CONSIDERATIONS

ON OUR

CORN-LAWS,

AND THE

BILL

PROPOSED TO AMEND THEM.

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CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

IF all thoſe nations which are connected with one another by a commercial intercourſe, were under the authority of one ſuperintending power, there would be no cauſe for thoſe mutual diſtruſts which have given riſe to ſo many regulations and reſtrictions.—Induſtry would probably, in ſuch a ſituation, be beſt left to its own direction. The inhabitants of each country might, with ſafety, cultivate thoſe arts which were found moſt profitable, without having any other object but profit in view.—No matter though the land ſhould be employed in producing only wine, or the manufacturers only in ornamental arts.—There would be no reaſon to apprehend that the neceſſaries of life would not be got in return from thoſe countries whoſe intereſt it was found to be to cultivate and produce them.—But as the commercial world is on the contrary parcelled out into many different ſtates, all ſtruggling to acquire ſuperiority or to preſerve independence, ſuch entire confidence cannot be expected to take place, and no wiſe nation will ſo far turn its induſtry towards the production of the luxuries, though perhaps more profitable, as to be dependent on another for the neceſſaries of life.

It has accordingly been an object of the attention of every government, to eſtabliſh ſuch regulations as might guard againſt a want of food for the inhabitants, though thoſe which have been adopted, have been different in almoſt every age, and in every country; indeed the regulations

which may be wise in one country, might be absurd in another. In *Holland*, where the territory is so narrow, that under the best of cultivation, it could not produce half as much as to maintain the inhabitants, and where they must depend upon supplies from other counties, for their daily bread; to impose any tax or any restraint upon the importation of those supplies in order to encourage agriculture, would be the greatest folly. The cultivation of their own land, as it cannot produce enough to support them, is on that account but a secondary object, and must be sacrificed to that free intercourse with other countries upon the supplies from which their existence depends.

But in *Britain*, which contains fifty-six millions of acres, and only seven and a half millions of inhabitants, and where, by a proper cultivation, the land is capable of producing twice as much as is necessary for their support; the cultivation of the land is undoubtedly the first object, and it would be unwise to depend upon supplies from other counties, which must necessarily in some degree be precarious and uncertain. *America* is too distant to be trusted to in time of want, even if the re-establishment of a lasting amity with *Britain* was ever so certain. And *Poland*, the only country in *Europe*, which has at all times great quanties of grain to spare, not only has its port frozen up for a great part of the year, but is too much under the influence of the King of *Prussia*, to be depended on as a safe resource.

If this country does not at present produce enough to secure us against the danger of famine, or even of very high prices, the natural and safe

remedy is within our own power, every encouragement should be given to our own farmers, to bring more of our own waste land into cultivation, and to improve that which is already ploughed; and this encouragement is only effectually to be given by increasing the demand for the grain that is produced by those improvements; for no man will plough, if he finds that he cannot dispose of the crop.

The common consumption of the country will occasion the production of no more than what is found sufficient in ordinary seasons to supply it. If in order to guard against the evils of famine or scarcity, we wish that more should be produced every year, than what is equal to the annual consumption in ordinary seasons: An artificial demand, must be created, and to answer that artificial demand, more land will very soon be cultivated.

With the same view, the importation of foreign grain should never be allowed, except when the prices at home rise to such a height, as to endanger the loss of our manufactures; for whatever part of the demand for home-consumption is supplied from abroad, the encouragement for the cultivation of our own land, and the quantity ploughed, will be just so much lessened; and here lyes the great error of those who argue for a continual free importation of corn; their arguments presume, that notwithstanding the importation, the quantity produced within the country, will remain the same, and that the quantity imported, by making greater plenty, will only lessen the price.

If importation is only allowed on an emergency, when the prices at home rise to too great

a height; no doubt what is then imported will have that effect, becauſe the farmer knowing that there will be no interference, unleſs prices riſe to be very high, and conſequently that he is in no danger of being deprived of a proper return for his expence and his labour, will not be diſcouráged from ploughing; ſo that what is imported will in that caſe be a real addition to the quantity in the country, and will therefore leſſen the price in proportion.

But if corn is at all times, or when prices are not very high, admitted from abroad, the quantity imported will juſt in ſo far leſſen the demand for our own grain, and the quantity of ground ploughed in order to ſupply that demand. A continued permiſſion of importation, therefore, will not make any permanent diminution of the price, the quantity brought to market to anſwer the home conſumption, will be as it is now, in proportion to the demand, the more that is imported, the leſs will be produced at home, and the importation will interfere with the tillage, and leſſen it, but not the price. Probably indeed the price would become higher and more variable, for as the ſupply from abroad would be more irregular and uncertain: And as there is no ſet of men upon whom hope and fear has more influence than upon farmers, when there is a proſpect of a demand, more will generally be ploughed in conſequence of it, than is ſufficient to anſwer it, and if on the other hand there ſhould be a danger of the demand being leſſened or ſupplied by others who perhaps are lower taxed, and can have labour cheaper; their fears would have as ſtrong an effect, too little would be ploughed, the markets would be worſe and leſs regularly ſupplied, and prices would riſe.

In this country therefore, a bounty has wiſely been given upon the corn exported to other countries, when prices are ſo low as to ſhew that we have plenty at home. An artificial demand is thereby created, becauſe we are oftener enabled to underſell thoſe foreign nations, which compete with us in the trade of corn, than we ſhould be without the bounty, and in order to ſupply that artificial demand, more ground is ploughed, and more corn is produced at home than is neceſſary to maintain ourſelves.

The ſurplus of produce, which is at all times under our command, is our ſecurity againſt famine, and the bounty is a price prudently paid in years of plenty, to guard us againſt that worſt of evils in unfavourable ſeaſons.

Thoſe who object to the bounty, and think that we may ſafely truſt, that if our manufactures ſucceed, the improvement of the land will follow, either do not underſtand the great object of the bounty, or at leaſt uſe no convincing argument againſt it. That the increaſe of manufactures will increaſe the number of our people, and therefore the demand for the produce of our land, is undoubted, but whatever the numbers may be they can only create a demand for that quantity that is commonly required for ſupporting themſelves, and the uſe and object of the bounty is to create a ſurplus of produce beyond the quantity that is neceſſary for ourſelves in common years, whatever it may be, that we may have enough even in unfavourable ſeaſons, ſo that the bounty remains as uſeful and as neceſſary when our numbers are great, as when they are ſmall.

From the time of Henry the VIII. down to the latter part of the laſt century, many acts were paſſed relative to corn, all of them founded on principles directly oppoſite to thoſe of our preſent laws; with the view of having plenty of corn at home, the exportation of our own was generally prohibited, and the importation from other countries was allowed and encouraged. The conſequence was, what under ſuch regulations it muſt always be, the markets were irregularly ſupplied; ſometimes great quantities were poured in when they were not neceſſary, and at other times corn did not come when it was moſt needed. Prices were ſometimes ſo very low, and ſometimes ſo very high, as to ruin both farmers and manufacturers. Dearths were frequent, and we find the writers of thoſe times all complaining of the decreaſe of tillage and of population.

After the conſequence of theſe abſurd regulations had been long ſeverely felt, and when more enlarged ideas came to prevail in this country, new acts were paſſed, by which at firſt exportation was allowed at higher prices than before, duties were then impoſed on imported corn, and at laſt that parliament to which we owe the revolution, diſregarding the noiſe and riot of the multitude, who from ignorance of what is for their own good, have at all times oppoſed exportation, and called out for importation, paſſed that famous act ſo much admired in every other country of the world, by which a bounty was given on corn exported.

The particulars of that act are ſo generally known, that they need not be mentioned. Since

the time it was paſſed, when any unfavourable ſeaſons have happened, and prices have been too high, the bounty has been ſuſpended, exportation has been prohibited, and importation has been allowed, as the ſituation ſeemed to require. The effects have been as fortunate as could have been deſired, the exportation which has naturally been at all times carried to the greateſt extent in times of the greateſt plenty, has prevented the prices from falling ſo exceſſively low as they did before; the importation, as it has only been allowed when there was occaſion for it, and when prices were high, has not diſcouraged agriculture, and has therefore really made the quantity at Market greater, and has by that means prevented the prices from riſing at any time to ſo great a height as before; indeed prices have not only been more equal, ever ſince that law was eſtabliſhed, but as appears by a very accurate regiſter of thoſe in Windſor market, kept in Eton college, they have been on an average from 15 to 20 per cent. lower ſince the bounty was given, than they had been for a hundred years immediately preceding, and this has happened while every other article of living has grown dearer, which would ſeem to be unfavourable to that ſyſtem of reaſoning, though ſupported by a very great authority, by which it is attempted to be proved that the money price of corn regulates that of labour, and of all other commodities, for if that opinion was juſt, the price of labour and of every other commodity as well as corn, muſt have fallen ſince the revolution, which it is hardly neceſſary to ſay has not happened.

It is true, that as no man will work for leſs

wages than what will buy as much food as is necessary to maintain him, the price of food, of which corn makes a principal part, fixes the lowest rate at which labour can be obtained; and consequently the lowest at which any manufacture can possibly be afforded: but it does by no means fix the price at which the manufacture will be sold, nor the wages that will be given, for these depend upon the demand for the manufacture, and the number of the labourers. If there is great demand for any commodity, the proprietor will get a high price for it, and if there is a great demand for labourers they will obtain high wages, whatever the price of corn may be at the time.

But it is not necessary to enter minutely into this discussion; because supposing the system was just, it would be an argument for, and not against, those laws, whose tendency is not to raise prices, but to make them more equal, and to increase the quantity produced at home.

About the same time that we, who formerly had been supplied from abroad, were venturing to exclude foreign produce, and give a bounty upon the exportation of our own, in France, (from whence we had till then received part of our supply) restraints were laid upon exportation, and importation was encouraged by Colbert, who had adopted the vulgar prejudices on these subjects, and imagined that he should by these means keep down the prices of grain, and encourage manufactures.

The effect of these regulations are a farther confirmation of the principles here attempted to

be supported; we find in the speech of the Procureur General Chalotais, when he presented the edict 1764 to the parliament of Britanny by which Colbert's regulations were altered, and in many excellent treatises of their best authors on that occasion, the most pathetic complaints of the decrease of tillage and population, all imputed to these regulations of Colbert's.

Perhaps in ascribing to our corn-laws, which gave a bounty on exportion, and prohibited importation, the rise of this country, in agriculture, manufactures and power, they have imputed to them more than they deserve; there have been many other circumstances which have concurred in promoting our advancement; but we may venture to say, that by increasing the quantity of grain produced in this country, and by keeping prices more equal than formerly, which of all things is the most favourable to manufactures, they have greatly promoted their success, and increased our power, and that it would be unwise upon any speculative reasoning to make any violent alteration, or allow any pernicious one that has already been made to continue in a law which from the experience of so many years appears to have had such important and beneficial effects.

No material alteration was made in England on the law of 1688, untill the year 1774, when an act was passed, by which the former customs and duties on importation were repealed, and the price at which the bounty shall cease, and exportation be prohibited, are altered; and upon payment of a trifling duty, importation is thereby allowed, when wheat is at or about 48s. rye,

peaſe or beans 32s. barley 24s. and oats 16s. and oat-meal is allowed to be imported into any port or place in Scotland where the price does exceed 16s. per boll. The powers formerly veſted in the judges of the court of ſeſſion, juſticiary, and exchequer, to take proof of the prices of grain and meal in the city and county of Edinburgh, and in time of dearth and ſcarcity to ſuſpend the laws which prohibited importation into Scotland, are repealed, and our ſheriffs or ſteward deputes and ſubſtitutes are required four times in every year, in November, February, May, and Auguſt, to take proof of the prices within their reſpective counties or ſtewartries, and when in any of them the price of grain or meal are above thoſe mentioned, they may be imported from Ireland or any place beyond ſeas.

This act, which proceeds on the ſame principles with that of 1688, was intended, like it, to encourage the exportation of grain when the prices are moderate, and to prevent importation except in times of dearth or ſcarcity, and in ſome reſpects it improves upon the former; but in giving to each county a right to import when the prices within any part of it ſhould exceed thoſe mentioned in the act, the particular ſituation of our counties had not been attended to, and a door was opened for artifices by which the whole intention of the law is in danger of being defeated.

It is well known, that ſheriffs have already been miſled, and that advantage has already been taken of this part of the act; and it is obvious, if it ſhould not be altered, that the intention of the law will be defeated, and that to the ruin of

manufactures as well as agriculture, foreign corn may at all times be poured in upon us in conſequence of this act, which was meant to prevent it. It will hardly be doubted by any who conſiders this part of the act, that an amendment is neceſſary, and with this view, in the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, a bill was propoſed, the conſideration of which has been delayed, till the next, that the ſentiments of the country may in the mean time be diſcovered.

That bill contains a clauſe to repeal this inaccurate and pernicious part of the act of 1774, and another, by which the mode of aſcertaining the prices would be brought back to what it was before that act was paſſed, that is to ſay, the proof for all Scotland would be taken by the judges of the ſupreme courts, who were to meet for that purpoſe once in every month, and the ports over all Scotland would be opened or ſhut when the prices in the town and county of Edinburgh are found to be under or above thoſe mentioned in the bill, which are the ſame with thoſe in the preſent law, the price of oats only being left out, " Becauſe inconveniencies had been found " to ariſe from taking a proof both of oats and " of oat-meal, as when the price of oats is above, " and the price of oat-meal below, the import- " ing price, the prohibition of importing oat- " meal is rendered ineffectual by the importation " of oats which may be afterwards turned into " meal, and becauſe the regulating the importa- " tion and exportation both of oats and of oat- " meal, and the bounty on exporting them by " one uniform rule would prevent ſuch incon- " veniencies; therefore in order to regulate the " importation and exportation both of oats and

"of oat-meal and other produce of oats, and the "bounty payable on the exportation of them; "the price of the oat-meal alone is to be taken; "and when that is found, as before, to be at or "above 16s. per boll, oats, oat-meal, or the "produce of oats, may be imported upon pay-"ment of the ſame ſmall duty as before of 2d. "per quarter. And the exportation is allowed "when the price of oatmeal is under 14s. per "boll." Theſe are the only alterations that are propoſed in the bill; they are perfectly conſiſtent with the ſpirit of our corn-laws, and are calculated only to correct ſome inaccuracies in the act 1774, and to prevent thoſe artifices by which the purpoſe of it was counteracted and defeated.

If taking the proof and opening the ports in each county ſeparately was found to be attended with inconvenience, it was natural enough for our repreſentatives to go back to the former mode, which had been try'd for many years without occaſioning much inconvenience or complaint; and if a confuſion and inconſiſtency ſometimes aroſe from taking a proof both of oats and of oat-meal, it was natural enough to leave out one of them, and if one is to be left out, it certainly ſhould be the oats, for very obvious reaſons.

Oats are more or leſs valuable in proportion to the quantity of meal that they can yield; ſome kinds will produce almoſt twice as much as others, and are therefore almoſt twice as valuable; but the meal is not very different in its value, whether it came from oats that were well filled and heavy, or from what were light; there-

fore a boll of oat-meal is without any doubt a more diſtinct deſcription than a quarter of oats.

Objections however have been made to theſe propoſed alterations in ſome of the towns in Scotland, and perhaps with a view to excite popular prejudice againſt them; a memorial has been publiſhed, dated from the *Council-chamber of Glaſgow*, which deſerves notice, not ſo much on account of any argument that it contains, as out of reſpect to the place from whence it comes.

It is filled with the vulgar opinions upon this ſubject, and probably contains all the objections made by the multitude againſt the preſent law, as well as againſt the propoſed bill. The general ſyſtem recommended in it, is, that the ports ſhould at all times be open for the importation of foreign corn; that however low the prices may by that means be brought, it is all that the farmer or the landed man is intitled to receive, but if that general permiſſion cannot be obtained, the memorialiſts will be ſatisfied if the price at which oat-meal may be imported ſhall be reduced from 16s. per boll, which is the limitation both in the law and the bill, to 13s. 4d. per boll; and if oat-meal ſhall be permitted to be warehouſed and re-exported in the ſame manner as grain is when imported after the price falls below the limitation, that is, when the price of meal ſhall fall below 13s. 4d.

To the propoſed bill it is objected, in the firſt place, that Edinburgh is not the proper place for taking the proof of the prices by which the ports over all Scotland are to be opened and ſhut, becauſe it is ſituated in the richeſt corn country,

Glasgow in the poorest, so that while the one city might be blessed with plenty, the other might be in a starving condition.

Secondly, That the taking a proof at the end of every thirty days is too frequent, because the merchant, who in consequence of the ports being opened shall purchase foreign grain or meal, with a view to this market, may very probably find them shut before his cargo arrives, thirty days being too short a time for purchasing a cargo and bringing it even from Ireland; so that the consequence of this clause in the bill would probably be to prevent any grain from being brought to supply the demand of this country.

These are the only material alterations proposed by the memorialists upon the present law, and the only objections to the proposed bill; and in answering them they shall be taken in the order in which they have here been stated.

In the first place, in answer to the general system of allowing the free importation of foreign corn at all times, though borrowed from a work very justly admired, it is apprehended, that many arguments cannot be necessary. In order to encourage any manufacture at home, it is our uniform policy to restrain or prohibit the importation of similar manufactures from abroad; to promote the manufacture of broad cloth, the importation of foreign broad cloth is forbid; to encourage our silk weavers, French silks are made contraband; it will not be denied that agriculture, or the production of corn, which Montesquieu justly says is of all manufactures infinitely the most valuable, deserves encourage-

ment as well as the rest, and it must seem strange if its success is to be promoted by the very reverse of the method taken to encourage every other; by the admission of foreign corn to a competition with our own.

If they are right who argue that every restriction and every bounty does harm, the alteration of our laws ought to be general; it cannot with propriety be made with regard to one manufacture, and not to the rest. In order to do justice to the growers of corn, to our landed men and farmers, if we are allowed to buy corn at all times wherever we can find it cheapest, we ought also to be allowed the same liberty in every kind of manufacture.

But under the security of the home market, which our present laws give us, our manufactures and our agriculture have rose to surpass those of every other country in the world, and it is not easy for one who sees a country in high prosperity to avoid thinking that there must be some connection between that prosperity and the laws which have been made to promote it. To condemn a whole statute-book, and yet to admire the happiness of the country governed by that book, is very bold, but it is hardly to be supposed that any wise nation will place such confidence in a system, however ingenious the arguments may be by which it is maintained, as to risk its prosperity on the trial.

The first objection that comes to be considered, is that made to the price at which the importation of oat-meal is allowed, which by the present law is 16s. at which rate by the bill it is

propoſed to be continued. This price it is ſaid is too high, and arguing upon the erroneous ſuppoſition that by making importation leſs frequent, the price of oats will by that means become permanently higher, great complaint is made, that as oat-meal is the common food of our manufacturers, this ſuppoſed increaſe in the price will hurt them, and put us on a worſe footing than they are in England, where the rate at which oats can be imported is in proportion lower.

In anſwer to this, in the firſt place, no compariſon can in this caſe be made with England, becauſe in England there is no regulation about oat-meal, and as it is not there the food of the manufacturers, our rate being higher in proportion than theirs is for oats, cannot give any advantage to their manufacturers over ours, unleſs it could be ſhown that our food, which is oat-meal, would by this means become dearer than theirs, which is flour, beef, and porter.

The principle upon which the law proceeds, is to encourage the growth of wheat, barley, and oats, by preventing the importation of foreign grain until the price ſhall riſe conſiderably above the medium prices; and the only way to diſcover whether or not 16s. per boll is too high a price for oat-meal, is to conſider whether or not 16s. per boll exceeds the medium price of oat-meal more than 48s. per quarter exceeds the medium price of wheat, or than 24s. per quarter exceeds the medium price of barley.

In order to diſcover this, the medium price of the Mid-Lothian fiars has been taken from twenty-one years, being from 1755 to 1775 incluſive; and the general average is found to be as follows:

Wheat, 17s. $2\frac{17}{21}$ per boll.
Barley, 11s. 10d. per do.
Oatmeal, 13s. $\frac{22}{63}$ per do.

Turning the bolls of wheat and barley into quarters, our meaſure being a little larger than the Wincheſter, and neglecting ſmall fractions, it would be nearly as follows:

Wheat, 34s. per quarter.
Barley, 15s. 6d. per do.
And oat-meal, 13s. per boll.

Now if though the medium price of wheat has been only 34s. per quarter, the importation has not been allowed till it riſes to 48s. following the ſame proportion, and giving the ſame encouragement to oats, if the average-price of meal is 13s. the importation ſhould not be allowed till it riſes to above 18s. and if the medium price of barley is 15s. 6d. and the rate at which importation is permitted is 24s. following that proportion, the rate at which oat-meal ſhould be imported is above 20s. per boll, ſo that in fact, inſtead of the limited price for the opening of the ports for bringing in oat-meal being too high at 16s. it is actually much lower in proportion to its real price than the limitation of either wheat or barley is to their real prices; and as wheat and barley muſt be conſidered as the food of Engliſh manufacturers, as oat-meal is of the Scots, if there was really any diſadvantage ariſing from fixing that limitation much above the real price, their manufacturers, and not ours, would have a right to complain.

By what means it has happened, that in our

acts of parliament, the importation price of oats has all along been much lower than it ought to have been, it is not easy to discover, though it has been taken notice of by many authors. Davenant, one of the most sensible writers of his time, states the real proportion of the prices of the different kinds of grain to be, wheat 28s. barley 16s. and oats 12s. according to which, the limited price for the importation of oats or meal would be still higher than they are made by the above calculation. Neither has this escaped the attention of the very intelligent author of the *Tracts on the Corn-trade and Corn-laws*, who observes, that the price at which oats may be imported by our law is much lower than it ought to be in proportion to the prices of other grain.

Reasons might even be assigned why the growth of oats, instead of less, should have more, encouragement from the law than of any other kind of grain. The great object of the law is to encourage cultivation, and the improvement of our waste-lands, and oats is the crop almost always taken first upon land that has never before been ploughed, and for this reason if by too frequent importation the demand for oats should be lessened, it would undoubtedly discourage the bringing in of waste-lands, much more than a want of demand either for wheat or barley.

Tho' it may therefore be improper so far to go against the prejudices of the country as to raise the importation price of oat-meal to its just rate in proportion to those to wheat or barley: there seems on the other hand to be no good reason for yielding so far to them as to let it be made still lower; and the bill which has been so much com-

plained of, does no more than keep the price the same that it is in the present law.

The second objection made to the present law is, that oat-meal is not allowed to be imported (without paying duty) and lodged in a warehouse under the joint locks of the king and the importer, as grain is when the price is so low as that it cannot be imported for sale duty free. And to this proposed alteration no answer need be given, as it may perhaps without danger be admitted.

These are the only alterations proposed in the present law, by the opposers of the bill, and to the bill the first objection is, to the taking the proof in the town and county of Edinburgh. The arguments that occur in favour of this clause, are, that there is less danger of any improper proof being brought before the judges of our supreme court, than when that is intrusted to every sheriff or sheriff's substitute in the kingdom, so that there will be less danger of those artifices and evasions by which the real intention of the law, since that power was intrusted to the sheriffs, has been defeated. That it was the method formerly followed, down to the year 1774, and no great inconvenience arose from it, even before the great canal was made, which by joining the firths of Forth and Clyde makes the communication between the two sides of the island infinitely easier than it was before, and prevents the possibility of any lasting scarcity on the one side when there is plenty on the other, and that in fact the prices in the town and county of Edinburgh are found to be near about a medium of the prices when taken over all Scotland. Edinburgh is a market of great consumption, and the prices there exceed those of the

Merſe and the North, from whence it is ſupplied, as much as the prices at Glaſgow exceed thoſe at Edinburgh, ſo that it is really the eaſieſt and moſt certain method of coming at the true medium price over all Scotland.

The only other objection made to the bill, is the taking a new proof at the end of every thirty days, which it is ſaid allows too little time for purchaſing and importing even from Ireland.

The danger which the merchant complains of, is only, that he may find the ports ſhut when a cargo arrives, which was commiſſioned as ſoon as they were opened; but what is the effect to be expected from this apprehenſion? It is only this, that unleſs by his general correſpondence he finds there is a real want of grain or meal in the country, he will not venture to import. If, notwithſtanding the alteration propoſed by the bill, there ſhould ſtill be a poſſibility of bringing a falſe proof before the judges, ſo as to lead them to open the ports when there is no real ſcarcity, he will ſee that this may be rectified at the end of thirty days, and he will not truſt to it ſo far as to order corn from abroad to anſwer this fictitious want.

The ſpirit and avowed intention of the law is to prevent importation except in times of dearth or ſcarcity, and if there is a real dearth or ſcarcity, there is no chance that prices will ſo ſoon fall below the limitation.

On the other hand, the danger to the country from extending the time for which the ports are to remain open without a new proof, is obvious.

If by any art the proof ſhould be brought by which the ports may be opened, when there is no real ſcarcity in the country, and if that ſhould be without remedy for a longer period, let it be ſuppoſed for three months, there is not a doubt but in that time ſuch a quantity may be poured into this country when prices are low, as to diſtreſs and diſcourage our farmers, and defeat the whole purpoſe of the law.

A clauſe which gives ſo much ſecurity againſt thoſe arts by which the ports have been improperly opened, which ſaves the farmer from being diſcouraged and hurt, and the purpoſe of the law from being defeated, without preventing ſupplies from being brought into the country when they are really neceſſary,—ought not to be given up.

N. B. *The laſt paragraph in page 20th of the original is here omitted, in regard the publiſher has authority to ſay the Author has altered the opinion he gave in that paragraph.*