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A  
**LETTER**

TO THE  
**EARL OF LIVERPOOL,**  
ON THE PRESENT  
***DISTRESSES OF THE COUNTRY:***

SHEWING,  
THAT THEY DO NOT PROCEED FROM TAXATION, NOR FROM ANY OTHER COMMONLY-ASSIGNED CAUSE; BUT FROM THE WANT OF A SUFFICIENCY OF FOOD IN THE COUNTRY FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE WHOLE OF THE PEOPLE:

AND PROVING, THAT A  
**REPEAL OF THE CORN LAWS**

AND THE REMOVAL OF ALL RESTRICTIONS ON COMMERCE, WOULD NOT ONLY BE A COMPLETE REMEDY FOR THE DISTRESS, BUT WOULD, IF ACCOMPANIED BY THE MEASURES POINTED OUT, BE ATTENDED WITH GREAT ADVANTAGES EVEN TO THE LAND-OWNERS THEMSELVES.

BY  
**E. G. ATHERLEY, ESQ.**  
BARRISTER AT LAW.

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[The discrepancy between the following letter, which is anonymous, and the title page, is accounted for by a change in the Author's intention since the letter was printed, in May last].

TO THE

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL, K. G.

FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, &amp;c. &amp;c.

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My LORD,

To ascertain the causes of the distress which the country is suffering, and to point out a plain and easy remedy for it, must, no doubt, lead to the removal of the distress; and must consequently lead to results of the utmost importance, both as respects the tranquillity, the security, and the independence of the country, and the happiness and welfare of the people.

The object I have in view in addressing myself to your Lordship, is, to endeavour at least, to point out the causes of the distress, or rather the sole cause, (a cause hitherto not even dreamt of); and also a plain and simple remedy for it. To the adoption, however, of the remedy, the opinions of the country, on subjects connected with the remedy, at present oppose a formidable obstacle. To shew that those opinions are entirely founded in error, is a further object of my address to your Lordship; for by shewing their fallacy, the obstacle which stands in the way of

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the prosperity of the country and the happiness of the people, will necessarily be removed. And with a view the more clearly to demonstrate the *real* cause of the distress and the only effectual remedy for it, I shall endeavour to shew, that the *supposed* causes of the distress, viz. taxation and the state of the currency, have nothing at all to do with it; and that the remedies hitherto recommended, viz. a reduction of taxation, and a return to what has been termed, "a healthy state of the currency," would not, in the slightest degree, lessen the distress.

In the course, too, of the ensuing pages, some light may probably be thrown on the nature of commerce; for upon a correct knowledge of its principles, the welfare and happiness of mankind, and more especially of the people of this country, (at least under existing circumstances), very materially depend; and it is but too clear, that its true principles have not hitherto been discovered:—the great and leading principle which all writers on the subject of commerce have taken as the basis of their doctrines, is demonstrably an unsound one; no wonder therefore, that their doctrines should be difficult of comprehension, and their practical results frequently injurious; and no wonder that writers upon the subject should speak of it, (as most writers upon it do), as one of great difficulty and abstruseness. What, however, is said on the subject in the following pages, (though it is cursorily glanced at, rather than minutely entered into), may tend to shew that it is not one of any very great difficulty.

It may be proper to observe, that the arrangement of the following pages, is not quite so systematic as might have been wished. They are part of a small work, intended for publication, on subjects connected with the science of

political economy (*a*):—they are, in fact, detached and broken parts of that work. This will account for the want of more method and regularity in their arrangement, and

(*a*) In this work will be shewn, the ties and connexions by which mankind, in a state of society, are united to each other for their common benefit; and the means by which their common and individual interests will be best promoted; and it will be shewn, (contrary to the opinions of many,—but on grounds very different, and much more satisfactory than any hitherto thought of), that a minute sub-division of lands is highly prejudicial to the interests of society; and that the possession of great estates by individuals is decidedly advantageous to the people at large. In the work adverted to, will be pointed out the erroneous notions entertained by the late Dr. Adam Smith, by the late Mr. Ricardo, by Mr. M'Culloch, and other popular writers, relative to "capital," "rent," "wages," "profit," &c.; and the unsoundness and fallacy of all, or most of their leading principles, as "political economists," will be clearly demonstrated; and the true principles of the science clearly developed:—and such development will prove, that the science, instead of resting, as generally supposed, on principles extremely subtle and intricate, rests, in fact, upon principles extremely simple and intelligible. The work will point out the nature, operation, and effect of taxation; and in doing this it will be shewn, that excessive taxation when long continued, creates an *unnatural state of the population*, productive of great and serious evils to a country. The work will likewise point out the means by which the government of a country may be carried on, and all its necessary expenses provided for, (even the expenses of extensive and long-protracted war), without the slightest resort to taxation; and that Great Britain and the United States of America, and especially the latter, possess, in this respect, very great and decided advantages over every other country of the world.

By the means alluded to, England, even with her load of debt, might be entirely relieved from the burthen of taxation; and had it not been that this burthen may be greatly alleviated, as well as the distress of the country entirely removed by the adoption of the measures recommended in the present letter, it might have been proper that the means should at once have been made known.

The work adverted to will develop the true principles of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures; and will point out their connection with, and effects upon each other:—And under this head will be shewn the

may also form some excuse for it; especially as the author had not time, (with reference to the period at which he wished to make known his sentiments on the subjects now treated of), either to make the arrangement, or to treat the subjects so clearly or so fully as he otherwise would have done.

The distress of the country has been ascribed to various causes, but by most people, either to taxation, or to the state of the currency or circulating medium; and some have considered it to arise, partly from one and partly from the other of these causes: and they who ascribe the distress to taxation consider the remedy to consist in a reduction of the taxes; and they who ascribe it to the state of the currency, consider the remedy to consist in a return, to what they call, "a healthy state of the currency;"—by which they mean, a return to a circulating medium consisting of gold and silver; to the exclusion, or nearly to the exclusion of paper or bank notes.

It is obvious, however, that the distress of the country does not proceed from either of the above causes separately, or from both of them jointly; and consequently, that neither of the above-noticed remedies would prove efficacious. It may not, however, be improper to demonstrate this; for by shewing the erroneous notions which prevail, both as to the cause of the distress and as to the remedies

effects which the use of machinery in manufactures, &c., has upon the interests and condition of society: The nature of British commerce, and its effects upon the health, morals, and happiness of the people will be described; and it will be shewn, that it is rather its *peculiar nature* than its *extent*, which enables the government to derive so large a revenue from it: and the means are pointed out by which great changes might be made in it, to the advantage both of the people and the government.

which have been prescribed for it, we shall the more clearly see both the *true cause* and *true remedy*.

I have advanced the opinion, that the distress of the country does not proceed from taxation. What I mean to say is—that the distress in no wise proceeds from *present* taxation:—I am far from meaning to assert, that taxation has had nothing to do in producing it: on the contrary, taxation has been the great cause of it. But though the distress has clearly been produced by taxation, yet it is equally clear, (though it may at first seem paradoxical), that it in no wise proceeds from *present* taxation, and would not be diminished, even in the slightest degree, by a *reduction of taxation*; but rather the reverse. It is *past*, and not present taxation, from which the distress of the country proceeds. Excessive taxation, long continued, *unnaturally* increases the population of a country: I say *unnaturally*, because it increases it much faster than the means of subsistence are increased. It also creates too large a proportion of people who do not contribute either to the supply of their own wants or to the wants of others—that is, it creates too large a proportion of unemployed people, or of people uselessly employed;—people, in short, who take from the common stock of the necessaries of life, but who contribute nothing to them. Excessive taxation, long continued, producing these effects, (and that it *does* produce them, as a natural and necessary consequence, is clearly demonstrated in the work <sup>above</sup> adverted to), creates most serious evils. But though the above consequences necessarily arise out of heavy taxation, long continued, yet when taxation has *ACTUALLY produced the consequences*; when, in fact, *it has already done the mischief*:—when it has *already produced*



*an increase of population to an extent far beyond the means of subsistence which the country possesses, (and this is the great mischief which heavy and long-continued taxation has produced in this country); when the mischief is actually done, the remedy must be something very different from that which would have done extremely well as preventive. As preventive, a timely cessation of taxation would have been perfectly efficacious: the mischief, however, being actually done, it is clear that the remedy is not to be found in a reduction, or even a total cessation of taxation; for the evil being demonstrably a population far too great for the means of support possessed by the country, can it, for a moment, be contended, that a reduction of the taxes, or even taking them totally off, would either lessen the population so as to bring down its numbers to an amount not too great for the means of subsistence possessed by the country; or would increase the means of subsistence so as to make it sufficient for the support of the whole of the population? It is clear that a reduction of taxation, or even a total taking off of the taxes, would not do either the one or the other; consequently the distress would continue, notwithstanding a reduction or even a total cessation of taxation. So far, indeed, from a reduction or even total cessation of taxation having any effect in lessening the distresses of the country, it is clear that it would increase it; for is it possible that the government could materially reduce the taxes, without at the same time reducing the interest of the national debt, and the salaries or incomes of persons filling public situations, and without discharging soldiers and sailors? It is clear that it could not. Could then the fund-holders, and persons filling public situations, have their incomes greatly reduced, without being under the*

necessity of altering their style of living? Must they not discharge part of their servants, lay down their carriages, live in smaller and worse furnished houses, wear plainer clothes and fewer of them, and in all respects reduce their expenses in a degree commensurate with the reduction of their incomes? It is evident that they must. And could all this be done, and yet no distress be produced? Suppose even the fund-holder or place-holder had sufficient left to keep *himself* from actual want, (though this could not be the case with the smaller ones, supposing they and the greater ones should *all* have their incomes reduced in the same proportion), is it not clear that the servants he discharged must experience distress? And must it not be equally clear that the lessened demand for the services of coach-makers, upholsterers, manufacturers, masons, carpenters, &c., must throw numbers of them out of employment—for it is impossible that the fund-holder or place-holder, with his *reduced* income, could employ so many of them as he previously did,—must not *they* consequently experience distress? If, too, great numbers of soldiers and sailors are discharged, must not *they* be deprived of their present means of support, and would not this be attended with distress to *them*? I am aware ~~that~~ it may be said, that although the incomes of fund-holders and persons holding situations under the government must be lessened by a reduction of taxation, and that although they would be compelled to discharge their servants, and to alter their manner of living, and to give less employment to coach-makers, upholsterers, &c.,—that although all this must necessarily follow a reduction of taxation, yet that the reduction of *their* incomes, (such reduction being occasioned by lessening the taxes), would, as a necessary con-

sequence, *increase* the incomes of those who had previously paid the taxes;—that, therefore, although the fund-holder or place-holder would, owing to his income being lessened, be obliged to lessen the number of his servants, to lay down his carriages, to live in a smaller and worse furnished house, wear worse clothes, &c.; yet that those who hitherto paid the taxes, would, by means of their increased incomes, be able to keep more servants and carriages than they before kept, to live in larger and better furnished houses than they before lived in, and to wear better and more clothes than they before wore: that, therefore, *they* would be *enabled* to keep, (and as a necessary consequence *would* keep, the servants discharged by the fund-holder or place-holder; and would afford employment and support to the coachmakers, upholsterers, masons, carpenters, manufacturers, &c., who had been previously employed by the fund-holder and place-holder; and consequently that a reduction of taxation, though it might be attended with distress to the fund-holder or place-holder *himself*, would be attended with none to the servants, coachbuilders, carpenters, &c., whom he had employed; and therefore that a reduction of taxation would, at the worst, be only felt by the fund-holder or place-holder himself. This kind of reasoning, though it may appear specious, will be found upon inquiry to be extremely fallacious. If, indeed, the taxes were wholly paid by the land-holder, or rather by the *great* land-holder, whose income, or disposable income would necessarily be *greatly increased* by any considerable reduction of taxation, (the sum paid in taxes, direct and indirect, by the great land-holder being no doubt very large), in that case it is readily admitted that a reduction of taxation would be attended with scarcely any other effect, (except

to the fund-holder or place-holder himself, and his family), than to *transfer* to the land-owner, the servants and others who had been previously employed and supported by the place-holder or fund-holder. But instead of the taxes being wholly paid by the great land-owners, we must recollect that *a great portion of them* is paid, *not* by the great land-owners, but by *the labouring classes of the people*; and we must also recollect that a lessening of *their* taxes would not be productive of the same result to *them* that a lessening of the taxes paid by the great land-owner would produce to *him*: to him, any material reduction of taxation would be attended with a *great increase of income*, to the labouring classes no such consequence would follow. To *them* a lessening of taxation would, no doubt, be attended with *some* increase of income: their increased incomes would afford each of them rather more food for *his own consumption* than he before had (a); but it would

(a) When the situation of the labouring classes is considered, it cannot be doubted but they could consume, generally speaking, considerably more food than they now have to consume; therefore, if a reduction of taxation left them more to consume, no doubt but they *would* consume it; and consume it too in their own proper persons, and not give it to others to consume; that is, they would lay out their increased incomes in articles of food; for these are things a man generally thinks of providing, and indeed must provide, before he thinks of better clothes, better houses, or better furniture. Therefore the increased incomes of the labouring classes, occasioned by a reduction of taxation, would merely be productive of benefit to themselves in the way of supplying them with more *food*; and not in procuring them more clothes, furniture, &c.; consequently, the manufacturer, upholsterer, &c., who had before been employed by the fund-holder or place-holder, would receive, generally speaking, no part of the increased incomes of the labouring classes; for the increase would not be large enough, even if all the taxes were taken off, to allow of this. If it should be supposed that the additional money

be too inconsiderable to enable any of them, generally speaking, to give any portion of it to the servants, manufacturers, upholsterers, masons, carpenters, &c., who had been previously employed and supported by the fund-holder or place-holder. All these servants, manufacturers, &c., must therefore, by a reduction of taxation, be left totally destitute; and must consequently experience *great distress*. The case therefore of the servants, and others supported by means of taxes received from the *labouring classes* would be widely different from that of the servants, and others supported by taxes received from the land-owner, especially from the *great land-owner*. I am well aware that the persons who are supported by means of taxes received from the great land-owner cannot be distinguished from those who are supported by taxes received from the labouring classes: the consequence, however, of a reduction of taxation, would be just the same as if they could be distinguished; that is, such *proportion* of the general body of servants and others, as had been supported by means of taxes received from the great land-

which the labouring classes would expend in articles of food would increase the incomes of the persons with whom they expended it, and consequently that *they* would be enabled to employ and support more carpenters, masons, servants, &c., than they before employed and supported; if it should be supposed that *this* would be the case, no opinion could possibly be worse founded; for is it not clear, that the money which would constitute the increased incomes of the labouring classes, previously formed part of the incomes of the fund-holder and place-holder; and was it not *then* expended in articles of food by *them*, and by the carpenters, masons, upholsterers, and others amongst whom they distributed it; and had not, therefore, those who *then* received it, just as much benefit from it, as they will have when they receive it from the labouring classes?—It is quite clear that they had.

owner, would soon be employed and supported by such land-owner out of his increased income; consequently, to this portion of them a reduction of taxation would not be productive of much, if any distress: but such proportion of the general body of servants, upholsterers, &c., as had been supported by means of taxes received from the labouring classes, (and this is by far *the largest proportion*), *could not*, and therefore would not, be employed and supported by such labouring classes out of *their* increased incomes; as they would *themselves* consume the whole of such increased incomes in procuring more food; therefore *this* portion of the general body of servants and workmen, who are now supported by means of taxation, (and this portion would form a decided majority of the whole body), would be left without any support:—the utmost they could hope for would be a pittance out of the poor's rates.

If the above view of the subject should leave any doubt as to the correctness of the opinion,—that a reduction of taxation would increase, rather than lessen, the distress of the country; the soundness of such opinion may perhaps be better demonstrated as follows: Suppose I am a fund-holder or person holding a situation under government, and that instead of receiving from government a large sum of money, I receive a large quantity of corn and other articles of human sustenance, which the government takes, under the denomination of taxes, from some great land-owner and gives to me (a). Out of this large quantity

(a) Though taxes are imposed and paid in money, yet taxation is in reality, (as will be clearly shewn in the work above adverted to), neither more nor less than taking from the land-owner and from those who are either directly or indirectly connected with him, a portion of the bread

of human food or sustenance I support myself and my family; and I give a part of it to numerous servants whom I keep; another part I give to the coachbuilder who builds my carriages; another part to the manufacturer who manufactures the silks, cloths, cottons, &c., worn by myself and my family; another part to the masons, carpenters, &c., who build and repair my houses; another part to the upholsterer who furnishes them; and other parts to various other persons who are employed by me in one way or another, either directly or indirectly. Suppose the government should cease to take from the land-owner the

and other necessaries of life produced by his lands; and consequently, that upon the land-owner and those connected with him, the whole burthen of taxation clearly falls. It is true that they whose incomes arise out of the taxes, (as the fund-holder, place-holder, &c.), pay taxes as well as the land-owner; but this makes it come just to the same thing as if the government, instead of taking, we will suppose, 2000*l.* a year from me, a land-owner, and giving the whole of such 2000*l.* to a fund-holder, and then taking back from the fund-holder 500*l.* a year, in the shape of taxes on his carriages, wines, &c., and giving this 500*l.* to a place-holder, had given the fund-holder only 1500*l.* of the 2000*l.* taken from me, the land-owner, and had allowed the fund-holder to keep carriages, have wines, &c., without paying any taxes for them; and had at once, or in the first instance, given the remaining 500*l.* to the place-holder. Under the above view of the thing (which is clearly the correct one, as would perhaps be more apparent, were the case put in the shape of taking so much corn and other articles of sustenance from the land-owner, and distributing them amongst the fund-holders and place-holders) not only do I, the land-owner, pay the whole of the sums received both by the fund-holder and place-holder, but the fact is, that the 2000*l.* a year taken from me, the land-owner, is, in reality, all that is raised by means of taxation; and not 2500*l.* as would appear to be the case by first giving the whole of the 2000*l.* to the fund-holder, and then taking 500*l.* from him again and giving it to the place-holder: but as the nature, effects, and operation of taxation, through its minutest ramifications, will be shewn in the work above adverted to, the subject need not be very fully entered into here.

corn and other articles of food, (the produce of his lands), which it has hitherto taken from him, it would, of course, be no longer able to give them to me, the fund-holder, or place-holder: The consequence would be that I should be left without any means of support for myself <sup>and</sup> my family; and we must necessarily experience great distress; and having no longer a large quantity of the necessaries of life to distribute amongst coach-builders, upholsterers, masons, carpenters, servants, &c., I necessarily cease to employ them. For a short time they may probably be brought into a situation of distress, yet they will not long remain in this situation; for as the great land-owner has now a much larger quantity of corn and other articles of food to distribute and do what he pleases with, than he had when the government took a large quantity from him and gave it to me, (a fund-holder or place-holder), he the land-owner, is enabled to keep more servants than he before kept, to have more carriages than he before had, to have his house better furnished and kept in better repair than it before was; therefore, soon finding himself with the means of doing more in all these respects than he before could, he takes my discharged servants into his service, and gives employment to the coach-builders, upholsterers, &c., whom I previously employed; so that they all pretty soon receive as much bread and other necessaries of life from the land-owner as they before received from me, the fund-holder or place-holder. So if a number of soldiers or sailors were supported with bread and all the other necessaries of life taken from some great land-owner, and the government ceased to take the bread, &c. and discharged the soldiers and sailors, they would no doubt soon find employment and support in the service, direct or

indirect, of the land-owner. The above would be pretty much the way in which a great reduction of taxation would operate so far as the taxes are received from the land-owners.

But now let us put another case; and from which it will appear, that a great reduction of taxation would not only be attended with distress to the fund-holder or place-holder himself, and his family, but also to the servants, upholsterers, manufacturers, masons, carpenters, and the various other persons amongst whom he distributed the bread and other necessaries of life which he received from the government. Suppose, (as in the case put above), that I am a fund-holder or place-holder, and receive from the government a large quantity of bread and other articles of food or human sustenance, but the government, instead of taking this large quantity of bread, &c., from some great land-owner, in the shape of taxes, takes a small quantity of it from the mason in the shape of a tax upon the tea which he and his family consume, or upon the ale and porter which they drink; another small quantity of it from the carpenter in the shape of a tax upon the sugar, &c., which he and his family use; and a small quantity, in like manner, from each of 5000 others in the same rank or station of life. All these small quantities make up a large quantity, and this large quantity the government gives to me, a fund-holder or place-holder; and though taken in small quantities from each of 5000 labourers, it is just the same to me as if the government had taken it from some great land-owner. It enables me to keep just the same number of servants, to live in as good a house and as well furnished, and to afford employment and to give support just to as many people, as coach-builders, manufacturers, upholsterers,

masons, &c., as if the government had taken it from the great landowner instead of the 5000 labourers. But suppose the government should take off all taxes, or, in other words, cease to take these small quantities of bread and other articles of food from the 5000 labourers, and, consequently, should no longer give me (the fund-holder or place-holder) the large quantity of bread and other articles of food it before gave me; the consequences (though just the same with respect to myself and my family as if the government had taken the bread, &c., from the great land-owner instead of the 5000 labourers) will be very different with respect to the servants, coachbuilders, manufacturers, masons, &c., amongst whom I distributed it, and who were supported by it; for they will not be taken into the service or employment of the great land-owner, for *he* receives no increase of *his* income by reason of the government no longer taking those small quantities of bread, &c., from the 5000 labourers: and though the 5000 labourers receive some small addition to *their* incomes, yet can they possibly take the servants, masons, carpenters, &c., whom the fund-holder or place-holder <sup>can</sup> ~~is~~ obliged to discharge, into *their* service or employment? It must be clear they can *not*; for the quantity of bread, &c., previously taken from each of them under the denomination of taxes, and which is now allowed to remain with them, (for the assumption that it *does remain* with them, that is, that it is not taken from them by their employers, forms the basis of our present argument), forms only so small an addition to what each of them before had, that they can well consume it *themselves, and they accordingly do so*. Therefore the servants, upholsterers, masons, carpenters, &c., amongst whom these several small quantities of bread and other articles of sustenance (when col-

lected together from the 5000 labourers and given to me, the fund-holder, in one considerable quantity) were before distributed, no longer receive any part of such bread or other articles of sustenance from any one. It must therefore be clear that they must be left entirely without support, except the pittance they may obtain from the poor's rates; and it must consequently be clear, that a vast number of persons, who are now in situations comparatively comfortable, would, by a reduction of taxation (if such reduction was at all considerable) be brought into a situation of great distress. By a reduction of taxation, the condition of a portion of the labouring classes would, no doubt, be improved in a slight degree; but, on the other hand, the situation of another portion of the same classes would be rendered much worse than it is at present. Upon the whole, therefore, we may, I think, safely come to the conclusion, —that a reduction of taxation would not only NOT be a remedy for the distress of the country, but that to great numbers it would be positively accompanied by an aggravation of their distress. It is not to be doubted or denied, but that to those who *pay* the taxes, (the land-owners and those connected with them), a reduction of taxation would be attended with advantage; but to those who *receive* them, and are supported by means of them, (the fund-holders, place-holders, and those connected with and supported by them, and also soldiers, sailors, &c.), a reduction of taxation would be productive, generally speaking, of great distress: and the numbers who would experience this distress would be very considerable. It is better, therefore, that the distress should be pretty equally spread over eight or ten millions of the people, than that the distress of one-half of them should be greatly increased, in order to produce some alleviation of

the distress of the other half. A reduction of taxation is therefore a thing not to be thought of as *a remedy* for the distress of the country. The suffering classes, and also those who wish to see their sufferings relieved, must therefore turn their thoughts to a remedy very different from that of a reduction of taxation.—Novel as the opinion may be, the distressed part of the community is clearly interested, generally speaking, *in maintaining the present amount of the taxes.*

Having, it is hoped, clearly shewn that a reduction of taxation would afford no relief to the distress of the country, but, on the contrary, would rather be the means of aggravating such distress, and consequently, that a resort to *it* as a remedy cannot be thought of; I will now endeavour to shew that the distress does not proceed, as supposed by many, from the state of the currency or circulating medium; and, consequently, that any measures relating simply to the currency would not prove a remedy for the distress. When I say, that the distress of the country does not proceed from the state of the currency, I must qualify this opinion in the same way in which I have qualified the opinion,—that the distress does not proceed from taxation; and this I must do, by observing, that the distress is in no wise ascribable to the *present* state of the currency. That it is ascribable, and in no slight degree, to the *past* state of the currency, or to the state in which it was during the period at which heavy taxation was producing the mischief above spoken of, viz.—an unnatural increase of the population, is readily admitted: for, as heavy taxation was the primary or more immediate cause of the distress, so the state of the currency was the secondary or more remote cause; for, without the vast increase which there was of the circulating medium, the large amount of taxes



raised upon the country could hardly have been levied (a); and if not, the evil above spoken of could not have existed, at least not to so great an extent. To the state of the currency, that is to the *past* state of it, the distress of the country is, no doubt, in some degree to be attributed. But though the distress is to be ascribed, to a certain extent at least, to the paper-money circulation, yet, (as has been observed with respect to taxation), all the evils of a paper-money circulation have been *already* produced—all the mischief has been *already* done. Therefore putting an end to the paper money would not, in itself, in anywise lessen the distress of the country; for, it is clear, that putting an end to the paper money, or altering the nature and amount of the circulating medium, would *neither bring down the population to an amount not too great for the quantity of human sustenance produced by the country, nor raise the quantity of sustenance so as to make it sufficient for the whole of the people.* It is clear, that

(a) This will be pretty clearly demonstrated in the work before adverted to; where it will be also shewn, that for a considerable time, at least, the landowner, by means of paper money, (though, perhaps, unconscious of the thing himself,) was, in fact, almost entirely exempted from taxation; for, though he appeared to pay taxes, yet by the secret and concealed operation of the paper money, he, in reality, took these very same taxes out of the pockets of the manufacturers, carpenters, masons, &c., whom he employed; therefore, the taxes which he appeared to pay, produced, in fact, no diminution of his comforts and enjoyments; whilst they took away no small part of the very necessaries of life of the labouring classes. Had the real burthen of taxation fallen upon the landowners, or people of fortune, they would hardly have submitted to the burthen; therefore, in saying that taxes to so large an amount could hardly have been raised without the aid of paper money, I am advancing an opinion which would seem to be well founded. The labouring classes, no doubt, bore the burthen more patiently than the landowners would have borne it, had it fallen upon them.

notwithstanding any alteration in the amount or nature of the currency, the amount of the population and the means of supporting it would bear the same relative proportion to each other that they now bear. As many, therefore, as are at present ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-lodged, would, even if the paper money was totally destroyed, continue ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-lodged; I believe I may venture to assert that it is impossible to shew the contrary: and if there would still be as many people with an insufficiency of wholesome food, and still as many ill-clothed and ill-lodged as there are at present, is it not clear that there would still be the same degree of distress in the country as there is at present? It may be observed, too, that the prices of all the necessaries of life have now pretty well adjusted themselves to the amount of the circulating medium; and if the circulating medium consisted entirely of gold and silver, and did not amount to even one-tenth part of the present amount of the circulating medium, it may perhaps be pretty safely asserted, that the necessaries and comforts of life (the only things of importance) would be distributed and divided amongst the people pretty much *in the same proportions* in which they are at present. Every one would only have one-tenth of the money he now has, and with that tenth would just procure the same quantity of food and of the other necessaries of life he now procures, and no more;—how then would the distress of the country be at all lessened by altering the nature and amount of the circulating medium? The notion, in fact, which so universally prevails, that if the necessaries of life were *cheap*, as is termed, that the distress would disappear, is altogether an erroneous notion. The prices of the necessaries of life have, in fact, nothing to do, speaking generally, with the distress of the coun-

try. It is not, therefore, abstractedly speaking, that the country wants a different kind, or a different amount of circulating medium to that which it now has; for it is not an alteration either in the one or the other, which, abstractedly speaking, would be of the slightest service to the country. Nor, abstractedly speaking, is it of the slightest consequence to the people, whether the necessaries of life are cheap or dear. Bread may be what is termed *cheap*, yet many not able to get a sufficiency of it. It is not, therefore, dear bread or cheap bread, or more money or less money, which, abstractedly speaking, is of the slightest importance. High prices of food do not necessarily prove that there is an insufficiency of food; nor, on the other hand, do low prices afford any evidence of there being a sufficiency. What the country wants, is a *different amount* (viz. a LARGER QUANTITY) of all the necessaries and enjoyments of life. It is the circulating amongst the people of a larger quantity of bread, and meat, and the other necessaries of life, and not the circulation of a smaller quantity of money, which is the thing wanted: and if they only obtain a larger quantity, it will be of no consequence what the price may be. So far, in fact, would any material alteration in the amount of the currency be, abstractedly, or in itself, the means of doing good, that, like a reduction of taxation, it would actually do mischief; and increased distress would be the more immediate fruit of such an alteration. This, indeed, is but too obvious; for any material diminution in the amount of the circulating medium must necessarily greatly reduce the prices of every thing; and therefore every person who owed money would be obliged to sell (if he had it to sell) a much larger quantity of his land, or other property, in order to enable him to pay what he owed, than it would have been necessary to have

sold, had there been no alteration in the amount or value of the currency. To many, therefore, who owe money, an increase in the value of the currency, (or in other words a diminution in the quantity of it), would (unless accompanied by an adjustment of contracts) be productive of distress. A reduction, therefore, of the amount of the circulating medium, as an abstract, isolated measure, whilst it would do positively nothing towards relieving the general distress of the country, would, in numerous instances, produce much distress, and much injustice. We may, therefore, safely come to the conclusion, that neither a reduction of taxation, nor a reduction of the amount of the circulating medium, nor even the total annihilation of paper money, would alone do any good to the country at large; but, on the contrary, would create a great deal of partial mischief. A remedy therefore for the distress of the country must not be looked for either in a reduction of taxation, or in an alteration in the circulating medium.

It may be proper briefly to notice another cause or two, to which the distress of the country has been ascribed by some; viz. "over production," and "excessive speculation." It must be obvious, however, that it does not proceed in the slightest degree from the former of these causes; for if the land-owners and farmers (the only primary owners of the necessaries of life) have *greater* quantities of corn, and other articles of human sustenance than they before had, they must, of course, have *more* bread and other articles of human sustenance to distribute amongst servants, manufacturers, masons, carpenters, &c. than they previously had, and they distribute such increased quantity accordingly; such increased quantities of bread, and other articles of human sustenance, are neither more nor less than *increased*



*income* (a); and it is the general, and, indeed, almost universal practice of mankind, when their incomes increase or their circumstances improve, to keep more servants, to have larger and better furnished houses, more and better clothes, and in short more of all the other comforts and enjoyments of life than they previously had; and in order to obtain them they necessarily distribute their increased incomes amongst additional servants, and others; from whose labour they procure such additional comforts and enjoyments. As, therefore, increased quantities of corn and other articles of human sustenance, are clearly increased income to the landowner and farmer, (who are alone the owners of such increased quantities of corn, &c.), and as they distribute such increased incomes amongst those who are either directly or indirectly connected with them, (and who, in fact, constitute *all the rest of the people*, when the population is in a natural and healthy state) (b); the necessary and unavoidable consequence is, that increased quantities of bread,

(a) By increased income, I do not mean increased amount of *pecuniary* income; for supposing the amount of the circulating medium to be *the same* with what it previously was, an increased quantity of corn and other articles of human sustenance, would not occasion an increase of any man's *pecuniary* income. But though *pecuniary* income would not be increased in nominal amount, yet as it would buy a larger quantity of all the necessaries of life, (from there being larger quantities in the country), it would to all practical and useful purposes, be in fact *increased*.

(b) We frequently hear of what is termed the "monied interest," as a body in the country distinct from, and independent of, the landed interest. In the work above adverted to, it will be shewn of what the monied interest consists, where the population is in a natural and healthy state; and it will be seen that it is not, as generally supposed, an interest distinct from, and unconnected with, the landed interest; much less is it an interest, like that of the funded interest, if I may so call it, opposed, and highly injurious, to the landed interest.

and other articles of human sustenance, (or what has been termed "over-production"), *must increase*, and *not diminish the comforts and enjoyments of the labouring classes*; and indeed of all. We may, therefore, without the slightest hesitation conclude,—that the distress of the country in no wise proceeds from over-production.

With respect to the distress of the country arising from speculation, it is readily admitted, that partial and temporary distress must necessarily attend the failure of improvident speculation. The distress of the country, however, does not, speaking generally, arise from any such cause as that of speculation.—For what, in fact, is speculation, but employing a number of people, and expending a quantity of money upon some scheme or other? And are not food and support thereby given to those so employed, and is not distress for a time, at least, thereby kept from them, and also from their families?—for had they not been employed by the speculator they probably would not have been employed at all, and consequently must have depended for a miserable support upon the poor's rates. Even those idle schemes of which the country has lately heard so much, and from which, no doubt, much distress has arisen, even these schemes, though they have caused distress to some, yet they have no doubt been productive of advantage to others.—<sup>Through</sup> To the poor duped people who lost their money, (or in other words, the bread and other necessaries of life which they would have purchased with their money, and with which they would have supported themselves and their families), though some of these deluded people, no doubt, experienced distress, yet it will be recollected that their money (or the bread, &c., which their money would have procured

them, and from the *want* of which bread, &c., they suffered distress) got into the hands of those by whom they were duped, and was the means, for a time, at least, of keeping *them* from distress; as it enabled them to procure bread and other necessaries of life which they could not otherwise have procured: so that these speculations had, in fact, no other effect than that of transferring to one person (very improperly it will be admitted) a part of the money, and with it a part of the bread and other necessaries of life, belonging to another person.—In short, speculation, however unsuccessful, does not necessarily *occasion* DISTRESS, considering the word as applied to the country at large; but merely produces changes as to the persons upon whom, or the times at which, the distress may fall. Speculation, therefore, (such at least as the country has lately abounded with), neither occasions the distress of the country <sup>nor adds to</sup> ~~produces~~ the aggregate amount of it. But though speculation does not produce or even aggravate the distress of the country at large, yet the distress of the country has no doubt much to do *in producing speculation*; for many of the speculations we hear of are no doubt owing to the trade and commerce of the country being in a most unnatural state, occasioned by prohibiting trade in an article (corn) which the country stands in need of more than of any other—an article of trade, in fact, of primary importance to the country; and, without allowing a free trade in *it*, all the efforts of the country to extend its trade in other things will prove utterly unavailing, (as will be shewn by and by) and cannot produce the slightest mitigation of the distress of the country. From the restricted state of commerce (for our commerce is greatly short of what it ought to be, and of what it would be if the free importation of foreign corn was allowed), it does

not afford the means of acquiring fortunes, or even a comfortable subsistence, or even regular employment, to great numbers of those who are engaged in it: and from their not succeeding by the regular and proper modes of commercial enterprise, they resort to speculation; and often to speculations of the most desperate and ruinous kind. And yet if the trade <sup>of</sup> ~~and~~ commerce of the country was in the state in which it ought to be; viz. in a state commensurate to the population and to the wants and necessities of the people, leaving them to obtain whatever they wanted from any part of the world from which they could procure it, (and was the trade of the country in this state, I have little doubt but it would be nearly twice as great as it at present is),—was the trade <sup>of</sup> ~~and~~ commerce of the country in this state, no doubt but many, or most of those very men who are now unprincipled speculators, would be respectable and honourable merchants and traders, supporting themselves and their families in comfort, or even affluence; and would be channels through which *good* would be done to millions of their fellow-creatures: But all the advantages which would arise to themselves and to millions of others, was the commerce of the country in the state in which it ought to be, are unfortunately lost, owing to the erroneous notions which prevail with respect to the interests, or supposed interests, of certain classes of the people. It is to be hoped, however, that the time is not far distant when those erroneous notions will be dispelled, and all obstacles removed which stand in the way of the prosperity of the country and the happiness of the people;—both of which might, without doubt, be advanced to a height of which hardly a conception can be entertained; and with respect to Ireland, such would be the change

wrought in her, that the people of that unfortunate country would almost doubt their own identity (a). The means,

(a) A great deal has been written and said, as to the *cause* of the distress in Ireland. The cause is the same with the cause of the distress in England; viz. the want of a sufficiency of human sustenance for the *whole* of the people. The cause, however, exists in that unfortunate country to a *greater extent* than it does in this; that is, in proportion to the population, there is still a smaller quantity of bread and other articles of human sustenance in Ireland than in England; and this arises in no slight degree from large quantities of Irish corn, beef, and other articles of human sustenance, (which should remain in Ireland and be consumed by the Irish people), being sent to England and consumed by the English people. This is occasioned by the absenteeism of the Irish land-owners; therefore absenteeism, whatever Mr. M'Culloch and others may say to the contrary, is one cause, and no slight one, of the distress of Ireland. If the absentees did not bring their corn and their beef with them to give to English servants, English manufacturers, English upholsterers, English carpenters, English masons, &c.; or if with their corn and their beef they also brought over Irish servants, Irish manufacturers, &c., (but this they do not do) (a); in either case absenteeism would do little harm to the Irish people. But though Ireland suffers much from absenteeism, yet England is a gainer by it, and her distress much less than it otherwise would be. Mr. M'Culloch, in writing on the subject of Irish distress, appears to have forgotten the great and important circumstance of the absentees bringing the corn and the beef of Ireland with them, but leaving the people behind. If the corn and the beef were left behind as well as the people, then would absenteeism operate pretty much in the way contended for by Mr. M'Culloch, and would do little or no harm to the Irish people.

A great deal has been said about "investing capital," as it has been termed, in the manufactures of Ireland. In the first place, it may be observed, that this *investing of capital* (which is nothing more than buying a certain quantity of food, and giving it to a certain number of people who are employed about the manufactures) would have no effect whatever in lessening the distress of the country, *because it would not increase the quantity of food*; and it is clear that the *distress is only to be lessened by increasing*

(a) I am aware ~~that~~ there are a few Irish bricklayers and labourers in England; but they do not consume one-tenth part of the Irish corn and beef brought to England.—they only form a kind of set-off against the English soldiers quartered in Ireland.

too, of effecting this great change of producing so much of real happiness and prosperity to the country, are extremely ample—ample to an extent far beyond what is necessary; and what is of the greatest importance, whilst we were ourselves deriving such inestimable advantages from them, the whole world would participate in them; and thus prevent those envious and jealous feelings which nations are apt to entertain towards others which enjoy a greater share of happiness and prosperity than themselves.

Having, it is hoped, shewn that the distress of the country, (though springing *primarily* from heavy taxation, aided by a paper-money currency), does not at *present* proceed from either the one or the other of these causes, and consequently, that the distress would not be alle-

*the means of subsistence*. And, in the next place, who are to buy the manufactures when they are made?—The people of this country cannot buy them, for there is already as much manufactured as they have money (or rather food) to give in exchange for: and as to the Irish people buying them, where are their means of doing so? And as to the people of other countries taking them, even suppose they would do so, yet if the Irish are not to receive food or sustenance for them in return, what advantage, it may be asked, would arise to *them* from the extension of Irish manufactures?—Or supposing that the extension of manufactures in Ireland might partially mitigate the distress of that part of the kingdom, yet so far as it lessened it in Ireland, in the same degree it would increase it in England; for there cannot be an extension of Irish manufactures without a corresponding diminution of English manufactures. The investment of capital in Ireland in *improving agriculture* might, and, indeed, clearly would be of service; for by that means *the quantity of human sustenance would be increased*; which is the only thing to do good. All other kinds of investments, either in Ireland or in this country, will be of little or no avail towards lessening the distress, so long as the quantity of human sustenance is not increased. Allow foreign corn to be imported without restriction, and *then* investments in manufactures, both in Ireland and in this country, might doubtless be made with *great* advantage.

viated either by a reduction of taxation, or an alteration in the currency; and having also shewn, that the distress in no wise proceeds either from over-production of the necessaries of life, or from excessive speculation;—having in fact shewn, that the common notions entertained both as to the *causes* of the distress, and the *remedies* for it, are founded *in error*, it remains to point out what is the real cause of the distress, and the true and only remedy for it.

The cause of the distress has been already more than once incidentally adverted to; viz., *an insufficiency of food, or human sustenance*; in other words, that the country does not possess a sufficiency of food for the **WHOLE** of the people. This being the case, a portion of them must of necessity be without a sufficiency; and an insufficiency of food is necessarily accompanied by an insufficiency of clothes, and all the other necessaries and comforts of life. An insufficiency of articles so essential to health and comfort, must unavoidably occasion "*distress*." All the above consequences necessarily follow the want of a sufficiency of food. The cause of the distress being ascertained, the nature of the *remedy* is perfectly obvious. It may be proper, however, to ascertain how far the opinion—"that the country does not possess a sufficiency of food for the *whole* of the people," is a sound one; for upon such being the fact, or otherwise, the nature of the remedy for the distress must of course depend. That the population of the country has of late years increased, and increased very greatly, is a point upon which no proof is necessary:—the fact is universally admitted. Whether the increase has or has not been occasioned in the way I have mentioned, viz., by the operation of taxation, is, for the present purpose of no importance: but that it has increased, and greatly increased within the

last twenty or thirty years, is too clear to admit of any doubt (*a*). Now, unless the quantity of human sustenance

(*a*) The circumstance of the population of the country being greatly increased has been frequently brought forward as a proof of the flourishing condition of the people. An increase however of population, where such increase is produced by the means by which the increase of the population of this country has been produced, is no evidence of the general flourishing condition of the country. The increase was produced by the flourishing condition of a *part* of the people, and not of the whole:—by the flourishing condition of vast numbers of government contractors; and of great numbers of persons who held situations under the government (civil and military) of great emolument; and by the flourishing condition of vast numbers of persons connected with them, and who derived large incomes through them. The flourishing condition of all these, (and whose flourishing condition it will be recollected was produced by the large incomes they received out of the taxes), enabled them to marry and have families, (which, with many of them, would otherwise have not been the case), and enabled them to give fortunes to their children, and thereby enabled *them* also to marry and have families. To this flourishing condition of a part of the people, the great increase of the population is to be principally ascribed. In the work so often adverted to, it is shewn how an increase of population has been produced by means of heavy taxation, not only amongst those who held ~~the~~ lucrative situations, but that by a necessary and inevitable consequence the effect was extended to all those who derived their support from them, even down to their domestic servants. But although the increase of the population is clearly to be ascribed to the flourishing state of a *part* of the people, yet it is equally clear that the flourishing state of this portion of the people, was produced at the expense of great privations to another portion of them;—and the ultimate effect of the flourishing state of a *part* of the people, at the expense of the other part, has been to increase the population in an *unnatural* manner, and thereby make it far exceed the means of support afforded by the country; and as an inevitable consequence, to involve a very large portion of the people in great distress. Happily, however, the means exist by which they may be relieved from it; and no doubt the government will speedily avail itself of them; for the well known character of those at the head of affairs, though they may hitherto have been in error as to the cause of the distress, and would necessarily err as to the remedy for it, yet when once satisfied as to the cause, no doubt they will readily see the remedy, and will, with equal readiness, apply it.

(or means of supporting the population), has increased in the same ratio or proportion with the increase of the population, the conclusion must be, that "the country does *not* possess a sufficiency of human sustenance for the *whole* of the people;" for, I believe, it is well known, that twenty or thirty years ago the quantity of food was not then by any means *too much* for the people; and if the quantity *then* was not too much, and if the population since that time has increased in a *greater* ratio than that in which the means of subsistence has increased, the necessary result is, that the people of the present day have *NOT* a *sufficiency of food*. Whether, however, the population has or has not increased in a greater proportion than the means of supporting it, may perhaps best be ascertained by a comparison of the general condition of the labouring classes, (not of the upper classes), with what it was twenty or thirty years ago. It is not, however, my intention to adduce any evidence as to their relative conditions at the respective periods I have mentioned; nor is there perhaps any necessity to do so; for I believe it is admitted, on all sides, that the general condition of the labouring classes is now much worse than it was thirty years ago; or in other words, that a labourer now has not so much bread, meat, and the other necessaries of life for the support of himself and his family as he had thirty years since. Now, if this is the fact, (and I suppose it will not be questioned), ~~to~~ what are we to ascribe it to but this,—viz., that there is not so much ~~of~~ bread, meat, and other necessaries of life in the country, for each and every person, as there was thirty years ago; consequently, that ~~the~~ bread, meat, and other articles of human sustenance, have not increased in the same degree in which the population has increased; for, had they kept pace

with each other, then, as a natural, and indeed inevitable consequence, (as is clearly shewn in the work so frequently adverted to), every additional individual would have received his share of the additional food; and the aggregate mass of food would have been distributed amongst the aggregate body of people, just in the same proportions as the aggregate mass of food was distributed amongst the aggregate body of the people previous to there being any such increase either of the one or the other. The circumstance, therefore, of the labouring classes of the people not receiving now so much bread and meat, and other necessaries of life, as the same classes received thirty years ago, affords conclusive evidence that *there is not a sufficiency of human sustenance for the whole of the people*. Indeed, it is not at all likely that there should:—Within the last thirty years the population has perhaps *nearly doubled*; yet can any one, for a moment, suppose that the quantity of corn and other articles of human food has nearly doubled also? It is clear it has not; for though the science of agriculture has somewhat improved, (at least in some parts of the country), and though considerable quantities of waste lands have been brought into cultivation, (though, it will be recollected they were, generally speaking, of a bad quality, and not capable of affording much additional human sustenance), yet against these increased sources of human sustenance must be set the drawbacks occasioned by the vast increase of carriage, and pleasure, and other horses, (perhaps there are four times the number there were thirty years ago, when oxen were much used for agricultural purposes in many parts of the kingdom), which require great quantities of land to be appropriated for raising grass, hay, and corn for them; and also the drawbacks occasioned by the additional parks and plea-

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sure-grounds belonging to the great numbers of families raised by the late war, as well as the no trifling quantities of land taken for building upon, making new roads, canals, &c. We may, therefore, very safely come to the conclusion, that the quantity of human sustenance raised in the country, though no doubt increased, has not by any means increased in the same proportion in which the population has increased. Besides, too, it will be recollected, that the country till within these few years, in addition to the corn, &c., produced at home, frequently imported large quantities from abroad; therefore, taking the present population, and the means of supporting it, and comparing them with the population of former periods and the means of support then possessed by the country, and no doubt the result would be greatly to the disadvantage of the people of the present times; and that it would be found, that the labouring classes (and they constitute the great bulk of the people) of the present times are receiving individually a much smaller quantity of food, and consequently a much smaller quantity of all the other necessaries of life (a) than each individual of the same classes received thirty years ago. But perhaps more has been said to establish the correctness of this position than was at all neces-

(a) The abundance in which every one possesses clothes, furniture, and all the other necessaries and conveniences of life, depends altogether upon the quantity of food which he possesses over and above what is sufficient for his own consumption. If a labouring man only receives in return for his labour as much food as is barely sufficient for his own consumption, (and it is the same thing if he receives only as much money for his labour as will purchase a bare sufficiency of food for his own consumption), what has he got to give to the manufacturer for cloth to make him clothes? What has he to give to the carpenter or mason for building or repairing his house? What to the upholsterer for furniture, or for the various other things of which he stands in need?

sary; for it will no doubt be readily admitted, that it is of little or no consequence whether the labouring classes of the present day are or are not, as well fed, as well clothed, and as comfortably lodged, as the same classes were who lived thirty years ago. On which side soever the advantage in this respect may lie is, abstractedly, of very little moment. The only question of any real importance, either as regards the interests of the country generally, or of the labouring classes in particular, is—*are the labouring classes as well off as they ought to be?* have they as much wholesome food, and as much comfortable clothing as they ought to have, and, as with due attention to their interests, they *might* have? Are the houses they live in as comfortable, and as well furnished as they ought to be, and, as with a proper regard to their welfare, they might be? These are the inquiries which should be made; and having made them with the care and diligence, which their importance demands, it can hardly be doubted but the conclusion we must come to is,—that the labouring classes are *not* so well fed, and *not* so well clothed, and that their houses are *not* so good, and *not* so well furnished as they ought to be. I say as they *ought to be*, because it is clear, that in all these respects their situation might be greatly improved; and as it *might* be improved, can it be doubted but it *ought* to be improved; more especially, as an improvement in their condition would be attended with most important advantages to the country at large,—by increasing its power and strength, and resting its security and independence upon a firmer basis. But it would appear to be thought by some, that there is not any thing that can properly be called "*distress*" in the country; or at least that it is very partial, or only temporary, and not experienced by any great number of the people; and the



flourishing state of the revenue is adduced in support of this opinion. But a flourishing state of the revenue, and the existence of great distress amongst the people at one and the same time, may easily be accounted for. The flourishing state of the revenue arises from the consumption of articles of luxury by the opulent part of the community; for no one supposes that all the people are in a state of poverty and distress. On the contrary, the number of people of fortune, or opulence, of people in fact within whose reach articles of luxury are placed, is perhaps three times as great as it was thirty years ago; and this increase has been produced by the very means (taxation) <sup>have</sup> (a) by which poverty and distress ~~has~~ been produced amongst such numbers. If then there are three times the number of people who

(a) That taxation has been the means of producing such a vast increase of people of fortune is perfectly clear. Of the numerous fund-holders, (many of them possessed of great wealth, that is, in receipt of large incomes out of the TAXES), most of them have acquired such wealth out of the taxes. A great government contractor, for instance, (who of course received the price of his contract out of the taxes), lent his gains upon such contract to the government, by taking a share in some loan, or by buying scrip or omnium. So the admiral, or general, or place-holder, who did not nearly expend the whole of his income, (an income received out of the taxes), in like manner lent the surplus of it to the government; and the same was the case with numerous merchants, manufacturers, and tradesmen, who lent to the government their increased gains, arising from the employment they received from the contractors, and admirals, and place-holders, &c.: so that the whole, or nearly the whole of the national debt has, in fact, arisen in the way just noticed; and when we consider the length of the late war, and the large sums raised in taxes, and the large incomes which vast numbers of persons, year after year, received out of them, (and one half or more of which they probably lent again to the government the following year), when we consider all these things, we shall not be much surprised at the great magnitude of the debt. As the above subject, however, is fully entered into in the work before adverted to, I shall not say any thing further upon it here.

indulge in articles of luxury, which there were thirty years ago, is it at all surprising that there should be a great additional consumption of articles of luxury, or that a large revenue should arise from the duties on such articles? (a). But as the consumption of such articles may be, and in the present instance clearly is, by a part of the community only, their consumption by a part of the community, though an evidence of that part being in a state of ease and comfort, affords no evidence of the other part being in a similar state. No doubt, however, but the flourishing state of the revenue is to be ascribed, in some degree at least, to the consumption of articles of luxury (though the very lowest on the scale of such articles, as rum, gin, inferior teas, coarse sugars, &c.), even by those who are the most distressed. But so far as the flourishing state of the revenue arises from the consumption of such articles of luxury as these, its flourishing state arises, not from the affluence and ease of the people, but from their very poverty and distress. How many poor people, in fact, live almost entirely upon tea, because they have not the means of procuring meat, milk, and other wholesome kinds of food. It is their poverty which compels them to live upon tea, therefore all the duties arising from the teas and sugars they consume, are clearly so much taken from their poverty, and not

(a) The increased commerce of the country may be accounted for in the same way. If, however, all the people, instead of a part of them, were in a state of ease and comfort, both the revenue and the trade of the country would be in a much more flourishing condition than they are. It is true, they are now more flourishing, or in other words more considerable than they were thirty years ago; but they are flourishing from unnatural causes, from causes which have produced great distress to millions. But were all the people in a state of ease and comfort, then would the revenue and commerce not only be much more flourishing even than at present, but they would flourish from natural causes,—causes from which alone a flourishing state of the revenue and of commerce is to be desired.

from their abundance. How many poor people spend their few pence in gin or other ardent spirits, in order to cheer and warm themselves when suffering from the want of a sufficiency of wholesome food and comfortable clothing?—yet is not all that arises to the revenue from such sources as these, so much taken from the very poverty of the people? Much, too, of the duties arising from spirituous liquors, tobacco, porter, ale, and things of the like kind, arise from the wages of those who resort to the ale-house, because their homes, from fireless hearths, from wretched furniture, from naked, starving children, are unpleasant and irksome to them; and they fly from these evils to the comforts, as they think them, of the ale-house; thereby, doubtless, aggravating the evils they before endured:—but can the excise-duties arising from what these deluded men spend in ardent spirits and idleness be considered as arising from their superabundance? Clearly not. If, however, all these poor people did not give a part of their food (for this is the true way of putting the thing) for gin, teas, &c., (a); what, it may be asked, would become of those who are supported by means of the food which they receive in exchange for such articles? The fact is, that spirituous liquors, teas, &c., are the means by which some procure food and the other necessaries of life, who would otherwise be without them. An unfortunate thing, certainly, that one man should be supported, as it were, out of the very poverty of another; but such is clearly the case. Ardent spirits, teas, &c., are only so many means or contrivances (bad ones it will readily be admitted) by which

(a) Giving the money with which they should have bought food and other necessaries of life, is in reality exactly the same thing as if they possessed so much bread and other articles of human sustenance, and had given them in exchange for gin, tea, &c.

the necessaries of life get distributed amongst a greater number of people than (from the circumstance of there not being a sufficiency for the *whole* of them) they would otherwise get distributed amongst; and the consequence is, that the country contains a greater number of half-starved persons than it would do if none gave their food in lieu of spirituous liquors, and things of the like nature; but then such are the means by which many are prevented from being *actually starved* (a). But enough, perhaps, has been said to shew that the revenue may be in a very flourishing state, and yet that great numbers of the people may be in a state of great distress. To attempt, however, to prove either the affirmative or negative of the question under consideration, (viz. whether great numbers of the people are, or are not, in a state of poverty and distress), by a resort to reasoning on theoretical grounds, when we have the certain means of coming at the fact, is perhaps not the wisest mode of proceeding. If therefore any doubt can be entertained, either as to the fact of great numbers

(a) Gin-shops, ale-houses, &c., though evidently productive of evil to those who part with their food and other necessaries of life in lieu of such things as spirituous liquors, are clearly productive of benefit to those who receive food and the other necessaries of life by means of them. Those who give a part of their bread and other necessaries of life (or their money, which is the same thing) in exchange for teas, gin, &c. in fact supply the persons who sell such articles, and also their servants, and the various other persons connected with them, with the necessaries of life. So, too, such necessaries of life as are given to the government in the shape of duties on spirituous liquors, teas, &c., go to support the fund-holders, place-holders, &c., and their servants and others connected with them. I will not say that a better mode of distributing the necessaries of life which the country produces, might not be hit upon:—The only object, however, of the present note is to shew, that such articles as ardent spirits, tea, sugars, &c., are the means by which a part of the necessaries of life get distributed; and the means, like taxation, by which many procure the necessaries of life who might otherwise be without them.



of the people being in a state of distress, or as to the cause of such distress, such doubt may easily be removed: and this, perhaps, would best be done by ascertaining the *number* of the people of Great Britain and Ireland, and by ascertaining what is the annual quantity of flour, meat, and other articles of wholesome food which, on the average, the country produces (*a*). Then let it be determined what is a sufficiency of wholesome food for each individual, (man, woman, and child), for the space of twelve months, or any other given period of time. By these means it will be ascertained whether the quantity of human sustenance produced in the country is sufficient for the comfortable and proper support of the *whole* of the people. If the result of the inquiry should shew, that there is *not* a sufficiency for the *whole*, then must it be clear, that the want of a sufficiency of food for the *whole* of the people, must cause *a part* of them to be without a sufficiency of food, and also without a sufficiency of the other necessaries of life (*b*):

(*a*) Such portion of the oats, barley, potatoes, &c., as ~~is~~ not made use of as *human sustenance*, (a large portion being consumed (or perhaps rather *wasted*) in distilleries, and another large portion consumed by horses, cows, pigs, &c.), should be deducted from the aggregate quantity of such articles, and the surplus only considered as the portion consumed by the people.

(*b*) As every one, in order to the comfortable support of life, requires many things in addition to mere food or sustenance, it follows, that in order to obtain such things, the wages of every labouring man should enable him to procure, not only a sufficiency of *food* for the consumption of himself and his family, but also a sufficiency of the various other things which he stands in need of. With a view, therefore, to the comfortable condition of the labouring classes, it would seem to be of great importance to ascertain,—what amount of wages an active, able labourer in husbandry, manufactures, or otherwise, ought to receive. We will suppose him to be a married man, and to have a wife and four children, none of them capable of contributing to their own support: This is a situation in which numbers of labouring men are placed. Some have much larger families, and some, no doubt, smaller; but a middle case seems

—*a part* of the people must therefore necessarily experience "*distress*;" and this distress must consequently be ascribed to the circumstance of *there not being a sufficiency of food for the whole of the people*.—And the distress it may

to be the proper one, as the basis or ground of an inquiry like the present. Where a man has four children, all incapable of contributing to their own support, his wife must have sufficient to do to attend to her children; she must, therefore, be unable to contribute any thing to the support either of herself or her children. The question then is,—what wages, according to the present value of money, ought an active, good labourer to receive in order to support himself and his family, (consisting of a wife and four young children), in that state of comfort in which they ought to be supported?—I say in that state of comfort in which they *ought* to be supported; because I feel well satisfied that every active, able, labourer *might*, and under a proper state of things would, support himself and his family in a state of great comfort, and *that* without the least injury to the interests of the other classes of society, or to the general interests of the country; but, on the contrary, with decided advantage to the interests of all:—but this being a subject pretty fully entered into in the work before adverted to, it may be unnecessary to say more upon it at present.

To enable a labourer with a family, consisting of a wife and four children (*a*), to support himself and his family in a state of comfort, his wages should not be less, in London and large towns, than six shillings a day. A man, his wife, and four children, to support them comfortably should have at least one quarter loaf and two pounds of meat a day, which at the present prices would come to two shillings and fourpence a day. As to milk, vegetables, butter, sugar, tea, and beer, the daily consumption of these articles by a man, his wife, and four children, could not be less, (allowing them such a quantity as they ought to have in order to their comfortable support), than a pint of milk, three pounds of potatoes, a quarter of a pound of butter, about three ounces of sugar, half an ounce of tea, and one pot of beer or porter. These articles, at their present prices, would cost about one shilling and sixpence a day: so that the food of a man, his wife, and four children, would cost three shillings and ten pence a day, or near seventy pounds a year. The quantity of food I have mentioned will be found, upon inquiry, not to be more than sufficient for the comfortable

(*a*) Where a man has more than four children, all incapable of supporting themselves, additional means of support would be necessary, and for which provision might be made in the way hereinafter pointed out.

be observed, is not confined to such a *proportion* of the people as constitute the surplus over and above the number for which there is a sufficiency of food, but embraces *almost the whole of the labouring classes*; by reason that each

support of six persons; one of them, it will be recollected, a hard-working person, and who therefore ought to live well. The allowance of bread is not more than a quarter loaf a day for six persons, or about three quarters of a pound a day for each person; and not much more than a quarter of a pound of meat for each person, and not much more (in money) than two pence half-penny a day for each person for milk; butter, tea, sugar, beer, and vegetables. It is true, that four of the six persons are children; and unless they were so, it would be utterly impossible that the quantity of food I have allotted to six persons, could support them in any comfort. After thus providing for the food of a labouring man and his family, what remains of his wages must be applied in payment of house-rent, fuel, clothes for himself, his wife, and four children, and all the various other little things which he stands in need of. What he has left for those purposes, amounts to scarcely thirty pounds a year. Of this sum, house-rent, or unfurnished lodgings, (to have a place fit for a human being to live in—for most of the houses and lodgings of the labouring classes in London, and other large towns, are *not* fit for human beings to live in), would take at least fifteen pounds, and coal about five pounds; leaving not ten pounds a year, (which is in fact too little), for clothes, candles, soap, repairs and renewal of furniture, &c. From the above statement it would appear that for a labourer, with a wife and four children, to support himself and his family in any thing like comfort, his daily wages, according to the present value of money, ought not to be less in large towns than six shillings a day, or nearly one hundred pounds a year. In the country, wages from about four shillings to five shillings a day, might be equivalent to six shillings in large towns. If the prices of provisions were higher or lower than at present, the wages of a labouring man should increase or fall accordingly. They should always be sufficient to enable him to purchase about four quarter loaves, and four pounds of good meat a day. Of these quantities, his wife and children would consume what was equivalent to one quarter loaf, and two pounds of meat; and supposing the exchange of commodities to be affected by barter, instead of through the medium of money, the other half would be given, partly to the person of whom he rented his house; partly to the manufacturer who manufactured the cloth of which the clothes of himself, his wife, and children were made; partly to the tailor

individual of these classes gets pretty nearly the same quantity of employment, (some getting a few days or few weeks employment at one time, and others at another time), and by means of such employment, obtaining nearly the same

who made his clothes; partly to the coal merchant from whom he obtained his fuel; partly to the upholsterer, or carpenter, of whom he procures his furniture; partly to the person of whom he procures his teas, sugars, soap, and various other articles of which he stands in need.—So that to the comfortable support of a man, his wife, and four children, his wages ought not to be less, in money, than what was equivalent to the purchase of four quarter loaves, and four pounds of meat. *daily*

When a labouring man has a wife and more than four young children, their situation must be less comfortable (at least so far as depends upon his wages), than where his family is smaller. It would not however be possible to regulate every man's wages according to the number of his family. But though his wages would not afford the means of supporting himself, his wife, and his children, so comfortably where his family is large, yet as the wages of single men, and of men with small families, would be more than sufficient for their comfortable support, a fund might, and ought to be formed out of their surplus wages, in order to meet the exigencies of a larger family, or of sickness, or old age; but this is a subject more fully noticed in speaking of the wages of single men.

As the wages of a labouring man with a wife and family ought not to be less than what I have mentioned, so the wages of a single man must necessarily be the same. It is true the expenses of a single man (I mean necessary and unavoidable expenses), must be much less than those of a married man with a family; but in the first place it would be impossible, or next to impossible, to make a difference between the wages of a married man, and the wages of a single man; and in the next place, no public or individual advantage would arise from it; therefore the wages of the single man must be the same with the wages of the married man. The single man who receives as much in wages as the married man, instead of giving a part of such wages to a wife and children, another part in house-rent, &c. as the married man does, is enabled to wear better clothes, shoes, &c., and more of them, than the married man can, therefore the manufacturer, the tailor, the shoemaker, &c., receives that portion of the single man's wages, which in the case of the married man are received by his wife and children. So too, the brewer probably receives a greater portion of the single man's wages than he does of the married man's. The

quantity of food; but that, unfortunately, a very insufficient one.

Perhaps, however, the inquiry which has been suggested by the government also, in duties upon porter, ale, spirituous liquors, &c., most likely receives more of the single man's wages than of the married man's; therefore, though the single man receives as much in wages, (or in other words as much of the necessaries of life as the married man does, though without the same absolute necessity for it), yet in fact, his doing so is no positive injury to society. The single man, like the married man, after he has consumed what is necessary for his own support, gives the residue to others. The married man gives the residue of his, partly to his wife and children, and partly to the person of whom he rents his house, &c.: the single man gives the residue of his to the manufacturer, the tailor, &c.: still each of them, after consuming what he wants, hands over or transfers the residue to some of his fellow creatures who are supported by it. In the case, however, of the single man, nothing could be more advantageous, with reference to the time of his becoming a married man, than to lay by a part of his wages in order to provide for the demands of a family, for old age, sickness, &c. This *laying by* of a part of his wages, (even if such wages instead of consisting of money, consisted of articles of food and sustenance), would occasion no injury to society; for it would not be the means of abstracting or taking away any portion of the food or sustenance of the country; for as much as was laid by, by the single man, would be brought out and consumed by the exigencies of the married one.—Perhaps there could be no objection to *oblige* every single man to contribute a certain portion of his wages to a fund for such purpose.

That the wages of labour should be adequate to the comfortable support of the labourer, (for "the labourer is worthy of his hire"), is not only a matter of great moment to the labouring classes themselves, but is a matter of great importance to the well-being of society at large. Nothing is better calculated to prevent a redundant population than liberal wages to the labouring classes; for nothing more effectually produces a miserable, wretched, and "unnatural" population, than making a quantity of food and clothing sufficient only for *one* person serve *two or three*. On the other hand, nothing will so surely produce a happy, healthy, contented, and industrious people, as their having plenty of wholesome food, good clothing, and comfortable residences. Every humane man, every wise politician, every good government, must wish to see the labouring classes possessed of an abundance of the necessaries and com-

gested might safely be dispensed with; for the fact of there being, and of there having been for some years past, great distress in the country, is but too well known.

forts of life. In countries where such is the case, order, tranquillity, good morals, religion, intelligence, physical power, love of country, and every other virtue will prevail. The want of all these excellent qualities ~~is~~ found amongst a people ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-lodged.

If too the labourer is possessed of the comforts of life, (and it is quite clear he ought to be possessed of them), if he has a sufficiency of wholesome food for himself and his family, if himself and his family have comfortable clothing, and a comfortable well-furnished house, perhaps the labourer (at least the labourer in all healthy employments, and unhealthy ones should be lessened as much as possible, and every thing done to render them less unhealthy), enjoys as much, or perhaps even more happiness than the man of large fortune. Where too a country contains a sufficiency of good, wholesome food for *all* the people, not only does every one obtain a sufficiency of food, (and under a proper distribution of it also a sufficiency of all the other necessaries and comforts of life *(a)*), but what is perhaps little considered by most people, the humblest person in the country actually has as much for his own individual consumption, as the owner of the largest estates in it,—not, it is admitted, of quite so delicate a kind; but if what he has is good and wholesome, (and which it *clearly ought to be*, and no doubt would be, where there was an ample sufficiency for *all*), he has probably as much real enjoyment of life, and is in fact as happy, as the richest person in the kingdom. Perhaps an objection might be urged against adding so greatly to the comforts of the labouring classes, viz. that it would induce early marriages, and would thereby be the means of increasing population too fast, and again occasion poverty and distress. This however is clearly an objection which need not be made for years to come; and "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Why indeed should the people of the *present times* be kept in a state of distress, if they can be freed from it, merely because their posterity, two or three hundred years hence may *possibly* happen to get into the same state? But only free commerce from all injudicious restrictions, and generations may pass away before a redundant population (or population too large

(a) The distribution of the food or sustenance of a country, or, in other words, the way in which people spend their incomes, is a matter of great importance to the well-being of society. In the work so frequently adverted to, the subject will receive some consideration.

Into what part of the kingdom can we go, (and in Ireland the case is much worse), without seeing the most striking proofs of want and wretchedness?—not in solitary instances, but in instances extremely numerous. Of those who are in distress, no doubt some are in much greater distress than others. Perhaps, however, it is not going much beyond the truth to assert, that the *distressed part* of the community comprises a majority of the people of Great Britain and Ireland; that is, that a majority of the people have not a sufficiency of wholesome food, have not a sufficiency of comfortable clothing, and have bad, uncomfortable, ill-furnished houses; and all clearly ascribable to the circumstance of the country not possessing a sufficiency of food for the *whole* of the people; for where there

for the means of supporting it) will be complained of. Means, however, when the time arrived for their adoption, would be easily devised to check early and improvident marriages. Besides, is there any well-founded reason for thinking that people in a situation of ease and comfort, and who are more reflecting, and more intelligent, and more moral than those in a contrary situation, are more likely to marry early than if they were in a situation of poverty and distress? How is the case with reference to Ireland and Scotland? But if the checks on industry and commerce are only removed, a century or two hence may be quite soon enough to think of imposing checks on population. The subject of this note may be concluded by observing, that the condition of the labouring classes might be greatly improved by the judicious employment of children, in making many articles which would contribute to the convenience and comfort of the labouring classes, as stockings, shoes, &c. So all who received parochial relief, (though soon after the adoption of the measures recommended below, there would be few who would stand in need of any such assistance), should be employed in making articles of furniture, &c., which might either be sold cheap, or given to those who had large families.—In short, all who are provided with food by others, ought to be employed in producing something or other by which their own comforts and the comforts and convenience of their fellow creatures might be increased.

is a sufficiency for *all, there*, by an unerring law of nature, *all* obtain a sufficiency; except perhaps the idle and the profligate. The existence of the distress being undoubted, and assuming the cause of it to be the want of a sufficiency of food for the *whole* of the people, the next thing to be inquired into, is the REMEDY for the distress. The remedy, however, is too obvious to require pointing out; it clearly consists in a *larger* supply of food or human sustenance. The only question, therefore, is,—can the remedy *be procured*; or, in other words, can such an additional quantity of human sustenance be procured, as to provide for the wants of all the people? Had the population of the world been ten times as large as it is, in that case there might have been the more difficulty in answering the question:—as it is, there can be none. It is too clear to admit of a shadow of doubt, that an additional supply of human sustenance to an amount much greater than we stand in need of might soon be obtained. It may be obtained at home by means of the general adoption of a better system of agriculture; it may be obtained from our colonies and possessions abroad; it may be obtained from the United States of America, from Poland and from other countries of Europe. It is not meant to be said, that it may be *immediately* obtained in any or all of these ways, or from any or all of these places; but, as our own country and all the others, possess sources from which such supply may be obtained, it only requires the adoption of the proper means to obtain it, and in a very little time we should be sure of having it. As it would, however, be obtained the soonest from abroad; and as the distress of the country should be relieved with as little delay as possible, to obtain it from foreign countries would appear to

be preferable to any other way of obtaining it (*a*); for, whilst we were receiving from them an article of which we stand in much need, they in return would be receiving from us various articles, (as glass, hardware, silks, cottons, linens, woollens, sugars, rums, spices, and various other things, the produce of our skill, industry, and colonies), many of which would be almost as useful to them as their corn would be to us. We will, however, take a brief view of the probable, or, it may be rather said, of the natural and certain advantages which would arise to all parties from the free, unrestrained admission of foreign corn. The *objections* which have been made to the adoption of such a measure will be then noticed, and it will be shewn how utterly untenable and unsound those objections are.

With a view to a more clear demonstration of the advantages which would arise from the free, unrestrained admission of foreign corn, it may be proper to observe, that the commerce and manufactures of a country are necessarily limited by the amount, NOT of the money (*b*), but of the

(*a*) Without resorting to foreign countries, the distress of the country might, no doubt, soon be put an end to. We have vast resources within ourselves, in the better cultivation of our lands, and an improved system of agriculture. From our colonies and foreign possessions, too, no doubt large supplies of corn might be readily obtained. But it might be more wise and politic to receive such supplies from the different countries of Europe, and from America; for, whilst we were receiving benefits *from* them in receiving their corn, we should be conferring corresponding benefits *upon* them in supplying them with various articles of utility of which they stand in need; and an intercourse thus mutually advantageous would produce relations of amity, from which the happiest consequences might result; and which might be the means, in no slight degree, of putting an end to war, that scourge of mankind, and disgrace to a Christian world.

(*b*) Commerce, though carried on through the medium of money, is, in fact, the exchange of one article for another.

human food or sustenance which such country possesses. Any attempt to force the commerce or manufactures of a country beyond these limits must be utterly unavailing; and therefore all hope of our manufactures and commerce being freed from their present embarrassments, or rather all hope of any extension of our manufactures and commerce, so long as there is no increase of the quantity of human food or sustenance, must be completely groundless. If the French, or any other nation should wish to take twenty times the quantity of our manufactures which they now take, yet the thing is completely impracticable till the quantity of food is greatly increased (*a*); for the French cannot take our manufactures unless we in return take their wines: and the reasoning equally applies to every other thing (except corn or food) received from foreign countries. And even if they did take twenty times the quantity, but did not give us *food* in return for it, (the very thing,—indeed, the only thing we stand in so much need of), what benefit would arise to us from the extension of our manufactures? It is evident however, that whilst the quantity of human food is stationary, we cannot extend our manufactures, or increase our consumption of wines, unless indeed by means of taxation operating upon the labouring classes, and giving the money raised by means of such taxation to place-holders, &c.; but that the government will not resort to any such means as this to increase our commerce or to extend our manufactures must be perfectly clear. We will put a case by

(*a*) The like observation will equally apply to trade in every article, and with every country; and whether direct or indirect will make no difference: I believe it may be safely asserted, that it is impossible to shew the contrary.

way of illustration of the position,—that manufactures and commerce cannot be extended beyond the limits prescribed by the quantity of human sustenance which the country possesses. Suppose I am a great land-owner, and am possessed of a certain quantity of corn, (I will put corn for all kinds of human sustenance): A part of this corn I consume myself, another part is consumed by my family and servants, another part I give to the coachbuilder who builds my carriages, another part to the carpenter who repairs my houses, another part to the manufacturer who manufactures the silks, cottons, linens, hardware, &c., as well those which are made use of by myself and my family, as those which I send to France, (through the medium of the merchant), in exchange for the wines I consume. Thus, I distribute the *whole* of my corn (*a*). The portion of corn which I give to the manufacturer for the cottons, hardware, &c., sent to France in exchange for wines, is *all* I can possibly part with for that purpose, without taking something from that portion which I give to my servants, to the coachbuilder, carpenters, &c.; and this, from a regard to my other wants and comforts, I of course, do not think of. It is therefore clear, that although the French might gladly take twice the quantity of hardware, and other manufactures which I send them, and give me twice the quantity of their wine in return, yet I have it not in my power to make any addition to the quantity I send them; for I can only procure the hardware and other manufactures which I send them by giving a certain

(*a*) Though a man of large landed property distributes the produce of his lands through the medium of money, yet the corn, the beef, and other articles produced by his lands, are in reality the things which he gives to his servants, the carpenters, the masons, the manufacturers, and the various other persons whom he employs.

portion of my corn to the manufacturer, in exchange for the silks, cottons, hardwares, &c.; and as I have no more corn to give him, I can receive no more of his manufactures; consequently, I can send no more to France, and by a necessary consequence, I can receive no more French wines; for the French will not send me their wines, unless I send them something in return for them. Manufacturers, therefore, with all their machinery, can only make as much of any manufacture as is equivalent to the quantity of human food which can be given to them by the owners of such food, in exchange for such manufactures. In fact, the manufacturer, like the carpenter, or mason, is a person employed by the owner of the food (*a*); and to the extent of the food which he receives from the owner of it, to that extent and no further he manufactures for him; it being, in fact, impossible to go further. Upon the amount, therefore, of human food which each person can give to the manufacturer, the amount of the thing manufactured must entirely depend; and this is the case whether such person consumes the manufactures himself, or sends them abroad for something which he receives in exchange for them. Without therefore an increased quantity of human sustenance, a boundary appears to be set to our manufactures, which all the ingenuity of our manufacturers cannot possibly make them pass (*b*): And not only is this the case

(*a*) It is *food* which is given to the workman in return for the labour which he bestows in manufacturing silks, cottons, &c.—it is food, therefore, which is in fact given in exchange for silks, cottons, &c. In short, it is *food* or *human sustenance* (as will be clearly shewn in the work before adverted to), which is the means by which almost every other thing is procured.

(*b*) It is true, that improvements in machinery may enable the manufacturer to give the land-owner a greater quantity of silk, cotton, or other manufactured article, in return for the food he receives from the land-owner, than he could otherwise have given him. The quantity given,



with respect to manufactures, but it is equally the case with respect to the produce of our colonies; for my consumption of sugars, spices, &c., is as much limited by the quantity of human food which I have to give in exchange for them, either immediately or through the medium of the

however, though it may be greater than was given before, must still be limited by the quantity of food which the land-owner is enabled to part with in exchange for silks, cottons, &c. But if the master-manufacturer, by means of machinery, lessens the number of his workmen, then most likely the land-owner will not be able to obtain *more* silks or any other manufactured article than he did before the improvements in machinery were made; for though he will now, for a *smaller* quantity of food, obtain a quantity of silks, &c. *equal* to what he before obtained for a *greater* quantity of food, yet he will have the discharged labouring manufacturers to support, either under the denomination of paupers, or by affording them some kind of employment or other; so that all the food which he saves by obtaining silks, cottons, &c., for a less quantity of food than he did before, must be given to the discharged manufacturers, and not to the master-manufacturer for an increased quantity of his manufactures: so that in the case put, the land-owner would be no gainer by improvements in machinery used in manufactures, nor would the manufacturer either. But the subject under consideration is one upon which it may not be necessary to say much; for in the first place, the machinery used in our manufactures is brought to such a state of perfection as to afford little scope for improvement, consequently there can be no great hope that our manufactures and commerce can be increased by means of improvements in machinery; and in the next place, even if the machinery was capable of improvement, and if by reason of such improvement, silks, cottons, and other manufactures could be obtained at a less price than at present, still this would not increase the quantity of food (*which is the thing wanted*), except, perhaps, to a very trifling extent; as some of the land-owners, if they got their linens, silks, &c., for less money (or food) than they before obtained them, might perhaps lay out what they thus saved in making improvements in agriculture.—Some might do this, and others might lay out what they so saved in buying great quantities of silks, &c. It would seem, however, to be pretty clear, that there is no probability of any such improvements taking place in manufacturing machinery, as to afford the slightest reason to suppose, that the country has to expect any remedy for its distress from any such source as *that of improvements in manufacturing machinery.*

manufacturer, (no matter which), as the consumption of French wines is limited from the same cause. But increase the quantity of human sustenance, let myself and the rest of the people have more food than we now have, and in that case our manufactures and our foreign commerce would immediately increase; for then have the owners of such increased quantities of food more to give in exchange for manufactures; and through the medium of manufactures, (or at least principally so), for wines, sugars, spices, and all other articles of utility or luxury. To suppose that trade depends upon great quantities of money, is a notion founded in complete error. Great quantities of money may give an occasional briskness to trade, but can never increase it; and ends in doing harm rather than good.

The manufacturer who borrows ten or twenty thousand pounds of paper money, may build manufactories, employ numbers of masons, carpenters, weavers, and spinners:—The merchant who has a large sum of money, may lay it out in building ships, in manning and victualling them, and may import large quantities of cottons, sugars, &c.; but where the quantity of food in a country is limited, there, by an unerring law of nature, the demand for the manufactures, and cottons, and sugars, and other things, must clearly be circumscribed within those limits which the quantity of food necessarily prescribes. ~~The~~ Speculations, therefore, occasioned by a facility of obtaining money, overstock the market with manufactures and merchandise. The manufacturer and merchant not finding customers or consumers for their manufactures and merchandise, cannot get back their money laid out in such manufactures and merchandise: If the money was borrowed money, they cannot repay it; and the probable, perhaps indeed certain consequence is, that the manu-

facturer, the merchant, the banker of whom the money was borrowed, all stop payment; numerous weavers, spinners, seamen, &c., are turned out of employment, and great distress necessarily ensues:—and from time to time, the like takes place again and again (a). Till, therefore, the country possesses an increased quantity of human sustenance, not only will the trade of the country be confined within its present limits, but it will be constantly subject to vicissitudes and convulsions. There will be alternate fits of comparative prosperity, occasioned by speculation; and of great distress occasioned by the failure of such speculations. To increase the quantity of the food or sustenance of the country, must therefore on all accounts be highly

(a) The President of the Board of Trade, (a gentleman of whose talents I am disposed to speak with every possible respect), in a late letter to Mr. Bolton, of Liverpool, in reply to one from the latter gentleman accompanying the present of a service of plate, adverted to the embarrassments under which commerce and manufactures were labouring. From the manner in which Mr. Huskisson expresses himself, he does not seem to have understood the true cause of such embarrassments: He observes, "To such vicissitudes as those which have recently occurred, the commerce of the country has been at all times liable; they are perhaps the inevitable result of activity and enterprize, stimulated by unbounded credit, and by those perpetually increasing powers of machinery which ingenuity has created in aid of the natural industry of our population." The vicissitudes which Mr. Huskisson speaks of, are, however, clearly to be ascribed, (to speak in a few words), *to too much money and too little food in the country*; though more indeed to the latter than the former cause. And with respect to the powers of machinery which he speaks of, if those powers were ten times as great as they are, (though they probably will never be much greater than at present), they could not carry trade or manufactures beyond those limits which are necessarily prescribed by the quantity of food which the country possesses. But perhaps nothing further need be said in the way of proof, upon a point so clear. In the work however before adverted to, the most satisfactory demonstration of the truth of this opinion will, it is believed, be found; as there the subject is much more minutely entered into.

desirable. Such increased quantity may, as before observed, be easily obtained in various ways; perhaps however, in none more readily, or with more advantage both to ourselves and others, than by obtaining it from foreign countries. This would be giving real life, and briskness, and activity to our manufactures and commerce; comfort and happiness to the people; and prosperity and security to the country.

Our extensive mines of copper, lead, tin, and iron, the abundance of our coal, our great skill in manufactures, the activity and enterprize of the people, our extensive colonies abounding with articles of utility and luxury, our insular situation, our canals and navigable rivers, our vicinity to almost every country of Europe, and the easy means by which we can convey to them the various products of our mines, our colonies, our skill, and our industry, (and all which things, fortunately for us, many of them do not possess, at least not in much abundance, and would be glad to have, provided we would take the only thing (corn) which some of them, at least, can give us in return), are all circumstances, if turned to proper account, of the most inestimable value to us. Our <sup>own</sup> ~~extended~~ resources, if properly called forth and properly directed, would soon relieve the country from its present distress, and place it in a situation of permanent happiness and prosperity. Most countries might supply their wants from Great Britain better than from any other country. But they *cannot* supply their wants from us, because we *will not*, in return, take the only article they have to give us. If we would take their corn, our commerce and manufactures would increase almost beyond credibility. Let us take the corn of the Americans, the Poles, Russians,



Germans, and of other countries, and they in return would take our hardware, our glass, our manufactured silks, and cottons, and linens, our sugars, our rums, our spices, our mahoganies, and other valuable woods, and all the various other articles which our mines, our colonies, and our skill produce. Put an end to our Corn Laws (*a*), which hurt every one, (and the land-owner more than any other), and the greatest advantages will ensue to the country. Mankind, in short, in every civilized part of the world, would soon be in a state of great comfort and happiness, if all impolitic restrictions upon the free interchange of the products of the earth were only removed, and the erroneous notion got quit of, that commerce is merely a matter of *money-making*; and that where, what is called "*a balance of trade*" cannot be obtained by it, that there it is not worth carrying on:—but this is a subject more fully noticed by and by. *Can it be doubted, but the Russians, the Poles, the Americans, and many others, would be glad to possess those various articles of utility*

(*a*) Unless we do this *soon*, perhaps much of the benefit which would arise from doing it may be lost to us: for if we will not give our hardware, and cottons, and woollens, &c., to the Poles, the Prussians, and other European nations, which would be glad to have them, provided we would take their corn in exchange for them; no doubt the Americans will soon discover, that they can do themselves no possible injury, but on the contrary would greatly increase their population, their manufactures and commerce, by sending the Poles, the Prussians, &c., *their* (American) manufactures in iron, copper, cottons, linens, and all the other various products of their extensive and fertile country; *and taking corn in return for them*. The more food, or human sustenance any country possesses, the more flourishing it must be; and whether such food is its own produce, or the produce of other countries, is of very little moment. If the people only have plenty of food, it is of very little consequence where it is produced.

*and luxury with which we could supply them, provided we would take their corn in return?* But corn being almost the only thing which they have it in their power to give us in return, the consequence is, that if we *will* not take their corn, they *cannot* take our sugars, hardware, glass, silks, cottons, &c. If we would take their corn, millions of our people would be employed, (and by means of the employment, well-fed, well-clothed, and well-lodged), in supplying them in return with the produce of our colonies, and with the silks, cottons, and linens of our manufactories. But whilst we refuse to take their corn, the mutual advantage which would arise to both parties, is lost by both. See then the impolicy of our Corn Laws. They are the means of working a serious injury both to ourselves and others. This cannot be doubted: for it must be quite clear, that the Polish land-owner, the Saxon land-owner, and the land-owners of various, perhaps of all other countries, if they could get all the useful and elegant articles which our colonies and our manufactories produce, (our spices, our linens, our silks, our cottons, and the hundreds of other things with which we could supply them, and all of which are so much the object of desire to mankind, and which they will be sure to have, provided they have only the means of procuring them), it is quite clear, I say, that if they could get all these things in exchange for their corn, they would soon send us corn to any amount. They would soon introduce better systems of agriculture, they would soon bring their waste lands into cultivation, and would soon send us corn to feed all our manufacturers, and others, who are at present starving. No doubt France, and Spain, and Portugal, would take our manufac-

tures, and the produce of our foreign possessions to a much greater extent than they do at present, provided we would take, in return, their corn as well as their wines. And what, it may be asked, could we possibly take which would be half so beneficial to ourselves; for corn is the only thing with which our half-starved millions can be fed and clothed, the only means by which they can be employed; the only thing by which we can be relieved from the burthen of poor rates, and by which we may be relieved too, (as will be most incontestably proved), from a part, and no small part, of the burthen of taxation. This last advantage, and no slight one, would principally belong to the land-owners; consequently, *they* are particularly interested (contrary to the received opinion on the subject) in allowing the importation of foreign corn:— but this is a point which will soon be more fully entered into.

It may not be improper to advert to the vast benefits which our colonies and East India possessions would derive from a free trade in corn; for the people of the countries from which we received the corn, (countries, in general, possessing no colonies or foreign possessions), would receive with avidity the numerous articles which our colonies and foreign possessions produce, and which would be produced in great additional quantities if our merchants were allowed to exchange such articles with the Germans, Poles, Russians, &c., for their corn. Look at the extension of all kinds of trade which this would occasion; and this is not the only extension of trade which would arise from allowing the importation of foreign corn, for *our own* consumption of the produce of our foreign possessions would be *thereby* greatly increased. An increase of manu-

factures and trade, arising from the importation of foreign corn, would not be confined to the direct advantages arising from the importation of such corn, and the exportation of the manufactures, &c., given in exchange for it: The benefits which would arise from the importation of corn would not stop here; for, as those who are engaged in making the manufactures receive considerably more corn in return for the manufactures than is barely sufficient for their existence, a further increase of manufactures and trade, in a variety of ways, would be the consequence of an unrestrained importation of foreign corn. The master-manufacturer, out of his gains, (or, in other words, out of the surplus of corn which he gets beyond what is necessary for his bare support), is enabled to have handsome houses, carriages, furniture, &c., by which means a variety of persons obtain employment as masons, carpenters, coach builders, upholsterers, &c. The master-manufacturer is also enabled to drink more wines, and to consume more teas, sugars, &c., by himself, his family, and his servants, &c.; and so in a lesser degree is every workman employed in manufacturing the articles given in exchange for the corn; and the carpenters, masons, &c., employed by the master-manufacturer about his manufactories, his houses, &c., all contribute to the extension of trade; as each of these gives a part of the surplus corn or food which he receives, in exchange for teas, sugars, and various other things of utility or benefit; *and from all this increased trade, a greatly increased revenue would arise to the government.* But perhaps enough has been said to shew the advantages which would arise from allowing a free importation of foreign corn.

As an argument against the importation of foreign corn,

it has been urged by some, that though the Poles and others would send us their corn, yet they would not take our manufactures, sugars, spices, &c., in return, but would merely take our *money*. No fear could possibly be worse founded. To suppose that they would only take money in return for their corn, and not our manufactures, sugars, spices, &c., is to suppose that they are foolish enough to prefer what, in itself, is of no use, to things which they would find of the greatest use. To suppose they would prefer pieces of gold and silver, in themselves of no value, to all those various articles which they would find conducive to their comfort and their gratification, is to suppose that which is palpably absurd. It is clear, that though they would in the first instance take our gold and silver for their corn, yet they would send them back for our silks, our cottons, our sugars, &c.; so that the gold and silver would be what gold and silver are intended to be, viz. the medium through which an exchange would be made of articles mutually beneficial to both parties. Nothing, in fact, but the most impolitic regulations; nothing, in short, but the most infatuated ignorance on the part of the governments of the countries from which we received corn, could *prevent* the people of those countries taking our cottons, silks, sugars, &c., when they had the means of procuring them: and it would be the part of our government to provide, by treaty, for the free admission of our manufactures so long as we admitted their corn. And with a view the better to secure the admission of our manufactures, and the produce of our foreign possessions, (as well as for other reasons hereafter mentioned), it might be advisable that every person importing foreign corn, should for every given quantity of such corn be obliged to export a certain quantity of our manu-

factures, or the produce of our colonies. It is pretty clear however, that such measures as these would be quite needless; for there can be no doubt but the Poles and other nations from whom we received corn would take with readiness our manufactures and colonial produce. Besides, it is clear that the Poles and others would not long be able to get our *money* for their corn, unless they sent it back to us for the produce of our colonies or for our manufactures; for if we had ten times as much money as we have, (I mean gold and silver) it would soon be exhausted if it was not returned to us; and they would then find we could take no more of their corn. In order therefore to have us as customers for *their* corn, they must *of necessity* take our manufactures and colonial produce in return. It is true, we must in the first instance send our money for their corn, yet if we at the same time send them plenty of our cottons, silks, &c., we may be certain they will not keep the money long in their pockets, but will lay it out in the purchase of such silks, cottons, &c.; so that the money will soon find its way back again to us; and thus would the interchange constantly go on; we sending our money for their corn, and they immediately returning it for our sugars, &c.; so that the money would be merely what money is intended to be: viz. the medium through which an exchange (and one highly useful to both parties) would take place.—The effect which the different values of money in this and other countries would have upon commercial intercourse is afterwards noticed.

It may here be proper to observe, that most erroneous notions respecting trade, universally prevail. The benefits of trade are supposed to consist *in the gain of so much money*; and *that* country is supposed to be the greatest gainer by trade, which happens to have a *money balance*

in its favour at the end of the year. This is termed having "a balance of trade" in its favour. But the real benefits of trade do not proceed on any such narrow principle. The real benefits of trade are, that by *means of it*, the *people* of a country enjoy more of the comforts and conveniences of life than they would otherwise do. Each of two or more countries may be greatly benefited, or in other words, both may be *great gainers* by mutual trade, though neither the one or the other should obtain a single penny by it *in a pecuniary point of view* (a). This may be easily demonstrated: One country, for instance, produces, or would, with proper management, produce great abundance of corn, but possesses no mines. Another country possesses but a sterile surface, but its bowels produce abundance of mines, &c. Trade, most advantageous to both parties may be carried on between these countries, without the one gaining an advantage over the other, to the extent of ~~gaining~~ a single farthing; or having what is called a *balance of trade* in its favour. The country with the fertile soil, sends a large quantity of its corn to the ~~people~~ <sup>country</sup> with the barren soil. The country with the barren soil, in return, sends to the country with the fertile soil, a quantity of articles of steel, iron, copper, tin, lead, &c.; all of which are of the greatest use to ~~them~~ <sup>it</sup>; and just as much we will suppose of these articles are sent, as are equiva-

(a) In commercial intercourse between nations, the idea of both parties, or both nations being gainers, has, I am aware, been ridiculed. Nothing however is more clear than that both *may be gainers*; not gainers indeed of gold and silver, but gainers of something a great deal better; gainers by each enjoying a greater abundance of food, clothing, and all the other comforts and necessaries of life, than in case no such intercourse subsisted.

lent to the corn which was sent to the barren country. Here there is no *balance of trade* on either side; and yet it is clear that the trade or commercial intercourse between the two countries, must be productive of great advantages to both. *In fact, the fancied advantage arising from what is called a balance of trade, is just the reverse of an advantage, it is in reality a disadvantage.* This balance consisting of money, consists in reality of a thing which is of *no value in itself*; it consists therefore in receiving something without value, in lieu of something which possesses value. Suppose a master-manufacturer in the barren country, instead of receiving 5000 quarters of corn as heretofore from the fertile country, should require 5000*l.* in money to be remitted to him. What would be the effect of this, both as respected his own country and the other? With respect to the barren country, which receives the money, the effect would be this;—it would not have a sufficiency of corn for the support of the people; a portion of them must, therefore, of necessity be without a sufficiency of food. And would the circumstance of having somewhat more money in the country be any compensation for the privations of the people, or at least of a portion of them? Let us see, too, what would be the probable advantage even to the master-manufacturer who received this money. He might, perhaps, for a little while suppose himself a richer man. The deficient quantity of corn in his country, is soon, however, the means of taking his money from him: for such deficiency occasions a *rise in the price of corn* in the barren country; this rise in the price compels the master-manufacturer to give his men higher wages for their labour; his money is therefore added to the previous amount of the money in

in circulation; and the country thereby becomes richer in money, but poorer in the necessaries, comforts, and enjoyments of life. Where, then, is the advantage of this increased quantity of money? Is it not clear, that though the barren country has thus a *money-balance of trade* in its favour, that it is in reality a loser by its trade; having for the articles of value which it sent to the fertile country received something *not* of real, but of mere nominal value?—in other words, that it received what did not add to the comforts of the people, but just the reverse; for by receiving money instead of corn, the people were deprived of a part of their food. The master-manufacturer, it is admitted, might make the money the means of increasing his enjoyments; he might send a part of it to some other country for wines, &c.; but it is clear that it could do no possible good to the people at large; and trade should be looked at as it produces advantages and contributes to the comforts of the people *at large*, and not of a few individuals. With respect to the fertile country, or country sending their money instead of their corn to the barren country, in lieu of the iron, copper, &c., which they received from the barren country; to the fertile country comparatively little harm would arise (at least for a time) from parting with their money instead of their corn. It would of course lessen the quantity of their money; prices would fall, and it would occasion inconvenience by deranging contracts; still they would be receiving those articles they stood in need of; and would have a greater abundance of corn for their consumption than they even had before; consequently, though they part with their money, yet they do not, like the people of the barren country, experience any diminution of their comforts and

enjoyments. If however the fertile country possesses no mines of gold and silver, (and we suppose it to possess none), a complete exhaustion of their money must in time take place. Both countries would, therefore, soon find that they must return to their former mode of carrying on their commercial intercourse; and the barren country would again receive the corn of the fertile one with much more satisfaction and readiness than she ever received her gold.—In short, it is clear, that trade or commerce cannot be long carried on except in the way of exchange, either directly or indirectly, of one article for another; this in fact being the true nature of trade.

Having, I hope, proved that the greatest possible advantages would arise to the manufacturing and commercial interests, and to the distressed portion of the community, from allowing the free, unrestrained importation of foreign corn; I now come to the consideration of a subject which has hitherto opposed an insuperable obstacle to the adoption of such a measure;—viz. The *injury*, which it is supposed would result from its adoption, to the landed or agricultural interest of the country. As the tranquillity, the security, and perhaps the very independence of the country, and the happiness and welfare of the people, may possibly, at least, depend *upon the removal of this obstacle*, I would request your Lordship's more particular attention to this subject; for whether the opinion,—*that the landed interest would be INJURED by the importation of foreign corn* is well founded or not, is no doubt a most important subject of inquiry.

The land-owners object to the importation of foreign corn, on, I believe, two different grounds; the one, that if foreign corn was imported, *they would be deprived of a*

market for their own corn (a); or, in other words, that they would find no consumers for it; and the other, that such importation would occasion a great depression in the prices of English grown corn. I will consider each of these objections in their order.

The first of the above objections,—viz. That the importation of foreign corn would deprive the English land-owner of a market for his corn; of course means, that there would be no CONSUMERS of English grown corn. In reply to this objection it may be asked,—are not the English land-owners themselves the proper and natural market for their corn?—is it not clear that they themselves, and their families, and all the various persons who, as servants, manufacturers, masons, carpenters, &c., are directly and indirectly connected with them and supported by them, is it not clear, that all these constitute the natural and proper consumers of the English land-owner's corn? That they do, must be clear beyond all doubt (b). Therefore, the land-

(a) If the newspaper reports of the speeches delivered in the Houses of Parliament are to be relied upon, some gentlemen have even gone the length of supposing, that the importation of foreign corn, (the unlimited importation of it), would put a total stop to the growth of corn at home, and would produce nothing short of a famine in the country. How far this opinion may be well founded, may be the better judged of after seeing what is said in favour of the importation of foreign corn. It may be proper that I should do his Majesty's Ministers the justice to state, that I never understood that they ever advanced such an opinion as the one just noticed,—an opinion so totally without a foundation on which to rest it.

(b) In the work often adverted to, it is shewn how the produce of every man's land is properly consumable by himself, and those who are, either directly or indirectly connected with him; and that if he has no mortgage or charge upon his lands, and if he paid no taxes, the whole of the produce of his lands would be actually consumed by himself, his family, his domestic servants, the manufacturer who manufactures the

owner himself, and those who are connected with him, are clearly the consumers of his corn:—those connected with him giving him in return their services, as coachbuilders, upholsterers, manufacturers, carpenters, &c.; and from whom he derives all the comforts, enjoyments, and luxuries of life. Now let us inquire, if it is at all likely (or I may say even possible) that the importation of foreign corn into a country in which there are more people than can be supported by the corn grown in such country, can prejudicially affect the land-owner of such country; that is, if it is at all likely, that he should lose any of his comforts, enjoyments, or luxuries; for if it should be clear that he would not, then what possible objection could he have to allow those whom he cannot himself supply with food, to obtain it from the American land-owner, the Polish land-owner, or any other? In order to come to a clear and more correct conclusion in the proposed inquiry, we will put the case of a single land-owner, possessed, we will suppose, of a considerable estate (a); an estate, we will

silks, linens, &c., of which are made the clothes of himself and his family; and by the various other persons who, directly or indirectly, are connected with him, and supported by him. An exception takes place where a land-owner saves, or lays by, as it is termed, a part of his income; that is, does not consume the whole of his corn, &c.; but where this is the case, the surplus is lent to some one who spends or consumes it; therefore, so far as the community is concerned, it comes to much the same thing, as if the land-owner had spent or consumed the whole of his income himself.

(a) I put the case of a single estate, as affording a clearer, and at the same time not less satisfactory mode of illustration, than by putting the case of a whole kingdom; for a kingdom consists of only a certain number of estates; and, therefore, whatever is a sound mode of reasoning, and will afford a just conclusion with respect to a single estate, is equally so with respect to every estate in the kingdom; and consequently, as to the whole kingdom.

suppose, which produces on the average 100,000 quarters of corn a year. [We will put corn for all kinds of human sustenance]. There are, we will suppose, 15,000 people upon this estate, all of whom are supported by means of these 100,000 quarters of corn: these 100,000 quarters, however, are not, we will suppose, sufficient for the comfortable support of more than 10,000 of the 15,000 people; or for more than two-thirds of the whole. This is a most material circumstance to attend to in the *supposed case* under consideration, and makes it resemble the *real situation* of Great Britain at this very time. The 100,000 quarters of corn not being sufficient for the comfortable support of more than two-thirds of the 15,000 people, the necessary consequence must be, that the greatest part of them are ill-fed, ill-clothed, and ill-lodged; and in short, insufficiently supplied with all the necessaries and comforts of life; and without regular, steady employment. The whole of the 15,000, we must recollect, are dependent upon the land-owner, and are supported out of the 100,000 quarters of corn which are grown upon his lands. Now let us inquire, whether the land-owner derives any real advantage<sup>(a)</sup> from having the whole of these 15,000 people on his estate, (being one-third more than the produce of it will comfortably support), and whether, in fact, it would not be more advantageous, even to *himself*, to have only 10,000 upon it rather than 15,000; or, at any rate, whether it would not be equally advantageous to him to have

(a) If the land-owner did, in fact, derive a benefit from having upon his estate, or in his employment, so many more people than he had the means of properly supporting, it must be clear that this would be *no reason* for keeping many thousands of his fellow creatures in a state of suffering and distress:—but it will be shewn that it occasions him a positive injury, and no benefit whatever.

10,000 as to have 15,000; that is, whether he would not procure, by the services of 10,000, as many of the comforts, enjoyments, and luxuries of life as he does at present; for if he would, then it must be clear, that not only could he have no objection to have the remaining 5000 fed and employed by some other person, but that it would be actually desirable to him that they should be so. To come to a more correct conclusion in this inquiry, it will be necessary that we should take a cursory kind of view of the way in which the land-owner distributes or disposes of his 100,000 quarters of corn. A part of it he consumes himself; another part of it is consumed by his family; another part by his domestic servants; another part by his steward who manages his affairs; another part he gives to the coachbuilder, who builds his carriages, as the price of such carriages; another part to the artist, who paints his pictures, or chisels his statues; another part to the master-manufacturer, who makes the silks, linens, cottons, &c., worn by himself and family, and exported in exchange for foreign wines, &c.; another part to the upholsterer, who makes his furniture; and so in like manner to other persons, whose services are found useful to him in some way or other<sup>(a)</sup>. Amongst these the land-owner distributes or divides the *whole* of the 100,000 quarters of corn which his lands produce, except such parts of it as are consumed by himself and such as he is called upon to give to those who cannot

(a) All those immediately connected with the land-owner, (at least all those connected with him in those capacities in which their services are liberally remunerated), obtain an ample sufficiency of the 100,000 quarters of corn for the support of themselves and families: therefore a portion of the 15,000, over and above the land-owner himself and his family, enjoy a sufficiency of food, and all the other necessaries of life.



obtain any of it by their labour, and to whom he gives it under the denomination of poor's rates. In return for the corn which he thus distributes, (except the part given under the denomination of poor's rates), he receives carriages from the coachbuilder; silks, cottons, linens, woollens, &c., from the manufacturer; pictures from the artist; &c. Now, if he could have all these things *in as great abundance* if he distributed his 100,000 quarters of corn amongst 10,000 people, as he *now has them*, though he distributes it amongst 15,000, it must be quite clear that 5000 of the 15,000 are of no use to him, and consequently that he would be in no wise prejudiced if these 5000 were taken off his estate; or, if they remained upon it, were fed and supported by some other, to whom they gave their services in return. Let us then see, if the land-owner would not have carriages, and silks, and cottons, and pictures, &c., in as great quantities from the services of the 10,000, as he now has them from the services of the 15,000. Of these 15,000, some are brought up as coachbuilders, some as manufacturers, some as carpenters, some as masons, &c. We will suppose 100 of the 15,000 to be brought up as coachbuilders. The master coachbuilder, who builds and repairs the carriages of the land-owner, receives from the land-owner, we will suppose, 1000 quarters of his corn every year; this being all he can give to the coachbuilder, after appropriating other parts of his 100,000 quarters to *other purposes*. Of these 1000 quarters, the master coachbuilder applies half, we will suppose, (under the denomination of the profits of his business), for the support of himself and his family; a portion of the residue he lays out in the purchase of materials, of which he builds the land-owner's carriages; the quantity he can appropriate to

the purchase of materials, will purchase, we will suppose, sufficient for two carriages; if he laid out more in the purchase of materials, he would not have sufficient left to give, as wages, to the labourers, or journeymen coachbuilders, whom he employs about building the carriages. After, therefore, appropriating half of the 1000 quarters of corn which he receives from the land-owner to his own use as the profits of his business, and after applying a part of the other half in the purchase of materials for the two carriages, the remainder of the 1000 quarters will be distributed amongst the journeymen coachbuilders as wages, or pay, for their labour. The two carriages which the master coachbuilder has to build for the land-owner can be built with ease by, we will suppose, 60 of the 100 persons brought up as coachbuilders; and consequently only 60 are employed by the coachbuilder (a). Forty, therefore, of the 100 are totally useless to the land-owner as coachbuilders; and, indeed, equally useless to him in every other way, for there is equally a surplus of hands in every other business. What possible objection then could the land-owner have to these 40

(a) Though 60 of the 100 only obtain employment, yet the *same* 60 are not always employed. The master coachbuilder from time to time changes his workmen. At one time one part of the 100 are employed, at another time another part of them; sometimes, perhaps, more than 60 are employed, at other times less, and by this means distress and privation is pretty equally distributed over the whole 100. Those who are from time to time out of employment, obtain relief out of the poor's rates, for they must not be left to starve. A provision by law for the ~~poor~~<sup>poor</sup> is founded as much in justice and policy as in humanity; and it is to be hoped, that the law will never allow the poor and destitute to be left without such provision: allow, however, the free, unrestrained importation of foreign corn, and the poor laws would soon be almost a dead letter.



men being fed and employed by some other land-owner? Is it not, in fact, clear, that he would be benefited by it: for these 40 people render the land-owner no services, yet he is obliged to support them under the denomination of paupers (a).

As 40 of the 100 coachbuilders do the land-owner harm rather than good, so exactly the same is the case with respect to a part of those who are brought up as manufacturers, as upholsterers, as carpenters, as masons, &c. :—there is a greater number in each of these trades than are necessary to make the silks, the cottons, the furniture, &c., which the land-owner's 100,000 quarters of corn enable him to give in return for silks, for cottons, &c. All those, therefore, over and above the number necessary to make the silks, &c., which the land-owner consumes or sends abroad for wines, &c., are of no use to the land-owner; but, on the contrary, clearly a burthen upon him. Instead of having more of all the comforts, and enjoyments, and luxuries of life, by means of the 15,000 people upon his estate, he has positively less of them than he would have, were there only 10,000 upon it; and as to the people themselves, that each of them (with the exception of a small portion) has less food, and all the other necessaries of life (b), than

(a) The necessary consequence of a population greater than the means of subsistence is, to occasion some to receive food without returning any services for it: this, perhaps, is too clear to require proof:—The fact, however, is demonstrated in the work so often adverted to. As it is probable that this work may, before long, be given to the public, many subjects are only slightly noticed in the present pamphlet, which would otherwise have been more fully treated of.

(b) It has already been incidentally observed, that in order to obtain all the necessaries and comforts of life (except food) it is necessary to have a *surplus of food* over and above what we want for our own con-

if there were only 10,000, is too clear to admit of doubt. As the *land-owner* would have more of the comforts, enjoyments, and luxuries of life if he had only 10,000 people upon his estate instead of 15,000, what possible objection could he have to allow 5000 of the 15,000 to be fed with foreign corn, and be employed by the foreign land-owner?—Under the above view of the subject, I think it must be clear, that so far would the importation of foreign corn be from working a *prejudice* to the English land-owner, that it would be decidedly advantageous to him; and advantageous, not merely to the extent of freeing him

sumption. It is principally *by means* of this *surplus of food*, that both the raw material of all other articles, and the labour bestowed upon it, are to be procured. Food, *in short*, is the *origin of almost every thing*. Food, spontaneously produced in the numerous animals, &c., with which the world abounds, enabled man by labour and skill to increase the quantity of food; and the labour of one man, where skill is united with it, being able to procure food for many more than himself, the surplus of what he procures affords support to others, who are employed in various ways useful to mankind. Political economists, therefore, when they say *labour* is the origin and foundation of every thing are greatly mistaken, for *food* is clearly so; and it is of great importance to the well-being of mankind that this should be clearly understood: for, except so far as there is food to give to the labourer, none of the other comforts, conveniences, or enjoyments of life are to be obtained. As the possession, therefore, of every other thing depends upon the possession of food, we must see how important it is *that a country should possess an ample sufficiency of food for ALL ITS INHABITANTS*. I may here take the opportunity of observing, (though the observation may be of more importance when the world has become more populous), that as food, clothing, and every other thing we stand in need of are the produce of the earth, it might be desirable to make it (the earth) produce, as much as possible, articles, each of which would of itself supply two or more of our wants: my meaning may be explained by putting the case of sheep, which afford us both food and clothing. But what I have said is a mere hint, which may be attended to when circumstances may render it necessary.

from poor's rates, (or the burthen of supporting those from whom he receives no services in return), but he would be further benefited, as will be shewn soon, in being relieved from a part (and perhaps no very inconsiderable part) of the present burthen of taxation.

By relieving the land-owner from poor's rates and taxes he will be enabled to give the amount of them to those whom he employs, *in addition* to what he now gives them. It will be *by means of this addition*, that the proposed advantages to *them* will arise: It will be in the increased energy, activity, and alacrity with which they will render the land-owner their services, when well fed, well clothed, and in a state of comfort, in which *his* principal advantage will consist; for a man ill-fed, ill-clothed, and in a state of poverty, neither will, (nor indeed can, for he does not possess the physical power) do half the work which a man, well fed, well clothed, and in a state of ease and comfort will do. And besides this positive advantage to the land-owner, (and which would clearly result from having the labouring classes well-fed, well-clothed, and well-lodged), no slight satisfaction would arise to him from seeing all around him in a state of comfort and happiness.

Humanity, policy, and even self-interest, (when he once clearly understands his own interest), all concur in rendering the importation of foreign corn a measure highly desirable to the English land-holder. Notwithstanding the importation of foreign corn, he will still have the same powerful inducement to grow corn himself, and to feed cattle and make his land produce all the necessaries and comforts of life he now has. It is the produce of his land, and that alone, (as is too clear to admit of question or doubt), which affords the means of support for himself and his

family; which enables him (if a *great* land-owner) to keep numerous domestics; to have handsome equipages; to live in large and well-furnished houses, &c. *It is the produce of his lands*, and that *alone*, which gives him all those comforts and enjoyments. Why then should the importation of foreign corn, (which will be consumed by those whom he cannot support or employ himself), make him discontinue the cultivation of his lands, when by doing so it is clear that he must lose so many advantages?—and yet it can only be by discontinuing the cultivation of them, that the growth of English corn could possibly be stopped; for to suppose that foreign countries would send *such quantities* of their corn that they would actually employ all the people of Great Britain and Ireland in making cottons, silks, hardwares, &c., in return for their corn, so that there would not be a man left to cultivate the English soil, or a man who would take the produce of the English soil in return for his services as a manufacturer, upholsterer, mason, &c., is a notion too palpably absurd to require any argument to refute it. The English land-holder may be satisfied that he may go on and make his estates produce as much corn and other articles of human sustenance as he possibly can, and that he will find plenty of persons who will take his corn, &c., in return for their services as coachbuilders, manufacturers, carpenters, servants, &c.; and that it will only be such of the people as he *cannot* in some way or other employ in his service, (because he has not food to give them in return for their services), who will take corn from the foreigner; and who clearly ought to be allowed to do so, as the land-owner at home has it not to give them. The English land-owner may therefore make himself perfectly satisfied that, the owner of foreign corn will

never deprive him of the servants, manufacturers, coach-builders and others who minister to his comforts and enjoyments; for all of them will just as soon take the English land-owner's corn in return for their services, as they would take the foreign land-owner's; provided the former will only give them as much for their services as the latter would give them; and that he would do this there can be no doubt. He could afford to give them *more*: for his corn, &c., is on the spot; is at the very doors, as it were, of those to whom he gives it, or amongst whom he distributes it: whereas the foreign land-owner must give a portion of his corn to the merchant, to the ship owners, and to the sailors, who convey it to England (a): therefore, with a portion given in this way, a foreign land-owner (who for the sake of illustration, we will suppose has just the *same quantity* of corn with an English land-owner) cannot possibly give so much to the coachbuilder, the manufacturer, &c., as the English land-owner can give him. It is therefore quite clear, that the English land-owner would have more corn to give to the coachbuilder, manufacturer, &c., than the foreign land-owner would have to give them; and consequently, could with *his* corn obtain a greater number of carriages, and a greater quantity of clothes, furniture, &c. (b), than the foreign land-owner could with

(a) The same is the case with respect to the manufactures which the foreign land-owner takes back in return for his corn; whereas such manufactures are comparatively at the English land-owner's door; consequently he gives but a small portion of his corn for conveying them to him.

(b) An idea seems to prevail, that it is the manufacturer and merchant who give employment to the land-owner in his capacity of an agriculturist, and afford him a market, (or consumers), for his corn and other agricultural produce. This, however, is clearly an erroneous notion, for just the reverse is the fact:—it is the land-owner who affords employment and gives food to the manufacturer and the merchant. Looking at the thing in this, its true light, the subject will present itself to us in a very

his. The English land-owner would therefore have a decided advantage over the foreign land-owner, and con-

different point of view to that in which it otherwise presents itself; and will lead us to very different conclusions, to those we should otherwise come to. Perhaps, this brief notice of the subject may be sufficient here—in the work so frequently adverted to it is more fully entered into; It may here be proper to anticipate an objection, which may possibly be made, by the master-manufacturers, to a measure recommended in a former page; viz. *giving increased wages to the labouring classes*. The master-manufacturer would probably object to this, on the ground, that increased wages would occasion increased prices of manufactures, and that he would have no purchasers for them at such increased prices, and consequently that he (the manufacturer) would lose his customers and be ruined. A correct view, however, of the subject will satisfy us that no such consequences would ensue. Such increased wages, it will be recollected, will, in fact, be *increased quantities of food* given to the labouring manufacturers;—and such increased quantities of food, will come out of the increased resources of the land-owner. I have already shewn that it is the land-owner who employs the manufacturer. He gives him a certain quantity of food (or money, which is the same thing), with which to buy or obtain the raw material, and to give to the labourers who manufacture it. Suppose then a great land-owner gives, we will suppose, to the master-manufacturer a thousand quarters of corn (I put corn for all kinds of human sustenance), in order that he may make him a certain quantity of silks. Of these 1000 quarters the master-manufacturer keeps a certain portion for himself, in return for his services, under the denomination of profits; another portion he gives (either through the medium of manufactures or otherwise), for the raw material; and the rest he gives to the labouring manufacturers in return for their services. Now, in consequence of there being far more people in the country than there is a sufficiency of food for, the master-manufacturer (by reason of the competition for employment which necessarily takes place amongst the labouring classes) (a), can pro-

(a) A population too great for the means of subsistence, not only occasions a part of the labouring classes to be without employment, (sometimes one part and sometimes another part being unemployed), but it also occasions great competition for employment; which competition induces the laboring classes to give their services for a very small remuneration. In order, indeed, to have something for the unemployed and to prevent their literally starving, it is absolutely necessary that this should be the case; for if the employed portion of the labouring classes received a *sufficiency* of food in return for their labor, the unemployed part would get none at all; and would therefore be literally left to starve.

sequently need never fear that the foreign land-owner would run away with the services of all the labouring people. Nothing, however, should it be necessary, could be more cure the services of labouring manufacturers, for (we will suppose) a peck of corn each by the day. But suppose the free importation of foreign corn to take place, and that the English land-owner is thereby relieved from the payment of poor's rates and a part of his taxes. Being relieved from these burthens, he has less of his corn taken from him than was before taken from him, and consequently has more for his own use, or at his own disposal.—We will suppose he has one-half more than he before had: This enables him to give one-half more to the master-manufacturer than he before had it in his power to give him: he can now give him 1500 quarters with as much ease as he before gave him 1000; and he gives him 1500 *accordingly*; for what is he to do with his increased quantity of corn if he does not give it in increased quantities to those whom he employs?—and it will be recollected that he only employs the *same number* of people he employed previous to his having such increased quantity. If he even wished to employ a greater number than he before employed, yet he would not be able to do so, that is, he would not be able to procure the services of a greater number; for the only labouring people in addition to those whom he previously employed are those who had before been supported by his corn as paupers, or to whom it found its way, after having been taken from him in the shape of taxes; and *their* services he cannot have, for *they*, it will be recollected, are now employed by the foreign land-owner. As therefore, the English land-owner can only employ, (or have the services of) the *same number of persons*, now that he has a larger quantity of corn, than he employed whilst he possessed only the smaller quantity, in what way is he to dispose of his *increased quantity*, except by giving it amongst the persons whom he employs as manufacturers, coach-builders, carpenters, &c.? Being, therefore, possessed of this larger quantity of corn, he of necessity, as it were, distributes it amongst those whom he employs; for it cannot be supposed that he would waste or destroy it. *It is in fact by this very means that the situation of the labouring classes must be improved.* The land-owner, therefore, by getting quit of poor's rates and a part of his taxes (the result of the importation of foreign corn) has more to distribute amongst those whom he employs than he before had.—The master-manufacturer, (amongst others), receives an *increased* quantity of it for the silks, &c. with which he supplies the land-owner and his family: and it will be out of the increased quantity received by the *master manufac-*

easy, than to regulate the importation of foreign corn, so as to prevent the possibility of its affecting the interests of

*turer*, that the increased wages of the labouring manufacturer will come (a). Under the above view of the subject (which is clearly the correct one), how could increased wages to the labouring manufacturers work any possible injury to the master manufacturer? It is, however, *perfectly clear*, that no such effect could arise from the labouring manufacturers

(a) Though in the above view of the subject under consideration, the case is put, as if the labouring manufacturer received his wages in corn and other articles of human sustenance, and not in money; yet the circumstance of his wages being paid in money makes, in fact, no real difference in the case; for the land-owner, by getting quit of poor's rates, and a part of his taxes, has a *larger sum of money*, as well as a larger quantity of corn to distribute amongst those whom he employs; and he distributes such larger sum of money accordingly. But it may perhaps be said, that he might not *expend* the *increased part* of his income, and that if he did *not*, then that those who were employed as labourers, either in manufactures or otherwise, would not obtain any increase of wages. There is, however, no reason to fear that this would be the case; for *not* to expend the *whole* of his income, would be contrary to the almost 'universal practice of mankind. But even admitting, for argument's sake, that he did not expend the *increased part* of his income, still, as will be shewn presently, the labouring classes would nevertheless obtain *increased* quantities of the land-owner's corn and other necessities of life; and as long as they did this, it would be of little or no consequence whether they received increased *money* wages or not; and therefore to them of no consequence, whether the land-owner expended the increased part of his income or not. There is, however, no doubt but he would expend it; not, it is admitted, in disposing of it, *directly and in the first instance*, in giving either increased wages or increased prices, but in laying it out in something or other necessary to his comforts or gratification; and as an increased quantity of money would thereby circulate amongst those connected with the land-owner (by ~~means~~ <sup>receiving</sup> that less of the landowner's money or income would go in poor's rates and taxes), the necessary effect would be to cause every one connected with the land-owner to receive a greater quantity of money than he before received; consequently, the labouring classes would receive more, in the shape of wages, than they previously received. Nothing, in fact, could prevent this being the case, provided the increased part of the land-owner's income or money only got into circulation. But supposing it did *not* do so, but was hoarded either by the land-owner himself or by some one else, in that case the consequence would be, that the prices of corn and all other things would be *less* than they before were; for there being now a greater quantity of corn to distribute amongst those connected with the land-owner than there before was; and as this greater quantity is to be distributed by means of only the *same* quantity of money which there before was, the necessary consequence would be, that the price of corn and of all other things would be *reduced*, and, therefore, the labourer, and all others, though they possessed only the *same quantity* of money they previously possessed, yet this *same* quantity would procure them a *greater* quantity of food than it before procured them; and thus would they obtain an increased quantity of the land-owner's corn, &c., just the same as if the increased part of his income or money actually got into circulation.—In short, wherever there is an *increased quantity of food*, there the people (and of course the labouring classes amongst others), will be sure to obtain it, and that without regarding whether the prices may be the *same* with what they before were, or greater or less than they previously were.

the English land-owner. In my own opinion, however, legislative measures on the subject would be quite unnecessary.

Upon the whole, the notion that the English land-owner enjoying the benefit of increased wages; or in other words *increased quantities of food*; for such increased wages would, in fact, come out of the *increased prices* which the *master-manufacturer* had *already actually received* from the land-owner out of his (the land-owner's) increased resources; such increased resources being afforded by his being freed from poor's rates and a part of his taxes; and from which he is freed, it will be recollected, *by means of the importation of foreign corn*. Upon the whole, it may be safely asserted, that higher wages to the labouring manufacturers, when produced in the way shewn above, (which will, in fact be neither more or less than increased quantities of food, and which increased quantities of food will be the consequence of allowing the free importation of foreign corn), can by no possibility work any prejudice to the master manufacturer. Scarcely any one, in fact, would derive so great a benefit as *himself* from *increased wages to the labouring classes* when proceeding from the free importation of foreign corn; for the additional wages they received, would, by enabling them to wear more and better clothes, *alone occasion a vast increase* of manufactures: and as to the foreign demand for manufactures, that would be increased beyond all conception: and, (which is a consideration of great importance), the manufacturer would *have a regular and steady profit* upon his manufactures, without experiencing any of those losses, occasioned by bad debts, which he must frequently meet with where there is not a sufficiency of food in the country for the whole of the people; for almost the whole of the bankruptcy and insolvency, of which there has, of late years, been so much in the country, is clearly referable to the circumstance of there not having been a sufficiency of food in the country for the whole of the people. The want of a sufficiency of food occasions to numbers a want of its representative (*money*):—and the want of money makes those who want it contract debts with people in trade which they are never able to pay; and those unpaid debts occasion bankruptcy and insolvency in numerous quarters—no doubt even in other countries. To the trading part of the country, the free importation of foreign corn is a measure of the very highest importance. We should afterwards hear of few bankruptcies; at least if the value of money was kept steady.—*Fluctuation in its value* (at least where occasioned solely by variation in its amount), is a great cause of *bankruptcy and insolvency*; and also of injury and injustice to numbers.

must, if the importation of foreign corn was allowed, cease to cultivate his lands, or in other words, that he would have *no market for his corn*, (which of course means, that he would not be able to get any of the labouring classes to give him their services in return for his corn and the other articles of human sustenance which his lands produce), may be safely asserted, to be a notion, without even the shadow of a foundation to rest it upon. He may feel assured, that the importation of foreign corn can never deprive him of a market for his own corn; or, in other words, that it will never deprive him of the services of the various persons whom he employs as servants, manufacturers, coachbuilders, carpenters, &c.; and who clearly constitute "the market" for his corn. He may therefore rest satisfied, that by means of their services, he will still possess those various articles of utility, ornament, and luxury, (and these are the things, and the only things which he wants, or indeed can procure by means of his corn), which he now possesses. He will, in fact, even possess them (as I have already shewn) in greater abundance, by reason of the very measure (the importation of foreign corn) which he so earnestly deprecates;—a measure which will relieve him almost entirely from the burthen of the poor's rates, and will also greatly relieve him from that of taxation. That it will do the former, I hope I have already clearly shewn; and I will now endeavour to prove that it will also do the latter; and then proceed to consider the only remaining objection which has been made to the importation of foreign corn, viz., that it would occasion a depression in the prices of our own.

In order to satisfy us that the English land-owner would be relieved from a part of the burthen of taxation *by means of the importation of foreign corn*, a very few words would appear to be sufficient:—for what, in fact, are taxes, though paid in money, but a portion of corn and other articles of

human sustenance? A portion, therefore, of the Polish *and* other foreign corns imported into this country, would, of course, be received by the government, under the denomination of taxes, just the same as it now receives a portion of English corn under the same denomination.—Every one, in fact, who consumed foreign corn would give a portion of it to the government, in the shape of taxes upon some article or other on which taxes are imposed.

The merchants engaged in the importation of foreign corn will have such gains or profits upon it, that many of them will be able to keep carriages, horses, and livery servants, and have wines and various luxuries, in respect of which the government will receive taxes. The manufacturers engaged in making the silks, the cottons, the hardware, &c., which will be sent to Poland and other places, in return for the corn, will also have so much gain or profit, that they also will be able to keep carriages, &c.; and from them too, the government will also receive, in taxes, a further part of the foreign corn. The men employed in building ships to bring over the corn; the sailors who navigate them; the men who are employed by the manufacturer in weaving the cottons and the silks, and in making the hardware, &c., sent to Poland and other countries, in return for their corn,—from all these, too, the government will receive a further part of the corn in taxes upon spirituous liquors, teas, &c., which will be consumed by such ship-builders, sailors, &c. (a); so that the government will clearly

(a) As government would clearly derive a large amount of revenue from foreign corn, by the consumers of it giving a part of it in taxes for the use of articles subjected to duties, it would appear to be advisable, to allow the importation of it *without any duty*. The importer should have no obstacles to importation thrown in his way, nor any thing taken from his direct profits; and the greater those profits are, the more no doubt, will he give to government in taxes upon articles of luxury, &c. Besides, as the merchant, owing to the different values of money

receive, in the shape of taxes, a *part of the foreign corn*: consequently will want *less* English corn—consequently may remit to the English land-owner a part of what is now taken from him in taxes; and which will consequently leave him more for his own use:—In short, whatever proportion the corn imported from abroad may bear to the quantity of English grown corn (I put corn for all kinds of human sustenance), in the same proportion may taxes be reduced; for taxes derived from foreign corn (and taxes, in fact, are neither more nor less than so much corn and other articles, the produce of the land), are just as good to the government, as taxes derived from English corn; and it is clear, that the taxes *would* be derived *in rateable proportions* from the imported and the English corns.

With reference to taxation, such would evidently be the here and in most countries from which the corn would be obtained, must lose by the silks, cottons, &c. which he exports, he can only make up his loss upon the exports by a large profit upon the corn which he imports: and here it may be proper to observe, that the circumstance of the exports being attended with a loss would seem to render it necessary that the merchant who imports the corn should be the *same* person who exports the silks, &c.; so that the person who sustained the loss on one side of the account, might have the gains on the other; and no doubt the gains on the corn would be amply sufficient, not only to cover the loss, but to leave a handsome profit over and above. And as there could be no chance of profit on articles of export, so long as the values of money continued so different in this country and the countries from which the corn was obtained, (though increased commercial intercourse would tend to approximate their values), in order to prevent the merchant from attending merely to the profit side of the trade, (that is, only to the importation of the corn, neglecting the export of manufactures, &c., though it is true, the thing could not long go on so), it would seem to be proper that he should be *obliged* to export a certain quantity of manufactures or colonial produce, for every given quantity of corn he imported.—By means of the *same* merchant being concerned both in exports and imports, trade between two countries may, it is conceived, be carried on with just as much ease, and with just the same advantages to both, though the value of money may differ in the two countries, as if it was of the same value.



consequence of allowing the importation of foreign corn; supposing taxes were paid *in kind*, and not in money. Let us then inquire, whether exactly the same result would not follow the importation of foreign corn, notwithstanding taxes are paid in money. The merchant who imports the foreign corn, instead of giving the government a part of the corn in kind as a tax upon the carriages, servants, &c., which he keeps, sells to the manufacturer or others the corn which, in the shape of taxes, he would have given to the government had the taxes been paid *in kind*. The *money* he receives for what he so sells, he gives to the government under the name of taxes (a): and the like is the case with all the others from whom the government would have received a part of the foreign corn had the taxes been paid *in corn*. Now, by so much money as the government receives from the importers and consumers of the foreign corn, so much *less* will it require from the growers and consumers of English corn. If, for instance, one half of the population of the country was fed on foreign corn, (I put corn for all kinds of human sustenance), in that case the government would derive just one half of its revenue from such foreign corn; and so in proportion to the greater or less quantity of foreign corn which was consumed. Putting, therefore, out of sight, for the present, the effect which the importation of foreign corn would have upon the *prices* of our own corn, it may be very confidently asserted,—*that the importation of foreign corn would be decidedly* ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE

(a) This money the government hands over to the fund-holder, place-holder, &c., who lays it out with the baker, who lays it out with the flour merchant, who lays it out in the purchase of foreign corn:—so that the thing is just the same as if the government had taken so much corn, and had at once given it to the fund-holder or place-holder.—The *money*, in fact, is only the indirect means *by which the corn is taken*.

ENGLISH LAND-OWNER and all connected with him, either directly or indirectly: and as to the benefits which would result to *all others*, upon *that point*, not a moment's doubt can be entertained.

We, therefore, now come to the consideration of the question,—*what effect would the importation of foreign corn have upon the PRICES of our own?* The importation of foreign corn would no doubt cause the prices of English corn to *fall*; that is, *supposing there should be no addition to the present amount of our circulating medium*. It is clear, however, that the fall in the prices would not be occasioned, as supposed, by the different values of money here and abroad; or, in other words, from the different prices of English and foreign corn (a); but would be produced by a cause totally different; and a cause over which the heaviest import-duty would have no effect. A heavy-duty might *stop* the importation of foreign corn; by taking away all inducement to import; (from leaving no profit to the importer); but if the importation only *does* take place, it is quite impossible for any import-duty to prevent the importation of foreign corn from bringing down the prices of English corn;—that is, supposing our circulating medium to continue at its present amount. The fact is, the fall in the prices of English corn would be produced by causing our circulating medium to be the means of putting a greater quantity of corn, &c., into circulation than it does at present; in short, by extending and diffusing our money through a greater number of channels, and putting it into a greater number of hands than at present. It is *this* which

(a) Though the greater value of money abroad would enable the merchant to bring foreign corn here and sell it *for a much lower price than the price of English corn*; yet, though he *could* do this, it is not at all likely he would do it; for his object would be to sell it at as high a price as possible: nor is it likely that competition would make it otherwise

would occasion the fall in the prices of English corn. The importation, in fact, of foreign corn, without any augmentation of the present amount of our circulating medium, would depreciate the price of our own corn exactly in the proportion which the quantity of foreign corn bore to our own. If, for instance, foreign corn was imported *equal in quantity* to the corn of our own growth, (supposing there could be a demand for so much), the consequence would be, that the price of our own corn (whatever might be the price at which the foreign corn was bought by the importer) would soon be reduced to one half of its former price; for there being only the same quantity of money employed in putting twice the quantity of corn into circulation, (and along with twice the quantity of corn, twice the quantity (though not, perhaps, immediately) of *all other things*), the inevitable consequence would be, that the price of English corn would fall one half. So if a quantity of foreign corn was imported equal to one quarter of the corn grown at home, there would be a reduction of one quarter in the price of English corn: and so ~~on~~, in like manner, whatever proportion the corn imported might bear to English grown corn. But in order to prevent this consequence arising from the importation of foreign corn, it would only be necessary to *increase the amount of the circulating medium, in the same proportion which the quantity of foreign corn bore to the English corn*. This (*which an extended state of commerce might call for*), would effectually prevent the depreciation of English corn. Or, if an increased amount of the circulating medium should be thought objectionable, (though I conceive there could be none *in such a case to the extent I have mentioned*), then the objection which would arise to reduced prices might be met by a reduction (which would, in fact, only

be nominal) of the interest of the national debt, and by an adjustment of contracts; for without this, the importation of foreign corn, (if it produced any material depression of the prices of English corn, as it no doubt would if the importation was to the extent required by the wants of the country), would occasion the most serious injuries, and the grossest injustice to great numbers; and might almost for a time, at least, make the importation of foreign corn do mischief to the country instead of good. It is, however, clear, that by either of the above modes, all possible injury, injustice, and inconvenience might be easily prevented. The first, (and which would prevent any reduction of prices), viz. *an increased amount of the circulating medium*, is a measure of *easy practicability*; and where resorted to with proper caution, and under proper guards and restrictions, could not be productive of the least injury, or do the slightest injustice to any one. It should, of course, be under the direction, and with the sanction of government, that this augmented amount of the currency should be put into circulation (a); and it

(a) Though it is of the very highest importance to the interests of society that prices should be kept as steady as possible, and not be constantly moved about by increased or diminished quantities of the circulating medium; yet I take it to be quite clear, that neither the *nature* nor the *amount* of the circulating medium is *in itself* a matter of any real consequence to a country. If it consists of paper, and the holders of such paper can be guarded against loss from the failure of those who issue it, it is just as good a means, or medium, through which food and the other necessaries of life are moved about as gold and silver. So long, indeed, as the offence of forgery is punished with death, every one must, of course, wish to keep paper-money of low denomination out of circulation; but with proper restrictions as to the amount of paper money, and by taking care that no one shall issue it who cannot give ample security for the payment of it, there does not seem to be a shadow of objection to it as a circulating medium. Increased commerce would soon bring such a quantity of gold into the country as would be amply sufficient to keep paper money of a low denomination out of circulation.

should only be augmented *so as to just meet the increased operation which the circulating medium had got to perform*:— to go beyond this would be to raise prices, *and not merely to keep them from falling*, (which should be the *only* object); and would be attended with injustice. It is clear, therefore, that all the bad consequences which some apprehend would attend the importation of foreign corn by reason of its depressing the prices of English corn, would most easily be prevented by an augmented amount of our circulating medium; and as this, perhaps, would be thought by most people, preferable to allowing a reduction of prices (*a*) and meeting such reduction by reducing the

(*a*) High prices of agricultural produce are deemed, by some, to be necessary to the flourishing condition of agriculture, and also of the country. This is, however, a great fallacy. *High rents and low prices* would, no doubt, cause distress to the farmers; but if rents only bear a *just proportion* to prices, it is clearly of no consequence how low prices may be. The farmer, after paying his rent, must have a certain quantity of the corn and other produce of his farm (for these are the things of value to him) left for the use of himself and his family. If he *has this quantity left*, it is of no consequence to him what the prices of his produce are. One thousand bushels of corn left for his own use, after he has paid his rent, is just of as much value to him if the price of corn is a shilling a bushel, as it would be if it was a pound a bushel: and here perhaps a few remarks may be made on *money*, principally with a view to correct some erroneous notions respecting it. It need hardly be observed, that money does not in itself possess any positive value. It is neither meat, drink, nor clothing; it is, in fact, merely the representative of such things, *and the means* by which they get distributed amongst the people. It is called “the circulating medium,” as by means, or through the medium of it, the necessaries of life get circulated, or moved about from one to another. It perhaps, however, would be as agreeable to the fact, to consider the necessaries of life as the means by which the money is moved about; for whatever quantity of money there may be, if there are no necessaries of life, the money will not move about, or circulate much. Money has generally been esteemed to constitute *wealth or property*. It cannot, however, properly speaking, be considered to do so. It is certainly *the means* by which wealth or property (or the necessaries, the enjoyments, and the luxuries of life,

interest of the national debt and modifying contracts, (or by what has been termed “*equitable adjustment*”); perhaps, it may not be necessary to say much relative to this latter mode of obviating the objections which have been made to the importation of foreign corn. It is clear, however, *beyond all possible doubt*, that by an equitable adjustment and also the land from which they spring), may be procured; therefore the man in possession of money may, in a certain qualified sense, be said to be possessed of wealth, or property. Money may, perhaps, be regarded as wealth to an individual, (because as it represents commodities, it will enable the person who possesses it to procure all the comforts and enjoyments of life), and yet with reference to the community at large, it cannot be regarded in any such light. Suppose a man finds a large sum of money hid in the earth. He makes it the means of procuring him food, clothing, and all the other necessaries and enjoyments of life; because they who have got such things are ready to part with them for gold or silver. But what is the effect of finding this money with respect to the great body of the community? Will it increase the food, clothes, &c., of every individual of the community as well as of the person who finds it? It is clear, it will not. With respect to the community at large, putting this additional sum into circulation, can have no other effect than to increase *the prices*, (and, for a time, to the evident prejudice of all to whom money is owing), and *not the quantities* of food and the other necessaries of life; and therefore can add nothing to the comforts or enjoyments of the community at large. Suppose the amount of every man's money to be at once *doubled*, would this *double* the quantity of their bread, meat, and other necessaries of life? It is clear that it would not. It would not increase them at all: it would only double their prices. Such increased quantity of money would give every man something more *in his pocket*, but nothing more *on his back*:—in short, it would afford him no increase of the necessaries and comforts of life. Where then is the use of a man's having more money, if it will not clothe or feed him better than he was before clothed or fed? If there was as much money in a country as the advocates for a large circulating medium could wish for, but there was not corn and other human sustenance to be obtained, more than sufficient for one half of the population, of what service would all this money be? Could it possibly keep the people from starving? It clearly would not. I speak of the people *generally*, and not of the few who, from possessing greater quantities of money than the rest, would be able to preserve themselves from such a calamity. Bringing, therefore, additional quantities of money into a country, forms no

of contracts, (including the contract with the public creditor), *not, only might all possible injury to any one, occasioned by the fall in prices, be prevented; but it is equally clear, that accompanied by such equitable adjustment, the LAND-OWNER and all others would be just as much benefited by the importation of foreign corn, though the price of his*

increase of the national wealth; nor does it improve the condition of the great body of the people; but by increasing prices, deranges contracts, and consequently, to many, does mischief. It is unfortunate for the interests of mankind in general, that so much importance has been annexed to "money," as if it constituted every thing that was desirable. Even enlightened men fall into strange errors on this subject. Mr. Western, in a pamphlet on the subject of the Currency, contended that the distress which the country was then experiencing was to be *solely* ascribed to lessening the quantity of our money. So, if the newspaper reports of the debates in parliament are to be relied upon, Mr. Baring advanced some very untenable opinions relative to money. He was stated to have observed, that "the power of the country consisted in money." If Mr. Baring meant to include paper-money, (and which, doubtless, when properly regulated and modified, answers the purpose of a circulating medium as well as any other kind of money), then according to the notion "that money is power," *the power* of any country may be increased without limits. But supposing he meant only gold, still a country might have an abundance of gold, and yet if she had no corn, beef, &c., her gold would be but of little service to her. If, indeed, the people of such country could send their gold to some other country, from which they could receive corn and the other necessaries of life in exchange for their gold, (though an unprofitable exchange to the country parting with their corn, &c.), in such a case, *the power of the country* might, in a certain sense, be said to consist in *money*; and yet with all her money she might be so circumstanced that *this power* would be of little service to her. But I need not pursue this subject further, for it is evident that money abstractedly, or in itself, *is of no value whatever*. Nothing indeed can be more erroneous than to suppose that the happiness and prosperity of a country depends upon the quantity of its money. Is Spain an instance of great quantities of money (for at one time she had great quantities) making a country happy and flourishing?—Just the reverse, in fact. If the people being well fed, well clothed, &c., depended upon the quantity of money the country possessed, would not, in that case, the people of this country be better fed, and better clothed, and, *beyond all comparison*, bet-

*own should be reduced one-half, or even more, as he would be if the price was kept up to what it is at present. So too, it is clear, that "equitable adjustment" is a measure which might be resorted to without depriving the fund-holder or public creditor of a single farthing, (except nominally), of his just demands upon the public. As, however, keeping up present prices would no doubt be preferred to any thing else, and as that can be so easily done, I shall not say any thing further on the subject of "equitable adjustment," (or modification of contracts) though, if the importation of ter off in all respects, than the people of any other country? But is this the fact? It is well known that it is not. It is however too clear to admit of a shadow of doubt, that an abundant circulating medium (for which vast numbers are advocates) is of no positive utility, and that the *high prices* produced by it, are of no real advantage to the country. How low so ever prices may be, or how small so ever the quantity of money may be, food and the other necessaries of life will get distributed; and that, too, with equal ease as if the prices were ever so high, and the quantity of money ever so great. If, therefore, there is only food enough in a country, there is little fear but there will always be money enough to distribute it. The thing to fear, and the thing to provide against is, the want of a sufficiency of *food*, not of money; for if there is not food enough, the people must necessarily be sufferers how much money soever there may be. Perhaps it may be said, that high prices have a tendency to increase the quantity of human sustenance. Upon a sudden start from lower prices this will no doubt be the effect to some trifling extent. Farmers and agriculturists receiving a greater price for their corn, &c., will be encouraged to make improvements in agriculture, and agricultural produce will, for a while, be greater than before; but these improvements soon cease: They cease as soon as the prices of things bear the same relative proportion to each other which they did before the rise took place. The advantages of high prices are therefore only just after they take place; and against these advantages there are many disadvantages; especially those which arise from a derangement of contracts. It is a *steady* price which is the thing that is desirable to the people:—If prices are only *steady*, it is of very little moment what they are; and, therefore, of very little consequence what the amount of the circulating medium may be. My object in saying so much on the subject of this note is, to correct notions which, I have no doubt, have had a pernicious effect upon the interests of mankind.*

foreign corn would *unavoidably* produce a fall of prices (that is, if there was no means of preventing it) in that case, "equitable adjustment" is a measure which might be resorted to without a shadow of well-founded objection, either on the part of the public creditor, or of any other person (a). What has been said relative to the remedy for the distress of the country, may be concluded by again adverting to the benefits which would arise from the application of it. The remedy, it will be recollected, is THE FREE, UNRESTRAINED IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN CORN, accompanied by taking off all restrictions on every other branch of trade. The manufacturer, the merchant, the colonist, by new markets for their silks, their cottons, their hardware, their sugars, &c., would be benefited to an extent, of which little conception can be formed; and as to the labouring classes, great indeed would be the benefits to them. And with respect to the land-owner and fund-holder, it has been clearly shewn, it is hoped, that the importation of foreign corn, so far from being productive of injury to them as generally supposed, would, in fact, be highly conducive to the interests of both; to the former, (the land-owner), by freeing him from poor's-rates and a part of the taxes with which he is burdened; and to the latter, (the fund-holder, or public creditor), by increasing the sources of taxation, and thus affording a more ample and improved security for the payment of his claims upon the public:—perhaps it is not asserting too much to say, that it is utterly impossible to shew the contrary either in the one case or in the other.

(a) "Equitable adjustment," as an accompaniment to the measure of allowing the free importation of foreign corn, would be a very different thing to the "equitable adjustment," of which so much has been said, and which has been so frequently proposed as a remedy for the distresses of the country; but which, so far from being a remedy, would not, even in the slightest degree, lessen them.

Another, and no unimportant advantage, would also arise from the free importation of foreign corn; viz. that no more complaints would be heard of the burden of taxation:—in fact, the burden under which the people are labouring, is the burden of poverty, and not of taxation.

I might have amplified upon the benefits arising from free trade, and have more fully shewn how impolitic it is to prohibit, at any time, and under any circumstances, a trade in corn and other articles of human sustenance;—articles, in fact, of the very first importance to mankind, and without which trade in other articles cannot be carried on at all. To impose restrictions upon any branch of trade, or upon any article whatever, clearly springs from a blind policy. If it is more advantageous to the people of any country to provide themselves with any article at home than to obtain it from abroad, (and to compel them to provide it at home is the object of restrictions on trade), there is no reason to fear, that they will go abroad for it. If, on the other hand, it would be more advantageous to them to obtain it from abroad than to produce it at home, (and if left to themselves, every country which has any pretensions to consider itself enlightened, would soon discover what was, in this respect, most for its benefit), why, it may be asked, should they not be at liberty to do so,—why not at liberty to do that which would be to their own advantage? But it is time for the whole world to put an end to prohibitory systems of commerce. What is it that is gained by them?—We shall find it difficult, I believe, to answer the question. But if we ask what is lost by them; is it not clear, that mankind have lost numerous things with which one part of them could have supplied the other, and which would have conduced greatly to their mutual comforts and enjoyments,

—*they have therefore lost those comforts and enjoyments.* With respect to the interests of our own country, if those interests and the means of promoting them were only properly understood, all commercial restrictions would be immediately taken off. By their removal, the power and prosperity of the country and the happiness of the people might be advanced to an extent beyond all calculation; and whilst she was enjoying all the advantages which her extensive possessions, (containing the produce of almost every soil and climate in the world), which her geographical situation, and the skill and industry of her people could not fail to give her, she would at the same time be promoting, in no slight degree, the happiness and prosperity of almost every other nation in the world—but all these advantages to herself and others are in a great measure lost owing to injudicious laws and regulations relating to commerce. The blame however is not to be imputed to England alone, for other nations are equally, or more culpable than herself. It is to be hoped however, that England will soon afford a proof, that on a subject of so much importance to mankind, she entertains more liberal and enlarged views than she has hitherto entertained; and *her* example will no doubt be soon followed by other nations. But to enjoy all the advantages which a free, unshackled trade would be sure to give us, it is absolutely necessary that the trade in *corn* should be entirely free. With a free trade in corn, many countries would take those various articles of our manufactures and colonies, who otherwise would take few or none of them. Allow them to send us their corn, and our East and West Indian possessions would soon be of more than twice their present importance to us. Where, in fact, is the use of a small country like England having large colonies, unless she

makes their products *the means* of augmenting her population, and providing the people with all the comforts and enjoyments of life? There is no reason why a country possessed even of the most fertile soil, and capable of producing the most abundant crops, should not augment her population, and with it her power and her strength, by means of the corn of other countries, in exchange for articles which she may have it in her power to give them. Corn, indeed, and other articles of food, are the most desirable things any country can receive in exchange for such things as she can part with in lieu of them; for they are the only things which will increase her population, and thereby increase her power and her strength. With respect to ourselves, the importation of foreign corn is at present desirable on more accounts than these. The tranquillity, the security, and even the independence of the country may possibly depend upon it. At all events *the comfort and happiness of millions of the people depend upon it.*—*The very lives of numbers probably depend upon it.* I think I have shewn, that the fear, that the land-owner and fund-holder would be *prejudiced* by such a measure, (and to shew this is the great object of my address to your Lordship), *is totally groundless.* It is therefore to be hoped, that the obstacle which has hitherto stood in the way of so much benefit to the country, may be regarded as removed; and that the distressed part of the people may consider their sufferings at an end:—and that such may be the case, is, no doubt, the ardent wish of your Lordship, as well as of myself.

I have selected your Lordship as the person to whom to address myself on the important subject to which my Letter relates, not so much from the circumstance of your Lordship being at the head of his Majesty's government, but because of those who fill important situations in the state, no one,



I believe, is more disposed than your Lordship to give a prompt attention to whatever concerns the welfare of the country and the happiness of the people; and no one more anxious to promote both the one and the other; and if any thing in the preceding pages should tend to give your Lordship any new views on subjects connected with the prosperity, the security, and the stability of the kingdom, and with the happiness and welfare of the people, no one, I believe, will be more ready than your Lordship to adopt and act upon them. That the country may, under your Lordship's administration, be relieved from her difficulties, and the people from their distress,—that she may attain that degree of greatness and prosperity, which I feel persuaded she is capable of attaining; and the people that degree of comfort and happiness which might be easily procured for them; and that they may hereafter be distinguished by their moral and religious deportment, and be an example for other nations to follow, (but which can never be the case so long as they are in a state of poverty and distress), is the sincere wish of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Very obedient Servant,

(a).

(a) Should the opinions contained in the above Letter prove unsound, the writer can have no wish that his name should accompany them: On the other hand, should they *but only lead* to a more correct view of the subjects to which the letter relates, (subjects of great importance to the welfare of mankind); and more especially, should they lead to the removal of the distress of the country, and to her attainment of that degree of prosperity and happiness which the writer feels well satisfied is completely within her reach, in that case, his object, in promulgating his opinions, will be fully accomplished.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE writing the above letter, Mr. Jacob's Report, relative to the State of Agriculture in different parts of the Continent, has been published. It is a document of some importance, inasmuch as it goes to shew, that from Poland and other parts of the Continent we might soon receive very large supplies of corn;—for their agriculture, generally speaking, seems to be in a most deplorable state; consequently there is vast scope for improvements; and by means of such improvements large quantities of corn would be raised. The report is also important, inasmuch as it also shews, that the general condition of the people is very wretched;—that they are in want of many of the necessaries, and possess few of the comforts and enjoyments of life. When, therefore, they have the means of procuring these comforts and enjoyments, (as they will by improving their agriculture and sending a part of their corn to us), we shall find in them a ready market for our various manufactures and colonial produce. The situations of ourselves and of the people of many parts of the Continent, are just such as to render commercial intercourse highly advantageous to both sides.

Mr. Jacob, in his Report, frequently ascribes the distress which he found in Prussia, Poland and other places, to the *low prices* of agricultural produce (a). Nothing, however, can be more erroneous than such a notion as this. The distress arises, *not from low prices, but from gross ignorance on*

(a) The Poles and other Continental nations appear to complain of *low prices* as the cause of *their* distress. We complain of *high ones* as the cause of *our's*.—How are these contradictions to be reconciled?—It is clear, however, that *both* are wrong *as to the cause* of their respective distresses.

*the part of the landed proprietors, in not knowing how to promote their own interests, and the interests of those connected with them.* Though long emerged from barbarism, yet their knowledge of the commonest arts seems to be little advanced beyond that which is possessed by people in the very first stages of society. The same rude implements of agriculture, the same mud cottages covered with shingles, the same want of all aid from mechanical power seem to be found amongst them now, just as they were 1000 years ago. No wonder they are "poor" and live "on the lowest and coarsest food." No wonder they do not possess the comforts and enjoyments of life. Instead of the whole, or at least nearly the whole of the people being engaged in procuring, with wretched implements of husbandry, a scanty and miserable subsistence (*a*), let a portion of them immediately employ themselves in working their mines in order to obtain iron for the various purposes for which it is so useful;—let another portion be employed in making the best kinds of agricultural implements (*b*); let another portion be employed as carpenters, upholsterers, bricklayers, masons, &c., in order to build good houses, make good furniture, &c.; and let a skilful system of agriculture be introduced, aided by the best agricultural implements;—let but all this be done, and the distress of the people will soon disappear.

The means of improving the condition of such a people,

(*a*) Mr. Jacob speaks of *four-fifths* of the population being employed in agriculture.

(*b*) If we take their corn, agricultural implements are the first things we should send them in return: Perhaps we should send them *first*, accompanied by some good ploughmen, carpenters, &c.

are too clear to admit of doubt; and it is equally clear, that it may be improved, and in an equal degree, notwithstanding rent should continue just as low as it is at present. But it is the absurd notions of the political economists about "rent," and "prices," and "profits," and the like, by which they puzzle and perplex themselves, and bewilder, and mislead, and deceive others.

Mr. Jacob speaks of the Prussian and other agriculturists as complaining of the want of manure for the improvement of their lands. Let them get good ploughs and other agricultural implements, and plough and work their lands *well*:—Let them follow Mr. Tull's system of agriculture, and they will soon have a sufficiency of manure; for the quantity of their manure will be necessarily increased by increased crops; and increased crops will be sure to follow an improved method of ploughing and working their lands.

Mr. Jacob speaks of estates as "well managed," (that is, *comparatively* so I suppose), yet as yielding "no rent," or, "no revenue." This would seem to be utterly inexplicable. He mentions the case of a large estate, managed by the proprietor himself, and well managed, and yet he adds,—that he was induced to believe the assurance which was given him "that it had not yielded any revenue to the proprietor for the last four or five years, in his joint capacity of owner and farmer." Mr. Jacob does not explain how this could happen.—Did it, during these four or five years, afford *no support* to the owner, to his family, to his servants, and others whom he employed? If it *did* it afforded him *revenue*. But perhaps all that Mr. Jacob meant to state was,—that the owner had not been able to sell any of his produce and put *money into his*

*pocket.* But of what consequence was that, provided his lands furnished him with an abundance of good food, enabled him to wear good clothes, live in a good and well furnished house, and have all the other comforts and enjoyments of life?—And can it be said that a man whose estate produces him all these things, has no *revenue* from it?—I should think no one would advance a doctrine so untenable. But Polish and Prussian land-owners, I dare say, do, in fact, derive small revenues from their estates, in comparison with the revenues they might, and clearly would derive, if instead of keeping all their people engaged in a wretched kind of agriculture, they would employ four-fifths of them in other ways; viz. as bricklayers, carpenters, masons, &c.; leaving only the remaining fifth to attend to agriculture; for one-fifth of the people, or even a less proportion is quite sufficient, (with skill and proper agricultural implements), to be employed in agriculture.—These hints should they ever come to the knowledge of the Poles, &c., may be of service to them.

The measure which has just been brought before parliament—(I allude to the measure for bringing three or four hundred thousand quarters of bonded wheat into the market, and for allowing, in future, the annual importation of foreign corn to the extent of half a million of quarters), having arisen out of the distresses of the country, may warrant a few observations: and first, I may observe, that the quantity of foreign corn to be brought into the market will, in fact, do *nothing* towards alleviating the distress of the people; or, at least, will do nothing towards placing them in that situation of ease and comfort in which they *might* be placed, and therefore in which *they ought to be placed.* Probably the number of

persons in Great Britain and Ireland who have not a *full sufficiency* of food, is not much less than fifteen millions. Divide the half million <sup>of</sup> quarters of corn amongst fifteen millions of people, and it gives the thirtieth part of a quarter to each person. A quarter of wheat will produce, on the average, about four hundred pounds of flour, or not quite so much. The thirtieth part of four hundred pounds of flour, is a trifle more than thirteen pounds: thirteen pounds is therefore about the additional quantity of bread, by the year, which each individual of the distressed classes would receive by allowing the annual importation of half a million of quarters. Thirteen pounds, by the year, is about half an ounce a day for each distressed person. It must be clear that such an addition *as this* can positively and literally do *nothing* towards alleviating the distress of the country.—Even in the article of bread itself, it is no augmentation worth speaking of; and the distressed classes not only want an increased quantity of bread, *but also of all other kinds of food; and likewise of all the other necessaries of life.* To do any real good to the distressed part of the people perhaps not less than six or eight millions of quarters should be imported:—or articles of food, of one kind or another, equivalent to six or eight millions. But why should any prescribed bounds be set to importation?—why not let all the people who cannot procure a sufficiency at home, obtain as much as they think fit from abroad? It is clear, I think, that no *good reason* can be assigned why they should *not* be allowed to do so. The reason hitherto assigned against the importation of foreign corn is evidently an *unsound one.* To demonstrate its unsoundness was the principal object I had in view in the liberty I have taken in addressing your

Lordship: In doing so, I have addressed myself to your *judgment*, and not to your *feelings*; as knowing that the feelings ought to have no influence in deciding upon measures of public policy. I doubt not, however, but your Lordship's feelings lead you strongly to sympathise with your suffering fellow creatures; and that you will adopt, with promptitude, any measures for their relief, compatible with the general interests of the country. Those interests, my own feelings have not, I hope, made me lose sight of; nor have I, I trust, whilst advocating the interests of the humbler classes, at all oppugned those of the higher classes; being, indeed, well satisfied, that where their respective interests are only properly understood, it will be found, that they in no wise clash or interfere with each other.

Much surprise has been frequently expressed, that the country should during a period of profound peace, experience a greater portion of distress than she did at any time during the late war. The difficulty, however, of accounting for a state of things so different to the received notions of mankind, is of easy solution. During the war the population was not nearly so great as at present, and yet I have no doubt it would appear, (if the fact could only be ascertained with accuracy), that the quantity of human sustenance in the country was much greater during the late war than it has been at any time since its termination. If such is the fact, then the people during the war, *though much less numerous than at present*, had not merely a relatively, but a positively greater quantity of human sustenance for their support than they have now. During the late war a considerable impetus was given to agriculture, and for some years great additional quantities of corn were

produced, not only by means of an improved system of agriculture, but also by the cultivation of waste lands; and over and above the increased quantities of corn produced by the means I have just mentioned, considerable quantities were frequently obtained from abroad:—great attention too was paid to the improvement and management of farming stock.—Such was the state of things during the late war when the population was much less than at present. Since the peace agriculture has materially suffered: The great depression which took place a few years ago in the prices of agricultural produce, (occasioned by the reduced amount of the circulating medium, whilst a corresponding reduction did not take place in rents), so injured and crippled numbers of farmers, that they no longer carried on their farming pursuits with spirit or enterprise. They had a smaller proportion of their farms under crop than during the war; and what they had under crop was not so well managed or cultivated; and quantities of inferior lands were thrown entirely out of cultivation. Considering then, that during the war we produced at home a greater quantity of human sustenance than we have for some years past produced; considering, too, that during the war we frequently obtained corn from abroad, and which we have not done since the peace, or at least to a very trifling extent; considering, too, that the population of the country is now *much greater* than during the war,—taking all these circumstances into consideration, we shall easily see, how it has happened, that the people have been worse off since the peace, than they were during the war. During the war, twelve or fifteen millions of people had a greater quantity of human sustenance amongst them, than since

its termination, eighteen or twenty millions have had. I do not wish to be understood as speaking with perfect accuracy *as to numbers*.—I merely mean to advance the position that, during the war a *smaller* number of people had amongst them, *more food*, than has been possessed by a much *greater* number since the peace.

What I have said on the above subject ought to have been introduced in the body of the letter, I have taken the liberty of addressing to your Lordship. I deemed it, however, right to point out the way, in which, I conceived, the worse state of the people at present than during the late war, was to be accounted for; and if I am right in my notions on the subject, additional grounds are afforded for coming to the conclusion,—*that the country does not possess a sufficiency of human sustenance for the support of the whole of the people*; consequently, that THIS is the cause of the distress; and that the remedy consists in their having *an increased quantity of food or sustenance*. This they may easily obtain from foreign countries; and I indulge the hope, that what I have urged in favour of the free importation of foreign corn may convince your Lordship, that the adoption of such a measure, would be productive of *NO injury to the land-owners*; whilst to all others it would clearly be attended with the most beneficial consequences:—in short, with consequences so extensively beneficial, that *every individual in the kingdom would partake of the benefit*.

#### FURTHER POSTSCRIPT.

THE notion entertained by many, that the distress which the country is experiencing arises solely from over-trading, and is only temporary, has been briefly noticed in the above letter:—some further notice of it may not, however, be improper, for I feel convinced that the notion is a very erroneous one. That a *portion* of the distress at present experienced in the manufacturing districts, arises from over-trading, and is only temporary, is what I readily admit; but I consider it to be clear, that when the severity of the present distress in the manufacturing districts shall have passed away, and things shall have returned to the state in which they were twelve or eighteen months ago, great and wide-spreading distress will still exist in the country. The fact is, that ever since the termination of the late war, great distress has existed amongst the lower classes of society. This distress has been steady and constant;—it has been without intermission; and every now and then there has been a partial increase of it, especially in the manufacturing districts.

These periods of *increased distress* having excited more of the public attention, it is from this circumstance that many people have been led to suppose that the distress of the country was confined to these periods; and that at other times the people were in a state of ease and comfort. No opinion, however, could be worse founded; for almost ever since the peace took place, nearly the whole of the

small tradesmen and their families, and nearly the whole of the labouring classes, (in every kind of employment), and their families, have been in a regular, constant state of distress. Including the people of Ireland, not less, perhaps, than nine-tenths of the population of the kingdom have been, and still are, in a state of distress; that is, nine-tenths of the people of Great Britain and Ireland have been, and still are, without a sufficiency of wholesome food, comfortable clothing, and the other necessaries of life;—some experiencing an almost total want of them, others but a trifling want of them, and the rest occupying the intermediate gradations in the scale of distress. This has been the condition of nine-tenths of the people of Great Britain and Ireland during the last ten or twelve years; and every now and then the distress of two or three hundred thousands of them, (principally in the manufacturing districts), has been considerably aggravated; and owing chiefly to over-trading\*.—During the occasional briskness, however, which is caused by such over-trading, the labouring manufacturers are something better off than they would otherwise be; as during such periods of briskness, they procure more employment and higher wages than they would otherwise procure:—this, however, is a poor set-off against the acute distress they experience during the periods of depression.

\* If the corn laws were repealed we should hear no more of over-trading; for the increased consumption, at home and abroad, of all kinds of manufactures and produce, would afford a demand for all that could be brought into the market; and the great additional numbers of people who would be employed as servants, carpenters, masons, shipwrights, sailors, &c., would prevent our manufactories from being crowded to excess, as they are at present.

If the fact was ascertained, I have no doubt it would be found, that the difference between the *quantum* or *degree* of distress at the present period, and at those periods which have been deemed prosperous, does not amount to more than this:—viz., that during the periods deemed prosperous, there were twelve or fifteen millions of people who had not a sufficiency of the necessaries of life:—that at the present period there are three or four hundred thousands of these twelve or fifteen millions who are almost totally without the necessaries of life;—and as to the remainder of the twelve or fifteen millions, that their present situation is pretty much the same with what it was during the periods deemed prosperous. The distressed portion of the people consists therefore of the twelve or fifteen millions whose distress is regular and permanent, and not merely of the three or four hundred thousands who are at present suffering an increased degree of distress. In applying therefore a remedy to the distresses of the country, such remedy must go to relieve the permanent distress of the *millions*, and not be confined in its operation to allaying the occasionally increased distress of the thousands.—A remedy applied to the former will be sure to reach the latter; but a remedy confined to the latter will do little or nothing towards relieving the "*distress of the country.*"

In addition to the reasons adduced in the above Letter in support of the opinion, *that the distress of the country is owing to the country not possessing a sufficiency of food for the whole of the people*, may be added the following; viz. that as millions of the people have year after year, for several years past, been without a sufficiency of food, (for I take it for granted, that this is a fact which cannot



be doubted or denied), it would seem to follow, as an inevitable consequence, that *if the country HAD possessed a sufficiency for the WHOLE of the people*, there must, 'ere this, have been a vast accumulation of corn and other kinds of human sustenance, being what those millions *would* have consumed could they have procured it, but which, from some cause or other, they were unable to procure, and was therefore left unconsumed. Now it is well known that there is no such accumulation, and it is equally well known that there has been no waste or destruction of corn or any other kind of human sustenance. It is not to be doubted, in fact, but the people consumed *all* that the country produced; and yet after consuming *all*, they *could have consumed* MUCH MORE. This must render it clear, that the distress of the country, in every proper sense of the expression, must be ascribed to the want of a sufficiency of food for the *whole* of the people;—the Remedy for the Distress is therefore obvious.