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POLITICAL ARITHMETIC.  
CONTAINING  
OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE PRESENT STATE OF  
**GREAT BRITAIN;**  
AND THE  
PRINCIPLES OF HER POLICY  
IN THE  
ENCOURAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

Addressed to the  
ŒCONOMICAL SOCIETIES established in EUROPE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A MEMOIR on the CORN TRADE:  
Drawn up and laid before the COMMISSIONERS  
of the TREASURY.

By GOVERNOR POWNALL.

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and MANCHESTER, and of the Œconomical Society  
of BERNE in SWITZERLAND.

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TO THE SOCIETIES  
ESTABLISHED IN  
DIFFERENT PARTS OF EUROPE  
FOR THE  
ENCOURAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
THIS TREATISE  
ON THE PRINCIPLES OF  
BRITISH POLICY  
RELATIVE TO  
THAT IMPORTANT DESIGN,  
IS INSCRIBED,  
BY THEIR  
MOST OBEDIENT,  
AND DEVOTED SERVANT,

ARTHUR YOUNG.

*North Mims, near  
Hatfield, Hertford-  
shire, April 15, 1774.*

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P R E F A C E.

**T**HE great encouragement which agriculture at present meets with in *Europe* has been either the cause or effect (probably both) of many publications upon that part of political œconomy which concerns the culture of the earth. In several of these writings I have remarked, in some important instances, such a turn of thought, and such recommendations to sovereigns as appeared to me to be founded upon principles extremely false: At the same time, I met with many passages in the works of foreign writers, wherein they

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quoted the example of *England*, but under great misrepresentations. These circumstances induced me to attempt a plain explanation of the system of *Great Britain* in the encouragement of agriculture, in order for an opportunity to point out as well as I was able the principles of that policy which has wrought those effects in this country, and which give foreign authors an idea of our prosperity; *British* ones, a conviction of our declension and ruin.

If such a plan is executed with ability, it can hardly fail of being beneficial; for a train of conduct false in the very foundations of its policy, being recommended by writers of considerable reputation, may be supposed to be listened

to

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to by statesmen and legislators:—to point out such errors is incumbent on a lover of agriculture, who thinks he sees them—the world must be his judge if mistaken. At the same time to find others recommending ideas because they are realized in *England*—which in truth have no such foundation, instigates one farther to shew in what principles consists this branch of *British* policy. All this will be allowed to be an important subject; I wish it had been in more able hands; but others not having undertaken the task, is the reason that the reader finds me engaged in it.

In executing this design, it was necessary to give some account of our present state, in respect of agriculture, arts, manufactures, com-

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merce,

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merce, luxury, population, wealth, and the prices of commodities. I have dwelt upon these no farther than was necessary to shew that the principles explained had been attended with such and such effects. I had already done something of this sort in the observations annexed to the registers of my Tours through *England*, and therefore avoided repetitions; this part of the work would have been very short, had not the assertions and opinions of some writers among ourselves (gentlemen for whose abilities I have an high respect) been so very contrary to the positions I was laying down, that it would have been affectation gravely to explain principles as if undeniable, without removing the objections of men of repute, who denied their existence.

The

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The observations I made in my journies through the kingdom, fixed my opinions concerning population—the inclosure and division of landed property—the prices of the earth's products, &c. I found the language of plain facts so clear, that I could not but listen and be convinced, and I laid the facts before the world on which I founded my opinions: In opposition to these facts, those writers have offered reason upon reason, argument upon argument, and have given elaborate disquisitions on subjects which demanded facts alone. This has occasioned my shewing in the present treatise how the facts I before gave are consistent with, and even naturally arising from first principles. This I esteemed a necessary part

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part of my undertaking—for if I could not succeed here, it would be in vain to offer circumstances in our national conduct to the imitation of foreigners, which were not clearly deserving their attention.

The subjects here treated are the most important that can demand the attention of our legislature—and it is of the highest consequence that gentlemen should have right ideas of them; since giving into vulgar errors, and mistaken notions on population, prices of provisions, luxury, size of farms, inclosures, &c. must have ill effects. If the parliaments of this kingdom once adopt the errors I here endeavour to refute, it will be a signal of national decay; since those principles

## P R E F A C E. xi

ciples of our policy which have made us the envy of the world, will then, instead of being revered, become active against us.

I am very sensible that throughout these calculations I have taken the unpopular side of the question. A work (unless conducted with uncommon abilities) rarely succeeds, whose principal aim is to persuade a nation to be easy and satisfied under present circumstances; and to convince them that they have almost every reason to be pleased: such a task has nothing in it that flatters the multitude—you run counter to public prejudice, and all the reward you can hope for, is the approbation of a few sensible individuals.

Gover-

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Governor Pownall was so obliging as to permit me to take copies of some important papers relative to the corn trade. His memoir on the uncertainty of the statutes, and the means of ascertaining the prices of corn for the purposes of exportation, proves, in the clearest manner, his uncommon attention to that subject, and his ability in discussing it. He likewise favoured me with the table of the expence of shipping corn to and from Holland at page 28; that of the prices at which flour from New-York and Pennsylvania can be landed in England, page 280, 281, and 282. Also that of the prices of flour in those colonies, page 340.

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## P O L I T I C A L

## P O L I T I C A L A R I T H M E T I C K.

## I N T R O D U C T I O N.

I F ever the encouragement of agriculture was a principal object of attention in the several governments of *Europe*, it is at present, when we every day see establishments, institutions, or laws framed with this great and laudable view. It is a spirit which does much honour to the present age, and will certainly be attended with excellent effects. Having in many foreign publications seen various accounts of these exertions in most of the neighbouring countries; read several dissertations on what the French call the *Oeconomical Science*; and reflected on the propositions which have been best received in those countries, I am induced to offer a few observations to the public—speaking to other nations as well as to my countrymen. There are instances in which appear much

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more merit in the general design of encouraging agriculture, than in the particular means taken to effect it; arising, I should suppose, from a want of information: This must give concern to one who wishes so well to the cause. Desirous of being as good a citizen of the world as my station in life will allow; and seeing that the foreign writers frequently quote the case of *England*—and are eager to copy her, let me endeavour to explain, as far as I am able, the principles which have advanced the husbandry of this country to its present height.—Let me observe wherein foreigners should imitate us—and wherein their imitation can be of no service to them. We cannot well understand this without improving the knowledge of our own interests. I shall do it with the greater readiness, as I believe the ingenious writers, who have published so much upon these subjects in *France, Italy, and Germany*, have, in several cases, formed mistaken ideas of the policy and practice of *England*; both have been the objects of my particular attention, and though I may fail in minutely tracing many effects to their true causes, yet a slight examination relative to foreigners adopting what they call our system, may, I think, have its use to ourselves.

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In the progress of explaining what I take to be our national advantages, and our national obstacles, I shall naturally be led to examine some popular opinions started lately among ourselves by other writers, as some of them are such as appear to me utterly destructive of the ends I propose in this enquiry.

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C H A P.

CHAP. I.  
ENCOURAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN GREAT-BRITAIN.

THE circumstances to which our farmers owe most, are,

- 1. Liberty.
- 2. Taxation.
- 3. Leases.
- 4. Tythe not generally gathered.
- 5. A freedom from personal service.
- 6. Corn Laws.
- 7. General wealth of the kingdom.
- 8. Inclosures.
- 9. Consumption of meat.

SECT. I.  
LIBERTY.

THE advance which the agriculture of this country has made, is owing primarily to the excellency of our constitution—to that general liberty which is diffused among all ranks of the people, and which ensures the legal possessions of every man

man from the hand of violence and power : This is the original and animating soul that enlivens the husbandry of *Britain*. But it is not owing to this alone that we have attained to an high degree of excellence ; other causes also have operated, and very powerful ones, for freedom alone will not do, as we see by *Scotland*, where the constitution is the same, but agriculture abundantly different. This we see also in *Ireland*.—Our farmers, and all the people employed by them, enjoy that general freedom and security which is the birth-right, I will not say of *Britons*, but of all mankind. The operations of a correct and spirited agriculture require considerable expence ; the returns of which are some years before they come in ; such a business, above most others, requires every favour that legislation can shew : A great degree of security of possession is necessary in such a case, not only from the effects of arbitrary power, but also from all oppressions that the nobility, gentry, and wealthy landlords can throw upon their tenants. An *English* farmer, with a lease, is as independent of his landlord, as the landlord is of the farmer ; and if he has no lease, we may be sure he is favoured in the rent proportionably to such circumstance. This general liberty, which our farmers enjoy

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in common with the rest of their fellow-subjects, it must be evident, to all attentive observers, cannot fail of being of the highest consequence to the promotion of good husbandry. It is impossible to enter into a full explanation of all the advantages they receive under this general head; which, in fact, is of all others the greatest encouragement, not only to agriculture, but equally so to arts, manufactures, commerce, and, in a word, every species of industry in the state\*.

S E C T. II.  
T A X A T I O N.

**T**HE public revenue of *Britain* is raised by such a mode of taxation, that little of the weight falls on husbandry. The great

\* Le travail est le pere de l'opulence. La terre inepuisable dans ses dons, recompense toujours la sueur de l'homme laborieux qui la sollicite, en le comblant de richesses à proportion de ses soins & de ses peines. Mais l'appas seul des jouissances encourage le travail. L'assurance qu'on a d'échanger à son gré le superflu, est ce qui crée le superflu. C'est cette cause active qui fertilise les champs, fait fouiller les mines, enfante les inventions, les découvertes et tout ce qui rend une nation florissante et redoutable. *Théorie du Luxe*, 1771, tom. i. p. 170.

great division of our taxes is into: 1. Land; 2. Parish; 3. Windows; 4. Excises; 5. Customs. As to the smaller objects of stamps, licences, post-office, &c. none of them bear the least upon one set of men more than another, nor are they burthensome to any.

The land-tax is raised absolutely and totally upon the landlord, though paid by the tenant. In all cases it is the same thing to the farmer, whether he pays his rent immediately to his landlord, or to the King in taxes; the latter are first carried to account, and the ballance to his landlord is always proportioned to what he has already paid for land-tax. Whether it is one shilling or four in the pound, it is just the same to the farmer—the landlord is the only one concerned.

If he farms his own estate, he pays it himself, which makes no other difference than the mere trouble of the payment.

An immense advantage is the amount of the tax being fixed: If I buy or inherit an estate consisting of waste, or poorly cultivated tracts, which let only for an hundred pounds a year, and pay a tax of five pounds to the state; and if after, by spirited exertions, I advance the annual value of my estate to a thousand pounds a year, the tax remains just as it was before—no in-

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crease. This is an advantage, and an encouragement to improvements which no system can exceed\*.

Several *English* writers have pleaded for a new and more equal land-tax; which might be perhaps a good measure if there was an absolute certainty of its then remaining unchangeable for at least a century; but as we cannot have such certainty, I must esteem it a most dangerous idea; for if the tax was by a general new assessment made an equal and fair one, then there would not be the same reason as at present for opposing alterations: A tax of so much in the pound, varying according to rent, would be at once a tythe, and the most pernicious system that could be invented, because an improver would be TAXED IN PROPORTION TO HIS IMPROVEMENTS. Let therefore the tax remain upon its present footing: it is now perfectly innocent, if altered, we know not where the alterations would stop.

Another

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\* In one respect this is not so fully the case; the sums which parishes are assessed always remain the same; but the officers may vary the assessment on individuals; but then they must know at what rent a farm is let before they can raise any person's tax, and the person so raised may appeal, if every other person in the parish is not equally taxed, which makes such alterations in the assessment rare.

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Another circumstance which renders our land-tax so little burthenome to the agriculture of the kingdom, is its being laid absolutely upon *rent*: The assessors cannot tax the landlord for any supposed or visible value: if a farm is ever so rich, or supports ever so many cattle, it is nothing to the assessor, he can tax the rent only: and if the landlord farms it himself, he can only be taxed according to the rent the last time the farm was let, though an hundred years ago, and would at present let for quadruple the sum; if the old rent cannot be discovered, the old assessment is continued, without enquiring on what foundation it was formed.

From this slight review of the land-tax of *England*, it appears to be no burthen on agriculture:—no system of taxing land could have been invented that would injure it so little.

It is not so with the parish taxes; they are laid immediately on the farmer, and prove a burthen to him in proportion to their weight: They consist of the poor's rate, or the sums raised for the support of the chargeable poor: The church rate, for keeping in repair the parish church: The highway rate, raised by the surveyors for the repair of the roads. The latter is not general, as the statute duty of six days work with their teams, is commonly more than

than sufficient; and in no case, by act of parliament, more than a rate of six-pence in the pound of rent can be laid in aid of the duty: this is the only resemblance we have in *England* of the *Corvees* of *France*, and the monstrous personal service which is so destructive to the agriculture of *Germany* and *Poland*. The amount in *England* cannot be called burthensome; since the six days work are performed only at a leisure time of the year, and may be generally compounded for at a fourth part of the real value.

With the poor's rate there is usually a few other small taxes thrown together, such as the constable's expences, which however are trivial, and the county rate, being a county expence for certain bridges and other general expences which concern the county at large; when divided among all the parishes it is a very small amount. The poor's tax, with these additions, including the church rate, are usually all thrown together, and raised by a single rate, in which every occupier of lands or houses are charged in proportion to his rent. The average of them in my Northern Tour, came only to 1 s. 1 d. in the pound; and in the Eastern Tour to 2 s. 8 d.; average of both 1 s. 10  $\frac{1}{2}$  d. But in manufacturing,

turing, and many other particular places, they rise much higher.

The reader will observe that this tax is entirely regulated by the rent of the land, which is a circumstance that renders the burthen comparatively light: If a man hires an hundred acres of land for thirty pounds a year, during a lease of forty years, and by improvement raises the land to the annual value of an hundred pounds, still he can be rated only at thirty pounds a year, as the value or goodness of the land, and the largeness of the farmer's stock have nothing to do in the account; he is not to be taxed for them, but only in proportion to his rent.

Another observation I should make is, that in parishes where the rates run very high, as in some they do to 3, 4, 6, and even 10 s. in the pound, in such, the tax is in fact on the landlord, for no tenant will hire land in any parish without first enquiring what the rates are; and when he finds them so high, will give a rent only in proportion to such certain expence; if the rates were to be lowered from 10 s. to 5 s. in the pound, the landlord at the expiration of his leases would be able to add 5 s. in the pound to his rents.

Upon the whole, though the poor's-rate, &c. is a direct burthen on the farmers, yet

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yet the amount not being a matter of great consideration, and being laid only on the certain rent, it is not in any respect to be considered as checking the progress and improvement of agriculture: the disputes, litigations and lawsuits, which arise from the quarrels between farmers on some being rated higher or lower than others, and between parishes concerning the settlement of their poor, are in some instances a greater abuse and burthen than the total of what they pay regularly in rates. This is an abuse of freedom, and rather marks the lightness of the burthens laid on our farmers, than their weight.

The tax upon windows bears not particularly upon agriculture; the farmer pays something annually for each window in his house, proportioned to the total number, it is a regular tax, and too inconsiderable to be esteemed a burthen, certainly it has no ill consequences on our husbandry. Were it however, as some authors have advised, to be the only tax, by its absorbing all others, it would be a deadly burthen to the whole kingdom; since no man should pay to the amount of all taxes in proportion as he *possesses*, but in proportion as he *consumes*; but of this more hereafter.

The two great branches of *English* taxes are the excises and the customs; their

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their being burthensome to agriculture depends entirely on what objects they are laid, and to what extent they are carried; but in general I shall remark, that they are much less detrimental than commonly imagined. Customs on the exportation of corn would be ruinous to agriculture: excises on wool and leather to such an amount as to lessen the consumption and sink the price in the hands of the farmer, would be evidently mischievous: such excises upon malt as would lessen the consumption of beer, and at the same time customs on the export of barley, would greatly hurt the culture of that crop: excises laid on butchers for all the beasts they killed, to such a height as to lessen the consumption of meat, would have the same effect;—but these are cases of which we have no instances in *England*: our customs and excises are not prejudicial to our husbandry but in very few cases, the prohibition which is only another word for a very high custom on the export of wool, and raw leather, are certainly heavy burthens laid on agriculture in favour of manufactures, the proof of which, is the price of wool in *England* having fallen half since that policy was embraced, which has been a tax of near two shillings in the pound additional on land; not that I would  
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venture to plead in favour of the exportation of wool raw: I shall only refer the reader to the arguments of Mr. *Smith*, in his *Memoirs of Wool*, where he will find many extreme curious facts concerning wool and the woollen manufacture.

That customs and excises do not injure in the least the agriculture of *Britain*, we have the clearest proof, in their not lowering the prices of any of the farmer's commodities, (wool, &c. excepted, as above;) while they leave them at the price they found or raise them, certainly the farmer cannot be injured. When they are carried too far they lessen consumption, which in every circumstance is the great wound the farmer has most to fear, because his prices from that moment will fall; but in *England* the consumption of every commodity has increased under every burthen that has been laid on it: this has been uniformly the case with malt; nor have we an instance of either excises or customs lessening the consumption, and consequently the price of the farmer's products. The excellence of this species of taxation has been very ably explained by several writers, who have shewn that by the tax being blended with the price, the purchaser does not feel its weight, and never pays the tax but when he is best able to pay it, that is at the moment he makes the purchase.

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purchase. If all the taxes of *England* were consolidated into this general branch *on consumption*, our system would be still more perfect. As to their raising prices, it is as I could easily shew an advantage to every class in the state.

From this review of the system of taxation in *Britain*, it is clear that the agriculture of the kingdom cannot suffer from any part of it, without the amount being carried to a much greater height; but hitherto we have seen nothing like even the prospect of mischief to our husbandry from any of our taxes. This must arise in a great measure from their not being laid on improvements—from their being permanent and not varying—from the assessors, collectors, and receivers being armed with very moderate powers, and with none beyond the mere line of fraud against the tax—from their being no respectors of persons, dealing equally with the duke and his little tenant.

## S E C T. III.

## L E A S E S.

THE improvements which have been wrought in *England* have been almost totally owing to the custom of granting leases:



leases: In those countries where it is unusual to give them, agriculture yet continues much inferior to what we find it where they are usual, nor can it flourish till this custom is adopted. If the mode and progress of country improvements is well considered, they will be found utterly inconsistent with an occupation without a lease. A farmer hires a tract of land in an unimproved or inferior state; he repairs the fences, deepens the ditches—clears away rubbish—purchases dung—forms composts—drains the wet fields—waters the meadows—adds to the buildings—digs for marle—gets the arable lands into good and clean order; these works take him three or four years, during which time he sacrifices his profits in hopes of being well paid. Now how can any person possibly suppose that such a system will be executed on his farms, if he will not or does not grant long leases? Is it to be expected that a tenant will lay a thousand pounds out upon improvements, and remain all the time at the mercy of his landlord, to be turned out of the farm as soon as the money is expended? The case is so self-evident that the necessity must be undeniable; no man of common sense will put such trust in another.

Nor

Nor is it sufficient that granting leases is a common custom, they must be so guarded by the laws as to give the tenant the most perfect security; he must be sure of his term, and also sure of being safe against any ill designing, malevolent, or insidious attacks of a wealthy landlord, and be as independent while he adheres to the contracts of his lease, as the landlord is of him: all this is the case with the majority of *English* farmers. It is true, there are many tracts of country in which landlords will not grant leases, but then one of two circumstances must exist; either the land is of such a nature that no *improvements* are wanting—or, in consequence of no lease being given, the farms are let much under their value.

In some countries of *Europe* no leases are granted, in others they are very weak guaranties of the tenants security, and in others, the sale of the estate vacates the lease: These are all radical evils which must be cured, or husbandry can never flourish.

C

SECT.

## S E C T. IV.

## T Y T H E.

THIS is the greatest burthen that yet remains on the agriculture of this kingdom; and if it was univerfally taken in kind, would be fufficient to damp all ideas of improvement. Fortunately the fpirit of our clergy is too liberal in general to live in fuch a ftate of warfare with their parifhioners, as pretty generally is the cafe where they fubmit to the trouble of gathering for the fake of the additional profit.

In many parifhes however, the tythes are gathered, and in them I will venture to pronounce no correct or fpirited husbandry will ever be met with:—and I may further remark, that in the extenfive journies I have made through this kingdom for the purpofe of examining its agriculture, I have never met with confiderable improvements where the tythe was taken in kind; and a very little calculation would fhew the impoffibility of it. The reafon our husbandry has advanced upon the whole in fo great a degree, is fuch a large part of the kingdom not being tythed in kind, but a compofition *per* acre or *per* pound being taken in lieu; and fuch a confiderable

portion of it being tythe free, which is every day increafing by all the new inclofures. The great object at prefent of *British* agriculture, is to obtain a general exemption from tythe, by giving the clergy fome fettled income in lieu of it.

## A B O L I T I O N O F T Y T H E.

Last winter there were fome refpectable meetings of gentlemen, for the purpofe of applying to parliament for an alteration in the tythe-laws: a committee was chofen, and having made one in feveral of their meetings, I am able to affert that their defigns are perfectly commendable; having equally in view the benefit of agriculture and the rights of the clergy.

The committee, in the petition they prepared for prefenting to the Houfe of Commons, names no equivalent to be given in lieu of tythe, properly leaving that to the wifdom of the houfe: It may not, however, be amifs to make a few obfervations on fuch as have been thought of.

*First*, A Pound Rate. The annual value of the living for the laft feven years to be ftated, and the average to be in future raifed by a pound rate; not by a fixed fum, but at fo much in the pound, confe-

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quently the value of the living will rise with the rise of land and fall of money.

There are two insuperable objections to this scheme. *First*, The difficulty of gaining a fair pound-rate is fully equal to that of abolishing tythes. Three fourths of the kingdom have at times litigated their rates with a view to honest proportions, but in vain; and accordingly the inequalities every where found, and the enormous fallacies, through various reasons, are such as render the plan utterly impracticable. People who have long occupied their own lands, and are rated according to their last lease, though an hundred years old, pay the tythe either in kind or to the value; were it to be paid by rate they would be exempted of three fourths of their just contributions, and the burthen fall on their neighbours, who already pay as much as they ought. For instance, A. B. C. D. and E. are the renters in a parish, and F. and G. farm their own lands: the former contribute to the rates proportionably to their rents; but F. and G. only in proportion to the last rental of their lands: For want of an explicit decision of the value of F. and G's lands, they are unjustly favoured, and the rest of the parish burthened in proportion; is not this inequality sufficient without easing F. and G. of a great part of their tythe,

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tythe, and throwing the weight on A. B. C. D. and E. who are already burthened more than they ought to be? What system can be more iniquitous? *Secondly*, If this objection was got over, there is another great one. You want to be eased of tythes because of the enormous burthen of a payment proportioned to the crop? How absurd then would it be to exchange it for a direct similar burthen? The mischief of tythes, of the taille in *France*, and all taxes proportional to products, valuations, or rents, is the circumstance of taxing improvements: this monstrous evil you would not get rid of. If a man buys a farm at 50*l.* a year, and by excellent management improves it highly, and lets it at 100*l.* his tenant is at once doubled in the rates—the very evil which has so often been complained of in various countries, that groan under taxes varying with rents or valuations. This system therefore would be only changing one evil for another: Our poor rates are a tax liable to this great evil; in the name of common sense, therefore, do not quadruple a tax which is open to such objections.

*Secondly*, It has been proposed to pay the rector by a corn rent; with the double view of giving him his share of future improvements, and securing his property from

sinking with the value of money; but this is liable to most of the objections of the pound-rate. Giving him his share of future improvements, is giving him the only thing we want to take away; and if the quantity of corn to be paid per acre is fixed, then you will throw a monstrous oppression on all the kingdom below your medium in favour of the part that is above it, which must appear to every one an insurmountable objection.

*Thirdly*, It has been proposed that the composition for tythes should be fixed at so much in the pound rent, throughout the kingdom. This would obviate the objection from the fall of money, but it is open to that of the second proposition; and it is also open to another, which is the difficulty of fixing a rent to lands long occupied by their owners.

*Fourthly*, It is proposed to give a value in land—which, upon the whole, is that idea which appears to me open to the fewest objections: It provides for the clergy infinitely upon more favourable and liberal principles than any other mode whatever, inasmuch that (which is an object, in the great work of changing tythes, of vast importance) the clergy themselves would probably agree to the scheme upon this footing. It secures them not only from  
suffering

suffering by a fall in the value of money, but also gives them a property which will rise proportionably to that fall. It is not open to a single objection upon the account of fair pound-rates, valuations of rent, or any such sources of knavery. It is the same to the whole kingdom; you will not oppress one part of it in favour of another. It is but one account; the moment it is fixed there is for ever an end of squabbles with the clergy, whereas many of the other schemes would perpetuate them as much as tythes in kind.

That there are objections to this idea is certain, and some that are very weighty; but I think the whole affair must depend on overcoming these objections; if you cannot do that the business is impracticable. However, I have yet heard none that are insuperable. An act might direct that the land-owners of every parish should chuse one commissioner of allotment, and the rector or tythe-owner another, which two to chuse a third, and these three commissioners to be invested with those absolute powers common in all commissions of inclosure; they should be tied down by the act to ascertain the average value of the living for the last seven years, including all tythes great and small, and to assign, as near as may be, to the parsonage, a portion of land

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sufficient to yield a rent equal to such average value. This would of course be done in the usual method of reducing the whole parish to money, and then gaining the proportions. That there would be difficulties in such a work nobody can doubt, and if acts of inclosure had never passed, such as would be called insurmountable; but we know that no difficulty could arise that has not often been met with, and overcome in inclosures—no variety or complexity of interests, no difficulty of arranging lands—no more important interests to be settled in one case than in the other; why not therefore proceed on a system which is put daily in execution in one part of the kingdom or other? I speak this under the supposition that the lands assigned in lieu of tythes were necessarily to be in a spot around the parsonage; if contiguity was not insisted upon, all difficulties would vanish.

Another objection which has been made to the whole of this idea, is the impropriety of adding to the lands in mortmain, which are already too numerous and extensive. This may be an impropriety, but are improprieties to weigh down such amazing benefits as would result from the abolition of tythe? Adding to the inconvenience, when no public advantages are to result  
from

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from it, would be absurd; but the present is a very different case. The tenth part of your gross products is already in mortmain, why not change such a burthenfome payment for an assignment of land? This is not in any respect a similar case with an increase by legacies, purchase, or donation. But farther; lands in the possession of rectors of parishes lying around their parsonage houses, would be scarcely open to the usual objections against mortmain: much the greatest part would necessarily be kept in the hands of the resident rectors, improved just as much and as well as the farms of the laity, when in their own hands. I appeal to the knowledge of gentlemen in the country, if the glebes of clergymen, when they lie conveniently for their own houses, are not as well managed as other lands; unless the necessary improvements are of a very expensive nature, and the incumbent very old. And when such lands are let, why are we to suppose that the rector will not, for his own interest, get as great a rent as he can, and if he does, then the greatest objection to the land being in the hands of the church vanishes.

Lands in the possession of a dean and chapter, or a bishop, where the tenure is on lives, and the benefit a fine, or belonging to colleges or hospitals, are as entirely different as any two cases can be. In

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all these cases, the public suffers from the present incumbent preferring a present advantage of a fine to an annual one in rent; rents therefore are not raised, and wherever that is the case, all the world knows the public suffers from the bad husbandry exercised on such lands. It is the same with trustees for hospitals, &c. who never attend to the benefit of the estates in the manner they do to their own. But in all these cases, the rector of a parish would be put on a par with other private gentlemen, having the same interests, and from the situation of the land around his mansion, the same inducement to improve for profit and pleasure. But this reasoning is upon the supposition that there were any solid objections to the scheme, without attending to the advantages; reflect on the evil you get rid of—reflect on the mischief of tythes to your estates—reflect on the improvements made in land tythe free, which can only be made in them—reflect on the rise of your rents following such a plan—reflect on the solid improvement which would result from it to the agriculture of the whole kingdom; and then determine if both public and private interests do not strongly unite to promote the execution of this plan, the only one by which this enormous tax, MULTIPLIABLE ON ALL IMPROVEMENTS, can ever be abolished.

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## S E C T. V.

## FREEDOM FROM PERSONAL SERVICE.

FROM reading several *French* authors on rural oeconomy, I apprehend their farmers lie under a very considerable and irregular burthen in the services performed for their landlords, seigneurs of towns, &c. and these appear to be of an extensive nature—at all seasons of the year—and no equivalent or pay returned for them. Of this we have no other traces in *England*, except such articles as are sometimes inserted in leases, such as carriage of firing, timber, and other materials of building; but these are always specified, voluntarily engaged in, and a limitation that they shall not exceed a certain number of days work. It can in no case be esteemed a burthen; the exemption from such evils as the *French* writers describe, must be esteemed as a very valuable circumstance.

## S E C T. VI.

## CORN LAWS.

THE liberty enjoyed by every rank of our people; the ease and impartiality of  
of

of our taxation—the length of our leases—our freedom from personal service — all these would in vain shed their happy influence, if, for want of good corn laws, foreigners were allowed, in the markets of *Britain*, to rival our own farmers, or if by prohibitory laws our products were kept at a low price; every other advantage under heaven would not make amends for such deficiencies. It is in vain that an hundred encouragements urge the farmer to gain great crops, if when he has gained them he cannot find a ready market and a sufficient price. I have, in several other publications, explained myself so fully upon this head, that at present I have only to make a few observations, which are essential to a clear idea of the dependance which our agriculture has upon the police of corn\*.

The

\* One argument against the bounty, used by several writers, is the imagination that the *Dutch* buy our corn by means of that premium, and sell it to us again with profit:—Which is much such an objection as was made to Governor *Pownal's* bill, that the bounty would be paid to pretended exporters, who would carry their corn to *Holland* and then ship it back again. But the following table of the expences will shew how well 5s. a quarter would pay for this operation.

Corn-

The first great step was to cut off the importation from foreign countries, unless when the price at home was very high; this important object preceded another of equal consequence, the granting a bounty on the exportation when not exceeding certain prices. This was one of the most remarkable strokes of policy, and the most contrary to the general ideas of all *Europe*, of any that ever were carried into execution.

The design was to give a premium to the landed interest of the kingdom, in return for the great exertion they had made to place the crown on the head of King *William*. The act declares the price of corn to be too low, and the evident design of the

	s. d.
Cornfactor's charge of shipping, per quarter,	1 6
Commission and insurance, supposing wheat	
at 43s. - - - - -	1 6
Freight and primage, - - - - -	1 8
	4 8
The charges from <i>Holland</i> are to be estimated	
at 1 s. more, - - - - -	5 8
	10 4

The charges are the same to *Ireland*, but the freight higher to and from, 1 s. per quarter, 12 4

From which account it is very evident that the 5s. a quarter bounty can have no such effect.

the measure was to raise it. It has, however, been attended with the direct contrary effect, it has sunk it considerably; a point not sufficiently understood by many persons, who do not take into their account the fall in the value of money, and consequent rise in the price of all commodities, corn excepted; if this is calculated, the fall in the price of wheat will be found very considerable\*. This fall has not been owing to improvements in agriculture, since they would have operated equally in lowering the price of meat and other products of the farmers, which has been far enough from the case. Here, therefore, remains the paradox, how a measure, which has sunk the price of corn, can have encouraged agriculture?

It has certainly given a greater stability to prices, which is an object of consequence: It is not the farmer's interest to have corn three pounds a quarter one year, and five and twenty shillings the next. Years in which the price is very low, are the farmers great enemies; in the sixteen years, from 1741 to 1756, the crops of corn, in this island, were so uncommonly plentiful, that the price would have sunk

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\* In the *Expediency of a Free Exportation of Corn*, 1770, p. 11, I have shewn this at large.

so low as to have utterly discouraged cultivation, had not a remarkably brisk exportation carried off immense quantities, and kept the farmers from throwing their wheat to their hogs.—Now had not the bounty effected this, the farmers would not have sown wheat, and then successive years would have risen so high in price, as to have raised the general average of the period much higher than before the bounty took place.

In examining the prices before the prohibition of the import of foreign corn, as given in our only record, the *Windsor Table*, we do not see the *real* prices, tho' we do since that time: They are the prices of corn in that market, which is necessarily affected by all the markets around, and by that of *London* in particular, with which it communicates by water.—Now if the *French* or *Dutch* poured in great quantities of corn, it necessarily sunk the price of our own, and probably gave our farmers a low rate when they ought to have had an high one: This operation necessarily gave a degree of equality to the prices before that period, which was totally artificial, and not owing to encouragement of our own culture, but the direct contrary. Yet with all this mischief to our husbandry, the system very poorly answered the intent, for the fluct-



fluctuation of prices was, notwithstanding, much greater than it has been since. And when the writers against the bounty speak of the cheapness of corn at former periods, they forget that they are speaking of the cheapness of *French* corn as much as of *English*, since the cheapness they falsely state was effected by importation. This was particularly the case through the reign of *James I.*

The prices since that period are real ones of our own corn, unaffected by foreign imports, and consequently shew the true degree of cheapness.

The cheapness brought on by this measure has indeed in one period been so great, that I do not think our agriculture could have supported it, and continued flourishing, unless the crops had, at the same time, been very abundant. From the year 1730 to 1756, corn was so amazingly cheap in *England*, that this nation ought not to wish ever to see such another period: During the whole of it complaints were incessant, through every part of the kingdom, of the decay and ruin of manufactures: I have a list of above one hundred and forty publications at *London*, in that period, pointing out or complaining of the decline of the woollen and other fabrics: If those complaints had any foundation (which I admit

admit is by no means clear) it certainly was owing to this prodigious cheapness of provisions, which in all countries is such an encourager of idleness, that no manufactures can flourish under it. From 1741 to 1756, the average price of wheat at the *Windsor* market was 3 s. 8 d. a bushel, or 1 l. 9 s. 4 d. per quarter, which is 2 s. 7 d. per bushel, or 1 l. 0 s. 6 d. per quarter *Winchester* measure, and average quality. It was impossible the farmers should be so wealthy as they ought, or even in tolerable circumstances, with wheat at such a price;—and from the best information I have been able to gain, I have reason to believe that our husbandry, in the cheap period from 1730 to 1756, made scarcely any advance: I know this was not the case in *Norfolk*, but the improvements there were forced by the landlords, who built, inclosed, and marled at their own expence, and then let the land at a fourth of the rent it carries at present: Since 1756, that is with a comparative high price of corn, the tenants have done the whole, and made more money in sixteen years than they did before in six and forty.

That the system of exporting with a bounty has been of infinite national importance, cannot be doubted: Between 1730 and 1756, the quantity of corn we

exported brought in many millions of money to this kingdom, and employed a great quantity of shipping, yet the price was very low at home through the whole period; to what purpose should we have kept that corn, and lost that wealth, unless to sink the price, in certain years, so low as to stop the plough, and consequently occasion successive scarcities. The uniform experience of all nations proves that where the exportation of corn is prohibited, there the price in abundant years falls so low that the plough yields no profit to the farmer—it is abandoned, and the lands lie uncultivated—scarcity, and even famine, are then never far off. It is not a satisfaction to the farmer to tell him, that the immense rates of certain years render the general average as high or higher than in other countries: this is no consolation to a man who has been absolutely ruined by the low prices of three or four successive years. His money, stock, and farm are gone, nor can he enter into business again when the high prices come. To have embraced a system directly opposite to such a pernicious one, must be esteemed a singular felicity in this kingdom.

LATE SYSTEM.

It is here necessary to offer a few remarks on the system which our legislature has pursued since the year 1756, because, since that period, an almost new one has been adopted. In 1757 and 1758, the price arose considerably, and exportation was prohibited. In the six successive years the export continued. But from the year 1765, to the present time, we have had a perpetual shifting policy, in which nothing has been permanent: no regular law; no new arrangement of prices at which export should be allowed or prohibited; every year has produced a temporary act suspending the operation of those laws which had proved of such excellent utility. The legislature had almost constantly been driven into such a pernicious system by the riots and complaints of the manufacturing poor, and the *London* mob—and by the foolish petitions of ignorant boroughs.

Upon reviewing this period of sixteen years, from 1757 to 1772, both inclusive, it is remarkable to find that the average of the best wheat at *Windsor* has been only 5s. 6d. a bushel, or 2l. 4s. a quarter; which, for the average quality and *Winchester* measure,

sure, is only 4s. 4d. a bushel, or 1l. 14s. 8d. a quarter. Now that this has not, upon the whole, been an high price, cannot for a moment be doubted. From 1697 to 1714, throwing out two years in which the export was prohibited, the remainder being also a period of sixteen years, through the whole of which exportation *with the bounty* went on, the average price, in the same *Windsor* market, was 2l. 5s.; consequently the last period of sixteen years, ending 1772, was *cheaper* by 10d. a quarter than the other, during which the bounty was paid! But so far from the bounty being paid through this, that it has been suspended during ten of the sixteen years, and export itself prohibited during more than half the period. This is such an amazing change of policy, that no sagacity can discover any other reasons for it than the transitory impulse of riots and complaints.

But let me farther remark, that the late period, which is to be called *dear*, only on comparison with the sixteen preceding years, opened with the war, which, during nine years, added such an amazing mass of bullion and paper to our circulation, and which has, to the present time, been every day increasing rather than diminishing, by acquisitions in the *Indies*, and by a most enlarged

enlarged and flourishing commerce—that it would have been a most astonishing phenomenon in politics, had not the price of all sorts of commodities risen. An increase of national debt of seventy millions, with the regular circulation of the interest—the expenditure, during the war, from twelve to twenty millions a year—and the money brought into the nation the last years of the war by a commerce which never was equalled;—a great increase of taxes—and a still greater of paper currency of all sorts, could not fail of having that effect.

But let any person reflect on the rise of all prices during the last sixteen years; let them name one article, in the common course of purchase and sale, which has not been considerably advanced. All the parts of dress, as cloth, linen, silk, lace, leather, ornaments, &c. The whole of furniture; your pictures, glasses, hangings, carpets, sofas, chairs, tables. Your equipage, from the gilded chariot at *St. James's*, to the one horse chaise at *White-chapel*. All those articles of food which are beyond the purses of the poor, the whole train of delicacies. Your pleasures, your diversions, your education, and your study. Throughout all this list, and that it might be much lengthened every one will agree, can you name a single article

the price whereof is not greatly raised? We see, therefore, by this general rise, that the causes, I just mentioned, have taken their natural effect, by raising every thing; and it remains to be shewn, that wheat ought to rise with other things. Two words will dispatch this argument; if the producer of one commodity is proscribed from so general an advantage, while, in every branch of his consumption, he pays amply to every one else—while his rent, his labour, his rates, his tythe composition, his wear and tear, and manufactures, all rise in price upon him, how is he to carry on his culture? He must be inevitably ruined. On the contrary, he ought to receive equal encouragement with any other class, for exactly in proportion to his encouragement will be the spirit and extent of his culture and improvements. Yet, in direct opposition to such ideas, do we every day hear complaints of the high prices of provisions, with inflammatory publications, designed to shew the too great profits of our farmers, and attributing such prices to false causes—these are vulgar complaints, common in all ages and all places. The capital of the kingdom even petitioned parliament, last sessions, to give a bounty on the importation of wheat, and actually gave one itself. Let us suppose

the House of Commons had adopted the idea, and offered a bounty sufficient to have brought in considerable quantities of foreign corn—the price before was a just one, proportioned to the quantity of money in the nation and the quantity of the preceding crops—consequently the price was just what it ought to be. The import, we may suppose, lowers it considerably; this is the object desired—but how are the farmers to fare? if proportion demands 7s. a bushel, what is he to do with only 4s.? What spirit will there be in his culture? What encouragement to raise corn? Thus you lay a very heavy tax (for nothing else would do in a time of such general scarcity) which in the expenditure is to be ruinous to the farmers, in order that corn may be cheap! What a heap of absurdity and contradiction is such a system! Might you not as well cut the manufacturers looms in pieces, and set fire to their warehouses in order to lower the price of cloth? Would not any person suppose that such ideas were found in some silly pamphlet, instead of a petition from a great city to a *British* House of Commons? From all this we may determine, that our former system of corn law was a great encouragement to our agriculture, and since those laws were reversed, the general rise of prices has operated a succeeding good effect.

PERMANENT CORN LAW.

The act which passed last sessions, and which was brought in by Governor Pownal, has remedied some of the evils which flowed from the variable shifting policy that had for some years been our disgrace; yet was that bill founded on radical mistakes, since the principles of it supposed that lower export prices ought to be fixed at present than in 1689, instead of which they ought to be *higher*: And the only principle upon which an alteration of the prices could be justly effected, was proving that corn, in the present period, ought to be considerably cheaper than it was in the latter part of the preceding century—which assertion, to be rendered consistent, must be followed by another, that the farmers of this kingdom pay much lower rents than they did; have their labour, implements, furniture, and manufactures at lower prices, and pay much smaller sums in poor rates, at present, than an hundred years ago. What consistency there can be in adopting the *principle* that prices ought to fall, and making it the corner stone of a permanent law, I cannot understand. I do not think that a beneficial system, which had stood the test of many years experience, should,

should, in its *principles*, be overturned. The act of 1689, declares corn, at that period, to be *too cheap*, and therefore gave a bounty at certain prices: Corn is now much cheaper, and you declare that it is *too dear*, by lowering the bounty rates: In a word, the ideas, which were our guide in 1689, were essentially different from those which influence our conduct at present.

In answer to this, I have not heard any satisfactory motives; it is all thrown on the discontents of the mob, and the complaints of rioters, who insist on wheat being *cheap*, that they may afford *dear* sugar, tea, brandy, and strong beer; and be able to consume four times as much of those commodities, as their more frugal ancestors did.

As I have declared my opinion of the new act thus far, I shall, on the other hand, readily admit, that if the comparison is not to be drawn with the old policy—but with the abominable system that has disgraced us since 1765, Mr. Pownal's act has great merit. *First*, It is a permanent law, which single circumstance remedies abundance of evils that have perplexed us. *Second*, It preserves the bounty when corn is very cheap, the very idea of which we were in danger of losing. *Third*, It gives the bounty whenever exportation goes on, which

which is a plan equally well adapted to a constant encouragement both of husbandry and navigation, and the only means of regaining our lost corn trade. *Fourth*, The provisions relative to importation are well imagined, to keep up a *trade* in corn when not wanted for *consumption*, and obviate the old objection to our laws, that shipping in foreign countries could not be safely done, when it was an uncertainty whether the price in *England* would allow importation.

Upon the whole, the act has great merit, and will do more good than any other *new* measure could have done: and I must say, that the father of it merits the thanks of every one, as a member who sacrifices his time and attention to objects of public importance. I have the pleasure of knowing, from his conversation, that his ideas are perfectly judicious on this point, and that he necessarily framed the bill, from a practical knowledge of what would succeed\*.

## VARIATION OF PRODUCTS.

It is amusing to reflect to what a variety of causes the rise of prices has been attributed—monopoly of farms—inclosures—jobbers—the bounty—horses—dogs, and all sorts of absurdities: others have had  
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\* See Appendix.

judgment enough to reject these idle causes, and acknowledge that there has been a *real* scarcity owing to bad seasons. A late very ingenious author\* says, that there has been a failure of crops in general for five years past; and Mess. *Smyth* and *Farrer* at the bar of the house of commons, talked the same language. I cannot, from the most attentive reflection, allow these remarks to be just: the average *Windsor* price of six years ending 1772 inclusive, was 2*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* a quarter, which is, average quality and *Winchester* measure, only 1*l.* 14*s.* 5*d.* Does such a price mark any real scarcity? Compare this price with preceding periods—reflect that it is at a time when all sorts of prices are rising, owing to the cheapness of money, and then tell me if it is possible that wheat should have stood at such a rate, had there been five successive bad, or even indifferent crops! A small deficiency in the markets has always been observed to raise the price beyond the proportion of such deficiency; under which circumstance, a bad crop at a time when every thing is rising in price from the plenty of money, must appear to have a prodigious effect:—What therefore must be the effect  
of

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\* *Enquiry into size of farms and price of provisions,*  
p. 51.

of five or six bad crops, causing a scarcity, while the cheapness of money, increase of consumption, waste, luxury, &c. all conspire to raise the price even of good ones? Surely an enormous rate must be the consequence; so that those who attribute the ideal scarcity to bad years, but deceive the people, as there probably will never be better years. It is idle to flatter them in this manner; in my own opinion, the crops for five years past have been not bad, at least; consequently there is no reason to expect corn lower;—an hundred arguments might be brought to prove that it is not high: To raise wheat to 1 l. 14 s. 5 d. must so many chimerical reasons be brought! Surely parliament was not very attentive, when she appointed committees to enquire into the causes of wheat getting to so *high* a price!

As to good and bad crops in general, very little dependence is to be placed in the accounts received or given by millers, mealmen, factors, and such people, who depend so much on private intelligence, that they are ever apt to suppose the language of their interested information, that of the kingdom, which is generally a very great error. But five bad crops in succession, when agriculture is highly encouraged! Very suspicious such ideas—I do not believe such a thing happens

happens in two centuries. Nor do I think it easy to declare what season, wet or dry, best suits the production of corn in *England*; the soil is so various, such tracts of sand, sandy loams, gravels, chalks, and other soils, to which a wet year is as suitable as a dry one to clays. So many tracts of clay and wet loams, to which a dry year is as suitable as a wet one to sand.—Upon the whole, I am clear that attributing the late prices of wheat (*low* I might say with more propriety than *high*) to bad seasons, is more rational than to talk of jobbers and post horses, but is very far from throwing the matter into its proper light.

I have ventured this remark as an antidote to melancholy accounts of *another bad season*—and then we shall hear of *another*—and another—and another—and the hand of God supposed to be chastising us for our luxury\*, at the very time that he is

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\* Our political moralists are ever inveighing against luxury, I think with very little reason. And I entirely agree with a writer, who gives his opinion in the following passage: "A clean shirt and a laced hat are not inconsistent with piety and virtue, nor ortolans and burgundy with temperance, nor a feather bed with fortitude, nor a pinch of snuff with sobriety, nor a handsome woman with chastity. A man may enjoy them all, and yet act up to the dignity of his nature, and conformably to the precepts of religion and

is showering down all the blessings of plenty\*.

## S E C T. VII.

## GENERAL WEALTH.

**I**N proportion to that wealth in a country which is the result not of mines, but of industry, will be the prosperity of agriculture, arts, manufactures, and commerce: Arguments indeed have been used, to shew

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and morality. Neither, on the other hand, does a man's confining himself to the use of fat bacon, *Lacedemonian* broth, muddy beer, coarse woollens, a leather doublet, a canvas shirt, and a thatched hovel upon a common, render him the more pious, temperate, sober, chaste, religious and virtuous; for he may confine himself to the use of all these, and yet be a most slovenly sinner and beastly profligate. And it seems that the refined debauchee is the most eligible character of the two." *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, 1758, p. 51.

\* Let it not be imagined that I suppose bad crops cannot happen: In 1698 and 1699, the crops are supposed to have been very bad, and the same in 1709 and 1710, in which two years wheat at *Windsor* was 3*l.* 18*s.* a quarter: reckoning the fall of money, this is not far from being equal to 6*l.* 10*s.* or perhaps more. And if we had what really deserved to be called a general bad crop, it is not to be doubted but the price would rise much higher than any thing we have experienced of late years, the prices of which, even 1757 itself, speak not any thing like a great scarcity.

shew that the two last *may* suffer from great wealth, though not, I think, conclusive ones; but I am clear that agriculture must always flourish in proportion to the general wealth of a country; and I attribute the flourishing state of the husbandry of this kingdom greatly to the quantity of our riches. But as there is a system of reasoning which may be used against this idea, it will be proper to shew upon what grounds the opinion is founded.

Many writers have remarked that agriculture is much encouraged by simplicity of manners—that luxury is an enemy to it; that it flourished more among the old *Romans*, with their minute division of the soil, when a whole family had but a few acres, than in the more brilliant and wealthy period, the age of *Augustus*. But the idea is very false: for let us grant the fact, that when a family has just land enough for its subsistence, that portion will be well cultivated; what useful deductions are to be drawn from it relative to modern policy? Of what use in a modern kingdom would be a whole province thus divided, however well cultivated, except for the mere purpose of breeding men, which, singly taken, is a most useless purpose: A province of such farmers would live only to themselves—they would consume nothing but



but the produce of their lands—they would not be able to buy manufactures—and they could pay no taxes without an oppression which would reduce them to indigence and misery: Such a population is of no use in a modern state. In the early times of the *Roman* republic they were of great use, for the more men the greater the tax paid, *viz.* the personal service in arms. This distinction is so strong, that the same division of land, which, in one case, was a political excellence, is, in the other, a political evil. It is of no consequence to say, that the little portion of land is perfectly cultivated, if its perfection is of no benefit to the state. Hence arises the necessity of distinguishing between the practice of agriculture as a mere means of subsistence—and practising it as a trade. The former is of no benefit to a modern state, the latter of infinite importance.

Now simplicity of manners, and a freedom from the effects of luxury, are best exhibited in a country portioned into such little properties as are merely sufficient for subsistence: Luxury recedes, and simplicity advances, as you withdraw from mankind. But that cause, which destroys a simplicity that operates in preventing agriculture being exercised as a trade, is highly beneficial to a modern state; this is public wealth:

wealth: As money flows in, such little portions of land must disappear\*, by becoming united in large parcels; wherein agriculture is exercised as a trade—wherein products are raised in surplus—carried to market—sold—taxes paid—and the circulation of money active. Upon what consistent principles, therefore, can that cause be condemned, which works just the effects that are essentially necessary in a modern kingdom?

Now, to quit the period of change from one state of property to another, let us see the effects of great national wealth, when the change is effected. Let any person consider the progress of every thing in *Britain* during the last twenty years. The great improvements we have seen in this period, superior to those of any other, are not owing to the constitution, to moderate taxation, or to other circumstances of equal efficacy, ever since the Revolution, as the existence of those circumstances did not before produce equal effects.—The superiority

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\* Supposing the country so divided before, as was the case at *Rome*. The contrary effect happened in the kingdoms portioned out in the feudal system; great tracts were reduced; but the principle of the change was the same in both; *agriculture for subsistence*, was in both changed for *agriculture for trade*, and in both the improvement of the national territory was proportioned to this change.

ority has been owing to the quantity of wealth in the nation, which has, in a prodigious degree, facilitated the execution of all great works of improvement.

This idea is, in part, contrary to a common one, that the price of commodities is proportioned to the quantity of money; and consequently that a crown in one age is as effective as a guinea in another; this is very true, but the great difference lies in the superior ease of getting money in the wealthy period. When the quantity of money in circulation is very great, it is surprising to see the facility with which all kinds of great works are undertaken and executed: the money when raised goes not proportionably farther than a smaller sum in a poorer age; but the greater sum in the wealthier period is gained, acquired, borrowed, raised a thousand times easier than the smaller sum in the poorer one, and this is the circumstance which gives the superiority; and which invigorates to so great a degree the whole range of industry.

In this enquiry no distinction should be made between money and paper, as the effects are exactly similar; and the great figure made in active industry, by this country, has been almost totally owing to the introduction, increase, and support of

paper credit. Let those who doubt of this fact, reflect on the progress which agriculture, manufactures, &c. made in a few years in *Scotland*, from the institution of land-banks, which threw into actual circulation a large part of the value of the estates of that kingdom. While the paper of those banks circulated in full credit, no undertaking was too great—money was always to be had; and consequently the improvement of lands was rapid.—New manufactures, upon the largest scale, were every day established, and commerce in all her ports increased. But since the shock, which almost destroyed that credit, no undertaking of any magnitude has been thought of.—Many that were in action have received such a blow, that they expired, and others can scarcely be said to exist.

Let us, in the next place, consider, what a stagnation has, in *England*, been experienced since the bankruptcy of Mr. *Fordyce*. There is no branch of industry, whether agriculture, arts, manufactures, or commerce—no public works depending on private subscriptions—none carried on by borrowed money, but what have felt the evils of that shock to credit. If it is said that credit was carried too far, and the consequences necessarily mischievous,

ous, I admit it; but this proves nothing against my position, which is, that the flourishing state of agriculture is principally owing to general wealth: this leads at once to the question, whether our public paper is to be ranked in stability with the credit of Mr. *Fordyce*; an enquiry which I shall leave to itself.

Nor do the advantages of which I speak, depend only on the *ease of raising money*; another circumstance of great importance, is the increase of luxury, which increases consumption: first, from increasing the number of the people: secondly, from feeding them better and more plentifully: and, thirdly, from waste.—All these circumstances are but other words for an increase of the farmer's market. If the number of the people is increased since the revolution, of which there can be little doubt, the food they eat yields that increase of demand. Of the better living of every class, of which no doubt can be entertained, the same effect is evident: This better living consists in the people consuming more food, and of a better sort; eating wheat instead of barley, oats, and rye — and drinking a prodigiously greater quantity of beer. This is not the case only among the lower classes, but in all the middle ranks, and in the kitchens of every family  
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of fortune in the kingdom. Nor is the article of waste of less importance: if we consider the number of dogs kept in every house, and the profusion in which people of fortune live, we shall be convinced that this article includes no inconsiderable part of our consumption, and is far greater in a refined and luxurious age, than in a plain and frugal one. It is exactly proportioned to luxury — and is to be esteemed as much a market to the farmer, as the regular and frugal consumption at the poor man's board. I have here confined myself to wheat—but the remark is yet more striking if we name horses, which raise a vast demand for other products of the farmer, and are in numbers exactly proportioned to the general wealth of the nation\*.

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\* It is incredible that the *French* economists should so far mistake the very principles of encouragement to agriculture, as to declaim against luxury, which they define, l'intervention de l'ordre naturel, essentiel des dépenses nationales qui augmente la masse des dépenses non productives au préjudice de celles qui servent à la production et en même tems au préjudice de la production elle même. The expences which flow from luxury not productive! What can be meant by this? The increased consumption and waste of all the products of the farmer; is not this a market to him? The circulation and rise of all prices, which, though an attendant, and not the effect of luxury, is a circum-

Those who urge that the simplicity of living in frugal times is the most beneficial to the culture of the earth, should reflect on the probable circumstances of a decline in that wealth which they are such enemies to. Let me suppose that such a declension comes — that the people decrease — that the rest eat less in quantity, and poorer in quality, than before — that the greater poverty of the times strikes off all waste: In such a situation the farmer finds a great change in his landlord or rich neighbour — instead of a profusion in the consumption of bread, beer, mutton, and beef, those articles are reduced; the number of servants is lessened — a pointer and a spaniel occupy the place of a pack of hounds — a chaise and pair instead of a coach and six — ten horses kept instead of thirty or forty. — All these reductions are so much taken from the farmer's market; he cannot, from that day, sell so much cattle, corn, hay, and straw as formerly; consequently will not raise

cumstance of the highest consequence to agriculture. And what a contradiction is it to esteem all expences unproductive, that are not actually employed in cultivation. If the luxurious way of spending a fortune in this age, was changed for the simple manners of three hundred years ago, would agriculture be encouraged thereby? Such ideas are extremely ill founded, and can never be reduced to practice without the most mischievous consequences.

raise so much. But this is not the only effect; in such a decline he will necessarily raise more than demanded, the prices will then fall, and *all* his product will be affected by the fall in only a part of his markets: This is the very progress to ruin — he can no longer pay the same rent, labour or taxes — no longer execute the same spirited cultivation: — the next step is his land becoming waste. This degradation is not an opinion — it is an evident fact — a matter of calculation; it is the very train into which so many of our writers are desirous we should fall — since it is but another word for a general fall of prices: a more fatal mistake could never have been adopted: a GENERAL RISE is the great signal of national vigour and health; a GENERAL FALL the sure criterion of decay.

If I am told that an increase of general wealth is more favourable to the consumption of foreign, and other luxuries, than of the products of our soil, and that a decrease of it would also be more felt by them; I reply, that the proportion between their sufferings is difficult to calculate; but the observation has some truth in it; but this does not impeach my assertion; however the venders of superfluities may suffer, yet the farmers will certainly suffer

with them; for in all the articles I recited above, the rich man must curtail his expences, and he cannot do that without lessening the farmer's market.

It should farther be considered, that the manufacturers and sailors with their dependants, who are employed by the consumption of luxuries, form another considerable branch of market to the husbandman; and if the decline of national wealth decreases that consumption, this is a fresh wound to that market.

L U X U R Y.

A late writer \*, for whose abilities I have the highest regard, seems to condemn what is called luxury, for the waste it creates—for the number of domestic servants—for horses—and for the slaughter of calves and lambs, which, he thinks, makes mutton and beef dearer. I am sorry I cannot fully agree with him; we both speak of these matters, not with a view to visionary useless ideas of the manners of the people, but relative only to the encouragement of agriculture and increase of plenty. In this light, what difference is there between

*waste*

\* *Enquiry into Price of Provisions, and Size of Farms,* p. 47. In other passages, however, he justly allows luxury its merit as a market to the farmer.

*waste* and *regular consumption*? Between bread eat at my lord's table, and barley consumed by his hounds, or oats by his horses? All these *methods* of consumption are nothing to the farmer—the mere purchase of the commodities is what encourages him, in consequence of which he sets heartily about a farther production of them. And how is the consumption of calves and lambs to lessen the quantity of beef and mutton? The farmer brings these things to market because they are demanded: if instead of demanding ten pounds worth of lamb, you go to market for ten pounds worth of beef, he will bring the beef for you. Here is a given demand for beef; it is supplied: luxury adds another for veal, it is supplied, certainly without taking from the beef—and if luxury doubles that demand, the farmers will answer it, and supply the old one of beef besides. But it is said, there is a given number of calves every year; if the consumption of veal was stopped, so many more would of course come to market as beef, and this additional number would surely make beef more plentiful, and consequently cheaper. Granted. And so you would encourage the farmer to continue this plenty of beef by lowering the price of it!—This is that universal combination which runs through the supply of

of all sorts of markets—the case of corn has been pretty well understood; but still the remnants of these prejudices hang about us in calves, pigs, lambs, and so forth. —On the contrary, you ought to act upon the reverse of these principles. Your given fact is the dearness of beef, and you want permanently to make it cheaper:—Your only method is to raise the price. Encourage the slaughter of calves, which is such an encouragement to the breeder and grazier, as the export of wheat is to the corn-grower; his prices rise—he becomes more spirited in his business—he brings more to market. Consider this train from the beginning—is it possible it should have any other consequence? A century ago, these things were so ill understood, that our ancestors gave a bounty on the export of corn, *in order to make it dear*: they never dreamt that they were taking the most effectual means to make it cheap; and yet it would doubtless have been thought a glaring paradox to assert, that taking great quantities of corn from our markets, was not a way to raise the price. And for what I know, the idea I have just dropped, that *in order to make beef cheaper, you must make it dearer*, will even in this age be thought another paradox.

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I am here aware of an objection which will be made to this: It may be said, that the demand for calves lays a tax on the grazier in the progress of his business, by raising the price of what may be called his raw commodity; not similar to the *export* of beef.—I admit this, and am sensible that the export of beef would be a better method of effecting it; but let it be considered that the way in which export encourages the product of a commodity, is lessening the quantity in the markets while the demand continues the same, and consequently raising the price;—now the objection to killing calves, is, that it raises the price of beef: this is what I contend for. It is of little consequence what does it—if the price is raised, the producer of the commodity is encouraged—and in consequence, will bring forth a proportioned plenty\*. Who can suppose that preventing all the calves of *Essex, Surry, and Hertfordshire* from coming to market in the shape of fat oxen, will

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\* ——— que la source des dépenses est la dépense elle même; que plus on dépense pour la production, plus on obtient de produits; que *consommation* enfin, est mere de la production. Cette source est un méandre; & les anciens peignoient à bon droit la nature, sous l'emblème d'un serpent qui mord sa queue. Mais ne confondons pas la tête & la queue. *Eléments de la Philosophie Rurale.*

will not be an encouragement to the graziers of *Norfolk* and *Northampton*?—These are my reasons for thinking that luxury does NOT raise the price of provisions, though it will raise the price of whatever can be produced in the markets only in limited quantities, as early strawberries, asparagus, green pease—the works of the fine arts, &c.—Those who doubt this, may consult the prices of common food and *luxuries* at *Rome* in the age of *Augustus* \*. At the same time, I do not here mean, that a great increase of wealth will not raise *all* prices: I shall never assert that every thing is now as cheap in *England* as in the fifteenth century. The argument demands it not.

If the principles here laid down are not true, how will the gentlemen who have written so much on the high, exorbitant, monstrous, marvellous price of provisions, account for the low prices of those and other commodities compared with the increase of money. Bread, meat, labour, manufactures, &c. ought in direct proportion to the increase of wealth to have been far higher than they are at present: it is the cause I have now explained that has kept them down. The increase of wealth and luxury has had a gradual tendency to raise

\* *Arbutnot's tables of antient weights and measures,*

raise all these prices, which, as I before stated, has been a gradual encouragement to their production, and consequently created a regular increase of quantity. The operation of this cause of plenty in the case of provisions, was as I have already shewn; and I have little doubt but the same thing has happened with labour.

PRINCIPLES OF POPULATION.

The national wealth increased, the demand for labour, which had always the effect of raising the price; but this rise encouraged the production of the commodity, that is, of man or labour, call it which you will, and the consequent increase of the commodity sinks the price. Increasing the demand for a manufacture does not raise the price of the labour, it increases the number of labourers in that manufacture, as a greater quantum or regularity of employment, gives that additional value to the supply, which creates the new hands. Why have the inhabitants of *Birmingham* increased from 23,000 in 1750, to 30,000 in 1770? Certainly because a proportional increase of employment has taken place. Wherever there is a demand for hands, there they will abound: this demand is

but another word for ease of subsistence, which operates in the same manner (the healthiness of one, and the unhealthiness of the other allowed for) as the plenty of land in the back country of *America*. Marriages abound there, because children are no burthen—they abound in *Birmingham* for the same reason, as every child as soon as it can use its hands, can maintain itself, and the father and mother need never to want employment, that is, income—land—support. Thus where employment increases, (*Birmingham*) the people increase: and where employment does not increase, (*Colchester*) the people do not increase. And if upon an average of the whole kingdom employment has for a century increased, most certainly the people have increased with it.

Go to the shipping of the kingdom, it will be found the same; our sailors have increased. Why? Because their employment has increased. As long as the demand for seamen increases, that demand will be answered, let it rise as high as it will.

Nabobs from the *Indies*, planters from *America*, merchants from the exchange, settle in the counties, they farm, garden, plant, improve—they want men, their demand is answered, and was it regular,  
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would around every great house found and support a town.

Go to the villages, the same truth will every where be apparent: if husbandry improves, it will demand more labour—that demand is the encouragement of the production of the commodity demanded—and it will be supplied. Who supposes that a county of warrens, heaths, and farming flovens, converted to well tilled fields, does not occasion an increased demand for hands?—And was it ever known that such a demand existed without being supplied?

But the hands, it is said, leave certain villages and go to towns. Why? Because there is not employment in one case, and there is in another—their going to the town, proves that they go to employment—they go to that very circumstance which is to increase their number. They go, because they are demanded; that demand it is true takes, but then it feeds them.

Let any person go to *Glasgow* and its neighbourhood, to *Birmingham*, to *Sheffield*, or to *Manchester*, according to some writers, every cause of depopulation has acted powerfully against such places: how then have they increased their people? Why, by emigrations from the country. It would be very difficult for any person to  
shew



shew me a depopulation in the country comparable to the increase of towns, not to speak of counter tracts in the country that have doubled and trebled their people: But why have not these emigrations been to other towns, to *York*, to *Winchester*, to *Canterbury*, &c.? Because employment does not abound in those places—and therefore they do not increase. Does not this prove that in every light you view it, it is employment which creates population? A position impossible to be disproved; and which, if allowed, throws the enquiry concerning the depopulation of the kingdom into an examination of the decline or increase of employment.

*But so much land may be thrown into grass, and consequently so much employment cut off, that depopulation may ensue.* Impossible; this cause can never operate beyond those lands, more proper by nature for grass than tillage, for if it did, it would at once counteract itself; corn would then rise to a price beyond the proportion of meat, and of course it would be more profitable to *plough*, than to *lay down*. This is a circumstance that ought to shew the enemies of inclosures that they are fighting against a chimera—they complain of meat being dearer than corn, in the same breath that they say the country is depopulated by converting

converting arable to grass—What a contradiction is this; meat being what they call so dear, is a clear proof that a greater proportion of land is not laid to grass than is broken up for corn, otherwise corn instead of being cheaper than meat would be dearer.

I shall carry this idea yet farther. I have considered an increased demand, which raises the value of a commodity, to be the means of increasing the quantity of that commodity, by encouraging the production of it; and I have applied it to beef, to mutton, to wheat, and to labour. I remarked that lessening the quantity in the market while the demand continued the same, operated as an encouragement; and presently supplied more than the usual quantum: it is the same with population. You fight off your men by wars—you destroy them by great cities—you lessen them by emigrations—most infallible method of increasing their number—PROVIDED THE DEMAND DOES NOT DECLINE. This is exactly the same thing, as rendering beef scarcer by the slaughter of calves, and wheat by exportation—take a quantity from the market, certainly you add to the value of what remains, and how can you encourage the reproduction of it more powerfully than by adding to its value?

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What are the terms of complaint for depopulation in this kingdom?—People scarce—labour dear;—would you give a premium for population, could you express it in better terms? The commodity wanted is scarce, and the price raised; what is this but saying, that the value of MAN is raised. *Away! my boys—get children, they are worth more than ever they were.* What is the characteristic of a populous country? *Many people, but labour dear.* What is the mark of a country thinly peopled? *Few people, and labour cheap.* Labour is dearer in *Holland* than in any part of *Europe*, and therefore it is the most populous country in *Europe*.

Dr. Price says, that for the last 80 years, there has not been one great cause of depopulation which has not operated among us\*. What is the great encouragement of population? *Ease of acquiring income:* It is of no consequence whether that income arises from land, manufacture, or commerce; it is as powerful in the pay of a manu-

\* “The humour of blaming the present, and admiring the past, is strongly rooted in human nature, and has an influence even on persons endued with the profoundest judgment and most extensive learning.” *Hume's Essays*, 8vo. 1764, vol. i. p. 490.

manufacturer †, as in the wilds of *America*: What is the great obstacle to population? *Difficulty of acquiring income.* Here then we have a criterion, by which to judge of the population or depopulation of any period. If you view the country and see agriculture under such circumstances that the farmer's products will not pay his usual improvements, and consequently, dismissing the hands he formerly kept. If the manufactures of the kingdom want a market, and the active industry, exerted in them, becomes languid, and decays. If

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† I do not here mean that our manufacturing towns increase as fast as the settlements in *America*—I mean only that the principle in one case is as powerful as in the other: the difference in point of health is one obstacle—but nothing to another, which is manufacturing employment in these towns not keeping full pace with the increase of people. In the back settlements plenty of land (*income—employment*) keeps pace with the most rapid increase; whereas, if the manufacturers of *Birmingham* had a demand for all the wares they could make, I suppose it would not be long before they could supply half a dozen worlds—their hands would increase almost as fast as in *America*; their trade would double every twenty years, and their people with it. By the way, I do not think I should be far from the truth, if I asserted, that some of our manufacturing places, particularly *Burton*, for a certain period increased as fast as any of our colonies, which is nothing more than saying, that employment has kept pace with population.

commerce no longer supports the seamen she was wont to do. If private and public works, instead of entering into competition for hands with the manufacturer and the farmer, stand still amidst numbers who cry in vain for work\*.—If these effects are seen, a WANT OF EMPLOYMENT will stare you in the face, and that want is the only cause of depopulation that can exist. Have these spectacles been common in the eyes of our people since the revolution? Are they common at present? Does not the great active cause, EMPLOYMENT, operate more powerfully than ever? Away then with these visionary ideas, the disgrace of an enlightened age—the reproach of this great and flourishing nation †.

Sir

\* ———“ when labourers are plenty, their wages will be low, by low wages a family is supported with difficulty; this difficulty deters many from marriage.” —*Observations concerning the increase of mankind*, said to be by Dr. Franklin; where more good sense upon these subjects will be found (mixed with a few thoughts not equally striking) than in half a score of complaining volumes.

† *Davenant* gives the signs of a declining nation, which well deserve consideration. “ Where a nation is impoverished by a bad government, by an ill managed trade, or by any other circumstance, the interest of money will be dear, and the purchase of lands cheap: THE PRICE OF LABOUR AND PROVISIONS WILL BE LOW; rents will every where fall; lands will

Sir *James Stewart* has an observation similar to the idea which I am now explaining, that if *Africk's* sons were all returned her, who can suppose she would be the more populous? But he founds this idea on the quantity of food in the country: but I mean to throw the point of food out of the question, taking it always for granted, if a man gains employment which gives him the value of food, that he will never go without it. Increase your people as much as you please, food will increase with them. Notwithstanding the increase of people which must have taken place in this kingdom since the revolution, added to the waste of luxury, and also exportation, yet the price of corn has fallen.—Population merely for want of food, will not stop till every acre of the territory is improved to the utmost.

We are told that since the revolution, this country has lost a million and a half of people: this therefore implies that the causes of population were more powerful in the last

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will be untilled, and farm houses will go to ruin; the yearly marriages and births will lessen, and the burials increase. The stock of live cattle must apparently diminish; and lastly, the inhabitants will by degrees, and in some measure, withdraw themselves from such a declining country.” *Davenant's Works*, vol. i. p. 358.

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than in the present century; these causes, we are told, are small farms, open field lands, and simplicity of living; which is not very far from asserting, that the less employment there is in a country, the more populous it will be. Small farms with their universal attendant, *poor farmers*, can never form such a system of employ as richer farmers, for this plain reason,—they cannot work equal improvements—nor ever were known to do it—and improvements in husbandry are but another word for increase of labour. Besides, we should reflect, that agriculture in general, by whatever farmers carried on, had not received that improvement in the practice, and operose methods of culture which have since been introduced; and of which a long catalogue could be given.

A county divided into little farms, with many little estates supporting little landlords, has certainly the appearance of population: these writers say, that if the small farms are thrown into large ones, many of the people will disappear: let us (which we need not do) grant this fact. It is saying, that when the country was more populous, its inhabitants eat much more food than at present, consequently could not spare so much for towns. The people employed in the country in raising the fruits of the earth, may be employed with

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so little oeconomy as to eat up the whole produce; in which case, there can be no towns. Thus the population of the country depends partly on the manners of the age; if it is not the custom to live in towns, there will be little demand for the products of farmers, consequently they and their dependants will consume them: but if, as in this age, people gather very much into towns, they demand the products in competition with the useles hands before supported by the land, who, not being able to stand that competition, gradually take refuge in towns, as manufacturing employment arises. This is a change, advantageous in every respect that can be named. You had before a population useles, because not industrious; who, instead of adding to the national wealth, only eat up the earth's produce; this population is changed for industrious manufacturers, artizans, and seamen, who eat the same produce, but pay you amply for it. With one population, let it be ever so great, you must be a poor and a weak nation: with the other, you are a wealthy and powerful one.—In this argument, I suppose husbandry in the improved period, to raise no more products than in the other period, accounting only for the change of those who eat its products. But the contrary is

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well known to be the case, consequently as there is much more food raised, we may suppose more people who eat it. I have also taken for granted, that in the latter period, fewer hands are employed on the soil, which would be the case if the agriculture was the same in both, but improvements far more than ballance the number of farmers, and render the population of the modern period far greater in the country, than that of the remoter one.

Respecting open field lands, the quantity of labour in them is not comparable to that of inclosures; for, not to speak of the great numbers of men that in inclosed countries are constantly employed in winter in hedging and ditching, what comparison can there be between the open field system of one half or a third of the lands being in fallow, receiving only three ploughings; and the same portion now tilled four, five, or six times by Midsummer, then sown with turnips, those hand-hoed twice, and then drawn by hand, and carted to stalls for beasts; or else hurdled out in portions for fattening sheep! What a scarcity of employment in one case, what a variety in the other! And consider the vast tracts of land in the kingdom (no less than the whole upon which turnips are cultivated) that have undergone this change since the last

last century. I should also remind the reader of other systems of management; beans and pease hand-hoed for a fallow—the culture of potatoes—of carrots, of coleseed, &c.—the hoeing of white corn—with the minuter improvements in every part of the culture of all crops—every article of which is an increase of labour. Then he should remember the vast tracts of country uncultivated in the last century, which have been inclosed and converted into new farms, a much greater tract in 80 years than these writers dream of: all this is the effect of inclosures, and consequently they also have yielded a great increase of employment.

Lastly, with respect to simplicity of living—in what does this consist? Why, it consists in all the classes of the people being satisfied with a less consumption of all sorts of commodities than at present. Living in smaller houses; with less and worse furniture; fewer carriages; less change in these articles; wearing fewer cloaths, hats, shoes, stockings, &c.; using, in a word, fewer manufactures of every sort and kind, and never thinking of a variety, now common in every family. Contented with a worse and more difficult carriage; no great roads; no navigations; and very few public works; much less ship building, and fewer of the variety of fabrics

fabrics which the fitting out a ship consumes.—In a word, a smaller general consumption of all sorts; what is this but LESS EMPLOYMENT\*, and of course, fewer people? But is it necessary to reason how these causes must have operated? Does not the knowledge of all old people, and all registers, prove the general increase of towns? Nay, these writers themselves admit it, and speak of it as the cause of depopulation †!

But it is said, that the prices of necessaries have risen so much since the last century, that the ease of living has declined, and consequently depopulation come upon us.

\* It is a great income that causes a great expence, and it is a great expence that augments population. *Encyclopedie*, vol. ii. Art. *Grain*.

† Manufacturers,	Domestic servants,
Artizans,	Merchants, and their
Fishermen,	train,
Seamen,	Inkeepers, and their
Soldiers,	train,
Miners of all sorts,	Inhabitants of towns in
Colliers,	general,
Carriers of all sorts, and	The classes supported by
navigators of rivers,	the public taxes.

Let these several sets of men be considered, and the most inattentive observer will at once see that all are amazingly increased since the last century: who can imagine that such an increase is not sufficient to answer the decline (supposing there is one, which I do not believe) in the number of farmers.

us. First I say, the fact is certainly false taken in general, though, for what I know, it may be true taken in one particular: in manufactures, I am told that the price of labour has risen very little\*; here therefore this observation is partly true; but the pleasant thing is, that manufactures are out of the question, because there cannot be a man so senseless as to suppose as many persons maintained by them in the last age as at present. Dr. *Price* expressly admits this, and throws the depopulation on country parishes. In them the first fact is by no means true, for I have it on good authority in most parts of the kingdom, that husbandry labour has risen greatly. I have shewn the rise of it in very many places, to be much beyond that of provisions; the rise of which has been very little, considering the importance of bread in general consumption, as far as we can judge from registers that are authentic. Very many of the labouring poor are become chargeable to

\* At the same time that the nominal pay of manufacturers who work by the day, is not risen equally with that of husbandry labour, yet we should remember that it ought not to have risen equally, as we have it on various authority, that manufacturers had in the last century double the pay of labourers in husbandry.

to their parishes; but this has nothing to do with depopulation; on the contrary, the constantly seeing such vast sums distributed in this way, must be an inducement to marriage among all the idle poor—and certainly has proved so. The reason the rates have increased so much, is the increase of national wealth and the superior ease of the poor. This has enabled them to consume the greater quantity of superfluities, and that consumption (as it always does in all classes) has grown upon them. Let our poor give up tea, sugar, spices, brandy, rum, gin, and ale in immoderate quantities, and they will not feel the high price of provisions, even in manufactures. As to husbandry, they indulge in all those expences, and yet live well\*—exceptions there will be, and doubtless, always were, for the nature of man is the same in all ages.

Admitting

\* Our farms and the cottages of our labourers will stand the test, which *Rousseau* would bring a kingdom to.—C'est en lui que consiste la véritable prospérité d'un pays, la force, & la grandeur qu'un peuple tire de lui-même, qui ne depend en rien des autres nations, qui ne contraint jamais d'attaquer pour se soutenir, & donne les plus sûrs moyens de se deffendre. Quand il est question d'estimer la puissance publique, le bel-esprit visite les palais du prince, ses ports, ses troupes, ses arsenaux, ses villes; le vrai politique parcourt les terres, & va dans la chaumiere du laboureur. Le premier voit ce qu'on a fait, & le second ce qu'on peut faire. *Julie*, tome v. p. 33.

Admitting that the ease of living in manufactures was greater—yet the numbers in manufactures are vastly increased. In villages, the ease of living is not a whit lessened, consequently there is no reason from thence to suppose a decline. Let us reflect on the different circumstances of the two periods in another light. In the last century, the farms it is said were smaller, and consequently more farmers and their families. But let me ask what a little farmer or a labourer did with his family? That surplus of the population of villages, which in the present age finds at all times a refuge in manufactures, commerce, arts, or some branch of industry, (all which are infinitely increased) could not do the same then; for they had not such abundance of *employment* to resort to; and if the villages were better peopled, this must have happened at a time when such a resort was much more wanted. What must have been the consequence of this? Why the little farmers houses and the cottages must have been crowded with people *without employment*, and consequently *without the means of living*: this might go to a certain point, as far as relations would submit to be burthened, but it would go no farther, and must operate as a great discouragement to marriage. A great family where there is plenty

plenty of employment for all ages, is not a burthen long; but where there is no employment, of what use to say that provisions were 15 or 20 *per cent.* cheaper; it must have been a monstrous burthen. Now we have reason to think that this was not the case, because if it had, the poor's rates would probably have shewn it; the inference therefore which I draw, is, that no such population existed, that the villages had not more people than to be on a par with manufactures, arts, and commerce, and not near so populous as at present. Let any unprejudiced reader who has the least conception of the oeconomy and management of a small farm, reflect for a minute on an occupier of from 20 to 50 acres, with a family of 8 or 10 children, most of them unable to maintain themselves from the small progress of arts and industry. Lowness of rents, and a cheapness of labour, the consequence of hands without work, would enable him to support more perhaps than at present: but how can any one from such a system, deduce the causes of population? Here arises a fresh reason to suppose the country could not be so populous as at present, which was labour being dear; if there were so many more little farmers and labourers, whose

children

2

children manufactures could not take off, how should labour be dear?

Here Dr. *Price* says, "as the number of occupiers of land was greater, and all had more opportunities of working for *themselves*, it is reasonable to conclude, that the number of people willing to work *for others*, must have been smaller, and the price of day labour higher—this is now the case in our *American* colonies."—My conclusion is directly the contrary.—Is it to be supposed that *England* in the last century, was in the same situation as the colonies, every one to inclose and take land that pleased? You say the number of occupiers was greater: you admit they had families—here comes the difficulty—*what did they with those families?* Not take fresh farms, for all were full: not take refuge in towns, there was not employment for them; not carry their cultivation by the spade and hoe to the highest perfection, their husbandry was miserable, not a tenth so prosperous as at present—what therefore could the surplus of this great system of population do to support itself? Nothing but regorge in the cottages—render labour too cheap—become a most miserable burthen on parents—and an effectual check on marriage.—What comparison can be drawn between this situation and *America*, where every

child,



child, as soon as arrived at man's estate, marries, and has a *new* farm immediately.

Mr. *Wallace* says, "Suppose the great body of manufacturers in some trading nations that have a large territory, to lay aside their manufactures, and employ themselves in agriculture, pasturage, and fishing; they would provide a vast quantity of food, they would make all the necessaries of life cheap, and easy to be purchased; and it would soon become visible how great a difference there is between agriculture and manufactures in rendering a nation populous\*."

I cannot agree entirely to this reasoning; Mr. *Wallace* would give these manufacturers small portions of land, sufficient to yield the necessaries of life, and no more. In the supposition of such a small division of the soil, the class of farmers eats up all the earth's produce. Now I see no difference in point of numbers, between the manufacturers being fed by the farmers, or feeding themselves: in both cases they are fed—and they can be no more. But suppose them turned farmers, every man with his little farm—this supposes no more increase than before. What are their families to do? Are they also to marry and turn farmers?

\* *Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind*, p. 27.

mers? If you answer in the affirmative, then your observation may all be blotted out, and instead thereof, you may simply say, that plenty of land to be had for nothing as in *America*, greatly increases the people. Who can doubt it? But this is not the position. You are supposing the manufacturers in a peopled country, which is already property, converted into farmers—I accept your supposition, and I say that then every family, instead of being fed by labour in the manufactory, will be fed by the portion of land assigned them, but there will be no more increase in one case than in the other, because the people bred in these farms, and also in the old ones, (as manufactures are supposed to be at an end) will have no employment or means of support, consequently can neither marry nor multiply beyond the fixed number of farms. Nothing can be clearer than this. But there is another consideration; while the manufacturers formed a distinct body, the old farmers had a market, in which their products yielded a value in money, the sale of these must necessarily enliven their business, and enable them to improve their culture; and the higher the prices, the more they would be encouraged to work improvements and increase the quantum of food, all which causes would be at once cut off

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off in the above idea, and of course their effects would vanish. Thus the tendency of the proposition, instead of being favourable to increase, would be prejudicial to it.

Nor can it ever be too much inculcated, that the taking people from towns and spreading them over the country, is attended no farther with *increase*, than in proportion as you have a demand for that increase. A man and woman in *London* do not marry. *Why not?* Because a family, if they had one, would, for want of employment, be a burthen. This is supposing what is the case, that there are people enough in the kingdom to answer all demands for hands. Take the couple into the country, the case will be just the same; a family there, sticking to the cottage, will be just as great a burthen. Such effects are not commonly seen in the country now, because manufactures, arts, &c. take off the surplus of its population; but if these were converted into fresh cottages we should see it every day.

As little reason is there for drawing the causes of depopulation from every refinement that is made upon the simple stages of civilization, which Dr. *Price* says, "favour most the increase and the happiness of mankind: For in these states, agriculture supplies plenty of the means of subsistence; the blessings of a natural and a simple life are

are enjoyed; property is equally divided; the wants of men are few, and soon satisfied, and families are easily provided for: on the contrary, in the refined states of civilization, property is engrossed.—Our *American* colonies are at present in the first and the happiest of the states I have described."—Relative to the advantages of the present *American* system, I agree entirely with the author; but I think no useful conclusion can be drawn from the fact: what country can possibly be produced in any period to which history goes back, that is a parallel to a new planted colony, with the immensity of land without any property in it but that of the crown—and ready to be granted to whoever will take it? The young society under the protection of a formidable power, and enjoying the freedom of the noblest constitution in the universe? At what period of our history was this island in such a situation? Go back to the ages in which luxury and refinement were out of the question, was not *property engrossed*? Did a great quarrelsome, fiery, tartar of a baron, give up his estate of 900 or 1000 manors to be settled by peasants in property? And had he done it, would propagation in those barbarous ages have gone on as at present in *America*? The system of which country is so peculiar,

peculiar, that a parallel was never to be produced. In any age from *Alfred* to king *William*, landed property in *England* has been decided — no land for those who to take possession of it — much greater inequality of estates than at present — hence therefore depopulation cannot have come upon us from any causes the reverse of those which operate at present in *America*, but which did not operate in the last century in *England*.

ENGLAND MORE POPULOUS THAN EVER.

It is for these reasons that I suppose the country at that time could not possibly be so populous as at present, because the population of the villages must depend on other causes for taking off its surplus—it can never advance beyond that point—the moment it produces a greater surplus than can be taken off, it counteracts itself, and will infallibly lessen. This production of the village commodity (people) depends on the demand for that commodity occasioned by manufactures, arts, commerce, wars, &c. This is a universal truth in the production of all commodities. And as that demand in the last century was not comparable to what it is in the present, there thence results the

the clearest impossibility of population in the country being equal to what it is at present.

To illustrate the contrary idea, chalk out a line of country; suppose it divided into farms of 20 acres, fix an occupier in each, and force this country to support its own population, that is, cut off the demand of arts and manufactures; there will be a family to every 20 acres. How are the parents to maintain the children? The whole produce of the earth is eaten up, and is insufficient, the children will be the most dreadful burthen imagination can paint—population will destroy itself—the farmers if not starved, will be bankrupts, and nothing can prevent desolation but their either living all unmarried, or else the farms running into one another, and some means taken to reduce the people\*. But suppose manufactures, luxury, great cities, and recruiting serjeants to operate, then the farmers may go on getting children as fast as they please, for the very circumstance of the surplus becoming burthensome will drive it away: And without

G 3 supposing

\* —le plus grand produit total n'est pas l'intérêt de l'état si ce plus grand produit est consommé par de plus grands frais de culture. *Eléments de la philosophie rurale.*

supposing in one case that nothing will lessen the surplus, or in the other, that the whole shall be demanded; yet will the effect of the demand be proportioned to it.

Can any thing be more simple than this principle? Can any thing prove clearer that the idea of a village population beyond the demand for its surplus is chimerical? Is it not evident that demand for hands, that is employment, must regulate the numbers of the people? And that if employment in this age is greater than in the former, the total of the people must be greater? Ideas of purity and simplicity of living in little farms, with the farmers engaged as much in propagation as in culture—the women bringing forth with all possible expedition—and every movement in the whole rural machine nothing but increment and multiplication—all these notions are fine speculative fancies, equally removed from reason and experience. It certainly is the case upon the *Ohio*, but for the same reason that it is not so upon the *Thames*.

As I have through these papers laid it down as a principle that population is proportioned to employment, it necessarily follows, that the population of agriculture depends on the employment of agriculture, and the population of manufactures on the employ-

employment of manufacturers—and from hence I give no credit to the reasoning used to convince us that we are less populous than at the revolution, or any remoter period. This principle guides us also in giving credit to or rejecting opinions of any other period. I have been informed, that several of our manufactures have declined since the peace of 1762\*, which may indeed easily be conceived from the amazing and unnatural height to which the commerce of this country was carried by the war—being literally erected on the ruins of that of half our neighbours,—such a decline in certain fabrics must be attended with a proportionable depopulation, if others have not made a corresponding advance.—And such a depopulation in manufactures, must affect our general numbers, unless the population of agriculture has proportionably increased, which is a matter of opinion; it appears to me that it increases every day.

*But why will you reason against facts? Are not the public lists of houses and windows lower than they were in the last century? This is the only apparent fact for supposing the people less numerous.*

Those gentlemen who have taken the trouble to calculate the number of the people, have differed very much in their

G 4 opinions.

\* See Appendix.

opinions. Sir *W. Petty* made the number in *England* and *Wales* in 1682, amount to 7,400,000\*.—*Davenant* in 1692, made them 7,000,000†—but in the same tract, he makes them 8,000,000—and in 1700, he quotes and approves from Mr. *King* a computation of 5,500,000‡.—Sir *M. Decker* supposed them in 1742, (from 1,200,000 houses, at 6 to a house) 7,200,000§—Dr. *Mitchel* says the number is 5,700,000¶—Mr. *Walace*, 8,000,000¶¶—*Templeman* makes it the same\*\*—Another supposes it 6,000,000††—Another, 5,480,000‡‡—Mr. *Smyth*, 6,000,000§§—Dr. *Brakenridge*, 5,340,000|||—Another, 8,000,000\*†—Dr. *Price*, 4,500,000††.

From

\* *Political Arithmetic*, p. 15.  
 † *An Essay upon ways and means*, p. 136.  
 ‡ *An Essay upon the probable method of making a people gainers in the ballance of trade*, p. 18.  
 § *Serious Considerations on several high duties*, 8vo. 1744, p. 15.  
 ¶ *Present State of Great Britain and North America*, p. 113.  
 ¶¶ *Dissertation on the Numbers of mankind*, p. 41.  
 \*\* *Survey of the Globe*. Plate 5.  
 †† *Posslethwayte's Dictionary of Commerce*. Art. *People*.  
 ‡‡ *Considerations on the Trade and Finances*, &c. 79.  
 §§ *Three Tracts on Corn Trade*, p. 181.  
 ||| *Phil. Trans.* Vol. 49, p. 877.  
 \*† *Houghton's Husbandry*, vol. ii. p. 465.  
 †† *Observations on reverſionary payments*, p. 184.

From the accounts we have had of former enumerations, there are reasons to think they were taken with much inaccuracy; but what is decisive in the comparison, the last public lists of 1759 and 1766, are known by experiment to be false. Catalogues were taken in a variety of parishes about *Wentworth House* in *Yorkshire*, by order of the marquis of *Rockingham*; and similar trials were made elsewhere, in all which, the number EXCEEDED the reports of the surveyors; who, in most parts of *England*, paid little attention to houses exempted from the tax: of which the deficiencies I have mentioned, are the most satisfactory proofs. When the treasury wants to know the number of cottages exempted from all payment, the receivers general of the land-tax may have orders to direct such a report. But how are they obeyed? Like all such orders in this country, where no penalty to an informer is fixed. The collectors are chosen from among low and illiterate men; some may think such an order a preparatory step to a new tax; others are careless and forget it; others set down what cottages they recollect, and do not take the trouble to ride through their parish; an hundred such reasons may operate in lowering the truth at a time that not a single one can occasion an exaggeration.

tion. However, the circumstance that causes it is not of consequence—the fact we know is so.

In the next place, if you got the number of houses, you have not that of the people; here the authority is as rotten as elsewhere: in some places you have gained the number of people *per family*—but what has that to do with the number *per house*? Are not many houses the habitation of several families? But farther, from the most extraordinary prejudice in the world, you collect the numbers *per house* in many places, constantly rejecting hospitals, prisons, colleges, schools, and poor houses\*—you then say—there are so many houses in the kingdom—such is the result *per house* of my enquiries—consequently you have but so many people, MAKING NO ALLOWANCE FOR THE BUILDINGS YOU HAVE OMITTED. Is this a fair way of calculating?

Further, how do we know that a house at present contains on an average of the kingdom no more souls than 80 years ago? I have

\* London is also forgotten, in which Grant asserted, that among tradesmen there are 8 to a family; in higher ranks 10; and in the poorest, near 5: how much more *per house* he does not tell. At present the number *per house* is probably 9 or 10, perhaps more.

have little doubt but the population *per house* is greater †.

Upon the whole, we may determine that the facts upon which the arguments for our depopulation are founded, are absolutely false: that the conjectures annexed to them are wild and uncertain, and that the conclusions which are drawn from the whole, can amount in nothing but errors and mistakes.

SIGNS OF DEPOPULATION.

As ideas of depopulation have in all ages been so common, and complaints of mischiefs in the government and policy of state ever annexed to them, and generally without any reason; it may not be amiss to bestow a few reflections on those signs of depopulation, which, whenever they appear, may be supposed to speak truth. I have said, that populousness in *England* depends on employment, which here operates on the same principles as plenty of land in *America*; this offers a very simple idea of depopulation—*employment lessening*. Not lessening in the parish A, while increasing in the town B; or lessening in B, while

† See the appendix, for other observations on this subject.

while increasing in A, but a general visible declension; such as would take place if the national wealth was to decline, which generally being the effect of *employment*, must mark the state of its cause. If the seamen lessen and your shipping falls away, it is a circumstance which to this nation would be of the highest consequence, and mark a variety of declension—if at the same time the great manufactures of the kingdom could no longer find a vent, and consequently their people without employment, it would be a mark not less equivocal—if the cultivated soil lessens—if tracts once valuable, become waste, and rents fall, it is an unerring sign of decay—if the prices of labour and commodities in general sink, it is no less to be depended on. These signs of national decay need not be multiplied, whenever they are seen they must mark in proportion to their extent, the declension of our prosperity.

Decrease of shipping—decline of manufactures—decline of agriculture—a general fall of prices.

It appears to me that these are circumstances which involve every other cause of national declension; they mark a loss of wealth—A DECREASE OF EMPLOYMENT, which must universally bring down population with it.

Whenever therefore we hear of other causes of depopulation, such as engrossing farms, inclosures, laying arable to grass, high prices of provisions, great cities, luxury, celibacy, debauchery, wars, emigrations, &c. we may very safely resolve them into a string of vulgar errors, and rest assured that they can have no ill effect, while the five great causes mentioned above, do not subsist.

LAW OF SETTLEMENTS.

Having ventured thus far on the activity of the causes of the population of *England*, which I think far superior in power to any tendency there can be found to the contrary, I shall very freely acknowledge there is one cause of depopulation among us, however it is in general overcome by favourable circumstances; this is the *law of settlements*, the most false, mischievous, and pernicious system that ever barbarism devised. By forcing every parish to maintain not the resident, but the settled poor; and by disabling the poor from settling where they please, you give a strong and effective motive to very many people to do every thing in their power against population, by raising an open war against cottages. The landlord and the

the farmer have almost equal motives to reduce the number of poor in their parishes: marriages are very frequently obstructed; the couple must, if they marry, stay at home; the overseers of the poor will grant no certificates; if they marry therefore, where are they to live? No cottage is empty—they must live with their fathers and mothers, or lodge; the poor abhor both as much as their betters, and certainly in many cases, run into licentious amours, merely for want of a cottage or a certificate. The whole system of our poor laws is so mischievous, that it must be attended with this effect. Suppose an unmarried labourer applies to the lord of a manor for leave to build a cottage on the waste—*No*, says the gentleman, *the cottage when built, will be a nest of beggars, and we shall have them all on the parish.* Can you wonder at such language from a man who probably can let land worth 20 s. an acre, for no more than 14 s. on account of high poor rates? It would be amazing if he acted otherwise.

Dr. Price quotes with applause, an observation of Lord Bacon, in praise of the act of Henry VII. which prohibited all new cottages with less than 4 acres; but what tendency had this but the evil I have now described? If a poor man buys half a rood of land to build on, he cannot do it; he must

must buy four acres!—This is the very circumstance that now gives the power of restraining the erection of cottages.

Our policy is weak beyond all doubt, because it consists of prohibiting the natural course of things: all restrictive forcible measures in domestic policy are bad; population should not be expressly encouraged, but it is ridiculous to throw wanton restrictions on it: It ought certainly to be left to its own course; people will not multiply beyond the demand for the surplus of their increase, but thus far they ought to be allowed; and to prohibit cottages, which when built, would be filled with industrious inhabitants, is a violent and a mischievous system. It is true, the causes of population in this kingdom are so powerful, that they overcome these obstacles; but this is no reason against remedying them. The first effectual cure is to annul the law of settlements, and allow every man to settle where he pleases: the second, to repeal the act which allows no cottage with less than 4 acres. This would do a great deal; but a great cause of the evil would still remain, for as long as the poor are supported by the parish, it will be the interest of every landlord and farmer to oppose their increase; but this would be much remedied by breaking the laws of settlement, since any



any couples who wanted to marry and settle, if refused at home, or if no habitation could be found for them, might then go settle where a cottage and employment were easiest had.

POPULATION IN NORFOLK.

Since the preceding observations were written, the second edition of Dr. Price's *Appeal to the Public on the National Debt* came to hand: Annexed to it is a very sensible and well written memoir on the decline of population in the county of *Norfolk*; in which many appearances and reasons are set forth, to prove that the people of that county are much decreased. If this is really the case, the principles which I have advanced, if not false, will at least have received a wound; for a county which has been improved more than most others, to have fallen off in population, would be an exception to all rules. But the gentleman who has examined this matter, carries back the period of superior populousness to the reformation, not acknowledging any such effect since the revolution, which is a declaration extremely counter to the whole argument of Dr. Price.

But what causes more favourable to population could have existed before the reformation,

mation, which have not existed since the revolution? This will be very difficult to shew: I shall attend not to churches, manor houses, names of fields, gateways, and foot paths, but to first principles—living effective principles. Was liberty in that age clearer and more explicitly defined? Was it practically better among the lower classes? Were farmers and peasants more independent of the nobility, lords of manors, &c.? Was there more employment for the poor in a more correct husbandry—more flourishing manufactures, or more extensive commerce? Were other demands for the surplus of the country population more powerful?—What, but an absolute negative, is to be the answer to all these queries? And shall we then believe numbers under those circumstances to have exceeded the present!

If none of these circumstances operated, pray what were those which did cause such an effect? I know not what can be mentioned, unless it be the charity of the monasteries—that charity I can conceive to have maintained numbers of idle poor, but that it could possibly equal the reverse of the circumstances I just now mentioned, appears to me utterly incredible. For supposing very considerable revenues spent in the support of the attendants on monks  
H and

and friars, and thereby to have been a parallel to a part of modern labour, this must then be considered as the *employment* of those people, who since have turned labourers; but what demand for the surplus of their population? What parallel to modern manufactures, arts and commerce? The class supported by charity, must have multiplied like other lower classes, without an outlet for their surplus, which, wherever wanting, is poison to population, and the mark of a system, utterly inconsistent with it. If it is said that charity was the parallel, not of modern labour, but manufactures, &c. then I say, you suppose agriculture in that age to have been as good and operose as at present—and if on that proposition you will rest your argument, nothing farther can be made of it.

The truth is, there was not in that age an employment for the people comparable to what there is at present, how therefore could there be as many people? Let their maintenance be pointed out. But it is amusing to see the faculty men will have of complaining of present times, and lamenting the past; we are not satisfied with our numbers, but assert that *England* was better peopled in *Henry VIII's* time; and nothing was so common in that age as the same complaint, as we learn even from the statute

tute books. To what period I wonder did the croakers of that age refer? To that of the desolation I suppose which flowed from the quarrels of the roses—or the tumults of the barons of King *John*.

Compare the supposition before us with every possible cause of it; and the result will be, that no such effect could ever take place. But let us examine into the foundations of the idea.

*Large churches are found where the people are not numerous enough to fill a single aisle; and some to a single family.* This gentleman admits, that churches were often built more for ostentation than use. If in those bigotted times, legacies were left for church building where none were wanted, what could the pious executors of such testaments do, but raise useless edifices? No satisfactory way of accounting for the fact—but if ostentation was their motive to one degree of folly, why not to another. Besides, most of the *Gothic* religious buildings in the kingdom, wherever money enough was to be had, were conspicuous for this extravagance: what idea of utility could be the guide in constructing many of the cathedrals? While this species of expence was the fashion of the times, and while we every day see proofs that the mere idea of religious magnificence and little thought of utility,

utility, was the motive of such works, why should we now think of measuring the population of that age by the edifices of sacred shew?

*Proper names, distinguishing fields, inclosures, roads, trees, gateways, &c. now almost forgotten.* This I think is but a very slight presumption of a superior population; we cannot know what were the original causes of such names, whether the residence of a proprietor, or the wantonness of straggling shepherds and warreners: it is possible to have been, as the writer mentions; it is very possible not to have been so.

*Roads and foot paths at present altogether needless.* This is an argument which proving too much, proves nothing. We have them common in this country (*Hertfordshire*) within less than 20 miles of *London*, and in great numbers; if they are a proof that *Norfolk* was better peopled above 200 years ago, they are also a proof that this county was the same, which was simply impossible. But the original reasons for marking all the roads we now see, is so difficult an enquiry that it cannot be brought to prove any thing; chance probably, and unnoticed use, were the fathers of numbers, and as some became common, others were neglected, without population having any thing to do in it.

*Houses*

*Houses appearing in ruins—villages on the sea coast scenes of desolation.* This is positive evidence, and more deserving attention than any of the other reasons. What does it prove? It proves depopulation in the parishes of A, B, and C. But have not D, E, and F, increased? This we are not told, but if it is not known, what proof can be fixed in the opposite facts? Can the writer imagine that *Lynn* 200 years ago was what it is now? *Wells* he acknowledges to be almost a new town. *Norwich* certainly was not what it is. There are no appearances to make one suppose *Yarmouth* more populous two centuries ago, and the same observation might be made on many others. But among the villages, probably many of them have much increased:—at least, thus much we may venture, that if the contrary is not proved, no proof arises of general depopulation from some being in ruins.

When it is considered that so large a part of this county was sheep walks, which is now under an excellent corn culture, it is incredible that it should have declined in population: since to have done so, employment of the people must have been pernicious to their increase, and the inhabitants most numerous when they had the fewest means of living.

H 3

While

While I am writing this, I have the pleasure of the company of some *Norfolk* gentlemen in my house: I made enquiries of them; they confirmed part of this gentleman's account; in such a place the cottages in ruins.—*The farmers then do not cultivate the lands?* Yes they do, better than ever. *Where do the men come from then?* From other places.—This is the general round; it is a circle; depopulation here; population there.—They named many parishes which they knew to be considerably increased.

But I think I can account in a very plain manner for the most important of all the reasons assigned by this gentleman—that of so many villages being in ruins.—When a whole parish becomes one farm, under one landlord, the power over both the poor and their habitations will center in such landlord and tenant. The tenant pays the poor-rates, and perhaps as a part of his agreement, repairs the cottages; here therefore are two strong reasons why he should drive the people away, and let their houses go to ruin, or perhaps advise his landlord to pull them down; first, he eases himself of rates, and secondly, he gets rid of repairs. As to his labour, he hires men from parishes not in the same predicament, of whose population, as he does not pay to it, he regards not. This may also be the case where a parish

parish consists of two or three farms, provided the farmers agree. This is certainly an evil, but it is owing to the absurdity of our poor laws, not to great farms: however, the amount of it is by no means of consequence, and for this reason: The farmer's want of hands when he has destroyed population in his own parish, is directly to its amount, a premium upon the population of the neighbouring parishes; upon the principle of *demand* which I have before explained. It is then impossible but the people in them must proportionably increase. Thus the very existence of the evil in one place is a demonstration that there must be a cure for it somewhere else; for this county is not one whose farms are laid to grass; the depopulation complained of, is in the midst of tillage.

The great leading fact is admitted by every one—the rural employment has not declined; on the contrary, it has much increased; for every one knows, that inclosing, marling, dunging, ploughing, turnip-hoeing, &c. are in this respect very different from sheep and rabbit feeding. As *the work is done*, it must be done by somebody; and whether that somebody lives in one parish or another, has nothing to do in the enquiry. Much of the harvest is got in by *Scotch* itinerants. There is  
H 4 nothing

104 POPULATION IN NORFOLK,

nothing to object to in this; where the people come from is not the enquiry; all I look to is, that from somewhere they must come. This supply of *Scotchmen*, however, is only in harvest; the works of the rest of the year are sufficient to establish the truth of my observation. *Irishmen* do most of the reaping in *Hertfordshire*; this is so little a proof of depopulation, that great tracts of our county (most of it) are almost a continued village.

Upon the whole, I cannot, upon the most attentive reflection, on the cases brought by *Dr. Price's* very ingenious correspondent, find any reason to consider them as exceptions to the general principles I before laid down. They certainly carry the appearance of depopulation, perhaps an un-deceiving appearance; but we must never form conclusions from such particular instances.

POPULATION IN FRANCE,

The most particular registers of population that I have met with, are those of *M. Messance*, in his *Recherches sur la Population*, printed at *Paris* in 1766. This gentleman gives the progress of population in several of the provinces of *France*. The following extracts will shew the increase of people in those provinces.

POPULATION IN FRANCE. 105

<i>Auvergne</i> , 162 parishes.		
Births from 1747 to 1757,	-	68,934
1690 to 1700*,	-	56,814
Ditto, 38 parishes.		
1747 to 1757,	-	13,547
1700 to 1710,	-	11,146
Ditto, 119 parishes.		
1747 to 1757,	-	20,611
1710 to 1720,	-	17,953
Ditto, 61 parishes.		
1747 to 1757,	-	23,047
1720 to 1730,	-	21,258
<i>Lyon</i> †, 133 parishes.		
1749 to 1759,	-	40,126
1690 to 1700,	-	35,228
Ditto, 118 parishes,		
1749 to 1759,	-	32,014
1701 to 1711,	-	25,318
Ditto, 72 parishes.		
1749 to 1759,	-	40,145
1710 to 1720,	-	30,380
Ditto, 109 parishes.		
1749 to 1759,	-	30,968
1720 to 1730,	-	26,532
<i>Rouen</i> ‡, 541 parishes.		
1752 to 1761,	-	123,037
1690 to 1699,	-	120,691

And in general he finds the present population

\* Page 18. † Page 35. ‡ Page 77.

lation of the three generalities of *Auvergne*, *Lyon*, and *Rouen*, to be to the population of 1700, as 1456 to 1350\*.

*Provence, Auch, Pau, Burgundy, &c.* 1752 to 1763 †, - 426,035  
1690 to 1701, - 390,375

*General View.*

Comparison between the present population of *France*, and 60 years ago.

	<i>Parisbes.</i>	BIRTHS.	
		<i>First period.</i>	<i>Second period.</i>
<i>Auvergne,</i>	- 162	5681	6893
<i>Lyon,</i>	- 133	3523	4012
<i>Rouen,</i>	- 541	12069	12303
<i>Lyon City,</i>	- —	3775	4137
<i>Rouen,</i>	- —	2449	2271
<i>Paris,</i>	- —	16988	19221
<i>Marseille,</i>	- —	3465	3218
<i>Toulon,</i>	- —	1416	1073
<i>Aix,</i>	- —	989	822
<i>Montaban,</i>	- —	607	602
<i>Sezanne,</i>	- —	185	160
<i>Vaison,</i>	- 38	1023	1183
<i>Carcassonne,</i>	- —	495	523
<i>Valence,</i>	- —	259	266
<i>Vitry,</i>	- —	416	250
<i>Burgundy, Provence, &amp;c.</i>	1278	32531	35503
		‡ 85871	92437

\* Page 128. † Page 268. ‡ Page 272.

From the whole of *M. Messance's* examinations, it appears that the people of *France* have increased in the last 60 years. I cannot but quote this fact for the opportunity of asking the *English* complainants, if the causes of depopulation have not been almost as strong in that kingdom as in *England*? If under those circumstances, *France* has increased her people, may we not listen to the voice of reason, which tells us that *England* has done it in a much greater degree? It is true, complaints of depopulation have been as common in that kingdom as with us; and I suppose there never was a period or a country where such complaints were not in the mouths of many\*.

\* In the course of these papers I took occasion to quote a passage from *Mr. Hume*, not omitting to pay that tribute to his political sagacity which I should suppose every one must acknowledge. I shall now transcribe an observation from another writer, whose admirable talents enlighten every subject he pleases to undertake. A man who describes with pleasure the prosperity of his country.

“ to make settlements in the most distant parts of the globe, and by a wise and happy conjunction of our labours both there and in *Britain*, at once extended our wealth and power without the least diminution of our people, contrary to the effects of plantations made from other countries, which have suffered at home by aggrandizing themselves abroad; whereas

IMPORTANCE OF WEALTH.

It is upon these principles that I reckon wealth but another word for consumption; and esteem it as the soul of agriculture: had

whereas our domestic power is constantly augmented in proportion to the advantages derived from our settlements abroad; and to this circulation of our commerce it is in reality owing that our strength is so much greater, our lands so much more valuable, and our intrinsic wealth so much increased, as it is since that time; and this in spite of long wars and other intervening accidents, not at all favourable to our interests.

This may look like a paradox to some, and there may be others who perhaps will regard it as a thing taken upon trust. But in reality, the facts are absolutely certain, and it is to the wonderful growth of our plantations that we owe the strength and populousness of this island, which could never otherwise have attained its present condition. A very little attention will make this plain. The commodities and manufactures of any country, have a certain limit, beyond which, it is impossible they should extend, without an alteration of circumstances; that is to say, when they are carried so high, as that no new markets are to be found, domestic industry can proceed no farther. Now it is owing to our colonies that hitherto we have not been very sensible of this truth; for the people settled there from a variety of causes, into which I have not room to enter at present, take off much greater quantities of our commodities and manufactures than if they had remained at home. So that one of our countrymen established in *America*, finds

IMPORTANCE OF WEALTH. 109

had not very ingenious men held a direct contrary opinion, I should have thought my time as ill spent in explaining it, as in demonstrating that 2 and 2 make 4. Those princes and states therefore who would wish to have the agriculture of their dominions flourish, should wish to see the general wealth of their subjects increase, and encourage every branch

finds full employment for several hands here; and AS FULL EMPLOYMENT WILL ALWAYS DRAW PEOPLE, it plainly follows from thence, that our settlements abroad must increase the number of people at home. As this method of arguing shews the reason of the thing, so the truth of it may be likewise demonstrated from experience. It is certain that the number of people in the city of *London* is about five times as great as at the death of *Queen Elizabeth*; and though it cannot be supposed that the number of people in this island hath increased in the same proportion, yet it is certain that they have very much increased, as is apparent from the growth of other great cities, the swelling of small villages into large towns, and the raising on our coasts of many new sea ports. It may indeed be objected, that if people remove out of the country into great towns, this augments the number of their inhabitants, but not that of the nation; but then the fact must be proved, which is a thing impossible; for such as dwell in great towns consume a larger quantity of provisions and all other necessaries than such as live scattered up and down the country, they must consequently be supplied with these, and therefore *the growth of towns must increase the number of people in the country about them.* Thus the farther we trace this matter, the clearer and the more certain it appears, and therefore what is deduced from it cannot be rationally called in question." *Present State of Europe*, 3d edit. p. 508.

branch of industry that can render their people rich—they should remember that when they exhaust a country by ill devised taxes, or otherwise, they as effectually ruin husbandry as if they burnt all the ploughs in their territories, and prohibited the future use of them: destroying the farmer's market is, in effect, doing this.

It is also destroying it for no good purpose, since a cheapness of provisions is not attended with the least advantage to any class or order of a state\*. Nor let him in the

\* A writer in the last century has a very good observation on this: "It is the dearness of corn that encourages the farmer, not only to pay his rent well and give good prices, but also to live high, and improve all his unimproved land within his reach, which will still increase trade and revenue, and the necessity will make the manufactors work harder, and that will increase manufacture, and that will make us sell cheaper, till we have gotten so many new, or so improved our old customers, as that our quantities will not serve. Anno 1683, I offered to make it appear, that this kingdom will thrive more, and the manufactors live better when provisions are dear than cheap. There I shewed that plenty or cheapness caused laziness, that dearness, that industry, and that plenty; and also, 'T WAS GOOD TO ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE TO A HIGH LIVING, and the conveniences of it: That if the manufactors cannot live as they use to do, by three days in a week working, they must work four, or find some quicker way, and that will produce a fourth part of more manufacture, which must

the right progress of his policy be turned aside by erroneous ideas concerning the luxury that flows from this wealth; let him equally disregard the gloomy notions of depopulation, secure in the idea that if he gives wealth to his people, he gives employment, and of course they will multiply.

PRICES

must cause it to be sold cheaper. I there also shewed how 'twas the king's interest to give money for exporting corn, and our interest to have the excise higher, and a duty not only on brewers but on all that brew." *Houghton's Collection of Husbandry and Trade*, vol. ii. p. 266. The idea of encouraging the people to live high, is a very bold, but I believe a just one. In another place he says, "If corn was sold at 12s. the bushel, and beef 6d. the pound, by means of an encouragement for their exportation, or double consumption, I should not be sorry." Vol. iv. p. 91. At page 382, he enlarges the idea. It is not only in *England* that provisions should be dear—the inconveniences of cheapness are the same all the world over. It is so in *Asia*: Dr. Campbell describing the great plenty in the *Maldives*, says, "The natives it's true, don't grow rich, and that I take to proceed from their cheap and easy living, which encourages them to negligence and idleness." *Harris's Voyages*, vol. i. p. 706. And of *Siam* he says, "The peasants lead a miserable life, by reason that provisions are so cheap here, that they cannot get any thing by their labour." p. 782.



PRICES DEPEND ON QUANTITY OF  
MONEY.

Here it is proper to remark that the importance which I give to general wealth, is founded on the same principle with that laid down by *Montesquieu* and *Mr. Hume*, that the price of commodities is proportioned to the quantity of specie. But as *Sir James Steuart* has opposed this idea, and endeavoured to establish another in its room, it is necessary to say a word or two upon his arguments; because if they are just, my observations on the consequence of national wealth to agriculture, must be erroneous, or at least but indifferently founded. There may be (according to *Sir James's* idea) a great influx of wealth, and yet no rise of prices, and consequently no benefit accruing to the farmer: The passages I mean are the following:

“ I have laid it down as a principle that it is the complicated operations of demand and competition, which determines the standard price of every thing. If there be many labourers and little demand, work will be cheap. If the increase of riches therefore have the effect of raising demand, work will increase in its value, because there competition is implied; but if it has  
only

only the effect of augmenting demand, prices will stand as formerly.”—“ Let the specie of a country therefore be augmented or diminished in ever so great a proportion, commodities will still rise and fall according to the principles of demand and competition, and these will constantly depend upon the inclinations of those who have property or any kind of equivalent whatsoever to give, but never upon the quantity of coin they are possessed of\*.”

There is an obscurity in the distinction between raising and augmenting demand, which is not at first to be dissipated; but the point principally to be attended to, is another distinction, which I humbly apprehend may be without a difference, viz. that between specie and demand. I never understood either *M. de Montesquieu* or *Mr. Hume* to assert or mean, that very great variations would not be frequent, independently of the quantity of money: Nobody could suppose they were so short-sighted as to form such ideas: If there is much corn brought to market this week, and few buyers, prices will certainly be higher than in another week, when there is little corn brought, but many buyers: Mackarel are  
I certainly

\* *Enquiry into the Principles of Pol. Oeconom.* vol. i. p. 400.

114 *Prices depend on Quantity of Money.*

certainly cheaper when many boats arrive than when but few come: If any commodity in general and regular demand, is brought to market at a particular season in much greater plenty than at any other season, who can doubt but the price will be low? All such variations are perfectly consistent with the idea that the price of commodities will depend on the quantity of specie; because this idea is not relative to certain days, weeks, months, or markets, but to general periods in which money has increased or decreased; one century compared with another;—one 50 years with another 50; twenty years since a peace with twenty before it, &c. In such a comparison, and neither the *French* writer nor Mr. *Hume* could have any other in view, the idea of demand and competition, is absolutely lost in that of specie, because they are in fact the same thing. Sir *James* will keep close to the circumstance, that the quantity of money has nothing to do in the case, if a man will not *spend* when he *possesses*: but this appears to me to be taken for granted: relative to a market day, or other point of competition, I admit of it; but I think it should be rejected in application to a *period*. Suppose foreign commerce increases from a war or other reasons, so as to add immensely to the national

*Prices depend on Quantity of Money.* 115

national wealth; an additional income is added to the fortunes of many men, these men will in general increase their expences, and consequently demand. I have no idea of a great increase of national wealth any where without an increase of the expences of individuals following; there certainly may be such cases, but they must carry rather the appearance of exceptions, than the ground of new principles. Why did land sell in the last century for 15 years purchase? Because there was so little specie that there was no comparative demand; people who have not MONEY do not add to *demand*. Why is land at present so much higher? Because a greater plenty of specie has given a greater demand. Demand and competition appear to be *effects*; money the *cause*.

Sir *James* supposes it remarked—“that articles of indispensable necessity must remain constantly in proportion to the mass of riches. This I cannot by any means admit to be just. Let me take the example of grain, which is the most familiar. Is it not plain from what we have said above, that the proportion of wealth found in the hands of the lowest class of the people constantly regulates the price of it; consequently let the rich be ever so wealthy, the price of subsistence can never rise above the faculties of the poor.”—In answer to this

it may be observed, that the price has risen far beyond what the faculties of the poor in former times could purchase, and they would now all be starved, if *quantity of wealth*, that is *demand for labour*, had not risen the price of it, as well as of wheat.—Through whatever political mazes we are carried, we shall find that an increase in the national wealth will be only another word for increase of demand; so as to be scarcely possible for one to subsist without the other.

From various of the instances quoted by Sir James, there is reason to believe he principally draws his argument from the demand and competition at certain times, for certain commodities; at a market for corn; at ancient Rome for a mullet; prices in January 1759, &c. and what is remarkable, he says nothing of the increase of money from the discovery of America, on which Montesquieu founds his idea; and it is from a gradual increase of wealth from industry that Mr. Hume supports his. And yet Sir James asserts, that the money in Europe might be increased to ten times the present quantity, without the prices of commodities being affected.—Upon the whole, the matter turns principally on the proportion which holds between money and demand—throughout this essay I have supposed

posed them the same thing; because I see, whichever way I look, the expences of all ranks of people increase, with an increase of their incomes, and luxury spreading through countries in proportion to their wealth: now luxury is wealth—is demand—is competition for the thing desired, and prices rise in proportion to expences, that is to money. If this is not true, how are we to account for the prices of a thousand things before the discovery of America, compared with the present prices of the same commodities;—or, without going so far back—for those in the last century, not only of rarities, but almost every commodity that can be named, provisions, labour, manufactures, land, &c. Why is labour, provisions, house-rent, land, and commodities in general, except foreign manufactures, cheaper in Sweden or Norway than in England or Holland?—Surely it is because those countries are not equally wealthy. You may, if you please, add the consequence, that there is not an equal demand. Further, let us take Sir James's supposition; suppose our national wealth to be increased to ten times the present amount; how would it be possible for the prices of commodities not to rise immensely, unless every man became a hoarder, which I shall never suppose? Thus every man possessing

possessing ten times his present wealth and income, immediately increases his expences; increases his servants, equipages, labourers, builders, artizans; his house-keeping expences multiply; more is eaten, drank, and wasted; all this forms a fresh demand for every article; and as the wealth of others has the same effect with them, here is competition; if prices in consequence of this demand and competition should not rise, surely it would be miraculous? This was the idea of Messrs. *Montesquieu* and *Hume*, who, from seeing an universal effect regularly following a visible cause, justly attributed the former to the latter; they saw that a great increase of national wealth always caused a great rise in prices; and that in poor countries commodities were cheaper than in rich ones; hence they deduced their reasoning; and what we have since seen and felt in this country, would, if any proof was wanting, confirm their doctrine.

This I think is the direct and plain way of attributing the effect in question to its proper cause. But here I readily admit a partial exception; an exception which *Sir James* seems to have wrought into a complete hypothesis: I admit that to an unknown degree, an increase of wealth increasing the demand for certain manufac-

tures,

tures, will increase the quantity brought to market, and prices stand as they were: For instance, send a gradual increase of orders to the manufacturers of *Manchester, Norwich, Birmingham, &c.* and they will answer the increased demand for perhaps a long time, without an increase of prices; because the people will increase with their industry, and a want of hands will not be felt. This is the strongest exception that can be put to the rule of *Mr. Hume*, yet is it not of importance enough to overturn his idea, since the word *commodities* includes such a variety of things besides certain manufactures, that his expression may be deemed sufficiently accurate: land, houses, labour, provisions, &c. are all clearly within his rule, not to speak of a variety even of manufactures, not wrought in great manufacturing towns.

But even in this great exception of *Sir James's*, there are some circumstances which favour *Mr. Hume's* hypothesis: Why are not all manufactures cheaper now than they were 300 years ago? If the argument urged by *Sir James* is just, they ought to be cheaper, or at least not dearer; but if the difference of the periods be considered relative to favouring manufactures of every kind, they ought now to be produced 500 per cent. cheaper. Yet in 1460, good  
I 4 cloth,

cloth, such as was to serve the best Doctor at *Oxford*, was sold at 3s. 7d. a yard; but as there were 30 shillings in the pound at that time, we must call this near 7s. 6d. whereas now the proper cloth for such a person would cost 18s. In *William* the Conqueror's reign the serjeant of an infirmary had a coat for 4s. I instance these only to shew, that in periods very distant, the rise even of manufactures depend on the quantity of money; and if their rates in the last century be examined and compared with what they are at present, it will be found that scarce an instance is to be produced in which there has not been a considerable rise; which must be owing to the increase of money.

In any one period of no great extent, the increase of demand from the increase of wealth, may not be found to operate its natural effect; but in a longer period a change happens from a gradual and almost imperceptible progress; and then manufactures as well as all other commodities get up to a proportion with the quantity of money. That this must be the case during a long period cannot be doubted, when we consider that the price of labour has much more than doubled in a century, and that several articles of raw materials in many fabricks have risen equally with labour;

and if we take a larger scope, and go back to the period when provisions, labour, and every other article were not a fourth of the present price, how are we to conceive that manufactures could be as dear as we pay for them? And to what cause is it possible to attribute the change but to the superior quantity of specie?

I have been led into this disquisition from its intimate connection with my subject, as I cannot but esteem great national wealth as one of the most important circumstances in the encouragement of agriculture; and if the reasoning laid down by *Sir James Steuart* is just, as I understand it, this wealth must be of little importance, and my reasoning fallacious. It is with diffidence I venture an opinion, contrary to the ideas of a writer of such distinguished abilities; and who has given such uncommon attention to every part of the science of political œconomy: nor perhaps would this apology be deemed sufficient, had not *Sir James* taken the same liberty with the illustrious *Montesquieu* and the sagacious *Hume*.

## S E C T. VIII.

## I N C L O S U R E S.

THE next article, I shall mention is the circumstance of so large a part of the kingdom being inclosed, and the policy in the legislature of constantly increasing inclosures.—To enter into a detail of their advantages here, would be a useless undertaking—the prejudices of some of our writers, who have even to the present day declaimed against them, are to be reckoned among those absurdities that never die—they are to be found in every branch of philosophy, literature, and art. I shall here reply to one assertion thrown out by the enemies of inclosures—They say that rich lands after inclosing, are laid down to grass, and the kingdom thereby depopulated. Supposing the case in the first instance, yet I have a great doubt whether the husbandman converting his farm to that use for which the soil is most adapted, which pays him best, and consequently adds most to the national wealth, can depopulate the country:—it may depopulate one parish, but probably others will gain beyond the proportion by it. However, granting the position, which is more than there is occasion to do, yet I think

think population is but a secondary object: The soil ought to be applied to that use in which it will pay most, without any idea of population: A farmer ought not to be tied down to bad husbandry, whatever may become of population. Population, which, instead of adding wealth to the state, is a burthen to the state, is a pernicious population—and will be found so in every country where the national strength does not depend on troops serving without pay. As to attributing to inclosures the many evils, most of them imaginary, which some writers have laid to their charge, they are merely ideal.

That many absurd opinions should be commonly embraced concerning *new* measures, is natural enough, but that we should see the same errors relative to matters of which we have had long experience, is certainly remarkable. The complaints against inclosures are of a very long date; we have had them between two and three hundred years, and they never appeared without receiving the most solid and satisfactory refutation. One of the most remarkable instances is in the reign of *Elizabeth*; the following extract from a very curious tract will set this matter in a clear light.

A

*A Compendium, or brief Examination of certayn ordinary complaints of divers of our countrymen in these our days. By W. S. (supposed to be WM. SHAKESPEARE) 1581.*

*Husbandman.]* Marry for these inclosures doe undoe us all: for they make us pay dearer for our lande that we occupy, and causes that we can have no lande in manner for our money to put to tyllage, all is taken up in pasture. I have known of late a dozen ploughs within less compass than six miles about me, layd down within these seven years, and where threescore persons or upwards had their livings, now one man with his cattel has all, which is not the least cause of former uprores: for by these inclosers many doe lack lyvings and be idle; moreover all things are so deere that by their day wages they are not able to lyve\*.

*Capper.]* I have well the experience thereof, for I am faine to give my journey-men two-pence in a day more than I was wont to doe, and yet they say they cannot sufficiently lyve thereof.

*Merchaunt.]* Most parte of all the towns of *England, London* only except, are sore decayed in their houses, &c. whereof it is long,

\* One would have thought, without seeing the title, that this had been a transcript of the common complaints of the present time.

long, I cannot well tell, for there is such a general dearth of all things, as before 20 or 30 years hath not bene the like, not only of things growing within this realm, but of all other merchaundize that we buy from beyond the sea, as fylkes, wines, &c. then all kind of vittayle are as deere or deere agayne, and no cause of God's part thereof as far as I can perceive; for I never saw more plentie of corn, grasse, and cattle of all sorte than we have at this present, and have had (as ye know) all these 20 yeares passed continually.

*Knight.]* Since ye have plentie of all things, of corne and cattel (as ye say) then it should not seem this dearth should be long of these inclosers, for it is not for scarceness of corne, that ye have this dearth, for (thanked be God) corne is good cheap, and so hath been these many years past. Then it cannot be the occasion of the dearth of cattle, for inclosure is the thing that nourisheth most of any other\*: yet I confess there is a wonderful dearth of all things; and that doe I, and all men of my sorte feel most grief in, which have no way to sell, nor occupation to lyve by, but only our lands. For you all with other artificers may save yourselves meetly well. Forasmuch

\* An admirable reply to the croakers of the present age.

much as yee, as all things are dearer, do aryse in the pryce of your wares and occupations accordingly.

*Husbandman.*] Yee rayse the pryce of your lands, and ye take farms also, and pastures to your hands, which was wont to be poor men's lyvings such as I am.

*Merchaunt.*] On my foul yee say truth.

*Knight.*] Syr, as I know it is true that yee complayne not without cause, so it is as true, that I and my sorte, I mean all gentlemen, have as great, yea, and far greater cause to complayne; the pryces of things are so risen on all hands, we are forced either to minish the third part of our household, or rayse the third part of our revenues; and for that we cannot so doe of our own landes, that is already in the hands of other men, many of us are enforced to keep peeces of our own landes, when they fall in our own possession, or to purchase some farme of other men's landes, and to store it with sheep, &c.

*Husbandman.*] Yea, those sheep is the cause of all these mischieves.

*Doctour.*] I perceive by you all, that there is none of you but have just cause to complayn.

*Knight.*] I marvel much, maister doctour, what should be the cause of this dearth, seeing all things are so plentiful.

*Doctour.*]

*Doctour.*] Syr, it is no doubt a thing to be mused upon. *Quere*, Whether if the husbandman were forced to abate the pryces of his stuff, this dearth would be amended; if he should be commanded to sell his wheat (for instance) at 8*d.* the bushel, rye at 6*d.* barley at 4*d.* his pig and goose at 4*d.* his hen at 1*d. ob.* his wool at a marke a tod, the landlord to return to his old rent, &c. would goods in that case from beyond seas be brought as good cheap after the same rate? A man would think yes. For example, if they now sell a yard of velvet for 20*s.* or 22*s.* and pay that for a tod of wool, were it not as good for them to sell their velvet for a marke a yard, so they had a tod of wool for a marke\*?"

In another part he says, "that in 20 or 30 years before 1581, commodities had in general risen 50 *per cent.*; some more. Cannot you neighbour remember, says he, that within these 30 years I could in this town

\* *Memoirs of Wool*, vol. i. p. 113. I transcribe this extract from Mr. Smith, not having been able to procure the original. He tells us, that the *Doctour* resolves the general dearness into the greater plenty of money from increase of trade, and accounts for wool being dearer in comparison than corn, from the former being allowed to be exported, and the latter too much restrained in that respect; but that by giving an equal liberty to both, notwithstanding inclosures, the ballance would be preserved by the farmer shifting from sheep to corn, and *vice versa*.



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town buy the best pig or goose I could lay my hands on, for four-pence, which now costeth twelve-pence, a good capon for three-pence or four-pence, a chicken for a penny, a hen for two-pence." P. 35.— Yet the price of ordinary labour was then 8d. a day, p. 31\*.

As a commentary on these extracts I shall give the price of wheat through the 16th century, in the coin of the present standard †.

	£.	s.	d.
1500, Wheat the quarter, -	0	6	7
1504, ——— ———	0	8	9
1514, ——— ———	0	5	6
1519, ——— ———	0	5	6
Average of 20 years,	0	6	7
1521, ——— ———	1	7	7
1527, ——— ———	1	15	10
Average of 7 years, —	1	7	8
1532, ——— ———	0	8	10
1550, ——— ———	0	5	1 1/4
1551, ——— ———	0	1	9

\* Mr. Hume's History of England, vol. v. p. 484.  
† This I take from Combrune's Enquiry, folio.

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	£.	s.	d.
1552, ——— ———	0	2	4
1553, ——— ———	0	8	2
1554, ——— ———	0	8	2
1555, ——— ———	0	8	2
1556, ——— ———	0	6	4
1557, ——— ———	1	2	6
1558, ——— ———	0	11	2 1/2
1559, ——— ———	0	8	2
1560, ——— ———	0	8	2
1561, ——— ———	0	8	3
1562, ——— ———	0	8	3
Average of 31 years, -	0	8	3 1/2
1573, ——— ———	2	1	2 1/2
1574, ——— ———	2	1	2 1/2
1575, ——— ———	1	4	9
Average of 3 years, —	1	15	8
1586, ——— ———	2	18	8
1587, ——— ———	3	6	6
1588, ——— ———	0	6	5
1592, ——— ———	0	19	6 1/2
1594, ——— ———	3	2	10
1595, ——— ———	2	3	6
1596, ——— ———	1	17	4
1597, ——— ———	2	14	6
1598, ——— ———	2	4	2

130 PRICES IN THE 16th CENTURY.

			£.	s.	d.
1599,	—	—	1	10	6
			<hr/>		
Average of 14 years*,	-		2	2	4
			<hr/>		

It is upon record that the rise of price in 1573, was not owing to any natural scarcity; and it is farther known, that in 1561, a free export was allowed and continued for some years. It has been asserted that the succeeding high prices were owing to that freedom of exportation: The whole of this table shews the contrary; exportation, whenever it raises prices, raises them immediately; for instance, in a few weeks instead of years; yet the price in 1561 and 1562 continued low.

But it appears from the dialogue quoted above, that from 20 to 30 years preceding 1581, prices had risen 50 per cent. It is plain that this had nothing to do with wheat, which continued at a tolerably steady

\* This table, as I mentioned before, is taken from the *Enquiry into the Prices of Wheat, Malt, &c.* folio; but I must remark the authority not much to be depended on. The author asserts his having reduced the prices to the present standard, but bill op *Fleetwood* gives 5 l. 4 s. the price of 1597, and 4 l. that of 1596: I have taken this fallible guide, because I consider here merely the comparison of the periods: I have before shewn what little dependance is to be placed on a man who makes the profit of arable land in fallow, wheat, barley, 78 per cent.

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steady price till 1573; and then arose for many years more than 50 per cent. The author of the dialogue writes in 1581, and in it inclosures are much arraigned for converting arable into grass for sheep; but mark, that this complaint followed 31 years, the average price of which was 8 s. 3 d. 1/2, and we are told that the labouring poor could not live, whose wages were 8 d. a day! Such are the preposterous and absurd complaints, which, like those of depopulation, are, as Mr. *Hume* most justly remarks, a vulgar complaint in all places and all ages\*. We have Sir *W. Petty*'s positive authority that day labour was 8 d. a day a century after this period; and at present it is 16 d. on an average.

But how could inclosures act against the plenty of corn, while wheat for 31 years stood at 8 s. 3 d. 1/2 present money? Does not this palpable contradiction shew the folly of such an idea: Does it not shew, what we have so often remarked, that any operation which has a tendency (like throwing arable to grass) to raise the price of any particular product—has in its very nature a tendency to the direct contrary effect. Throw so much arable to grass as to raise the price of corn, and you encourage the

K 2 corn

\* *Hist. Eng.* vol. v. p. 482.

corn farmers so much, that an increase of culture immediately follows. Every very high period in the preceding table is surely followed by a low one, until wheat came to 3*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.*; the highest price of all: what followed? Why 6*s.* 5*d.* a quarter the very next year; such an encouragement to the farmer was the former price that it at once produced the latter. The same remark is just in every table of prices that has been published throughout *Europe*. And the low price being an equal discouragement, it must at once produce an high one.

Is it not evident therefore that the *Knight* in the dialogue has reason to say that it could not be owing to inclosures that corn was dear; nor could they make cattle dear, for inclosures cause plenty of cattle. This is the very mirror of the present state of *England*: Inclosures are condemned for raising prices: How do they raise prices? Why they raise wheat to 2*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* a quarter for 7 years\*, and they make beef and mutton dear by infinitely increasing the number of fat sheep and oxen!—When shall we see an end to these absurdities?

The author of the dialogue tells us, that in the 20 or 30 years preceding 1581, commodities in general had risen 50 *per cent.*

\* *Observations on Reversionary Payments*, 3d Edit. p. 383.

*cent.* and some more: and the short-sighted good people of those days attributed this evil to sheep, inclosures, grass, and great farms; they would not look at the right cause with *Shakespeare*, the increase of money; it is the nature of the vulgar, great and small, in all ages, to attribute evils to such a cause as may be changed; because the malignity of man loves an opportunity to quarrel with government. If sheep are the cause; prohibit, say they, great flocks; if horses, tax them; if great farms, divide them: such causes admit of remedies, which if not applied, give an opportunity of clamour: but attribute them to an increase and consequent cheapness of money—to publick wealth—to national prosperity—the prospect is too brilliant for a jaundiced eye, that can look with pleasure only on ideal evil and chimerical declension.

Among the present complaints of the high prices of provisions, we are told by some writers that it is not the rates of wheat that oppress the people, but those of meat. Among these, Dr. *Price* is pleased to rank himself: he says that it is the superior price of flesh that hurts the poor, as it forces them to consume bread only, consequently they could before live better when wheat was high, than they can now while it is comparatively low. I cannot subscribe to

K 3 this

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this observation, for the reasons I am going to produce; nor do I put much faith in the registered prices of meat, from their being so uncertain and defultory; we have them not (except at the victualling-office) in the same regular manner as the *Windsor* prices of wheat and malt. In Mr. *Combrune's* table of prices, who supports the same general argument as Dr. *Price*, we have the following minutes:

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1309, Wheat,	1	1	11	An ox,	2	14	0
1314, —	3	1	2	—	3	13	6
1315, —	3	1	2	—	7	6	9
1336, —	0	6	1½	—	1	0	4½
1349, —	0	5	6	—	0	18	4
1444, —	0	9	0	—	3	4	9
1532, —	0	8	10	—	1	16	6
1550, —	0	5	1¾	—	0	18	0
Averages,	1	2	4	—	2	14	0

Hence it appears that a fat ox in those days was worth as much as 20 bushels of wheat. If we call the present price of wheat 6 s. 6 d. a bushel, it is for 20, 6 l. 10 s.; then if we consider that the improvements in husbandry for two centuries have contributed more to improve the food and size of cattle than any other ar-

PRICES OF MEAT. 135

ticle; we shall have great reason to think that such an ox as in that period yielded a price equivalent to 6 l. 10 s. would not at present yield more. If the total want of turnips, and those other means of winter fattening, long since discovered, be considered—and that hay sold as well or better than at present, and consequently must be sparingly used, we may conjecture to what size their cattle arose; and then judge if they were probably better than the *Scotch* black cattle bred on mountains with little winter food, which fell fat from 5 l. to 10 l. at present.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1309, Wheat,	1	1	11	Sheep,	0	9	1
1314, —	3	1	2	—	0	3	7
1336, —	0	6	1½	—	0	2	0½
1310, —	0	17	9	—	0	3	9
1448, —	0	13	0	—	0	5	0
1531, —	0	8	10	—	0	3	10¾
1532, —	0	8	10	—	0	5	6½
1558, —	0	11	2½	—	0	3	6
Averages,	1	0	0	—	0	4	6

The value of a sheep therefore was equal to 1 bushel 3 pecks and ¼ of wheat: this at present would be at 6 s. 6 d. a bushel, 12 s. 2 d. for more than which I do not apprehend one of the sheep of those days

would sell, for the same reasons I before mentioned in respect to oxen\*.

In 1532, when wheat was 8s. 10d. a fat sheep is 5s. 6d. 1/2; this is equal to 5 bushels, a much higher price than they yield now; and difference of breed considered, probably double.

But Dr. Price gives, from a manuscript of the Duke of Northumberland's, the following particular: "In 1512, the price of wheat was 6s. 2d. a quarter, that of a fat ox, 13s. 4d.; the price of wheat therefore, says he, was about a seventh of its present price; that of meat, only a fifteenth." Here therefore we find the Doctor fixes the present price of the fat ox at 10l.: But on what possible authority can he suppose, such oxen as were fed in Yorkshire 150 years ago, to be of a size that would now yield that sum; if the considerations I before urged are admitted, I should rather suppose the oxen of those days no better than Scotch runts at present. At best therefore it is only one supposition in support of another supposition; an uncertainty

\* I must remark on both these articles that it is uncertain whether the oxen and sheep were fat or lean; but in all probability both; as they are sometimes called an ox fat; a sheep fat; if all were so, it would not be specified so in particular years, and not all.

tainty that must run through all accounts of the price of cattle, which vary so prodigiously, that 20l. may be very cheap for an ox, and 5l. very dear. Further, a wether (not said if fat or lean) is 1s. 8d. or equal to 2 bushels 1 peck of wheat: That quantity of wheat at 6s. 6d. is 14s. 7d. a very good price for a wether at present through the North of England; and in some parts of the North, an high one: the same observation is applicable to the hog at 2s.

The Doctor next quotes from Maitland another proportion. Wheat, 12s. An ox, 1l. 18s. A wether, 3s. Butter, 3/4 and 1d. a pound. Cheese, 1/2d. These are,

- The ox, — 26 bushels of wheat.
- The wether, - 2 ditto.
- Butter the pound, 2 quarts ditto.
- Cheese ditto, - 1 quart ditto.

The prices of these commodities at present would be (wheat at 6s. 6d.)

	£.	s.	d.
The ox, —	8	9	0
— wether, —	0	13	0
— butter per pound, -	0	0	4 3/4
— cheese, —	0	0	2 1/2

From these prices I must draw very contrary conclusions from the Doctor: the ox and the wether are probably as cheap now as before, but what amazes me is the article of butter; which he prints in italicks, that it may be remarked. Salt butter is frequently

quently in the present period 6 d. a pound, and butter in 1549, so high as 4 d.  $\frac{3}{4}$ ! Is this produced to shew the disproportion of the products of cattle to wheat? Twenty years ago butter in London was cheaper than 200 years ago. If the butter is supposed to be fresh, the price is high, but why may we not think it all salt so soon after an age that had no mutton in winter but what was salted?

No idea on these subjects is more mistaken than the supposition that butter in this age is dearer than formerly: very many instances might be produced of the contrary. Instead of being dearer, it has not advanced near so much as most other commodities. In June 1695, Houghton expressly says, fresh butter in the country 70 miles from London sold at 6 d. a pound, and he mentions it as a common price\*. Cheese is low, but unless we knew what cheese it was, we can find no conclusions: In Norfolk and Suffolk, cheese is at this time but 3 d.  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and some under that. But let us quit such uncertain conjectures founded on accidental circumstances—the prices of single years—of particular purchasers, which can give us no more knowledge than we at present reap from hearing that Nokes bought beef last Saturday

\* Collection for Improving of Husbandry and Trade, vol. i. p. 390.

day at 2 d. a pound, or Stiles butter for 11 d. What was the quality? Was the market day high or low? Did others buy so? Such insulated circumstances scraped out of dusty libraries and records are not worth transcribing for such general uses as are too often made of them. The only register of the prices of meat that carries with it the least degree of authenticity is the records of the victualling-office, the prices of which are always cheaper than the common ones in the market, but this is not of consequence, when one period is compared with another, as that circumstance operates equally in all. The following table of the London prices of beef and pork, will shew us how much these commodities are advanced.

Years.	Beef per Cwt.		—	Pork per Cwt.	
	s.	d.		s.	d.
1683,	18	8	—	25	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
1684,	20	0	—	26	0
1685,	20	0	—	26	6
1686,	17	0	—	26	0
1687,	20	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	25	3
1688,	20	6	—	23	9
1689,	20	10	—	31	8
1690,	20	4	—	25	0
1691,	19	3	—	24	2
1692,	18	6	—	24	1 $\frac{1}{2}$

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Years.	Beef per Cwt.		—	Pork per Cwt.	
	s.	d.		s.	d.
1693,	22	0	—	29	6
1694,	23	4	—	32	6
1695,	26	0	—	32	3
1696,	25	2	—	29	6
1697,	25	0	—	31	0
1698,	26	0	—	32	6
1699,	21	9	—	33	10
1700,	25	0	—	33	10
1701,	24	6	—	32	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1702,	27	3	—	33	7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1703,	22	6	—	27	6
1704,	21	2	—	24	0
1705,	25	7	—	27	10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1706,	21	5	—	27	5
1707,	19	0	—	25	7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1708,	20	6	—	28	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1709,	26	0	—	30	7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1710,	31	0	—	45	7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1711,	39	6	—	58	6
1712,	23	10	—	31	9
1713,	23	1	—	30	9
1714,	21	10	—	29	10
1715,	23	3	—	28	0
1716,	23	9	—	31	3
1717,	22	0	—	30	9
1718,	23	0	—	29	10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1719,	24	7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	27	6
1720,	29	3	—	37	9
1721,	21	9	—	43	3

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Years.	Beef per Cwt.		—	Pork per Cwt.	
	s.	d.		s.	d.
1722,	26	9	—	31	0
1723,	18	0	—	24	0
1724,	21	6	—	31	0
1725,	20	8	—	34	6
1726,	26	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	37	6
1727,	21	9	—	35	6
1728,	19	7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	32	0
1729,	26	0	—	40	6
1730,	18	6	—	29	3
1731,	18	3	—	24	5
1732,	16	9	—	19	0
1733,	16	1	—	25	0
1734,	16	5	—	23	5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1735,	13	3	—	21	2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1736,	13	7	—	23	11
1737,	13	5	—	22	6
1738,	18	7	—	30	1
1739,	18	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	25	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1740,	23	7 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	—	31	0 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1741,	24	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	36	3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
1742,	24	4	—	32	9
1743,	19	2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	27	2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
1744,	18	3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	22	5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
1745,	18	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	21	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
1746,	21	3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	—	24	8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
1747,	19	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	—	24	0 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1767,	25	5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	none	b <sup>t</sup> .
1768,	25	3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	ditto.	
1769,	22	9	—	33	0

142 PRICES OF MEAT.

Years.	Beef per Cwt.		Pork per Cwt.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
1770, - -	22	2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	41	5
1771, - -	22	6	43	5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Average of the last 5 years, - -	23	7	39	3
Average of the 17 years of the last century, - -	21	5	28	1
Former dearer by - - - -	2	2	11	2
Average of the years 1709, 10, 11, 12, - - - -	30	1	41	7
Last 5 years,	23	7	39	3
Former dearer by - - - -	6	6	2	4

If the 17 years ending 1771 were known, the average would probably be lower, or at least as low as the 17 of the last century. I think this is upon the whole, a reply to the observation of Dr. Price\*, that the exportation, which in 1697,

\* Page 383. The uncertainty which attends the ancient registers of prices (except those of wheat and malt

FALSE ACCOUNTS. 143

1697, went on without clamour, though at 3*l.* a quarter, was because meat was so reasonable as to enable the poor to live on that: On the contrary in 1697, beef was 2*s.*

malt at *Windsor*) is so great, that I should never have thought of making use of them had not others given them an importance which they do not deserve. While it is so difficult to know these prices at present, how can we suppose it so easy to know those of the 15th century? Before the late act of parliament for publishing the prices of corn, how did any person know what was the price even of wheat? *I bought at 5*s.* Nay—says another, I gave 7*s.* 6*d.* A third in company (from a place where the measure is 11 gallons) 9*s.* A fourth, who bought the worst wheat he could find in the market, 3*s.* 6*d.* A fifth, who looked for the finest, 8*s.* If any one of them happened to make a minute in a book which is found 300 years afterwards, the price minuted is asserted to be that of the period. We find in these old registers wheat, *so much*, oats, *so much*, an ox, 1*l.* 16*s.* Very pretty registers truly! How came the gentleman who made such a minute, to know what the price of an ox was? He might buy an ox, and minute the price of it—and so may I now go into *Smithfield* and buy one worth thirty guineas, or I may buy one worth 5*l.* 10*s.*; but am I in either case to say for the information of posterity, *such is the price of an ox?* It is the same with calves, sheep, pigs, and geese, any of which may be dear or cheap, without conveying the least information if all the causes are not explained. I have mentioned above the price of labour being 8*d.* a day in 1581, and the same in 1681, on the authority of *Shakespeare* and Sir *W. Petty*: but must it not strike every one, that neither of these writers could know any thing of the matter? They speak of 8*d.* being*



2s. 6d. per cwt. dearer than in 1771, and pork only 2s. a cwt. cheaper than in 1769. Let me also remark, that for this fact I have not only publick contracts to quote, but also private prices. In 1682, the common price of beef was 3d. per pound\*.

And

being the common price of a day's labour. Where was it the common price, at *London*, or in the mountains of *Yorkshire*? Was it the price in hay, in harvest, or in winter? Thus Mr. *Combrune* tells us that in 1351, the price of labour was 2d.  $\frac{3}{4}$  a day, but reapers had 4d.  $\frac{1}{2}$ , threshers 7d. and mowing grass, 1s. 1d.  $\frac{3}{4}$  per acre or day, I know not which, but either is an absurdity, for no such proportions could possibly exist in any age. There is an extreme difficulty in knowing what the price of labour is at present in any place, for in many, there are three or four prices per diem in the year; some with board, others exclusive of it; besides which, there are many sorts of work generally done by the piece, insomuch that a man whose nominal pay shall be 1s. a day, shall on an average of the year, earn 1s. 4d. From all which considerations it is surprizing that writers, very acute in other matters, should readily accept any information which tends to shew prices in former times, while they must know it to be so difficult to gain those even of the present. And this consideration ought to make us value the registers on real authority much the more, such as the *Windsor* prices—the register act—and the prices of meat laid before parliament by the victualing-office, all of which, though not infallible, are far more deserving of notice than the gossiping tittle tattle of conversation, in which every man remembers just those prices that suit his argument, and quotes purchases that have about as much authority here, as they have in the Moon.

\* *Houghton's Husbandry*, vol. iv. p. 91.

And in 1768, I shewed, that on an average of a great part of the kingdom it was 3d. and even at *London* only 3d.  $\frac{1}{2}$  † How upon the whole is it possible for any person to assert, that the export of corn—monopoly of farms—or inclosures, have raised the price of beef and pork so as to exclude those poor from eating them now, who in the last century eat them on wages of 8d. a day?

All these ideas are contrary to the nature of things; we also find them contrary to the few facts that can be gained. As little reason is there to think that the proportion between the prices of bread and meat has varied in any degree sufficient to be the least oppressive:—none of these circumstances, nor any others that can be named, are comparable to the rise of husbandry labour and poor-rates throughout the kingdom.

But the same writer, whose accurate investigation of other subjects makes his opinions on this point the more to be lamented, has other arguments against inclosures, which must not be overlooked. He says, the increase of tillage is now at an end, and adds, "I have lately received an account of a large common field in *Leicestershire*, which used to produce annually 800  
L quarters

† *Six Months Tour*, vol. iv. p. 278.

quarters of corn, besides maintaining 200 cattle, but which now, in consequence of being inclosed and getting into few hands, produces little or no corn, and maintains no more cattle than before, though the rents are considerably advanced\*." If the Doctor had formed his tables of Observations on no better authority than this, they would not have been very famous. *Rents raised—corn disappeared—cattle not increased* †!—What are we to think of such facts? I travelled through *Leicestershire* and *Northamptonshire*, and not I think without attention. I saw great tracts of country inclosed, and laid from arable to grass; but I saw throughout the graziers fields, such herds of fat sheep and oxen, as delighted

\* *Observations on reverfionary Payments*, p. 388.

† "We shall only observe, that it seems more the national interest of *England* to employ its land to the breeding and feeding of cattle, than to the produce of corn; for, as Mr. *Fortrey* has well noted, "the profit of one acre of pasture in the flesh, hide, and tallow of an ox, or in the flesh, wool and tallow of a sheep, or in the carcase of a horse, is of so much greater value abroad, than the like yield of the earth would be in corn; that the exportation of this nation might be at least double to what it is, if rightly disposed." *Davenant's Works*, vol. ii. p. 229. Sir *Thomas Moore* says, that a shepherd and his dog will eat up townships; but will not the wool and skins produced by an acre of pasture, make greater employment than the tillage of such an acre can? I question it not." *Houghton's Husbandry*, vol. i. p. 49.

delighted the eye—the generality of these lands are stocked at the rate of a large ox, and 2 ½ sheep to every two acres; and the soil does so well in grass that they fat large sheep the winter through.—Before the inclosure, those lands were managed in the course,

1. Fallow,
2. Wheat,
3. Spring corn.

How in the name of wonder were fat oxen and sheep kept before? Upon the fallows? Or upon straw? That the corn disappears is most certain; but that it is amply made up in beef and mutton is as certain.

The system of inclosing arable lands and laying them down to grass, lessens the quantity of corn—yet does the Doctor admit that corn in the present period is cheap: This system increases greatly (as *Shakespeare* well observed) beef and mutton; yet the Doctor complains of those commodities being dear, and owing to inclosures. What is this but in other words saying, that we lessen the quantity of beef by increasing the number of oxen:—and render mutton extremely dear, by making sheep more plentiful! But these marvellous effects take place at a time when, according to the same writer, depopulation operates like a pestilence:

pestilence: here, therefore, is a fresh reason why meat is dear—the mouths that eat it being daily lessened!

The fact is this; in the central counties of the kingdom, particularly *Northamptonshire, Leicestershire*, and parts of *Warwic, Huntingdon* and *Buckinghamshires*, there have been within 30 years large tracts of the open field arable under that vile course, 1 fallow, 2 wheat, 3 spring corn, inclosed and laid down to grafs, being much more suited to the wetness of the soil than corn; and yields in beef, mutton, hides and wool, beyond comparifon a greater neat produce than when under corn. At that time, the horses that tilled the land eat up the few grafs inclosures near the farm houses, and a considerable part of the spring corn, whereas at present, many farms of from 500 to 1000 acres have not more than two or three nags on them for the farmers, to ride and see their stock. Thus the land yields a greater neat produce in food for mankind—the landlord doubles his income, which enables him to employ so many more manufacturers and artizans—the farmer increases his income, by means of which he also does the same—the hides and wool are a creation of so much employment for other manufacturers

—How any one from such a system can deduce the melancholy prospects of depopulation, famine and distress, is to me amazing.

But further; Dr. *Price* and the other writers who assure us we should throw down our hedges, and waste one third of our farms in a barren fallow by way of making beef and mutton cheap, will confine themselves to the inclosures which have converted arable to grafs. What say they to those which have changed grafs to arable? They chuse to be silent. I do not comprehend the amusement that is found in constantly looking at those objects which are supposed to be gloomy—and in regularly lamenting the evils that surround us, though they flow from causes which shower down much superior blessings. When I look around me in this country, I think I every where see so great and animating a prospect that the small specks which may be discerned in the hemisphere, are lost in the brilliancy that surrounds them. I cannot spread a curtain over the illumin'd scene, and leave nothing to view but the mere shades of so splendid a piece\*.

L 3

What

\* A *French* writer has a very good observation on the distempered imaginations of our croaking politicians: “L’Angleterre se trouve dans l’état d’un homme qui se porte bien, qui jouit d’une santé brillante, qui  
à la

What will these gentlemen say to the inclosures in *Norfolk, Suffolk, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire*, and all the northern counties? What say they to the sands of *Norfolk, Suffolk* and *Nottinghamshire*, which yield corn and mutton and beef from *the force of INCLOSURE alone*? What say they to the wolds of *York* and *Lincoln*, which from barren heaths, at 1s. per acre, are *by INCLOSURE alone* rendered profitable farms? Ask Sir *Cecil Wray* if without *INCLOSURE* he could advance his heaths by sainfoine from 1s. to 20s. an acre.—What say they to the vast tracts in the peak of *Derby*, which *by INCLOSURE alone* are changed from black regions of ling to fertile fields covered with cattle? What say they to the improvements of moors in the northern counties, where *INCLOSURES alone* have made those countries smile with culture which before were dreary as night?—What have these gentlemen to say to these instances? Cannot they manage to assure us the prospect is delusive? They can.

a la respiration libre, mais qui ne connoît pas assez l'anatomie pour sentir quels sont les principes de la santé dont il jouit; si quelqu'un lui dit que son embonpoint pourroit bien être le principe masque d'une maladie, il craint, il s'allarme, il se trouble, l'inquiétude le gagne." *Traité de la Circulation et du Crédit*, 1771. P. 44.

can. Hear how they are characterized.—  
 "Inclosures of waste lands and commons  
 " would be useful if divided into *small al-*  
 " *lotments*, and given up to be occupied at  
 " moderate rent, by the poor. But if besides  
 " lessening the produce of fine wool\*, they  
 " bear

L 4

\* How far the produce of wool is declined, may partly be gathered from the rates at which it has been sold in different times, being now as cheap as it was centuries ago; while the value of money has sunk so much, that most other commodities have greatly risen in price.

Years.	Price per Ton in present Money.		
	l.	s.	d.
1198, Wool,	—	—	0 15 0
1337, — the best,	—	—	1 8 0
1339, Wool,	—	—	1 10 3
1353, Wool,	—	—	1 10 4
1390, — (the sale restricted to certain places)	—	—	0 10 11
1425, Wool,	—	—	0 17 5
Average,	—	—	1 1 11
1533, — the best cloathing,	—	—	0 13 4
1581, Wool,	—	—	0 18 5
1622, Wool,	—	—	1 3 8
1641, Wool,	—	—	1 4 0
1647, Romney Marsh,	—	—	1 17 6
1648, Ditto,	—	—	2 0 0
1651, Ordinary,	—	—	1 8 0
— Civil War,	—	—	1 19 8
1656, Wool,	—	—	2 1 3
Average, from the beginning of the } civil War to the Restoration, }			1 15 0

152 PRICE OF WOOL.

“ bear hard on the poor, by depriving them  
“ of a part of their subsistence, and *only*  
“ go

			l.	s.	d.
1660, Wool,	—	—	1	19	8
1670,	—	—	1	8	0
1677,	—	—	0	14	0
1694,	—	—	1	8	0
1698,	—	—	1	1	0
Average, from the Restoration to the end of the Century,			1	6	1
1706, Wool,	—	—	0	17	6
1707,	—	—	0	16	6
1712,	—	—	0	15	0
1713,	—	—	0	18	0
1717,	—	—	1	5	0
1737,	—	—	0	11	0
1739,	—	—	0	13	0
1742,	—	—	0	14	0
1743,	—	—	1	0	2
Average,			0	16	8

Smith's *Memoirs of Wool*, Vol. ii. p. 507. The writer justly observes, that when wheat was 8*d.* a bushel, the goose 4*d.* and the hen 1*d.* wool was a mark a tod, and that the fall in price was a great burthen upon the landed interest. And manufacturers clamoured so much about the year 1737, upon account of the decay of our woollen trade, that much was written on it, and parliament busied with their complaints; they brought the low price of wool as a proof of this; but all was false, for at that very time the export of woollen goods amounted to 4,158,643*l.* 17*s.* 0*d.* which was twice what it was in 1698. Thus the author of the *British Woollen Manufacturers*

STATE OF WOOLLEN TRADE. 153

“ go towards increasing farms already too  
“ large, the advantages attending them  
“ may

to the *Members of Parliament*, 1737: “ Your honours are fully apprized, even by your tenants, that the effects of a declining trade are now generally felt: and no general cause can be ascribed but the great decay of our woollen exportation trade.” The author of the *Observations on British Wool*, 1738, says, “ Our trade is considerably decreased; and even the landholder finds the inconvenience thereof by the present low price of wool.” And the author of the *Essay on the Causes of the Decline of foreign Trade*, 1739, (from whose fallacious accounts the *French* writers have borrowed so much) says, “ That the foreign trade of *Britain* declines, will appear by the following symptoms, viz. *the low price of wool*. I appeal, says he, to the experience of every honest man conversant in trade, whether it does not decline, year after year, especially *our woollen trade*.” And Mr. *Webber*:— “ The present low price of wool shews the great decay of our trade. Hence it is evident, that we have not one THIRD PART of the quantity of goods carried to *foreign markets* which we formerly had.” And Mr. *Lowndes* intitles his Scheme, printed 1745, by order of the house of commons, “ *A Scheme—* in order to RE-ESTABLISH the woollen manufacture of *England*.”

I have inserted these long accounts to shew the disposition that is so common of seeing imaginary evils, and magnifying them as much as possible:—these writers, and some others, alarmed the nation at the decline of what was then FLOURISHING; and it is the same with our present complainants of luxury and depopulation.—From the above table, Dr. *Price* may collect how much reason there is for thinking the quantity of our fine wool lessened; for after 1743, the price

“ may not much exceed the disadvantages \*.” Hence therefore we find all these improvements very equivocal—Before it is allowed that converting ling to corn is beneficial, it must previously be asked if the im-

price continued for many years low; for some years last past it is risen to about 20s. or a guinea; but that price is nothing (the value of money considered) to what it was from the Restoration to 1699, viz. 1 l. 6s. 1 d. equal now to double that sum.

\* *Observations on Reversionary Payments*, p. 390. While our own writers, in the usual manner of depreciating every thing in their own country and their own age, would fain make out the misery of this kingdom, foreigners are struck with a very different idea. S’il existe une nation qui, sans être très nombreuse; possède une grande quantité de terres bien cultivées; si cette nation augmente journellement son agriculture et son commerce, sans que sa population augmente en pareille proportion; en fin, si elle fait naître beaucoup plus de subsistances sans nourrir plus d’habitans, je dis; *Il faut que cette nation consume spécifiquement plus que les autres; il faut que le tarif de la vie humaine y soit plus haut. Et c’est là l’INDICE LE PLUS CERTAIN DE LA FELICITE DES HOMMES. Tel est le cas où se trouve l’Angleterre. Felicité Publique*, tom. ii. p. 141. And again, speaking of our great national debt, the great evil of which he thinks has been not expending the money in the improvement of the wastes of *Scotland and Ireland*; he says, “ J’avoue que je trouverois difficilement d’autres objets que la guerre ait fait négliger; car *cette heureuse contrée offre par tout l’IMAGE DE LA PROSPERITE. Population, agriculture, manufactures, grands chemins, établissemens magnifiques, rien ne paroît y manquer, et c’est un argument terrible entre les mains des sceptiques en politique.*” *Ib.* tom. ii. p. 190.

improvement is wrought by that ghastly object of dread and terror—a great farmer; before it is acknowledged right to make that sand which would not feed rabbits, produce beef and mutton, we must know whether the poor were deprived of a part of their subsistence:—before you will submit to change the heaths of *Lincoln* to fertile fields of sainfoine, you must demand, *Were the allotments small?* I must own, it is with astonishment that I thus see superior minds stooping to prejudices so unworthy of their abilities.

How, in the name of common sense, were such improvements to be wrought by little or even moderate farmers! Can such inclose wastes at a vast expence—cover them with an hundred loads an acre of marle—or six or eight hundred bushels of lime—keep sufficient flocks of sheep for folding—and conduct those (for the lower classes) mighty operations essential to new improvements? No. It is to GREAT FARMERS you owe these. Without GREAT FARMS you never would have seen these improvements—much I suppose to the satisfaction of those who declare themselves so indiscriminately their enemies\*.

\* I must beg leave to transcribe from Mr. *Hume*, whose political ideas have an acumen that distinguishes him in an uncommon manner, a passage or two which highly

SECT. IX.

CONSUMPTION OF MEAT.

THESE points are the great foundation of *Britain's* agriculture; but there is another circumstance which though not of equal

highly deserve attention, and are indeed the best reply to most of the advice given by Dr. Price on great farms, inclosures, luxury and depopulation.

*Encouragement by Exportation.*

“ It was prohibited to export horses; as if that exportation did not encourage the breed, and render them more plentiful in the kingdom.” *Hist. of Eng.* Vol. iii. p. 401.

*Freedom of Prices.*

“ Prices were affixed to woollen cloth \*, to caps, and hats †: and the wages of labourers were regulated by law ‡. It is evident, that these matters ought always to be left free, and be entrusted to the common course of business and commerce.” *Ib.* p. 402.

*Rise of Prices.*

“ Labour and commodities have certainly risen since the discovery of the *West-Indies*; but not so much in every particular as is generally imagined. The greater industry of the present times, has increased the number of tradesmen and labourers, so as to keep wages nearer a par than could be expected from the great increase of gold and silver. And the additional art employed in the finer manufactures, has even made some of these commodities fall below their former value. Not to mention that merchants and dealers being contented with less profit than formerly,

\* 4 H. 7. c. 8.

† *Ib.* c. 9.

‡ 11 H. 7. c. 22.

equal consequence, should not be forgotten — It is the custom of eating such quantities

afford the goods cheaper to their customers.” *Ib.* p. 402.—And again—“ There seems to have been two periods in which prices rose remarkably in *England*, namely, that in Queen *Elizabeth's* reign, when they are computed to have doubled, and that in the present age. Between the two, there seems to have been a stagnation. It would appear, that industry during that intermediate period increased as fast as gold and silver, and kept commodities nearly on a par with money.” *Ib.* Vol. v. p. 484.—This is an excellent idea, and accounts in one word for the effect which other writers attribute to engrossing farms, enclosures, and all the nonsense we meet with in so many volumes.

*Enclosures, Farms, and Population.*

“ The absurd limitations of manufactures proceeded from a desire of promoting husbandry, which however is never more effectually encouraged than by the increase of manufactures. For a like reason, the law enacted against inclosures, and for the keeping up of farm-houses, scarcely deserves the high praises bestowed on it by Lord *Bacon*. If husbandmen understand agriculture, and have a ready vent for their commodities, *we need not dread a diminution of the people* employed in the country. All methods of supporting populousness, except by the interests of the proprietors, are violent and ineffectual. During a century and half after this period, there was a frequent renewal of laws and edicts against depopulation; whence we may infer, that none of them were ever executed. The natural course of improvement at last provided a remedy.” *Ib.* Vol. iii. p. 404.

quantities of meat in this country, and, on comparison with others, so little bread.—It is true, a very able writer draws from this a direct contrary conclusion from what I shall; and as his authority is too good in general not to demand a proper deference, I shall offer what I have to observe on this subject only as doubts that I have conceived.

Whatever a people principally consumes for their subsistence, must be the great object of the husbandman in his culture: thus in *France*, where bread, I apprehend, forms 19 parts in 20 of their food, corn, and especially wheat, is the only great object of cultivation; vines answering to our barley. In *England*, on the contrary, the quantity of meat, butter and cheese, consumed by all ranks of the people, is immense—to a much greater value, I should suppose, than that of wheat; hence cattle to our farmers is an object as important as corn: Thus the husbandmen in *France* keep scarcely any cattle, addicting themselves almost entirely to corn—in *England* vast quantities of cattle are kept. This circumstance I should apprehend would, if every thing else was equal, give a prodigious general superiority to the *English* agriculture. Let us consider on what principles the farmers of the two countries

countries must necessarily manage their lands. In *England*, they keep such part of their farms in meadow and pasture as are by the nature of the soil so adapted; they throw their arable land into such courses of crops, that several are introduced which are either summer or winter food for cattle: thus the best cultivated parts of the kingdom adopt the following course:

1. Turneps.
2. Barley or oats.
3. Clover.
4. Wheat.

In which course, there is as much food for cattle raised, as corn; and as a large part of the second year's produce, which is barley and oats, also goes to the cattle, above half the period is applied to their support, and wheat occupies only a fourth. After the wheat many farmers add,

5. Pease or beans.

Which is another year given for cattle. This course is that of very good husbandry; but where the culture is not so good, more crops are taken, but the addition generally oats. Now upon this system, a considerable part of the whole farm or meadow, and a large portion of the arable are employed for cattle—the quantity of dung raised is very great, which being spread,  
as



as it usually is on the arable fields, insures good crops—so much better than if such flocks of cattle were not kept, that I question if three acres are not quite as productive as five would be. Nay, I have in this point no doubt but the barley and wheat in a farm thrown into the course abovementioned, with a due proportion besides of meadow, yield a greater value than the corn in general would if one year was fallow, and the three following ones were wheat and barley—of such great consequence is this system of manuring.

Now let us turn to the *Frenchmen*; their two most general courses are,

- 1. Fallow,
- 2. Wheat.

And,

- 1. Fallow,
- 2. Wheat,
- 3. Barley or oats.

Much the greatest part of the farm arable—the meadow and pasture being very trivial, except in spots that cannot be otherwise applied, and near great towns. Thus very little cattle can be kept, except for tillage; in very many farms no other. Here we find manuring in any degree is cut off at once, consequently the crops must be poor; besides this, one half or one third of the land is fallow, at a mere barren expence:

expence: A system which we know from the experience of our open fields is miserable, and not to be compared for profit to those in which crops for cattle are made the preparation for corn.

Wheat being in *France* the great object, all the expence is applied to that: A year's fallow is given, and what little dung they raise is all spread on it; this produces a middling, perhaps a good crop; an effect we experience in our own open fields, and when the farmer reaps his wheat he often finds himself out of pocket, and has to depend for his profit on a poor crop of spring corn. Thus the little demand for meat, butter and cheese, necessitates him to apply all his land to corn—the consequences of which are, he pursues a bad course of crops—he has no dung—his products are small—his profit comparatively nothing.

It must surely be evident to every one, that there is a great advantage to the *English* farmer from corn and cattle being in equal demand; since he is thereby enabled to apply all his lands to those productions only to which they are best adapted—and at the same time the one is constantly a means of increasing the product of the other.

Nor is this advantage by any means confined to the husbandman:—the state is

M intimately

intimately concerned. A much greater value is drawn from the earth; of this we have proof in the open lands in *England*. A crop of wheat in the course, 1. turnips, 2. barley, 3. clover, 4. wheat, on an inclosed farm, with a part meadow, yields acre for acre, from one quarter to two more than in the course, 1. fallow, 2. wheat, 3. barley, on an open field farm: And barley in the former succeeding turnips, yields on an average, nearly, if not quite double what it does in the latter succeeding wheat: But supposing the one  $2\frac{1}{2}$  quarters, and the other 4, it is giving as little superiority as can be admitted. A slight calculation will shew this point clearly.

*Open field.*

Wheat after fallow, $2\frac{1}{2}$ quarters an acre, at 50s.	}	£.	s.	d.
Barley after wheat, $2\frac{1}{2}$ quarters, at 30s.		6	5	0
		3	15	0
In three years, - - -		10	0	0
<i>Per acre per ann.</i> - - -		3	6	8

*Inclosure.*

Turnips, - - - -	£.	s.	d.
Barley, 4 quarters, at 30s. -	1	15	0
Clover, - - - -	6	0	0
Wheat, 3 quarters, at 50s. -	4	0	0
	7	10	0
In four years, - - -	19	5	0
<i>Per acre per ann.</i> - - -	4	16	3
	3	6	8
Superiority <i>per acre per ann.</i>	1	9	7

This every practical farmer will allow me is as little superiority as can be admitted;—yet are the national consequences prodigious; for there is a much greater deduction from the open field produce for expences, than from the product of the inclosure, where a proper part of the farm is grass. Thus more in proportion is the farmer's profit, consequently he is wealthier, and more able to work improvements—and at the same time to pay his landlord a greater rent: points of vast importance to the national interest. But if the superiority of one course to the other was only 1*l.* 9*s.* *per acre* on all the arable land,

land, it would prove of a magnitude extremely deserving attention.

The author abovementioned therefore thinking we should be more populous if we lived as much on bread as the *French*, is an idea that seems doubtful: It is a strange position at best, that bad husbandry should add to our population—that losing 1*l.* 9*s.* 7*d.* an acre on our arable lands should increase the people. This is fairly stating the case, for if the demand for meat is changed to an increased one for wheat, the farmers must either change their good course to the bad one of the *French*, or the wheat must be imported; as the latter can in no country be depended on, the former must inevitably be the case: and the moment the sale of meat stops, those crops which best prepare for corn must disappear, when there would be no choice left the farmer but the old husbandry of fallow and wheat—unless new refinements were introduced, which we cannot speak of here with propriety.

But this comparison of population depends on another enquiry: Which yields most food for man, 1. fallow, 2. wheat, 3. barley, or 1. turnips, 2. barley, 3. clover, 4. wheat? The abovementioned author I apprehend, supposes the country of bread eaters the most populous, because a given tract of land applied to yielding bread, will  
feed

feed more than if applied to bread and meat: If this is *not* his reason, I cannot conjecture what *is*. But I should suppose that the latter course yields far more food than the former.

The part of a farm when properly arranged, that is under grass, is the part more applicable to grass than corn—so that when all is converted to corn, the produce of the whole must not be supposed upon a par with the part which is best for corn. And surely an acre of grass in three years will yield beef and mutton to support a man, as long as one acre of wheat; for the second crop in corn countries is oats for the team. But such proportions can only be taken in the value of the crops in money: in the comparison I gave of the two courses above, the superiority of 1*l.* 9*s.* 7*d.* *per* acre, is what should decide it, with this additional point relative to food, that it is gained by a course which gives three crops in four years as food for man; *viz.* the wheat, and the turnips and clover fed by cattle, to say nothing of the barley; whereas in the other course, only one in three is to be reckoned, *viz.* the wheat. This superiority will more than answer the inferiority (supposing it such) of a part of the farm being meadow and pasture; but it is not clear that good pasture does not  
M 3 yield

yield as much food for man as corn land without the assistance of grafs.

Unite both objects as they ought to be, fo as to have the farms from one third to half of meadow and paffure; and the other two thirds or half thrown into a proper courfe for the winter fupport of the cattle, and fuch a farm will, I apprehend, be found to feed more men than if it is all ploughed up, and as much wheat raifed as is poffible upon the *French* fytem.

Perhaps it may be faid, that there is not fuch a connection between the custom of the people in their food, and the courfes of the farmers, as I have ftated, fince what is not in demand at home might be fold abroad. But this reasoning I do not think is juft; if a furplus of corn is raifed, it may, generally fpeaking, be exported—though not always: But as to meat, butter and cheefe, there is no dependance of that fort, the foreign demand is too various and uncertain: Nothing can uniformly encourage the farmer to keep fufficient ftocks, but a great home confumption.

S E C T. X.

INFERIOR OBJECTS, AND DEFICIENCIES IN BRITISH HUSBANDRY.

I BEFORE remarked that it is utterly vain to recommend minute improvements in the practice of agriculture to any people who feel the want of thofe effential and capital articles of encouragement, with which I began this differtation: but at the fame time it is neceffary to obferve, that when a country like *England* is happy enough to enjoy fuch encouragement, then it is wife and prudent to give much attention to inferior objects, fuch as the culture of wafte lands, the introduction of new branches of culture, the improvement of old ones, alterations in methods, and abundance of other articles to which it is very neceffary to attend, if we would have our agriculture generally good. It is therefore upon very wife and liberal principles that the fociety eftablifhed at *London* for the encouragement of arts, manufactures, and commerce, offers premiums for fuch improvements, and gives bounties to fuch farmers and mechanics as excel or invent any thing valuable.

It is very surprizing to think of the general advantages enjoyed by this nation, and yet to see what large tracts (much the greatest part of the kingdom) are under a culture infinitely inferior to that of other parts. After viewing the husbandry of *Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Kent*, to observe the miserable management of so many other counties, must convince every spectator of the importance of spreading the knowledge of what is good:—of letting the unenlightened parts of the kingdom know what is done elsewhere—and of explaining to them the principles and practice which give wealth to one set of farmers, mediocrity of fortune to others. This idea urged me to undertake the tours I made through a part of the kingdom, the registers of which are before the public.

The improvements which are much wanting in so many parts of *England*, are particularly the spreading the knowledge of good courses of crops, so as utterly to banish fallows; a practice pursued very generally in the counties I have named above; and which is effected by the introduction of turnips, beans, pease, tares, clover, &c. as preparations for white corn—covered drains—manuring with marle, chalk, and clay—watering meadows—the culture of carrots, cabbages, potatoes, sainfoine, and  
lucerne

lucerne—performing works of tillage with no more cattle than necessary—the use of oxen in harness—an almost general reform in implements—the introduction of the drill husbandry for beans—the culture of madder, woad, liquorice, hemp and flax, on such lands as are suitable—with several other points too tedious to mention.

Every one of these articles, excepting cabbages and lucerne, are already *commonly* practised by tenants in some part or other of the kingdom; and all of them in the lands of gentlemen, with great success: the spreading the knowledge of such useful practices, is therefore of the highest consequence to the general welfare of British agriculture.

But above these and all other circumstances is to be named, the bringing into culture our waste lands; which form so large a proportion of the territory, that I much question if we have not eight or ten millions of acres waste in *England*, and a great deal more in *Scotland*. The want of public spirit in the generality of their proprietors is truly amazing—and no less is it surprizing that they should be equally inattentive to the advantages of themselves and families. Where would be the mighty exertion in one of our great owners of moors to say to a spirited practical man,  
You

You have the knowledge necessary for making a trial of my moors, but not the money: I have the money, but not the knowledge: fix upon what spot you please in my estate, and I will supply you with a thousand pounds a year for ten years to come at common interest, and all the security I ask is being convinced that the money is spent upon the land? Where would be the hazard in such a case? for such a person would have the best security for his money of all others, his own estate; and he would certainly have double interest; the common, and the advantage of all the improvements at the end of the term of years agreed for.

That there are many active practical persons, no visionary theorists, who would settle the moors upon such conditions, I have no doubt; and that the great moor-possessors in general, proceeding on such principles, would in no long term cover them with cultivation, I have as little doubt: how much this would add to the nation's wealth I need not say. Such undertakings increase the classes of the people, that form real POPULATION.

Nor is it only to private landlords that these observations are applicable; it appears to me surprizing, that the legislature should never have thought it worth their pains to attempt something in favour of

cultivation on those immense wastes: A private expenditure of between twenty and thirty thousand pounds would not make any great figure in the national expences, yet might it be so managed as to have considerable effects. I enlarged pretty much on this idea in a pamphlet I published about a year ago\*; I explained the practicability and the advantages of such an undertaking: but among the infinite sums expended by our government, such works possess a most contemptible share †.

I have endeavoured to shew, that as this kingdom enjoys most of the great supports of a flourishing agriculture, that therefore it is right to attend to these smaller circumstances, and the London Society judicious in so doing; but at the same time I must remark that they carry their attention too far to the minutiae of management, and too little to the more important objects: they offer more premiums about drilling and horse-hoeing, than for the improvement of waste lands: and as their gold medal is the highest premium that can be gained, there being but two, the gold and silver one; this highest declaration of merit is often given

\* Observations on the present State of the Waste Lands of Great-Britain, 8vo. 1772.  
† See Appendix, No. IV.

given to very inferior objects, for want of a better scale of reward. Hence comes their practice, which totally destroys the great ideal value of the medal, of offering *twenty pounds, or the gold medal.—Thirty pounds, or the gold medal.* Thus the importance of the premium is explained by the sum given if the medal should be rejected, or if the claimant should be a member\*. Hence arises a necessity of classing objects in the same light, which are of infinitely different merit; and as gentlemen are more desirous of honorary premiums than pecuniary ones, there ought to be some higher reward devised than the gold medal, which having been given to inferior objects, is no longer a reward for capital ones.

Suppose a gentleman has improved five hundred, or even one hundred acres of moor; and did it in various methods, in order to discover the most effectual—he has built a house, barns, stables, and all the buildings requisite for a farm; inclosed, planted, manured, and reduced a desert tract to be a fertile farm; such a gentleman, that his experience may be useful to others, sends an account of his operations to the society: What do they decree?—They give him their

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\* Members can receive only the honorary premium.

their gold medal: that is, they rank his merit in the same class as a man who sows hogs, plants coleseed, drills turnips, and horse-hoes wheat. Can this be right? If a society instituted for rewarding merit, confounds all ideas of merit, surely the end of their institution is wretchedly answered.

They should offer an ornamental model of a plough in gold or silver, so curiously wrought, as to be an object of beauty and *shew*; and on the mould-board the inscription. A man would place such a thing in a glass case, and set it where it might be seen: but a medal, unless a hole is drilled through it, and you wear it pendant from a button hole, is seen by no one—a man must be put to the blush to bring out his medal and shew it. A silver or gold cup with the inscription, which passing round the table, would promote conversation on husbandry, and raise emulation in every one present to gain the like, would also be a good expedient. In a word, vanity is very prevalent in this age, and I see no reason why we should not render the passions of mankind subservient to the good of agriculture.

Perhaps the spirited endeavours of this excellent society in the encouragement of husbandry, may have been partly the reason

son why his present Majesty, who has so munificently protected the fine arts and literature, should not have given more attention to the means of advancing the agriculture of his kingdoms, as I am informed that he has founded several establishments with this view in his electoral dominions. The small progress however, which has been made by that society in the great article, the culture of waste lands, shews that a more effective encouragement is wanting. But as I have ventured to make this observation, I shall not refuse myself the pleasure of remarking with how much judgment even the amusements of the young princes are made conducive to just ideas of the importance of husbandry. Nor will the lover of that art fail to congratulate himself on the hands in which the future hope of *Britain* is placed, when I relate an anecdote, which to some may perhaps seem trifling, but appears to me pregnant with excellent consequences.

A spot of ground in the garden at *Kew* was dug by their royal highnesses the prince of *Wales* and bishop of *Osnabrug*; they sowed it with wheat; they attended the growth of their little crop, weeded, reaped, and harvested it. They threshed out the corn, and separated it from the chaff. And at this period of their labour, were taught to reflect

reflect from their own experience, on the various labour and attention of the farmer. Nor did this admirable lesson stop here. The princes not only raised the crop; they also ground it; and having parted the bran from the meal, attended to the whole process of making it into bread. This bread it may be imagined was eaten with no slight relish: the King and Queen partook of the philosophical repast, and beheld with pleasure the very amusements of their children rendered the source of useful knowledge.—An instance, and no trifling one, that a great nobleman from having attended to agriculture, is so much the better qualified to superintend the education of a prince—and that lord *Holderness* has attended to agriculture both as a philosopher and a man of practice, I have on another occasion given the world sufficient proof\*.

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\* The instance I have now inserted justifies me as a farmer, for saying that this country has reason to be happy at the princes' education being committed to this nobleman; since it is by such a conduct that they will best become acquainted with the importance of husbandry. Not that I would have it supposed I confine the merit of the governor to points of this sort: those who know him best, would best be able to refute such an idea. Nor let his lordship's recommendation of Mr. *Smelt* for an assistant in his important office, be forgotten—a man whose general knowledge



This pleasing idea, I hope, will be a prelude to a farm, in some of the royal gardens, parks, or chafes, where our amiable young princes may have a farther opportunity of learning the theory and practice of agriculture:—where they might see a course of rational experiments, and gain not a mere mechanical idea of what that useful class of the people the farmers perform, but a political acquaintance with the connection between the expenditure and the products of husbandry:—they would learn the necessity of the farmer being secure in the possession of that harvest his industry prepared;—the dependance of all the orders of the state on the soil—the population that flows from a good culture—in a word, they would see that well tilled fields were the source of armies, of navies, of conquests, of splendid courts, and magnificent expences. They might set their hands to the plough, and remember that its good progress was the test of a nation's happiness and a monarch's glory; and from hence, never forget the maxim of the wise sovereign, THE KING'S FAVOUR in matters of

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knowledge and amiable manners, rendered him the delight of an extensive neighbourhood; a character formed rather to give lustre than to receive it from a court.—And let me also add with pleasure, an excellent farmer.

of agriculture, IS AS DEW UPON THE GRASS.

An experiment from whence such instruction might flow, is surely worth the trial.

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Thus far I have proceeded in endeavouring to point out the mistakes that may easily be made by adopting in one country the policy of another. Before I conclude, I shall suppose that things will continue much in the same train in most countries; and in case it should be so, I shall recommend an experiment that might very easily be tried by the legislature of any country;—I mean the

SYSTEM OF ENGLAND

in matters of husbandry and taxation. Suppose in *France*, *Spain*, or parts of *Germany*, individuals were backward to engage in it; it might easily be executed in the sovereign's demesne. What I mean is, to ease, in a certain number of parishes, the farmers from all sorts of taxes which are laid any ways in proportion to their wealth, industry or products; in lieu of them, raise the same sum of money partly by a permanent land-tax, exactly in the manner of that of *England*, not sub-

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ject to variations, to the amount of about 2s. 6d. in the pound rent; and this, as in *England*, should be charged by the tenants to the account of the landlords. Thus the farmers would be exempted from all taxes except tythe, and those general ones on consumption, which equally affect every class. Let all the district be inclosed in fields proportioned to the size of the farms. Let leases of 21 years be given to every farmer at a rent per acre equal, (all national circumstances, rates and prices considered) to what similar land lets for in the best cultivated parts of *England*. Exempt them absolutely from all personal service; and as to the price of their corn, in order to answer the effect of the corn-laws of *England*, establish near this district a magazine where their corn may always be carried when they chuse to sell at or under a given price, but from thence to be carried immediately to the nearest port, and sent where the consumption of it cannot possibly affect the price of the district in question. After these regulations, let the farmers pursue their husbandry in quiet, in whatever manner they think proper.

In the next place, form out of this experimental district a farm of 1000 acres, to be cultivated entirely in the *English* manner, under the direction of a person perfectly

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acquainted with the best husbandry of *Britain*. Let the arable part of it, which should not be less than 800 acres, be divided into four parts, of each 200 acres: one-fourth to be constantly under turnips, cabbages, carrots, and potatoes; another under spring corn; another under clover; and the last under wheat: by means of these articles being thus arranged, and perfectly well cultivated, the superiority of this system to that of a fallow would soon appear. The stock of cattle on this farm should be sufficient for the consumption of 200 acres of grass, sainfoine or lucerne (according to the soil) and 200 of winter food; 200 of clover; and 400 of straw.

Besides these circumstances, the teams of horses and oxen (the latter the most numerous) should be large and able beasts, a pair of either sufficient to plough an *English* acre in a day. All the harness and implements of every kind to be *English*, and of the best sort. The buildings composing the farm-yard to be complete, and in every respect sufficient for conducting the farm in winter on the *English* system, with a view to raising manure. If such a plan was executed completely, the expence of stocking and supporting such a farm would be 7*l.* an acre, or 7000*l.* for 1000 acres.

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Now I conceive that the regulations here proposed, would yield two very important pieces of intelligence: first, they would shew the superiority of the *English* mode of taxation over that of *France*; and this in respect, not only to the welfare of the farmer, but also to the wealth of the landlord, who should calculate the difference of his neat receipts at two different periods, one under the old management, and the other under the new. Secondly, it would shew what improvements practised in *England*, are wanting in the country where the experiment was tried; this would evidently appear by comparing the management of the farmers after being eased in taxes, &c. with that of the *English* farm on the same soil, and under the same circumstances: and I should add, that the establishment and regular conduct of such a farm would be a constant source of information to every person in the country who was desirous of improving the practice of husbandry. Among other very spirited plans carrying into execution for the benefit of agriculture in his majesty's *German* dominions, I should presume something of this sort might prove equally beneficial with any other scheme hitherto devised.

CHAP. II.

REMOVAL OF OBSTACLES.

HAVING explained the principal causes of the agriculture of this nation being so flourishing, I shall pursue my design by remarking, that other countries that would enjoy the same advantages, should follow the same maxims: it is a little surprizing in this case, that other nations should shew the greatest eagerness to advance their husbandry, manifesting clear ideas of its importance, and yet in most of their plans beginning at the wrong end: if the principles are well understood which prove favourable to agriculture in one country, what should prevent others from adopting those principles as far as climate, government and manners will allow; instead of which we see volumes written on modes of culture, where political principles should alone be attended to.

We must not, however, suppose that in every country where plans are laid for the improvement of agriculture, that such an admirable constitution as that of *Britain* must first be established, since in disquisitions of this nature, little utility can re-

ful if we are not practical. Thus, under the article government, if its nature is unfavourable to industry, the business of the statesman is to mollify its severity; and as the principles of it are mischievous, to soften them by a gentle and equitable administration.

In the articles above examined, on which principally depends the prosperity of *English* agriculture, other countries that would wish to imitate the example, should first remove such circumstances as militate most against them. That this is the right way of proceeding, can hardly be doubted; to think of making improvements in the modes of culture—in manuring, fencing, tillage, horse-hoeing, or introducing new vegetables, while the farmers are oppressed by taxes, slavery, personal service, or a want of leases; or where bad corn-laws, defeat every purpose for which they were intended; or where a want of general wealth leaves him a poor market, is to labour against the stream: such a conduct, instead of giving any radical cure, can only make a shew of little temporary local palliatives; of no consequence in themselves, and disgraceful to the statesman who uses them. But let us proceed to instances of great obstacles, which ought first to be eradicated.

## S E C T. I.

## T A I L L E.

**I**N the article taxation, I shall mention the *French* land-tax, the *taille*, which is laid on the renters and occupiers of all lands, who are not called noble, that is, what we call the gentry are exempted: there is nothing hurtful in such an idea, as the exemption is very fair, the tax being laid on in lieu of the personal military services which were peculiar to the lower classes: the great evil lies in the method of laying it.

The ministry having determined the sum to be raised by the *taille*, decides the proportion to be paid by every district. This is sent to the intendant, who makes the distribution upon all the parishes in his division, and the sum is raised by collectors in each parish, who impose it on individuals by rules sent them by the intendant. The expression of a well-informed writer is, that these rules of taxing are on—“every species of income, every emolument of industry, even every animal in the possession of those who are subject to this tax. This proportion is calculated to carry the most scrupulous attention to every man's

gain upon all effects belonging to him, and upon every possibility of making profit by industry \*." If the first assessment does not bring in the total demanded, second and even third assessments are made upon the rules of the first, till the total sum comes in. Here, therefore, we find the taille is in fact a tythe only the full value of the proportion taken instead of the product itself, and consequently has all the mischievous effects of that most pernicious tax. A farmer is taxed in proportion to his industry and improvements, let the tax be ever so justly laid on: but the aggravating circumstance is, that a shew of improvement is taken as a sign of wealth, and a burthen laid in proportion not perhaps to the fact, but the idea of the collector—herein it is worse than a tythe. Now how is it possible that a man can carry on any spirited husbandry if his tax is augmented proportionably for every improvement—for every good crop he gains—for every increase of his cattle—for a good dunghill—better implements of husbandry than common—in a word, to be burthened in every instance in proportion to his merit. Would it not be very ridiculous to tell one of these farmers that he should sow beans in

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\* *Stewart's Political Economy*, Vol. ii, p. 566.

in drills, that he should hoe turneps, cut drains, and manure so and so—would he not in reply say, *for whom am I to do this?* NOT FOR MYSELF.

At the same time that the principles of this tax are so contrary to the interest of agriculture, the height to which it is carried exceeds any thing we know in *England*: We learn from *Duprè de St. Maur* \* that in *Sologne*, the occupier of a little farm, let for 20*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.* pays 9*l.* 10*s.* 9*d.* taille, besides 2*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.* capitation. In another farm, let for 11*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* the farmer pays 5*l.* 5*s.* 0*d.* and 1*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* capitation.

It is amazing that a people so clear-sighted in various instances should remain so blind in this!—Surely it would be easy to change somewhat the nature of this tax by levying it as a proportion of the rent of a farm: in the first place to direct, that all farms should be held by lease, though only for a year; secondly, that all leases should be registered; thirdly, to assess the tax at so much in the pound on the rent; and if it fell short, to have fresh assessments to make up the deficiencies, as the intendants now make fresh distributions on that account; and as in *England* the parish-officers

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\* *Essai des Monnoies*, p. 26.

make fresh rates to levy the deficiencies of former ones. Let all exempted from the taille be exempted from this tax; the only object is to make the assessment depend on a certain criterion, which is rent; and not to be increased because of improvements. If a man hires a farm at the rent of 1000 livres, let this taille be levied in proportion to that rent without the intendant's having any thing to do with his crops, stock, or circumstances; the farmer then would not fear working improvements; and their husbandry would soon wear a new face. I see some objections which I should suppose a *French* minister might start; but none that have any solidity.

There is no necessity of extending instances of improper taxes relative to the husbandry of a country; they may, in any case, be understood by considering the principles upon which they are framed; it is impossible agriculture should flourish, if they are made proportional to the wealth, stocks, improvements or industry of the cultivators.

S E C T. II.

WANT OF LEASES.

**I**N the next place, concerning the tenures on which the tenants hold their farms. If the legislature of a country would have agriculture flourish, encouragement of every kind must be given to letting land on long leases. If a landlord would have his estate well cultivated, he must adopt the same principles: The endeavours used by many of the considerable nobility and gentry in *Scotland* to improve their agriculture, will meet with success only where this essential principle is pursued: How can any man be so blind as to suppose that farmers will enter into a correct and spirited husbandry, which is but another name for great expences, if they have not absolute security of a term sufficient to repay them with a competent profit.

Consider the common wants of the *Scotch* agriculture; wastes to be inclosed and converted to corn and grass; bogs and marshes to be drained; turneps, and clover to be introduced; good fences to be promoted; and expensive manuring to be wrought; experienced labourers in several articles of management, procured from

from *England*. Where is the farmer from whom any of these articles are to be expected while a tenant at will, or under a lease of no more than seven or nine years? When I hear the gentlemen of *Scotland* talking of their improved husbandry, and understand that they grant no leases, or short ones, I guess what the improvements are, and how durable they will prove: At the same time, however, it is right to observe, that there are some among them who have just ideas of this point; and for the sake of giving this solid encouragement to the husbandry of their country, give up the vanity of having their tenants in a state of dependance, and readily grant leases of 21 and even 32 years where they are well deserved.

In *Ireland* the custom of granting leases of a proper length is coming fast into practice, yet is it introduced in a manner well calculated for destroying much of the good which naturally attends the measure. Lands are let in very great tracts by auction, with a liberty of re-letting to others; thus the overgrown tenant, who is probably no farmer, has that security which the cultivator of the land should have, who, on the contrary, is often only tenant at will: in this pernicious system, long leases are  
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practised without one good effect flowing from them.

We have lately heard much in the public papers of great emigrations from *Scotland* and *Ireland* to *America*, not only of poor inhabitants of towns, and country labourers, but even of farmers; if this is true, it must be owing very much to the mischievous obstinacy of their landlords in not giving them sufficient security in their tenures; for under fair and proper leases, it is impossible that farmers should dream of leaving their country. It is greatly to be wished that the landlords of those kingdoms in their ideas of improving agriculture would attend to this policy of first removing the great obstacles to their success; this will prove more beneficial than introducing horse-hoes, or planting cabbages.

Leases are granted in *France*, and often of considerable length, but there it is not a matter of great consequence; for the taille so effectually crushes all spirited husbandry, that it leaves little mischief for a want of this sort to perform.

In *Spain* and *Italy* the sale of an estate vacates the lease. This is not an evil that operates in common, therefore is not of a general bad consequence; but it deserves attention, and should be put an end to.

S E C T. III.

TYTHE GATHERED.

AS to the obstacles that arise from tythes, they are great in proportion to their frequency of being taken in kind. Every government desirous of carrying agriculture to perfection, ought to take every possible measure for substituting some other method of paying the clergy.

S E C T. IV.

PERSONAL SERVICE.

BUT in the article of personal service, the case is different: in this there are no difficulties that might not be overcome almost without trouble. In *England* the farmers were most miserably oppressed by purveyance, while the crown had that prerogative; in which the service of themselves and teams were demanded, and little or nothing returned; besides provisions being taken of them, at one-tenth of their value—and sometimes for no value at all. But in *France* there are great remains of the antient personal service, which was very important before money was plentiful: their

their *corvees* have been much complained of by the modern *French* writers on political œconomy: they are personal services performed by all the labouring classes in carrying on all sorts of works, such as roads, causeways, navigations, &c. The value of them reduced to money by composition is not calculated to exceed 60,000*l.* through all *France*, and yet the distress brought on husbandry by means of the oppression, is probably more than a million sterling: Nothing can exceed the miserable policy of suffering a people to be fleeced for so inconsiderable an advantage: The farmers teams are driven to a great distance—their cattle jaded, and often destroyed—their carts broken—their selves ill-used—and this very often, and at all seasons of the year. Where the labour and carriage of all public works are thus performed, the evil must be of a most extensive and dangerous nature,—and one that is very well adapted to depress the agriculture of any country. But there is in *Germany*, *Denmark*, and in some parts of *France* (where the peasants are free) another sort of personal service, which is that of performing all the labour and carriage of the landlord's household and farm; which is often a considerable part of his estate: all his ploughing, carting, dunging, harvest, hay, and, in



in a word, all the work of a farm : Whatever such little tyrants may suppose, we may depend on it that these seeming advantages are in reality heavy taxes on themselves—their farmers cannot, under such burthens, pay them near the rent that is paid in other countries—if they would absolutely release them from such services, the increase of rent would far more than enable them to do the whole by their servants. We may guess what would be the countenance of an *English* farmer, if his landlord demanded all his teams in the middle of feed time.

The small real value of personal service we experience in the last remnant of it in *England*: The six days-duty in the highways. It is done so miserably, and so much time is necessarily lost by going to a distance, that nobody can doubt but any new road or considerable work might be made by a private man, or an appointed surveyor, with teams on purpose, for one-tenth of the sum which it would cost if performed by parish work. Not having substituted a tax universally instead of these services in a country so enlightened as this, is a very great reflection on our police.

CORN

S E C T. V.

C O R N L A W S.

THE obstacles to good husbandry, which are found in bad corn laws, have been very much discussed of late years—yet there are readers remaining who will not acknowledge the justice of the innovations recommended. The countries in which very bad regulations have mostly prevailed are, *France, Spain and Naples*; in those and others no transportation of corn from one province to another was for a long time allowed, which is yet the law in some parts of *Spain*: It is but very lately that any exportation was allowed in *France*, even when corn was the cheapest; and all exportation has been regularly forbid to this day in *Spain, Portugal*, and several other parts of *Italy*. I do not apprehend it is possible, under such a system, to have a flourishing corn husbandry—prices will be too fluctuating—some years will be so cheap, that the farmers will be ruined—and others so dear, that the people will be starved. Long experience must convince us, that this is not only reasoning, but fact. Famines never appear in countries that admit a free exportation; but

but in all above named, where a contrary policy has been pursued, they have appeared frequently and severely.

The variations in the earth's products owing to seasons, though not so great as some have imagined where the husbandry is good, yet where it is indifferent must necessarily be considerable: Let us lay down one maxim, which can hardly be contradicted, *the good of husbandry requires that the price of corn should be proportioned to the product.* Let us then suppose the common consumption of a nation to be 5,000,000 of quarters of bread corn: the proportion between the common product and the common consumption must vibrate according to various circumstances:—Suppose a crop of 6,000,000 of quarters, and no exportation, what must be the consequence? There is the surplus of a 6th in the markets, consequently the price is brought down much lower than that proportion: Here lies the misfortune. If corn in such a year yielded a price proportioned only to the plenty, the misfortune would not be great—but the addition in the markets of a sixth sinks the price probably a third, and perhaps more.—Mr. King, the political arithmetician, calculated the proportion; but as it is impossible to attain any accuracy in such a calculation, it is sufficient to suppose the

the difference very considerable. To continue the case, we may suppose another good crop with a new surplus of a sixth or seventh; this coming upon graneries full of a part of the former surplus, sinks the price yet lower; and then the farmers are not only discouraged; as several writers have observed, from sowing another crop, but what is as bad, they are impoverished so much, that they cannot plough, harrow, dung, drain, ditch, fence, or do any thing with proper spirit. These two circumstances, inability in future to act well, and discouragement from sowing again, can hardly fail of occasioning in future years a scarcity, or probably a famine. Then the farmers reap of course a thin crop from their former inability, and that too over only a part of the land usually sown; in such a case, corn must be very high to recompence the farmer—probably so high, that the government of the country is alarmed, and imports corn from wherever they can get it, then the price falls, when he again suffers. Thus a great crop or a bad one operates equally against him, and nothing can support him at all but such a product as pretty exactly answers the annual consumption. There is no balance preserved in the measures, exportation is prohibited, yet importation is allowed; so that it is

impossible the price should with any regularity be such as can encourage good husbandry.

On the contrary, if the policy of the state admits exportation, the surplus of a large crop being sent away, keeps the price at home from falling too low: this is an encouragement to the farmer acting two ways; first, by enriching him, he is able the better to improve all his culture; secondly, he is induced to sow as much corn as possible, for every man, whatever be his trade, is desirous of increasing that commodity which sells best at market. The bounty on exportation given in *England* was a refinement on the policy I am now recommending—it was given in order that corn might rise in price, as an encouragement to the country gentlemen; yet, contrary to the expectation of those times, it has made corn much cheaper, by being so great an inducement to sow it.

In such countries as will adhere to so destructive a system as that of restraining the export of corn, it is not of much consequence what other advantages are given to husbandry, since all others united, that can be named or thought of, will not make amends to the farmer for the want of a market: it is of no consequence to enable him to raise noble crops, if, when he has  
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got them, he cannot sell at a proper price; his plentiful harvests tend only to his ruin. It would be endless to answer the objections of those who have written against the beneficial measures adopted in the last century by *England*; they insist on mischief having arisen to manufactures and the poor from exportation making corn dearer: they assert a fact which is contrary to record, and on that they build the falsest hypothesis that ever was displayed; the great end of which is to prove, that in order to advance the interest of a people, their agriculture must be depressed;—and, to make corn cheap, the culture of it is to be discouraged!

S E C T. VI.

NATIONAL POVERTY.

IN the next place, in relation to the inconveniences arising to agriculture from the want of general wealth, we are not to speak with such certainty as in other cases; for although laws and regulations are within the power of a legislature, yet is not this the case in the great point of rendering a nation wealthy. It is true, that a uniform encouragement of manufactures, commerce, and every branch of national industry, will as long as it is carried on tend powerfully

to that end; but as the business requires unremitting attention, and is a long time effecting, we cannot say to a statesman, *Make your people rich*, as lightly as we can advise him to repeal an ill-judged law.

However, this case is not without a remedy: if the evil lies in the want of general wealth, the farmer will find himself most oppressed by a want of a good market: the statesman should in that case, besides taking the usual methods of encouraging agriculture, endeavour by every means to make the prices of all commodities rise; and respecting the farmers products, he ought to give a bounty on the exportation, as this remedy bears immediately at the evil, by providing the husbandman with that market abroad which he cannot get at home:—this I think is in such a case the most political conduct he can pursue.

S E C T. VII.

O P E N F I E L D S.

AS to the article *inclosures*, he has much more in his power. In this instance, he should lay it down as a maxim, that without inclosures there can be no good husbandry: while a country is laid out in open

open field lands, every good farmer tied down to the husbandry of his slovenly neighbour, it is simply impossible that agriculture should flourish. Of what consequence is it that in all the preceding articles the farmer is favoured, if he lies under the weight of this evil? Let taxes be fair, equal and unoppressive; leases long; tythe not gathered;—no personal service; good corn laws, and general wealth in the nation to provide a market. Let all these points be established, yet of what consequence if the husbandman cannot pursue the plans which he knows to be right: if he is tied down to a system, which, with all possible advantages, cannot be made to equal inferior modes in inclosed countries? It is also a happy circumstance that this capital obstacle to good husbandry requires nothing but resolution to be destroyed. The tenderness to liberty, which is so commendable in the *British* legislature, prevents their interfering in these cases, except when requested by the parties concerned: this makes the business much slower here than it need be in other countries; where a less proportion of owners applying for the measure might be made to bind the whole. When the proprietors have the absolute and free choice of the commissioners who are to order the division, there cannot be any

objections of importance to facilitating the measure.

Inclasures, like the export of corn, have engaged the attention of many writers, who declare against them. But if no measures favourable to agriculture are to be embraced until such are discovered as shall meet with universal approbation, we may safely venture to pronounce that nothing great or good can ever be performed. I do not at present recollect any cases which ought to be pleaded as exceptions: Doubtless there are many *Spaniards* that would be vehement against them on the principle of their destroying the immense walks assumed by their shepherds from one part of the kingdom to another: and granting that the inclosure of open dry country, is prejudicial to the fineness of wool; yet is nothing to be considered but wool? Is not five hundred pounds in corn as good as one hundred pounds in wool? Besides, the boasted fineness of the *Spanish* wool is like their *American* mines, of much greater benefit to foreigners than to themselves. In all disputes of this sort, the statesman should enquire what application of the lands brings in the greatest product valued in money, and then universally adhere to that party who satisfies him of the superiority, without paying any regard to the contrary prejudices

judices—always providing that he lays no prohibitions, no restrictions on their antagonists. If one party adheres to sheep, let them stick to sheep, without controul; and whenever he would favour any branch of culture, let it be by such encouragements as shall not depress another. What! says one, would you, for instance, encourage corn in *England* to the extirpation of wool for manufacturers? I reply, the case is impossible: Suppose any measures were adopted to encrease the corn culture to the most immense extent—supposing farther, that sheep suffered—yet the very progress of such an effect remedies itself; for the increasing price of wool would counteract your encouragements of the corn culture, and make the one as profitable as the other. Such fears, therefore, are groundless: while prohibitions and restrictions keep their distance, and every man is left to do what he pleases with his land, a general level will be observed among all common products\*.

\* It is remarkable, that some of the *French* writers, in describing our agriculture, overlook this great point, inclosing.

As an instance, among many others, we may turn to M. BUTRE's *Observations diverses sur la grand et la petite Culture*. In which he entitles one of his sections, *Grande culture opulente d'Angleterre*. Which great and opulent culture we call a miserable exploded system:

## S E C T. VIII.

## S L A V E R Y.

**B**ESIDES these grand obstacles to the improvement of agriculture, there are others which are not to be properly classed under the heads with which I set out: among these let me name, first, the absolute slavery of the peasants in some parts of *Germany*, in *Denmark*, in *Poland*, and in *Russia*, in all which countries, they were lately considered as cattle, and transferred from master to master with the estate on which they live. In this system the landlord farms all his estate by means of these slaves,

system: But he says, it is faite avec splendeur, one plough cultivating 150 arpents, having six horses (two for ploughing and four for carting) and the farm is in three divisions, one of fallow, another wheat, and the third spring corn! Surely Mr. *Butré* might among our husbandry writings have found out that this is the course of crops peculiar to our old open fields, where the farmers can practise no other, but that the moment they are inclosed, they reject so vile a system for many others. They then lay aside fallows, and sow turnips and clover instead of fallows; or some other ameliorating or hoeing crops—this is our splendid and opulent husbandry: that quoted by Mr. *Butré* is a miserable and beggarly culture †.

† Ephemerides du Citoyen, 1767. Vol. xii. p. 75.

slaves, except the small portions left for their own subsistence. It would be rash to assert that this system is inconsistent with good husbandry; for if the landlords enjoy the advantages which I have stated before, they may certainly carry on any culture, and in whatsoever manner they please; but this can only be on a certain extent of land, no greater than can be well overseen by the landlord himself; the appointment of stewards and overseers for distinct estates will not do, since when once the extent is too great for one person to overlook, he must necessarily trust entirely to others, which is always the common husbandry of the country, how bad soever it may be: improvements are then introduced with great difficulty. Yet this is the system in these countries; of whatever size the estate, all is in the hands of the owner, and the peasants assigned in districts to the stewards and overseers, by whom a very miserable agriculture is usually carried on, and with all the oppression and cruelty arising from the spirit of slavery.

It will not admit of a moment's doubt, but that such landlords would increase their income prodigiously if they would overturn this system, by declaring their peasants free, and let them farm according to their abilities of stocking and cultivating them:

many advantages would flow from such a conduct; the landlord would receive his rents with very little trouble, one steward would do the business of twenty overseers and bailiffs; frauds and impositions would in a great measure vanish; the population of the estate would much increase, and as this increase of people would arise from an increase of wealth and industry, it would bring a new market without any disadvantages attending it. As the farmers grew richer, they would keep greater stocks of cattle, and cultivate their lands better; and of that the landlord might take his advantage without any oppression, by raising his rents with judgment on the renewal of the leases. I am sensible there are many who will laugh at my talking of freeing peasants, and giving leases in *Poland*: but so far from there being any thing idle or extravagant in this idea, that I aver the thing has been done, and with great success, on a part of the estate of the Prince de *Massalski*, as I was assured by himself.

S E C T. IX.

H U N T I N G.

**B**EFORE I quit these remarks on great obstacles to the improvement of husbandry, I must mention the excess to which hunting is carried in some countries by the sovereign. I recollect a remarkable instance given by Mr. *Hanway* in his travels, that of *Saxony* under King *Augustus*, who not allowing his deer, &c. to be any where destroyed, they multiplied all over the electorate to such a degree, that the miserable *Saxons* offered readily an addition to the army of 6000 men, only for liberty to reduce the deer to half their number; but were refused with contempt. If such a thing was not well authenticated, it would be difficult to give credit to so excessive folly. Wherever hunting and other rural sports are carried to any such excess, it must be almost to the ruin of agriculture: I have seen hares in *England* in so great abundance, as very much to injure the husbandmen: If the crops when gained, are to be devoured by game, we may easily conceive that all the encouragement in the world, and the removing of every other obstacle  
would

would all be in vain.—Let it ever be laid down as a maxim, that if the farmer is not to reap, he will not sow.

## S E C T. X.

## R E C A P I T U L A T I O N.

**T**H E R E are abundance of other circumstances which are real obstacles to husbandry, but which I think do not demand a particular attention here; because I conceive that such are not radical evils; if a right system of encouragement is adopted, they would disappear, without any particular attack.

The articles I have dwelt upon, are obstacles so mischievous, that enterprising spirits among the nobility and gentry who are desirous of promoting the good cause, should direct their utmost endeavours to remove them. Princes, statesmen, and the legislature of every country desirous of a flourishing agriculture, should attend to these objects; and let me further remark, that it is a vain work for individuals to attempt the introduction of new improvements in farming: to talk of turnips, cabbages, carrots, lucerne, clover, and other articles of husbandry cultivated with such success in *England*, to tenants that have

no

no leases, to men who pay a taille, to farmers who pay every tenth cabbage, and every tenth lamb and pig to the parson; to people exposed to all the oppressions of personal service; to the husbandmen of a country where the exportation of their products is forbidden, yet importation allowed, or of a territory so poor that they cannot find a market for the crops when raised:—what can such recommendations be esteemed, but a frivolous insult upon common sense? Gentlemen who act in this manner may mean well, and they have as much merit as people can have who begin at the wrong end—but no general or lasting good can ever flow from their most strenuous endeavours.



## C H A P. III.

## EXAMINATION OF FALSE PROPOSITIONS.

HAVING explained the principles upon which the happy state of agriculture in *England* principally depends, and endeavoured to point out the capital obstacles which in various countries, oppose themselves to the business of adopting those principles, I shall in the next place touch upon certain new systems that have been recommended to the world, which it is probable may attract the attention of a statesman in the great work of improving the agriculture of his country. If many schemes of public conduct are recommended by different writers of reputation, it may without uncommon attention be difficult to pronounce which plan is best. In the case before us there have been some propositions laid before the world with a view to encouraging agriculture, which appear to me to have a very bad tendency; and of course it is necessary to explain the reasons for my differing in opinion from gentlemen for whose abilities I have not less respect than others.

## S E C T. I.

## UNION OF TAXES ON LAND.

WITHIN these twenty years there have been an amazing number of publications in *France*, *Holland*, and *Germany*, on the means of promoting agriculture; and, as might well be expected, most of the writers became ideal financiers: The evils of the *taille* could not but strike every eye, and new modes of taxation were called for with all possible vehemence. System upon system was framed, and their authors looked upon themselves as the founders of a new science; the *oeconomical science*, or, as they termed it, *Physiocratie*. At the head of these writers appear *Quesnay*, the *Marquis de Mirabeau*, and *du Pont* \*, who agree in the great outlines of their

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\* The number of writers who have published on this subject in *France* is very great; among the many works on the branches of this pretended new science, the following may be consulted:

*Encyclopedie*, Art. *Fermier Grain*, &c.  
*Les Eléments de la Philosophie Rurale*, par *Mirabeau*,  
 12mo. 1767.  
*L'Ordre naturel et essentiel des Sociétés politiques*, 4to.  
 & 12mo. 1767.

their plan, which is to abolish all the long list of *French* taxes, and substitute a single one upon land; no idea of their own, but which is borrowed from *English* writers, from *Locke*, *Decker*, &c. They agree to it for the same reasons as are advanced by our writers, particularly the capital principle, that all taxes fall ultimately on the land; and as they build so much on this, it will be necessary to say a few words on it.

That the maxim is false and founded on nothing but absurdity, has been very clearly, though

*La Physiocratie, ou Constitution naturelle du Gouvernement le plus avantageux au genre humain*, par *Quesnay*, 2 tom. 8vo. 1767.

*De L'Origine et des Progrès d'une science nouvelle*, 8vo. 1767, par *Dupont*.

*Lettres d'un Citoyen à un Magistrat, sur les vingtièmes & les autres impôts*, par M. l'Abbé *Baudeau*, 12mo. 1768.

*Doutes adressés aux Philosophes économistes sur l'ordre naturel & essentiel des Sociétés politiques*, 12mo. par M. l'Abbé *Mably*, 1768.

*Precis de L'Ordre Legal*, 12mo. par *Marquis de Mirabeau*, 1768.

*Memoire sur les effets de l'impôt indirect*, par *Saint Peravy*, 1768.

*L'Ami des Hommes*, par le M. de *Mirabeau*, 7 tom. 1757.

*Tableau Oeconomique, avec son explication*, 4to. par *Quesnay*, 1758.

*Theorie de l'impôt*, par le M. de *Mirabeau*, 12mo. 1760.

*Journal d'Agriculture.*  
*Ephemerides du Citoyen.*

though elaborately proved by *Sir James Stewart*; but as it is too important a link in the present argument to be passed over merely with a reference to another book, I shall add a few observations to make it plain to every one.

The argument of *Mr. Locke*, *Decker*, and the *French* writers is, that excises and other taxes on consumption are blended by every artizan, &c. with the price of his work, which accumulating as they advance, render every thing dearer except to people in trade who draw back the accumulation, so that the landed interest not being in trade, receives the weight at last with the progressive profits of the whole train. This state of the matter has many fallacies in it: the tradesman who advances the taxes, can draw back only a part of them; the other part he pays as much as the landlord does his land tax. The excises he pays on the goods he manufactures, he draws back completely; but those upon the luxuries he consumes, he cannot draw back. The brewer is repaid the taxes on malt, beer, and hops, by the consumer, but he is not repaid for the chintzes with which he hangs his rooms, the stamps on papers and plate, the duty on his coach wheels, the customs on his wines, brandies, and fruit; and in a word, every article out of the line of his

P 2                      trade.

trade. The shoemaker is refunded his tax on leather; but let him go to the alehouse and drink porter; let his wife be extravagant as she pleases in tea, sugar, and spices, he pays the taxes on all those commodities, but most assuredly he will never be able to charge them on his customers.

But, says Sir Matthew Decker, taxes make all articles of housekeeping so dear, that tradesmen are obliged to charge the higher prices in order to enable them to support the expence, and others doing the same, it comes at last to the landlord. Nothing is farther from the truth; they cannot raise their price on any account that does not equally fall on all their brethren: the taxes on leather fall equally on all shoemakers, and consequently all may raise their prices proportioned to the taxes; but as to *dearness of living*, it affects them merely in proportion as they chuse to be expensive: if some are for *living well*, consuming much wine, punch, porter, tea, sugar, and other superfluities, and in proportion to *THIS dearness of living*, raise the price of their shoes; their trade will speedily be gone to others who are content with pork, cabbage and ale. What can be more idle than to suppose I am to pay in my shoes an increased price, because my shoemaker drinks wine instead of por-

*It is Taxes that equally fall on all the professions is which the impost of the consumption does apply to the consumption of things which are the same to all - the same to all*

ter? In the name of common sense, will he not be underfold by his neighbour, who sticks to porter; and if the porter drinker has raised his price because malt is taxed, will he not be underfold by the poorer man who is contented with small beer?

It is in this manner that the people in trade are able to draw back nothing more than the amount of the tax they pay, with such a profit on it, as all their brethren unite in; but as to a brewer's selling his beer dearer on account of the high price of candles, and the tallow-chandler on account of the high price of shoes, and the shoemaker on account of the high price of tea and sugar, as Decker would persuade us, it is self-evidently an error.

The fact is, that all taxes on consumption, such as excises of every denomination—customs and other duties, are all paid by the consumers of the commodity taxed; which so far from being the possessors of land alone, includes every rank of the people; the tradesman when he is extravagant as much as the duke; and in proportion to the wealth acquired by tradesmen, who often are enriched by taxes, is the landed and other idle interests eased, because that very wealth is spent in taxed commodities, and consequently contributes in proportion to itself to the wants of the state,

P 3. Thus

Thus are taxes on consumption the fairest and most equal, and the least burthenfome of all others; every class of the people, every individual in the nation bears his share, and that a *voluntary* share, because if he forbears consuming he pays no tax, never advancing a penny unless he buys a taxed commodity, and his very purchase implies an ability to pay; whereas taxes on property, like land taxes, and on houses, which was Sir *M. Decker's* favourite scheme, force a man to pay not because he *consumes* but because he *possesses*; the one is a proof he is able to pay, the other no proof at all of it.

As this is the case, let any impartial person judge of the consequences of throwing the whole weight of taxes upon land, under the preposterous idea of favouring it. A pretty figure our landed interest would make if the ideas of these gentlemen were realized in this kingdom; let us state the supposition.

	£. s. d.
The land tax to raise 2,000,000 £.	
is in the pound, -	0 4 0
The customs bring in 2,000,000 £.	
this is -	0 4 0
The excise 4,600,000 £. this requires in the pound, -	0 9 2
	<hr/>
Carry over, -	0 17 2

	£. s. d.
Brought over, -	0 17 2
The inland duties, 1,000,000, or	0 2 0
The malt tax 600,000 £. or in the pound, -	0 1 2
	<hr/>
	£. 1 0 4

So that for our land tax to absorb all our other taxes, it must be laid at 20s. 4d. in the pound\*; and then we are persuaded by these gentlemen that the landlords would  
P 4 grow

\* La Hollande est la preuve la démonstration que les principes de *M. de Mirabeau* ne sont pas fondés. Si les impôts ne dévoient se prélever qu'immédiatement à la source de revenus comme le prétend *M. de Mirabeau*, et qu'on ne pût jamais exiger qu'une partie du produit territorial, il y a longtems que la Hollande n'existeroit plus.

Elle a peu de productions alimentaires; elle est presque entièrement privée de terres labourables, de vignes, de bois; quelques près sont toute sa ressource de ce côté-la. Cependant cette république paie des troupes, a une marine, et a figuré souvent en Europe à côté des grandes puissances. Les taxes et les impôts qu'on y prélève sont bien plus forts, en tous genres, qu'en France et en Angleterre; et cependant cela n'a pas causé la ruine de l'état: il est même encore dans une grande opulence. Si la jalousie de son commerce ne lui avoit pas attiré tant de concurrens, l'état ne se ressentiroit seulement pas des taxes exorbitantes qu'on y paie. Le pain, qui est un objet de première nécessité, paie un impôt qui en double presque le prix; tous les objets de consommation y sont plus chargés qu'en France. Les biens fonds, comme maisons, actions,

grow very rich, because they would buy their shoes and stockings much cheaper!

Here is the infallible and immediate effect of laying all taxes on land; how is it to be paid? What is to enable the landlords to live after their income is gone in taxes? Explain this. Answer the objection. Your tax on the net product, lay it how you will, and realized to the fair proportion\*, will amount to about 15s. in the pound absolute payment. What is to be the landlord's return? Will his products rise proportionably in price, so as to enable him to bear it? Impossible. The very terms of the proposed innovation are, that all consumption should at once be so much the cheaper. Will he, in consequence of this change, find that his remaining rental of 5s. will go as far as his former one of 20? It does not follow; nay it is by no means clear, that even those commodities which were taxed before would be cheap in proportion to the deduction of such tax, from there not being the same encouragement to produce them—else why do the real

actions, contracts, terres, le font d'avantage; et malgré cela la Hollande fleurit, et la machine de la finance va son train, par la magie de la circulation et du credit qui opere ces effets salutaires. *Traité de la Circulation*, p. 134.

\* The *English* land-tax at 4s. in the pound nominally, is not so really. The true proportion is nearly that mentioned above.

real consumption of many articles encrease in *England* upon being taxed? Render any thing by taxes something more of a distinction than formerly, and you will find that the tax, instead of checking, will increase the consumption.—It has been proposed to tax horses and livery servants; I have no doubt but both would increase under a moderate tax\*. But a considerable part of the landlord's expenditure is in articles which never were taxed, the prices of which certainly would not fall; consequently he would have no advantage, though his whole income would suffer merely with a view to a general fall. Nothing can be clearer than the immense balance that would be against him on that account.

There are no taxes on the most necessary parts of provisions, except malt; consequently, you cannot pretend to increase the consumption by lowering the price (supposing the one to follow the other, which is not always the case) and if beer was cheaper, yet would it be enormously rivalled by all sorts of foreign wines and spirits; men who now are curious in ales, would then have *French* wines.—But not to waste one's time in proving that there is some distinction between black and white, there

\* The same observation I find in *Remarks on the Size of Farms and the Price of Provisions*.

*This in 1774  
How different in 1779*

0305

there is one general argument which with me is unanswerable. The proposition is designed to ease the landed interest in consequence of a general fall in the prices of their consumption; it is said they now pay not only the nominal amount of the taxes, but as much more in profits on them; if all these were struck off, the æconomical writers expressly say the income of land would go as far again; thus their plan of easing the land and improving agriculture, is to be by a general fall of prices\*! What a monstrous contradiction! What a contradiction of themselves! As if any thing could possibly be more favourable to agriculture than that general dearth which wherever found is the strong sign of vigour and prosperity.

But let us take a closer view of the argument of Messrs. *Mirabeau* and *Du Pont*.

The former says,—“Ce que j'en ai dit est seulement pour rapeler en un coup d'œil que de quelque manière que se retourne l'impôt, il est impossible qu'il provienne d'autre

\* There is one article, which is of all others the greatest expence upon husbandry—*labour*—And this would not fall one penny from the abolition of taxes. They have in scarce any respect raised it, and most certainly their fall would not sink it. There are also many other articles of the consumption of the landed interest, which would not be affected: thus their *whole* income would be heavily taxed in order for a despicable advantage in the inferior articles of their expence!

+ The Gross Price including the Tax would fall - But the real Price exclusive of the tax might rise

d'autre part que du produit, et que s'il n'est pris directement sur le produit net qui constitue le revenu, il n'a plus ni base, ni bouffole.—Aussi est ce directement sur le revenu et sur le produit net que l'auteur assied l'impôt, ainsi que la dîme\*.” This is *M. de Mirabeau's* grand idea; first, that all taxes fall upon land, which I think I have refuted; and secondly, that they should all be raised on the neat produce, which he states thus: the total produce he divides into, 1. the farmer's expences; 2. his profit; 3. the remainder sold at market; out of which third part are to come tythes, the whole revenue of *France*, and the landlord's rent: this scale is not drawn with much accuracy, but one word is sufficient; His third division would not pay one half of what he supposes; and as taxes and tythe would first be paid, the landlord would remain without a penny of rent. He goes on:—“Si l'on veut considérer quel est le poids des impositions arbitraires, soit personnelles, soit censées territoriales: des taxes sur toutes les manieres d'agir de contracter, de se faire rendre justice, &c. des droits sur les consommations, sur toutes les tranſi des denres des douanes, &c.—on en conclura que les propriétaires seroient fort

\* *L'Ami des Hommes*, tom. vii. p. 45.

fort heureux d'obtenir par le payement d'une portion égale à la moitié de leur revenu, l'exemption, de tant et tant de genres de spoliation réunis \*.—On voit en général que l'impôt doit être pris immédiatement sur le produit net des biens-fonds, puisque de quelque manière qu'il soit imposé dans un Royaume qui tire ses richesses de son territoire, il est toujours payé par les biens-fonds †.—This writer thinks the great benefit of his scheme is the laying the tax on the *net* not the *gross* produce of the lands; because he first secures the farmer's returns and his profit, before any tax is paid, consequently he escapes all taxation. But this idea appears to be false and impracticable; for the landlord we must suppose in the first place lets his lands at a certain fixed rent, let taxes be paid how and by whom they will; if then the tax is laid on any part of the product, or proportioned in any respect to the crop, it will evidently fall on the farmers, lay it on how you will; for though the Marquis may proportion the tax to what he calls *net* produce, yet a proportion will always hold to the *gross* produce. The farmer will pay in proportion to his crop: if he gets a good crop he

\* *L'Ami des Hommes*, tom. vii. p. 47.  
 † *Ib.* p. 171.

he will pay more than if he gets a bad one, and consequently such a tax would in fact be a new tythe, and a most mischievous burthen to agriculture. It is by the direct contrary principle that the land-tax in *England* is harmless, where being laid not on any part of the produce, but rent alone, the farmers and landlord pay just the same, whatever their crops are—whatever improvements are wrought, the profit is all their own, no part going in taxes. It is a strange mistake to suppose that because the tax is laid in proportion to the farmer's surplus, that therefore it should not be burthensome, when the surplus being proportioned to the produce, the farmer must certainly pay in proportion to his crop—which is the very mischief of tythes, nay, and of the *taille* too: whereas the glory of the *English* system is, that NO MORE IS PAID FOR GOOD CROPS THAN FOR BAD ONES.

But *M. de Mirabeau's* idea further appears to be impracticable; how is a tax to be raised on the farmer's surplus, which he calls *net produce*? how are the tax-gatherers and the farmers to agree in deciding what this surplus is? The latter first takes his expences—then his profit—and the remainder he leaves to the church, king, and landlord: a strange way of stating it, because the landlord should be paid first, and his rent reckoned among the farmer's expences.

expences. Does the writer mean, that a land tax should be laid proportioned to rent? This has nothing to do with net produce. Does he only in general mean, that the tax should never be so high as to touch more than the farmer's surplus? This he certainly means in general, but then none of his particulars have any further meaning, and he points at no mode of levying it.

Suppose a farm let for one hundred louis d'ors, and to contain two hundred arpents, how would M. de Mirabeau lay his tax—by the rent—or by the acre? I should suppose neither: nor in proportion to the gross produce. What is his net produce? he must divide every crop into three parts in the field, and taking two himself, the parson, the tax-gatherer and the landlord take the third? How can this be practicable! If the farmer carries the whole to his barns, and a composition takes place by valuing it—then would frauds multiply, and the whole kingdom be in confusion.

Let us in the next place examine if M. Du Pont will cast further light on this affair, as he has lately entered into a delineation of his ideas on this subject in his *Lettre à Messieurs de la Société d'Emulation de Londres* \*. Which is a performance that struck

\* It is an unaccountable affectation in the French writers that they will never call English things by English

struck me a good deal, since it is a lesson to Britain to convince us, that our system of taxation is absurd, and that the professors of the œconomical science in France could, if we would let them, pull down the fabric of our finances, and build a far better one in its stead.

He begins with giving Mirabeau's idea of the *produit net* out of which all taxes ought to be paid, and goes on—"dans ce cas c'est une très bonne loi que celle qui établit l'impôt non pas à une somme déterminée, mais dans une proportion connue et stable avec le prix du fermage; de sorte que l'imposition, suivant toujours pour règle le prix du loyer des terres, hausse et baisse avec ce loyer. Par cette loi de nature le gouvernement ne saurait accroître ses revenus que par l'accroissement de ceux du peuple.—"

Here

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*English* names: why is a society for the encouragement of arts to be called a society of emulation? An *English* writer to talk of the academy of knowledge instead of the academy of sciences at Paris, would but talk like a fool: and what excuse should we have for writing *Burdax* for *Bordeaux*, or *Kain* for *Caen*? yet *Cambridge* in their authors is *Catonbrige*; and M. de Mirabeau in *L'Ami des Hommes*, talks of *Goodman's chester*. The *French* writers that have done me the honour of mentioning the books I have published, have spelt my name so that I did not always know myself. Even Baron Haller, who composes in *English*, calls me M. *Arthard Joung*. *Memoires par la Société de Berne*, 1770, p. 50.



Here M. *du Pont* partly explains M. *dit Mirabeau*, that the idea is to rate every farmer with a sum proportioned to the amount of his neat produce; but, says he, it is then right to tax him in proportion to his rent, by which means the state will come in for a share of all the improvements that are made.—The very thing—and I will venture to say the thing alone that renders tythes and the *taille* mischievous to husbandry. “La loi, says he, qui laisse l’impôt invariable d’après un cadastre une fois fait, comme celle de votre taxe sur les terres, est moins bonne\*.—Si la nation prospère, au bout d’un certain tems elle se trouve n’avoir pas une force publique proportionnée à sa puissance réelle—elle se trouve presque inévitablement entraînée à des ressources ruineuses, telles que les emprunts, les taxes sur les consommations, les droits de douane, &c. &c. C’est ce qui est arrivé à votre nation, Messieurs.”—It is amazing that men of sagacity and penetration can see things in such a light. There is no man

\* One would think that these writers would not see the excellence of our system, for they blame it for the very reason which makes its merit—fondées sur un cadastre ou sur de pareilles évaluations fixes, une pépinière d’abus généraux et particuliers. Certaines terres ne payent pas quinze deniers par livre, et d’autres sont surchargées, vu leur état actuel. *Ephemerides du Citoyen*, 1767, vol. iv. The supposition of the tax ever being surchargées is a very great error.

man who has been attentive to the progress of husbandry in this kingdom but what must be sensible, that if our present land tax of a nominal 4s. in the pound was a variable one as here recommended, our agriculture would suffer considerably. The grand encouragement it meets with now is the stability of the land tax. If a landlord takes or buys a farm worth only fifty pounds a year, and by improvement makes it worth five hundred pounds a year, he has no increase of tax: will any body of common sense affirm that a contrary system, a system which divides his profits with him the moment he makes them, which bears on him in direct proportion to his spirit and his merit—will they assert that such a system is beneficial to husbandry? But to so preposterous a length is this system carried, that these writers want to have it include ALL THE TAXES OF A STATE; so that in *England* the improver would have his improvements immediately taxed at 15s. in the pound! And on comparison with such a land tax, excises on the consumption of the luxurious are called *resources ruineuses!* There is a madness in this hypothetical rage sufficient to confound perspicuity itself.

But M. *du Pont* does not content himself with general reasoning; he gives as an instance

instance of the mischief of customs, those upon *French* wines, (this stroke of patriotism I readily forgive him, yet it is amusing) by assuring us that the forcing our people to pay so exorbitantly for liberty to drink them, is impoverishing them, and by consequence the exchequer itself—*cet impôt est donc payé par les revenus de l'Angleterre*. Who can doubt but that a man is impoverished by drinking claret with a duty of three shillings a bottle on it?—But is he more impoverished by it than *M. du Pont's* landlord with a land tax of fifteen shillings in the pound? But supposing it only fifteen-pence, which is most politick, to make a man pay fifteen-pence because he *possesses* an acre of land, or to make another pay 3*s.* for *consuming* a bottle of claret? A man's having an acre is no proof that he can spare 15*d.* for the state, but his drinking a bottle of claret is a certain proof that he can pay the 3*s.* because it is blended with the first cost, and he pays it before he consumes—and on the other hand, if people will be extravagant and drink what they cannot afford, nothing is wiser than to make the state profit by their folly.

These gentlemen complain much of taxes on consumption raising the prices of every thing, and *M. de Mirabeau* calculates how much farther the *French* landlord's rents would

would go if they were abolished: But this is an effect which sound politicks ought never to wish for: the general dearness of every thing is in all states the greatest sign of prosperity—no instance is to be named of a prosperous and flourishing country being a cheap one: those in which every thing is to be had cheap, are poor and miserable, and exhibit in every respect the reverse of what a statesman would wish to see. I will go farther, and venture to assert, that there is not a class in *France* that would not suffer by a general fall of prices; it is a circumstance that never happens but in consequence of a general decay. And it is surprizing that *M. de Mirabeau* should argue in this manner, who in other parts of his works shews a very proper idea of the importance of a general dearness of commodities, and repeats with approbation from the *Encyclopedie*, ABONDANCE ET CHERTE EST OPULENCE.

At page 21, *M. du Pont* declares generally against all excises and duties, mentions their being falsely supposed to fall equally on the people; and observes, “*En vain les faits se sont élevés contre ces préjugés; en vain votre dette nationale perpétuellement croissante a du vous prouver l'insuffisance & l'illusion d'un impôt ainsi perçu qui porte sur les dépenses même de*

l'etat & qui tarit la source des richesses renaissantes de la nation." This reasoning is extremely fallacious: Does M. du Pont suppose that our debt is owing to the publick money being raised by one mode rather than another? Does he imagine that we should have been free from debts, had all our excises been consolidated into one tax on land? Should we then have been able to have raised from 15 to 19 millions within the year? Our debt has been owing to the taxes not producing half what is necessary, by no means to the mode of collecting them. At page 27, he asserts, that taxes on consumption, admit not of equality in their distribution; which is directly contrary to all experience. He says that some lands yield a great net produce, some a middling one, and some little more than the expence of culture; taxes on consumption, which are established equally on all three, he says, must reduce the last to waste. But what can this mean? What have excises to do with any land? the excise on malt, hops, &c. is not laid *per* acre, but *per* quarter and *per* cwt.; this supposed inequality therefore is merely ideal.

If he means the taxes on the consumption of the products of such lands, then his observation cannot be just because the tax will be pro-

proportionable to the quantity of product, and consequently cannot be *equally established on all three.*

Nor will M. du Pont take the instance of this kingdom, which alone is sufficient to refute him. After stating from Decker the mischiefs of our excises, &c. he says, "Et les proprietaires sont obligés en outre de supporter la dégradation de leur patrimoine, laquelle résulte de la *destruction progressive* des richesses d'exploitation operée par la partie des taxes dont les fermiers des terres ont ressenti le premier coup." This whole kingdom exhibits a fact so decisively contrary to this assertion, that M. du Pont must be little acquainted with the effects of our taxes to have let such a passage slip his pen. Instead of a progressive destruction of the wealth of our farmers, owing to excises, we see nothing among them but a progression of wealth and felicity—we have not a farmer who has any conception of an excise—nay, nor of a tax, except on windows, and poor's-rates; these are all the taxes he feels—and if M. du Pont was to question them on our duties on consumption, nine out of ten would stare, and not know what he meant—so little do they feel the very taxes they pay, from their being blended with the original price of the commodities they consume. This writer proceeding with his

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argument, tells us, that our exchequer receives but one half of what is raised on the people by our taxes on consumption. I quote this only to set the author right in a fact he much mistakes; even our excises cost only  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. collecting, every expence included: The following account of the charges of all our taxes, I believe is not far from the truth,

	£.
Land-tax, $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. - - -	10,000
Malt, $5\frac{1}{2}$ , - - - - -	41,250
Excises, $5\frac{1}{2}$ , - - - - -	308,000
Customs, 15, - - - - -	300,000
	659,250

For which expence the exchequer receives neat above ten millions; but if the charges of collection run up to one million, and higher than that no author of credit ever calculated, whence can M. du Pont derive his authority for making it ten times as much?

From the terms which this gentleman uses, there is not the least reason to suppose that he means by 10 millions to include the profit made by manufacturers and merchants upon the advance of customs and excises; but as he in other passages complains very much of such taxes raising prices, let us for curiosity suppose

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suppose he had meant to include this, and calculate how near to 10 million such an idea will carry him. We must calculate this by allowing the person in trade 5 per cent. interest on his advance; but to obviate objections I shall suppose 7 per cent. which gives him 2 per cent. profit on the tax.

	£.		£.
Customs, 2,000,000			
Collecting, 300,000			
	2,300,000	on which 7 per cent. is	161,000
Excise, 5,600,000			
Collecting, 308,000			
	5,908,000	on which 7 per cent. is	343,560

But this includes all inland duties, stamps, coaches, &c. on which no advance can be made; however I have reckoned the whole.

	£.		£.
Malt, 613,000			
Collecting, 41,250			
	654,250	on which 7 per cent. is	45,797
			550,357

Here therefore we find that manufacturers and merchants charging 7 per cent. on the taxes on consumption, amounts to but little more than half a million. I do not think we ought to reckon it at more than 7 per cent. and for this reason, the real expence

Q 4 to

to them is 5 *per cent.*; and as they can afford to take that, others who charge more might be underfold. However, as we are at present endeavouring to elucidate this matter, I shall calculate it in another manner; and suppose that the merchant and manufacturer blends the duty with the prime cost and all other expences, and then upon the total, charges whatever the neat profit of his trade is: Suppose the average profit on trade and manufactures to be 12 *per cent.* then we must calculate the advance on the taxes at 12 *per cent.*

Customs and collecting,	£.	2,300,000	£.
Excises, &c. - - - -		5,908,000	
Malt, - - - - -		654,250	
		<hr/>	8,862,250

On which 12 *per cent.* is, - - - 1,063,470  
 The whole account of *British* taxes therefore will, upon this footing, stand as follows:

Total of all our taxes neat into the exchequer, - - - - -	}	10,213,000	
Expences of collecting, - - - - -			
12 <i>per cent.</i> to merchants and manu- facturers on their advance of those on consumption, - - - - -	}	1,063,470	
Total, - - - - -			
		<hr/>	£. 11,935,720

I do not apprehend that any probable account can carry the calculation farther; upon what authority therefore, or on what prin-

principles, can *M. du Pont* make the total above 20 millions?

But it well deserves the attention of the æconomical writers, that if their ideas and those of *Locke* and *Decker* be true, *M. du Pont* is much too low in saying, that for 10 millions the exchequer receives, the nation pays 20; for if every man makes such advances on the taxes as they describe—if the farmer sells his ox dearer on account of taxes—if the leatherfeller raises his price on account of taxes on candles and soap—if the shoemaker adds to his on account of customs on wine—if the latter raises his on account of the high price of shoes—if the mercer raises his silks because hats rise—if the merchant importer raises his prices because silks are dearer—and, in a word, if every man in trade adds *all the taxes* he pays to the prices of the commodities he deals in, it is plain, as *Locke* observed, that the whole must fall (not on land) but on the idle consumer; but instead of taxes being thus doubled, they will be multiplied an hundred fold—instead of our paying 20 millions, we should be paying 100 millions, nay, perhaps 1000 millions; the extravagance of which idea shews plainly that the real bearers of the taxes are much more numerous than they suppose—and that in fact people in trade can draw back

back no other taxes on their consumption than such as fall equally and by necessity on every one engaged in the same trade. All the other taxes they really pay, and support the final weight as much as any landlord in the kingdom.

M. du Pont is determined to give our society of *Emulation* the meanest opinion possible of the whole system of *British* politics. Not content with overturning our finances, he attacks the navigation act—"cet acte n'a pas peu contribué à retarder les progrès de votre commerce"—I believe the *Dutch* in the last age would have given a different account; nor can there be any doubt but it was a measure calculated with the utmost wisdom, and the experience of above a century has confirmed the reasoning of the politicians who made it; M. du Pont seems not to know that our wisest writers, and those whose works are here in much the highest estimation, concur in this idea, which is so perfectly consonant with the nature of things\*.

In

\* At page 43, M. du Pont falls into a very great error in asserting that the *London Society* expends 40 *mille livres sterling* annually. This is an error of a cypher—let him strike that out, and he will be much nearer the truth.

In another place he says, "il a renversé la constitution *Britannique*.—Il a appauvri les maîtres de la maison pour enrichir leurs valets de leurs dépouilles. Il a principalement contribué à former ces fortunes pécuniaires qui ont jetté la *Grande Bretagne* dans le delire funeste des emprunts publics †." What is this to the purpose? he might as well have said in general that TRADE had done all this; which has nothing to do with the enquiry. Has it been an encouragement to trade? This he acknowledges in these words. And as to its being a monopoly, which is *Decker's* objection, experience tells us the contrary, and that from the competition between our own ports and our own merchants, freights are as cheap, and commodities as readily transported as if all *Europe* had been our carriers. As to navigation, shipping, and seamen, all these *physiocratical* writers laugh at such matters, but they forget that an extensive navigation, much shipping, and many seamen, are the farmers best markets—they are themselves markets—they by wealth create markets—not to speak of that maritime power which M. du Pont mistakenly says in the same piece, is to be bought.

† *Ephemerides du Citoyen*, 1769, vol. vi.

bought.—Ships and cannon may be bought, but money will not buy seamen.

He would do well to instance any export of our commodities in which the navigation act ever proved a monopoly: Let him enquire the freight of the immense quantities of corn *British* shipping landed in *France* in 1748, 49, and 50; and yet the export of our corn is a monopoly to ships navigated by *British* seamen.

The author in various parts of his letter speaks of our taxes on consumption as impoverishing the people to the lessening of consumption: but herein he is again utterly misinformed, since the consumption of every article that has been excised, has increased under the accumulated weight. No article has been heavier taxed than malt and beer—and none consumed by people less able to bear it; yet has the quantity almost regularly advanced under all the growing weight of such heavy duties.

Upon the whole, this gentleman and the Marquis *de Mirabeau*, with many other *French* writers, seem to have recommended the abolition of all taxes on consumption in favour of a simple land-tax, rather for the sake of getting rid of farmers of the revenue, and other great abuses, than from any positive conviction of the excellence of the plan: and in the pursuit of the notion they

they have run into the two common errors, a disposition to condemn every thing they find at home; and on the contrary, in their recommendation to launch into an hypothesis, to which every circumstance, every fact, and every thought must be squared. I know nothing more likely to lead to erroneous conclusions. It was a strange blunder to carry the same idea to *Britain*.

These gentlemen do not seem in any of their works to make a proper distinction between different countries. For instance, between those where the income arises only from the soil—those where the soil yields much the greatest income—and others where trade and manufactures are the most considerable. Had they made this distinction, they could not have allowed themselves the licence of such *general* expressions, as if their nostrum was equally adapted to every possible constitution. What do they say to *Holland*?—Would they absorb all the *Dutch* excises into a tax upon land, which one might almost say hardly exists? Would they, like our Sir *Matthew Decker*, lay it upon houses, and thereby let the trader, who spends five thousand a year, be taxed no higher than the fisherman who spends only fifty pounds? neither of whom possess one acre of land—And will they venture to assert

assert the inconsiderable body of *Dutch* landlords would be eased by paying all the enormous amount of *Dutch* excises directly in a tax on the produce of their lands, rather than have, as at present, the accumulations of those who advance the taxes? Would these gentlemen accept a *Dutch* estate in so blessed a predicament? This is an instance, perhaps the strongest, of a country, for which their system appears at first sight to be ridicule itself.

On the other hand, let us suppose a country where there is neither trade nor manufactures, and consequently where the national income arises only from land rents. If the publick revenue in such an one is raised by excises, the landlords, who from the supposition are the only consumers, pay not only the tax, but the profit made on advancing it. Here therefore their system is so far rational; but even in this case there follows the quere, Whether they would not lose more than to the amount of this advantage, by the new tax on their *produit net*, which would be a tax on their improvements, in direct proportion to the amount of such improvements. Hence, therefore, I should even in this case be against their scheme, and had rather that the general body of indolent landlords should

should pay accumulated excise, than have industrious improving ones taxed in proportion to their industry.

These are two instances, the one in which their system would be preposterous; the other, in which it would be attended with the fewest inconveniences. The example of *England* lies between both.

The income of our soil is very considerable, but does not make much above half the total income of the state. The profits and labour in commerce, manufactures and arts, are of a vast amount; consequently to exempt them all from taxation, and throw the whole burthen on land, would be unequal and oppressive in the highest degree.

In *France* the income of the soil bears a much greater proportion to the total income than in *England*, and consequently their system would do less mischief there than here. But it is by a strange mode of reasoning that they should recommend a plan to us, because in *France* it is to a certain point more expedient than in some other countries.

In answer to all this, I know they would advance as before, that their proposition is by no means to burthen the land more, because the land already pays all taxes, and in



in no system can it pay more than all: but on their plan it would pay the *all* with most ease.

By what other logical ledgerdeman than what *Locke* and *Decker* used, they make out this position, I know not; that it is false, will admit of no doubt—that every thing *Locke* and *Decker* advanced on this point, has been refuted by experience, as well as writings, there is as little doubt.

Suppose a merchant of *Marseilles* trades to the *Levant*, and that his commerce consists of exporting *French* cloths in return for cotton, silk, fruit, drugs, coffee, and silver; and upon this trade makes a profit of forty thousand livres a year. Now the question is, who pays the excises that in any way affect the manufacture of the cloth exported, or the cotton and silk imported; the customs on the drugs, coffee, &c.; and lastly, the manufacturers and merchants profits not only on the direct line of trade, but on the advance of the excises and customs?—*Answer*, The consumers of those commodities. *No*; say these gentlemen, *it is les propriétaires des biens-fonds*, the landlords alone.

Suppose the coffee, for instance, landed at *Marseilles*, and a custom paid on it; suppose

pose it next to pay (as not coming from their own islands) an excise; and further, suppose it to pay at the gates of a city the *entrée*: it is consumed, part by the merchant who imports it, part by the manufacturer of the silk and cotton, and part by a *French* landlord. These three purchasers of the coffee certainly pay all the duties, and all the profits made by advancing them—what I would urge is, that the merchant who drinks his part, pays in the last resort, his share of the taxes as much as the landlord. And I desire to know in what manner the tax on that drunk by the merchant and the manufacturer can possibly come to the landlord? *Locke* and *Decker* in answer will say, that these men will charge the expence on the consumers of the other commodities they deal in: they might as well say they would do the same by the money they lost at the gaming tables; and because they lost a thousand livres at hazard sell their silk and cotton so much the dearer.

Let us attend to the manner in which a merchant sits down to calculate the prime cost to him of the commodity he deals in. Suppose it wine; and let us state ideal sums, their exactness is not of consequence, suppose 36 pipes.

B

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Invoice of 36 pipes, - -				409	10	0
Duty with fees, -	347	15	4			
Port entry with ditto, 79	3	4				
	<hr/>			426	18	8
Freight, &c. - -	63	18	0			
Prifage, - - -	9	0	0			
	<hr/>			72	18	0
Infurance with convoy on 400 <i>l.</i>				20	0	0
at 5 per cent. - - - -						
Landing, at 3 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> per ton,				3	0	0
Porterage, - - - -				3	12	0
Cooperage, at 1 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> per ton,				1	4	0
Leakage, 5 <i>s.</i> a pipe, - - -				9	0	0
	<hr/>			946	2	8
Which is per pipe, - -				26	3	4
Suppose the merchant's profit				5	16	8
23 per cent. - - - -						
	<hr/>					
Cost to the consumer, exclusive				32	0	0
of expences in moving from						
the merchant's vaults,						

Now if the *French* writers ideas be just, the merchant, besides the above charges, should add such as these :

	£.	s.	d.
Expences in coffee, tea, sugar,	32	0	0
&c. beyond what the above	1	10	0
23 per cent. will allow,			
Point lace, and diamonds for	3	0	0
my wife, - - - -			
<i>N. B.</i> Merchants wives in <i>Eng-</i>			
<i>land</i> wear these commodities.			
Further, as I am perfectly well	1	8	0
inclined to drink as well as			
to sell wine, and my 23 per			
cent. not being sufficient,			
<i>inde,</i> - - - -			
	<hr/>		
Price which I must charge	* 37	18	0
the consumer, - - -			

The

\* Sir *M. Decker's* idea that every man advances the price of the commodities he deals in, proportioned to the increase in *all* the articles of his expence; of which he gives an instance in shoes; is contrary to common sense and all experience. Thus he says, the grazier adds the advance in shoes to the price of his beast: Impossible; the price of it in the market will not be regulated even by the expence of its food, much less of its master's shoes. He farther makes the tanner's journeymen raise their wages on account of the advance in shoes; another instance which shews how little he understood the nature of taxes. In what manufactory of the kingdom did he find 100 or 50 per cent. advance in labour since the excise duties? And

The merchant may charge what he pleases, but where is the consumer who will pay 37 for what he can get at next door for 32?

I suppose 23 per cent. or whatever is named on the above expenditure; but if the merchant charges more than reasonable, he will be as much underfold by his neighbour as if he charged his wife's gilt chariot, or her losses at quadrille.

Thus there are certain expences, under which a commodity cannot be procured; there must also be a reasonable profit for the merchant; and if there were no consumers but landlords, certainly the land would pay the whole; but as the commodity is consumed by all ranks—all ranks pay their share.

It is the custom of some gentlemen in *England* to import their own wine; they then save a part of the 5*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* per pipe

he makes every man who deals in leather or shoes, raise his price proportioned to the taxes on soap and candles; in a word, he supposes every man to make an advance in his commodity, proportioned to the general dearness of living—and because such a proportion appears reasonable, he took it for granted; whereas nothing is farther from fact. See *Essay on the causes of the decline of foreign Trade*: which decline never existed; so far from it, that our exports, and particularly of woollen goods, were then greater than ever known before, as is abundantly proved by Mr. *Smith*, in his *Memoirs of Wool*. Yet Sir *M.* complains most of the decline in the woollen fabricks.

pipe (not the whole of it)—then, say the *French* writers, surely the gentleman if he buys of the merchant, pays not only the duty, but 23 per cent. more—Certainly, I reply, for all he consumes—*On no more*, says a dealer in dowlas, who stands by, *for I buy part of the merchant's wines, and of course pay my share of the taxes.* But who buys your dowlas? *The Dutch and Americans*—and consequently pay the duties. *I also*, says a tobacco merchant, *buy wine of this man*:—Who consumes this tobacco? *Germany and the North*—they therefore pay their share.

But there is a farther circumstance which must not be forgotten, and which may be said to ease the landlord even of the share which belongs to him, which is his own consumption:—This is the great national wealth which accompanies taxes, or at least is always found, where they and trade abound together, as in *Holland, England, and France*, raising the prices of the landlord's products, so as to indemnify him for his taxes, which, though not a regular drawing back in the way a trader does, yet has the same effect: he is enabled from this national wealth, to raise his rents, and the price of the farmer's products rising with all other commodities; this burthen, like all the rest, falls equally on the whole

body of consumers. I do not say that the supposition I have now been making is always the case—but if the landlord paid an excise which he could regularly draw back, then the effect would be just so, and the circle complete: That is, every man advancing his share of excises, but paying no more than in proportion to his consumption.

In the next place, let us take the case of a stockholder, a man with a thousand a year in the public funds. The excellency of our excises is, that they bring every article of this man's consumption to contribute to the public revenue: Excises and customs are alone what he can feel: he cannot drink a bottle of wine, buy a yard of lace, or an article in furniture, &c. without paying a tax: this idle consumer therefore, is made to contribute—Is this no advantage to land?—He sells nothing which the landlords buy, and consequently cannot accumulate duties on them.

Out of the supposed 23 *per cent.* I stated above, there is to be deducted the interest of the merchant's capital, or 5 *per cent.*; also, all his expences of trade, or charges of merchandize, such as clerks, writers, vaults, coopers, paper, books, postage, long credit, bad debts, &c. which perhaps will reduce the 23 to 12 or 15; and there are

are many trades and manufactures not so good as a wine merchant: suppose we say 12 *per cent.* as a medium neat profit.—Now can there possibly be common sense in the landed interest submitting to the total of taxation, in order to escape 12 *per cent.* addition on the part of their consumption?

Suppose *M. du Pont's* proposition executed, and all our taxes laid on land: what would be the consequence, granting it possible for the land to bear them? Would not trade, manufactures and arts escape taxation, that is, the possessors of half the national income? And is this a way to render taxes an equal burthen? But in what manner is the landlord made amends? This immense tax on the farmer's neat produce is to be no excise which he can draw back and throw upon the consumers of corn, consequently he can afford to pay no more rent than before to the landlord; but much less; nor is there one attendant circumstance that can raise the price of his products, and thereby recompence him: What advantage is to arise to him farther than the 12 *per cent.* the mercantile advance on the landlord's consumption—No probable one; for, as to the benefits of a free port trade when customs are at an end, the probable consequences

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are much against the nation; one circumstance of which would be a free import of corn, not very favourable to the farming race—but which, in some years, would be heavy enough upon them.—It may be said, the duties on malt would cease, and the consumption of barley be greater. I much question it; at best it is but a conjecture; whereas we certainly know that with an increase of tax there has been an increase of consumption\*.

Thus,

\* A modern writer, whose information is undoubted, and whose abilities are confessed, states the duties on consumption at two periods thus:

	£.
—“ Average of net excise since the new duties, three years, ending 1767, } 4,590,734	
Ditto before the new duties, three years, ending 1759, } 3,261,694	
Average increase, - - -	1,329,040

Here is no diminution. Here is, on the contrary, an immense increase. This is owing, I shall be told, to the new duties, which may increase the total bulk, but at the same time may make some diminution of the produce of the old.—Let us take, as the best instance for the purpose, the produce of the old hereditary and temporary excise, granted in the reign of Charles II. whose object is that of most of the new impositions from two averages, each of eight years:

Average

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Thus, with a view to very doubtful advantages, they are, in order to ease themselves of 12 per cent. advance on taxes on con-

	£.
Average first period, eight years, ending 1754, - - - } 525,317	
Ditto second period, eight years, ending 1767, - - - } 538,542	
Increase, - - -	13,225

Such is the state of the oldest branch of the revenue from consumption. Besides the acquisition of so much new, this article, to speak of no other, has rather increased under the pressure of all those additional taxes to which the author † is pleased to attribute its destruction. But as the author has made his grand effort against those moderate, judicious and necessary levies, which support all the dignity, the credit and the power of his country, the reader will excuse a little farther detail on this subject: That we may see how little oppressive those taxes are on the shoulders of the publick, with which he labours so earnestly to load its imagination. For this purpose we take the state of that specific article upon which the two capital burthens of the war leaned the most immediately, by the additional duties upon malt and upon beer:

	Barrels.
Average of strong beer brewed in eight years before the additional malt and beer duties, - - - } 3,895,059	
Average of the eight years since the duties, - - - } 4,060,726	
Increase in last period, - - -	165,667

† State of the Nation,

Here

consumption, to accept the whole amount, and instead of 4*s.* pay 15*s.* in the pound, while all the other idle consumers in the nation are to drink their claret at 1*s.* 6*d.* a bottle, and wear foreign manufactures duty free—in a word, their whole consumption to

Here is the effect of two such daring taxes as 3*d.* by the bushel additional on malt, and 3*s.* by the barrel additional on beer. Two impositions laid without remission one upon the neck of the other; and laid upon an object which before had been immensely loaded. They did not in the least impair the consumption: it has grown under them. It appears, that upon the whole the people did not feel so much inconvenience from the new duties, as to oblige them to take refuge in the private brewery. Quite the contrary happened in both these respects in the reign of King William, and it happened from much slighter impositions. No people can long consume a commodity for which they are not well able to pay. An enlightened reader laughs at the inconsistent chimera of our author, of a people universally luxurious, and at the same time oppressed with taxes and declining in trade. For my part, I cannot look on these duties as the author does. He fees nothing but the burthen. I can perceive the burthen as well as he; but I cannot avoid contemplating also the strength that supports it. From thence I draw the most comfortable assurances of the future vigour, and the ample resources, of this great misrepresented country; and can never prevail on myself to make complaints which have no cause, in order to raise hopes which have no foundation." The French writers, who often quote *the State of the Nation*, should read this admirable answer to it: it would enlarge their conceptions not a little. *Observations on a late State of the Nation*, 3d edit. 1767. p. 44.

to be exempted from all taxation—and all this mighty operation is to be founded solely on the chimera that the land pays all taxes.—That Mr. *A.* the landlord pays the customs on Lord *B.* the stockholder's claret. That Mr. *C.* another landlord, is burthened with the duties on tobacco smoked in *Germany*. And Mr. *D.* a third, has the excises on tea drank at *New York* to pay. If these ideas are just, there is a contradiction in mine not far short of frenzy.

Suppose all customs and excises abolished, let me ask this simple question; How would the merchant or manufacturer contribute to the publick revenues? At present he pays taxes in the whole expenditure of his *profit*. The moment he is a mere consumer instead of a trader, he ranks with landlords, and pays at the last hand duties on all the commodities he buys.—Further; how would the stockholder, or him whose income was from mortgages, contribute to the public? Not a penny would be paid by them; if they pleased they might expend their whole income in encouraging the industry of *Frenchmen* and *Italians*, by consuming their manufactures, without contributing a farthing to the state. To what purpose, consistent with common sense, could such an exemption be given them? Such would live duty free, while land paid 15*s.* in the pound!

pound! The first, greatest, and most essential principle of taxation is *equality*: The wit of man could never devise a system so compleat in this respect as duties on consumption; where can the converse of their merit be found so perfect as in the union of taxes on the neat produce of the land?

A German prince, the Margrave of *Baden Dourlach*, pleased with the writings on what our authors pompously call *La Nouvelle Science*, the œconomical science, and I suppose meaning perfectly well, has made the experiment, as we are told\*, in the considerable village of *Dietlingen*, in 1770. He there abolished every excise, and duty whatsoever except the tythe, and in return accepted the 4th of the neat produce of gardens, grafs and arable lands; and the 6th of vines; that is to say,

	<i>liv.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>den.</i>
From an arpent of arable land, of the first quality	6	10	11
Ditto the medium quality	2	10	11
Ditto bad quality	1	14	11
Ditto good grafs	8	14	6
Ditto bad grafs	6	0	0
Ditto the best gardens	11	12	8
Ditto the next	8	14	8
Ditto vines	8	14	6

And M. *du Pont*, in a note on this observation,

\* *Ephemerides du Citoyen*, 1771, vol. vii. p. 209.

ferences, that it must be changed every ten years, because an acre in the lowest class may be advanced by improvement to the first. Thus we see that in every instance these friends of the farmer are for taxing his improvements: they must have a portion of the produce varying with improvements: we know what this is in our tythe; a tax would be universal, which the tythe is not.—What a curse upon the agriculture of a country would such a system be! Nay; as if they would not see the effects of their own *taille*, he observes, that the means to judge of improvements are the cattle the farmer keeps—"La quantité des bestiaux peut donner une idée assez juste de la somme des avances, dont ils forment toujours la meilleure partie.—Quand le nombre des bestiaux est *tel* sur *telle* étendue de terrain, les *avances de culture* et les *reprises du cultivateur* doivent être de *tant*.—Quand les avances de la culture et les reprises du cultivateur font de *tant* le *produit net* sur une récolte de *telle* quantité, à *tel* prix, est de *tant*."—But in this whole paper there is no satisfaction given us how excises are abolished in one part of a prince's territory and not in all—This is a difficulty to which I cannot readily imagine a solution without a much greater expence than the experiment was worth.

M. Quesnay gives in the *Encyclopedie* a set of maxims upon which his disciples have founded much of their new science; there is in these maxims a great mixture of penetration and prejudice. Here they are:

I. *Les travaux d'industrie ne multiplient pas les richesses.*

This is the idea upon which they partly found the necessity of making the soil pay all taxes; but what a strange assertion! In what manner will M. Quesnay get rid of the exception, *Holland*? Does not industry in that country multiply riches? Is it not attended with the same effect in *England* and *France*? To assert that the soil is the original of all wealth, would be just; but to say that manufactures and commerce add not to national wealth, is beyond conception. Let us state a supposition. A country produces besides its own consumption, 100,000 quarters of wheat; 500,000 pounds of wool; 50,000 hides; 5000 tons of hemp, and 10,000 tons of iron; which surplus of its product is exported in 300 sail of foreign shipping, navigated by 5000 failors. We will suppose these commodities sell for 500,000*l.* which is of course annually received part in cash and part in foreign produce. Suppose the legislature of this country, in order to enrich the people, introduces or enlarges manufactures

*first of these  
is conveyed in  
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soil is the original  
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alth can work  
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cting indu  
But it is impossible that anything can add  
to cannot originate or produce the thing it adds*

factures sufficiently to work the wool and hemp into cloth; the hides into fabrics of leather, and the iron into hard wares; and instead of exporting the wheat, feeds these new manufacturers with it. Let us, to make the idea stronger, suppose the statesman to erect these fabrics within an enclosure quite cut off from the common intercourse with the rest of the people. What is his process? In order for his designed works he wants a portion of the people; a demand that will in all countries be easily supplied. As he encreases the numbers of workmen in his enclosure, the export of those raw commodities lessens, till it ends upon his having hands sufficient for working the whole. Here then is a change wrought, but not to the old inhabitants; before, they sold their surplus products to the foreign shipping; now they sell it at the gates of the statesman's enclosure—it is the same to them; their interest is neither promoted nor injured. Now let us attend to the progress of the new manufactures; the raw materials being worked into the fabrics abovementioned, amount to the value of £ 2,000,000—these the statesman puts on board ships he has built, and having by degrees trained up seamen, he sends these fabrics to a foreign market, where he disposes of them, and taking in exchange such

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256 *Importance of Manufactures.*

such commodities as are wanted in his own country, receives the balance in bullion. Here then we may state some effects of the new policy.

The number of subjects is increased by all that are employed in the manufacture and transport of those commodities, which formerly were exported raw. This increase arises from the increase of demand for labour, the consequence I explained on another occasion. The people in his inclosure are just the same to him as an increase of territory; they have a regular, permanent income *created* by themselves of 1,500,000*l.* which is the value their labour adds to the rough materials purchased without the walls of the inclosure. This income supports them, and is open to levies for the public service as much as the products of the lands. How can M. *Quesnay* possibly assert that the labour of this industry does not multiply the wealth of the whole nation? The inclosure is peopled without lessening the population of the country; 1,500,000*l.* is gained more than before, which is to support the manufacturers; they in the common course of multiplication will yield a surplus of people for soldiers, sailors, &c. and in the expenditure of their income will add to the national revenue so much by taxes on consumption, that it may be possible for the statesman to ease the landlords thereby of a part

PRINCIPLES OF POPULATION. 257

part of those on the products of the land. I assert that the labour of these people is to all intents and purposes as really and effectually *wealth* as the income of the lands. Nor has M. *Quesnay* in any of his works given one reason to prove the contrary. Instead of an enclosure for manufacturers, suppose a small island full of them near a large one, a territory under the same government; will not the income gained by the inhabitants of the little island be as much the income of the statesman's subjects as that of the great one? Will he not have taxes and men from them? will not his people be increased? will not their navigation give him seamen? To what other purpose, intent or idea can the income from the lands in one island be called wealth, and that from manufactures in the other not allowed the same definition? I have kept the manufacturers, merchants and seamen distinct from the people, to throw the idea into the strongest light, but the effect is the same if they are scattered through the whole territory.

II. *Les hommes se multiplient à proportion des revenus des biens-fonds.*

Very true in some cases, very false in others. In a state where the only income is land it may, under some circumstances, be true; but not in others. Suppose the multiplication from the land stopped (as it

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always

*He cannot have read them*

always is) for want of a greater demand of the surplus of its population; it then stops because the people, if it bred more, would not be able to get an income; but if manufactures, arts or commerce are introduced or increased, to demand more hands from the population of the soil, then that population will multiply, though the revenue of the land remains the same. It is therefore a great error to suppose that the income of the soil alone regulates the population of it,

III. *Les travaux d'industrie qui occupent des hommes au prejudice de la culture des biens-fonds, nuisent à la population, et à l'accroissement des richesses.*

An ideal case, which is impossible to happen. A demand for hands in every thing creates hands; agriculture is always first established in a country; when manufactures come they demand hands of agriculture, which will have plenty to supply them; if this goes on so far that agriculture wants hands, she will demand them of the towns, and the towns will supply her. Both these cases are very common, and no inconveniences follow; if labour and prices in general rise, agriculture does not suffer by it.

IV. *Les richesses des cultivateurs font naître les richesses de la culture.*

It is impossible to state a truer maxim. V. *L'agriculture produit deux sortes de richesses: savoir le produit annuel des revenus*

*This proposition is certainly not true the discouragement under which agriculture laboured and the encouragements which trade has met with in modern Europe (circumstances well described by Doctor Smith) have produced a very different order in the progress towards improvement, — Great Britain is the Nation where trade and manufactures are carried the furthest. The different state of its agriculture may be learnt from Mr Young himself p. 169 - 170*

*des propriétaires, & la restitution des frais de la culture.*

You may make this distinction if you please, but with equal justice you might say, it produced several other species of income. In *England* I should say, first, the soil yields a gross product, which forms the following divisions of income:

- 1. The landlord in rent, 5
- 2. The clergy in tythe, 1  $\frac{3}{4}$
- 3. The state in the land-tax, 0  $\frac{1}{2}$
- 4. The industrious poor in labour, 3  $\frac{1}{2}$
- 5. The non-industrious poor in rates,  $\frac{4}{5}$
- 6. The artizans in wear and tear, 1  $\frac{1}{5}$
- 7. The farmer in his profit, 4  $\frac{1}{2}$ \*

And for the information of my foreign readers I have set down against each article, the proportion it bears to the rest. That is, if 20 is the gross product of *England*, the rest will be as above.

VI. *Les richesses employées aux frais de la culture doivent étre réservées aux cultivateurs & étre exemptes de toutes impositions.*

Most certainly; and this tythe and rates excepted is clearly and decisively the case in *England*; yet would these writers persuade us that our system of finance is a bad one.

VII. *Lorsque le commerce des denrées du cru est facile & libre les travaux de main-d'œuvre sont toujours assurés infailliblement par le revenu des biens-fonds.*

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A very

\* These make 17  $\frac{1}{4}$ , the other 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  are seed and teams.

A very just idea.

VIII. Une nation qui a peu de commerce de denrée de son cru, & qui est réduite pour subsister à un commerce d'industrie, est dans un état précaire & incertain.

Holland is an instance that this truth (for there certainly is truth in this maxim) must have strong exceptions. Holland is in a precarious state, not from subsisting by commerce instead of agriculture, but from the smallness of her territory. Greater neighbours, if permitted by others, might swallow up Holland; so they might Switzerland; so they always have done Milan: this cause of weakness has nothing to do with the employment of the people: but will any person pretend to assert, that Holland would be more powerful if she subsisted by the husbandry of a foil, the rental of which, would not keep out the sea! Commerce has made the Dutch more powerful than many states, far richer in territory. This maxim therefore is only saying, that small states (for such only can come within the description) are not so powerful as great ones!

IX. Une nation qui a un grand territoire & qui fait baisser le prix des denrées de son cru, pour favoriser la fabrication des ouvrages de main-d'œuvre, se détruit de toutes parts.

Uncontrovertible.

X. La non-valeur avec abondance n'est point richesse. La cherté avec disette est misère.

misère. L'abondance avec cherté (permanente) est opulence.

An incomparable idea, which deserves to be written in letters of gold.

XI. Les avantages du commerce extérieur ne consistent pas dans l'accroissement des richesses pecuniaires.

In what then do they consist?

XII. On ne peut connoître par l'état de la balance du commerce entre diverses nations, l'avantage du commerce, & l'état des richesses de chaque nation.

This opinion certainly is not just. Where there are no mines, the balance of national payments (which, with a few exceptions, is the balance of commerce) is the means of wealth—and it is wealth that encourages every branch of industry, agriculture as well as manufactures. A great domestic circulation—a flourishing husbandry—and abundance of national wealth, without a favourable balance of trade, is a chimerical idea—of which an instance cannot be produced in the whole globe.

It cannot appear just to a Man who thinks that the balance of National payments is the means of Wealth.

XIII. Une nation ne pourroit entreprendre contre le commerce de ses voisins, sans déranger son état & sans se nuire à elle même, surtout dans la commerce reciproque qu'elle auroit directement ou indirectement établi eux.

Nothing can be more mistaken than such ideas; of which truth innumerable instances may be given. See the commerce

of *India*, which has been successively enjoyed by the *Genoese*, *Portuguese*, *Dutch*, *French*, and *English*; and by none of them without the destruction of their neighbours. What is the monopoly of spices? What is the monopoly of the commerce of colonies, which all nations upon such good grounds keep to themselves? What is the navigation-act of *England*, that epoch of the maritime commerce and power of this country? What are the duties laid by northern nations on the commodities of their southern neighbours? When a country is situated like *France*, *Spain* and *Italy*, and at the same time enjoying colonies in the *West Indies*, what comparison can there be between the demand of such a country for the commodities of *Poland* or *Denmark*, with the demand in these for the commodities of the south? Would not an equal commerce without duties impoverish the north? And would not the diminution of its wealth ruin the industry and even agriculture of their own subjects? This is a distinction between nations formed by nature herself; and if industry is equal between them, that superiority must be beneficial to one, and injurious to the other. A general free trade, as there has been no example of it in history, so is it contrary to reason. But why will not those writers look around them? Where does commerce flourish

*Even Doctor Smith considers the navigation Act as injurious to the commerce of the Country—Waltham of Nations V, p. 114*

flourish most? Upon what principles does it flourish? It flourishes most in *England* and *Holland*, upon principles, and owing to a policy diametrically contrary to what these writers would inculcate. Let them produce their instances. Why will they eternally wrap themselves up in hypothetical visionary propositions, of which no experience was ever gained, and in which nothing but conjecture can guide them? Yet upon such foundations do they arraign the policy that carried the COMMERCE of *Holland* to the highest pitch of grandeur\* and the principles which have rendered the AGRICULTURE of *England* flourishing, and her people happy!

One word more to my countrymen, in general reply to these theorists. Our agriculture has long flourished—and is now flourishing and improving—our landlords and farmers wealthy and happy—our taxes heavy, but so equal and well administered that nobody feels the weight but the idle and extravagant consumer:—while our landlords raise their rents, and the farmers are happy in paying them; while all classes of the people expend more than ever they did in former times; while all parts of the island are improved by publick works; and ornamented by private

\* See the *India Commerce*, &c. &c.

vate ones; in a word, while the great characteristic of a flourishing state in every thing appears, ABONDANCE ET CHERTE EST OPULENCE, while the nation is happy in such a variety of circumstances flowing from her present policy, would it not be madness to adopt or even to commend a system which tends so powerfully to eradicate every blessing we enjoy?

But impartiality demands of me a due tribute to the genius of these writers in other circumstances than such as I have quoted. Mess. *Quesnay* and *du Pont* in many of their works, display great sagacity, much knowledge, and every where a very sincere desire of being serviceable to the public: In a word, they shew themselves to be writers that no man would wish to oppose, nor should I have been induced to assert opinions contrary to theirs, had not the same duty to my country which they owe to theirs, called on me to differ from ideas, which I should have trembled to see realized. *M. de Mirabeau* in his *Tableau Oeconomique* has some admirable observations on the advantages of great farms; on the export of corn; on the superiority of national wealth to population †, and on some

† It is very extraordinary that this writer, after discovering this most useful maxim, should recall his opinion,

some other points. In these he shews the clearness of his understanding, and his freedom from popular prejudices—in these I readily allow him distinguished merit, and am sorry that on any occasion I should feel a necessity of differing in opinion with a man whose humanity I love, and whose abilities I revere.

If in return for *M. du Pont's* letter to the *London Society*, in which he gives so much advice to this country, I should venture to offer advice to the government of his, I should do it in few words. Relative to the material object, taxation, I should say—Your agriculture is destroyed by your land-tax being proportional to the products of the soil—and you are cramped by the exemption of the nobles: Ease your husbandry by abolishing the *taille*, and throw the burthen into additional taxes on consumption, you will thereby tax the farmers only when they are luxurious consumers, and you remedy the nobles exemption, by making every rank and class pay in proportion to their expences. In case the amount of the present *taille* could not be added to the present taxes on consumption, then let the deficiency be laid on in the form of the

*Eng-*

opinion, and declare that wealth was an inferior object to population; and that numbers of people were alone the cause of riches; yet this is his position in the letters annexed to *La Socrate Rustique*, 12mo.

*English* land-tax on rents, and like that, be at an invariable rate. But if the representations of your writers are near the truth, there are such enormous expences in the receipt of your taxes, that a better conduct in that respect, would almost make up for the deficiency of the taille. If this is the case, certainly the interests of your country demand a reform.—

Thus have I gone through this long examination of the sentiments of these authors; I thought it a work necessary to my design, which is to point out how agriculture may best be encouraged. As I explained the system of *England*, and recommended the imitation of it to foreigners, and endeavoured to shew the great obstacles to husbandry in most countries; it was natural to throw in the caution against adopting, in the career of improvement, propositions, which, though made by able writers, appeared to me to have a very fatal tendency: this it is that induced me to examine with so much attention, the hypothesis which the modern *French* writers have built in what they call the oeconomical science.

S E C T. II.

POPULATION A SECONDARY OBJECT.

**I**N the consideration of methods for advancing the interests of agriculture, a legislature may be in danger of following bad advice not only in matters of taxation, but in several other points: Among these the attention that is proper to be given to population, deserves particular notice. Since in several instances recommendations may be offered, which at first sight may seem disadvantageous to population, and on that account rejected; it will therefore be proper to explain in a cursory manner upon what principles it is that agriculture should never be in any instance discouraged, with a view to render a nation more populous, supposing such discouragement could be attended with that effect.

What I would here inculcate, is the idea (in case of a supposed competition) of keeping population ever subordinate to agriculture. If a measure is beneficial to the latter, give no attention to those who talk of injuring population.—If you act primarily from an idea of encouraging populousness, you may injure husbandry; but if your first idea is the encouragement of the latter, you cannot hurt population.

If

If this idea was acknowledged to be just, there would be no necessity for a discussion of it—but as many are of a very different opinion, it is necessary to urge a right conduct, though upon motives apparently deceitful.

I have before mentioned that application of the soil to be most beneficial, which yields the greatest neat profit in the market—*Aye*, says another, *provided it be food for man, thereby promoting population.* But I admit no such provision; and I am clear that the population of a country will be most advanced by the farmer's growing rich, whether by hops, madder, or woad, as well as corn: but granting the truth, still let the farmer act as he finds best, because he had better increase his wealth than the nation's people.

The farmers are desirous in such and such districts to convert their arable lands to grass—*No*; they are told, *that will injure population.* This reasoning is all on false principles. Do not the husbandmen best know what their lands are proper for? If they desire a change, is it not plain they do it for their own interest? Will they not grow more wealthy from hence? Will they not proportionably encourage and consequently increase all the classes that depend on, or are connected with them? And how can a conduct in such a train, be in the end an injury to population?

M. de

M. de Mirabeau has observed in *France*, and I have repeatedly made the same observation in *England*, that great farms are of far more advantage to husbandry than small ones: the same gentlemen tell us, *no matter; small farms are the most beneficial to population.*—I have proved this to be false from the register of all the farms on more than 70,000 acres of land in various parts of the kingdom; but granting they are right, yet the advantages of agriculture are never to be opposed on that pretence; for a good, spirited and accurate cultivation carried on by wealthy farmers, is of more consequence to the nation than population.

This whole matter is reduced simply to this; National wealth raised by industry, is more advantageous to a nation than an increase of people. Why are you strenuous for population? It can only be with views of national defence. But the number of people in a modern state, is by no means the measure of strength\*: this is wealth alone. Men were never wanting where money, flowing from industry, was plentiful; but if money is wanting, your population is of no consequence. All modern experience is but a collective proof of this.

My principles are these: I mean to befriend population, and I think the only way to

\* See this farther treated in *Proposals to the Legislature for numbering the People, 1772.*

to do it is to promote every branch of national industry, and never throw out any restrictions, laws, or rules with a view to population—ever let it be a secondary object flowing from wealth, if you would in fact have it the first. Farmers, manufacturers, merchants, &c. conducting their business after their own ideas, and from the increase of their private wealth, enabled to be more active in their respective provinces, and increasing the general consumption of all commodities, must in the very nature of things promote population infinitely more than it is possible for you to do by your cautions, your restrictions, and your regulations.

Those who are so eager in favour of population should reflect, that a very numerous people raised by any means but the gradual progress of wealth and industry, would, in most cases, be burthensome. Suppose the farms so small as to be just able to feed a family, and that the farmers were (as they must be in such a case) their own landlords—supposing by such a minute division of the territory the people should increase, but to what purpose? Merely to starve one another; they can sell nothing, wanting the whole produce for their own support—land-taxes on them would reduce them to beggary, and they can consume no excisable commodities, for how are they to buy them? Thus such a system gives you

no public revenue—nor yields any products for exportation, scarce any even for sale—Of what good therefore is this part of your territory? Why it breeds people. True; but does it maintain them? No? Here therefore would be a surplus of population; but you want no such surplus—your army is full; your navy is full, and your manufacturers have far more hands than they can employ—Why then increase your people?—They can be nothing but a public burthen, if they do not leave a country which cannot support them.

This country, and I have reason to believe it is the same in *France*, and most certainly so in *Germany*, has men enough to spare from industry for any wars that we may find it necessary to wage. Whoever will take the trouble to consult the political tracts and the debates in parliament towards the close of the war in the year 1748, will find re-iterated complaints of the want of men, and bold assertions that none could be found to continue the war; yet in ten years we were in the midst of another that employed more than double the men of the former; and when it was ending again, heard the old complaints of a want of men: and the reason was the high premiums given to those that enlisted in the army. But this did not prove that you had fought off the surplus of your population, every



every man's experience, I might say in almost every village, certainly in every town of the kingdom, would tell him the contrary of that; it only proves that, as the surplus decreased, the price arose.—It is the same in the purchase of all other commodities; no buyer but what knows that he must pay according to the quantity in the market—and he feels prices rise, without dreaming that he is to go home without his commodity. That the want of soldiers never went beyond this scarcity, which would appear in the most populous countries that ever existed, we have the greatest reason to believe, from the quick and mighty execution of all publick and private works at the same time. It was precisely during the last years of the war that our master manufacturers employed more than ever they did in any former period, our merchants employed more seamen; if you examine the statutes of that time, you will see more turnpike, drainage and navigation bills; and in no former period did you ever know so large sums expended by private people in buildings, lawns, plantations and lakes: all these were so many bidders at the auction of men against the government: the consequence was, prices arose; but are we therefore to say the scarcity was real? Are we to say that there were few goods at a sale, because from many bidders they went high?

S E C T. III.

FREEDOM OF CULTURE.

ANOTHER notion of much the same kind with this false one of population, and connected with it, is the government of a country issuing edicts against the culture of certain crops—such as vines in *France*, *Spain* and *Portugal*. Those countries have suffered so much for want of corn, that they think endeavours should be used to feed themselves: this is certainly very right; but the means they take is to drive the husbandmen from one branch into another; knowing wine can be better spared than bread, they want to convert the vineyards into wheat fields; this is false politicks. It is evident, that the farmers find the vineyard culture the most profitable, or they would not be desirous of getting into it, which is alone sufficient proof that they do right in pursuing it.—Probably the money they make by their wine will much more than pay for the corn that could have been raised on the same ground.—But supposing the government desirous of cutting off any such importation, yet the evil is one whose direct

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tendency is to remedy itself; for if the vineyards multiply so as much to lessen the culture of corn, the price of it will rise, and every day bring the profit nearer to that of vines, and consequently the culture would speedily increase. But if the government of a country is desirous of increasing any product of its lands, the direct and proper way is to encourage the culture of it without depressing that of any other. If your territory does not yield corn enough, give the farmers a better and more steady price for it, by encouraging exportation; ease the husbandman of those taxes which disable him from pursuing his business with spirit; in a word, make the culture of corn profitable to him, and fear not but he will raise enough of it. I have been surprized to read in the works of the *French* writers, instances of edicts not only to prevent an increase of vineyards, but even to grub up such as have been planted since certain periods. This is a system of absurdity which appears to me astonishing. It has also very lately been the case in *Portugal*. I have reflected on this policy with as much attention as I am able, and I cannot conceive upon what principles it can be embraced.

## S E C T. IV.

## RISE OF RENTS.

**A**NOTHER erroneous idea may easily take place in relation to rents. In my journies through this kingdom I have often taken notice, of how much consequence it is to the welfare of agriculture here, to improve the rental of estates; as I have remarked that those parts of the country which are much under let, are generally cultivated in a very incomplete and slovenly manner.

This remark I know to be just in *England*; but that it is so in other countries is by no means clear. Here our farmers enjoy every advantage that can result from liberty, law, taxation, and other circumstances; if therefore they do not make use of such advantages, it must be owing to their being contented with merely living, by means of low rents, instead of aiming by industry at wealth: But in other countries where liberty is precarious—law the will of the prince, and consequently of the great—taxes excessively burthensome—markets low—and few circumstances very favourable—in such the farmers must necessarily have spurs enough to be industrious, there must

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be more danger of activity being extinguished by oppression, than damped by any favour in rent; consequently it would be very dangerous to recommend this conduct to such a country, though found so beneficial in *England*.

S E C T. V.

FREE CORN TRADE.

ANOTHER instance wherein it may be imprudent in one country to copy the sensible regulations of another, is seen in the case of the absolutely free corn-trade of *Holland*. I have, in various passages of this essay, spoken much in favour of a free export of corn—but in some cases, I think a free import would be disadvantageous.

That it is a most wise measure in *Holland* cannot be doubted, and for these reasons: In relation to corn, the *Dutch* have but two interests, those of commerce, and consumption. For the former, corn, like other commodities, cannot be too cheap, because the cheaper it is with them, the greater the trade must be with all their neighbours; and as to the consumers, the cheaper the better for them. If the States think bread too cheap, they can raise the price by excises, which

which accordingly is their practice; and thus the cheapness of corn is beneficial to the state.

But carrying these circumstances in our eye, they offer a strong instance of the caution with which we should recommend the practice of one country to another. Several writers, and especially one for whose abilities I have no slight esteem\*, have warmly expressed their opinion in favour of *Britain's* adopting this system, which is so advantageous to *Holland*: But herein I think there are reasons against them, which at least deserve attention.

I have just shewn that there are only two interests in *Holland*, that of trade, and that of consumption. But in *Britain* the case is extremely different; for besides these interests, we have another which deserves to the full as much attention as either of the former—that of agriculture—an interest totally out of the question in *Holland*. Here, therefore, is a palpable difference between the circumstances of the two countries, entirely overlooked by the authors I have just mentioned. To the two interests in *Holland*, corn cannot be too cheap; but to the third interest in *England*,

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\* *Inquiry into the Connection between the Size of Farms, and the present Price of Provisions. 1773.*

it cannot be too dear—how, therefore, can the same policy be proper for both countries? The aim of our police is to keep corn at a moderate price for the consumer, without suffering it to fall too low, on account of the grower.

The argument which I should suppose would be used in answer to this, is the denial of a free import of corn having a tendency to sink the price, because where husbandry is so good, it can be raised as cheap as any where else. But the truth of this I can by no means admit. Corn is a commodity which varies very much in price, merely from the difference of crops, and they do not fail in all countries alike—it has been no unusual thing to have a good crop in *Poland* and a bad \* one in *England*, a good one in *England* and a bad one in *France*, a good one in *America*, and a bad one in *England*; cases which, as they have happened and have in future nothing impossible in them, we may surely reason from.

The equality of the price of corn ought not to be regulated by the import, but by the product: if the crop is extremely plentiful,

\* Whenever I mention bad crops, do not let it be supposed I have the common idea of scarcity; I mean no more than those variations which will ever be found, and which affect prices beyond the proportion of the plenty or deficiency.

tiful, the price ought certainly, and will be very low: on the contrary, if it is very deficient, it ought to be high; but when there is a scarce crop, what would the farmers do if a free importation poured in corn from a country where the crop was plentiful? The author of the *Enquiry* gives a table to shew at what price the *English* farmer can afford to sell according to his products; and it is from that table extremely evident, that the import in scarce years would do him infinite mischief, if not absolutely ruin him; and the only reason why he has not felt this of late years is, that other countries have had corn as dear as our own, and consequently a free import, when there is none to come, must be perfectly innocent.

We should remember that a good crop in *France*, *Sicily* and *Barbary*, at any time answers the demand of *Spain*, *Portugal*, and part of *Italy*; and then the surplus of *America*, in case of a free import, might all be poured into the markets of *Britain*, with how much danger to our husbandry may be seen from the table given by the author of the *Enquiry*, where he shews that a quarter of wheat is landed at *London* from *America* for the expence of 14s.—and when their export to the *Streights* fails, corn with them is 20s. a quarter only: but

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suppose it 35s. it makes 49s. in *England*; whereas by his other table he proves that when the *English* farmer's crop is 2 1/2 quarters, no bad one on an average, he cannot sell under 56s.\*

Those who think there would not be any danger of an import from *America* at too low prices, should consider the charges of shipping flour from thence. The following is an account of the prices at which flour was actually brought from *Philadelphia* to *London*, before the late high prices in *America*.

	£.	s.	d.
A barrel of 2 cwt. at from 8s.	}	0	16
to 8s. 6d. per cwt. -			
Barrel - - - - -	0	1	0
Fee for branding - - -	0	0	1
Freight - - - - -	0	4	6
Commission and insurance -	0	1	1
Port charges in <i>London</i> -	0	1	4
	<hr/>		
	1	4	6

Another

\* Our knowledge of the agriculture of the colonies is too imperfect to allow us to reason in a positive manner; but from all the information I have been able to get, and also from the prices in *America*, I am confident they can afford wheat much better at 20s. a quarter than we can at 40s. The advantages enjoyed

Another account makes this as under:

One barrel of flour, weight neat 225 lb. at 13s. per hundred, and to which add, cask, branding, nails, &c.	} <i>Pensylva.</i> <i>Money.</i>	1	8	0
Insurance to <i>England</i> at 2 1/2 per cent. and part policy -				
	<hr/>			£. 1 8 9

Charges.		<i>Sterl.</i>	
Freight to <i>England</i> per barrel -	}	0	5
Cartage, warehouse, &c.			
	<hr/>		0 6 6

Exchange, at 165 - - -	0	10	9
	<hr/>		
	1	19	6

joyed by agriculture in that country much exceed those of any other under heaven; let but the following circumstances be considered, and this cannot but appear, viz. Land to be had in property at a very small price—and what exceeds every other circumstance, ADDITIONS AT WILL—No tythe—Taxes very light—No poor rates—Materials for building extremely cheap—Great ease of supporting cattle.—And in opposition to these powerful circumstances, there is no counter article; for I do not think the price of labour to be such, as it does not exceed that of *England*.

225 lb. neat flour, costing 1*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.* gives 19*s.* 7½*d.* for 112 lb. which sterling is 11*s.* 10½*d.*

2 cwt. therefore (equal to 6 bushels of wheat) come to 1*l.* 3*s.* 9*d.* landed in *England*.

From *New York* the account is:

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
2 cwt. flour - - -	0	18	0
Charges as above - - -	0	8	0
	0	26	0
	*	1	6
	0	27	0

These 2 cwt. of flour are equal to six bushels of wheat; so that the *Americans* fold that grain in *London* at 4*s.* a bushel from *Pensylvania*; and at 4*s.* 4*d.* from *New York*, which is *per* quarter 32*s.* and 34*s.* 8*d.* Will any person assert that our *English* farmers can rival such prices?

Since that period, prices at *New York* and *Philadelphia* have risen, owing, as I am informed, almost singly to the increased export to *Europe*, a circumstance depending on the fluctuation of the *European* markets: But in the more southern colonies, the prices are yet very low. I have lately received the following account from *South Carolina*:

Price

\* See Appendix, No. VIII. for prices of flour in *America*.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Price of wheat <i>per</i> bushel -	0	2	10½
3 bushels make a barrel of fine flour - - - - -	0	8	7½
Barrel - - - - -	0	1	0
Freight to <i>Charles Town</i> -	0	2	0
Ditto to <i>London</i> , 10 barrels a ton at 40 <i>s.</i> - - - -	0	4	0
Landing, wharfage, &c. -	0	0	6
	0	16	1½

The barrel weighs 2½ cwt. consequently the hundred weight comes to 6*s.* 5*d.* ½. a degree of cheapness never yet rivalled in *England*.

But without entering into any such enquiries, we may in general venture to assert that the great object of a free import is to lower the price of corn; to reduce high prices owing to poor crops to the same standard as the rate of good crops in other countries: if it means not this, it can mean nothing; and how well adapted such a system is to encourage husbandry in the importing country, must surely be obvious without much explanation.

Following the example of the *Dutch*, is to us highly inconsistent on a second account, which is the difference of government. That of the States is one of the most

most stern and severe in *Europe*. Any measure adopted by the legislature, is carried punctually and rigorously into execution—the opinion of the lower classes is overlooked—obedience is demanded and enforced. The author of the enquiry gives a singular instance of this, that while the people were almost starving—much nearer to it than any thing we have an idea of, yet would they not prohibit for a moment the exportation of corn, although they would not allow a potatoe to be sent away: Now let me ask these strenuous admirers of *Dutch* policy, if any thing of this sort is to be expected from a ministry in *Britain*? They want what they are pleased to call a perfect freedom in the corn trade: let them explain what they mean by that freedom: I know not what they mean; but I can tell them what it would be—We should have a regular freedom of import—whatever our farmers might suffer, this would certainly be secured: but whenever the price became disagreeable to the mob, then our *freedom* of export would be at an end: this would be the event of that *perfect* freedom in favour of which our bounty on export at low prices is to be sacrificed, a measure which has brought so many millions into this country.—I cannot forget hearing the minister

minister in the House of Commons declare, that *a liberty of export must not be given, for the discontents of the people were great, and such a measure would make them yet greater*: a declaration following an examination which proved the average price to be only 4s. 6d. a bushel. Now, I beg leave to urge, that while the people (*i. e.* those who certainly wish to eat as cheap as possible) are in matters of export to be directors—surely a perfect freedom in the corn trade is a mere chimera, applicable enough to some governments, but by no means to ours.

Is it not therefore a conduct that may be pernicious to the interests of agriculture, to recommend in a country governed as ours is, such schemes, which every one must know to be impossible to be fairly executed—the above measure is likely some time or other to be adopted; but as to a free export when corn is very high at home (a case so possible, that it would actually have often happened of late years) these gentlemen must be certain it would never be allowed: So we should have the mischief of their free import, without the good of their export.

Some of these writers, who are so earnest for a free trade in corn, also plead for a general free port trade, which is very consistent with their former proposition, being

being a stroke aimed in favour of manufactures and commerce at the direct expence of agriculture. It is nothing more than saying to the landed interest, *Gentlemen, we will do you and your husbandry the favour of laying 8s. in the pound on you, instead of four; and in return for this you shall have the liberty of eating, drinking and wearing foreign luxuries cheaper than ever*—very much to be sure to the national benefit\*.

\* The very ingenious and observing Mr. Smith, in reply to some wild performances, remarks; "These gentlemen, it is to be observed, are great admirers of the policies of the *Dutch*, whom they esteem the greatest masters in the art of trade, and who possibly are so, for their own situation and circumstances. But it does not therefore follow that they are a perfect pattern for all the world besides; though *London* and *Amsterdam* resemble each other, yet *Great Britain* and *Holland* are very unlike: The chief stock of the latter, comparatively is money. It has not natural product sufficient for its own consumption, nor manufacture enough for its domestic use and foreign trade. The former hath a large estate in land producing stores of many kinds in great plenty, and abundance of manufactures far beyond what it can use or readily vend. So that *Great Britain* differs from *Holland* much as a country farmer does from a *London* shopkeeper."— Upon these considerations, I am humbly of opinion that all the fine notions which some have entertained for making *England* what is called a FREE PORT, are quite chimerical, could the great obstacle in their way, the duties and customs, be transferred elsewhere." *Memoirs of Wool*, vol. ii. p. 523.

S E C T. VI.

SIZE OF FARMS.

A STATESMAN, in his ideas of improving the agriculture of his country, ought to give a perfect freedom to landlords and tenants, the one in letting their estates in whatever sized farms they please, and the other in hiring them. But there are writers that will give very different advice, who will assert, that instead of giving such entire liberty, both landlords and tenants ought to be restrained in the circumstance of rendering farms great—since it is supposed that great farms are pernicious to population, and raise the prices of provisions too high. Now as listening to such ideas would in any legislature be a most mischievous circumstance, it is necessary to offer a few general reasons to shew the necessity of giving perfect liberty in this respect. This will be done in few words, as I have in another place from facts shewn the fallacy of the remark\*.

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\* *Six Months Tour through the North of England*, vol. iv. p. 192. 251. 253. 267.



A considerable farmer, with a greater proportioned wealth than the smaller occupier, is able to work greater improvements in his business, and experience tells us, that this is constantly the case; he can build, hedge, ditch, plant, plough, harrow, drain, manure, hoe, weed, and, in a word, execute every operation of his business, better and more effectually than a little farmer: In the same manner as a wealthy manufacturer always works greater improvements in a fabric than a poor one. He also employs better cattle, and uses better implements; he purchases more manures, and adopts more improvements; all very important objects in making the soil yield its utmost produce. The raising greater crops of every sort, so far increases the solid publick wealth of the kingdom; himself, his landlord, and the nation are the richer for the size of his farm; his wealth is raised by those improvements which are most of them wrought by an increase of labour; he employs more hands in proportion than the little tenant, consequently he promotes population more powerfully; for in every branch of industry *employment is the soul of population*. Thus he employs more people and he creates more wealth, which again sets more hands to work, and in

in the whole of his course does more effectual service to his country\*. The gentlemen who maintain a contrary opinion must virtually assert that good husbandry is pernicious, bad husbandry beneficial; a position which I leave them to meditate on.

Dr. Price has the following observation: —“ Let a tract of ground be supposed in the hands of a multitude of little proprietors and tenants who maintain themselves and families by the produce of the ground they occupy, by sheep kept on a common, by poultry, hogs, &c. and who therefore have little occasion to purchase any of the means of subsistence. If this land gets into the hands of a few great farmers, the consequence must be, that the little farmers will be converted into a body of men who earn their subsistence by working for others, and who will be under a necessity of going to market for all they want: And subsistence in this way being difficult, families of children will become burthens, marriage will

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\* The proper and only right encouragement for agriculture is a moderate and gradual increase of demand for the productions of the earth: this works a natural and beneficial increase of inhabitants; and this demand must come from cities. *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Oeconomy*. By Sir James Stewart, vol. i. p. 54.

be avoided, and population will decline\*.  
 —At the same time perhaps there will be more labour because there will be more compulsion to it. More bread will be consumed, and therefore more corn grown; because there will be less ability of going to the price of other food. Parishes likewise will be more loaded, because the number of poor will be greater. And towns and manufactures will increase, because more will be driven to them in quest of places and employments.—This is the way in which the engrossing of farms naturally operates: And this is the way in which for many years it has been actually operating in this kingdom.”

It is a very barren disquisition to enquire into the different means of promoting population, without we previously shew that the increase of people will be of any use comparable to the evils that will attend it. The Doctor sets out with the idea that the minute sub-division of landed property is favourable to population: It may be so.

But

\* A writer who had very good information concerning *England*, and knew *France* perfectly, says, speaking of the former: *Le paysan & le laboureur font dans l'aifance; & n'étant point vexés, ils multiplient, & fournissent à l'état des cultivateurs, des marins, des artisans & des manœuvres. Traité de la Circulation, p. 71.*

But what would a nation of cottagers do for their defence? They would become the prey of the first invader: they are to have neither manufactures nor commerce; for, says he, a flourishing commerce whilst it flatters may be destroying\*. What does this mean but proscribing it? For we must take mens sentiments in their tendency, and not admit the ideal measure and degree of trade and luxury which they will allow, as if it was in human power to say to wealth, So far shalt thou go, and no farther. This nation of cottagers therefore must pay all taxes, which we may suppose sufficiently productive to support the magnificence of a shepherd king—no army—no fleet—no

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\* I cannot pass this opportunity of remarking, that the complaints of commerce, luxury, and an unequal division of the lands being prejudicial to population, have been very often repeated—If the reader would see the subject treated in a much more masterly manner than any late writer has handled it, let him consult Mr. WALLACE'S *Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind, 1753*; where every thing is said against them that can be said; yet is the author candid enough to allow much to commerce and the arts, and speaks of them as occasions of depopulation, not so much in the country where they are practised as in the world at large; see p. 22. Yet do I not think his system is well founded: The circumstance that *the countries wherein the necessaries of life are the cheapest, are the worst peopled*, is an answer to three-fourths of his arguments.

wars—What has such a situation to do with the state of the modern world! If the author says it is extravagant to carry his idea so far, I reply, such a supposition shews the necessity of limits—shews that we must have something else in a modern state than the cultivators of seven jugera.—If this is admitted, how far is the exception to go? Who is to lay down the line of division, and say, Here propriety ends—there excess begins? In a word, the great fact proved by this argument is, that you must give up a degree of population in favour of more important objects—that is, you must admit commerce and wealth.—This must be admitted—I desire no other concession: your whole system at once tumbles about your ears.—My politicks of classing national wealth before population, needs no exception—it sets population at defiance—Yours of giving populoufness the first rank, necessitates you to call in a superior to your assistance—and like all superior powers called to the support of the weaker, it destroys their independance.

But to proceed: the Doctor says, when the land is got into few hands, the little farmers must become labourers: Certainly; and in that state are just as useful to the nation as in their former. But, says he, subsistence then being difficult, they will

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not marry: So marriage, in a given state, thrives in proportion to the ability of maintaining families. In the back country of *America*, where every child is 50 acres to the father, and the wife 100—where there is no society beyond the cottage, and where a woman is necessary almost to the existence of a man—I admit this.—In a modern *European* state, I deny it: I appeal to every man's observation for telling him that celibacy is more common among the wealthy than the poor—and that the classes least able to support a family, marry more readily than the rich.—At the same time, says the Doctor, there will be more labour: then I reply, there is every thing we want, for labour is the valuable effect of population. In a great farm there is but one idle person, in a small one there is the same\*. Sure, therefore, the supernumerary farmers are a mere burthen to the state; an idea applicable to every one who stands in the place of a labourer without performing his office, but consumes those products that ought to go to market.

There is one argument I have heard in conversation against large farms, which

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\* One can scarce ever be accurate in using such terms as *large* and *small*; by small I do not mean only farms of 20 or 30 acres, but others upon which mere idle occupiers are found.

appears more specious than any to be found against them in Dr. Price. It is said, that large farms are in fact machines in agriculture, which enable the cultivators of the soil to do that with few hands which before they did with many; resembling a stocking-loom, for instance, which enables the master manufacturer to turn off half his hands, and yet make more stockings than ever. A lively argument, but false in almost every particular; indeed the resemblance holds no farther than the capacity of performing in some operations much more with ten men in one farm, than with the same number divided among five farms; of which there can be no doubt; But I appeal to all persons conversant in husbandry, if this holds true through one-tenth of the labour of a farm; witness ploughing, harrowing, sowing, digging, mowing, reaping, threshing, hedging, ditching, and an hundred other articles, in which one man, separately taken, performs the full tenth of ten men collected. The saving of labour is but in few articles, such as carting hay or corn; carting dung or marle; keeping sheep, &c.

But take the comparison in another light. Who dungs most? Who brings most manure from towns? Who digs most chalk, clay or marle? Who cultivates most turneps? Which hoes them best? Which plants most  
pease,

pease, beans, potatoes, &c. in rows for hand-hoeing? Who digs most drains? Who digs the largest and deepest ditches? Which gives the soil the most numerous, deep and effective ploughings? Which brought into culture the most waste land? Who in all this, and many things more, expends most labour in proportion to their acres, the great or the little farmers? That any man who pretends to know wheat from barley should assert so preposterous an idea as the poorer occupier to be the best cultivator, is not a little astonishing. Nothing appears to me so reasonable as the contrary; and when I compared the population of 250 different-sized farms, the fact turned out as every one might suppose\*.

As to the change of the consumption from meat to bread, it is perfectly harmless—for I know no good in one being consumed more than in another, as long as meat is dear enough to induce the farmers to keep proper stocks of cattle for manure. But it is a little extraordinary if the consumption of meat declines so much, that the price should continue so high.—Farther, towns and manufactures will increase—

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\* The single circumstance of much of the labour of small farms being servants unmarried, and nine-tenths of that of great ones labourers married, makes a greater difference.

This is a great misfortune in the Doctor's political creed—but I would recommend him, if he will hold national wealth in contempt, to consider manufactures in that most beautiful idea of Mr. *Hume's*—*a store-house of labour for the public*: those hands which are employed in these fabrics yield a surplus always at the service of government—but what navies, what armies are recruited from farmers? The people employed in raising food must be tied to the soil, and so we every where see them. The fewer employed (consistently with good husbandry) the better; for then the less product is intercepted before it reaches the markets, and you may have so many the more for manufacturers, sailors and soldiers.

This is a mode of reasoning, which I think is perfectly fair. I do not expect any reasoning should convince those who will not be convinced by facts; for I may say with a *French* author, *La dépopulation étoit devenue à la mode\**; who also observes very justly: *Je suis très porté à croire que les Anglois ont aussi LA MANIE de dénigrer leur population.*

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\* *De la Felicité Publique*, tom. ii. p. 133.

S E C T. VII.

MANUFACTURES AND COMMERCE.

**I**N too many of the writings on the oeconomic science which have within these twenty years appeared in *France*; writings which I mention rather than the publications in *England*, because they have been greatly superior, the advocates for husbandry have seemed too much to arrange themselves rather *against* commerce and manufactures, than *with* agriculture; M. *de Boulainvilliers* in his well known work \* enters into very long details of the mischiefs arising from commerce, colonies and manufactures, and he has been followed by several other writers. But I think such ideas are extremely mischievous: on the contrary, I esteem them as of infinite consequence to the well-being of agriculture, whenever the latter is not sacrificed to the former by prohibitions and restrictions on the export of corn laid with a view to feed manufacturers cheaper; views never answered by such a policy. If the conduct of a state-

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\* *Les Interets de la France mal entendus*, 3 tome, 1755.

a statesman shews ability, I had rather he would neglect agriculture than manufactures and commerce; and for this reason, agriculture requires only a negative encouragement—let it alone, and it will thrive; you cannot hurt it unless you are *active* against it, in taxation, corn laws, &c. But, on the contrary, trade and manufactures are children of more sickly and difficult growth; if you do not give them active encouragement, they presently die; witness nine-tenths of our foreign treaties—witness our public companies, *supposed* to be necessary—witness our eternal wars made for the defence or acquisition of trade—witness half the acts of the legislature: every thing in this country shews the attention that is necessary, or at least that is given to commercial interests. If I am asked, of what good all this is to agriculture, I reply, it makes us a wealthy people—it makes every thing dear:—and I have already shewn, that great national wealth is one of the most essential points in the encouragement of agriculture. I do not think it is necessary to add, that such a conduct may be carried to excess—Views of trade may so exhaust a country's revenues as to bring on a burthen of public debts, more mischievous than all the evils that can result from

from a want of trade\*: I am not reasoning on the abuse of a right maxim; nor do I assert

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\* As I have in various passages found myself under a necessity of differing in opinion concerning provision, population, &c. from the very ingenious author of the *Observations on Reversionary Payments*, I ought not to let slip any opportunity of paying my tribute to his abilities in other parts of his work. I think his proposition for paying or lessening the national debt by the uninterrupted operation of a sum sacred to compound interest, is set forth, explained, and all objections answered in the most clear and satisfactory manner; infomuch that the author well deserves the thanks of the community for that part of his performance. Perhaps the idea of ruin from our debts is carried too far; but be that as it may, the having an opportunity of placing any sums at compound interest by way of freeing a portion of taxes as a treasure in reserve, and not doing it, is certainly infatuation: nor can I conceive a reason against it, unless it be the proposition whenever made supposing a reduction of our taxes. Such a supposition is extremely impolitick; it is so contrary to the particular interest of the crown, that there is an absurdity in supposing it will ever be thought of, consequently to connect the circumstance of *payment of debt*, with *reduction of taxes*, is to raise a prejudice against the whole: Indeed the two circumstances are abundantly different; payment of debt strikes one as highly necessary, but as to a necessity of lowering the taxes, I see none; nor do I think any good would flow from it, except in a very few instances, which might easily be changed without any reduction. The object of freeing a part of the national income from incumbrances, in order for other applications, is a much more necessary and obvious work than the reduction of taxes.—See Appendix.

assert that this has yet happened in this country.

Certain it is that manufactures and commerce provide an excellent market for the farmer, at the same time that they give that wealth to the public, without which agriculture cannot thrive: And this beneficial effect, in every country except *England*, is unattended with any great burthen of unprovided poor in case of a failure or decline of a manufacture; because, although the community in general has a load upon their charity, yet is not the evil tied to the farmer. In this circumstance, from the absurdity of the poor laws, which threaten more than any other circumstance the agriculture of the kingdom, and I might in fact say every branch of industry in it; operates very differently from what one could wish, and occasions, wherever manufactures are established, a most heavy burthen of poors rates, partly borne by the tenant in the customary form, and partly by the landlord, who is obliged to let his farms so much the cheaper.

Yet as this disadvantage belongs more to the false policy of our poors laws than to any circumstance necessarily flowing from manufactures, it would not be right generally to find fault with them on that account: other nations who make them a great

great object of their endeavours, should take warning by our example, and if they find any support of their poor further than charity affords necessary, that they may take care the burthen arising from manufactures may fall on manufactures, and by no means on agriculture.

Hence therefore we may venture to assert, that the encouragement of manufactures and commerce, and in general of all branches of industry, is a sure way to encourage agriculture, provided the legislature attends to a few circumstances which should not be forgotten. *First*—Not to burthen agriculture with taxes proportioned to its products, in order to lessen those on consumption. *Secondly*—Not to prohibit, or in any way restrain the export of the earth's productions, on supposition of feeding manufacturers the cheaper. *Thirdly*—To make manufacturers support their own poor. These conditions are so simple, and at the same time so just, that a compliance with them can never be reckoned a restraint on any branch of national industry.

A P P E N D I X.

NUMBER I.

Memoir drawn up, and laid before the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, containing An Historical Review of the statutes that have been made relative to the Corn Trade; and Proposals for ascertaining the prices of Middling British Corn for the purpose of exportation.

Now first published.

BY GOVERNOR POWNALL.

VARIOUS laws from time to time have been made and enacted, directing when corn might be exported and when imported; marking the prices at which such respective grains shall be sold the rule whereby the ports are to be opened and shut to the exportation and importation of corn: And also directing what duties should be paid inwards and outwards, according to such prices. Yet "no provision was made by the said Acts for ascertaining and determining the said prices \*."

H. 6. an. 15. c. 2.  
20. c. 6.  
23. c. 5.  
P. & M. 1 & 2.  
c. 5.  
El. 1. c. 11. § 20.  
13. c. 13.  
35. c. 7. § 25.  
Ja. 1. c. 25. § 26.  
21. c. 28. § 3.  
Car. 1. c. 4. § 24.  
Car. 2. 12. c. 4.  
§ 11.  
15. c. 7.  
22. c. 13.

Therefore for the first time, an act passed in the first year of James the Second, entitled, An additional Act for the Improvement of Tillage, directs, That the justices of the maritime counties have power by the

1685.  
1 Ja. 2. c. 19.  
§ 3.

\* Words of the Statute of 1 Ja. 2. c. 19.



the oath of two men, being neither merchants nor factors for the importing of corn, nor anyways concerned or interested, and having a freehold of 20*l.* per ann. or a leasehold of 50*l.* per ann. to determine the common market prices of middling *English* corn, &c. and then to certify the same to the chief officer or collector of the customs.

All foreign corn imported is to pay duty according § 4. to those certified prices.

This enquiry, determination and certificate are to be made by the justices at their quarter sessions § 3. at *Michaelmas* and *Easter* yearly, for the kingdom at large—and for the city of *London* in the § 5. months of *October* and *April*.

N. B. Those prices thus determined and certified are to continue six months.

Several bounties were granted on the exportation of corn, when the prices of the respective grains therein mentioned did not exceed the prices in that statute respectively mentioned. 1688. 1 W. & M. c. 12.

Remark. The law of *James II.* had it been actually carried into execution (which it was not) respected only the rates to be paid by *foreign corn imported*.

There was not at the time of passing this bounty law any rule for ascertaining and determining the prices up to which the several bounties on the several grains were respectively payable.

The law itself contains no such rule or regulation, nor has any been made since to this day, except in 2 Geo. II. c. 18. § 5. the case of bere *alias* bigg, oatmeal, and malt made of wheat, as shall be hereafter explained.

We will therefore pursue the various alterations and amendments which have been successively made in the mode prescribed for ascertaining and determining the prices which were to regulate the importation of *foreign corn*—and the duties payable thereon.

In

In the 2d year of *Geo. II.* a law was made, called "An Act to ascertain the custom payable for corn and grain imported, for better ascertaining the price and quantity of corn and grain for which a bounty is payable on exportation." The first clause recites the whole act of *James II.* and then recites as the ground of this new law, "That the justices of the peace for some of the counties of this kingdom have, notwithstanding the last mentioned act, omitted or neglected to settle the price of corn at their quarter sessions, and to return certificates thereof—whereby great loss has arisen to the revenue, and detriment to the farmer and fair trader."

Therefore the act directs, that the justices who have omitted to settle the prices of corn at the quarter sessions after *Michaelmas* last, are to settle it at the next quarter sessions by examining and determining what the prices were at or about *Michaelmas* last—and all persons concerned are to govern themselves by the prices thus set, as though according to the old law they had been actually set at the quarter sessions after *Michaelmas* last.

Corn imported since the 1st day of *Michaelmas* quarter sessions, and duty not paid, forfeited. § 2.

If justices in time to come shall omit or neglect to examine, determine and certify the prices as by law directed, the chief officer or collector of the customs, "where foreign corn or grain shall be imported," empowered to receive the several duties of the corn so imported, according to the lowest price of the several sorts of corn or grain, as per 22 *Car. II.*

Officers to measure corn exported: The bounty to be paid according to the quantity thereby computed. § 4.

The act uniting the two kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland* passed since the *English* act, granting a bounty on the exportation of certain grains.

An article of the union gave a bounty on the exportation from *Scotland* of bere or bigg, and of oatmeal.

X

By

By an act in the 5th year of the reign of *Anne*,  
 § *Anne*, c. 29. this bounty was extended to bere *alias*  
 § 10. bigg, exported from *England*; and by  
 the same act it was determined and enacted, that a  
 bounty on malt made of wheat, exported, should be  
 payable. This act therefore of the 2d of *Geo. II.*  
 supposing that the regulations for ascertaining the  
 prices according to which the duties on *foreign corn*  
*imported* should be paid, were general rules and regu-  
 lations that extended to ascertain the prices of *British*  
*corn exported*—which it is seen herein above they did  
 not—does under this mistake enact, that the like  
 powers, certificates and regulations, and other matters  
 and things abovementioned, shall extend to the ascer-  
 taining the prices and quantity of bere *alia*. bigg, oat-  
 meal, and malt made of wheat intended for exportation.

N. B. The case then after this law had passed,  
 stood thus:—There was a method (such as it was,  
*an ineffectual one*) for ascertaining the prices according  
 to which the duties on *foreign corn imported* should be  
 paid; and according to which the bounty on bere  
*alias* bigg and oatmeal, and malt made of wheat  
 should be paid. But yet the rules by which the prices  
 at which the several sorts of corn and grain specified  
 in the bounty act might be exported, and to which  
 price the several respective bounties were payable, still  
 remained undetermined and unauthorized.

Let us then see what the next law respecting the  
 matter did.

In the 5th year of *Geo. II.* an act passed “for  
 “amending and making more effectual  
 § *Geo. II.* c. 12. “an act made in the first year of  
 “King *James II.* intituled, *An additional Act for*  
 “*the Improvement of Tillage.*”

This recites, that in the act of *James*, provision  
 was made for examining and determining the common  
 market prices of middling *English corn and grain*; which  
 was however INEFFECTUAL. Then directs, that for  
 the better ascertaining the common market prices of  
 middling *English corn and grain*, and for preventing  
 the fraudulent IMPORTATION of foreign corn and  
 grain;

grain; the justices of the peace in such counties of  
*England*, wherein foreign corn or grain shall or may be  
 hereafter imported, at every of their quarter sessions  
 shall give in charge to the grand jury to make en-  
 quiry and presentment upon their oaths of the common  
 market prices, of the respective sorts and quantities  
 of corn and grain mentioned in the 22 of *Car. II.*

N. B. Although this law was made since the  
 bounty, yet this ascertaining of the prices is expressly  
 only to prevent the fraudulent importation of foreign  
 corn—Is to be executed in such counties wherein  
 foreign corn shall or may be imported, and refers, not  
 to several sorts of corn and grain, which by the  
 bounty act and the 5th of *Anne* are to receive a  
 bounty on exportation, but only to the 22 of *Car. II.*  
 respective to the duties payable on importation.

This presentment to be made in open court, to be  
 certified to the custom-house where such corn § 2.  
 and grain shall be imported, to be hung up § 3.  
 there—And all duties on importation ap-  
 pointed to be paid by 22 *Car. II.* are to be paid accord-  
 ing to these prices so certified.

N. B. Here the mode of ascertaining the common  
 market prices is altered; and the prices certified are  
 by this law to continue only three months, which  
 before continued six months.

The mode of proceeding in *London* to § 4.  
 continue as before under the act of *James*.

Bounty on corn ground to be regu- 24 *Geo. II.* c. 56.  
 lated by weight.

By the 31st of *Geo. II.* (an act for the due making  
 of Bread, and regulating the affize and  
 price thereof, &c.) another mode is 31 *Geo. II.* c. 29.  
 directed for the returns of the prices of grain. But this  
 is done only for the purpose of setting the affize of bread;  
 and the custom-house cannot regulate itself by it.

By an act of the 6th year of the reign of his  
 present Majesty, the Mayor and Alder- 6 *Geo. III.* c. 17.  
 men of the city of *London* may deter-  
 mine the prices of corn in the months of *January* and  
*July*, as well as in *April* and *October* yearly.

By an act passed in the 10th year of the reign of his present Majesty, weekly returns of the prices of grain are to be made, and published in the Gazette.

But this has no reference to importation or exportation, nor can the custom-house regulate themselves thereby.

The case then standing thus; that the law of King James II. is ineffectual—that the law of King George II. is not always executed, and that neither of these laws have any reference to, or can regulate the prices as to exportation; the custom-house, having no legal rule to regulate themselves by, have adopted without law (if not contrary to law) a mode of their own: They oblige the exporter in the body of the entry outwards to swear that the prices of the corn or grain so entered for exportation, did not exceed the bounty price the last market day.

For the doing this, they have no authority by law: And when done, this does not authorize to give a debenture for the bounty, or even to suffer the exportation.

They are therefore, as a succedaneum, directed and intrusted by their superiors in these words: "If the officers are satisfied that the respective prices of corn do not exceed the limitations for the bounty (which they are carefully to inform themselves of from market day to market day, remembering that they must be accounted as at the time of shipping and not of entry) and the exporter has given the collector a certificate under his hand, containing the quantities and qualities of the corn so shipped, &c."

Now this is not only, as I said above, without the authority of law, but contrary to law—as the oath to be taken respecting the prices of corn, by which the custom-house is to regulate itself as to the duties on importation (even if it could have reference to the bounty

bounty act and to exportation) must be taken by two persons—and neither of these merchants or factors for the importing of corn, nor any way concerned or interested, and must have an estate of 20l. per ann. freehold, or 50l. per ann. leasehold.

The conclusion of the matter is:

I. That the laws for ascertaining the prices of corn which are to regulate the importation and duties thereon, are ineffectual and not carried into practice.

II. That except for the article of bere alias bigg, oatmeal, and malt made of wheat, there is no law for ascertaining the prices which are to regulate the exportation and bounty paid thereon.

III. That the mode pursued and practised is unfounded—is open to frauds—and has given occasion to many impositions.

The remedy proposed is to repeal these several vague and ineffectual laws, which neither are executed at all, nor can to the purposes intended—To reduce all the provisions † contained in them into one bill, to render them practicable, and to point their effect to the real end intended, by

1st, Reciting the present state and inefficiency of them.  
2dly, Repealing them.

3dly, Enacting the purview of them by provision, which may reach the end, taking care to insert all and every regulation so pointed as the legislature have already enacted, and all such others as may be farther necessary.

The general scope and purview of such bill will be,

I. That the justices ‡ at their general quarter sessions do, by all such methods, and from all ways of information as the laws direct, or as by this proposed law shall be directed, enquire what have been the common

† The Register of weekly prices answers (in the publication) so many good purposes, besides the matter of export, I should apprehend that it might very properly be a part of the provisions Mr. Pownall mentions retaining. As it ought to be rendered perpetual, it might very properly be done in a general act. Y.

‡ Of the maritime counties only are necessary.

common market prices of corn and grain for three months past.

II. That having special regard to the case, whether the markets have been falling, or rising, they do *determine* what shall for the next three months which are to come, be deemed the prices of such respective corn or grain: that is to say, what shall be deemed the port price.—According to which, importation or exportation shall take place, and according to which, the duties and bounties shall be paid.

III. That they do certify this to the respective How to oblige custom-houses within the county.—And justices to do it. that this, and this only, be the rule to be observed at such ports.

IV. This bill to contain a proviso to guard against the only thing which can happen to the hurt of the landed interest, viz. That if, upon the ports being opened (according to the prices certified as above) for importation, any such large quantity should be imported so as to load the markets in a way that may prove a discouragement of tillage—the facts of which will appear by the falling of the market prices,—that is to say, that if the *port price* shall have been fixed above 48 s. *per* quarter, and by an overflow of importation the actual market price should, within the next three months to come, sink suddenly or rapidly below 44 s. *per* quarter, that then the said justices, at any adjourned or special sessions, may, for the remaining part of the three months, alter the certificate to such price as the *immediate state of the market* shall justify.

These certificates and determinations to be hung up openly at the several custom-houses.

All the provisions respecting the measurement of quantity, the mode of ascertaining the quality to be re-enacted. If it were not thought better, as it most certainly would be, to determine the quantity which was to pay duty, or to receive bounty, *by the WEIGHT*, both as to corn unground, as well as (which the law now directs) to corn ground.

Such

Such a simple regulation would have an immediate tendency to encourage good husbandry † in the tillage of, and to avoid a thousand frauds in the commerce of grain.

It would prevent many frauds as to the bounty,—many in contracts—and would have an effect to give our British corn a preference in the foreign market—and would, at the same time, lead to the importation of such as would never interfere with our own corn, in our own markets, even upon the most ample importation of foreign corn.

Although there might arise a thousand perplexities and difficulties, and hence some danger, in any law directing corn to be *sold by weight*; yet the thus directing the duties and bounties to be so paid, could have none. I can venture to say that this matter has been fully considered.

I take the liberty of laying this state and proposal before the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury. I wish it to be referred to the Commissioners of the Customs—and I will be ready to communicate or give explanations in detail upon every point which may arise.

Richmond, Surry, July 15, 1773.

† An observation which carries conviction with it. Y.

NUMBER II.

Rise of Prices—page 36.

IT has been, by some writers, supposed that the high prices of corn since the year 1756, have been confined to *England*; an idea which was favourable to the causes they attributed the evil to, a worse police respecting markets, engrossers, forestallers, &c. To say, that prices have of late very generally risen in other parts of *Europe*, will be a reply to much of this nonsense; and it will also account, in the most satisfactory manner, for the rise in our *American* colonies. I transcribe the following tables from M. *Engell's Essai sur la maniere la plus sure d'etablir un systeme de police des grains.* Berne, 1772.

I.

The sack of wheat, weighing 212 pounds, was sold in the divers markets of the *Palatinate* from 1751 to 1769 inclusively, at 4 florins and a half to 6*fl.* 5*s.* and in 1770, at 13*fl.*

II.

Price of spelt at *Berne.*

Batz.		Batz.		Batz.	
1751	— 70	1758	— 92	1765	— 75
1752	— 70	1759	— 75	1766	— 85
1753	— 80	1760	— 60	1767	— 80
1754	— 65	1761	— 60	1768	— 78
1755	— 60	1762	— 60	1769	— 90
1756	— 65	1763	— 56	1770	— 130
1757	— 85	1764	— 64		

The sack of wheat, or spelt, weighs 190 to 200 pounds.

III.

Price of wheat at *Dijon.*

1753	— sols 62 to 70	1757	— sols 55 to 65
1754	— 50 — 65	1758	— 65 — 76
1755	— 48 — 55	1759	— 70 — 75
1756	— 50 — 56	1760	— 55 — 65

IN EUROPE.

1761	— sols 48 to 58	1767	— sols 85 to 88
1762	— 38 — 45	1768	— 84 — 200
1763	— 45 — 50	1769	— 85 — 92
1764	— 60 — 65	1770	— 85 — 107
1766	— 72 — 80	1771	— 140 — 160

The measure of *Dijon* weighs 46 to 47 pounds.

IV.

Price of corn in the *Canton of Bale.*

Liv. s. d.			Liv. s. d.				
1754	— 8	2	6	1763	— 7	16	8
1755	— 7	12	6	1764	— 7	6	8
1756	— 9	5	0	1765	— 8	15	0
1757	— 11	7	6	1766	— 10	10	0
1758	— 10	17	6	1767	— 10	6	8
1759	— 10	12	6	1768	— 10	15	10
1760	— 9	2	6	1769	— 11	19	6
1761	— 7	15	0	1770	— 25	0	0
1762	— 8	15	0				

V.

Price of corn at *Geneva.*

Florins.		Florins.		Florins.	
1700	— 30	1720	— 21	1740	— 33
1701	— 33	1721	— 21	1741	— 26
1702	— 32	1722	— 21	1742	— 28
1703	— 34	1723	— 16	1743	— 25
1704	— 32	1724	— 16	1744	— 25
1705	— 21	1725	— 21	1745	— 28
1706	— 18	1726	— 21	1746	— 31
1707	— 21	1727	— 24	1747	— 40
1708	— 45	1728	— 21	1748	— 50
1709	— 95	1729	— 21	1749	— 50
1710	— 36	1730	— 21	1750	— 25
1711	— 36	1731	— 21	1751	— 30
1712	— 36	1732	— 22	1752	— 30
1713	— 40	1733	— 20	1753	— 30
1714	— 40	1734	— 21	1754	— 23
1715	— 36	1735	— 23	1755	— 22
1716	— 24	1736	— 19	1756	— 24
1717	— 21	1737	— 19	1757	— 36
1718	— 20	1738	— 18	1758	— 35
1719	— 25	1739	— 25	1759	— 34

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Florins.	Florins.	Florins.
1760 — 24	1764 — 22	1768 — 29
1761 — 24	1765 — 36	1769 — 34
1762 — 23	1766 — 36	1770 — 63
1763 — 22	1767 — 32	

The measure is the *coupe*; weighs from 108 to 112 pounds, of 18 ounces.

NUMBER III.

*Decline of Manufactures—Page 87.*

It is very difficult to know what is the real state of any manufacture; so difficult, that I believe it is scarcely ever attained, except when a committee of the House of Commons is appointed for the purpose, with power to send for persons, papers, and records. The late appointment of such a committee to enquire into the state of the linen manufacture in *Great Britain and Ireland*, has brought to light some very important facts relative to that manufacture. The point of supposed declension, mentioned in the text, after the conclusion of the last war, appears to be no such point in reality: this is an extraordinary circumstance, for in the journies I have made through this kingdom, I found accounts very general of the decline that followed the peace; I am therefore surprized to find that this was not the case with the linen manufacture, as appears by the following table of export of *British* and *Irish* linen from *England*.

Years.	<i>British</i> Linens. Yards.	<i>Irish</i> Linens. Yards.
1743	52,779	40,907
1744	49,521	28,255
1745	56,240	101,928
1746	175,328	695,002
1747	238,014	595,277
1748	330,747	723,663

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Years.	<i>British</i> Linens. Yards.	<i>Irish</i> Linens. Yards.
1749	414,834	965,897
1750	588,874	742,032
1751	527,976	854,490
1752	437,277	968,319
1753	641,510	1,039,967
1754	1,382,796	843,973
1755	41,367	51,040

Average of seven years peace, } 576,373 ——— 772,245

1756	394,746	719,135
1757	1,016,754	2,005,575
1758	1,942,667	2,117,109
1759	1,693,087	1,956,572
1760	1,413,602	2,352,583
1761	1,272,985	1,819,329
1762	1,762,643	2,930,476

Average of seven years war, } 1,355,226 ——— 1,985,825

1763	2,308,310	2,588,564
1764	2,134,733	1,858,780
1765	2,095,933	1,663,670
1766	2,236,086	1,770,634
1767	2,444,181	2,227,142
1768	2,687,457	2,270,160
1769	3,056,950	1,855,159

Average of seven years peace, } 2,423,664 ——— 2,033,444

1770	3,210,506	2,707,482
1771	4,411,040	3,450,224

Since 1771, the manufacturers have complained much, and their complaints were the occasion of this committee. But upon this I must make two observations which appear to me essential: First, the year 1771 is greater than 1770, by

Yards ——— *British* 1,200,534 ——— *Irish* 742,742  
Which

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Which in the *British* is a greater rise by a million of yards than that from 1769 to 1770; this great superiority of 1771 was owing to the flow of trade that followed the dissolution of combinations in *America*; consequently is an improper year to take singly for comparison. The only fair method of comparing different periods is to average several: thus, if 1771, 1772, and 1773 equal on an average those of 1770, 1769, and 1768, no person can, upon any principles, deduce a decline. The stagnation of credit following the bankruptcies in *May* 1772, was a wound to every fabric in the kingdom; but as in its nature it was temporary, there can be little doubt of a revival: and accordingly trade of every sort is now fast reviving.

The linen manufacturers, it is true, came to parliament for relief, supposing the stagnation they experienced not owing to that of credit, but an increased import of foreign linens. The following table is transcribed from the report of the committee,

Years.	Total import, Yards.	Re-exported, Yards.
1752	27,856,122	7,187,110
1753	35,372,907	7,448,672
1754	30,871,973	6,981,528
1755	31,947,447	7,542,694
1756	31,759,234	8,461,726
1757	28,429,072	8,461,031
1758	29,770,104	7,989,160
1759	25,059,533	10,482,730
1760	27,988,972	10,079,851
1761	30,428,424	6,740,960
1762	18,827,853	5,990,706
1763	26,634,851	8,046,355
1764	28,092,215	7,889,265
1765	25,497,795	6,394,147
1766	25,624,107	7,171,891
1767	21,054,411	7,147,784
1768	23,112,349	8,046,980
1769	25,431,162	7,102,527
1770	27,101,343	8,461,546
1771	28,243,121	10,470,129

Now

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Now from this table it appears equally clear, that the import is not increased to 1771, it is on the contrary lessened; nor is the re-export lessened. If when the accounts come to be made up for 1772, and 1773, a great increased import is seen, than these gentlemen may have reason to complain.

The tables here transcribed being quoted for the purpose of shewing that this manufacture went on regularly increasing after the peace, it is not a part of my business to touch upon what has happened since 1771—they have proved what I produced them for clearly—as to the rest, I was induced to hint what I did, because I am always, from principle, suspicious of commercial complaints. The lengths to which the woollen manufacturers carried such complaints near forty years ago—the asseverations they made—the proofs they brought—the arguments they used—the attention given them by parliament—all tending to evince and *prove incontestibly*, that the woollen manufacture was *going to the dogs*, at the very time when it was flourishing in an higher degree than was ever before experienced—this is with me a circumstance that gives suspicion at manufacturing complaints—and will never allow me to believe facts that do not clearly appear in such tables of exportation as those I have now quoted. If, on the average of several years, a decline is *proved*, measures of encouragement ought certainly to be taken; but as to temporary stagnations, arising from evidently temporary causes, they do not appear to call for permanent alterations, if any thing is hazarded by such alterations: the alarm of ruin that is gone forth among all our other manufacturers at *the idea* of measures, carries an appearance of impropriety, for such alarms are generally groundless. The committee appointed to enquire into the whole affair, will fairly and candidly examine all parties—they will discover, first, whether there is any great decline; next, they will enquire if a corresponding decline has appeared in other manufactures—then the causes of such partial or general declension will be examined—and

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and if it appears that causes, which bear particularly against the linen trade, have produced such effects; they will very wisely recommend to the house such measures as may remove those causes. On the contrary, if they find that the effect is not singular but general, and flowing from causes which will gradually remove themselves; they will then, doubtless, determine that new and restrictive measures are unnecessary.

One circumstance has fallen within my own knowledge relative to the present state of *Ireland*, which gives me reason to think the evil complained of is not owing to any cause particularly bearing against the linen fabric. The number of farms at present upon the landlords hands in that kingdom is very great, and tenants every day throwing up others, or breaking upon them. I have been applied to by several very considerable landlords for my advice on this their situation; and upon making enquiries into the causes of this effect; asking if the products of the land fell at lower prices than they used to do—or if the farmers expences have arisen considerably—I have been answered, that products of all sorts fell better than ever they did—and that expences have not risen.—Nor was it till I had repeated my enquiries of different persons, that I found the whole of their evils owing to the stagnation of credit—yet was it proved to me incontestibly. Very many farmers hired their lands on credit—conducted their business on credit, and settled their children in other farms on credit, and this whole system receiving a fatal blow in the bankruptcies of *May, &c. 1772*, such a distress followed among these sons of credit, that infinite numbers were ruined. Now if agriculture could be so affected by the failure of credit, is it to be wondered at that manufactures suffered in a greater proportion, being more dependant on commercial credit: and is not this a very strong collateral proof that the declension of the linen trade is owing principally to this cause?

Before

IRISH EMIGRATIONS. 319

Before I finish these observations, I shall express a wish that the committee may publish, in their farther report, a table of the annual export of all woollen fabrics.—It is a common opinion that that manufacture is declining—I much suspect the truth of it; but to prove the real fact, cannot but have its uses—it will probably stop many groundless complaints.

EMIGRATIONS.

IN the course of the examinations which the linen committee has taken, the emigrations from *Ireland* were an object much enquired into—they seemed to many gentlemen an object of alarm.—What I have observed in the preceding papers was designed by way of reply to the false ideas too current in books, pamphlets, and news-papers.—I did not imagine that so wise an assembly as a *British* house of Commons would ever descend to opinions so much below their level. Why are you uneasy at these people leaving *Ireland*? To what purpose would you have them stay at home? their going is proof enough that they ought to go—or in other words, there were more than you could employ. *Oh, but that is owing to the decline of the linen trade, and if that rises again, the hands will not be found.* Do not indulge such idle fears: raise the manufacture as quick as you please, it will, in its most rapid progress, create hands by every motion: the absence of those that are gone will be a premium to the industry of those that remain, by filling their hands with constant work, and prove such an encouragement to population that nothing will be able to oppose its progress. It would be a most beneficial thing to this country, if the unemployed people at *Norwich, Colchester, Sudbury, Bocking, &c.* were seized with the *Irish* spirit of emigration; we should, twenty years hence, be the more populous on that account. In a word, this is a link of that chain of reasoning which I traced before. Look first to employment, as the principal object, and trouble not your head about population; if you cannot keep up your  
quan-



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quantity of employment, your people will decrease in spite of fate; and they will decrease more from the unemployed hands remaining a burthen on the industrious, and starving them by competition, than if they should emigrate as fast as their employment declined. Would but gentlemen reflect on the whole train of this reasoning, they would not think any part of it paradoxical. It has been with surprize that I have heard gentlemen of acknowledged abilities, saying, *If some measure is not taken to keep these emigrants at home, the country will be ruined.* Whereas, the surest method of doing mischief would be to stop them. Increase your employment and you will retain hands enough to answer that employment—let the rest take their way to that happy clime where *hands create employment.* Which is not the case in *Europe* †. But if you would retain them without doing mischief, offer them some of your waste land in property, and you will soon find that they will then stay in *Ireland*; having found that at home for which they wanted to go abroad—*employment.*

The emigration of the husbandmen from the North and West of *Scotland*, has occasioned as much conversation in that kingdom, as the emigrating manufacturers in *Ireland*. There is a considerable difference between them, for farmers and husbandmen emigrating are an extreme clear proof, that they are very unpolitically treated at home in some point of rent, houses, leases, or personal service. For I shall venture to assert, that if a landlord conducts his estate on good principles, even with his own profit the first object, that his tenants and labourers will never emigrate. Raising rents with judgment is an excellent operation for all parties, but some contrive to make it the very engine of loss and folly. I find, however, from some very sensible observations in the *Edinburgh Magazine*,

† I have heard some persons express themselves as if they wished a prohibition laid upon the exportation of men. Such an idea I have also found recommended in *France*, in a book which, from beginning to end, is a continued string of vulgar errors. *Des Causes de la Dépopulation*, 12mo. 1767, page 201.

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*gazine*, that the emigrations from that country are not considerable: the authors, also, observe, that the war carried off between 50 and 60,000 of the ablest bodied men in the north and west of *Scotland*, which, for a time, distressed every branch of demand, yet in a very few years numbers were greater than ever, and hands for every demand so plentiful, that many wanted work: an instance which is a very strong illustration of the reasoning I have offered; and proves that the absence of those men operated as a premium to the increase and industry of those who remained.

Now I am upon the subject of emigrations from *Scotland* and *Ireland*, I must add a remark or two on the methods followed in raising rents. People of large fortune will look only to saving trouble, and they send an agent to raise their estates, as if it was a work as easy as raising a barn. In *Ireland* the buildings on many estates consist of labourers cabins only, who may so far be called farmers, as they have each their little field or two. These labourers depend on and are under-tenants to farmers who live in towns at some distance; the landlord deals only with these farmers, and the cabins are left at their mercy. The most pernicious system that ever was invented. Was I entrusted with the management of a great *Irish* estate, I should set all these labourers free from the farmers, and make them tenants to the principal; and so far from raising their little farms, I should sink the rent where it was screwed very high, their cabins I would put into repair, give them as much more land at a reasonable rate as they desired—and assist the most industrious, in proportion to their industry. In a word, my first operation should make all the mob in the country my friends upon principles of justice; and then I would go to work with the farmers, and make them pay what their lands were really worth. In this part of the business however there ought to be many considerations, particularly under the circumstances of

1. Buildings;
2. inclosures;
- and 3. leases.

The two first articles must either be at the direct or the indirect

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indirect expence of the landlord—the latter is in all cases the heaviest upon him. If he throws an expence upon his tenant, which he ought to bear himself, he must grant ample deductions on that account—and he must not only do this, but must farther see his tenant spending that money on buildings and fences, which ought to be expended in the culture of the land—This is as heavy upon him as the former—he bears both these weights—and he precludes improvements upon the *English* system. Let any man who understands husbandry and figures, calculate these circumstances, and see what profit the *Irish* landlord makes by neither building houses nor digging ditches. As to leases, they should be for 21 years; never for lives.

## NUMBER IV.

*Reply to Dr. Price.—Page 91.*

*To the Printer of the ST. JAMES'S CHRONICLE.*

SIR,

**T**HE Rev. Dr. Price, in his very ingenious *Observations on reversionary payments*, has drawn such a picture of the declining population of this kingdom, as must alarm and terrify all well-wishers to their country, and much exhilarate the spirits of our neighbours. This *opinion*, for I can call it nothing else, is published in a work, the principal part of which consists of a chain of demonstrative proofs; the author being remarkably attentive not to advance any assertions in his calculations of the value of reversions, &c. without giving the positive facts on which he builds; and at the same time, being a gentleman of considerable literary reputation, whatever is found in his book must carry a much greater weight than the same sentiments would have if found in inferior company. The consequence is, that the idea of our depopulation will become more general; clamours

clamours about engrossing farms, and the high prices of provisions, will be more riotous; and the old worn-out declamations against luxury be again common in the mouths of our politicians. It is not only an author's readers that converse about his sentiments; the discourse is retailed among numbers. *The kingdom is depopulated!* Who says it is depopulated? *Why Dr. Price, who has written so excellently on reversions.* Immediately the assertion spreads, and connected with the idea of being as clearly proved as any other assertion in his book. *Engrossing farms depopulates the kingdom.* This is supposed to be proved as satisfactorily as the *value of joint lives for a given number of years.*

But here, Sir, I beg leave to observe, by way of consolation to my countrymen, that a very great distinction is to be made in the doctor's book. The positive assertions he has ventured on the number of the people, engrossing farms, &c. are by no means attended with any but conjectural proofs; no positive ones; that is, he offers us such and such *opinions*; supported by *arguments*; which, if you approve, you may accept; and if not, reject. But this is not the case with the other parts of his work; he there commands your assent by facts; not solicits it by arguments founded on suppositions.

The following are the propositions which Dr. Price labours to establish:

I. That the number of the people is fallen a million and a half since 1685.

II. That the present number is four millions and a half.

III. That the depopulation is partly owing to the engrossing of farms.

From an attentive perusal of the work, I can find no other data from whence these conclusions can be drawn than the following:

1. The number of houses calculated from the hearth books by *Davenant*, were,  
at the restoration, - - - 1,230,000  
Y 2. - - - In

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In 1685, ditto	-	-	1,300,000
In 1690, ditto	-	-	1,319,215
2. The number in 1759 (from Considerations on Trade and Finances)	-	-	986,482
In 1766, ditto	-	-	980,692
3. Individuals per house at Norwich, found to be in 1752	-	-	5
Ditto in Oxford (exclusive of the colleges) and at Wolverhampton	-	-	4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
Ditto in Birmingham and Coventry	-	-	5 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
Ditto in Shrewsbury	-	-	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>3</sub>
Ditto in Holy-Cross	-	-	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>3</sub>
Ditto in Northampton, Manchester and Liverpool	-	-	4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
Ditto in Ackworth, Newbury and Speen	-	-	4
Ditto in Calne	-	-	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Ditto in Altringham	-	-	4 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub>
Ditto in St. Michael's, Chester	-	-	4 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>6</sub>
Ditto in Leeds (partly conjectured)	-	-	5
4. Individuals per Family in 14 Market-Towns (from Dr. Short.) Little more than	-	-	4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
Ditto in 65 country parishes; not quite	-	-	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Ditto in Leeds	-	-	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>5</sub>

Upon these authorities I shall observe, that the number of houses given by Davenant is not from an actual enumeration, (for none was ever yet made) but calculated from the hearth tax. This may be just; but reasons are not wanting to think the contrary.

Here it is to be observed, that Dr. Halley calculated them (see Houghton's Husbandry) from the same authority, in 1691, at 1,175,951, which agrees so badly with that of 1690, as to make a prodigious error in one account, and shews how extremely fallible the authority is.

Dr. Brakenridge gives the number, in 1710, to be 911,310, which is less than at present. It is to be noted, that Dr. Price takes no notice of these accounts. It may be said, that Dr. Brakenridge does not mention the office whence he got the list; but his character is

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is too well established to suppose him utterly mistaken.

If the lists from which the Doctor calculates be true, the number of houses in 1766 were less by 249,308 than in 1660.

The list of 1691 gives 56,826 more houses in Yorkshire, Middlesex, London, Kent, Essex, Surry, and Suffex, for that year, than for 1758, which is simply impossible. (See Three Tracts on Corn Trade.) From hence is to be seen what credit is to be given to the calculations of the last century.

Let us compare the two periods.		£.
Customs at the Revolution, produced	-	*1,015,000
At present, above	-	2,000,000
The excise at the Revolution	-	† 666,383
At present	-	4,600,000
Total of imports and exports in 1668	-	‡ 10,000,000
In 1763	-	26,651,854
Rental of the kingdom in Sir William Petty's time, after the Restoration	-	**9,000,000
At present	-	20,000,000
Years purchase of land then	‡‡	17 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
At present	-	33 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Interest of money from 1660 to 1690,	£.	7 6 6
From 1730 to 1760	-	3 13 6

Agriculture needs no comparison.

In the name of common sense, if the kingdom contained in the former period a million and a half of souls more than in the latter, about what were they employed?

Does the Doctor imagine, that the superiority of all these circumstances can indicate a less numerous people, by a quarter, than in the former period? If Dr. Price can conceive these circumstances to exist, and at the same time mark a population inferior to that of 1660, I must say, by the same rule, that the most

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\* Davenant's Essay on Ways and Means, 1695, p. 36. † Ib. p. 36.  
‡ Davenant's Works, Vol. II, p. 15.  
\*\* Petty's Political Arithmetic, p. 151. †† Ibid.

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most populous age of *Britain* must have been the reign of the Conqueror.

In the next place, respecting the present list, it is supposed (and I apprehend justly) that these are much the most accurate ever taken; but I must remark, that a gentleman (equally eminent for his abilities, his eloquence, and his accurate investigation of these affairs) has informed me, that by taking particular accounts of several parishes, the inhabitants, houses, births, &c. he finds the number of houses falsely reported to government in 1759, &c. being in every instance FEWER than the real number. This is extremely probable to be universal; and of which the Doctor might have taken a hint, from the great difference between the number of houses in *London*, as appears in the parish books, and from *Maitland's* accurate and laborious examination. This circumstance is essential: It destroys the foundation of all the arguments to prove our depopulation, at one stroke.

Lastly, as to the number per house:—Suppose the houses 980,692, and the average

5	to a House,	as at <i>Norwich</i> ,	the total is 4,903,460
5	————	as at <i>Leeds</i> ,	———— 4,903,460
4 $\frac{1}{2}$	————	as at <i>Oxford</i> ,	———— 4,717,320
4 $\frac{1}{3}$	————	as at <i>Wolverhampton</i> ,	———— 4,717,320
5 $\frac{1}{4}$	————	as at <i>Birmingham</i> ,	———— 5,638,979
5 $\frac{1}{4}$	————	as at <i>Coventry</i> ,	———— 5,638,979
4 $\frac{1}{3}$	————	as at <i>Shrewsbury</i> ,	———— 4,249,665
4 $\frac{1}{3}$	————	as at <i>Holy Cross</i> ,	———— 4,249,665
4 $\frac{1}{4}$	————	as at <i>Northampton</i> ,	———— 4,658,287
4 $\frac{1}{4}$	————	as at <i>Manchester</i> ,	———— 4,658,287
4 $\frac{1}{4}$	————	as at <i>Liverpool</i> ,	———— 4,658,287
4	————	as at <i>Ackworth</i> ,	———— 3,922,768
4	————	as at <i>Newbury</i> ,	———— 3,922,768
4	————	as at <i>Speen</i> ,	———— 3,922,768
4 $\frac{1}{2}$	————	as at <i>Calne</i> ,	———— 4,413,114
4 $\frac{1}{7}$	————	as at <i>Altringham</i> ,	———— 4,062,867
4 $\frac{5}{6}$	————	as at <i>St. M. Chester</i> ,	———— 4,740,008
Average,			———— 4,587,000

HOUSES IN LONDON, &c. 327

At *Oxford*, the Colleges are rejected—at *Ackworth*, the Hospital—and at *Calne*, the Poor-house: These omissions are named; nor have we any information that similar deductions are not elsewhere used. But upon what principles can such a calculation be made? As the application of the facts is to know the general average not *per* family, but *per* house, the largest seminaries of people ought to be included, or the result cannot come near the truth. This is so apparent, that it must strike every one at first sight. Yet does *Dr. Price* determine the general number by the average of the particulars, after all such buildings are rejected. So that a house with a family of ten, two of whom are at college, is called eight, yet the college no where included—And the same with hospitals, poor-houses, &c. This is such a method of calculating as I cannot comprehend—for in it 2 and 2 do not make 4.

No parish at *London* is included, where the numbers *per* house must certainly be more considerable, though perhaps more than a tenth of the total are there\*. No place in which any great nobleman or rich commoner resides.—What allowance is made for all the body of seamen? the army, which in 1759 was above 100,000; also the men fought off by the war, but which peace soon recruits? The number taken *per* house of only one family, we find 4,587,000: To these are to be added the superiority of *London* and

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\* It deserves notice, that *Dr. Price* procured an account of part of *Pancras* parish, wherein the numbers are above seven to a house; which is explained away by saying many were lodgers.

Within the Bills there were in 1737, 95,968 houses, *Pancras* and *Marybone* not included; call it only 100,000, and if they are classed in whatever probable manner you may fix on, the number will turn out greater than the Doctor's idea.

20,000	at	12	————	240,000
20,000	at	10	————	200,000
20,000	at	8	————	160,000
20,000	at	6	————	120,000
20,000	at	5	————	100,000
				————
				820,000

its environs to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per house; the inhabitants of all colleges, schools, hospitals, poor-houses, and prisons; all soldiers and seamen; all persons without settled habitations, &c. You are farther to add the deficiencies in the list of houses, which cannot exceed, and which may fall short, as we know it does, and reckon for these the real average per house. And when all these circumstances are considered, the reader, it is apprehended, will not approve of the positive expression used by our author. "Four millions and a half are probably too large an allowance; five millions certainly so." (Page 60 of *Supplement*.) To what purpose such an assertion can be ventured, unsupported by facts, unless to convince the world that *the nation is ruined*, I know not.

As to the number of individuals per family, it is in this enquiry useless, unless it was proved that every house contains but one; which is impossible to prove. But I should be glad to know, whether an hospital, a prison, a college, a school, &c. were reckoned as families? The author takes no notice (except in the case of *Leeds*) of the difference between *house* and *family*; so that we have no certain satisfaction on this head.

Lastly, Sir, I come to the cause of this imaginary depopulation, which the Doctor attributes chiefly to *engrossing farms*. I will offer no reasons in support of that which I have already proved. From a comparison of the population of 250 farms, containing more than seventy thousand acres, I have shewn that farms of above 500 acres are in population superior to smaller ones, as  $8\frac{1}{4}$  to  $6\frac{1}{2}$  (*Six Months Tour*, vol. iv. p. 192, 251, 253, 267). I will change my opinion when a longer list, taken with more care and impartiality, is produced, that proves a contrary fact. And I have there given the reasons why it is impossible the fact should be otherwise.

Attributing the high price of provisions (*Supplement*, p. 19) to any causes that can be remedied by government, must have an extreme bad effect on the minds

minds of the people; it is like all we hear about jobbers, badgers, forestallers, &c. It is a mistake to suppose, that large farms can have any such effects, unless the soil, when well cultivated, yields less food than when full of beggary and weeds.

The Doctor from M. *Muret* speaks also of laying arable lands to grass, as a cause of depopulation. This has nothing to do with the size of farms. This *Swiss* writer speaks also of engrossing farms; but the author should recollect an essential difference between *England* and *Switzerland* in this respect. In the latter, the small farms M. *Muret* speaks of, are generally small estates, that is, the property of the farmer. I find this in almost every page of the *Berne Memoires*; but this is a direct exception to small farms. It is possible (but this again is a point which wants proof) that small farms *in property*, may be favourable to population; for the farmer may afford a much better culture than that miserable one universally seen on them when rent is paid.

No part of this subject will admit of general, random assertions; exceptions must be made, or a writer can only mislead.

If the prices of provisions be high, it must be owing to the cheapness of money, or a natural scarcity; but the people never recur to natural causes; they always dress up a phantom among their neighbours, and call it jobber, badger, butcher, or what not, to whom they attribute every evil under the sun. But who will be so hardy as to assert that provisions are dear? What do you mean by dearness? Would you have wheat at the same price when a kingdom has thirty millions of specie as when it had but twenty; or when it has twenty, the same as when it had ten? Before you talk of the comparative dearness of two periods, prove to me, that the quantity of specie in both is equal. For want of attending to this circumstance, the people are blown up into discontent, by writings which cannot possibly have any good effect. If my commodity is

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is wheat, and I pay for most of my consumption double the price of 80 years ago (and justly too; owing to the different value of money) ought I not to receive double the price for my wheat?

But the truth is, the prices of commodities must always vary according to the variations of *demand* for them; and the *quantity* that is brought to market to answer that demand. If the people either increase in numbers, or consume more, or a better sort of food than formerly, in either case the demand increases and prices must rise: If on the contrary, the demand continues the same, but the quantity is less, the same effect must follow. If the people decrease, or eat less, or a worse sort of food than formerly, and the same quantity is brought to market, then prices must certainly fall. In all which cases, whatever is found to be the price of a commodity, OUGHT TO BE the price of that commodity; since it is evidently regulated by the variations in the demand, and the quantity which supplies it. Nothing, therefore, can be more pernicious, and at the same time futile, than to attempt to regulate that by laws, rules, statutes, and proclamations, which regulates itself by the vibrations in the market. And I do not comprehend, how a country can greatly increase in wealth, through industry, without the *quantity of wealth* having a considerable effect in these vibrations. (*But for a contrary opinion, see Sir James Steuart, vol. i. p. 394.*)

To return to population—I have lately taken great pains in procuring lists for satisfying me on this head.—I shall continue to collect them, and doubt not being able to convince the publick, as far as any authority, except directly numbering the people, will allow, that the numbers, so far from declining, advance considerably; which may be seen by the great increase of births in very many places since the Restoration. The gentleman I mentioned above has made similar researches, and the event is with him universally the same. *Dr. Price*, though he has been so

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so conversant in such registers, takes not the least notice of this; from which I conjecture, that he also might find it thus.

But whether the people are increasing or not, it is certainly of high importance to know the real and the whole truth; this can only be gained by numbering them. I published last year, *Proposals to the Legislature*, for that purpose; and since opinions still continue so contrary, the necessity of that measure is greater than ever.

It is my being an enemy to all writings that can increase the groundless discontents of the people concerning the rates of provisions, &c. or convert into the melancholy prospect of a ruined nation the unparalleled prosperity of this great and populous kingdom, that has urged me, Sir, to trouble you with this letter; and by no means a fondness for contradiction: I honour the abilities of the author from whose opinion in one point I differ; and my aim, believe me, is nothing but the acquisition of real facts.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

ARTHUR YOUNG.

*North Mims, March 28, 1772.*

NUMBER V.

*Law of Settlements.—Page 95.*

SINCE the above passage was written, a bill has been brought into parliament, and is now under consideration, to prevent unnecessary and vexatious removals of the poor. I have read this bill, and been present at the debates that happened on its progress, and I am induced to add a remark or two on the proposition; because, to find fault with our laws as I have done in the above passage, and to take no notice of a proposed amendment, might be thought an inattention.

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The argument should, I think, go principally to this point: To remove the *POLITICAL* evil, incurring as small a *PRIVATE* inconvenience as possible. So great an object cannot be acquired without hazarding some inconveniences; but in questions of this sort, it ought to be an eternal rule, at the same time that you look at the inconvenience, to view also the benefit. Compare them, and then draw your conclusion. That it is an object of vast importance, no body can doubt; the present laws are cruel, injudicious, unpolitical, and pernicious. To tie a man down to a spot where his legal settlement may be, and cut off that natural liberty of mankind of moving where he pleases, is certainly a cruel law, and in its nature, a direct effort of tyranny, for the effect is slavery.—To suppose that the expenditure of the poor rates, is the price at which this right to tyrannize is purchased, appears very erroneous, for the evil falls where the benefit never comes—nor is the latter, individually taken, the consequence of the former. Yet if the one was to be supposed the price of the other, both will be acknowledged the effects of mere power—you chuse to inflict an unnatural restriction, you chuse to give a benefit—but both are the efforts of your power. It is therefore impossible to say, with any propriety, that the maintenance of the poor in their age should be considered as a sufficient compensation for the slavery of their youth.

But the striking light in which the business should be viewed, is that of a *POLITICAL* evil. In this respect the observations I made at the passage referred from, are such as I see no reason to change; the causes of population in this country are so powerful, that we do not feel the effects of contrary causes; but that they exist, no one can doubt, in the laws of settlements. And if population was out of the question, the effect on the general aggregate of industry, ought alone to evince their absurdity. The preventing a man from living in the place where he thinks he can best maintain himself and family, and forcing him

him to stay where he finds that he cannot, is such an abominable system, that to attempt to establish its absurdity is almost an affront to common sense. In short, the first principles of the proposition are sound, and founded upon the most immutable laws of nature and policy.

The only question is, how will you get rid of the evil? Will you make the poor the judges of the propriety of their own removals—or will you lodge that trust in justices of the peace, by giving them a power of refusing certificates? The latter proposition appears to be one of those palliatives, which plaisters over an evil, but can never effect a radical cure. Such a trust ought to be lodged in no man—much less in a justice, who living, perhaps, in the neighbourhood of the man who asks a certificate, and who wants, possibly, to remove into a parish where the justice has an estate, is refused, lest that burthen should be the consequence which, at present, people have such an idea of. Gentlemen of fortune who perhaps sit in parliament, and know the liberal principles which actuate their brother members, may be too apt to suppose that justices in general act upon such principles—but he must be a poor observer that is not sensible, very many of the tribe deserve no such idea—merit no such trust—and ought not to be confided in for acting contrary to what they think their interest.

A proposition was made, that the person wanting to remove should bring proof before the justice, that he cannot get employment—but this would be open to such horrid abuses and imposition as would totally defeat the ends of the bill; since nothing would be easier than to prove, that the man might have employment at home; and by that means kept from moving, though his stay at home be under the most oppressive circumstances.

The great objection made to the bill, was the idea that it would encourage vagrancy and frivolous removals, increase litigations, and raise poor rates. I should not have any great scruples at recommending

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mending the measure, even if all these evils were proved decisively to flow from it. Because it is much better to incur such inconveniencies, than to continue in a system subversive of the first principles of policy. But this conception is out of the question: for—*first*, the bill absolutely excepts vagrants and other delinquents. *Secondly*, removals being frivolous, that is, the reason for them not sufficient, is a contingency that must depend on individuals exerting their natural right in any point of conduct whatever. The poor must remove at their peril; if they find themselves mistaken in their expectations, and cannot find the employment they looked for at one place, they will seek it at another; but to suppose they will take up their residence where work is not to be had, is an idle idea, and when they become chargeable, then the old law comes again into play, and they are removed. It is impossible to attain the good looked for from this bill, without the attendant evil of many removals being injudicious—but it would be a most tyrannical system to reject the exertion of this natural and political liberty, because that liberty, like all good things, *may* be abused.

Respecting the increase of litigation, it is very difficult to gather this consequence from the measure:—at present every man may be removed that settles where he has not a legal settlement or a certificate, and removals are common every where, and every day: how disputes can increase from cutting away five sixths of the opportunities of removing, does not appear to me. Whether a man is chargeable or not, litigations from removals now are common—But if this bill passes, the removals can only take place after being chargeable; thus the removal orders are lessened; surely, therefore, the litigations must lessen with them.

As to poor rates increasing from this measure, it is the strangest assertion that any man could well make. Enabling the industrious poor to settle where their industry can be exerted to the best effect, is  
indif-

MULTIPLICATION OF EVILS. 335

indisputably a premium upon that industry; and how an encouragement of that sort should impoverish them to such a degree as to raise the poor rates for their support, is a contradiction in terms. Nor can I see how the granting this liberty to the industrious can fail of proving beneficial to their industry; how many are the instances wherein men are tied down to the profit of their own labour, without being able to make any advantage of that of numerous families, from the want of power to move where a more general demand exists! How many others wherein a man is forced by those cruel laws to support his family upon eight or nine shillings a week, when by a removal, he might with equal ease earn near twice the money in a different calling! How many instances of ploughmen being sent, from mere suspicion of becoming chargeable, to places where weavers only are wanted—weavers being packed away to coal-pits, and colliers sent to fishing towns. Is this rational? And will any man give the idleness of his imagination so much play as to indulge such inconsistencies as asserting, that such a conduct is judicious, and a means of enabling the poor so to support themselves, as to prevent rates from increasing!

One word more as to population—Is it a rational system to keep industrious workmen from filling empty houses? To keep industrious men and women from marrying, and becoming the parents of an industrious progeny? Does not such a conduct effectually operate against the population, the wealth and the happiness of the kingdom? But do your work effectually, and repeal that ill judged law which prevents any cottage being built without four acres of land annexed to it.



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NUMBER VI.

*Observations on the Register Act.—Note, page 144.*

*To the Printer of the ST. JAMES'S CHRONICLE.*

SIR,

HAVING just received intelligence that a motion was very soon to be made in the House of Commons, for the repeal of the act for registering the price of corn, I think there will be no impropriety in examining the principles upon which such a proposition can be made; that if those principles are cogent enough to satisfy the people of the expediency of the measure, we may applaud the idea, and, on the contrary, condemn it in case they are found nugatory and insufficient.

It is near two years since the average prices of corn have been laid before the public by authority of parliament. This has been a period sufficient for the consideration of all objections to such a publication; and it has also been sufficient for the friends of it to reflect on the advantages which they suppose may flow from it. I shall begin with the former, and enquire into the force and validity of those objections which have come to my knowledge.

It is in the first place asserted, that publishing the price of corn has this ill effect: It dissatisfies the farmers in the eastern counties, upon their finding that corn is so much cheaper there than in the west of *England*; the consequence of which is, inducing them to raise the price.

Those who found their objections upon this plea, must be very ignorant of the nature of the corn trade, and also of the common effect of such knowledge. That the farmers in one part of the kingdom would wish to have their corn as dear as in any other part, I readily allow; but I utterly deny that they can possibly realize their wishes, and because they want it dearer,

PUBLISHING THE PRICES OF CORN. 337

dearer, make it so. Who can be so weak as to imagine, that the low price in the east is owing to the moderation of the farmers, or the high rate of the west to their avarice? Corn is cheap in the eastern counties because so much is raised; they are, properly speaking, corn counties; the demand likewise is less, for want of manufactures, *Norwich* being the only capital manufacturing place in all the eastern part of the kingdom. It is dear in the west, because their lands are more generally grass, and because their demand is greater; owing to the immense manufactures there carried on.

These are the reasons for the difference, Sir, and by no means the wishes and avarice of farmers, or their possessing a knowledge of the prices in the different parts of the kingdom. If this cause of high prices, (*viz.* the proportion between the price and the quantity raised) was better considered, we should not see the House of Commons busying themselves so long in counteracting or remedying the decrees of providence.

But the idea of keeping the kingdom ignorant of the truth, is founded on the same principles as the old injunction in *France* of transporting corn from one province to another: They would not suffer it to be sent from *Normandy* to *Brittany*, lest the former should want it and pay too dear at home; and we have some politicians who are not for letting the farmers in *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* know how dear corn is in *Warwick* and *Staffordshire*, lest they should stop the sale and make it still dearer. This is all absurdity. On the contrary, take every measure to let them know this fact: let the farmers, factors, and dealers, know how dear it is in certain counties; they will only be so much the quicker in sending corn to so good a market; the consequence of which is to sink it, and reduce the price the nearer to that general level at which it ought to be throughout the kingdom. Were it possible to keep one part quite ignorant of the price in the other, can there be any doubt but the disproportion would be vastly greater?

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338 OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

How is a demand to be supplied, if the existence of it is not known?

But, Sir, we may grant the truth of this preposterous position, and yet these gentlemen will be never the nearer their mark; for granting that the eastern counties knowing corn to be so much dearer in the western ones, should enable them to raise the price, I reply, that upon the same principles this knowledge among the western consumers would be equally powerful in making it cheaper. The same register which tells the east that corn is dearer in the west, likewise tells the west that it is cheaper in the east; and why should not such knowledge as well enable them to lower their own prices, as to allow the other part of the kingdom to raise theirs? A Norfolk farmer says to a consumer, *I will not sell my wheat at 5s. You see it is 7s. in Warwickshire. Why are we to sell cheaper?* This is the argument. Surely the consumer at Warwick may as well say to the farmer, *I will not give you 7s. for your wheat; you see it is only 5s. in Norfolk;* and he may add, *if you will not take the same, I will go to the importer.* This, I think, is sufficient to shew the fallacy of such an argument.

In the second place, the enemies of the registry bill assert, that it does not give the prices of corn; on the contrary, that it gives false prices, and therefore had better give none.

This is an objection I have often heard in conversation, and as often answered, by observing that *the price of corn at market*, spoken in a general way, is not the price of some fine sample which Mr. *this* or Mr. *that* sells at, but the average of the market; that is to say, if all the wheat sold at market was thrown into one heap, the price of a sample taken from that heap would be the average price of the market: Nor is the price that of the customary bushel, which varies greatly, but of the Winchester measure.

Whenever these circumstances are duly attended to, the prices published by Mr. Cook will be found the true

ADVANTAGES OF THE PUBLICATION. 339

true average prices of the market. I have examined them since the first publication, and I find such a consistency throughout them, that it is impossible there should be any material errors in the account.

These are the only objections I have heard which seem to carry any weight; others there are, but too trivial to deserve an answer. As such objections have been thought sufficiently strong to found on them a motion for a repeal, I shall take the liberty to examine the contrary side of the question, and see if no good results from the publication.

It has at one stroke overturned the lying reports which used to be circulated of the high price of corn. When the world was ignorant of the truth, every man quoted that price which was convenient to his argument; and 8, 9, and 10s. a bushel were not unfrequently heard of, when no such price fairly existed.

When a man had a mind to harangue on the price of wheat, he told us that such a neighbour of his sold at so and so; not adding that his corn was the finest sample in the market; and another just arrived from a distance, lifting up his hands and eyes at the misery of the poor, used to tell us, that wheat at such a place was 9s. a bushel; forgetting at the same time to inform us, that the measure was 11 or 12 gallons; and yet, on such vague intelligence were the ideas of people on this important point founded! Before this act passed, parliament and the ministry were busied in remedying evils that never existed; and all the information they could gain of prices was from factors and dealers, who could never be uninterested in their opinion. Now the case is changed, and they have every day much better authority before their eyes than that of all the dealers in Britain: authority particularly valuable, because it is *disinterested*.

It is almost incredible that there should be any men so totally blind as to delight in darkness; and because they cannot or will not see themselves, urge the propriety

priety of hoodwinking all the rest of the nation. Till this act passed, we never fairly knew what was the price of corn, and every measure of the corn trade was transacted in the dark. Our knowledge of this branch of national oeconomy would now be wonderfully different from what it is, if we had similar registers from *James* the first's reign; such would be abundantly more satisfactory than the *Windsor* prices of the *best* wheat, and in only *one* market of the kingdom. This part of our domestic policy would then have been long ago understood, and instead of volumes of conjectures, we should have had tables of facts.

The regular publication of the price of corn tends more strongly than any other measure to prevent its being extravagantly dear in certain counties; because the knowledge of such an evil is the immediate occasion of a remedy. It enables the nation to judge rationally of exportation: and the common means of collecting the prices will, by degrees, familiarize the officers through whose hands the business goes, to be accurate and careful in the business, to a degree of which we do not at present think; a circumstance which may in future prove of no slight consequence to quite different views.

If any person proved to me (which, by the way, is impossible) that the prices published were not absolutely accurate, I should still be of the same opinion: If the authority is not good, give me better. Who will assert, that a more exact knowledge of the price of corn may not be gained from the tables than from the random impertinence of conversation; from the assertions of dealers and factors; from the reports of travellers; and from the lying tales of boasting gentlemen farmers; who, to give you an opinion of their husbandry, talk of prices which have as much to do with the national concern, as prices at *Jericho*? If the register bill gives us not this, I will agree in its condemnation.

It is for these and other reasons, Sir, that I cannot but esteem this act as the most valuable in corn affairs  
2 next)

(next to the general prohibitions of the import of foreign corn, and the bounty act) that ever passed the legislature of this kingdom, and, as such, most heartily wish, that instead of its repeal, I may see its perpetuity.

The House of Commons, I see, is much employed in endeavouring to lower the price of provisions. As far as gaining intelligence goes, they will do good; for the knowledge of facts can never have any other tendency. But by facts I do not mean such random assertions, calculations, and opinions, as I have seen in the papers among the evidences they have received, some of which, whether true or false, are little to the purpose in point; they may receive much more such, and at last find that parliament is unable to cope with nature; and that the effect of much money or bad crops is not to be remedied. Opening the ports is a measure that pleases the people; but *England* will not be fed by imports from countries where wheat is much dearer than with her. Our poor rioted last year because they paid seven farthings a pound for bread, while their brethren in *Holland* eat it at four-pence and four-pence farthing. In some parts of *France* it was five-pence; in *Switzerland* six-pence; and in *Germany*, barley, beans, horse-dung; and the bark of trees, formed the bread eaten by the poor, through a considerable part of last summer: A fact I have from good authority. Had it not been for the encouragement agriculture has received in this kingdom, our poor might have been in the same predicament; and if parliament is zealous in lowering prices, it must be done by the same means. Let them take means to bring into culture ten millions of our waste acres: a single vote to raise fifty thousand pounds to begin such a work, would at one stroke do more than all the nonsense that will be talked, or all the acts that will be passed, for two months to come.

There never was a scarcity of corn in any country that was remedied by measures taken after such scarcity was felt; an hundred proofs of this will occur at once to those who are in the least conversant in the  
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342 THE WAY TO PLENTY.

the corn history of Europe; even attempts to effect it have proved mischievous, in alarming the people; for they are apt to think a scarcity much greater than it is when they see government employed in reducing it, and an alarm of this nature never spreads without prices rising much beyond the proportion of the real defect in the crop. Nothing can be more pernicious than addressing parliament to do impossibilities, unless it be parliament's undertaking them; and, for the sake of quieting the minds of the foolish part of the people, acting as if it thought the evil to be remedied; the consequence of which is, leaving the mischief much greater than it was found. While the house is busied upon provisions, the poor will be quiet; but when they find nothing done, they will not be persuaded that nothing could be done; and then they will riot, and pull down graineries, and burn barns full of corn, in order to make wheat cheap.

The measures to be taken to remedy the scarcity, are such as are applicable to any period: first, gain a knowledge of useful facts, in which the publication of the prices of corn stands foremost; and, secondly, sink the future prices by increasing the quantity raised, which can only be effected by bringing our immense wastes into culture.

Excuse, Sir, the incorrectness of this letter, which is written immediately on receiving intelligence of the motion for repealing an act, the good effects of which are every day felt. I am called away to the care of a few fields, in which I endeavour to produce more corn than they produced before; and this, I think, is the way to make wheat cheap.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

ARTHUR YOUNG.

North-Mims, Dec. 14, 1772.

P. S. Corn Dealers, I can easily believe, may be against the act in question; for such an open and honest publication can little suit the purposes of private interest, which are peculiarly answered by the kingdom in general being ignorant, and the dealers possessing the little knowledge to be found.

NUMBER VII.

Smallness of Sums voted for National Improvements.—Page 171.

THE following paper of the expences of government from the revolution to the seventh year of his present majesty, I drew up some years ago with a different view; but I insert it at present to shew in comparison the attention that has been given by our legislature to the demands of war, and the arts of peace.

Expences of the revolution,	-	£.	1,020,000
Navy, - - - -	140,743,623		
Army, - - - -	166,551,041		
Sundries, - - -	23,273,795		
Subsidies, - - -	13,404,204		
East India company, for } military force, }	120,000		
Enemies' depredations	285,075		
<hr/>			
Total war and its consequences,	-	344,377,738	
Foundling hospital, -	418,527		
Public buildings, -	691,200		
British museum, -	36,000		
Streets and roads, -	66,500		
Rye harbour, - -	23,363		
Longitude, - - -	5,000		
Land carriage fish scheme, *	2,500		
Prisons, - - - -	20,800		
<hr/>			
Total public works and } useful establishments, }	- - -	1,266,890	
		Z 4	Colo-

\* This article was meant well, and therefore I have inserted it, but certainly it was a most futile trifling affair. A premium to supply the tables of people of fortune: had it been designed for the poor, it would have been confined to sprats and herrings.

344 NATIONAL EXPENCES.

Colonies, - - -	908,615	
Survey of <i>America</i> , - -	5,203	
Manufactures, - - -	14,000	
Pot-ash, - - -	3,000	
<i>African</i> settlements and trade,	546,715	
<hr/>		
Total colonies, trade, and manufactures, }	- -	1,477,533
Sufferers by the earthquake at <i>Lisbon</i> , }	100,000	
Ditto, by fire at <i>Charles Town</i> ,	20,000	
<i>French</i> protestants, -	13,000	
Mrs. <i>Stephens's</i> medicines,	5,000	
<hr/>		
Total charities and gratuities, - -	- -	138,000
Capt. <i>Cornwall's</i> monument,	3,000	
To Sir <i>Wm. Johnson</i> , -	5,000	
<hr/>		
Total rewards for bravery exerted in the service of the public, }	- -	8,000
Coinage,	887,655	
Burning infected ships,	23,935	
Cash stole, - - -	4,191	
Lost by an agent, -	8,715	
Masters in Chancery,	11,485	
Mr. <i>Lowndes's</i> mortgage,	1,280	
<i>Feykil's</i> legatees, -	13,582	
Rebels and forfeited estates,	158,753	
Heretable jurisdiction,	152,037	
Union tolls, - - -	7,641	
Journals - - -	7,278	
Expences of law, - - -	372,050	
<hr/>		
Sundry articles, - - -	- -	1,648,602
Expences of the court, - - -	- -	56,936,733
Interest of debts, - - -	- -	170,298,551
<hr/>		
General total, being the amount of all the money raised on the subject for the public service during 79 years, }	- - -	577,172,047
General medium <i>per annum</i> , 7,305,988		

In

NATIONAL EXPENCES. 345

In the following specification the interest of the debt is divided among the above articles, in the exact proportion between them and the whole amount.

Revolution, - - -		£. 1,438,581
<i>War.</i>		
Navy, - - -	202,813,683	
Army, - - -	233,969,431	
Sundries, - - -	32,500,602	
Subsidies, - - -	18,604,604	
<i>East India</i> company, and depredations, }	540,204	
<hr/>		
		488,428,524
Public works, - - -	- -	1,790,760
Colonies, trade, &c. - - -	- -	2,105,433
Charities and gratuities, - - -	- -	195,200
Rewards of bravery, - - -	- -	11,300
Sundry articles, - - -	- -	2,336,602
The court, - - -	- -	80,865,647
<hr/>		
		£. 577,172,047

If we suppose the total 20, the parts will then be ;

Revolution, - - -		$0\frac{1}{11}$
<i>War.</i>		
Navy, - - -	$7\frac{13}{38}$	
Army, - - -	8	
Sundries, - - -	$1\frac{68}{557}$	
Subsidies, - - -	$0\frac{1}{2}$	
<i>East India</i> co. &c. - - -	$0\frac{1}{52}$	
<hr/>		
		$17\frac{695}{587172}$
Public works, - - -	- -	$0\frac{1}{17}$
Colonies, &c. - - -	- -	$0\frac{1}{15}$
Charities, &c. - - -	- -	$0\frac{1}{160}$
Rewards, - - -	- -	$0\frac{1}{2700}$
Sundries, - - -	- -	$0\frac{1}{13}$
The court, - - -	- -	$2\frac{430}{587}$

This state of the expenditure of the public money ought to silence the answers which are usually given to propositions for small sums being voted as an encouragement to that part of agriculture which evidently

346 FOUNDLING HOSPITAL PERNICIOUS.

dently wants it, from the lands remaining in the same state of waste and defolation that has disgraced the kingdom for a thousand years. While the national wealth is diffipated by millions in military projects, why refuse a few thousands for the solid advantages of cultivation to the wastes—industry to the people—popularity to the minister—and fame to the monarch?

I have classed the Foundling Hospital rather as it was intended, than from its effect. If the principles of population explained in the preceeding pages be well considered, I apprehend it will be thought that the policy of establishing hospitals for foundlings is contrary to those principles. It is encouraging that vicious population which cannot support itself. You save many lives, it is said; but the very saving these lives must have the effect of starving other people. The thing wanted is not people, but employment; if you increase employment with the foundlings, you do good; but the increase of employment alone would have the same effect in a much better way. You assert, that you bring up many people, who would otherwise have died in the cottages; and encourage the increase of children by rendering them no burthen to their parents. But why are they a burthen? Why do they not increase? Because there is no demand for them. They would increase fast enough if you employed them: and your taking these children, bringing them up, and fixing them elsewhere, is (like naturalizing foreigners) only starving those with whose labour they come into competition, and consequently destroying with one hand as many as you rear with another. This ought to convince us that all measures, taken professedly with a view to encourage population, are nugatory and idle; and that the only possible means of doing it is by increasing regular employment.

But there is another circumstance which has rendered our foundling hospital pernicious. This is the irregularity of its support; the progressive grants of  
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BETTER TO IMPROVE WASTES. 347

parliament gave a great encouragement to that sort of increase I mentioned above, and then comes a sudden stop: What could be the consequence of this, but great distress among those people who had entered into procreation of some sort or other under the idea of their surplus being taken off by the hospital? the sudden stagnation of this demand must have just such effects as the sudden decline of a manufacture—doing more mischief to population than it could before have done good.

This four hundred thousand pounds I consider, therefore, as thrown away: but supposing it had been laid out progressively in bringing into cultivation our moors,—this would have answered the design most effectually, for the increase of employment would have increased the people, without taking the bread from any one, or throwing the least difficulty on the increase of other places: at the same time that this was effected, the whole progress of the expenditure would have added to the national income and wealth, and thereby have become a new cause of farther populousness. **WHEN WILL THERE ARISE A MINISTER WITH SPIRIT AND PATRIOTISM SUFFICIENT TO INDUCE HIM TO LET ONE POOR TWENTY THOUSAND POUNDS FOR WASTE LANDS APPEAR, IN THE LONG GRANT OF SO MANY HUNDRED MILLIONS!**

NUMBER VIII.

Price of Flour in America.—Page 282

IT will appear from the following table of the prices of flour in America, that the idea of the colonists not being able to rival the farmers of this country in their own markets, is a very false notion.

New-York.		Philadelphia.	
Flour.	s. d.	Flour.	s. d.
March, 1760, at 17s. 6d. per Cwt.	17 6	March, 1760, at 15s. 6d. per Cwt.	15 6
Cask, contain. 2 Cwt.	1 0	Cask, containing 2 Cwt. 2s. 4d. $\frac{1}{2}$ .	1 2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Insurance, weighing and carting, at 4d. per cask,	0 2	Commission on 16s. 8d. $\frac{1}{4}$ , at 5 per cent.	0 10
Currency, -	18 8	Currency, -	17 6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Exchange at 16s. is sterling,	11 3 $\frac{3}{4}$	Exchange at 15s. is sterling,	11 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Commission, -	0 6 $\frac{3}{4}$		
	11 10 $\frac{1}{2}$		
1760, April, -	18 0	1760, April, -	16 8
May, -	18 0	May, -	15 9
June, -	18 0	June, -	15 3
July, -	17 9	July, -	15 3
Sept. -	18 0	Sept. -	15 0
Oct. -	18 3	Oct. -	15 3
Dec. -	18 0	Nov. -	15 9
1761, May, -	18 0	1761, March, -	15 0
Aug. -	16 0	April, -	14 6
Nov. -	17 0	June, -	14 10
1762, Feb. -	18 0	Aug. -	15 0
March, -	18 0	Sept. -	15 3
May, -	18 6	Oct. -	16 6
Sept. £. 1 2 0		1762, Jan. -	15 9
Oct. - 1 3 3		Feb. -	16 0
1763, Jan. - 1 4 0		March, -	16 0
Feb. - 1 2 0		April, -	16 0
March, 1 1 0		Oct. -	17 9

AMERICAN FLOUR.

New-York.	s.	d.	Philadelphia.	s.	d.
April, -	17	0	1763, May, -	16	0
May, -	18	6	June, -	15	8
June, -	18	9	1764, June, -	12	0
July, -	17	6	Sept. -	13	0
Aug. -	17	9	Oct. -	12	10
Sept. -	17	0	Nov. -	15	3
Oct. -	16	0	1765, April, -	12	9
Nov. -	15	3	May, -	12	6
1764, May, -	14	6	June, -	13	8
June, -	12	6	1767, July, -	19	0
July, -	13	0	1768, May, -	17	4
Aug. -	13	9			
Sept. -	14	0			
1765, Feb. -	13	3			
March, -	12	6			
April, -	13	3			
May, -	14	0			
June, -	15	0			
Aug. -	16	0			
Nov. -	15	6			
Dec. -	14	6			
1766, Jan. -	15	6			
June, -	16	0			
July, -	16	0			
Sept. -	16	0			
1767, Feb. -	19	0			
April, -	19	0			
May, -	18	0			
June, -	18	0			
July, -	19	6			
Aug. £. 1 0 6					
Sept. - 1 0 6					
Dec. - 19 6					
1768, March, -	19	6			
May, -	19	0			

From this table it appears, that fine flour sold there sometimes at from 12s. to 16s. per cwt. and generally at 15s. to 18s. currency, which is from 7s. 6d. to 10s. and from 9s. to 11s. sterling per cwt. Say on a general average 9s. for that which is equal to three bushels good wheat,

NUMBER IX.

*Effect of Compound Interest in payment of the National Debt.—Page 299.*

THE effect of compound interest as given by Dr. Price suggests, I must own, to me a different idea from that of easing the nation of taxes which are no burthen to it. I should rather apply it to establishing a fund for increasing the revenues of the nation in future, in order to enable the government to expend considerable sums in the encouragement of agriculture, manufactures and commerce.

It is evident from the Doctor's tables, that a moderate annual appropriation to sinking debts might be made the means in future of commanding the greatest sums of money.

Let us suppose the scheme adopted in 1774, and six hundred thousand pounds a year applied inviolably to the extinction of debt, which we will suppose to bear 5 per cent. interest, and let us call our present debt 130,000,000*l.* and suppose it increased in future as below.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Debt.</i>	<i>Debt paid.</i>	<i>Debt reduced to,</i>
1774,	£. 130,000,000		
1784,	130,000,000	7,546,734	122,453,266
1789,	130,000,000		
Suppose a war } to have added }	100,000,000		
	230,000,000	12,947,136	217,052,864
1804,	230,000,000	39,863,307	190,135,693
1824,	230,000,000	125,608,800	104,391,200
1844, Twenty years } encourage- } ment of agri- } culture, ma- } nufactures, } commerce and } colonies, at } 8 mill. a year, }	160,000,000		
	390,000,000	353,117,106	36,882,894
1861, Seventeen } years ditto, at } 10 mill. a year, }	170,000,000		
A war, &c.	264,855,094		
	824,855,094	824,855,094	

PAYMENT OF NATIONAL DEBT. 351

Without attending to the minute accuracy of such a calculation (something of which sort I wish the Doctor had given, to shew what might yet be done with the debt of this country) it appears from it that by means of applying only 600,000*l.* a year, which is not one-third of the sinking fund, we might safely continue to run in debt for ever; but suppose for 87 years longer; during which period we might expend in war above 364 millions; and in cultivating the arts of peace 310 millions, by means of which every uncultivated acre in the three kingdoms might be made equal to the most fertile soils, great bounties might be given on the export of manufactures, new colonies established, and commerce extended, and at the end of the period, the nation might find itself without a penny of debt, and in possession of an immense clear revenue. By this means, those exertions in the arts of peace so necessary and important, and which are so much neglected in this country, might with ease be executed. To borrow at simple interest for these objects, while a fund for payment rolls on at compound interest, is making the highest advantage possible of the funding system: instead of expending the eight and ten millions *per ann.* in peace at the periods minuted, if a smaller sum was begun with in 1774, and continued regularly through the 87 years (for instance near four millions) it would be the same thing in the payment, and every branch of the national industry so greatly encouraged, that all taxes would be abundantly more productive than at present, and render the interest of 217 millions, a weight not much heavier than 130,000,000*l.* at present. I have been induced to run into this perhaps wild note, to shew what may yet be done by a small beginning. Dr. Price laments the past much more than he proposes for the future: if such a plan was now begun, we should have no reason to lament its not having been executed; and when once it is begun and really destined to its end, the more you borrow the



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the better; for, it will discharge more than you can know what to do with, and after it has been operating some years, you may safely borrow any sums, as it will be difficult to run in debt so fast as your fund will pay.

NUMBER X.

Corn Laws.—Page 40.

THE corn laws of Britain being entirely changed by the late permanent act, which was brought in by Governor Pownall, it is necessary, for the information of foreigners, to give an abstract of that act, by which they will see what our present system is.

I. The act took place the first day of January, 1774.

II. When Wheat is above 48 s. per quarter,

Rye — above 32

Barley — above 34

Oats — above 18

all duties on importation to cease.

III. Instead of former duties, new ones laid of

6 d. per quarter on wheat,

2 per cwt. on wheat flour,

3 per quarter on rye,

2 per quarter on barley,

2 per quarter on oats.

These duties designed to ascertain the quantities imported.

IV. When prices are such, that importation by this act is not allowed, wheat or wheat flour, rye, barley, or oats may be imported duty free, if immediately deposited in warehouses in the presence of the proper custom-house officer, and under the joint locks of the king and the importer. The corn not to be taken out for home consumption till the duties are paid as if commonly imported. But for re-exportation,

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tation, it may at any time be taken, a bond being given as security, that it shall not be landed in any part of Britain.

The design of this clause is, to enable merchants to carry on a trade in corn at a time when the prices here will not allow importation for home consumption.

V. When wheat is at or above 44 s. per quarter,

Rye ————— 28,

Barley ————— 22,

Oats ————— 16,

exportation to cease; except

2500 qrs. to Gibraltar,

3500 qrs. to Minorca,

500 qrs. to St. Helena,

5000 qrs. to Guernsey and Jersey,

2500 qrs. to Isle of Man.

VI. When the price of wheat is under 44 s. per qr.

Rye ——— 28,

Barley ——— 22,

Oats ——— 16,

the following bounties shall be paid on exportation:

For wheat - - - 5 s. 0 d. per quarter,

For malt made of ditto 5 0,

For rye - - - 3 0,

For barley - - - 2 6,

For malt made of ditto 2 6,

For bear or bigg - 2 6,

For oats - - - 2 0,

For oat-meal - - - 2 6.

VII. Merchants re-exporting corn, which on importation paid duties, to have such duties repaid them.

## NUMBER XI.

Proportion between the price of meat and wheat.

—Page 137.

**F**LEETWOOD quotes from *Stowe* another set of prices for the year 1533. A fat ox, 1*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* A fat wether, 3*s.* 4*d.* A fat calf, 3*s.* 4*d.* A fat lamb, 1*s.* Wheat is not registered, but the price of the year before is 8*s.* 10*d.*

The ox is 24 bushels.

The wether and calf, 3 bushels.

The lamb, 1 bushel.

These at 6*s.* 6*d.* are,

The ox, - - - £. 7 16 0

The wether and calf, 0 19 6

The lamb, - - - 0 6 6

Which prices for such cattle as the husbandry of 240 years ago would support, I consider as high as any rates at present at *Smithfield*.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is an inexpressible difficulty in discovering the proportion between the prices of antient times and those of the present. Till the 43d of *Elizabeth*, the coin varied perpetually, so that the number of grains of fine silver in the shilling vibrated between 20 and 264; the proportions between those numbers and 86 mark the proportions between the shilling of that age and of this. Thus, when the writers of *Hen. VIII.* and *Ed. VI.*'s time complain of the prices of all commodities rising to *huge, immoderate, and excessive* prices, and attribute it to inclosures, we have the clearest evidence of their errors, by turning to the value of money; there we find that those princes so debased their coin as to reduce the fine silver in the shillings down to 40 and even to 20 grains. The immediate consequence of which was, a prodigious

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confusion in prices, which created an alarm that made most things rise greatly.

For the better understanding antient prices, I shall here insert a table of the variations in our shillings:

One shilling contained of fine silver,

28	<i>Ed. I.</i>	— 1300	— 264	grains.
18	<i>Ed. III.</i>	— 1345	— 236	
27	<i>Ed. III.</i>	— 1354	— 213	
9	<i>Hen. V.</i>	— 1422	— 176	
1	<i>Hen. VI.</i>	— 1422	— 142	
4	<i>Hen. VI.</i>	— 1426	— 176	
49	<i>Hen. VI.</i>	— 1471	— 142	
1	<i>Hen. VIII.</i>	— 1509	— 118	
34	<i>Hen. VIII.</i>	— 1543	— 100	
36	<i>Hen. VIII.</i>	— 1545	— 60	
37	<i>Hen. VIII.</i>	— 1546	— 40	
3	<i>Ed. VI.</i>	— 1549	— 40	
5	<i>Ed. VI.</i>	— 1551	— 20	
6	<i>Ed. VI.</i>	— 1552	— 88	
2	<i>Eliz.</i>	— 1560	— 89	
43	<i>Eliz.</i>	— 1601	— 86	

And so has remained ever since \*.

But having found the proportion between the shillings, there then remains a farther difficulty: which is, the difference in the value of money. This is impossible to be discovered with accuracy, but conjectures upon it are numerous. Lord *Lyttelton* observes, that some reckon the proportion between the value of money, for some centuries after the conquest, at 20, some at 15 or 16, and some at 10 times the present rate, but his lordship calculates it at only 5 times †. His reason, however, appears to be very fallacious, for he founds it on making the prices of those days correspond with the present, which they very probably did not. Mr. *Hume*, upon better grounds, calculates it at 10 times ‡, a proportion I should be

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\* *Lowndes's Extract from the Mint*, p. 69.† *Hist. of Henry II.* vol. i. p. 403.‡ *Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 228.

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inclined to follow; he further adds, that considering we have six times more industry, and three times more people, we may multiply the sums mentioned by historians for some reigns after the conquest by 100. That ten times is not at all extravagant, we may gather from the conclusion of Bishop Fleetwood's elaborate enquiry, who made the proportion between the reign of Hen. VI. and that of Queen Anne, six times. Now, whoever considers the immense rise of prices since the beginning of this century, will allow that ten times, taken for the present period, is moderate.

But the difficulty continues after the 43d of Eliz. when the present standard was fixed; for there certainly is an immense difference between the value of money, for instance, in the reign of James I. and the present time: interest was then  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and land sold at 14 years purchase. But what the general proportion is, remains, nevertheless, a great difficulty; in which every man, who has reflected much on these subjects, must be left to form his own conclusions.

The most remarkable rise of prices was in the reign of Elizabeth, when the produce of the Spanish mines had circulated throughout all parts of Europe, that had any industry. I should apprehend the value of money to be now ten times greater than it was before that period, and that for a long time afterwards, perhaps till late in the reign of Charles II. five times might be the proportion. And that since that period the fall has been gradual.

If this idea (or indeed any moderate one that may be started, which takes in all circumstances) be considered, it will be found that those modern writers who complain of the high prices of the necessaries of life in the present period, compared with those of remoter ages, have very much mistaken the case. A few instances will shew this.

## ANTIEN T PRICES OF PROVISIONS. 357

We find in Fleetwood \*, that in 1302, a fat mutton fold at 1 s.; as there were 264 grains in the shilling, this in present money is about 3 s. which multiplied by 10 gives 1 l. 10 s. not a low price at present.

At the same time a cock or hen fold at  $1d.\frac{1}{2}$ , which at present would be 3 s. 6 d.—much higher than our prices.

Hogs (I suppose fat) came to 3 s.  $2d.\frac{1}{4}$ , which makes at present 4 l. 15 s.  $7d.\frac{1}{2}$ , the price of our largest hogs.

In 1314 the shilling continuing the same, a fat goose is  $2d.\frac{1}{2}$ , or 6 s. 3 d. present money; a very high price.—I have taken very moderate articles, some oxen and sheep run up to such prices that we rarely know any thing like them; for instance, in 1314 a stalled ox fold at 1 l. 4 s. equal to 36 l. at present, which for such oxen as theirs would be most enormous; even a grass fed one at 16 s. which now would be 24 l. An ordinary cow 10 s. or 15 l.

In the same year, four pigeons fold for a penny; this is 2 s. 6 d. present money, or  $7d.\frac{1}{2}$  each, which is a high price.

In 1315, and 1316, wheat 1 l. the quarter, which is 30 l. at present; but it was a great dearth. Some records make it double that price. But the changes were so great, that in the same year it was 4 l. and also 6 s. 8 d.

In 1336, wheat reckoned very plentiful, at 2 s. the quarter, yet that would now be 3 l. A fat ox, 6 s. 8 d. which makes 10 l. In 1344, a cow, 5 s. or 7 l. 10 s.; a good price now.

In 1348 (the shilling 236 grains) commodities were reckoned to sell very cheap. A good fat ox at 4 s. which now would be 5 l. 10 s. In 1349, a fat ox, 6 s. 8 d. now 9 l. 3 s. 4 d. In 1407, a cow, 7 s. which would now be 8 l. 15 s. Labour in this period was

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\* Chronicon Preciosum, p. 66.

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enormously dear, which, from many circumstances, particularly the small number of people, and still less industry, might easily be conceived. In this year a thresher had 2 *d.* a day, equal to 4 *s.* 2 *d.* at present. In 1425, a sawyer and a stone-cutter had 4 *d.* a day, equal to 5 *s.* 5 *d.* at present. Threshing a quarter of wheat, 3 *d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$ , equal now to 4 *s.* 7 *d.* At the same time a bay horse for a prior came to 1 *l.* 6 *s.* 8 *d.* which now would be 21 *l.* 10 *s.*

In 1444, a calf, 2 *s.* As the shilling then contained 176 grains, this is equal to 40 *s.* at present; a good price for fat calves. A porker, 3 *s.* equal now to 3 *l.* which is a great price. A goose, 3 *d.* now 5 *s.* Pigeons, the dozen, 4 *d.*  $\frac{1}{3}$ ; now 6 *s.* 10 *d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

In 1445, hay, the load, 3 *s.* 6 *d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$ , which is 3 *l.* 10 *s.* 10 *d.* a very high price in any part of the kingdom: such a price of hay explains the high price of cattle, yet rents were low. Oats, 2 *s.* a quarter, equal to 40 *s.* at present. Bullocks and heifers, 5 *s.* each, equal to 5 *l.* now.

In 1449, sheep, 2 *s.* 5 *d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$  each, making now 2 *l.* 9 *s.* 2 *d.* Hogs, 1 *s.* 11 *d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$ , now 1 *l.* 19 *s.* 2 *d.* and not said to be fat. In 1459, wheat, the quarter, 5 *s.* equal now to 5 *l.* Two years before it was 7 *s.* 8 *d.* or 7 *l.* 13 *s.* 4 *d.*

The ideas of parliament in those days were consonant to these prices, so high on comparison with ours. In 1463, it was enacted, that no corn should be imported if wheat was not above 6 *s.* 8 *d.* rye, 4 *s.* barley, 3 *s.* the quarter; which now would be for the wheat, 6 *l.* 13 *s.* 4 *d.* the rye, 4 *l.* the barley, 3 *l.* It is plain that these prices were not at all oppressive.

In 1475, a load of hay, 6 *s.* 8 *d.* equal now to 5 *l.* 8 *s.* 4 *d.* And in 1498, it came to 8 *s.* 2 *d.* which now is 6 *l.* 10 *s.* Nay, *Stow* makes it half as much again; and says, the usual price was 5 *s.* equal now to 4 *l.*

In 1510, a load of hay, 9 *s.* equal now to 6 *l.* 2 *s.* 6 *d.*

In 1533, the statute price of beef was  $\frac{1}{2}$  *d.* per lb. equal now to 6 *d.* Mutton,  $\frac{3}{4}$  *d.* equal to 9 *d.* at present;

ANTIENT PRICES OF PROVISIONS. 359

present; proportions decisive in the present argument.

In 1551, a load of straw, 5 *s.* which, as the shilling contained but 20 grains, is equal to 10 *l.* at present; another sign how unimproved their tillage must be, and how miserably they must support their cattle in winter. In the same year wheat, 8 *s.* a quarter, that is at present, 16 *l.* In 1562, a load of hay, 13 *s.* 4 *d.* or 6 *l.* 13 *s.* 4 *d.* A load of straw 6 *s.* now 3 *l.*

After this period (the beginning of the reign of *Elizabeth*) the method of computing must be changed: the shilling contained the same number of grains as at present, and instead of multiplying by 10, we must multiply only by 5.

In 1574, beef, at *Lammas*, 1 *s.* 10 *d.* a stone, equal to 9 *s.* 2 *d.* at present, but it is called very dear: it shews that their *scarcities* happened in meat as well as wheat.

In 1595, a hen's egg sold at 1 *d.* equal now to 5 *d.* A pound of sweet (I suppose *fresh*) butter, 7 *d.* equal to 2 *s.* 11 *d.* at present, but it was then a high price.

I think all these proportions prove, in the most satisfactory manner, that the writers who complain of the prices of meat and cattle being at present out of proportion to what they were in former ages, have utterly mistaken the difference in the value of money, and from that mistake have been led into declamation upon our present misery, which has raised riots among some of our poor, and infused discontent into the minds of the rest.

To say, in answer to this, that their pay is not now equal to what it was then, is no answer: for, in the first place, if the importance of bread be considered, and we were to set down *all* the old prices and compare them with the present, I am mistaken if the present pay will not be found equal to that of old. In

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the second place, we should reflect on the want of people and industry; the civil wars and confusions common; the number of labourers kept in subjection to the barons, and the want of communications for the supply of one place from another: if all these circumstances are considered, it will be found that labour must have been very dear, without any reference to the price of provisions.

I must also desire the reader to keep in his mind what I advanced at page 135, &c. concerning the difference between the oxen of those days and the present. They had no turnips, and the price of hay and straw was such, that very little cattle could be wintered, and those which were must have been almost starved; so that they could scarcely have any thing like the oxen now sold at *Smithfield*. In confirmation of this, I may quote the practice recorded in 1321, of salting all the oxen and sheep that were consumed in the winter; a circumstance decisive of what their husbandry and their cattle must have been.

It may possibly be said, that the prices of commodities did not rise and fall in such exact proportion to the quantity of silver in the coin—This may be true, and may not be so—but the prices in the preceding pages will, without injury to my argument, admit deductions on this account—But I am not inclined to admit this reasoning; for we find in our histories, that the *clamour* and *confusion* arising from alterations in the coin, were very great; and if so, I should suppose that the general alarm would raise prices *beyond* the true proportion.

TOWNS DO NOT DEPOPULATE. 361

NUMBER XII.

*People gathering into Towns do not depopulate.—*

*Page 71.*

DR. Campbell, in his *Political Survey of Great Britain*, just published, vol. ii. p. 254, a work which shews how deeply the author has reflected on these subjects, has a remark which I shall transcribe, being much to my purpose.—“Many think the great increase of towns, and the reigning inclination of people to reside in them, hath a visible tendency to depopulate the country, and thereby lessen its produce. But whence does this desire of living in towns proceed? Because industry enables people in towns to live better. Numbers living better must create an increased consumption. But of what? Most clearly of the produce of the country. If therefore the consumption be enlarged, the cultivation must be augmented in proportion, and those employed therein be consequently benefited thereby? The voice of reason seems loud, but the language of facts is still louder. All the lands in the neighbourhood of these towns, from which lands the inhabitants, occasional visitants, and passengers, are supplied with milk, butter, cheese, lamb, mutton, veal, and beef, are much raised in their value, and not a little improved by plenty of manure which towns constantly supply. It may be said, this regards only pasturage. It would be said with truth if these people ate no bread. But by the help of their turnpike roads, they may receive corn and flour from even distant markets.”

In another passage the Doctor reasons very sensibly in favour of inclosures.—“As to the popular clamours formerly against inclosures, they might have some foundation: as tillage was then neglected, we had few manufactures and little commerce, so that the common  
people

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people had few resources. But this has little to do with the present state of things. By the depopulation complained of must be meant a local, not a national loss of people; which however would be difficult to prove, since the villages and towns in the vicinity of these inclosed commons are as well or better inhabited than ever. As to the nation, the consumption and price of provisions *shew our people in general do not decrease*. In truth, this spirit of inclosing proves it. For the intent of inclosing is to encrease the quantity of provisions, and nothing could excite, or at least nothing could sustain this, but an increased demand. In respect to decreasing tillage, it also is hardly to be proved. It is certain the produce of arable lands in general is greatly augmented, that the tillage of commons was inconsiderable, and a great part of it beans. In respect to the poor (to whom the greatest regard is due) they only change the kind of labour; and this not to their disadvantage, for wages are higher, and employment in inclosed countries more easily obtained." Vol. ii. p. 278.

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NUMBER XIII.

*Inclosures.*—Page 127.

AS there has not been an age in which complaints against inclosures were not common, so no period has passed in which those complaints have not been satisfactorily answered. Of this I have given several instances—Another has occurred since these sheets were printed; it is taken from a pamphlet, entitled, *England's Interest considered in the Increase of Trade*, by Samuel Fortrey, 1663. —“ 1. Our care should be, to increase chiefly our stock of cattle. First, by a liberty for every man to enjoy his lands in severalty and inclosure, one of the greatest improvements this nation is capable of; for want whereof we find by daily experience, that the profit of a great part of the land and stock of this kingdom, as now employed, is wholly lost. And this appears, in that the land of the common fields almost in all places of this nation, with all the advantages that belong unto them, will not let for above one-third part so much as the same land would do inclosed, and always several.

“ 2. But it may be objected, that inclosures would cause great depopulations and scarcity of corn, as hath been conceived by former parliaments.

“ 3. To this I answer, corn would be nothing the scarcer by inclosure, but rather more plentiful, tho' a great deal less land were tilled: for then every ingenious husband would only plough that land he found most fitting for it, and that no longer than he found it able to bring him profit. And as to depopulation by inclosure, granting it increaseth plenty, as cannot well be denied; how increase and plenty can depopulate, cannot well be conceived: nor surely do any imagine that the people which lived in those towns they call depopulated, were all destroyed, because they lived no longer there, when indeed they were only removed to other

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other places, where they might better benefit themselves, and profit the publick. Certainly they might as well think the nation undone, should they observe how *London* is depopulated in a long vacation; when men are only retired into the country, about their private and necessary employments; and the like might they think of the country in the term time, yet a man is not thereby added or diminished to the nation.

“ 4. Further; as many, or more families, may be maintained and employed in the manufacture of the wool that may arise out of one hundred acres of pasture, than can be employed in a far greater quantity of arable; who perhaps do not always find it most convenient for them to live just on the place where the wool groweth, by which means cities and great towns are peopled, nothing to the prejudice of the kingdom.

“ 5. Wherefore then, if by inclosure the land itself is raised to a greater value, and a less quantity capable of a greater increase; and if it really causeth no depopulation, but at most a removal of people thence, where without benefit to the public, or profit to themselves, they laboured and toiled, to a more convenient habitation, where they might with less pains greatly advantage both: And if the manufactures and other profitable employments of the nation are increased, by adding thereto such numbers of people, who formerly served only to waste, not to increase, the store of the nation, it cannot be denied, but the encouragement of inclosure, where every man's just right may be preserved, would infinitely conduce to the increase and plenty of this nation, and is a thing very worthy the countenance and care of a parliament.”

Authors much more ancient were of the same opinion. *Fitzherbert*, in 1534, recommends inclosures greatly as working an high improvement, keeping four times the number of beasts. *Tusser* in 1590 is equally in favour of them. *Blythe* was of the same opinion in 1650, and *Hartlib* in his *Legacy* 1651, like *Fortrey*, answers the great objection to them, that

INCLOSURES ADD TO POPULATION. 365

that of depopulation from laying down to grass, in the following passage:

“ Pasture employeth more hands than arable, and therefore pasture doth not *depopulate*, as it is commonly said; for *Normandy* and *Picardy* in *France*, where there are pastures, in a good measure are as populous as any part of *France*; and I am certain that *Holland*, *Zealand*, *Friezeland*, *Flanders*, and *Lombardy*, which relye altogether on pastures, are the most populous places in *Europe*. But some will object and say, that a shepherd and his dog formerly hath destroyed divers villages. To this I answer, that we well know what a shepherd and his dog can do, *viz.* look to 2 or 300 sheep at the most; and that 2 or 300 acres will maintain them, or the land is extremely barren; and that these 2 or 300 acres being barren will scarcely maintain a plough (which is but one man and two boys) with the horses; and that the mowing, reaping and threshing of this corn, and other work about, will scarcely maintain three more with work through the whole year. But how many people may be employed by the wool of 2 or 300 sheep, in picking, carding, sorting, spinning, weaving, dying, knitting, fulling, I leave to others to calculate. And farther, if the pastures be rich meadows, and go on dairying, I suppose all know that 100 acres of such land employeth more hands than 100 acres of the best corn land in *England*, and produceth likewise better exportable commodities. And farther; if I should grant that formerly the shepherd and his dog did *depopulate*, that I may not condemn the wisdom of former ages; yet I will deny that it doth so now: for formerly we were so unwise as to send over our wools to *Antwerp* and other places, where they were manufactured; by which means one pound oft brought ten unwrought to them; but we set now our own poor to work, and so save the depopulation. Yet I say, it is convenient to encourage the plough; because that we cannot have a certainty of corn, and carriage is dear both by

sea

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sea and land, especially into the inland countries; and our commodities of wool do cloy the merchants\*.”

These observations are strictly true at this day, if the comparison is made with what it ought to be, the tillage of open field lands under the universal course of 1. Fallow; 2. Wheat; 3. Spring Corn; in which vile husbandry not one of the modern operative improvements is to be found. The fact is so clear, that it is not to be wondered at that some of these writers should appear to treat the contrary opinion with contempt; justly remarking, that it proceeded from people who knew little of husbandry, and who therefore must be very ignorant of the employment in either case.

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\* Legacy of Husbandry, p. 44.

F I N I S.