfection.

To notice the productions vended at Bath markets, during the last seven years, were to begin with scarcity, inferiority, and dearth.

Query. Whether to restore the blessings of plenty, excellence, and cheapness, be or not interesting, and a proper object for the consideration of the principal residents, traders, and builders, but more especially the body corporate of Bath? In order to invite visitors to come numerously and remain long there, whereby good old empty houses would again be of use to their distressed owners; finished new houses would every where let; unfinished houses would be completed, and the town would thereby become a more flourishing place than it was even heretofore.

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Whether most of the inhabitants of Bath do not expect to gain livelihoods by the visitors, seeing they have not to boast a manufactory.

Whether visitors, whilst scarcity and dearth prevail, will not embrace the first convenient moment to leave Bath, for a more cheap spring and autumn residence?

Whether visitors would not be pleased, many taking up their summer residences, knowing that plenty of provisions with cheapness or if but moderation, prevailed? Whereas by the prices demanded, if it were not proper to say exacted, for house lamb, for veal, &c. &c. in the shambles, and at town shops, by example, some pounds per week for marketings, more than formerly genteel persons, with small families, complained of paying, and left Bath as early as April 1795 and 1796.

Whether it is not our duty to invite persons to visit Bath, and how best to accommodate them, provided they arrive?

Whether, influenced by the idea of that study prevailing, greater numbers are not likely to come and remain longer at Bath, than formerly, shewing a still greater partiality for the place?

The season of 1795, brought a great number of strangers, although a desperate war prevailed. But dearth prevented their early arrival and hurried them away, much too soon, for those, who, to visitors, as it were, look up for their bread.

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The word at market, previous to Lady-day, became, viz. Bath market, all things considered, was equal to, if not dearer than those of London.

Whether it can be recollected at Bath, that fattened bullocks in July, in any year previous to 1796, cost butchers, of every description, who supply with meat, after the rate of three guineas per hundred weight; grass at the same time abundant. Nay, in November bullocks carcassed at fifty-four shillings per hundred weight; this being the case, proves an advance of three-halfpence per pound in one year only.

Whether it can be recollected that, during the hot months of summer, calves sold to retailers at six-pence halfpenny per pound; mutton and grass lamb in common at six-pence per pound, in many instances much dearer; bacon one shilling per pound; pork, cheese, and butter equally exorbitant?—Or in October, grass being abundant, fresh butter at fourteen pence per pound; tallow candles at eleven pence per pound; soap, and other common necessaries, at prices equally exorbitant?

Whether veal has not formerly been burnt as unwholesome food? Yet better in quality than has been sold to poor souls at Bath within the three years last past, being the principal food of the day, at nearly six-pence per pound.

Whether, for many years past, there has not been a waste of meat, of good quality, particularly after hot summer market days, and during

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the months producing foggy nights, hung in any hole (suffered not to be exposed a second day for sale, even by those whose duty was to have seen it brought forward) until in a perishing state, to the distressed owners (nearly heart broken) almost useless, unfit to be eat by mankind, inasmuch as to stir up God's wrath against rulers and the place where such abomination has repeatedly, year after year, been known to them, but disregarded.

But perhaps the great disposer of things, set apart this time for remedy. Moreover, that with obstinate rulers, obstinate error may have passed away.

Whether in fact it can be said, that many, if not the greater part of the butchers, who supply with meat at Bath, at this time, farm not. Or, that Bath, Bristol, and other neighbouring markets were not heretofore supplied as plentifully and cheap from neighbouring farms, as I have stated, or that farms at this juncture produce usual, or needful supplies for the existing multitude.

Whether seeing that those farms heretofore whilst in the hands of regular farming persons did afford proper supplies of food, &c. and that at this juncture they do not afford half sufficient, if the magistrates who can regulate or amend errors by their vigilance, remedy such disasters, it would not be admitted meritorious; in which case visitors might rely with safety, on finding Bath in future a place for cheap living; provided at Bath example be first shewn it will appear prudent, neighbour-

ing towns would follow, it is the neighbourhood where first the evil rooted, where it will stare you in the face, no matter the path.

Butchers who dwell in the neighbouring villages, town butchers by example are become perhaps more numerous who farm and fuckle, than supplying with meat any other town in England, wherefore the enormous prices of provisions, butter in particular may be accounted for.

Good pasture lands have been broke up for building, depriving thereby the inhabitants of many comforts, but that is not of more consequence than one mite compared with the general calamities of the day.

Were more distant farms properly cultured supplies for extended want-stricken Bath would come abundantly, but which in vain may be sought until the evils I complain of be removed.

The corporation of Bath, allowing them bred as gentlemen, cannot be (with good reason) expected to have a knowledge which experience alone can make men competent to, as how best to act between and manage its markets for the greatest satisfaction of visitors, the welfare of inhabitants, and the encouragement of those who bring in supplies of food, of course inexperience with seeming good intention too frequently let in errors.

For three reasons in the foregoing work, I have quoted passages from agriculturist writers, first, because they are known to be men of real experience; secondly, have declared themselves incom-

petent respecting the nature of native breeds of cattle; thirdly, I am inclined to offer a future work to explain more fully native breeds, and errors of crossing, with other matter, mean while, premiums to rear and produce Somersetshire and Gloucestershire bullocks would tend to general welfare.

Much may be said respecting regulations for Bath markets, future time may produce a subject to introduce it. Herein, those who may incline to general welfare, a mode may be found, but there still remaineth what time and circumstances permit not to insert.

One thing observed, will serve the inhabitants generally—open again the butchers market for an every day's sale. Persons with little money ought at least to have the comforts of choice, which produces moderate cheapness.

Meat unfold one day ought to be exposed the next week day, to prevent risking to offend our heavenly Giver by waste.

The idea of a cheap loaf is pleasant enough, but ~~not~~ being an absolute necessary should be reasonable.

The people enjoyed great comforts when the market of Bath was open for butchers every week day, good family pieces of beef, and joints of other meat, small articles were bought cheap as herein stated; a sheep's head was bought for two-pence, but in 1796, seven-pence was the price for a stript sheep's head, all other small articles proportionately dear.

Scarcity has been occasioned by fukling, but dearnefs by many means.

The most certain means, mark.

Dearness has been brought on at Bath by persons who purchase living fattened cattle by weight, more than any other means, unseasonable destroying of young stock excepted only; also by shutting up the every day's market for meat, which curtailed the choice. An every day meat market, would regulate prices to reason. By opening again an every day market for meat visitors will find choice, will be enabled to do much towards remedying of dearness, whilst it will shew a just sense of the late enormity. Moreover, desire, in reality for alleviating the miseries of the people.

Spare, O spare a thought.

There are in Bath, whose little all is nearly sunk.

Handicrafts, a shilling for a day of sickness cannot store; for what used to cost one penny only, nearly three-pence goeth out: one instance may suffice.

One penny worth of pigs fry heretofore weighed one pound in lump. At this juncture, one pound of pig's liver, &c. by weight six-pence.

Think of their not having brought the load on themselves, and if possible to fathom the ill consequences of shutting out butchers from daily offering commodities in nature perishable, think of waste, the result of oppression. Meat was ordained by God himself to be eaten ere the third day passed away: but at Bath skilful well meaning butchers have been deprived of exposing meat a second day until dead perhaps six days, and of doing good, whilst the inexperienced encouraged have not only done the chief of the mischief, but amassed riches.

Skilful industrious butchers, who farmed not, suckled not, have been reduced to poverty. Turn the eye through the town and shambles, the last twenty years will prove such unhappy events numerous: whereas it will be difficult to find one instance of a farming suckling butcher's failure.

Town butchers ought to be better provided for, who pay all town assessments, striving against a power of advantages inconceivable, the lot of those who pay no town tax at all.

Skilful butchers have experienced great loss, greater mortification applying for lots of goods here and there, since the unhappy event of veal being sold, and living fattened goods bought by weight.

I have stated that staged calves at the dearest time of the season, thirty-six years ago, of thirty-six pounds, and to forty pounds per quarter, were bought by hand at fifty shillings per calf.

Calves at forty pounds per quarter have been sold in Bath market dead, to retail, owing to such having been bought living in the country, by weight at high sums, viz. amounting to perhaps six guineas and an half, or upwards.

If a suckling cost one guinea and an half, nearly five guineas appears to be the pay for about ten weeks milk and chalk, next year sucklers, rather than dispense with such profits, may give two guineas, or more for sucklings, (if so) who will rear, where such ought to be reared? oh stop this practice, in the name of charity, or what will be the end thereof.

Unseasonable diminution of our young stock, the prices paid for veal by consumers, may not be won-

dered at, seeing there are to be found who purchase animals weighable by weight.

Butchers who farm not merit encouragement for bringing good meat to Bath. But such have stood a market day, with great quantities dearly bought in, and not turned one shilling: nay, have not been asked the price of three joints, yet deprived till next market day of chance of sale, weather good or bad.

An every week day's sale for meat restored, competent skilful butchers, who farm not, (would no doubt) expose good meat, chiefly, if not wholly bought living by hand, which would speedily eradicate enormity, let in moderation of prices. The account given of prices, &c. of lean bullocks at Lansdown fair, 1796, loss of the native breeds of cattle in a small circle around Bristol and Bath, may account for the high prices of butter. The Agricultural Report of prices paid for lean stock in Yorkshire, permits of saying, the ensuing winter who will be able to withstand?

An every day market will in a great measure prevent disaster, and give consumers a chance to deal where cattle has been bought by hand, rendering general benefit.

The Bath provision committee taking into consideration means used with public money at Hull, would probably here do infinite general good by imitating the same, see Bath Journal, July, 4, 1796.

Persons may be found who would merit such assistance to buy fattened stock at fairs and markets by hand, to work out a pernicious practice, viz.

buying by weight. Discretionally small loans might be well applied.

Milk is trebly dearer than heretofore, because the neighbouring fields are wrong cultured, being now chiefly given to calves, distressing the inhabitants sick or well.

By failures, said (chiefly) owing to household outgoings, empty houses serve to manifest that a remedy is much wanted at Bath: wherefore let all consider, that all can peaceably and affectionately work out those evils. I have stated the necessary caution, which to observe, the work will be done; its good effect will spread to the dwellers in Middlesex, and elsewhere. Embrace the reward within your reach, serve present sufferers, serve posterity; in the name of goodness let us endeavour for permanent plenty.

Farming persons in the course of thirty-six years, by innumerable chances, occasioned by the deep rooted original cause (which I abide by) have had innumerable advantages thrown in their way, Cannot such afford a turn of the scale?

To be deprived of choice, or by any species of art worked up to pay for meat, cheese, &c. as of late, (if not unfair) has been too severe for the needy and the poor: more moderate prices would do to pay well enough, and for the dearest rented lands in England.

Where there is no victuals in the house it is hard threatening seizures for taxes: were common neces-

faries at moderate prices, such might have been prepared for. However, nought can put things so well to right as the blessed regulator—plenty. It is worth observing, although dry weather, or a few days of frost has a sad effect upon Bath market, especially on butter, it is not so much the case at even neighbouring towns, which is a certain proof how ill the neighbouring farms are cultured.

Provided it were said, that I have recommended an every day meat market for self interest; be it understood, (nearly worn out in the service of the public), were trifling advantages to offer, and be mine, such must shortly terminate with me.

I have found it hard, to labour thirty-six years for a small reward, against those whose practices my Creator permitted I should thus notice; for such have counteracted God's bounties, and perplexed a whole nation.

Not to have explained the ills which are the result of those practices, on my part, would have been unjust.

The calamities having not been the work of a day, neither our sufferings those of one season, patience must be our guide. The multitude in Middlesex as well as the whole of the community, are dependent on Parliament for the most speedy remedy: on the other hand, on you who dwell near where bullocks and sheep, swine, cheese, &c. &c. should be found.

Of the great there are, who by dealing in cattle, particularly in the north, have amassed incredible

sums to add to great fortunes from returns by dealing therein, to perhaps fifty thousand pounds per annum. The consequence thereof is, viz. small scots, such as a few years ago were bought in poor at about three pounds per head, in 1796, yielded eleven pounds: does not this prove the lamentable loss of our stock in the Midland counties of England, the chief of the disasters falling upon consumers? However, to do according to the remarks herein contained, is the sure way to put an end to a practice, which is but of few years standing, and were to be sure of once again finding our neighbouring farms properly stocked with cattle, swine, poultry, cheese, &c. &c. for regular farmers will not fail to rear, raise, and make up of all sorts of marketings to make up their necessary returns: but above all for yours, and your distant fellow creatures comforts.

Think of sufferings in garrets, or at the remotest country hut, and you will shew a proper spirit of vigilance, Christian concern, trying to lessen miseries almost become habitual, your reward for so doing is in heaven.

The Bath waters for centuries have done miraculous cures, are the gift of God, whose power is such, were he to command, how certain would they cease to flow, which God forbid.

The Parliament of England most speedily, the public less speedily, but as certainly, may prevent evermore such disasters being experienced on the face of British earth, which God grant.

I now beg leave to return my sincerest thanks to those who deigned to assist me, by becoming subscribers for this work.

F I N I S.