With the Author's Respectful Compts

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

STATE OF AGRICULTURE,

AND

Condition of the Lower Classes of the People,

IN THE

SOUTHERN PARTS OF IRELAND,

IN THE YEAR 1812.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

RELATING TO

THE SAME SUBJECTS,

IN THE YEAR 1822.

BY JOSHUA KIRBY TRIMMER.

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1822.

PART I.

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ERRATA.

Page 12, line 12, *for* threshed *read* thrashed
33 — 8, *for* that *read* as
48 — 1, *the comma should be after* end *instead of* desired
57 — 7, *for* therefore I *read* therefore as I
65 — 11, *for* as formerly observed *read* as I formerly observed
87 — 1, and twenty thousand acres of land to each church *should not be in italics*
99 — 3, *for* wastes *read* roads

ADDRESS.

When I before submitted to the public some considerations on the state of Agriculture and the condition of the poor in the southern part of Ireland, I endeavoured to trace out the causes which led to them, and to suggest measures by which I trusted they might be improved.

But I wrote, as I then acknowledged, from first impressions. The subject was altogether new to me. Business had just led me to visit the country, and I had not before either means to learn or occasion to inquire much respecting it. I even almost doubted whether the view which I had taken of it, had not made too strong an impression on my mind and mis-led my judgment: I therefore looked eagerly forward to opportunities of reviewing it, anxiously hoping to find the life

of the peasant less wretched—the advances to prosperity less difficult—and the prospect in every point less gloomy than I had at first imagined. These opportunities have occurred. I have again and again seen the country; and sincerely should I rejoice, if, whilst I am about to extend my observations, I could erase, as being drawn stronger than the life, any part of the picture which I have given of the wretched condition of the poor. But far otherwise; at every re-examination the colours which I have used appear faint, and only imperfectly to represent the misery which exists. To dwell on the hapless condition of the peasantry, I am aware may be considered "tedious as a "twice-told tale;" but whilst I am convinced that the African hut possesses comfort and cleanliness beyond what the generality of Inhabitants in the Irish cabin know; I cannot rest satisfied without exercising every opportunity I may have of examining the subject to point out the causes from whence the misery arises.

What real friend to his country can for a moment bear the reflection, that a large proportion of the poor, dwelling in unquestionably the

second island in Europe, and forming so considerable a part of that nation, to which the whole world is now looking up, should fall short of even the few consolations attached to savage life?

Cheerless, however, as the present condition of the country is, and arduous as the undertaking must be from which real good can be expected, it nevertheless appears to me far from being impossible to accomplish it. After a full and I trust impartial consideration of the subject, I am strongly convinced that the want of prosperity and comfort in the inhabitants originates in the causes to which I have before referred, and that it must be by improvement in those through which a happier state of things can be gained.

Under this persuasion, therefore, I presume once more to offer some observations to the public, recurring to those remarks which I before made, and adding such others as a further acquaintance with the subject has occasioned.

In treating of the particulars relating to the state of agriculture, I fear I shall enter into more minute detail than may prove acceptable to some of my readers, but whether I look towards im-

provements in it as the means of bettering the condition of the poor, or as a source from whence some of the greatest national benefits would arise; such a crowd of advantages rush together, and press the importance of it so strongly on my mind, that I cannot rest the cause on mere assertion unattended by some of the arguments which lead me to regard it as a matter demanding the very first consideration both in point of humanity and sound policy.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS,

&c. &c. &c.

The great hindrance to the prosperity of the southern part of Ireland, I consider, as before stated, to originate in the imperfection of agriculture; but as I then only mentioned in general terms the causes which I supposed had retarded its improvement, I shall now endeavour to enforce my opinions more fully, by tracing progressively the effects in the manner I consider they are produced.

One of the chief articles for traffic in that country, is "*profit rent.*" It forms an interest distinct from, and in a great measure, at variance

with that of the land-owner. Almost every person seems anxious for a lease of land, not for the purpose of occupying, but of gaining an advantage by re-letting it, and such is the desire to obtain it, that, however extravagant the rent of land, there seldom has been wanting a tenant for it.

From this it would appear at first sight, (and I know it is estimated so,) that the agriculture is rapidly improving, and that in consequence of it and the high price provisions have borne, land is but gaining its intrinsic value. That the late and present high price of provisions has assisted speculations in land, and enabled many to pay a large rent, I have not the least doubt; but it is to the system of leasing, and not to the flourishing state of agriculture, that I attribute the high rate of rent at which land has arrived, and the great rise, as I formerly stated, I consider has produced ruinous effects by having outstepped the advancement of agriculture and the general prosperity of the country.

The usual tenour of the custom is this: the lessee in the first instance agrees to pay down a

fine, and an annual rent for a lease for lives, or on a long term, which the land-owner is induced to grant from two considerations: first, because he receives a sum of money in advance; and, secondly, because he flatters himself he is securing an improvement to the estate, by giving the lessee so long a term in it, and he, therefore, seldom guards it by any restrictive clauses.

The first lessee having thus engaged a quantity of land, re-lets it in several parcels, with a fine and advanced rent on each, thereby obtaining a present profit, together with an income without labour. Those who have taken this leasehold interest in it, see, that by splitting their parcels into more, they can find others to give them terms, by which they may also gain the like kind of advantage; and it commonly passes to at least a third set of dealers, and frequently many more, before it reaches the hands of the cultivators.

When thus broken down into small fragments, occupiers enough are ready to take it; for those who have little or nothing to lose, are generally willing to try their luck at gain. They are, however, in fact, driven to it; for, in consequence of

the holdings being so small, few or none of those who occupy can afford to pay for assistance in cultivating them; there consequently is scarcely any employment for hired labourers, and the business of serving others so nearly of a rank with themselves, becomes profitless and degrading.

Both pride and necessity, therefore, urge all to obtain land, however small the prospect of gaining by it; and thus arises the high price of rent. The nominal rate of it, however, is not the only advance which has taken place on the land, as it has generally been let in the first instance by the Irish acre, but some one of the lessees rarely fails to gain an advantage by reducing the measure to the English statute acre.

As the larger farms are wholly without any suitable buildings, it cannot be supposed that when divided into these small fractions, each contains even a residence. Those who cultivate them are mostly tenants at will, and it is in general made a condition with them by the preceding lessees, that on taking possession they should build one, the better to enable them to relet it in case these occupiers should fail.

If, however, it is not specially agreed for, the person who takes the land for the purpose of using it, is under the necessity of having a dwelling, and he knows that to have one, he must build it himself.

The great scarcity of timber, the nature of his tenure, and his scanty means, all concur in rendering it impossible for him to make it a comfortable habitation; but as a mixture of mud and short straw for the walls, some better straw, though not unfrequently only potatoe halm or grass sods for the thatch, with a few poles or boughs for the roof, and sufficient boards for the door, are all the materials required for those in general use, he does not hesitate to set about and soon completes a cabin. This cabin, when finished, must serve not only for his family to live in, but for every other purpose of farm buildings. I have, however, on a former occasion, so fully described the wretched state of these hovels, that I need not here repeat it. Having thus taken a small portion of land at a high rent, without any means of using it to the best advantage, since he has neither skill to direct him, nor capital to pro-

vide proper implements and assistance, and destitute of any buildings suited to the corn crop, he can only cultivate that in a very imperfect manner. He seldom accomplishes more than one plowing as a preparation for each crop of grain; the produce is consequently small, and, from all the disadvantages it has to struggle with, of indifferent quality.

The culture and preservation of potatoes he can better compass, as for the most part it is performed in that country by manual labour alone with the shovel and spade *; though each of these

* The shovel is of the kind common in Devonshire, having a plain handle without any eye or cross bar, and as long as a full-sized pitch-fork; the blade of a rounded point at the bottom. The spade has the same kind of handle, with a blade only about half the width of those used in England, a mere wedge of iron. With the latter of these the preparation of the ground, as well as the planting of the seed, is performed, and with it the crop is afterwards taken up.

The shovel is used for moving the manure, and earthing up the plants, which is done by throwing it from alleys between long narrow beds, in the manner practised in gardens for asparagus. These tools in the hands of any but persons

implements in use are of a very awkward kind, and ill suited to the despatch of work; neither is it in his power to provide many labourers to forward the business even in this way; the planting is thus protracted till very late. It usually continues not only throughout the months of April, but May, and great part of June. In the most favourable seasons much produce cannot be expected from land planted so late; and therefore

accustomed to them from childhood are almost useless. The length of handle certainly gives great power to break up the ground when it is once inserted into it, but the weight afterwards becomes proportionably increased on the hands, and renders it necessary for the knee to be placed in each operation as a rest. As the body is kept erect in working with them, those habituated to them cannot afterwards bend to use shorter spades without great pain.

With these implements the entire of the potatoes even in large fields, in the south of Ireland, is cultivated; except that in some cases a plowing is given before planting. Expert as Irishmen are with these tools, they expend, from first to last, equal to eighty days' work of one man on an acre of potatoes with them.

The difference of expense and time lost between this and hoeing with a single horse is obvious.

even in this his favourite crop, on which he has expended the greatest portion of labour, and all the manure he has been able to collect, he frequently meets with disappointment. If he is possessed of any meadow land, from which hay is to be made, the process is conducted in the worst way possible*.

After cultivating these different crops in this imperfect manner, he has next to convert them into money for rent and other purposes. As the corn will soonest become marketable, it is quickly threshed out, and sold in small quantities, perhaps a bag at a time; but the produce not being great, and that of an inferior quality, as before stated, it yields but little amount in

* From an idea that grass cannot be made into hay in that country before it has attained an extraordinary degree of ripeness, the cutting of it does not commence till it has arrived much beyond the proper state, and from the occupiers of land being in general not able to afford sufficient help to execute it, and the mowing being paid for by the day instead of the acre, some weeks, nay, even in many cases months, pass before they have completed it. During this time the weeds mature, shed their seeds, and in the end gain possession of the ground.

money compared with the extent of land upon which it has grown; particularly as from being sold in such small parcels, it must be disposed of to merchants to re-sell, whose general custom of fixing for a time one price on each kind of grain, without sufficient distinction being paid to the quality, as well as of buying it by weight, holds out but little encouragement for its being kept dry or clean.

His next resource is from butter, if he has any cows; and his last, as potatoes are not of ready sale, from being so generally cultivated, is by feeding hogs with the surplus of them beyond those required for the subsistence of his family, thus converting that crop into a marketable produce in the manner I formerly described, as tending so materially to deprive him of the comfort of a cleanly home.

After subsisting on no other food than potatoes and sour milk during the season it lasts, (for the hogs he has fattened are invariably sold,) and converting all the produce he can into money, he is perhaps able, in a good year, to pay his rent and go on; but if a bad season occurs he is in ar-

rears. He has no fund to carry him through till better times; and, as in all probability the lessee from whom he holds cannot do without his rent, his little stock must be taken to discharge it, and the land in the end given up.

Left even without the resource of supporting himself by manual labour, in consequence of the scarcity of employment, disappointed in his expectations, and angry at those with whom he has been concerned, he either sits down in despair, or has recourse to acts of violence.

Thus then, the land having been disposed of in the manner I have described, remains in the hands of men without capital and skill, or the possibility of gaining either. Skill they cannot attain without some examples to copy from, for theory will go but little way in such cases; they have neither the means to attempt, nor dare they risk the slow course of improvement by experiment; and the limits of their farms (if farms they can be called) would not at any rate permit them to proceed in a regular, systematic course of husbandry. Capital it is wholly impossible for them to acquire, since they cultivate the land

under so great disadvantages. If, by using their utmost endeavours to gain the end they have in view, they can but just accomplish it in prosperous seasons, no surplus profit can remain on the average to form a capital: neither can any real benefit arise under such circumstances towards the improved condition of the land itself. In the general scramble for interests in it, the true ones are, in fact, destroyed. In this state of things timber cannot, at least will not, be reared for the future purposes of erecting suitable buildings, or the other uses for which it is required on the farms. The land becomes more and more out of condition, not only from the cultivators in whose hands it is being unable to give it sufficient tillage, but had they means they are even deterred from keeping it in a state of tolerable cleanliness, lest those who have a prior interest in it should take advantage of its improved state, and either demand of them, or obtain from others, a higher rent. It is therefore common (nay any thing else is uncommon) to see land of the best quality, whether arable or grazing, over-run with coarse weeds.

Even the last class of lessees, who, in fact, stand in the situation of landlords to the cultivators, are in some measure concerned to have it remain in that state, so that they can just obtain their rent; for since their terms are the shortest, the more slovenly the appearance of the land, the greater is the chance of obtaining it again at their own price, and they are bound by no conditions for its being kept in a different state, as the landowner has in the first instance, let it without such restrictions. In this medley of property, the good faith between landlord and tenant, which would form the basis, the very essence of improvement and mutual advantage, is broken down, with no plan for securing the interests of the estate by restrictive conditions (poor as such a substitute is) reared in its stead. Thus then, whilst agriculture was in its infancy, and had taken only a rude and unshapen form, a system arose by slow degrees which has gone on enlarging, and proved more baneful and destructive to its progress than any which human ingenuity could have devised for the purpose of retarding it.

I will now proceed to the reconsideration of the necessary objects for improvement, and how assistance can best be given to remedy the evils attending the present state of agriculture, and also endeavour to meet such objections as I have known made, as well as any that have occurred in my mind as to the possibility of carrying into effect the means by which I before proposed to accomplish it.

I then stated (Brief Inquiry, page 49), that a better system of leasing the land must form the basis for an improved state of agriculture to rest on, and that it was therefore necessary that landowners, as their leases fell in, should not suffer new ones to be granted of such a tenure as to allow intermediate interests to exist between themselves and the cultivators of the land. On this head, however, I wish more fully to explain my meaning. I consider, that a clause, which is creeping into modern leases in England, to restrain a tenant from disposing of his term, and, in the event of his discontinuing to occupy, making it revert to the landlord, if not a complete bar, is at least a very great hindrance to improve-

ment. It is true that this clause is in general qualified with the conditions, that the tenant's interest shall go by descent to his family, or that he may part with it on obtaining the land-owner's consent.

Many things, however, may occur to prevent the former circumstance from taking place; and the latter condition though plausible, and generally accompanied by an assurance, that such consent will be given, does not afford any real confidence. For how can it be supposed, that the generality of landlords would assent, after improvements had taken place, to a tenant's disposing of that interest which might revert to themselves, if they persevered in refusing to do so? At any rate a prudent man should not risk it. This, therefore, is far from the course I recommend to be pursued. The plan which I consider best calculated to answer the purposes of both landlord and tenant, is, that a lease for not too short a time should be granted, containing clauses providing for the interests of the estate, encouraging the planting, growth, and preservation of timber and hedges, marking out a general

plan for the course of husbandry, but not so rigidly minute as to give the tenant no possibility of varying from it in some instances; restraining him from re-letting, but giving him power to dispose of the lease at any time, so that he reserved no profit-rent on the land, and remained responsible for the payment of rent and performance of the covenants entered into. Under an engagement of this kind, every thing may go on satisfactorily to each party.

With regard to the distinction which I make between re-letting and disposing of a lease, I must observe, that in the former case, all the evil effects which I have been enumerating may, and probably will, arise; but in the latter, if conducted according to the above regulations, I am not aware how they can.

The estate may be most materially injured to the land-owner, and the tenant ruined, as I have shewn, by a system of re-letting; but from the latter having an absolute power to dispose of his lease without the consent of the landlord, he feels independent, and goes on to improve with spirit, knowing that if at any time he should wish to

quit the pursuit, he has a reasonable chance of obtaining a fair price for what real advantages have arisen by his means to the estate. The landowner ultimately gains the advantage of it himself, and during the lease has, or should have, security upon the property of every person through whose hands the lease passes, for the performance of the covenants contained in it, in the same manner that the holder of a bill of exchange has according to the number of names indorsed upon it; and he has further an assurance, that the person to whom he lets it will not, for his own security, dispose of it to one without property. I am aware, however, it is taken as a point in law, that if a lessee parts with his lease to a person of property, who again assigns it to another not possessed of a shilling, the second lessee in a great measure escapes from responsibility; or, at any rate, that the remedy of the first against him must be slow and tedious, and perhaps imperfect; but if the law is incomplete in this respect, let it be altered. I before further mentioned (Brief Inquiry, page 49), that since it must be the work of time to bring about such

regulations as the foregoing, it was necessary to pursue other means whilst these were accomplishing; such as planting and preserving live hedges and hedge-row timber, and adopting a course of husbandry in which turnips and cultivated grasses formed a part, together with the use of the sheep-fold: recommending, as far as related to timber, that principally oak should be planted in hedge-rows, as being the most valuable, and the least injurious to the growing crops; and, for the sake of an early supply of small wood, that a willow should be planted in all situations not too dry for it, between each two timber trees, and kept as a pollard, and that as soon as the trunk became of a tolerable size it might be taken down, when it would be extremely useful for many purposes.

In addition to the observations I then made respecting the cultivation of timber, I must now remark, that I find upon close inspection the soil in general in the south of Ireland to be very favourable to the growth of timber of every kind, and that invaluable plant for hedges—the white thorn. They need only to be planted and preserved to secure success.

The ash, however, in particular, aided, I suppose, by the moisture of the climate, is luxuriant in the highest degree. This tree therefore is an object of the first importance; for, independent of its utility for implements of husbandry, it might also be applied to the erection of buildings. I admit it is less desirable for that use than some other kinds of timber, from being subject to be worm-eaten, but lime washing or paint in a great measure prevents this. It would at any rate serve for that purpose till other timber, better suited, arrived at sufficient size. I would, however, by no means recommend the custom of planting ash in hedge-rows, as it is so great an enemy to whatever grows near it. Not only its drip is injurious to other plants, but it exhausts the moisture of the earth in a greater degree perhaps than any other tree; and as it puts out roots nearer the surface, it starves every thing within the reach of them. The drip from the oak, on the contrary, is by no means unfriendly to its neighbouring plants, and it finds food beyond their reach, by sending down roots to a great depth. The white thorn will not

only grow under the shade of the oak, but flourish close to its trunk, while it pines and becomes useless near the ash.

Ash should therefore only be planted as groves in glens and other waste places. By this means it would be drawn up tall and straight, and make good common rafters without much expense of sawing; but if grown in hedge-rows, it would be less suited to this purpose. Moreover, from the soil and climate being so favourable to it, and as its seeds so readily disperse and grow, I am convinced, that if it was much encouraged in hedges in Ireland, it would become a perfect weed to them.

Situations like those which I have named for planting it abound there, and if the very wettest of them were applied to the growth of the willow, and those moderately so to that of the ash, and the plantations thinned by cutting down some of the plants as soon as they became useful, the stools would throw up sprouts, and a supply of small timber and lesser wood would thus soon be reared for early use, whilst the oak and other timber was attaining its growth elsewhere. As trees of

the fir kind have had so great a preference given them in modern planting, I think it necessary to observe, that they are in many respects very improper to be grown on a farm, and in my estimation they never ought to have a place on it, unless when required for ornament. For hedge-rows they are wholly unfit; the proper situations for them are poor wastes, and many of these, which would yield no other crop, would produce a valuable one of fir timber; not, however, by a few detached plantations being made, for they rarely succeed in such cases; but if a very large extent of land be planted at one time, the plants afford shelter to each other, and are able altogether to encounter even a bleak situation.

If each species of timber were assigned to its proper situation, the growing of it would prove no detriment to cultivated land; an injudicious arrangement, however, must bring the practice of planting it thereon into disrepute.

When oak trees are trained with stems free from drooping branches to the height of fifteen or twenty feet from the ground (which may be done without injury by cutting them off close to

the trunk and rounding the edges so that the bark will readily grow over the wound), a few of them scattered in the hedges on an arable farm will do no injury to the crops under them. On grazing land a greater number may be grown, and will afford shelter both to the cattle and herbage. Timber reared in such situations is the very best for ship-building, from being the strongest, and affording the greatest number of knees and crooks. An immense quantity may be produced in a country by this means, and the neglect of any being so grown is a national misfortune, operating to an incalculable extent. The supposition, that farms should be wholly without timber, because an excess of it in some cases has proved prejudicial to the growing crops, appears as extravagant as the idea, that sheep without wool would produce the best mutton, and be altogether the most profitable. I deem it necessary to enlarge so much on this head, in consequence of seeing the great difficulties which occur from the want of timber. Such is the general scarcity of it in the south of Ireland, that not only the farms are without suitable buildings, and

the peasant without a comfortable cottage, but, in most districts, even the fields are entirely without gates. As a substitute, large stones are piled up where gates should be, which are taken down and replaced from time to time as occasion requires. In the neighbourhood of sea ports, what field gates there are, are made of foreign fir!

Since, in the present state of things, so many causes operate to hinder improvement in respect to timber, I endeavoured, in my former publication, to suggest a mode of encouraging the planting and preservation of young trees by each new lease containing a condition on the part of the land-owners to pay, at the expiration of the lease, a fair price for every tree which had been planted by the tenant, and was well preserved.

In such cases as it can be accomplished, the price to be paid should be arranged in the first instance, rather than be left to after-valuation; and as a general plan is desirable, it appears to me that the best mode would be to fix a separate rate for the different kinds of timber tree, each class increasing in price according to the number of years they had been planted, provided the

planting was done in a proper manner, and the trees were well preserved. Either the landlord or tenant might furnish the plants in the first instance, according to the circumstances of individuals.

These means, I think, would have far better effect than merely binding down a tenant to perform covenants of the kind without a remuneration. I likewise before pointed out that it would be possible to accomplish, by agreement, an arrangement for rearing trees, even on such land as is still on lease for a long term, notwithstanding it were held under the present ruinous system of leasing, which I have formerly described as being so destructive to timber. In this case the owner of the soil might agree to provide the plants, and to pay the tenant in possession a price for planting and preserving them. I am aware of some difficulties attending an arrangement of this kind, in consequence of the different interests of the intermediate lessees, but which I consider might be removed, as I shall presently shew.

To the first proposition I made of this kind, it has been answered, that there already exists an Act

of the Irish parliament for encouraging the cultivation of timber, by rendering it the property of the tenant who plants it. This, I grant, may promote the rearing of saplings, though it will never, I fear, prove the cause of producing much large timber, but, on the contrary, rather tend to prevent it.

Few leases are of sufficient length to admit of timber arriving at any degree of maturity, even if it is planted in the very earliest part of them; and at the expiration of his lease, should the tenant not agree for a further term, the timber which he has planted, in consequence of this Act, will doubtless be cut down in its infancy, since the high price it bears holds out encouragement for him to do so rather than make it over to the landlord, whom, under such circumstances, he probably feels little disposed to accommodate. But if, on the other hand, the two parties were at first bound by special conditions, as I have proposed, that the one must allow and the other receive the price agreed for, they would then be in every respect in a better situation towards each

other, and more likely to come to terms for a renewed lease.

The difficulty, however, to which I have just before alluded, as being likely to interrupt the planting and preserving of timber on land still under lease, is that which I think would be produced by the very Act of parliament referred to, for this Act has in fact altered that natural right by which all timber is the property of the landlord; therefore, however well disposed the tenant in possession might be to make an arrangement for planting and preserving it, yet in leases of this kind some of the intermediate lessees, whose terms are longer, might interrupt the plan, as the timber left growing at the expiration of the first term would, in that case, become the property of the other lessees. If, therefore, the cultivation of it is to be encouraged by Act of parliament, it appears to me that it can only be done with good effect by an amended one. As timber is a crop which requires so many years to bring it to perfection, I consider the property in it should, for the general good, be vested in the lord of the

soil alone, as it may then, unless its owner's circumstances drive him to destroy it sooner, outlive several short leases even though the same tenants do not continue.

Some timber, however, having been planted on the faith of this act, it would be unjust to destroy the kind of property which the planter has thereby acquired; but an amended act might provide, that from the passing thereof the tenants who planted without a special agreement should have a conditional property in the timber, viz. not to have the power of cutting down for sale at the expiration of their terms, if the landlords would agree to purchase their interest in it at a fair valuation; and it might also without injustice enable the land-owner and tenant to come to an arrangement for cultivating a certain proportion of trees to a given number of acres, without interruption from the other lessees. The same provisions might be made in it for planting and preserving live hedges.

I shall now proceed to offer some further considerations respecting the introduction of such a

system of agriculture as I have been hitherto recommending.

I before mentioned, that the desirable objects seemed to be the adoption of a course of husbandry, in which turnips, cultivated grasses, and the sheep-fold should form a part, that the soil as well as climate was admirably adapted to it; and that on the whole there were few countries where oxen might be more advantageously worked; and I afterwards enumerated several advantages, both local and general, which I considered would arise from this practice.

In these opinions I rest strongly confirmed, after a more ample opportunity of observing the country and present produce of it.

Some of the arable land in the south of Ireland, is certainly too strong for turnip husbandry, but the soil is for the most part a light loam, much of it resting on a limestone subsoil, and but little is too light for wheat. No land therefore can be better suited to the growth of grain in general, and such other vegetables as are adapted to the support of a large proportion of live stock, which will best assist

the regular succession of crops, and by which means the land may be brought to yield the greatest produce.

The calcareous soils on the limestone, which so much abound, are highly favourable to cultivated grasses, such as clover, rye-grass, lucern, and saint foin; and yet, except in some few small districts in counties near the capital, even the cultivation of clover is not yet introduced.

This kind of land is also equally well adapted to the growth of fine wool; for notwithstanding a modern opinion that the wool of sheep folded on calcareous soils becomes brittle, I am firmly convinced that they are by far the soundest sheep pastures, and altogether best suited to produce fine wool. If any evidence is necessary to prove it, the quality of the wool grown on the south downs in Sussex is I think sufficient.

It would be impossible, in the first instance, to procure sufficient wood for hurdles for folding sheep, or feeding off turnips in the south of Ireland; but sheep netting might be substituted, or the turnips might be drawn and thrown on an adjoining field as practised in Norfolk.

Among the advantages enumerated in my former treatise as likely to arise from this proposed system of husbandry, I mentioned that of a greater quantity of beef being produced; and that the pork, by becoming corn-fed, would be of a very superior quality.

On this point I feel it necessary to insist strongly ~~that~~ as these two kinds of provision are among the first staple articles of trade in Ireland, from the export of which large returns are expected, and indeed do arise; and they are considered to be produced there of the best quality. The former of them is deservedly held in estimation, but the latter of them, in my opinion, very undeservedly. The prime Irish beef is certainly of excellent quality, and makes the best sea provisions; but it is to be lamented that a single tierce of the pork, fed as it now is, should ever find its way into the navy, or any ship intended for a long voyage.

Let it not be supposed, that I offer these observations with a view inimical to the interests of Ireland; far from it: I only wish to

see that commodity become a real and lasting source of advantage, which is at present produced in a manner that brings a nuisance on the country, and is itself unfit for the purpose for which it is designed.

Neither do I lightly take up these objections to the present quality of this kind of provision, for since I first ventured to state my opinion of the Irish pork, I have had ample means of viewing every thing relating to it until it is exported, and have lost no opportunity of ascertaining from those who consume, and therefore can best judge of it, and they invariably bear testimony to what I asserted, namely, that in its very best state it is not half so profitable or nutritious as corn fed pork, that it loses much of its substance in boiling, and that when carried into a hot climate it wastes, and becomes poor indeed.

Having, in my former publication, given a general idea of other advantages likely to result from such a system of husbandry as I have now again been speaking of, and as, I trust, they will further appear throughout the course of this

work, I shall not dwell on them in this place, but pass on to reconsider the means of accomplishing it.

I formerly proposed effecting this purpose by the example of a few practical husbandmen, sent from England, to whom a bounty and other advantages should be given, in order to induce them to settle there. Before I notice some objections which have been made to this plan, I must mention a difficulty greater than any I have heard, which indeed all along in some degree occurred to my mind, but the evil, I trusted, was less deeply rooted, and more easily removed than I afterwards found it to be; I mean that which arises from the holdings being so small.

However reluctant I may have been to state, in express terms, what I am now about to do, yet the whole tenour of my former as well as present observations has pointed to the pernicious consequences brought on individuals and the community by it.

The very name of small farms carries with it such a popular sound, and the public is so strongly possessed with the opinion that the high

price of provisions, and other evils, have been produced, by laying field to field, and farm to farm, that any idea of bringing it about, will, I know, at first sight, be considered as tending to produce injury rather than benefit: nor, indeed, would I wish to see any alteration attempted, could I for a moment bring myself to believe that the comfort, good order, and prosperity of the country would be interrupted by it; nay, if I was not most firmly persuaded of the contrary; and that without it Ireland can neither produce the abundance it is capable of, nor possess a happy and well conditioned peasantry, a thriving tenantry, and an opulent yeomanry, to unite the lower to the higher classes, and form that regular chain which, link by link, binds society together. But I will proceed to examine the subject.

It is generally declared, that small farms promote industry, and train up better female servants, and more useful members to the community, than larger ones; that by the family labouring themselves without hired workmen, the work is performed at a cheaper rate, and better

attended to; that by a great abundance of poultry being reared on them, and the general produce being from necessity carried sooner to market, and by the frugal diet and simple habits of the occupiers, the price of provisions was kept low to the public; but that in consequence of the enlargement of farms, and the opulence of farmers, who live comparatively in luxury and idleness, the contrary effects, it is said, have been produced.

However unpopular the declaration may be, I must say, that unless when the land is let much below the average rent of the district, distress frequently accompanies, even in England, very small farms; and I have rarely seen an instance of one being brought to yield nearly as much as the land was capable of; and consequently in every such case a loss of produce and profit was incurred. In Ireland this assertion appears most strongly verified.

We have there seen farms reduced to the smallest possible size; the tenants destitute of every comfort; and the land starving for want of sufficient culture. Poultry, it is true, is reared in great abundance, and sold at a very

low rate; but without producing, from a cause I shall hereafter state, any essential diminution in the price of general food.

The corn is thrashed out and carried to market as rapidly as possible; the people are frugal, and live on the most simple diet that human beings can subsist upon; and yet with all these boasted advantages, carried to the very highest pitch, none of the promised blessings arise: for how, indeed, can they, since the means from which they are expected are the cause of preventing it; for the farms are too small to admit of the land being cultivated to the best advantage, and neither afford the means of capital being acquired, nor admit the possibility of any being profitably employed on them. If the occupiers bought with it sufficient horses for a team, or sheep for a fold, these would require more than the whole produce of the farms to sustain them, and during the greatest part of the year must remain unemployed. For example; suppose an hundred acres of land required four horses, or a given number of oxen, to till it, and this farm was divided into four; each man keep-

ing one horse would answer no good purpose, and if he had only a proportionate number of sheep, they would require as much attendance as the flock of the larger farm. So it would be with respect to barns, implements, and every thing which relates to a farm.

If these small farmers could hire sufficient workmen at only the particular seasons when the tillage was required and attempted to perform it by manual labour, were there no other obstacle to such a plan, the expense of it would ruin them.

They, therefore, go drudging on from one employment to another without any head to direct them; idle at one time for want of a sufficient round of employment, and toiling at another without being able to perform their work in due season. "With all their thrift they thrive not."

But if farms were of sufficient size to maintain and employ a due proportion of live stock and a regular set of labourers, a proper division of labour (which forms the true œconomy of it) would take place, and a much greater produce and profit would ensue. The occupier would provide payment for those employed on his farm, and

they on their parts would have nothing to do but follow the several occupations assigned them. He himself would not be idle, but engaged in planning the best means of carrying on the business, buying what was necessary to the greatest advantage, and disposing of the produce, which would enable him on the whole to provide for payment of the rent. Not only, however, can the general œconomy of cultivation be better carried forward on a large, than a very small farm, but also the price of provisions be afforded cheaper by the former than the latter means, as I shall now endeavour to shew.

With respect to the opinion that provisions are kept at a lower rate by means of small than large farms, I have already had occasion to point out, that notwithstanding the produce of such farms, from the necessity of the occupants, is taken quickly to market, and, therefore, may cause a reduction in the price for a time, yet it will on the average find its real value, which must be in proportion as the quantity grown is to the demand. Larger farmers may keep back their corn for a time, and smaller ones may dispose of their's

quickly, but if the latter supply the market faster than the consumption requires, it must then pass into the hands of corn dealers. These latter may, as well as the large farmers, advance the price for a short time, but if the general produce is greater than the demand, the price will only fall so much the lower for the commodity having been kept back.

Neither can I admit that a great number of poultry being reared on small farms tends to reduce the price of provisions in general, unless a given extent of land can be brought to yield a larger amount in poultry than in other meat or corn. The argument that fowls are profitable, as they eat what would otherwise be lost, proves nothing more in favour of small than large farms, for the unavoidable waste incurred should only be supposed to be in the same proportion on the former as the latter.

I allow that poultry reared on potatoes, as in Ireland, are produced at a small expense, but the value of them for food is equally small, as they are consequently poor, and afford but little nourishment.

It is, however, further asserted in favour of small farms, that from the tenants of them working themselves, and in consequence of their moderate way of living, they can afford to sell at a lower price than a cultivator who performs no labour himself, and lives, as it is said, in idleness and luxury; but it must on the other hand be acknowledged, that the occupiers of several small farms collectively lose as much time in passing from one employment to another, and going* to market with their little produce, as one who per-

* I mention, as one example, the circumstance of the small farmers in the most remote parts of the counties of Cork and Kerry travelling day and night to Cork market, a distance equal to fifty or sixty British miles, and returning with the same expedition, after having conveyed thither only a single firkin of butter, and sometimes a less quantity.

In many instances, money, equal to the amount, has been previously advanced to them by the butter-merchant to whom they take this small produce, and then obtain a further advance.

Were their necessities less urgent, and a regular common conveyance established, one man with a waggon and four horses, would take weekly the produce of as much land as an hundred men and as many horses are thus employed in carrying.

forms no labour himself but overlooks a large concern; and as it is out of the power of the small farmers to bring the land to yield as great an amount as the large farmers, the difference of produce which the latter gain over the former, much more than counterbalances to the community for their higher way of living. Hence it appears, that the opinions urged in favour of small farms are not founded in facts. I am not, however, contending, that all farms should be very large; but I do insist that no arable farm of less than an hundred acres can be carried on so beneficially to the cultivator and the public as one of that size can; that a farm of two hundred acres is still more advantageous to both, and that a mixture of some of a much greater extent is by no means injurious, but that, on the contrary, they have been the means of producing the greatest improvements in agriculture in Great Britain. Neither do I contend for the necessity of farmers living in luxury and extravagance. This, perhaps, is the prevailing evil of the present age, which the increase of riches, real or imaginary, has produced.

What I am arguing, to prove is, that the person cultivating a large tract of land, is able, from the advantages he possesses, to make it yield a much greater quantity of human food than could be produced on the same extent of ground were it divided into several very small farms, as the occupiers of them can only act on a confined system.

I say then, that the large farmer, instead of incurring a charge on the price of provisions, is the cause of their being produced at the cheapest rate, and therefore is not an idle and useless, but a profitable member of the community.

These observations, respecting the size of farms, apply more fully to arable than grass farms, but yet, even on the latter, some degree of labour is lost by the same attendance being bestowed on a little, which would serve for much more. There is also another disadvantage attached to them: viz. that they do not afford sufficient opportunity of changing the stock to different pastures, which would both improve their condition and tend to keep them in health; so that

if any disease happens, it frequently affects the whole.

I must also remark, that although pasture land lies, as it were, dormant, and consequently requires so much less labour, yet the produce from it is much more than proportionably smaller than from land kept in an active state of aration, which must therefore be of the most public benefit.

I by no means assert, that all land should be under the operation of the plough. A due proportion of good rich meadows is of great assistance to the general plan of agriculture, but I am of opinion, that no land except of that kind should be kept in a constant state of grass.

From the foregoing observations it appears, that very small farms are neither productive of those advantages to the individuals who cultivate them, nor tend to reduce the price of provisions in the manner they are supposed to do: but there remains yet another objection, made in their favour, for me to answer, and that by no means an unimportant one; namely, that they promote industry and frugality in a greater degree, and

train up better female servants, and other more useful members to the community than larger farms.

That many, very many, frugal and industrious servants, as well as good and useful members of society, have been trained up on small farms, I entirely acquiesce in; but such have been produced by other means, and also on large farms; and I cannot but think that the first habits of early industry and frugality can be, and are as often acquired in the cleanly and happy cottage of the thriving labourer, and afterwards enlarged and fitted for general practice in the domestic concerns of a frugal housewife on a large farm, as by any means whatever.

But alas! however these rudiments are first taught, how soon do their good effects vanish when those who have been instructed in them have opportunities of seeing the customs of higher ranks by being taken into their service, or in any way mixing with them.

If then a general corruption is unhappily found in the present day to pervade all ranks in Great

Britain, from the mansion to the cottage, let not the cause of it be attributed to the diminution of the number of small farms, or pleaded as an example to prove the necessity of them, for it was not the servants taken from large farms who first tainted the morals of the higher classes, but the latter, I fear, sent back a lesson which has poisoned the virtue of even the small farm and cottage itself.

Having enlarged so much on the unprofitable effects of small farms, and I trust satisfactorily proved, that the advantages they are said to possess are rather imaginary than real, I shall now proceed to consider what remedy can best be applied to the existing circumstances, to correct the evils attending them. The task, I confess, is arduous, but I think far from impossible.

Since the occupiers of these small holdings cannot be supposed to consider them as unprofitable to their individual interests, and knowing themselves unable to accomplish greater undertakings, they must naturally feel attachment to what they are at present possessed of.

It would, therefore, be more prudent as well as

much more likely to produce the desired, end, to accommodate the remedy to the present custom, rather than attempt an entire alteration.

Indeed it would be both unjust and cruel to say to one man, you shall give up your little farm to your neighbour who has one also, and become his labourer; or, to both, your farms must be taken from you and let to a stranger, because he is richer than yourselves, and it would be more advantageous to the community that the land should be so disposed of. But with strict justice and a fair chance of their being brought to consider it so, it might be said to any two or greater number of the occupiers of adjoining small farms—the course of husbandry which you are carrying on, is by no means calculated to gain that produce from the land which it is capable of yielding, neither is it possible for you separately, and with your slender capital and small plots of ground, to provide and sustain the means of cultivating the land in the most beneficial manner for yourselves; but join your strength altogether, so that the whole may be conducted as one large farm, and either divide the profits, or make an arrangement

amongst yourselves, for the stock of the whole being so employed, that each one's ground may alternately partake of the benefit of your combined means, that there may be sufficient plough teams, and a flock of sheep, and the whole be conducted under a regular course of husbandry, and be assured, you will find your separate gains greater than at present.

Whoever, therefore, whether he be land-owner or lessee, has the controul over one or two hundred acres, has power to aid such a plan.

By this means, also, agreements might be brought about (at any rate in all new leases) stipulating a given system of husbandry. One barn and set of farm buildings, when they could be erected, would thus serve for several holdings. It might also be made a condition, that if any one or more of the party ceased to occupy, no stranger should be appointed to succeed, but that it should be equally divided among those who remained, and this would hold out a fair chance of advantage to every one of them.

Some, either from superior management, greater œconomy, or fortuitous circumstances,

would be more prosperous than others, those less so would then become labourers to them, and thus, without doing an act of injustice, by wresting from any one what he is in possession of, a state of interests would ultimately arise, tending more to promote the real good of individuals and the public.

Having now endeavoured to clear the way for an improved system of husbandry, by pointing out such a remedy for the disadvantageous effects of small farms, as I trust is fully practicable, and unlikely either to injure or produce discontent amongst the present occupiers of them; I come next to consider, by what means these persons can be most readily taught it; and this I am persuaded would be soonest accomplished by the example of a few practical farmers sent from England to reside among them.

What I before proposed (Brief Inquiry, page 54) was, that a beneficial lease of an hundred acres, which I consider the very smallest quantity of land on which a regular course of husbandry can possibly be carried on to advantage, should be granted by land-owners to them, so that one

might be induced to settle in a given district; and as a further, and indeed a necessary inducement (for men of property could not be expected under the present circumstances to leave their friends and country for such a purpose) that the state should give a moderate bounty to each, under certain regulations, which I named, to enable them to carry on the farm. Part of this money I proposed, should be laid out in proper implements, and seeds to be taken with them; and as fine wooled sheep would prove, in that country, as I shall hereafter show, a great national benefit, and the native stock are so bad, it would be desirable for each person to take with him a few of a good kind.

With such encouragement, a sufficient number of practical good husbandmen, who are now only a superior kind of labourers, would be ready to engage in the undertaking.

I was aware of an objection which would be made to this plan; namely, that the native inhabitants would regard these strangers with no favourable eye, but I endeavoured to remove it by saying, that it would be necessary, in the first

instance, to explain that only a few persons would be sent over for the express purpose of shewing the inhabitants by their practice, a more advantageous manner of cultivating their land than they at present follow; and that if this was properly made known to them, and some of the seeds and sheep produced on the farms of these settlers were to be distributed gratuitously amongst such of the native tenants as were disposed to follow the new plan of husbandry, I was persuaded all difficulties would soon be done away.

This objection, which I anticipated, has, indeed, been made, and thought by some persons an insurmountable obstacle to the plan. In support of their opinion, they say, that those who know but little of the character of the lower class of Irish, may reason about it in the manner I have done; but that others, who are better acquainted with them, must be satisfied how impossible it would be to accomplish such an undertaking.

Though I trusted I had been able to form a true estimate of their character at the time I made those observations, yet I certainly could not speak to it from experience as I now can; and I am

happy to be able to say, that I rest confirmed in the ideas I then entertained of the people.

The peasantry of Ireland look up to the skill and abilities of Englishmen in the different arts with a degree of astonishment, and are eager to copy from them.

Those of any particular district certainly have great jealousy of a stranger, even of their own countrymen, coming to settle among them, especially if it appears to be for the purpose of wresting their occupations from them; but whenever it is clearly stated to them, that it is with a view to serve their interests, they wait the result; and if it proves as they were taught to expect it would do, they are afterwards not to be outdone in gratitude by any people whatever.

In respect to the carrying into execution such a plan as I propose, I admit that some districts are in a more favourable state to receive the benefit than others, and those persons resident in the country can best judge of the particular spots where first to set about it; but let it not be said, that because it must be allowed there are other districts in which it would be hopeless

at present to introduce any plan of improvement, no attempt should be made any where. Moreover, it is asserted, that the native inhabitants of the south of Ireland possess such a degree of indolence that it would be a vain attempt to endeavour to lead them to industry. It is indeed a lamentable truth, that these people do, in their early years, contract habits of indolence, which they afterwards find it difficult to overcome, but in contradiction to the broad statement, that they are wholly without industry, numberless instances might be adduced. To such an assertion I would reply, does the peasant who, whenever he can obtain even a piece of barren heath, toils on it to make it produce potatoes for his family, possess no industry? Is the patience with which the small farmer cultivates great part of his ground with the spade and shovel a testimony that he wants industry? Is the instance I have given of his travelling day and night fifty or sixty miles to sell a trifling quantity of butter, and returning with the same expedition, a proof that he wants industry? And lastly, are the exertions made by the farmers in general to drudge on in cultivating

their land with little prospect of gain, proofs of a want of industry? Alas! all these things may indeed be given as evidences to shew, that with the means these people at present possess, their exertions tend to little good, and likewise the necessity both for their own and the public advantage that their endeavours should be better directed; but whilst such examples exist, I cannot admit that the people are incapable of being led on, as they begin to taste the fruits of their labour to exercise it to the utmost.

But I will state the particulars of a case, fully illustrating what I advance respecting the possibility of bringing about improvements in agriculture by such means as I had proposed.

The cause of my first going to Ireland was to arrange an establishment for the Honourable Board of Ordnance, for the manufacture of bricks in that country for the use of fortifications, as those procured there were of a very inferior quality, and the freightage on others sent from England was extremely high.

After obtaining some land proper for the purpose, and in a suitable situation, my next object

was to provide manufacturers. The neighbourhood, though a populous one, afforded none, and those in other parts of the country appeared so unskilful that it could answer no good purpose to collect and remove them. To have had a number of workmen sent from England would not only have been attended with very great cost, but as their habits of life are so different from the people of Ireland, and as many of this kind of manufacturers, from an excess of earnings, are profligate in their manners, they would have ill accorded with each other; it therefore appeared to me by no means advisable to mix many of them together. Above all, having seen the distressed condition of the people in that part of the country, I had taken up a warm interest for them, and determined that those on the spot should, if possible, gain the benefit of the undertaking.

I therefore caused the work to be commenced with only two men from England, and such labourers of the place as first offered their services. Having arranged a plan for their being severally instructed in the different parts of the ma-

nufacture, and divided the labour into distinct branches, I directed that such men as appeared most active and intelligent should be put to those parts which required the greatest skill.

They all, in the first instance, entertained a great dislike to perform it by piece-work; and therefore, and I was aware that without their doing so the business would go on heavily; instead of its being let to them in a systematic manner, I had it accommodated to whatever way they were most disposed to engage in it. They soon found the advantages of the proposed method, and gladly acceded to it. The result was, that within two months from the commencement they were enabled to execute their respective parts in a workmanlike manner, and afterwards continue them with expertness.

If I have greater satisfaction in reporting one thing more than another relating to this establishment, it is, that notwithstanding the very low price of spirits, and the proneness with which the Irish are said to be addicted to the use of them, only one instance has occurred of a workman being intoxicated during two years.

Besides having this man discharged from the

employment, as a warning to others, I adopted a plan which has been attended with beneficial effects; viz. that the workmen are permitted to have any part or the whole of their week's wages early on the Saturday morning, and their wives are consequently enabled to lay it out in provisions in the market. Thus the whole family obtain real benefit from their increased earnings.

From this instance, small as it is, I think it may be fairly estimated what the Irish peasantry are capable of being brought to accomplish; and I ask, whether, if before it had been carried into effect, I had declared a plan of having a manufacture, requiring skill, at once executed by the common labourers of the country, it would not have been considered more visionary than any thing I have now been proposing?

The next head on which I wish to offer some considerations, is the state of the country with respect to tithes. At the time I made my former observations, I felt and endeavoured to express the great importance of the subject; but also acknowledged the delicacy with which it was requisite to treat it.

I proposed, however, as a remedy for the present unhappy state of affairs, what I thought would be nowise objectionable, and indeed the only one by which I conceive the just rights of the clergy can be preserved, and at the same time harmony and good-will be restored between themselves and their flocks; viz. an allotment of land in lieu of tithe, to be carried into effect by commissioners, vested with powers like those given them in Acts for enclosing land in England.

Yet to this plan some objections have been made. The question has likewise undergone grave discussion in Parliament, but no alteration has been resolved upon.

I have attentively watched for, and fully considered every argument that has been brought forward on the subject; but I confess my sentiments remain unchanged, as to the mode of effecting the above-mentioned purpose; and from all I have since witnessed, I am more strongly than ever convinced of the necessity of an alteration, and that an immediate one.

With a view then to place the matter in a clear light, I shall, as I have done respecting the agriculture, first trace the causes of the present

unhappy state of affairs in this respect, and then endeavour to shew how far the proposed remedy will be likely to prove successful.

But before I proceed to do so, I wish, if possible, to do away a prejudice, (at least as far as relates to myself, since it has been objected to what I suggested,) that whoever is actively friendly to the interests of agriculture, is inimical to the payment of tithe. Far, however, very far be such a sentiment from my mind: I know and feel that the tithe of land is as justly due to the church as the rent of it is to the landowner; and I should lament to see any class of men, much more the clergy, deprived of their right.

Almost every civilized government has deemed it expedient to have an established church, and so I conceive must every wise government and enlightened people know how necessary it is in the first place, that the ministers of that established church should consist of different ranks, and each be upheld in a degree suitable to their high office; and that for the happiness and prosperity of it, the funds appointed for the purpose should be raised in a way the least likely to produce dis-

content; that thus those who entertain such communion may pay their portion without reluctance, and others who dissent and separate from it, although they have no more just ground for complaint at having to contribute towards the ecclesiastical than the civil part of the state establishment; (for, if it is otherwise admitted, it may as well be said that every different sect should set up a civil establishment of its own, and thus throw the whole country into anarchy); I say it is advisable that these also should have as little occasion as possible to make their contribution a ground of dissatisfaction, or to use it as a weapon for ultimately destroying the whole fabric, by keeping up a constant state of warfare with the established church, which liberally tolerates them publicly to exercise and promulgate their own faith.

I deem it wholly unnecessary to go the length which some persons have done to prove the origin of tithes; for it is fully sufficient to say, in the present day, that throughout the Christian dispensation, during which nearly two thousand years have elapsed, every generation has acknow-

ledged and ratified the right of part of the produce of the earth being allotted for this purpose*. Our ancestors, from time immemorial, have inherited their estates subject to it, and it ill becomes their successors now to grasp at what does not really belong to them.

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* A law for payment of tithe may be traced in the English civil code to the time of King Alfred, who, in the preface to his laws, says, he borrowed them from the tables of his ancestors. Alfred's law concerning tithes was confirmed by his son Edward. King Athelstan, about the year 930, earnestly conjures by all that is sacred, all under his jurisdiction to pay tithe. Edmund, his successor, in a Synod, held at London, about the year 944, charges every Christian to pay his tithes duly. King Edgar added another law in the year 967, and enforced the payment under severe forfeitures, which were afterwards approved and established by the Danish king Canute, in an assembly of his wise men at Winchester, about the year 1032.

These laws were strengthened and enforced by Edward the Confessor, acknowledged after the Conquest, and in substance continued to the time of Henry the First.

The rights of the clergy, with special reference to Edward's laws, and the charter of Henry the First, were afterwards ratified by Magna Charta.

Of this however they may rest assured, that whenever the ecclesiastical part of the title deeds is consigned to the flames, the conflagration will soon reach their own.

These are the sentiments which I endeavoured to express; I had their accomplishment in view; and I trusted that the plan I as briefly proposed would tend to promote so desirable an end.

Having now endeavoured to explain, I hope beyond the possibility of misconception, my opinion respecting the duty and necessity of contributing the tithe of land to the clergy, I shall proceed to notice, as I proposed, the present state of this contribution in Ireland.

It must be almost needless to observe, that by far the greatest part of the clergy in that country neither receive what is justly due to them, nor is such proportion as they do receive paid in general without murmuring and contention.

Thus they must either forego their claims, or live in a state of constant hostility with their parishioners. Let us, therefore, inquire whence this discord arises. I have already shewn, in de-

scribing the state of agriculture, that the land, from a multiplication of interests and profits on it, has become overloaded with rent, which the scanty means and imperfect husbandry of the farmer are scarcely, if at all, able to sustain. The calls for rent are loud, and must be satisfied, or he knows his cattle will be impounded and sold, almost without notice, by the summary process in use in Ireland, which produces such daily scenes of distress and strife by attempts to resist it. If the tithe has been taken in kind, he says, that but for that he should have been able to pay his rent, and prosper. But suppose it not to have been the case, but that he is to pay a stipulated price in money, and that after disposing of the produce of the land he has sufficient to provide for the rent, and a little surplus, he then considers whatever is taken out of it for payment of tithe, as so much torn from his profits. The lessees and claimants for profit rents from the land consider, that but for the payment of tithe they should gain more, and I fear that too many of the land-owners entertain the same opinion. Many of the clergy let their tithes to a proctor,

some few, perhaps, from a desire to obtain the utmost; but I am persuaded, the number who resort to this expedient from such a motive is very small indeed compared with those who are driven to it by necessity; for a man of a meek and quiet disposition is unable at present to collect any tolerable proportion of his dues without it. Yet from whatever motive this mean is used, it tends alike to add fuel to the fire, for the proctor will endeavour to make the most he can of his trade; and, as formerly observed, it is not to the interest of these persons to reconcile the other parties. An outcry is raised against tithe as an unjust demand on the produce of the earth; every one can plead in his own interest, and specious arguments are at hand. Those who are indifferent to all religion assert, that there is no necessity that the clergy should be supported at all. Those who dissent from the established church maintain, that it is sufficient that they pay their own pastors: and the government is accused of supporting unjust claims for the establishment.

Now, in fact, was the payment of tithe to be

wholly abolished, the tenant at will would not gain any advantage, for a still larger rent would immediately be expected from him; and none but lessees and land-owners would profit by it. The lessees would gain a temporary advantage from the land-owners, by having a term secure before the change took place, and the land owners would gain a permanent advantage from the clergy, but as unfairly as if they were violently to enclose part of an adjoining estate into their own. Thus some wilfully unjust, others deluded into a blind belief that their own interests will be advanced by the abolition of tithes, join in the clamour, and become hostile to church and state.

Since then, such confusion exists, and self-interest in one class, and false expectations of gain in another, so generally prevail, can any person who is capable of estimating how strongly these motives operate on the human mind, bring himself to think that the evil will wear itself out: and is it not more reasonable to suppose that it will increase rather than diminish? What then follows, but that unless a different arrangement for providing payment of tithe is adopted, either the

clergy must go unpaid and the church become deserted from want of ministers, or the present strife continue, cankering while it lasts the mild and pure principles of religion in pastors and people, and sapping the foundations of church and state.

Now since this payment (to urge no other motive) has time out of mind arisen from the land, which is the best of all security, it would be highly unjust to the clergy to change it to any other fund, neither would any good be produced by doing so.

If a rate was to be collected for the purpose, that could make no real difference, unless indeed the clergy gave up as much as the landed interest gained; neither would it be at all equitable, by any mode, to fix a given sum in lieu of part of the produce of land, when that produce is liable to change in value. Were the government to undertake the payment of the clergy, this would be such a revolution, and so completely break down a kind of property which has become an inherent right from the sanction of antiquity, and coeval with any other property that can be

claimed on the land, that no right could afterwards be considered stable; neither could any advantage to those who have to contribute arise from it, as a tax must then be collected in the place of tithe. But instead of the clergy being paid the tithe either in kind or by money, if a given proportion of land was allotted in every parish for the payment of their dues, no injustice would take place.

If the land owner gave up part of his soil, though he would not have an equal number of acres, yet his rent-roll would be to the same amount as the remaining quantity would be worth more by being tithe-free. The tenant would be no loser thereby; for although he paid the same rent to the landlord for fewer acres, yet he would then have no tithe to pay.

The clergy themselves would have no just grounds to complain from the change; for if the price of the produce of land varied, so would the yearly value of their allotments.

It has, indeed, been asserted, that a change of this kind would cause such a difference in the principle of the thing as to endanger the right itself.

From this opinion I very much differ; for I consider that it would, in fact, be no change whatever in principle, but only a variation in the manner of payment of one of the two hereditary interests in land.

The largest of these interests is that of the landlord, who formerly was paid his rent by the tenant in kind; but it became more convenient to him to receive it in money, after that grew into general use as the circulating medium; and by his having the absolute controul over the land he was enabled readily to effect this change without prejudice to his interest.

But the other interest belonging to the church, though equally valid, was not separately set out; for instead of the incumbent of each living having a distinct estate, he had an undivided though fixed rate of claim on many estates; and therefore from the clergy not having such an absolute controul over a given quantity of land as the landlord, they have been less able to bring about this change in the manner of receiving payment from the cultivators, so as to obtain an equivalent for their just due.

Contentions of the kind which I have related have consequently occurred, and will continue until portions of the land for the claim the church has on it are separately set out.

These observations, however, relate mostly to clergy of the second rank, for a principal part of the incomes of the bishops arises from absolute and defined estates. The plan therefore which I am proposing tends to render the revenues of rectors and vicars more of the nature of those which the higher order of the clergy receive; and an objection which has been made to it, that if all church property was vested in real estate, it would be the more likely to be legislated away from it, appears to me to originate in a visionary idea. No country ever attempted so black a deed, until both the government and the people were lost to all sense of religion, and how will a proper reverence and respect for it so probably be kept up, as by rendering the mode of payment to the clergy the most agreeable that it can be made to all descriptions of people? That this would be the case by the plan I propose, I feel most strongly persuaded, for the undivided inheritance which landlords and the clergy now have in the same estate being then separated, and a landmark being set up between the rights of each, all strife and discord must die away between them. Neither would the cultivators of land have any thing to contend for with the clergy, as they would have no tithe to pay them, and there would consequently be the fairest prospect of their living harmoniously. The immediate renters of the glebe farms, instead of being hostile to the incumbents of livings, would hold the same relation to them which other tenants do to landlords.

Were it necessary to bring facts in proof of of what I assert, numberless cases relating to England might be adduced, in which, from an Act of enclosure having taken place, and the glebe land being allotted in this manner, peace and goodwill have sprung up in a parish which was before full of broils. I must yet further mention, that I think the general cause of religion would be most essentially served by what are now considered as the annual contributions of individuals being done away. For example; the very best

of men prefer a free seat in church, to that for which they have to pay a yearly rent; even though it be one for which their ancestors or themselves gave a value, they nevertheless are better satisfied with it than that for which there is a constant demand for payment. This argument holds equally good with respect to the manner of paying tithe annually, and that of providing payment by allotting a proportion of land to discharge it.

I have thus endeavoured to reply to every argument which I think can reasonably be urged by the clergy or laity against this plan, and shall now proceed to state what I consider would be the most fair and satisfactory manner of carrying it into effect.

I have already proposed, that it should be done by means of commissioners vested with powers similar to those given in Acts for enclosures in England; viz. to adjust the quantity of land to be set out in each parish in lieu of tithe, and to make exchanges of lands, so as to bring the allotments as compact as circumstances would admit of, and to be enabled, as much as possible, to do

justice to all parties. Two objections, however, may fairly be made to the present manner of conducting enclosure Acts in England; one is, the enormous expense which the commissioners too often incur on the land, and the other, that they so frequently shew favour to the interest of particular persons; in either of which cases, there is but little prospect of redress being obtained by those aggrieved; but these evils, I consider, arise principally from the enclosures being effected by individual Acts of Parliament, and there being no appeal from the local commissioners to a superior board. What I would therefore propose in this instance, is, that two commissioners should be appointed for a given district, one fixed on by ballot of the majority of land-owners, and the other by the bishop of the diocess; and also a superior board named in an Act of Parliament, to controul the whole, and to whom both the land-owners and incumbents of livings might appeal and refer all grievances: that this board also might have power to settle all matters in dispute between the two district commissioners, to appoint a third to judge between them of any local circumstances,

and in cases of necessity to cancel the appointments of the two first named, either in respect to the district for which they were to act, or for any particular parish, and to order others to be chosen in the same manner in their stead. One general Act of Parliament should, therefore, provide for this; direct rules for the guidance of the district commissioners; fix a rate of expense for carrying the measures into effect, and determine the proportion of land to be allotted in lieu of tithe. The chief business of the district commissioners would be to ascertain the exact quantity of land which every land-owner possessed in each parish, to settle the number of acres to be given up by every one, and to effect exchanges of land in the fairest manner, so as to bring the glebe estate as much together as circumstances would possibly admit of.

The business of the board of commissioners would be to adjust, on appeal, any difficulty arising from local or other circumstances, to restrain the district commissioners from acting with partiality to individuals, and to redress grievances. It would, indeed, be matter for important consi-

deration what rate of proportion of the land ought to be fixed by the general Act, to be allotted in lieu of tithe.

Seeing how very extensive many of the parishes in Ireland are, the church livings of such, if the land was brought into a good state of husbandry, would almost equal small bishoprics in value. But since, in such a number of cases, two have been consolidated into one, it is not unreasonable to hope, that a time will come, when they may again be disunited; thus a greater number of the clergy be provided for, and those be better enabled to compass the care of their respective parishes. This measure, I conceive, could be accomplished without any act of injustice on the demise of an incumbent, whenever a second church and glebe house were erected.

But there is also another point worthy of the maturest reflection, which is, whether, as there is at present no certain fixed fund for the infirm, sick, and totally destitute part of the poor, some provision should not also at the same time be made for their support. Many liberal-minded clergy of Ireland declare that, as circumstances now are, they would

in no wise look for so great a proportion of the land to be allotted in lieu of tithe, as is considered equitable in England. On the other hand, the land-owners can have no plea to retain a larger portion of it than those in England do, more especially as the land is subject to no poor's rates. Here then an opportunity is afforded of allotting also a portion of land in aid of the poor, which would be doing an act of the highest justice and popularity, and which it would be generous in the clergy to acquiesce in.

If a proportion of the waste land to be enclosed was also set apart for the same purpose, the rental of these together would contribute to the necessities of those, who for want of such a fund are reduced to the very lowest dregs of human misery.

I have already noticed, that no laws at present exist in Ireland for providing means of relief for the necessitous poor, who are consequently wholly dependent on voluntary contributions. Alms are collected in the churches every Sunday for the purpose; but as I observed in a former publication, those can only prove a scanty and inade-

quate fund for the numbers who stand in need of it. In a country where the poor form so large a class compared with the rich, and where there must consequently be so many, who from sickness, infirmity, and the want of friends or employment are left completely destitute, the best efforts of the rich can go but little way towards succouring them. The charity too of these persons from such frequent and stated calls being made on it will be in some degree blunted, especially as they must find what will ever be the case with voluntary contributions, that the niggardly and unfeeling cast the weight entirely on them.

It may, however, be said with great truth, and very much to the honour of the Irish peasantry, that they feel most sensibly, that it is the duty of children to cherish and support their aged and infirm parents, and even other near relatives, and discharge it to the utmost their scanty means will enable them. This, I know, is brought forward to shew, that laws for the relief of the poor, tend to destroy their exertions to assist each other. There may be some degree of truth in the asser-

tion, though by no means sufficient to prove that such laws are bad, or altogether unnecessary. But if some good effect is produced by the absence of them, so (as in all extremes) is opposite evil. It was long before I could believe that the disinclination which parents in the southern part of Ireland possess to their children labouring, was connected with the dependence they feel on them for future support. But it certainly is so, and they persuade themselves that the less work their children perform till they become nearly adults, the greater will be their strength and activity to support their aged parents afterwards. Thus then, if from the non-existence of legal obligation for the support of any of the poor, they are urged during manhood, by the ties of filial and relative duty, to cherish and maintain those near and dear to them, so are they also, from the want of these laws, unfitted for it, by being reared up in habits of indolence and inactivity from the fears of those who feel dependent on their exertions, lest they should find them unequal to perform their future task. Even suppose this prejudice, so common in the part of the country I am treating of,

were removed, yet in a land so much abounding in poor, what numbers must there be who are unblessed with children or other near relatives to comfort and sustain them, how many families where a widow and helpless infants, bereft of him who before toiled for their support, must either have constant relief from others, or perish from want. But I will state a case or two from amongst the many within my own knowledge which I could bring in illustration.

An industrious poor labourer, whose occupation was quarrying stone, unfortunately had both his hands blown off at the wrists, by a premature blast of the rock. He had a wife and numerous young family, unable to earn food for him or themselves.

From the bounty of a public body who owned the property, he was allowed gratuitously to take stone from the quarry and dispose of it; but in consequence of the very low price the material bore, and the uncertain demand for it, he could not afford to pay a labourer for assisting him. I have seen him toiling daily with an iron crow placed between the stumps of his arms,

to rend asunder the fragments of rock. The quarry, however, shortly afterwards failed, and so did his hard-earned bread; his countenance then exhibited such a picture of distress and famine, as it is painful to remember.

Another which I shall mention is now taking place.

A journeyman carpenter, by his industry and good conduct, maintained, till of late, a wife and four small children in a comfortable and very decent manner. During the hot weather last summer, he threw aside a flannel waistcoat which he had been accustomed to wear, and omitting to resume it early in the winter, was seized with a violent cold, which brought on a rapid decline; in the last stage of which he now languishes, and by the time when, in all human probability, he will have drawn his last breath, his poor wife will have added another to her helpless offspring.

Let these simple facts speak for themselves; they are no solitary cases, but such as constantly do and ever will occur—cases with which a populous country must teem, and which plead, more forcibly than any reasoning of mine, the neces-

sity of some provision being made for the poor, beyond the uncertain supply of voluntary contributions.

What likewise can be said to the cases of mendicity? A stranger passing through a town is assailed by a number of miserable objects, decrepit, ghastly, half naked, and apparently half famished; many of them scarcely retaining the semblance of human beings; some driven to it by pressing want—others preferring it from idleness; but he cannot exactly discriminate between them. If he gives to a few, perhaps the most worthless have obtained from him, by their clamorous importunity, that bounty which he designed for those who were truly objects of it, could he have selected them.

His means will rarely permit him to spare something for them all; and if they did, he would but be encouraging idleness and dissipation by giving it. If he passes by the whole, his heart will, perhaps, afterwards be torn by the reflection, that a fellow creature may have perished from the want of what he could well, or at least with a little self denial, have spared, had he but known how to dis-

tribute it. It would be needless to inquire of any of them, "which is your parish? and why are you not received into it?" for, alas! all parishes are alike to them, except that they must prefer the one in which they can have the greatest chance of exciting charity.

The best remedy for this calamity would be to increase the number of houses of industry, supported by a county rate*. The idle and dissipated would then be either driven to labour, or at any rate they need no longer be suffered to remain at large, a pest to society, nor rob those of

* How much more would it be to the benefit and credit of the country, that the several counties should raise money for this purpose, rather than furnish such enormous sums towards roads. The plea is the necessity of repairs and new roads; but the presentments, it is to be lamented, are too often countenanced by persons of property, and in some instances even of rank, who either undertake the business themselves at an extravagant rate, or by their interest procure a given part of the road to be repaired by their tenants, who pay them a higher rent for their land in consequence.

This practice is notorious throughout Ireland, and carried on to an incredible extent.

relief who would be industrious, had they the ability to be so.

In providing the necessary fund for the support of these last persons, humanity should not out-run the just means of accomplishing the intended purpose; and, much as I respect the laws of Great Britain which enforce parochial relief to the poor, I am far from supposing Ireland to be in a state to meet such at present.

Neither the higher classes nor the general property could afford to sustain such a demand, nor, perhaps, would many of the poor, circumstanced as they are, use their exertions to the extent that could be wished, to support themselves without such aid. I only mean to urge that it is indispensably requisite that every parish should have some certain fund for supplying the necessities of such as must otherwise either perish from want, or drag on so miserable an existence that death itself would be a relief to them.

I shall therefore proceed to the consideration of what fund can be best provided, and how afterwards distributed. I have before intimated that in making a commutation of land for tithe, toge-

ther with enclosing the wastes, there is ample opportunity of allowing a proportion of estate, the rental of which might be applied to the benefit of the poor. It is a measure which the reasonable part of the clergy and landowners neither could nor would object to, and the whole plan would be rendered highly popular by it. This, however, would not meet the case of every parish, and in some parts of the country, as well as in cities, a rate on houses must be collected. The more simple the mode of distribution, the better; and I would recommend that two guardians of the poor should be appointed annually for every parish—one to be chosen by ballot of all the landowners and tenants of a rental of ten pounds per annum, and the other by the resident clergyman of the parish; each of these two to distribute half of the annual revenue; and if in any case either was considered to be making an unjust distribution, an appeal to be made at any time to three magistrates, who should have power either to sanction or disallow that particular disbursement.

To prevent the possibility of both the guardians

of the poor acting with prejudice to an individual, three magistrates, on application being made to them to hear the parties, should have a discretionary power to order a small limited sum to be paid out of the fund, in case the individual or head of the family asking relief had resided constantly for seven years in the parish*.

The whole accounts of the guardians of the poor to be brought before the quarter sessions annually to be confirmed and signed by the magistrates, who should have power to disallow any part of the expenditure, and prevent the re-appointment of any guardian detected of fraud or gross partiality.

This, I conceive, is all the system of poor laws

* I do not mean that no persons should be relieved except such as had resided constantly for seven years in the parish, or that all those who lived so long in it should have an absolute demand for relief; but rather that in the former instance it should be discretionary with the guardians, and in the latter with the magistrates, who in cases of extremity should have power to order some small relief, if they deemed it expedient. This kind of settlement would, I think, attach families to a particular spot.

to which Ireland, in its present state, is equal; but if carried into effect, I am fully convinced it would tend to make the poor better satisfied with their homes, and less disposed to ramble from place to place; while it would also promote the happiness and prosperity of the rich.

There remains but one more head now untreated of, on which I formerly offered some observations, and in which the best interests of the country are materially concerned—namely, the state of Ireland with respect to churches and glebe houses.

By a statement which I then extracted from a respectable work*, it appeared that the whole island contained 1120 benefices, 2436 parishes, 1001 churches, and 354 glebe houses, on about twenty million acres of land, English measure: that in some counties there were nearly five parishes to one church; and estimating the whole population at only three millions eight hundred and fifty thousand, there were, on an average, almost four thousand inhabitants

* Rev. Dan. Aug. Beaufort's Memoir of a Map of Ireland, published in 1792.

and twenty thousand acres of land to each church, and upwards of fifty thousand acres to each glebe house. I then deducted four millions of acres for waste land, after which, there remained on an average only one church on every sixteen thousand acres of land fit for cultivation. Since that time, a grant has been made by parliament of fifty thousand pounds towards building churches and glebe houses, which is now expending, and I make no doubt, properly in most respects; but it still appears to me desirable, that a more regular and systematic course should be pursued, than that which is taking place. I before suggested the expediency of adopting one general model for churches, and that it should be of such sort, that additions could be made with facility, and without interrupting the order or beauty of the building. A parish at present standing in need of only a small church, might thus have the centre or body of a church first erected; one requiring a church somewhat larger might have one built of a second size or rather with a single wing; and a parish standing in need of a still larger, might have one with both the wings or side aisles to it.

I likewise proposed the same system with respect to glebe houses. That a plan for a moderate sized convenient house should be adopted, which admitted of additions being made to it without difficulty, if the incumbent chose to do so. The advantages arising from this system would be these. Stone and lime being so abundant in Ireland, an estimate might be formed of nearly the expense of each church. It would differ a little according to some local circumstances, such as the carriage of the materials, and labour in working the stone, as some kinds are of a harder quality than others; but the difference in most cases would not be so great as to derange the general estimate.

If then a regular return was to be made by the bishops of the state of every parish n their respective dioceses, as to the churches and glebe houses, with an account of the number of acres of land in the parish under or fit for cultivation—and in case it already contained no church or an indifferent one, which of the three sizes would be suited to it—the legislature could at once judge of the whole sum required, and in what annual proportions it might be allowed.

A census being about to be made, the population of each parish will be known, and I think that, in a considerable degree, ought to be a guide as to the size of the church; for whatever may be the communion of the inhabitants in general, it is the duty of the establishment to open wide its gate, to compel none, but to enable all to enter; and it is also the duty of the state (circumstanced as Ireland is) to provide means for its being done.

Having now stated my observations separately under those heads in which I suppose the happiness and prosperity of Ireland are most affected, I will proceed to make some general remarks. In the course of them, I shall shew the natural resources which the country possesses, pointing out how I think they will be brought into action by the plans I have suggested; and whilst summing up the advantages which I think these plans collectively will produce, I shall contrast the present with the expected state of things.

First then, let me notice the benefits likely to arise to the peasantry, and small farmers who so nearly resemble them in their circumstances, that

I hardly know how to draw the line of distinction between them.

The difficulty and almost impossibility of providing them with a comfortable and decent dwelling would cease to exist by a supply of timber being reared, which may be soon done to answer that purpose. It would be no longer necessary for the family to live in a hut almost poisoned with smoak, and the stench of pigs, fowls, horses, cows, and goats kept under the same roof with themselves, nor to have the dairying carried on, as a very great proportion of it now is, amidst this complication of filth. An improved state of agriculture would supply so large an amount of better food than they at present consume, as to reduce the price of it, and likewise both in itself and the other employments, which it would be the occasion of producing, furnish these people with the means of purchasing it.

They need no longer subsist on potatoes alone, or at best with the addition of sour milk*. This

* It is truly lamentable to behold the state of this food when sold to the poor in the markets. A number of cars,

latter object appears to me of so much importance, not only as it affects the comfort, but also the physical strength of the people, that I must digress to state and answer the arguments urged in favour of the sufficiency of the present kind of food. It is asserted, that there cannot be a more robust and healthy people than that part of the Irish who live on potatoes. I answer, they enjoy a fine climate, and perform in general but a slight degree of labour, neither can they, whilst they live on such food, perform more. The land may be said to yield a given degree of nutriment; some crops contain it in a small, and others in a more bulky compass. Potatoes are of this latter de-

each containing a large tub of sour milk, being placed in a row, the purchasers go from tub to tub, tasting the quality of each, and strange to say, from custom, preferring what is most acid. The whole, in general, is so glutinous, that when poured out it draws into long strings. To shew how far the farmers live in the same manner, I will mention the case of a man occupying fifty acres of land, (and the farms are not in general so large) at a rental of two hundred pounds a year, who had no other dwelling nor food than such as I have described.

scription, and, therefore, a man must consume many pounds of potatoes to gain from them the same bodily strength that a pound of wheat would produce. If, for instance, his labour required him to have the daily sustenance of one pound of meat and two of bread; he must, to keep up the same strength, if he lived entirely on potatoes, consume a greater weight of them than either his appetite or digestion would permit. It is further said, that the Irish perform many laborious employments in England, such as coal heaving, &c. True, but they obtain other food besides potatoes.—Again; in the cities in Ireland they carry great loads. These persons purchase at a cheap rate the offal food from the markets.—But even the peasantry, who live wholly on potatoes and sour milk, occasionally make great efforts of strength. They do so, but without the aid of some other food they must fall back into a state of inactivity for their bodily strength to be recruited. A man can no more keep up his exertions with the supply of a bulky food like potatoes, than a horse can with hay only without the addition of corn; and I have known

instances of workmen, who from parsimony attempted to live on poor food, whilst they were performing great labour, sinking under it.

In respect to the bodily condition of the Irish, who live so much on potatoes, I have constantly noticed, that although many among them who performed little labour were, during great part of their lives, robust and healthy, yet infants and aged persons in particular shew, by their meagre countenances, the insufficiency of such food even when they performed none. I make not these observations from prejudice; for in my former publication I have endeavoured to estimate the real value of this root. Having now, I hope, satisfactorily answered the arguments commonly urged in favour of it as an entire food, I shall return to the remarks which I was before making.

The Irish peasantry and small farmers, then, being able to obtain grain with some portion of animal food for their subsistence, in addition to potatoes, would not only be rendered more comfortable, but they would feel greater ability, and consequently more inclination to perform labour. Thus their strength would be improved;

and from this cause, together with the adoption of other measures which I have proposed, their minds would be more tranquil, respect for their superiors in rank would be promoted, their ill-will to the clergy of the establishment, from having to pay tithes, would be done away, and they would have reason to look to them for aid.

By an increased number of clergy residing among them, the better sort would be more informed, schools could then safely be established for the instruction of the very poor orders, without so much danger as at present of their being made, by ill-designing men, the vehicles of wild and extravagant doctrines, and the very ignorant part of the people would in the end become civilized.

Another benefit which may reasonably be expected to arise to the country from an improved state of agriculture, and the consequent comforts which the peasantry will experience, would be a diminution of the general spirit of emigration: but as there is one species of it which appears to me to require the immediate interference of the legislature, I must here digress to describe it; I

mean, that carried on under the appellation of indentured apprentices.

It has long been the custom of the masters of American merchantmen, after delivering their cargoes in Ireland, to entice the people of the class I am now mentioning to quit their homes, with the lure of gaining fortunes in America, by putting themselves under their patronage, as a remuneration for which, together with the expense of their voyage, and sometimes from the addition of a small sum given them for present use, they are induced to sign an agreement that they will serve for a given number of years, whomsoever their patron fixes on.

They are assured that they will have great advantages during the time, and that when it is expired there will be an absolute certainty of their making fortunes. No sooner do they arrive in that country than their stipulated services are sold for thirty or forty pounds each, their golden dreams vanish, and they shortly afterwards find themselves in a ten fold worse situation than before they left home; gladly would they return when their service is ended; but they are penny-

less, and alas! they meet with no American captain equally ready to carry them back.

This traffic in Irishmen has been of long continuance, and to a very great extent; so lately as last year I witnessed an American vessel freighted with nearly three hundred of these poor deluded self-sold men, then taking leave of their native shores, and the sails hoisting in the wind to transport them into abject slavery.

It is no part of my purpose to discuss the political relations between the British dominions and America; but were they far different from what at present exist, it would be incumbent on me to shew this evil in its full light, since it is material to the cause I am attempting to advocate, that the country should no longer be robbed of her youth, or they suffered to be sold into bondage.

I will not presume to say, that in a free land it would be equitable that those laws which restrain manufacturers from emigrating should be extended to every class of labourers. But I consider that it would be a measure grounded on principles of the strictest justice, that the master of every foreign vessel about to depart from the

country should first declare the number and names of the passengers he was going to take, and that every native previously to his embarking in a foreign vessel should be obliged to appear before the magistrates resident at or near the place, to declare his intention of going, and whither, and obtain a certificate to that effect. This certificate he would have to deliver to the master of the vessel in which he sailed; and a severe penalty should be imposed on every master who was found conveying away a native of the country, unless he could produce the certificate required.

A measure like this would, I am persuaded, at any rate, give opportunity for dispelling much of the poison instilled into the minds of these poor creatures by interested foreigners, and which I am fully convinced has principally promoted emigration in general.

But to return to the other advantages which would arise from an improved state of husbandry. Part of the capitals acquired by agriculture would find their way into commerce, and bring back increased wealth; thus the one would furnish strength to the other.

I will now point out how extensive these benefits may be rendered. In my former publication, after stating the whole extent of land in Ireland to be equal to about twenty millions of acres English measure*, I deducted a fifth, being four millions of acres for waste land in bogs, mountains, rivers, lakes, roads, &c. after which there remained sixteen millions of acres fit for cultivation. But some objections have been made to this deduction as not quite sufficient; I will therefore allow a million of acres more, or a fourth part instead of a fifth of the whole, which will then leave fifteen millions of acres fit for cultivation. I infer from the following data that this amount must be nearly correct. The bogs in Ireland are acknowledged to be equal to full two millions of acres; and I think every person who has viewed the country attentively must be satisfied that they occupy more of it than those mountains and other wastes which are incapable of being cultivated. But allowing two millions of acres for these latter, and such part of the good

* Beaufort's Memoir of a Map of Ireland.

land as is not directly applied to the purposes of agriculture, there will then, by this deduction, be one million of acres left for waters, ~~wastes~~ roads, and buildings.

Now I am confident there is no disinclination in the natives of Ireland to cultivate these remaining fifteen millions of acres, but, on the contrary, they are anxious for opportunities of doing it. There is, in fact, a much less proportion of land suited to the purpose really uncultivated in Ireland than may be supposed; and the eagerness of the peasantry to till it is manifest from the numerous instances which appear of cultivation creeping up the sides even of such mountains as might be considered unworthy of it. But the truth is, that the principal part of the cultivation which is performed is done in a very insufficient manner, as I have already shewn, and the gain therefore to be expected must arise from the people being taught to execute it better. I do not state lightly, but after mature observation, that I am fully convinced the land in the southern part of Ireland, on the average, by no means produces, at present, equal to a fourth of what it

is capable of being brought to yield under a good system of husbandry. The northern part is better cultivated, and I will therefore admit that on the whole the land of Ireland produces a third of what it could do. What then follows but that it yields at present only as much as should be the produce of five millions of acres, and that ten millions of acres of land, suited to the purpose, are uncultivated, or a loss sustained equal to it?

Ireland, out of her present produce, which I estimate as that of five million acres, supports her population, grows sufficient flax for her linen trade, and exports provisions to a very large amount; but I will suppose, that under an improved state of husbandry, provisions equal to the present export may be applied towards the better maintenance of the inhabitants. Five millions of well cultivated acres then will be employed for the support of the present population of Ireland and the linen trade, and the produce of the remaining ten million acres, suited to cultivation, may be advantageously exported. To estimate the value of this produce, I shall divide these ten million acres into five parts, and say, they may be annually thus employed.

1st. Wheat.

Two million acres of wheat producing twenty bushels per acre, or 5,000,000 quarters at 60*s.* being less than half the present value in London, 15,000,000

2nd. Barley and Oats.

One million acres of barley producing twenty-eight bushels per acre, or 3,500,000 quarters at 30*s.* being about half the present value in London, from whence Ireland has of late imported some barley and malt for the use of the breweries and distilleries 5,250,000

One million acres of oats at thirty-six bushels per acre, or 4,500,000 quarters, at 20*s.* being less than half the present value in London 4,500,000

3rd. Turnips and cultivated Grasses.

Two million acres of turnips and

£24,750,000

Brought forward £24,750,000

cultivated grasses, for which I shall put no value as it will be consumed by the live stock of the country, although it would at the same time yield a considerable amount of meat and butter for exportation.

4th. Fallow.

Two million acres fallow, which I allow to prevent the possibility of cavilling, but not that I admit the necessity of there being by any means such a proportion of whole year's fallow.

5th. Grazing land.

Two million acres of grazing land, which I consider a sufficient proportion to the arable land.

The value of the produce from it I shall estimate by the acre instead of

£24,750,000

Brought forward £24,750,000

taking it in beef, butter, and cheese, (which latter article Ireland now imports wholly,) and as so large an allowance has been made on the turnips and cultivated grasses, I shall state this at 3*l.* per acre 6,000,000

I have already supposed a quantity equal to the present export of pork to be hereafter consumed at home, which must then be considered as arising from the first five million acres. On the remaining ten million acres, I suppose there can be at least four hogs to every hundred acres fed on what would be otherwise lost*, by which

£30,750,000

* The above relates to waste corn and other refuse food, not to the present practice of boiling for each meal, as even every peasant does, a much larger quantity of potatoes than the family can eat, in order to supply the hogs; by which means, the account of the food consumed by both becomes

Brought forward	30,750,000
means they may be brought to a state fit for corn feeding, and I shall, therefore, value them at 30*s.* each. Their future value will be a deduction from the former estimate of corn to be added to the pork. The quantity of which, for export, may be increased to any amount, by consuming more corn; say 400,000 hogs at 30*s.*....	600,000

Having allowed so large a proportion as four million acres out of ten for turnips, cultivated grasses, and fallow, I may reasonably state the number of sheep kept on the whole, at the rate of forty to an hundred acres, or four millions. I calculate on the wool from five million acres being used for home consumption

£31,350,000

so blended, that it is difficult in any case to ascertain how much belongs to either.

Brought forward	£31,350,000
and manufacture, to which I will add that from the uncultivated mountains; and I consider the mutton from these ten million acres may be also added to the food of the inhabitants, taking only the wool for exportation, which at four pounds per sheep will be 16,000,000lbs. say *1s. 3d.* per lb.	1,000,000
	£32,350,000

In making the foregoing calculation, I have stated the produce according to a given, and as little complex course of husbandry as I well could, for the sake of arriving at an estimate of the value; but it is to be considered that the species of the produce may be varied either according to the quality of any part of the land, or the demand for any particular kind of commodity; and that in some cases pulse or hemp may be substituted for the crops I have named. This varia-

tion will increase rather than diminish the sum total.

The next object for consideration is how this produce can be disposed of. Need I mention the situation in which Great Britain has of late years been, and now is, with respect to corn, or state, that millions have been paid to our enemies for supplying us with it as long as they would condescend to do so; that the nation has been drained of its specie for the purpose; and from the increased population which appears from the last census, this demand must continue.

These facts are so fully within the knowledge of every person throughout the kingdom, that I should be trifling with the time and patience of my readers to dwell on them by a minute detail.

The following are such commodities as Great Britain stands most in need of, and Ireland could be brought fully to supply her with. The different kinds of corn and pulse, hemp (to which much of the soil in Ireland is well suited), beef and pork for sea provisions, butter and cheese, tallow and hides, fine wool*, and in consequence of the

* The quantity of sheep's wool imported into Great Bri-

high price they bear, a large supply of horses for the army and other purposes*, and likewise live oxen and cows.

Considering the amount of these articles which Great Britain has of late years imported from fo-

tain on the average of eight years, ending 1810, according to Lord Sheffield's last report, was 7,729,929lbs. yearly. From the high price paid for it, the annual cost may be estimated at upwards of three millions sterling. It has already been pointed out that the soil in Ireland is highly suited to produce fine wool, and that the land I have allowed for the export trade could yield twice this weight of common wool. It then only becomes necessary to encourage the growth of fine wool, and though the quantity will be diminished, yet Ireland can thus have the benefit of supplying England with all she requires.

* Ireland possesses a most valuable breed of horses if kept free from admixture with English cart horses, the introduction of which, I lament to say, has of late become fashionable, and, in my estimation, will cause the loss of the hardy and active qualities of the Irish horses, which are at present, except for very heavy draught, superior to any breed whatever, and if the largest are kept for that purpose and agriculture, and the lighter for other uses, they will prove a lasting source of national wealth.

reign countries, and the increased population, I am fully warranted in taking the annual value of them at about twelve millions sterling. Here, then, I am willing to rest my cause. Is any one disposed to object, that I have somewhat over-rated the quantity of land capable of cultivation in Ireland, or estimated the produce too high? Although I am far from being of such an opinion, (for if the quantity of land is right, which I am inclined to believe it is, the estimate very little exceeds three pounds an acre for rent, tillage, and profit,) let him strike off as much as will satisfy him from the 32,350,000*l.* set apart for exportation, provided he leaves me these twelve millions. Without looking for another market to take off any part of the remaining produce, I will only ask what Ireland would become, with the return of this sum annually from Great Britain, together with other reciprocal advantages, which might be expected to follow, and how much their united independence would be strengthened by such an intercourse? Surely this would level the rate of exchange, and many times more than counter-balance to Ireland for the sums remitted over

to those who are stiled absentees. But since it is so much insisted on that the sums paid on this latter account alone will, at all times, impoverish Ireland and prevent her prosperity, I must add a few words respecting it. I have before me a calculation on this head made about forty years ago, from which I am enabled to form some judgment on the subject*. As it was published with a view to shew the disadvantageous situation in which Ireland stood with respect to Great Britain, and it appears to have been written with great partiality, I presume no items were omitted which could be thought of.—It states as follows:

Class I. A list of absentees who live constantly abroad, with the sums remitted annually to them, amounting to	371,900
Class II. A list of those who live generally abroad and occasionally visit Ireland, with the sums remitted, ..	108,300
	£480,200

* "A list of the Absentees of Ireland, &c." The work is anonymous. The above extract is from the third edition published 1769, and said to contain a corrected list.

Brought forward	£480,200
Class III. Persons possessing employments and places, said to have been then absent	72,200
	£552,400

This is all I can find in the account which fairly belongs to absentees, for I am not disposed to admit into it such items as "money spent by Irish "merchants travelling in England" without a set off for English merchants travelling in Ireland; and for insurance of ships 40,000*l.*; Children educated at the universities in England and foreign colleges, 35,000. Students at the inns of court and law suits in England, 24,000*l.* Spent in attendance and applications for employment, ecclesiastical, civil and military, 15,000*l.* Insurance from fire, and money paid for coaches, jewels, toys, &c. 40,000*l.* Adventurers to America, 60,000*l.* And pay to armies on foreign service, 142,000*l.* Which sums, with many such like, are heaped together till they amount to a

million and a half, which England then seems charged with annually drawing from Ireland.

The increase from that time, I conceive, has been less than is generally supposed; for although the rent of land has so much increased, the difference has been gained by resident lessees more than absent land-owners. But supposing the sum of 552,400*l.* said to have been paid out of the country to absentees, has nearly doubled since then, or for the sake of round numbers, amounts now to a million, yet what proportion does this bear to the sums which Great Britain can return for the produce of the land, provided Irish agriculture is brought to a state to supply it? No one can lament more than I do, the want of countenance and support which the lower classes experience from the absence of some of the owners of estates; yet it must be recollected, that many of those persons have also estates and connexions in England, which it cannot be expected they should quit; but the pecuniary disadvantages arising from it in a national point of view, I hope I have proved may be fully counterbalanced, and I shall now return to consider the means of accomplishing it.

I recommended in a former publication, that bounties to the amount of about 150,000*l.* should be given by the state under certain conditions, to induce practical husbandmen from England to settle in Ireland, and to whom the land-owners were exhorted to grant beneficial leases of not less than a hundred acres, as being the least quantity on which a regular course of husbandry could be carried on to advantage. The national profit on which, as I have endeavoured to shew, might ultimately be two hundred times that amount yearly. A third part of the required bounties, if properly expended, would have been sufficient to commence the undertaking with spirit. Since that time, a large sum has been granted for the purpose of draining bogs in Ireland, with a view to the same end. I am far from wishing to censure any attempt to promote so desirable an object, but I may be permitted to compare the advantages likely to arise from each plan. By means of an improved system of husbandry from the land at present so imperfectly cultivated, and other of the like kind capable of cultivation, I conceive a produce equal to that of ten

million acres of average good land might be gained. The most sanguine advocate for cultivating bogs cannot, I think, suppose that every acre of them will ever be brought to yield more than a fourth of what such land as I have formed my calculation on will produce. Taking the estimate of the bogs then at two millions of acres, and supposing them all capable of being fully drained, and of afterwards growing every species of corn and other produce, and that they could even be brought into cultivation as quickly as a good system of husbandry could be accomplished on better land, and only require per acre a fourth part of the culture of other land, none of which things I believe to be the case, yet, after all, they would only be equal to five hundred thousand acres of average good land, or yield but a twentieth part of the produce which I estimate may be gained by the other means. To pursue the plan of draining bogs appears to me to be following a shadow and passing by the substance.

As far as the health of the inhabitants is concerned, draining the bogs to a certain degree may be desirable, but I think money spent on them

with any other view, whilst the rest of the country remains so imperfectly cultivated is but ill applied. But the difference does not end here; for if the supply of turf for fuel is by this means to be cut off before a sufficient quantity of coal is found, the distress of the country for fuel must be great indeed.

Almost the only comfort which the Irish peasant now enjoys arises from his being able to obtain a little fuel at an easy rate; take away this, and how can he boil his meal of potatoes? deprive him of the comfort of his evening fire, and how cheerless is his condition!

From the bog land being withheld from use for fuel in some places, with a view to bring it under cultivation, and the peat in others being exhausted from an increased population, distress of this kind is already severely felt in those parts. If this becomes general, how great must the calamity prove?

I have yet to notice one mean by which I think the plans I have proposed for the improvement of agriculture may be aided, and other interests of the country materially benefited, namely, by

a judicious distribution of the English militia regiments now in Ireland.

Were the Norfolk militia to be stationed in those counties best suited to the culture of barley and turnips, the Leicester in the grazing counties, the Northumberland and Warwickshire in those parts where coal may be looked for, and the Cornish where minerals may be expected, others distributed with the same intent, and some of the men permitted to assist in the different undertakings, much good might be produced.

In drawing my present observations to a close, I have to lament that they cannot be more flattering to the present state of the country. It will perhaps be objected that I have amongst other things purposely stated the size of the farms at a very low rate, when some considerable ones, particularly grazing farms, exist in the south of Ireland. There are, I know, some few, but comparatively a very small number of tolerably sized farms, and two or three grazing concerns estimated at the astonishing size of six or eight thousand acres of good land each; but others

in the same counties at once sink into the class of those I have described. I lament in this, as in every thing throughout Ireland, the rapid falling off from riches to poverty, from splendour to misery, and the immense distance which exists between them. In making the foregoing observations, I can truly say I have had no selfish point in view, nor been actuated by any other motive but that of endeavouring to promote the general good. Had I seen what I consider the true interests and wants of Ireland brought forward by others in a manner which appeared to me likely to gain the desired end, I should not have again intruded my observations on the public. I hope I have now made no assertions unsupported by reasons for entertaining those opinions, but whether they are such as may prove convincing to others it is not for me to determine.

Should it be objected that I have dwelt mostly on defects, I must declare, that if I have omitted to describe the natural beauties of the country it is because I thought them foreign to my present purpose. If I have failed to state in extra-

vagant terms the richness of the soil in Ireland, it is because I believe it to be in general over-rated; I consider it, on the whole, equal, but not superior to that of England. Had I mentioned the cities, and attempted to describe the grandeur of the capital, truth would have compelled me to shew, that if the munificence of its public charities, the noble structure of some buildings, and the spacious arrangement of many streets and squares, would do credit to the first city in Europe, so would the state in which those parts called the Liberties, and some others, are suffered to remain, disgrace the meanest. I have throughout honestly stated things in the light in which they appeared to me, and have wished to avoid offending any description of persons. It is the good and not the praise of the Irish I am seeking; and however slender my means, or small the opportunity I may have, of exerting them, I shall earnestly strive to promote the cause in which I have engaged. Highly shall I think my labour rewarded if the matter which these pages contain shall in any wise tend to promote the prosperity of a country whose interests I deem

inseparable from those of my native land, or to alleviate the distresses of a people for whom I feel a kindred regard: their calamities will never cease to afflict, nor their welfare to cheer my heart to its latest hour.

I appeal to every liberal minded Irishman, and to every stranger, who having passed through the country, has looked at it with common observation, whether almost every step you take, every glance you give, does not bring to your view some part of the misery which I have recorded. This being admitted, and I feel assured that it must be admitted, I then confidently ask, is there the man living in the United Kingdom, who, informed and satisfied of this, can lay his head on his pillow, and take an hour's rest, before he makes some exertion for bettering its condition?

THE END.

D. N. SHURY, Printer, Berwick-street, Soho, London.

PART II.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

State of Agriculture,

AND

CONDITION OF THE LOWER CLASSES OF THE PEOPLE,

IN THE

SOUTHERN PARTS OF IRELAND,

IN THE YEAR 1822.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS,

&c. &c. &c.

Ten years have elapsed since the publication of the foregoing Observations; they were written during a far different state of things from that of the present day. The nation was then engaged in a most formidable war; her intercourse with other countries was greatly disorganized; the produce of the soil of the united kingdom was insufficient to meet the demand for food, and this country was, consequently, dependent, in a considerable degree, upon a foreign supply.

But Ireland (at least a certain class in it) was reaping advantages from these causes. The great

bulk of her inhabitants being, from habit, non-consumers of corn and meat, she was enabled to export a very large amount of that description of produce; and from the ready market for provisions, and the high price they bore, was carrying on a very lucrative trade in them. Land consequently increased rapidly in price, new interests multiplied in it, and the prosperity of Ireland was generally considered to be advancing by rapid strides.

That such, however, was not my opinion even in those days, the foregoing pages will, I trust, fully testify; and that I deemed a material change indispensable in the system of her agriculture and the interests connected with it; since without such a change neither improvement could be expected in the condition of the peasantry, nor lasting benefits be secured to the land owners, nor peace, happiness, and prosperity to the best interests of society.

That such opinion was not ill founded, the experience of the present day, I think, most dismally proves.

Whether any of the measures which I before

suggested, or rather a combination of them, would have led to the desired end, or tended to avert the calamities of that unhappy country, I leave for others to decide. But if the remedies which I proposed were deemed futile and impracticable, why, I may fairly ask, have not others been adopted? and why has the disorder been permitted to attain such a height as to render the prospect of its removal more remote and doubtful.

To censure, however, is not my object in resuming the subject; but rather to look at things as we now find them, and once more offer my feeble aid towards removing the evils under which the inhabitants of so large and fine a portion of the United Kingdom are suffering. With this view I shall retrace my former observations, and add such as the events which have since passed and further consideration have produced in my mind.

The manner in which I before treated the subject was,

First. As to the imperfect state of agriculture, and the effect of such a state in depriving the

people of even the ordinary comforts of life, and in preventing their improvement.

Secondly. As to the baneful effects of the tithe system and its remedy.

Thirdly. As to the want of some fixed fund for the support of the infirm, sick, and totally destitute poor.

Fourthly. As to the state of the established Church.

Fifthly. As to the subject of absentees.

On comparing the state of Agriculture, condition of the lower classes of the people, and general state of things in Ireland, as existing in the years 1812 and 1822, there is, certainly, no opportunity for drawing conclusions favourable to the latter period; nor is there a more flattering prospect to encourage any hopes of improvement, but quite the reverse. I must confess, that I now see no reason to alter, generally, my opinions respecting the causes, effects, and remedies, which I have already delivered. It will, perhaps, be urged, that it is now more difficult than before to effect improvement in the system of agriculture; but if the difficulties in the applica-

tion of remedies have already increased by delay, I fear they will not be diminished by a further extension of it. With regard to the improvement in the condition of the peasantry and cultivators, which might be expected to arise out of a better organized system of agriculture and of leasing the land; as I see but little reason to enlarge on what I have already suggested, I shall, for the sake of brevity, refer the reader to the preceding pages on this head; and shall proceed to the second point to be considered, which is materially connected with this part of the subject; namely, the evils of the tithe system and the best remedy for them.

This is a momentous question; and, I trust, that my former observations on it will bear me out in the assertion that I wish to treat it as such.

On the evils attending the system of collecting tithes in Ireland, it is needless to add one word; for the effects are felt by those to whom they are payable, as well as by those from whom they are demandable, by the interruption to the peace of society of which they are the occasion. It is imperative then upon all classes to join heart and

hand in endeavouring to apply a speedy and effectual remedy, and to act liberally, as far as their individual interests are concerned, as the only means by which it is likely to be attained. I before stated my reasons for considering a commutation of land for tithe more equitable than a fixed monied rate on the land. To the first mode of commutation objections have been made, as tending to throw too much land into mortmain, as burthening the clergy with the cares of a landed estate, which, from their peculiar situation, it is said, they would be obliged either to let at a disadvantage or to cultivate themselves. My former objections to a monied rate on land must now be stronger than ever, since the price of produce and expenses of cultivation have varied to an unprecedented degree. And though I can by no means admit the validity of all the objections which have been made to the allotment of land as a commutation for tithe, I will propose another mode of commutation, to which none of these objections are applicable; namely, that the tithes shall be commuted for a corn rent, payable, however, in money, half yearly, according to the ave-

rage price of the corn sold in the market of the nearest city or shipping port; the names of such cities and shipping ports to be stated in an Act of Parliament, in which regulations should be laid down to provide for the average being duly taken and published at stated periods in the Gazette and provincial papers. The amount of commutation in corn on each separate quantity of land, to be valued and fixed by commissioners, with powers, like those granted them in England under enclosure acts, but subject to the control of a superior board, in the manner which I before recommended for adoption, in making a commutation of land. The local commissioners, for the purpose of ascertaining the amount of corn rent to be given as commutation for tithe on each separate farm, would have to fix the value, according to the quality of the land, in bushels of corn; the monied payment for which would vary with the average price, and no dispute could arise between receiver and payer. I have said that the averages should be taken from the *cities and shipping ports*, because it would be impossible, according to the practice in Ireland, to fix any satisfactory average

from the corn sold at the nearest *market town*; since it is the custom to carry the corn in small parcels to the merchant's stores for sale, without pitching it in the market; and although the merchants, in general, fix a rate of price which they will give for each kind of corn, that alone would not be satisfactory.

This, and the want of a uniform measure in Ireland (the "barrel" varying in capacity in different districts), are certainly impediments to the carrying into effect of this plan, though by no means insurmountable. It is desirable upon many other accounts, that the Winchester bushel should be enforced as the general measure for corn in Ireland; but if the difficulties, with respect to the measures and average prices of Ireland, are greater than I am willing to admit, the monied value of the corn rent might be taken from the British averages, which, after all, must regulate those of Ireland; allowance being made by the commissioners, in their valuation, for the difference between the price of corn in England and in Ireland, by apportioning a smaller quantity of corn, if the price

is to be taken from the averages of the latter country.

The quantity of corn to be apportioned by the commissioners, as a commutation for tithe, when once fixed, should remain invariable, thereby giving the land owners the full benefit arising from future improvements. The superior board of commissioners should have power, as I before recommended, to control any misconduct in the local commissioners, and to settle all differences. The first arrangement being thus made, all future payments would be easy of adjustment. As the desirable end in all commutations for tithe, is to render the land tithe free to the cultivators; and, as in Ireland, this is most essentially necessary, it is requisite that the payment should be made by the landlord. From all land not on lease, this would be equitable and unobjectionable, since in future agreements for rent, this would enter into consideration. Some difficulties would, however, arise from the complication of interests in many cases, existing in the same land in Ireland; but, as I shall endeavour to show, they are such as can be obviated.

Circumstanced as Ireland now is, the only prospect there can be for the land being cultivated well, or perhaps at all, is for the cultivators, whether they hold on lease or not, to be immediately exonerated from the burthen of tithe, which should be borne by the other parties interested in the land; and whoever they be, whether land owners or noncultivating lessees, if they view their own interests in the true light, they will gladly acquiesce in an arrangement for the accomplishment of this end; for, without it, their interests must, in the present state of things, be entirely destroyed. In doing so, they would not, in reality, be making any great sacrifice; for the cultivators are, for the most part, tenants under short leases at rack-rents;—such rents as can no longer be paid, and, therefore, it will be wisdom, in those interested in the land, to take this first step towards a reduction of rent.

On the necessity of the cultivators being exonerated from tithe, I shall, hereafter, make a few observations; but I shall first endeavour to point out how the various interests of land owners and noncultivating lessees may be regulated in making a commutation for tithe.

For instance, if A is land owner, B and C noncultivating lessees, and D cultivator, let the amount of commutation be divided between A, B, and C, according to their* several shares of rent. Suppose that in any one year it amounts to three shillings per acre, and the rent paid by D to C, to three pounds the acre, out of which C would have to pay two pounds as rent to B, and B one pound as rent to A. If D made the commutation payment on account of his rent, he should be empowered to deduct the whole from C, and C to deduct two-thirds from B, and B one third from A. As on the other hand, if the commutation payment were made in the first instance by the land owner A, he should be empowered to charge two-thirds of it, or at the rate I have assumed, two shillings the acre, over and above

* The rent paid by noncultivating lessees is often low, in consideration of a fine paid down at the commencement of the lease. The commissioners should, therefore, be empowered in adjusting the proportions in which the tithe is to be divided between the different landlords, to consider the rent as consisting of the stipulated annual payment and the interest of the sum paid down as fine.

the covenanted rent on B, and he, in his turn, should be empowered to charge C with one shilling the acre, over and above his covenanted rent. To secure the commutation payment, it would be requisite to provide that, unless it was paid within a given time, the interests of the noncultivating lessees and land owners should be sequestered until payment should be made. But payment might be accomplished without any advance of money from the landlord and noncultivating lessees, by an order being given for the tenant to advance it as part of the payment of his rent, and hand the receipt over to the landlord, with whom he had to settle.

I shall now, as I proposed, make a few observations respecting cultivating lessees being exonerated entirely from tithe; and what I have to add, can only relate to cases in which they have the land on very advantageous terms, of which there are so few instances in Ireland, that they cannot be used as an argument for not relieving from payment of tithe the bulk of the cultivating lessees, by a commutation such as I have proposed. But if such cases are more numerous than

I imagine them to be, let the local commissioners be empowered, with the concurrence of the superior board, to apportion the amount of tithe to be paid by the cultivating lessee. It only remains to advert to an exemption from tithe granted by an Act of the Irish Parliament (in my opinion most unfairly), in favour of pasture land. For reasons, which will appear under the next head of which I am about to treat, I consider all land should bear its proportion of tithe; and if an exemption has been unfairly obtained, there can be no injustice in removing it in a general commutation.

I come now to the consideration under the third head; of the nonexistence of a fixed fund for the infirm, sick, and totally destitute poor.

In my former observations, I stated how impossible it was for Ireland to sustain any thing like the load of poor laws with which England was then burthened; and by which this country has since become so severely oppressed. I am, nevertheless, far from altering my former opinion, that although the English poor laws are not without some disadvantages, yet that those disadvantages arose rather from abuses in the administration of

those laws, and from circumstances which had produced an excessive extension of them during a disorganized state of society, than from a defect in the principle of the original laws themselves; but that, when kept within wholesome bounds, they tended to promote the happiness and prosperity of the country; and that some moderate fixed fund, for the like purpose, is essential to produce the same effect in Ireland. I proposed that this fund should arise out of a commutation of tithe in that country; and showed how, in consequence of the great extent and value of the benefices in Ireland, it could be afforded without prejudice to the clergy; who, under such a change of circumstances as this regulation would produce, would derive more real advantage from a part, than they can now possibly obtain from the nominal possession of the whole of their property in the tithes.

I also proposed a simple mode of relieving the poor out of this fund, by two guardians, to be appointed annually, one by the resident clergyman of the parish, and the other by ballot of all the land owners and the tenants of ten pounds per

annum; that in case of apparent unjust distribution, an appeal should be made to three magistrates, who should have power to sanction or disallow any particular disbursement. The whole accounts of these guardians of the poor to be brought before the quarter sessions, annually, to be confirmed by the magistrates, who should have power to disallow any part of the expenditure, and to prevent the reappointment of any guardians detected of fraud or gross partiality. Thus much respecting the application of the fund; I must now speak of the equity of its being obtained from this source. In my former observations, I stated, at considerable length, arguments in favour of the rights of the clergy to tithe, and the injustice of the land owners attempting to deprive them of their claims on the land for it. To this I must add a few remarks, on the justice of a portion of tithe in Ireland being allotted to the poor; and in this I am warranted by ancient custom, in illustration of which I shall quote only one, but that a high authority. On this subject judge Blackstone says, "At the first establish-
"ment of the parochial clergy, the tithes of the

"parish were distributed in a fourfold division, "one for the bishop, another for maintaining the "fabric of the church, a third for the poor, and "a fourth to provide for the incumbent. When "the sees of the bishops became otherwise amply "endowed, they were prohibited from demanding "their usual share of these tithes, and the divi- "sion was into three parts only." Now if there existed in Ireland any certain provision for the poor, which had received the sanction of time, as in England (where the benefices, generally, are unequal to spare any part of the tithes towards the support of the poor), it would, in such a case, be the height of injustice to seek for any provision for the poor out of the tithe. But in Ireland, where several parishes have been consolidated into one benefice, the case is far different.

I have shown in my former observations, that Ireland contains 2,436 parishes, and only 1,120 benefices; and I estimated the quantity of land capable of cultivation, of which the greater part is in some manner cultivated, at fifteen millions of acres. This, on an average, gives 13,392 acres to each benefice, and consequently every shilling

per acre, chargeable thereon for tithes, would yield £669 12*s*. Surely then there is ample room in a commutation to provide for the clergy and some fund for the poor, according to the ancient custom, without overloading the land with expenses. The good fruits of such a measure would be felt by landlords, intermediate lessees, and tenants.

Under the fourth head, the state of the established church, I shall here offer but few additional remarks. I formerly adverted to the small proportion which the number of churches and glebe houses bore to the number of the parishes, and the necessity of some aid from Parliament towards rebuilding them. Money has since been granted and applied to that purpose, and I will now only suggest, whether in adjusting a commutation of tithes, it would not be desirable to have some provision out of that fund made, according to ancient custom, for maintaining the fabric of the church, rather than by a specific church rate, since those of another communion would not be called upon by a direct contribu-

tion for the repairs of the churches of the establishment.

In the remarks which I before made, respecting absentees, I considered them as consisting of two classes; the one comprising those who are not natives of the country, but have estates there as well as in England, and whose constant residence in Ireland cannot be expected; the other consisting of those native land proprietors, who, either for the purpose of enjoying the superior comforts and better society which they find in England, or flying from the unhappy state of their country, have absented themselves from home.

To suggest such measures as would tend to produce comfort and good order among the great mass of society, and thus induce and enable them to return, has been one great object of my efforts in this cause; and if ever that happy state of things shall, by any means be brought about, I trust, that this latter class will, from interest and patriotism, reside in the bosom of their country, and by their presence contribute to its welfare.

But there is a third class of absentees from among the lower orders, now become so numerous, that it demands immediate attention.

In my former observations, I lamented that under the distress prevailing at that time (which was prosperity itself compared with that of the present day), the peasantry of the country were quitting it, and selling themselves into a kind of slavery to the Americans, engaging by indentures of apprenticeship to serve, on their arrival in America, by way of remuneration to the master taking them out, such persons as should be appointed by him. But I had not then seen, nor had I calculated on such a state of affairs, as should drive thousands, not only of the peasantry, but also of the farmers, to quit a fine and fruitful island in Europe, to cultivate the wilds of America and the sands of Africa. Still less could I suppose that it would ever be deemed good policy to convey them thither for that purpose; nor could I have expected to see what at this hour I witness—a people starving in the midst of *over production*—the tenantry of Ireland flocking to England in quest of that food which they

themselves had raised; and which, from urgent necessity, they had been exporting, without having the means of reserving any of it for their own subsistence. Does not the existence of this kind of absenteeship demand, most strongly, the commencement of measures which may enable them to return and gain subsistence at home?

Of those who have once crossed the Atlantic, few can ever find the means, however desirous they may be, of returning; but, I trust, it is not yet hopeless to look for the return to their own country of those who have emigrated hither.

Alas! what good can be expected from their remaining here? If the Irish cultivator, who is thus quitting his occupation, seeks an asylum and means of supporting himself by labour, amidst the Agriculture of England, he will there find distress general enough, and the peasantry, from self preservation, hostile to his views; nor will he much mend his condition by repairing to the metropolis and manufacturing towns. No other cure then remains for this malady, but to attempt, by prompt and efficient measures, a new organization of the Agricultural Affairs of Ireland, which

would hold out a prospect of better days to this class of emigrants, and encourage them again to seek their native shores. In accomplishing this, much, very much depends upon the land owners in Ireland, though other measures than those within their power are necessary. Deeply is their interest concerned in promoting this end. Unless their lands be cultivated, they can expect no returns from them; their prosperity must depend upon that of their tenantry. I would exhort them then to offer the cultivators land on such terms that they may be enable to derive profit from it, towards forming some capital, and, whilst cultivating the soil, afford for themselves better food and more comfortable dwellings than they obtain at present. As they value their own interest, let no further time elapse before they hold out this inducement, to prevent the departure of those who yet remain in the land, lest Ireland become a desert.

E'en now the devastation is begun
And half the business of destruction done.

To the land owners and cultivators of England,

I would say, since a jealousy exists, least the prosperity of Irish Agriculture should ruin that of England; let no such cold hearted and narrow calculations influence you to prevent the adoption of measures tending to promote the prosperity of the sister island. If her agriculture advances upon a sure and liberal foundation, so that her cultivators will become consumers as well as producers of corn and meat, in their flourishing state they will need manufactures from this country, by which your interest will be also promoted *.

If, on the other hand, the condition of the cultivators of Ireland be not improved, times, like the present, will again occur; bad will become worse, and worse incurable; and instead of this country being called upon only for temporary aid to the inhabitants of Ireland, England will have to sustain the burthen of that country in an additional weight of taxes. Our union with that

* The injustice, however, must be noticed of English manufactures being charged with a duty of ten per cent., whilst corn from Ireland is admitted into England duty-free.

island must produce to us either strength or weakness.

And lastly, I would ask those who fear that the country is becoming too populous, and that its interests would be promoted by checking the cultivation of the soil at home, and encouraging the inhabitants to quit their native land for the purpose of forming distant settlements; whether the manufacturing interests can expect to derive any benefit from those colonies, except in proportion to the industry, prosperity, and numbers of the colonists; whether these may not be promoted here as well as there, by the application of judicious measures; and whether the expenses attending foreign colonies do not more than counterbalance the advantages to be derived from the transport of commodities thither?

THE END.

C. Whittingham, College House, Chiswick.