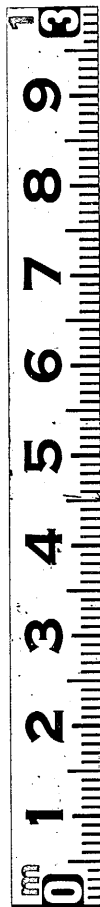


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ENCLOSURES,

A Cause of improved Agriculture, of Plenty and Cheapness of Provisions, of Population, and of both private and national Wealth ;

BEING

AN EXAMINATION of two PAMPHLETS, entitled,

THE ONE,

A Political Enquiry into the Consequences of enclosing Waste Lands, and the Cause of the present high Price of Butcher's Meat, &c.

THE OTHER,

Cursorj Remarks upon Enclosures, by a Country Farmer ;

TOGETHER WITH

Some slight OBSERVATIONS upon the

REPORT OF THE LONDON COMMITTEE,

Appointed the 16th of July, 1786, to consider the Causes of the present high Prices of Provisions.

By the Rev. J. HOWLETT,
Vicar of Great Dunmow, Essex.

—The Waste shall smile
With yellow Harvests ; what was barren Heath
Shall soon be verdant Mead.

MASON'S GARDEN, B. I. I. 109.

Enclosing would not be encouraged if Provisions were not at a high Price, and the Practice must soon cease when it becomes so disadvantageous as it would be if it tended to depopulate.

CRIT. REV. 1786. p. 393.

L O N D O N :

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M D C C L X X V I I .

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AGREEABLY to what I intimated in the Appendix to my *Enquiry into the Influence of Enclosures upon the Population of this Kingdom*, the greater part of the following pamphlet was ready for the press six months ago; but, upon the suggestion of an obliging correspondent, I was induced to wait for still further intelligence. This intelligence, at my request, has since been furnished by the following gentlemen: Mr. Thomas Davis, of Longleat, Somerset, Steward to Lord Weymouth; John Billingsley, Esq. of Ashwick; Benjamin Pryce, Esq. of Sarum; Thomas Tyley, Esq. agent to the Duke of Chandos in Somersetshire; Mr. Thomas Fricker, of Deverell Longbridge, Wilts, a sensible farmer of fifty years experience; and many other skilful farmers and graziers in South Wales, as well as in the southern, western, and midland counties of England. Of these persons, some have long been eminently distinguished for their agricultural knowledge in general, others for their extensive observation and great experience

ADVERTISEMENT.

perience respecting enclosures in particular. Their several communications are inserted in the following pages. In most instances they afford the confirmation of fact to what I had previously advanced on my own judgment: in others they contain sentiments, or suggest hints, of considerable importance. For both the former and the latter I think myself greatly obliged to them; and they will, I hope, excuse the liberty I take of thus publicly returning my thanks.

C O N-

C O N T E N T S.

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ERRATA.

P. ii. l. 2 from the bottom, for *his* read *its*. P. iii. l. 3,
for *his* read *this*. P. 19, l. 8, for 1748, read 1740. P. 35,
Note, l. 6, between *kept* and *in* insert *upon*. P. 48, l. 7, for
1739 read 1739-40: l. 9, for *forty following ones*, read *follow-
ing one*. P. 74, l. 2, for *as plants* read *and plants*. P. 77, l. 9,
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l. 8, dele *and*.

INTRO-

INTRODUCTION, &c.

IN the present state of society in Europe, an increase of people is, generally speaking, of all others, the most unequivocal proof of an increase of prosperity. Having, therefore, in my enquiry concerning the influence of enclosures upon the population of this kingdom, proved, I think, nearly to demonstration, (*a*) that they have not only augmented our numbers, but even more augmented them than any other cause in similar situations, I judged all further evidence of their utility utterly superfluous. The fact, that they have already produced this consequence, being once established, every argument against the practice, whether deduced from speculative reasoning, or

(*a*) The method I took for ascertaining this, seemed to me the only practicable one; and had my enquiries been answered to their full extent, the demonstration would have been complete.

Mr. Stone, indeed, in a late valuable publication, has made some objections, which I am persuaded he would not have made, if he had duly attended to the nature and limitation of my argument. I shall only here observe, that his objections are, in some measure, totally groundless; but as far as they are really founded, they only strengthen and confirm my general conclusions.

B

general

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general observation, however plausible on a general view, we may be certain is somewhere or other defective and fallacious.

The matter however appears to others, it seems, in a very different light. The Monthly Reviewers, whose judgment in general deserves respect, in their Review for May last, have, as it were, recommended to my perusal an anonymous pamphlet, entitled, *A Political Enquiry into the Consequences of enclosing Waste Lands, and the Causes of the present High Price of Butchers Meat, being the Sentiments of a Society of Farmers in —shire*, and have observed upon it, that the objections of this writer still remain in their full force. Upon a recommendation so truly respectable, and finding likewise that the work had had considerable influence in different parts of the kingdom, I immediately procured it, and have read it through with all the attention the importance of the subject demands. The result is, that I think it contains, as far as the main purpose is concerned, many sentiments so extremely false, and of such pernicious tendency, that they ought not to pass without a full refutation, especially as they are enforced with a vivacity of remark, and urged with a copiousness of language, highly plausible and imposing.

There is no probability, indeed, that his reasonings will have any influence on the measures of government.

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government. Commissioners have been appointed to enquire into the state of the *crown and forest lands* since the publication of his pamphlet, and there is little doubt but that such of them will be enclosed, as, upon fair examination, appear capable of due improvement. But every good citizen will not only rejoice in the salutary regulations of the state to which he belongs, but also wish to remove from the minds of others such groundless discontent as the publication before us, from the plausible air it assumes, is extremely well fitted to infuse.

The author has so dreadful an idea of *enclosures*, that “ he apprehends the universal cultivation of the waste lands in Great-Britain, “ would be so far from a benefit, that it would “ be the greatest evil to this country that could “ possibly befall it, except that of being absolutely “ swallowed up, and sunk in the bowels of the “ ocean.” This extravagant assertion he endeavours to enforce by the following illustration. “ If “ a beggar comes to me for relief from hunger, “ and I give him half a quartern loaf for nothing, “ no person will pretend to assert that if he had “ bought a whole loaf at the baker’s, and given “ seven-pence halfpenny for it, that because he “ would in that case have had a greater plenty, “ that therefore it was cheaper than my half loaf

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“ was. And this is nearly the case with regard to
 “ the cattle now fed on commons; the little they
 “ get is not paid for, and therefore the owners can
 “ afford to sell them cheaper than if they paid for
 “ their food, either by the way of rent of land,
 “ or any other means.” To this I shall only reply
 at present, that if the same beggar came to me,
 and I enabled him, in consequence of enclosing
 my wastes and commons, to earn, by industrious
 labour, what would purchase *two loaves*, whoever
 will not allow I do *him*, as well as the community,
 a greater and more essential service than if I had
 given him *half a loaf for nothing*, I have only to
 wish, for his full conviction, that he would take
 up his residence in a land of beggars, surrounded
 with laziness and indolence, and all their miserable
 disgusting attendants.

Our author's bold assertion, however, *that the
 universal cultivation of our wastes, &c. would be
 the greatest calamity that could befall us, next to being
 swallowed up, and sunk in the bowels of the ocean,*
 notwithstanding its startling sound, is a mere harm-
 less hyperbole, meaning nothing more, in plain
 English, than that *beef and mutton would be ad-
 vanced to ninepence or a shilling a pound.* For this
 appears the ultimate object he has all along in view,
 the grand point he directs all his arguments to
 establish.

In

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In order to accomplish this purpose, he lays
 down, as fundamental maxims, a few self-evident
 propositions, and then institutes upon them a course
 of the most fallacious and inconclusive reasoning
 that can be conceived.

“ Even gold,” says he, “ may be bought too
 “ dear, and so may corn and grass, or any other
 “ of the useful productions of nature.” Un-
 doubtedly. “ *Plenty* of the necessaries of life,
 “ abstractedly considered, is not of so much be-
 “ nefit to a nation as most people are apt to think.”
 Probably. “ For it is only when that plenty
 “ causes a *cheapness* that enables every rank and
 “ degree of people to purchase a sufficiency for
 “ their subsistence, which constitutes a general be-
 “ nefit to mankind. Granted. “ *Plenty or scar-*
 “ *city* do not ultimately govern the price of a com-
 “ modity, though it may tend to create a tem-
 “ porary rise or fall to a certain degree.” Allowed.
 “ It is *the charge of the production* that stamps the
 “ permanent average price of all kinds of com-
 “ modities whatever. For instance, no possible
 “ plenty of Dutch Holland, or fine muslins of
 “ India, could ever cause these articles to alter for
 “ any length of time to an equal price as the coarse
 “ dowlas; because the manufactory of these fine
 “ articles is so infinitely more expensive than the
 “ coarse.” This likewise I have no inclination to
 dispute. “ Admitting then,” continues this writer,
 “ that

“ that the charge of the production stamps the
 “ permanent average price in all kinds of commo-
 “ dities, I may fairly draw this conclusion, that
 “ though by a higher degree of cultivation of the
 “ lands of this country, we might be able to pro-
 “ duce twice as much corn and grafs as we pro-
 “ duce at present; yet if that corn and grafs so
 “ produced should cost the nation or the farmer
 “ who produced it, on account of the advanced
 “ rent of lands, and the exorbitant expences in the
 “ cultivation, twice as much per load, as the price
 “ of these articles are at present, neither the na-
 “ tion nor the farmer would mend their condition;
 “ on the other hand, the poor would suffer double
 “ the distresses they now suffer, unless their
 “ wages were doubled; and if their wages were
 “ doubled, this would put a stop to all manu-
 “ factures carried on at present to supply foreign
 “ markets.”

These conclusions are readily admitted; but
 their admission entirely depends upon the strange
 operation of the little word *if*. Change the appli-
 cation of this wonder-working conjunction, and
 we draw conclusions directly opposite. *If*, by a
 higher cultivation of the lands of this country, we
 might be able to produce three times as much
 corn and grafs as we produce at present, and if the
 corn and grafs so produced should not cost the
 nation or the farmer above twice more than the
 present

present product costs, both the nation and the
 farmer would greatly mend their condition: The
 farmer could afford to sell his produce of every
 kind considerably cheaper, the landlord might
 have larger rent, the poor fuller employment,
 their distresses would be lessened, and this would
 powerfully encourage our manufactures carried on
 to supply foreign markets.

It is a maxim of general application, that lands
 of the highest rent, and those which are most
 manured and cultivated, though at great expence,
 are finally the most profitable. The farmer, who
 gives a pound an acre annual rent, and lays out
 triple that sum in improvements, often gets more
 money, and can afford to sell his corn, his grafs,
 his cattle, at a much lower price than another,
 who gives not even five shillings an acre, and is
 at small additional cost of any kind whatever; the
 difference of product being still greater than the
 difference of rents and other expences.

The illustration of this from particular facts
 may easily be given. A small parish in the county
 of Kent, by the increased and higher cultivation
 of the land, has its quantity of corn, hay, hops,
 cattle, &c. three times as great as they were forty
 years ago; and though the rents have been con-
 siderably raised, the price of provisions and the
 expence of culture greatly augmented, yet the
 farmers,

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farmers, who used to be continually breaking, are now every day growing rich, the number of inhabitants is doubled, the poor, from the advantage of full employment, are in a much more comfortable condition than any I have ever seen upon the borders of a common.

Upon Mendipp Hills in Somerfethshire, five thousand (*b*) acres have been enclosed within the same

(*b*) The detail is as follows:

Names of the enclosures.	No. of Acres.	Average Improvement.	s.	s.
Charter House	400	4	4	12
Ashwick	200	4	4	18
Cranmore E. and W.	400	3	3	12
Uby	900	4	4	16
Haydon	300	3	3	12
Doubting and Stoke	700	3	3	14
Emborough	600	3	3	12
Shepton Mallet	800	3	3	15
Blagdon	900	not quite completed.		

Cultivation, expences, and produce of six Acres, enclosed in 1780.

DEBTOR.		CREDITOR.	
	£. s. d.		£. s. d.
1780 Oct. To 1st plowing 16 per Acre	4 16 0		
1781 March. Crops Do.	12 3 12 0		
May. To dragging	8 2 8 0		
20 qrs. or 160 bush. lime	10 0 0		
per Ac. at 20d. per qr.	2 0 0		
June. Spreading lime, &c.	0 18 0		
Plowing	1 4 0		
Harrowing	0 8 0		
Sept. Plowing and sowing	1 16 0		
12 Bush. seed wheat	4 10 0	Sacks. By 30	42 0 0
1782 Aug. Reaping and securing	3 0 0	Wheat at 28s.	
	32 12 0		
Balance profit	9 8 0		

42 0 0 In

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same period. The average improvement in the value of the whole is from about 3s. 6d. to nearly 14s. an acre; and although upon some parts of it the expences of tillage, manure, &c. the very first year of the enclosure, have been more than five guineas an acre, yet has the immediately succeeding crop paid it all, with a surplus of about 32 shillings an acre, for the rent, &c. While continuing under the plough the bare straw supports more cow-cattle during the winter, than the product of the whole year ever maintained prior to the enclosure. And where, in the course of a few years it has been laid down with clover, ryegrass, or other artificial herbage, it keeps four times as many cattle, of almost every kind, as it ever did before; and when broken up a second time, by a judicious course of management, and without the assistance of *purchased* manure, it appears again with its wonted fertility, producing crops equal to those it yielded when newly enclosed and cultivated.

Here, from the higher cultivation of our lands the farmer is indeed at higher expence, and pays

“ In this case it appears that there remains a profit of more than 30s. an acre, which will amply repay the expence of enclosing, and if the land be valued in its *unenclosed* state, at 4s. an acre, and in its improved one only at 12s. there is, as it were, a kind of new creation of two thirds more land, or at least property improved equivalent thereto.—Hear this, ye enemies of enclosures, and blush!”

C his

x INTRODUCTION.

his landlord a higher rent; yet his products of corn, of grafs, and of cattle, are fo much higher fill, that after defraying all his extraordinary charges, he has a nett profit of almost a pound an acre as the reward of his labour and industry. Is not then the farmer enriched; is not the landlord enriched, are not the poor more fully employed, and, if it be not their own fault, their distreffes greatly lessened? Are not all these a national benefit? Is not this abundance, thus amply paying the expence which attended the production, the surest ground for cheapness of provisions? And must not this powerfully tend to encourage our manufactures carried on to supply foreign markets?

These general remarks, and these general reasonings, thus supported by facts, may be considered, it is presumed, as a sufficient answer to the general remarks and general reasonings of our author, which have no other ground than mere speculation. I will now proceed to a particular examination of his great and leading positions, which are,

1st, That the enclosures which have taken place in the course of the last 30 years, have already advanced the price of butcher's meat three (c) halfpence

(c) Our author asserts, indeed, that the price of butcher's meat is advanced even two-pence in the lb. more than the advance

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halfpence in the pound more than the advance of price in other things.

2d, That should all the waste lands in the kingdom be enclosed and cultivated, the price of butcher's meat would be raised to nine-pence or a shilling in the pound.

These are the grand points his whole book is intended to establish; and, in answer to them, I will endeavour to shew,

1, That the assertion that the price of butcher's meat is advanced three halfpence in the pound, in the course of the last thirty years, more than the advance of price in other things, is not true.

2, Granting it to be true, that our enclosures cannot have occasioned it.

3, Allowing even both, that there is not the smallest probability that the enclosure and cultivation of all our wastes and commons would raise the price of

advance in other articles; but one halfpenny of this he ascribes to the increased number of horses; which, if his computation might be depended upon, would be the most plausible conclusion he has made. He says, p. 87, &c. that we now maintain eight hundred thousand horses more than we did fifty years ago; which must imply, on the most moderate allowance, an annual consumption of at least ten millions worth of corn, grafs, and hay.

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butcher's meat to nine pence or a shilling in the pound. And,

4, Admitting all the three facts, that still our author's arguments against enclosures would be inconclusive.

These four propositions I will endeavour to prove, and I request the reader's close and candid attention through the whole attempt, neither expecting nor desiring they may further obtain his assent, than they are founded in reason and truth.

S E C-

SECTION I.

The Assertion that the Price of Butcher's Meat is advanced three Halfpence in the Pound more than the Advance of Price in other Things, is not true.

THIS proposition, indeed, if we may believe our author in the latter part of his pamphlet, he has himself proved for me, however inconsistent it may be with some of his general maxims, and though entirely subversive of his leading purpose. He says, p. 101, that, "daily experience verifies that one article of provision advancing in price, makes the rest of the articles rise in nearly the same proportion." If this be true, what becomes of the assertion that the price of butcher's meat is advanced three halfpence in the pound more than that of other things? What is it but asserting what he assures us daily experience contradicts?

I wish not, however, to avail myself of apparent inconsistencies. I leave them to produce their natural effect in the mind of the reader. My present business is to prove that the assertion "that butcher's meat has advanced in price during the last thirty years three halfpence in the pound more

“ more than the advance of price in other things,”
is not true.

To establish this point it would be extremely trifling to give the result of my own very confined observations. The price of provisions in any particular county, in any particular part of a county, or at any particular market, could not be considered as the standard for the kingdom at large. In this extensive view, the only one that concerns the present inquiry, the most satisfactory evidence, with respect to pork, beef, butter, cheese, &c. is to be sought at the victualling office; and with regard to wheat, barley, &c. in the corn registers; and this not for a single year, but from the average of several years in immediate succession.

As to the former of the abovementioned articles, the testimony of the Victualling Office may be seen in the following tables.

Prices

Prices of Beef and Pork, at the Victualling Office, extracted from Mr. A. Young's Political Arithmetic, p. 141, 2.

Years.	Beef per Cwt.		Pork per Cwt.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
1740	23	7 ³ / ₄	31	0 ¹ / ₂
1741	24	9 ¹ / ₂	36	3 ¹ / ₄
1742	24	4	32	9
1743	19	2 ¹ / ₂	27	2 ¹ / ₄
1744	18	3 ¹ / ₂	22	5 ¹ / ₄
1745	19	9 ¹ / ₂	21	9 ¹ / ₄
1746	21	3 ³ / ₈	24	8 ¹ / ₄
1747	19	4 ¹ / ₄	24	0 ¹ / ₂
1767	25	5 ¹ / ₂	none bought	
1768	25	3 ¹ / ₂	ditto	
1769	22	9	33	0
1770	22	2 ¹ / ₂	41	5
1771	22	6	43	3 ¹ / ₂

Prices

Prices of Beef and Pork at the Victualling Office,
as sent me by a Friend there, July 4th, 1786.

Years.	Beef per Cwt.		Pork per Cwt.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
1772	26	3	52	6
1773	24	0	*49	11
1774	*28	8½	38	3
1775	*30	4½	44	7½
1776	*28	7	42	11¾
1777	*28	5⅓	*43	11½
1778	25	8	*43	0
1779	*33	2	38	6
1780	*31	2	*40	9
1781	26	3	37	6
1782	*26	8	41	0
1783	30	0	none purchased	
1784	none purchased		Ditto.	
1785	25	6	} 45 ready money	

These purchases were paid for by bills
in course.

N. B. The Prices mark'd thus (*) are average,
the others real.

The

The same obliging Friend has since sent me
the annual Average Cost of *Butter* and *Cheese*
at the Victualling-Office from 1750 to 1786,
both inclusive, as under.

Years.	Butter	Cheese	Do. Suffolk
	per lb.	per lb.	per lb.
	d.	d.	d.
1750	5		1⅓
1751	4¼		1½
1752	4½		1¼
1753	4	2¾	1¼
1754	5¼		1⅓
1755	5⅓		1⅓
1756	5¼		1¼
1757	5⅞	3	1¼
1758	5½	3¼	1⅓
1759	5⅞	3	
1760	4½	2½	
Delivered at Plymouth	4¼	2½	
1761	5¾	2½	
1762	5	2¾	
1763	6⅓	3⅞	
1764	5⅓	2⅞	
1765	5¼	3⅓	
1766	5⅞	3⅞	
1767	5⅓	3⅞	
1768	5½	2⅞	
1769	5⅞	2⅞	

D

1770

Years.	Butter pr. lb.	Cheefe Chesh. per lb.	Cheefe Suffolk per lb.
	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
1770	5 ⁷ / ₈	3 ³ / ₈	
1771	6 ³ / ₈	3 ¹ / ₄	
1772	6 ¹ / ₂	3 ⁵ / ₈	
1773	7	3 ³ / ₄	
1774	6 ¹ / ₂	3 ⁵ / ₁₆	
1775	5 ¹ / ₁₆	3 ¹ / ₄	
1776	6 ³ / ₈	3 ³ / ₈	
1777	7 ¹ / ₂	3 ¹ / ₄	
1778	8	3 ⁵ / ₈	
1779	8 ¹ / ₈	3 ⁷ / ₈	
1780	7 ³ / ₈	3 ¹ / ₈	
1781	5,8412	3,7977	
1782	6,2035	3,7574	
1783	6,4917	4,5541	
1784	7,3405	4,5512	
1785	6, ⁴ / ₁₁₂	4, ¹ / ₁₁₂	
1786 (d)	6, ¹ / ₁₁₂	3, ⁹ / ₁₁₂	

(d) It is true, that the prices given in this and the preceding tables, are probably much lower than they were at the several periods respectively in the London and other particular markets, when the specified articles were bought for private and domestic use. But this forms no objection to the conclusions deduced from them; because no reason can be given why the proportion between them and the other should be different at different periods.

From

From the preceding *Beef* and *Pork* Tables, it appears that the medium Prices of these Articles during three Periods, within the Compass of the last 46 Years have been nearly as follows:

Periods.	Beef p. lb.	Pork p. lb.
	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>
8 Years beginning with 1748	2 ¹ / ₂ ⁴² / ₁₁₂	2 ³ / ₄ ⁷⁷ / ₁₁₂
5 Years beginning with 1767	2 ¹ / ₂ ¹² / ₁₁₂	4 ²³ / ₁₁₂
5 Years (the last bought) } ending with 1785.	2 ³ / ₄ ¹⁰⁸ / ₁₁₂	4 ¹ / ₄ ⁴⁰ / ₁₁₂

From the Butter and Cheefe Tables, their medium Prices appear to have been, during four Periods of five years each, nearly thus:

Periods.	Butter p. lb.	Cheefe, Chesh. p. lb.
	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>
5 Years beginning with 1750	4 ³ / ₄	2 ³ / ₄ one year
5 Years beginning with 1760	5 ¹ / ₂	2 ³ / ₄
5 Years beginning with 1770	6 ¹ / ₂	3 ⁵ / ₈
5 Years beginning with 1780	6 ¹ / ₂	4

As to the Advance in the Price of Corn during the last forty Years it may be pretty clearly seen by the following Tables:

D 2

Average

Average Prices of Corn for nineteen Years, from 1746, to 1765, collected from the best authority that can be obtained, (e)

	Wheat.		Barley.		Oats.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Per Quarter - - -	32	3	17	8	14	0

Average Prices of the same Grains, respectively, for fourteen Years, from 1771 to 1784, extracted from the Corn Register, established by Act of the 10th of George III.

	Wheat.		Barley.		Oats.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Per Quarter - - -	45	8	23	8	16	0

It is evident, upon the slightest inspection of these tables, that butcher's meat, instead of being increased in price three halfpence in the pound more than other articles, is actually increased the least of all. Beef, we see, has been advanced during the last forty-six years, not even a half-

(e) Our author says, p. 63, that by undoubted vouchers which were laid before parliament a few years since, the average price of corn, during the last twenty years, has been lower than the average price for the last hundred years. I need make no remarks upon this; as whoever understands the subject will immediately see that it is very little to the purpose.

penny

penny per pound, whereas pork has risen almost a penny; butter, in the course of about 36 years, has been raised one penny three farthings, and cheese one penny farthing, and wheat, which we had been given to understand was not advanced at all, is really advanced more than any thing else; being, on an average, almost one-third higher for 14 years ending January 1784, than during 19 years ending with 1765. (f)

The ground-work, therefore, of our author's eloquent declamation, respecting the direful consequences which have resulted from our recent enclosures, vanishes into nothing, and we might here, of course, very safely terminate our researches; it being by no means necessary to investigate the cause of effects which do not exist. Agreeably, however, to my plan, and that I may give the more full and compleat satisfaction, I will next endeavour to shew, that if these effects really did exist, they could not have proceeded from the enclosures which have taken place in this kingdom during the last thirty or forty years.

(f) See an account of the quantities of corn and grain exported from, and imported into England and Scotland for fourteen years from January 1771 to January 1784, sold by W. Brown, corner of Essex-Street, Strand; and R. Turner, No. 13, Cornhill.

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SECTION II.

If the Price of Butcher's Meat has really been advanced three Halfpence in the Pound more than other Things during the last 30 or 40 Years, it cannot have been owing to the Enclosures which have taken place within that Compass of Time.

IF enclosures ever tend to increase the price of butcher's meat, it must surely be when they convert pasture to arable. But that even these do not always produce this effect, the case of Mendip Hills, already stated, seems to afford satisfactory proof. The products of corn alone, we have seen, paid the additional expences; while the straw clover and artificial grasses maintained more than the usual stock of cattle and sheep. By the same kind of husbandry, similar improvements have been made upon nearly 15,000 acres of almost fruitless common fields and comparatively unprofitable sheep downs, in the south western parts of Wiltshire. What shall we say then to those wet unhealthy marsh lands, upon which, from the unwholesomeness of the feed, the sheep by rot, and the beasts by similar disorders, were often in so sickly, infirm a state, and so frequently died, as to render the rights of commonage of
very

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very little and precarious value; (a) but which, by being enclosed and drained, have been made dry, healthy and luxuriant, supporting as many sheep and oxen, and four times as many milch cows as before? What shall we say particularly to the recent enclosures of this kind in Somersetshire? to those of Wedmore, Blackford, Crofs, Huntspill, Glastonbury, Westhay, Mark, Wookey; which

(a) I am assured on the testimony of a very sensible farmer on the borders of Sedgmore, in Somersetshire, that this is now actually the case with that very rich, extensive piece of land, containing 20,000 acres. For want of draining, he observes, it is frequently so unwholesome, (especially after a quick spring of grass) that the cattle fed there are liable to be *banded* (exactly in the manner as sheep) and, that so many die, or never perfectly recover, that the loss more than balances the profit derived from the right of common. Another person from the same quarter informs me, "that in dry summers, " indeed, it maintains cows, oxen, horses, sheep, and geese; " but that in wet summers it is *poison* to them all; and that " although, in favourable seasons, it may be worth from 10s. " to 20s. an acre; yet that from the multiplicity of rights, " from its being sometimes overstocked, and at others under- " stocked; from the diseases the cattle contract there, from the " uncertainty of its produce, to which no farmer, nor set of " farmers can accommodate their stock; from the number of " poor bad horses, that are in themselves unnecessary, are sel- " dom used, and would not be kept at all on enclosed lands; " from these several clogs on its value, he has seldom found " that, in valuing an estate in its vicinity, the farmers were " ever willing to allow any rent for it: whereas by draining, " which cannot be effected without enclosure, it would cer- " tainly be worth from 20 to 40s per acre."

have

have all taken place within the last 12 years, and contain more than 10,000 acres? (b) While in common, were they not, by the estimation of the most skilful farmers, of comparatively very little value? But now, in consequence of being drained and properly managed, are they not let at 25s. an acre? The surrounding lands, mean time, instead of being diminished in value, are they not even improved, and rented considerably higher? Are not the sheep on most of these new enclosures, more numerous, and, in the room of being, as formerly, poor and miserable, and often dying with the rot, are they not even during the winter months, fatted, and made fit for the butcher? Are not the neat cattle, of every kind, more than doubled? Are not the milch cows, in the single parish of Wedmore increased upwards of 500? And

(b) The detail of the above was furnished, at my request, by Mr. Thomas Tyley, of Wedmore, agent to the duke of Chandos in Somerset. The number of acres in each of the specified inclosures, and the periods at which they respectively took place, are as follows:

Dates.	Names.	Acres.
1774	Wedmore	2600
1781	Do. Blackford Manor	950
1778	Crofs	300
1778	Huntspill	1100
1778	Glastonbury	1400
1778	Westhay	1700
1781	Mark	2000
1783	Wookey	900
		10,950

are

are not these, on the most moderate allowance, equal to an additional rental of 2000l. a year, exclusive of the number of persons maintained by the employment they afford? The horses too, although not multiplied in number, are they not, from the improvement in the breed, greatly augmented in aggregate value? The poor, at the same time, have been constantly so much better employed, that the rates have continued nearly the same, and do not increase, though it is well known that in many other parts of the kingdom, they have been nearly doubled within the period just now mentioned. Amidst this profusion of produce, these multiplied flocks of fattened sheep, these crowded droves of kine and oxen, where is the evidence that these enclosures have contributed to heighten the price of beef and mutton? Would they be sold the dearer because three times the quantity was sent to market? Where is the probability that they could not be afforded as cheap as before? Or that the increased products were not more than equivalent to the increased expences? The improved condition of every rank of people here speaks the contrary.

If neither those enclosures which have left the grounds pasture which were pasture before, nor even those which have converted pasture into tillage, appear to have raised the price of butcher's meat, what may we expect from those which have

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changed tillage into pasture? From those immense tracts, for example, in the Vale of Evesham, in the counties of Worcester and Gloucester, which of cold wet and almost barren arable, are become dry healthy rich meadow, and, in lieu of scanty crops of wheat or barley, are covered with multitudes of fat sheep and oxen? Nay, what may we expect from those "newly-enclosed lordships" in Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, where," as Dr. Price and Mr. Addington heavily complain, "there are now not 50 acres ploughed yearly where there used to be 1500, and scarce an ear of corn to be seen where formerly were grown hundreds of quarters?" While these enclosures, in the fancies of these two gentlemen, appear to have raised the price of wheat *three shillings* in the bushel, have they, at the same time, also advanced that of beef and mutton *three halfpence* in the pound? If they have produced effects so directly opposite, farewell to the dictates of common sense!

As from the instances now adduced there seems to arise a very powerful evidence that the *particular* enclosures referred to have not increased the price of butcher's meat, the following facts are a strong presumption that enclosures in *general* cannot have done it. The average price of beef at the Victualling Office during the last seventeen years of the last century was about 2¼d. a pound, the four years beginning with 1709 nearly 3¼d. whereas the five years ending with 1771 it was only

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only 2½d. At the *two first* of these periods, none of the recent enclosures, now so severely condemned, had been made; at the *last*, more than half the present number had actually taken place.

All this reasoning, it may be said, however plausible, is so far from being a full refutation of our author's system, that it does not even directly encounter his arguments. For has he not proved, even to demonstration, by a clear and minute detail of particulars, that while *wastes* and *uninclosed commons* remain, the cottager can afford to sell that lean sheep for 10s. which the farmer, on his rich enclosures, cannot bring up for less than 20s. or a guinea? And must there not necessarily be the same difference of price when fatted?

Let me ask in return, can it be possible that his statements and reasonings can be just? If they are, must it not have been the uniform practice of the uninclosed counties, and those abounding with waste lands, to furnish the enclosed ones with lean sheep, and that the enclosed counties can never have afforded to breed for themselves? But how is the fact? Is it not notorious, that the richest and oldest enclosed counties in the kingdom, not only breed a large proportion of their own stock, but regularly furnish their neighbours with theirs? The county of Essex, in which are few wastes, and

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whose

whose enclosures are as highly cultivated as most, does she not now, and has she not time immemorial, sent her lean wethers to be fatted in Hertfordshire? The counties of Devon and Cornwall, most of whose waste lands have been enclosed from the remotest antiquity, (c) are they not well known to supply several others, especially that of Somerset, with the greatest part of their lean stock? Do not these instances give our author's doctrine a doubtful, at least, if not an incredible appearance? For how could these things have happened if the wethers in the former case, and the stock in the latter, could have been purchased for half the price upon wastes and commons? Would it not have recompensed the grazier to have fetched them from the farthest extremities of the island? Surely this writer's system must be unfounded. Let us,

(c) " There are, indeed, some considerable tracts of un-enclosed land, a correspondent remarks, between Exeter and Holdfworthy, and towards Plymouth; but a great part of it is not common, but private property, and that too worthless to pay for enclosing; and what is really common, is so exceedingly wet, and boggy, and poor, and so much exposed to the sea winds, that were it not for the straw they get from their enclosures, their cattle could not be subsisted in the winter; and even with this assistance it is certain that these and the open grounds of similar kind, whether in Devon or Cornwall, do not furnish their neighbours with half so much stock as those parts of either, which have been enclosed from the earliest ages."

however,

however, hear what he has to say in support of it.

To establish then his favourite and leading point, he gives the following statements of the expences of the farmer and cottager, in the situations above represented respectively.

FARMER'S EXPENCES.

Five ewes, producing five wether lambs, cost keeping the produce of one acre of ground, and for which he pays to his landlord per annum,	1 0 0
On account of parish rates, tithes, &c. one fifth more,	0 4 0
	<hr/>
Cost of lambs the first year,	1 4 0
Ditto second year,	1 4 0
Ditto third year,	1 4 0
Ditto fourth year,	1 4 0
	<hr/>
Gross costs of keeping the said five lambs till they become wethers of four years old,	4 16 0
Whence must be deducted the profits on the wool, that the five ewes produced the first year, and the wool of the five wethers the three succeeding years,	
	which

Brought over	4	16	0
which I estimate at two todd, viz. half a todd a year, and at 20s. a todd, amounts to	2	0	0
	<hr/>		
Net costs	2	16	0
Add one fourth of gross cost for loss by rot or accident,	1	4	0
Ditto one-fourth, for profit on labour and attention,	1	4	0
	<hr/>		
That is about one guinea per head,	5	4	0

COTTAGER'S EXPENCES.

Five ewes, producing five wether lambs, kept by a cottager on a common, and boarded at a farm 16 weeks in the winter, at 3d. per head per week,	1	0	0
Expences for boarding the wethers for fifteen weeks, at 2d. per week per head for the second winter,	0	13	4
Ditto for the third winter,	0	13	4
Ditto for the fourth winter,	0	13	4
	<hr/>		
	3	0	0
" Whence to be deducted, as in the case of the farmer,	2	0	0
	<hr/>		
Nett cost	1	0	0
	<hr/>		
			Nett

Nett cost	1	0	0
Add to the nett cost one fourth of the gross cost, for loss by rot and other ac- cidents,	0	15	0
Ditto for profit on labour,	0	15	0
	<hr/>		
	2	10	0

" Or ten shillings a head.

" That is to say, allowing for profits in both
cases in the same proportion, according to pro-
perty risked, the farmer's wethers at four (d)
years old would stand him in one guinea a-piece,
and the cottager's only ten shillings."

These are our author's plausible statements,
whence all his wonderful deductions are made.

(d) Our author says, that if all our wethers were killed at two years old, the farmer's expences would not, indeed, be so much greater than the cottager's, as they are when kept to four years old; but that the produce of wool in the whole kingdom would be diminished one third. This is so far from being true, that it would be rather thereby increased. For I may venture to appeal to any *Farmer*, or *Society of Farmers*, who know any thing of the matter, that wethers, which have been well kept, at the first shearing, when a year and four or five months old, produce more wool, in proportion to their *weight*, than ever after. Consequently, while the consumption of mutton remains the same, the quantity of wool must be increased by the wethers being all killed at two years old; and the keeping them to four is a mere matter of personal luxury, and not of national benefit.

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But they are every where, and in almost every particular, unless I am strangely mistaken, full of deception and fallacy. Sheep of the same kind and size, as far as appears, are represented as kept upon barren commons, as upon fine enclosures of 20s. an acre; their plight, their product of lambs and wool, their risques and hazards, the expences of labour and attention are also given as in equal proportion; whereas nothing, in every respect, can be more opposite to the truth. But let us examine the two accounts distinctly and minutely. And first, that of the farmer's

E X P E N C E S, &c.

This begins with a striking impropriety. The farmer keeps *lean sheep* three or four years in succession upon rich lands of 20s. an acre. A prudent skilful man, if upon such land he kept sheep at all, it would be with a purpose and with profits very different from those here stated.

An acre of ground of this description, would perhaps scarcely be adequate to the maintenance of five Wiltshire, Hertfordshire, or Essex sheep. I will set them only at four. The result in general would be nearly as follows. The four ewes would produce five lambs; two of these at least would, in the course of the summer, be fit for the butcher, making

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making from 16s. to a guinea a-piece. The remainder would be worth 12s. each in the month of October or November. Supposing them wethers, they may then be soon put to turnips, or other fattening food, during the winter; and in the ensuing summer, to rye-grass, clover, and the best pasturage the season affords; they will each produce five or six pounds of wool a fleece; and by the Christmas following, having been always so highly fed, will have acquired nearly their full growth, will be sufficiently fat, and worth upon an average 30s. a head. With such mutton as this, a nobleman's house in this neighbourhood used to be constantly supplied, and it was generally allowed to be as good, or the very best that could be procured.

An instance of profit, indeed, much superior to the above, came within my own immediate observation. Five Norfolk ewes were bought some time after Michaelmas 1783, for 16s. a head, and were kept in enclosed fields and pastures of much inferior quality to the above. Early in the spring, 1784, they produced seven lambs, which were all sold to the butcher in the month of May, for 16s. a head. They shorn in the summer about half a todd of wool, which was sold for nine-pence per pound. The five sheep took the ram again, and, in the month of August, in the same year, had seven lambs more, which, not long after Michaelmas,

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chaelmas, made ten shillings each. Of the five ewes four, being tolerable meat, were sold at their original price, in the month of October, and the fifth, early in the next spring, fetched a pound. The total produce of these five sheep, in something more than the compass of a year, was 9l. 16s. 6d. and all this upon little more than an acre of ground, so copious and abundant was the crop of clover. What could unenclosed wastes and commons have done comparable to either of these cases?

As to the former, few heaths would have kept the Essex and the Hertfordshire sheep very remote from starving; and as to the fattening the lambs, that would have been quite out of the question. The four ewes would not have reared above four, perhaps only three lambs, which might have fetched about 6 or 8 shillings a head, while the wool would not have exceeded 3lb. a fleece, instead of 4 or 5. The profits of Norfolk sheep would perhaps be the most certain, as from their manner of bringing up, they are much better suited to the rambling vagabond kind of life; they would yield about 2lb. of wool a fleece, and bring four (*e*) lambs, which at Michaelmas might be worth 6 or 7s. a head; so that their annual produce might be about

(*e*) I find from a very excellent account of the expences and profits of a flock of Norfolk sheep, consisting of about 1000, given by the Duke of Grafton, in the 37th No. of Mr. Young's Annals of Agriculture, that on an average of seven years, the produce

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about 35s. instead of 9l. 16s. 6d. as in the instance of the enclosures. Whoever will take the pains to compare these accounts will find that the farmer could have afforded, after paying rent and other expences, together with the allowance of considerable profit, to have *given away his second birth of lambs* as well as the cottager could have afforded his at six or seven shillings a head.

The instance indeed of the Norfolk ewes, as first above given, is a very extraordinary one, and must not be strenuously insisted on in the present argument. But that of the Hertfordshire, Essex, and Wiltshire is by no means unusual. The annual produce of four of them we find is upwards of

produce of lambs was scarcely four to every five ewes, and of wool about 2lb. a fleece, though they were doubtless much better fed and better managed than they usually are upon wastes and commons. The average rent of the land too was about 3 or 4s. an acre; and not higher rented than that should our author, perhaps, have supposed his lean sheep kept in enclosures.

It seems that these sheep are vastly more prolific when brought to our rich Essex pastures than when fed upon the poor thin lands of Norfolk. Instead of five producing only four lambs, it more commonly happens that four produce five; nay very often a proportion much higher still takes place. For, not to repeat the extraordinary case of the double births above stated, forty of the same breed of ewes, belonging to one of my neighbours, last year produced and fatted sixty-seven lambs.

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four pounds, which will pay rent with other expences, and still leave a superiority of profit over the cottager.

But it will be said that none of my wethers are kept to be four years old, which our author considers of such vast importance. To accommodate our reasoning then to his peculiar ideas, I will put a case exactly in point. Suppose then a hundred ewes, for the purpose of breeding and bringing up lean wethers to four years old, previous to their being put to fatten, are kept upon twenty acres of land annually rented at a pound an acre, and that these hundred ewes produce a hundred wethers. With these the farmer will fold his arable grounds, more or less in quantity according to its soil and situation. In many parts of Hertfordshire, and in some of Essex, beginning to fold at the end of March, and not leaving off till late in November, he will manure from 14 to 18 acres, worth from 20s. to 30s. each. In other places, on other soils, and in different seasons, not beginning to fold till May, and finishing so early as the end of September or commencement of October, scarcely more than 10 or 12 of the same value would be covered. We will take the average number of acres at 12, and the average value per acre at 25s. This amounts to 15s. to every five sheep; their wool at $4\frac{1}{2}$ lb. a fleece, and 9d. per lb. makes upwards of 16s.; which, added to the 15s. manure, gives 1l. 11s. for the

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the produce of the first year, exclusive of the value of the five wether lambs, (*f*) which are still to be continued lean, and annually folded. The manure arising hence will not be greatly inferior, one year with another, to that of the first year; I will, however, only set it at 12s. annually. The wool will be considerably more, being nearly 6 lb. a fleece; which I may fairly estimate at a Todd the five, worth about a guinea, (*g*)

Some other of our author's statements respecting the expences and profits of the farmer I might venture to contest; yet I will let them pass, and our accounts will be nearly as under :

Farmer's

(*f*) An acre of the supposed land will keep five sheep for folding, perhaps as well, as four when constantly fed upon it.

(*g*) The above reasoning will be nearly the same, *mutatis mutandis*, whatever kind and size of sheep are made use of. In Wilts and Hants, says a correspondent from Somerset, " Sheep
" are usually folded the whole year, and the fold of ewes and
" lambs from a good meadow is extremely valuable, it
" being the goodness of the feed upon which depend both
" the quantity and worth of the dung. Eight hundred couples
" will cover an acre in a night, which may be fairly
" estimated at 16s. often 20s. for the ensuing barley crop.
" The summer dung decreases much in value, till two or three
" weeks before wheat sowing. Then again it increases, and,
" where they can sow immediately after the fold, the dung
" of 1600 sheep, which are sufficient at that season of the year
" for an acre, is worth as much as the 800 couples were for
" barley. To sum up: I think the value of the manure arising
" from

Farmer's Expences, &c.

Rent and parish rates four years	- -	4 16 0
One fourth part of this for los by rot and accidents	- - - - - }	1 4 0
Ditto for profit on labour and attention	- - - - - }	1 4 0
		<hr/>
Total expences	- -	7 4 0
Total produce in wool and manure	- -	6 10 0
		<hr/>
Remains	- -	0 14 0

That is, the farmer can afford his four year old lean wethers at about three shillings per head.

C O T T A G E R.

As to our author's statement of the cottager's expences, I absolutely deny, some few extraordinary cases excepted, his first and fundamental maxim, that he pays no rent for the privilege of commonage. (b) Our author's own positions and reasonings, contrary to his intention, do themselves inevitably prove it. He is very copious and eloquent in

" from 100 sheep may be justly stated at about 15l. per annum.
" In the county of Wilts, at least, I know I am nearly right."

This account sufficiently agrees with the above given estimates to afford them satisfactory confirmation.

(b) We shall hereafter see, that even granting that the cottager pays no rent for his right of commonage, and that it is in itself really a benefit, yet that it proves in the end, hurtful and pernicious.

displaying

displaying the benefits arising to a poor man from the neighbourhood of a large common, Grant them to be equal to his heightened rhetorical representation, to whom do these benefits belong? Do they belong to the proprietor of the cottage? If they do, and he lives in it himself, he immediately feels these benefits. If he lets or sells it, will he resign these benefits without an equivalent? You may as well suppose that the owner of a large estate, endowed with common sense, will give it away for nothing.

But, says this writer, the principal advantage of the right of common depends upon the dexterity of the commoner. Granted. Is it not the same with regard to farms? But does the landlord estimate the value of them by the ignorance or folly of the farmer? Or by what may be fairly made of them by skill and industry? The latter is doubtless his standard of valuation. In like manner, if the renter of a cottage, in consequence of his vicinity to a common, can, by due care and management, keep five, ten, or twenty sheep upon it, the proprietor, fairly estimating the profits of them, fixes the rent at 5, 10, or 20s. the more.

But our author has made it extremely uncertain, whether the cottager can actually enjoy these privileges. " Though," says he, " we have an unlimited right of commonage, and though we are
" not

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“ not bound by any manerial or parochial restrictions to any particular quantity, or number of cattle respectively, our own *prudence governs* and *restrains us* on that head. We do not stock ourselves with *more* cattle in the summer to feed on the commons, than we can properly keep at home in the winter.” Now the same prudence which restrains the farmer from feeding *more* cattle on the commons in the summer, than he can properly keep at home in the winter, will it not as certainly induce him to keep as *many*? But if he does, what becomes of the poor man’s sheep? The farmer will keep as many as he conveniently can. If he takes in the cottager’s, therefore he may chance to starve both them and his own. Our Arcadian commoner, therefore, with his numerous flocks and herds, is, after all, reduced to a desperate dilemma. If he ventures them on the common, this writer assures us, he frequently loses many; if he sends them to the farmer, the farmer has nothing to keep them with, he having already a sufficient stock of his own. Either way the poor creatures must inevitably perish. If they remain upon the dreary heath, they will stray away and be stolen; or die with cold, and wet, and hunger. If they go to the farmer, they must be starved; with the only consolation of a great many others being starved along with them.

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But there are still other fallacies in the statement of the cottager’s accounts. The quantity of wool, if he keeps the same kind of sheep, as is evidently supposed, will be a fourth part less than that of the farmer; and his losses by accidents will be a fourth part more.

Our author contends, indeed, that the cottager’s sheep are less liable to rot than the farmer’s, as they will of themselves, at the proper times, retire to the higher grounds. Now, unless the sheep have more sense than their master, the reverse of this will generally happen. The farmer, of common discretion, will take care to keep his flocks, during a wet season, in his driest fields and pastures; whereas those of the cottager, if at all inclined to rottenness, will often seek those very spots, which tend to increase their disorder: and will not this more especially happen if (for the trifling profit of about a shilling a head) he lets them to fold upon the neighbouring fields of the farmer? Crouded together in the pen, will they not become considerably hot; and, upon being let out, will they not eagerly feed upon the moistest herbage they can get, whether it be what immediately springs after hasty showers, or such as grows upon those swamps and wet moorish lands, with which our wastes and commons so much abound? Must not this naturally produce the fatal disorder we are speaking of? Nay, this sudden transition

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from

from warm lodging to the bleak exposure of a heath, must likewise unavoidably subject them to colds, and that contagious distemper, called the scab; which as rapidly communicates itself to all the flocks upon the same common, as the small-pox or pestilence runs through a populous town; and although, by timely care, it prove not mortal, it often strips them of half their clothing, and leaves them poor, naked, and shivering, to the full operation of inclement seasons.

But after all, allowing the cottager's opportunity and convenience for keeping sheep, by the winter assistance of the farmer, let us here collect together the preceding observations and estimates, and place them before the reader in one view.

COTTAGER'S EXPENCES.

	£.	s.	d.
Rent four years, at 5s. a year,	1	0	0
Keeping five ewes, producing five wether lambs, at a farmer's, 16 weeks in the winter, at 3d. a head,	1	0	0
Keeping the wethers 16 weeks, at 2d. a week per head, the three following winters,	2	0	0
	<hr/>		
Total gross cost,	4	0	0
Carried forward	4	0	0
Brought			

Brought forward	4	0	0
Add the fourth (i) of the gross cost for loss by rot, &c.	1	0	0
(k) Ditto for profits on labour and attention,	1	0	0
	<hr/>		
Total expences,	6	0	0

P R O F I T S.

By wool, at even 2½ lb. per fleece, and 10d. a pound, about	2	2	0
Folding on the farmer's ground, at 1s. a head, during the best part of the summer,	1	0	0
	<hr/>		
Total profits,	3	2	0
Which deduct from the total expences, and there remains	2	18	0

Or about 11s. a head, at which the cottager can afford his four year old lean wether, which will not be nearly so good as what the farmer we have seen can afford for 3s.

In no way, then, does it appear, that the rearing of lean stock, by the assistance of *wastes and com-*

(i) This might perhaps be fairly set at one third.

(k) This also, according to the preceding remarks, might be equally heightened.

wastes, is but half as great as within rich enclosures. But granting for argument sake that it were, our author would still be very far from having proved, that the enclosures which have been made during the last thirty or forty years, have advanced the price of butcher's meat three halfpence in the pound more than the advance of price in other things. For, in order to establish this position, it would be necessary to ascertain the number of acres actually enclosed within the period now mentioned; what proportion they bear to *the wastes and commons* still unenclosed, as well to the whole quantity of land in Great-Britain, and how many cattle were kept before and since. None of these particulars has he shewn, or even attempted to shew. His estimate, therefore, of the necessary consequent advancement of butcher's meat, is mere random conjecture, unsupported by facts, or any just principles of reasoning.

Were I to form a judgment of the total number of acres contained in our recent enclosures, from the accounts of those I have now before me, I should not suppose they could exceed, if even amount to a million. But there can be little doubt, that more than four fifths of these were not *wastes and commons*, which chiefly affect the argument, but merely *open rented fields*. Supposing the lands of Great-Britain to be no more than sixty millions, the recent enclosure of *wastes and commons* cannot
be

be even a two hundredth part, a mere trifle, utterly insufficient to produce any sensible difference in the price of lean cattle, and consequently of butcher's meat.

Were it necessary I could very easily point out many other deficiencies and fallacies in our author's reasonings to establish the point now immediately before us. But from what has been already advanced, we may here very safely put an end to this part of our enquiry. We have seen that his statements to prove that the cottager can bring up lean stock upon commons and waste grounds at half the expence the farmer can upon his rich enclosures, are deficient in almost every possible particular; but that allowing them ever so full and complete, the deductions from them, *that our recent enclosures have raised the price of butcher's meat three halfpence in the pound more than the advance of price in other things*, is so far from true, they could not probably have raised it the fourth part of a farthing.

The high price of butcher's meat for the two or three years now immediately past, is, strictly speaking, no part of our enquiry. For, although our author in his title page mentions the *present* high price of it, yet he evidently means, both from the general tenour of his arguments, and from particular expressions occasionally used, several years preceding

ceding the publication of his pamphlet in the year 1785. The cause however of the high price of this article of provision even within the short period just now stated, being in itself a matter of considerable importance, it may not be amiss, before we proceed to our next general proposition, to say a few words respecting it.

Now I have not the smallest hesitation to assert, that it has arisen from a temporary *scarcity*, and that this scarcity has proceeded from a succession of *severe winters*, of *cold backward springs*, and from a *general failure of grass in the summers*. Was not the winter of 1783 so uncommonly sharp, that hay, in many parts of England, was 5l. a ton, and was not some exported to the continent at even nine (*k*)? Was it possible that the farmers could support their usual stock? Could the calves that fell early in the year 1784 be reared? Did not many of our cows, from being almost starved during the preceding months, miss their bulling, as the farmers express it? And was not again the winter of 1784 uncommonly long, as well as severe? Did not numbers of cattle die for want of fodder? And of those that lived, were not many so extremely poor as to make it impossible to fat them in the following summer, had grass been ever so plentiful? But unfortunately, was not

(*k*) Hay it seems then must have been dearer and scarcer with our neighbours than with us: Did this arise from *enclosures*?

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the crop so excessively short, that the farmers were distressed even to keep them at all? Was not the produce of barley too equally deficient? Did not that deficiency prevent the fattening vast numbers of hogs, which might otherwise in some measure have supplied the diminution of beef? And as to sheep, what multitudes were starved, some for want of hay, some for want of turnips, which were rotted and spoiled by the frosts? And of lambs, how many thousands and tens of thousands perished in the snows, or by the intenseness of the cold? Are not we assured from the breeding counties, that their stocks, from these several causes, have been reduced $\frac{1}{5}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, and in some parts of Wales, unsheltered, unfenced, unfed, by enclosures, more than $\frac{1}{2}$? (*l*) In a word, are not both neat cattle and sheep much fewer than in 1782? Must not these deficiencies be made up by the breeders before the graziers can expect lean stock to be plentiful and cheap, or the community hope for butcher's meat at prices moderate and easy?

Upon a view of all these concurrent causes, I am so far from being surpris'd at the temporary dear-

(*l*) This has the testimony of a capital farmer in South Wales, who also says, that, by the severity of the late winters, their stocks both of cattle and sheep, are become so exceedingly short, that it will be some years before they will be able to sell their usual quantities. In that country there have been few or no commons enclosed; nay thousands of sheep perished for want of enclosures; (i. e.) for want of shelter and winter food.

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ness of these articles, that I am really astonished they have risen no higher, and cannot but consider it as alone a strong presumption in favour of enclosures. Had not enclosures been more numerous and extensive than they were fifty years ago, must not the price of beef and mutton have been greatly more advanced? Did not the single hard winter of 1739, render them excessively dear, both through that season, and the forty following ones? This appears in general from the beef table already given; and in perfect coincidence herewith is the information of a sensible farmer, of fifty years experience, a Mr. Thomas Fricker of Deverill Longbridge, Wilts, in answer to some questions sent him on this subject. "In 1741, says he, beef sold in the Dorsetshire and Wiltshire markets at 6d. a pound:" and an acquaintance assures me upon his own particular recollection, "that about that time, at London, the finest and choicest pieces for steaks fetched even a shilling." I find also from a paragraph in a newspaper, called the Constitutional Journal, that so late as April 30, 1743, at Frome in Somersetshire, pork was 5d. and all other meats 4½d. per pound. These were the effects of *one* hard winter.

Have we not now had *two* or *three* in succession? But in what county, at what country or city market has beef been a *shilling* or even *sixpence* in the pound? "At several other periods," continues the above intelligent farmer, "beef has been both
" dear

" dear and scarce, and always from the same cause,
" *severe winters and cold late springs*, which never
" fail to occasion a scarcity of cattle."

Report of the LONDON COMMITTEE.

Before I quit this head, I cannot help taking notice of the *Report of the Committee appointed last summer, by the court of Common Council of London, to consider the causes of the high prices of provisions.* This *sapient* body can surely never have been out of the smoke of the city. They seem to have known as little of the real condition of the country from which their provisions are fetched, as philosophers do of the world in the Moon. Nay such appears to be the density of the atmosphere that envelopes them, that no ray of truth, though coming with the force and brightness of the meridian sun, can penetrate it. In spite of the assurances of respectable correspondents from different parts of the kingdom that there was a real scarcity of fat sheep and oxen; in spite of the manifest confirmation of this by the comparatively small numbers brought to market, they ascribe the dearness of meat to causes just as much concerned in it as Tenderden steeple was in the production of the Goodwin sands. They impute it to jobbers, forestallers, regraters, &c. who neither *have* influenced, nor in a country of free competition like this, possibly *can* influence the price of these things,

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one hundredth part of a farthing in the pound, for three months together, in any market in the kingdom, especially those of London. But granting their operation ever so considerable, has it been *peculiarly* so during the two or three last years? Was it greater in 1784, 5, and 6 than in the years immediately preceding? One of the witnesses examined by the Committee, indeed, intimates that it was; but has that witness, or any other, produced the shadow of a proof, either from reason or fact? Another evidence, p. 22, asserts that although fewer beasts were brought to *Smithfield* in the years 1784 and 5 than the preceding ones, yet that the quantity driven up to *town* was nearly the same; but is not this flatly contradicted in the very same paragraph, where it is said that there were fewer there the last winter, for this manifest reason, that there was not a sufficient fodder to feed them? A Mr. Boys, a considerable salesman, roundly declares that about twenty years ago, "there used to be a great many more beasts at Smithfield, so that it would scarcely hold them all." But is not this declaration likewise shewn to be totally groundless by the table in p. 75, which contains the number of beasts and sheep annually brought thither for more than 50 years past? Does it not there appear that the average of the last six years was above a fifth part greater than that of the six years beginning with 1763?

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But, say the Committee, the excess of the London prices of meat over those of the country is more than double what would pay the expences and risque of sending, and that this must have arisen from forestalling, jobbing, &c. Ref. 3d, &c. From what evidence does this appear? By what calculation is it proved? As far as they have vouchsafed to communicate, does not the reverse stare us in the face? Are not these prices in some of the corporations where they applied for information even higher than those of London? Witness the accounts from York, Guilford, &c. Nay at this very day, and to come to my own county, I am assured that the price of beef at the markets of Rumford, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Walden, Epping is 5d. and 5½d. per lb. while I find by the public papers, that at those of Clare Hall, Leaden Hall, Newgate, &c. it is only 4½d. And has not the *advance* of price in all the places, where the requisite statements are given to the Committee, been also more *rapid*? Is not this strikingly apparent in the letters from Lincoln, Chichester, Portsmouth, Bury, Edinburgh, Stafford, Ely, &c.? But, allowing that the difference between the London and country prices equal to what is contended, must we, in order to account for it, necessarily have recourse to forestallers, jobbers, &c.? Was not this difference still greater in the years 1740, 41, and 42, than in 1784, 5, and 6? Was it *then* owing to these dreadful monsters, when all the laws against them were

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in full force? Has not *tallow*, and consequently *candles*, been considerably more raised than even beef and mutton? Has this too been occasioned by the jobbers and forestallers of Smithfield?

But enclosures likewise seem to come in for a share in the Committee's heavy accusations. But how is this charge supported? Why, they procure a list of the enclosures made in the twelve years, ending with 1786, containing almost 500,000 acres; and it appears that upon 250,000 of these acres, sheep were forbidden to be depastured for ten or twelve years. Their conclusion from hence, I suppose, is, that our number of sheep must have been diminished, and the price of butcher's meat of course considerably heightened. But how fallacious! For what were these enclosures? What change took place in the cultivation or management of the lands? Was it of arable to pasture, or of pasture to arable? What were the products before and since? None of these things are we told; and yet *without* these, all the rest how little to the purpose? Of those from which sheep were excluded were not a great part mere arable common fields? And how many sheep, let me ask, were maintained upon fallows and alternate stubbles of wheat and barley and oats? And as to those from which sheep were *not* excluded, is it not notorious that many of them converted tillage into pasture,

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pasture, and that they now support twenty sheep and oxen instead of one? And of those which were pasture before and are pasture still, do not some, as in instances already given, produce three times as much butcher's meat as they ever used to do? Nay, is it not strikingly evident from the tables the Committee themselves have given us in Numbers III. and V. of the Appendix to their Report, that their apprehensions are totally groundless? For does it not there appear, that those very years in which the most numerous and extensive enclosures took place, and the three or four immediately subsequent ones, the greatest numbers of both sheep and oxen were driven to Smithfield?

The Committee having, as they fancied, found out the causes of the complained of evils, proceed, with no less sagacity, to prescribe the remedies; remedies, which if they could command mild winters, and fruitful summers, or make sheep and oxen come down from the skies, we might have halcyon days; but if not, the only tendency, of three-fourths of them, is to do essential mischief; they are fitted to increase the calamities they were intended to remove, and, if possible, would finally drive the market from Smithfield, as I am told, regulations of similar discernment have driven that from Salisbury, which used to be one of the best country markets in the kingdom.

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A few years ago the learned Academicians of Paris and Soissons* assembled to consider of the best method of encouraging and promoting the growth of turnips in France. One of these gentlemen having been in England, had thoroughly informed himself with respect to the excellent mode of cultivating this vegetable practised in Norfolk. This mode he states to the assembly with great perspicuity and precision. But another of the members, a man of high conceit and fluent elocution, pours such irresistable contempt upon this information of English origin, that no further attention is paid to it. This powerful persuasive orator and his brethren, with a solemn formality suited to the importance of the occasion, proceed to draw up a set of rules and prescriptions, for directing the culture in question. Some of these regulations are admirably calculated to prevent the turnips growing at all, and the rest, should the turnips happen to flourish in spite of every effort to destroy them, are no less excellent for rendering the growth itself of little or no value.

Perfectly similar to this appears to have been the conduct of our London Committee. They gravely pretend to enquire into the causes of the high price of provisions, and in order the better to succeed in this enquiry, they examine witnesses, and dispatch letters into different parts of the kingdom, request-

* Annals of Agriculture.

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ing information and assistance. But what use do they make of the intelligence procured? Why, that which accords with their own preconceptions they readily adopt and lay wonderful stress upon; that of a contrary kind, however rational in itself, and however well supported by facts, they seem to pass over as utterly insignificant. As this is evidently the case with respect to the evidence of some of the witnesses, and with respect likewise to some of the letters from mayors of corporations already referred to, so is it especially with regard to one written to a member of the Committee by Mr. Arthur Young, which, for the acuteness of penetration, and extensive knowledge of the real state of things in the country, it so clearly manifests, is worth all the letters of all the mayors of corporations put together. This is neither noticed in any of their reasonings and observations, nor even vouchsafed a place in their report. The obvious conclusions hence deducible, I leave to the public.

When I read the rules and prescriptions of the French Academicians, I feel, I confess, a strong propensity to ridicule; but when I peruse the report of the London Committee, and consider myself as a member of the same general society, I can scarcely refrain the emotions of serious indignation. I am, indeed, shocked to behold men of liberal education, and truly respectable characters, become

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become the dupes of prejudices, which, I fondly imagined, had disgraced only the lowest of the vulgar.

I have never known wheat uncommonly dear, but I have as constantly heard violent clamours from the ignorant poor against their superiors for sending corn abroad to feed their enemies; whereas the fact in these cases has always been, that, instead of *sending* it abroad, we have, as fast as we could, been *fetching* it thence, that the ungrateful murmurers might not be starved. Candour and humanity, however, will readily palliate, if not entirely excuse, such apparent ingratitude. They are destitute of the means for obtaining the requisite intelligence properly to judge in the case, and, therefore, very naturally follow the impulse of passion excited by misapprehension. But where is the candour, where is the ingenuity that can frame an adequate apology for parallel conduct in the London Committee? Have they not, in direct opposition to the clearest evidence, charged the inflictions of heaven upon the knavery and villainy of innocent individuals. Have they not been devising fines, and penalties, and punishments against their greatest benefactors? Against men who have ransacked the country in every quarter to find them provisions? Have bought them sheep and cattle, even at extravagant rates, to keep them from starving? To feed our capital, that ever *growing*, yet
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ever *grumbling* monster, which, like the daughters of the horseleach, mentioned in the Proverbs, is perpetually crying, "give, give," and never saying, it is enough. Nay, have not solemn resolutions been formed to apply to parliament for the revival of laws which were long the disgrace of our statute book, but which, upon an application, advised by one of the greatest and wisest men (*m*) this kingdom ever produced, were, but a few years ago happily repealed? Had the summer of 1786 been as dry as that of 1784 and 5, and the winter now past as severe as that of 1783, dreadful must have been the deficiency of sheep and oxen, and excessively high the prices of meat; and, under the impression of those ideas which our committee seems zealous to propagate, what riots, and tumults, and confusion might have ensued?

(*m*) Lord Mansfield.

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S E C.

SECTION III.

Granting that our recent Enclosures have advanced the Price of Butcher's Meat three Halfpence in the Pound more than the advance of Price in other Things; yet the Enclosure of all our Wastes and Commons could not raise it to Nine-pence or a Shilling.

THIS proposition requires no laboured reasoning to establish. Our author has himself, indeed, sufficiently proved it. The farmer, says he, can afford to sell his lean cattle, reared upon rich enclosures of 20s. an acre, at the rate of sixpence a pound. Were therefore *all the wastes and commons* enclosed and rendered equally rich and fertile, on his own principles, sixpence a pound would still be the price the farmer could afford it at, and at which, consequently, it would be bought. What then becomes of the nine-pence or a shilling? Both are vanished.

But supposing it otherwise; supposing, that although upon our present enclosures of 20s. an acre, lean cattle may be raised for six-pence a pound; yet, were all the lands enclosed, and rendered of the same value, it would inevitably happen,

pen, by some magic or other, beyond all human comprehension, that it could not be done for less than nine-pence or a shilling, what would be the consequence? This writer has himself very kindly suggested it. *Lean cattle would be imported from abroad.* Every country in Europe, which breeds them, long before they arose to so enormous a price, would be emulous to furnish us with them at a much lower rate; and our produce of corn would be proportionably increased. Both ways, therefore, our author helps to defeat his own arguments, and to shew that his assertions, respecting the universal enclosure of our waste lands, cannot be true.

Before I proceed to our next proposition, I must beg leave to present an argument, similar to that we have been considering, and which I cannot but wonder has escaped our author's penetration, to prove that enclosures have already encreased the price of *horses*, seven or eight hundred per cent. and that, should all our waste grounds be enclosed, this price would be double what it is at present. It is very well known, that, upon some of our forest lands, horses are now bred wild, the peculiar property of nobody. When three or four years old, they are, from time to time, caught by the lazier part of the poor people in the neighbourhood, (who are fonder of the frolic of *horse hunting* than of regular industrious labour) and sold

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for what they can get. You may sometimes purchase a tolerable nag of them for three or four shillings and a mug of beer; and, at all events, you may be almost sure of one for 20s. which will do you eminent service, and such as could not be brought up by the farmer on his rich enclosures of 20s. an acre for less than eight or ten guineas. Consequently our recent enclosures have increased the price of horses in the proportion of at least eight or ten to one; and should all our wastes and commons be enclosed, as is reported to be the intention of government, the present high price would be doubled. Before our author indulges his ridicule at the egregious absurdity of this reasoning, let me intreat him to remember that it is exactly his own, those particulars only excepted, in which it is superiour.

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S E C T I O N IV.

Granting that the universal Enclosure of our Wastes and Commons would advance the Price of Butcher's Meat to Nine-pence or a Shilling in the Pound, it would by no means be a conclusive Objection against such Enclosure. (a)

ALLOWING that the universal enclosure of our wastes, &c. would produce the asserted effect, yet still, before the argument against such enclosure were compleat, it must be shewn that this disadvantage more than counterbalanced the various certain benefits, which, in other respects would arise from it. Our author has indeed attempted this; but, in my apprehension, very un-

(a) "Granting the assertion, that where cattle are bred upon heaths and commons," observes a correspondent, "the tenants are enabled to sell them cheap, because they have such lands for little or no rent; can it be reasonable that those few counties in which they still remain, should have the exclusive privilege of breeding cattle cheaper than the inclosed parts of the kingdom, unless it could be proved they could breed sufficient for the whole nation? Or is it equitable that the owners of estates, entitled to such rights of common, should be obliged to forego the improvement of such estates, when they have it in their power to double or treble the value of them by an enclosure?"

successfully.

successfully. That I may fairly meet and encounter his calculations made for this purpose, I will here state them in their full force and magnitude.

He says, p. 93, that, "supposing there are ten millions of inhabitants in Great-Britain;" (which is indeed pretty near the fact) "and that each inhabitant, one with another, consumes one quarter of a pound of meat per day, the advanced price of three halfpence in the pound, which has already taken place in consequence of enclosures, is equivalent to a tax upon the nation at large, of *five millions sterling per annum.*" Resuming the subject in page 102, he observes, "that admitting butcher's meat, in consequence of the universal enclosure of wastes, &c. would be four-pence halfpenny dearer than at present, it would be an additional burden of *fifteen millions sterling per annum.* But as the lower classes of people would be in a great measure deprived of eating butcher's meat, there would not probably be more than one-third part consumed there is at present; therefore the estimate of *fifteen millions per annum,* should be reduced to *five millions per annum.*" Now admitting the general result of this computation, I am not at all afraid but that I shall be able to prove, that the advantages arising from the proposed enclosure, would more than counterbalance this burden,

burden, heavy as it would be, and partly too, from this writer's own concessions.

He acknowledges, p. 22, "that should the general cultivation of the waste lands be adopted, we should most probably produce a great deal more corn than would be required for home consumption;" but notwithstanding this, in opposition to common sense, and in spite of every day's experience, he is confident "that the price of grain would be nearly the same, neither much dearer nor much cheaper than at present." And the reason given for this extraordinary opinion is, "that we should send the overplus abroad, and consequently the price at home, would be the same which the merchant could sell it for abroad, deducting the charge of transportation." The simple fact, as apparent in the following table, is alone a sufficient refutation of this curious reasoning.

Quantities

Quantities of Wheat and Barley exported from and imported into England and Scotland for 14 years from the 5th of January 1771, to the 5th of January 1784, with their average Prices each Year respectively, the former extracted from the Custom House Books, the latter from the Corn Register established by Act the 10th of Geo. III.

Years.	WHEAT AND FLOUR.			BARLEY AND MALT.		
	Exported Quarters.	Imported Quarters.	Prices of Wheat per Qur.	Exported Quarters.	Imported Quarters.	Prices of Barley per Qur.
1771	10,089	2,510	47s. 2d	34,198	228	25s. 8d
1772	6,959	25,474	50 8	14,031	3,068	25 4
1773	7,637	56,857	51 0	2,471	63,916	28 4
1774	15,928	289,149	52 8	2,911	171,508	28 6
1775	91,037	560,988	48 4	51,414	139,451	26 0
1776	210,664	20,578	38 2	136,114	8,499	20 2
1777	87,686	233,323	45 6	142,725	7,981	20 6
1778	141,070	106,394	42 0	103,930	42,714	22 8
1779	222,261	5,039	33 8	85,777	7,085	19 6
1780	224,059	3,915	35 8	191,563	352	17 0
1781	103,021	159,866	44 8	150,468	56	17 2
1782	145,152	80,695	47 10	127,744	13,592	22 6
1783	51,943	584,183	52 8	54,065	144,926	30 4
1784	89,288	216,947	48 10	66,889	77,182	27 10
14 Yrs.	1,406,794	2,345,918	45 8	1,164,304	680,558	23 8
		1,406,794	Average Price.			Average Price pr. Quarter.
Balance	Imported	939,124				
Balance	Exported			483,746		

Upon the most superficial view of this Table it cannot but forcibly strike the observer that every year in which the exports greatly exceeded the imports the price of both wheat and barley was extremely

extremely moderate; whereas when the imports considerably exceeded the exports, the price was excessively high. Thus for instance, in the years 1779 and 1780, when the exports had greatly the lead, the joint average price of wheat was scarcely 35s. a quarter, but in the years 1773, 1774 and 1783, when the imports so much prevailed, the medium price was upwards of 52s. a quarter; consequently the price of wheat in years of great exportation is 17s. a quarter cheaper than in those of great importation. We also find, upon the best information that can be procured, that for nineteen years together, that is from 1746 to 1765, when the exports of corn so far exceeded the imports that the nett gain was 651,000l. a year, the average price of wheat was little more than 32s. a quarter. Should exportations again equally prevail, from whatever cause, it seems inevitably to follow, nor does there appear the shadow of a reason for supposing the contrary, after every allowance made, that the average price of wheat would not much exceed 35s. a quarter. Lower than that it ought not to be suffered to sink. Otherwise the farmer could not afford to grow it; and so the very cause which reduced the price, would prevent the production, and finally operate to effects directly contrary.

Now the average price of wheat during the fourteen years given in the preceding table is 45s. a quarter, and it further appears from the Custom

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Houfe books, that the grain imported in the fame period has coft the nation 330,000l. per annum. (*b*) Partly on this writer's own conceffions, therefore, the following advantages would refult from the propofed enclosure of our wafles and commons; Firft, There would be an annual faving of 330,000l. from the prevention of importation. 2dly, There would be a confiderable fum arifing from the fale of corn fent abroad: my only doubt in this cafe is, that fcarcely any extent of cultivation could always fecure this. And 3dly, Our wheat would be 10s. a quarter cheaper for our total home confumption. All thefe put together would, it is prefumed, go a great way towards a compenfation for the 4½d per lb. which our author afferts (though very unjuftly we have feen) would be added to the price of butcher's meat.

The laft article alone, the diminution of the price of wheat, at the rate of 10s. a quarter for all our people, would be a prodigious benefit. For allowing with our author that there are ten millions of inhabitants in Great Britain, and fupposing, (what I prefume cannot be above the fact,) that

(*b*) The decrease of exportation has arifen from an increase of that beft of all markets, a home confumption, occafioned by the vaft increase of our people, and of our horfes; both which are perhaps equal to an additional annual growth of two millions of quarters of wheat, and three or four millions of quarters of oats, beans and barley.

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each inhabitant, one with another, confumed eight bufhels of wheat in a year, this would be 10s. a year faved to each individual, and five millions fterling to the whole kingdom; which, the advantage of it refulting more immediately to the poor, would directly and powerfully operate as an encouragement to our agriculture and manufactures of every fort; whereas the price of butcher's meat, affecting chiefly the middle and higher ranks, would in this refpect, have comparatively very confiderable influence.

But thefe are a fmall part of the advantages which would probably arife from the meafure we are fpeaking of. For I muft here venture in the firft place, to adopt part of Mr. Lamport's computations, notwithstanding the pleafantry and ridicule which our author has fo plentifully poured upon them. (*c*) "The lands of Great Britain," fays Mr. L. "are computed at feventy-two millions of " acres; Mr. Eden estimates the *rental* of them at " twenty millions; according to Mr. Young, the " average rent of an acre, is eleven fhillings and " four pence to the land owner. From thefe data " it appears, that we have between 35 and 36 mil- " lions of acres under cultivation, either meadow " pasture or arable, to which add, (which is a good " deal too much) twenty millions for houfes, gar- " dens, woods, parks, lawns, rivers, fwamps, roads

(*c*) Pol. Enq. &c. p. 36.

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“ and barren spots, and there will remain at least
“ sixteen millions of acres, nearly one quarter of
“ the kingdom, capable of improvement, though
“ at present in the same state they were found in
“ by Julius Cæsar.”

“ The cultivated lands,” continues Mr. Lamport, “ are supposed to produce three *rentals*.” I must beg leave here to observe if the lands are about $\frac{1}{3}$ pasture and $\frac{2}{3}$ ds arable, which is perhaps nearly the average proportion for the whole kingdom, and they are let at only moderate rents, not less than *four rentals* will enable the farmer to get a decent livelihood, and make a proper provision for his family. *Three* might be sufficient forty years ago, but I am persuaded, from repeated observation, and numerous enquiries, that such are the necessarily increased expences attending the farming business, from a variety of causes, by no means requisite here to be stated, that *four* are but barely adequate. In some kinds of culture, it must be vastly greater; in that of hops for instance, if the produce be not equal to eight or ten rentals, the growth of them cannot be continued. I may therefore safely venture to set the necessary average produce at *four rentals*. (d)

“ If

(d) In Mr. Young's Annals of Agriculture, No. 29, p. 425, I find Mr. Macro's annual expences, including the interest of stock, upon a farm of 415l. a year, and containing 1000 acres of land, 100 pasture and 900 arable, were 2208l. 2s. 6d. or nearly

“ If the whole lands may be made,” continues Mr. Lamport's argument, “ to produce one-fifth
“ (e) part more, the rental of the land owners will
“ then amount to twenty-four millions, and the
“ produce to the nation at four rentals to the ad-
“ ditional sum of sixteen millions; what may
“ not this effect in the article of taxes, &c. espe-
“ cially when all its operation has been exerted in
“ trading with it!”

Now, allowing the accuracy of Mr. L—'s estimates respecting the number of acres in Great-Britain, the average rent per acre of such part as is cultivated, the number of acres now under cultivation, and the proportion of waste ground capa-

nearly $5\frac{1}{2}$ rentals. In No. 32. p. 159 of the same useful work, Mr. William Hall, of Elmstone in Kent, states the annual expence of his farm, rented at 350l. and containing 306 acres, about half arable and half pasture, at 1231l. 10s. or about $3\frac{1}{2}$ rentals. These accounts sufficiently confirm the above estimate.

(e) This is so far from being an extravagant supposition with respect to the kingdom at large, that I may safely venture to assert with regard to the best and oldest cultivated counties in England, such as Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, &c. that they produce one-fifth part more corn than they did forty years ago; nor is there any absurdity in hoping that in 40 to come, by due attention and improvements, the increase may be one-fifth part more. But if this may be the case with the highest cultivated counties, what may be expected from those that abound with wastes and commons?

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ble of improvement, I see no material objection to his conclusions, except it be that he has forgot to compute the produce of the waste lands, and that he appears also to have included the rents he all along supposes to be given for rights of common in the twenty millions rental of the cultivated grounds. Both these ought certainly to have been deducted; but then it is to be remembered, that he has set the proportion of the produce to the rent so much too low as to be more than a compensation for this, and we may therefore allow with Mr. L.—, that the total increased produce of the sixteen millions of improvable acres yet to be inclosed, provided they prove only half as fertile, (f) (which is the utmost his argument seems to require, notwithstanding what our author says (g) to the contrary) as those already under cultivation, would be at least twelve millions sterling per annum.

But our author having strangely imagined that Mr. L. had asserted, that our present waste lands, when inclosed and cultivated, would be of equal fertility with those already under culture, most wonderfully diverts himself with his own fancy, as the mere reverie and pleasant dream of Mr.

(f) Curf. Rem. p. 52.

(g) Polit. Enq. p. 52.

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L. (b) And yet, supposing this assertion really to have been made, he has not advanced even the shadow of an argument to shew its absurdity.

He says, indeed, what Mr. L. and all the world readily allow, that some lands may be incapable of culture so as to answer the expence; but he should have recollected that these are comprehended in the twenty millions of acres, supposed for ever to remain uninclosed and uncultivated. As to the rest, he seems chiefly to rely upon the imagined *wisdom of our ancestors*, (i) which directed them, he supposes, to the most judicious choice of what land should be cultivated, and what should be left waste; and, in proof of this *antient wisdom*, he maintains that the present wastes, excepting some few instances, bear no comparison in point of *natural* quality with those which are already in a state of cultivation. As to the choice made by our ancestors, I fancy it was oftener directed by chance than skill; and the whole of this argument, if it may be called one, might be carried back to any indefinite period; a hundred, five hundred, a thousand or even two thousand years, till we got amongst our naked savage forefathers; and had it always been adopted, we should still have remained as rude, as naked, as

(b) Polit. Enq. p. 34.

(i) Polit. Enq. p. 52.

savage

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savage as they. But not to retire into the remote ages of antiquity, what would have been the consequence had it prevailed only *thirty years* ago? Are not those barren wastes which have since been cultivated now as fertile upon an average as our oldest enclosures? Nay, are not many of them, (especially in the counties of Leicester, Lancaster, Worcester, Gloucester, Somerset, Lincoln, &c. ten times as productive as before? And can our author prove, has he even attempted to prove, that there are not really sixteen millions of acres still uninclosed, altogether as promising? Was there even a single spot of them equal in *natural* richness of soil to a great part of New Forest in Hampshire, which the *wisdom of our ancestors* depopulated, (k) “though covered
 “ with numberless villages for thirty miles in extent, contained thirty (l) mother churches beside many subordinate ones, and nearly an hundred thousand acres of the best cultivated land
 “ in the kingdom.” When we hear that commissioners are appointed to enquire into the state of this distinguished territory, as well as others of similar kind, what heart does not glow at the delightful prospect which seems to arise! Who does not see the *wilderness become a fruitful field*; the

(k) See Lord Egmont's pamphlet on the enclosure of the forest lands.

(l) By the map of the county it appears now to contain only seven of every kind.

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heaven-directed spires again to rise, and the whole wide extent to people fast, not with beasts of chase, as heretofore, to please a savage tyrant, but with industrious men and women, rational creatures, happy subjects of the best of kings, and candidates for immortality! (m)

But to keep the present argument full before us, only grant that there yet remains sixteen millions of acres of uncultivated land; (which our author seems to have no objection to,) and allow it may be rendered as productive as that under present culture, (against which idea nothing has been advanced of the smallest importance,) and I see no absurdity in supposing that the consequence of the general enclosure would be not merely what Mr. Lamport contends, an additional *twelve millions*, but an additional *twenty-four millions*.

Nay, I stop not even here. The most valuable productions of improved agriculture are not wheat and barley, sheep and oxen; but human creatures; which, if I may be allowed the expression, as na-

(m) In the southern and eastern part of the forest, there are now, it seems, some fertile, well cultivated spots. But through almost the whole of the northern, our author might see his *happy* commoners very little superior to Hottentots, and crawling out of their huts, with scarcely any thing to cover their nakedness, or to defend them from the inclemency of the weather but a piece of old sacking tied about their middle.

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turally spring from a melioration of the earth as corn and grass, as trees, as plants, and flowers. The population of the thirty-six millions of acres already in culture is allowed to be ten millions. The remaining sixteen millions rendered equally rich and prolific, must produce a population of at least four millions more, which considered in the food they would eat, the clothes they would wear, the tools they would use, and the fuel they would burn, could not be of less annual value to the state than 10l. a head; that is, in the whole, an addition of forty millions sterling per annum.

All this is perhaps infinitely short of what would be the fact, were ideas directly opposite to our author's universally to animate the minds of our people, and improvements correspondent to, and indeed connected with, enclosures, generally to take place. We shall probably have a glimpse of this when we state and examine our author's miscellaneous objections to the general enclosure, &c. But already I consider the purpose of this section, as well as that of the three preceding ones, sufficiently accomplished. We have seen, 1st, That butcher's meat is not encreased three halfpence in the pound during the last thirty years, more than other things. 2dly, That granting this, it cannot have arisen from the enclosures which have been made in that time. 3dly, Allowing both the one and the other, that the general enclosure of waste lands would not raise

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raise the price of butcher's meat four-pence half-penny more. And, 4thly, Admitting even all the three propositions, that the argument thence deduced against such enclosure would not be conclusive.

These several points being, in my apprehension, fully established, I shall next consider a few miscellaneous objections, and with them conclude.

SECTION V.

Miscellaneous Objections considered.

1. *Right of Common, a Privilege and Happiness to the Poor.*

THE trite and common objections to enclosures, that they are inevitably a violation of private property, and a great diminution of the privileges and happiness of the poor, have been sufficiently answered in an elegant well written pamphlet, printed for and sold by P. Sandford, Shrewsbury, in the year 1781.

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With

With respect, however, to the latter of these objections, as our author has thought proper, with earnest zeal, to revive it, I must not entirely pass it over in silence. After describing the primeval blifs of his Arcadian commoners, the peace and innocence, the virtue and industry with which they conduct their lives, he adds, p. 115, "I cannot
 " but own, that I myself have some degree of
 " pleasure in finding a cottager possessed of the
 " means of making a gift to a new-born child,
 " of a live ewe lamb as a portion; because I have
 " known instances, when a *lucky* child has found
 " itself, at the end of ten or twelve years of age,
 " hereby in possession of perhaps half a score, or
 " a dozen ewes and wethers, the produce of whose
 " wool, &c. has found the child *in pocket-money*
 " till she has arrived at 18 or 20 years of age;
 " this *little* flock, together with her own *little*
 " *earnings*, has served as a portion with her to an
 " industrious young man who marries her, and
 " which has greatly contributed to support their
 " children." This is all to be sure very fine! Let me ask, however, had this lovely *shepherdes* gone to a good service at the age of fifteen, and continued in it eight or ten years, and then married, might she not have brought her *industrious young man* 20 or 30l.? And would not this have been a better portion than all her *childish pocket-money, her little flock and her little earnings*?

In

In opposition to our author's eloquent description, I beg leave to state the following plain and simple fact. A farmer's servant in this neighbourhood, when at the age of about twenty-five, which is now sixteen years ago, married a decent, worthy young woman scarcely turned of twenty. He neither received the marriage dower now mentioned, nor had he flocks and herds, sheep or lambs, cows or calves, or any PARADISAICAL common; yet, by the labours of husbandry alone, he has supported a family of four children, two boys and two girls. The elder of the sons, being past fifteen, is out at service, the younger, nearly fourteen, works with his father, while the two daughters assist their mother. By permission of the lord of the manor, in the year 1781, he fenced in a small piece of ground by the highway side, and built him a house upon it, which consists of two neat apartments on the lower floor, and as many above, and has at the end, a commodious brew-house. To render every domestic occupation perfectly convenient, it has since been surrounded by various little out-buildings, infomuch that there is now not only a hog's cote, and a house for wood, but a hut to receive the spinning wheels and other utensils, even a shed to shelter the necessary provisions for a sow and pigs, and also a well secured bee-stall, filled with hives. The yard containing about ten or twelve square rods, is excellently fenced

fenced by a quick-hedge, which is already strong and vigorous. On one side of the yard are planted apple-trees of different sorts, on another plumb-trees, and cherry-trees of as various kinds. The intermediate space, before the *enclosure*, was part of it a mere gravel pit, and the rest so utterly barren as never to have half filled the belly of a single sheep or even rabbit. But now, from proper culture and suitable manure, it yields beans, peas, fine potatoes, and other useful garden productions in vast abundance; (a) a thrifty grape vine too, promising many a comfortable reviving cordial for declining years, has already spread its mantling branches a considerable way round the walls of the house. This rural mansion, with its several appurtenances, all in firm and perfect repair, can be worth very little less than 40l.; and I am informed on good authority, that the honest diligent man has already laid by nearly enough to raise another of similar value, should a like opportunity present. I must confess I never pass this *house of Industry* without feeling the highest pleasure. I yesterday evening, the 11th of August 1786, made it a visit. The father and the second son were returning from the labours of harvest. In the language of the poet, *The busy house-wife was plying her even-*

(a) A picture in miniature of such enclosures as have converted grass to arable, and which have been properly managed.

ing's care; and though the daughters were too big to run and kiss her sire's return, and climb his knees the envied kiss to share; yet, what was ample amends, heart-felt joy appeared in every face, and their wholesome supper was eaten with a relish, I ween, which the rich and the great but seldom know. No more let us hear of *happy commoners* and the wondrous *rights of commonage*.

Instances similar to the above are given us by the ingenious Mr. Arthur Young, in his very useful *Annals of Agriculture*, No. 26, p. 177. "The little village in which I live, says he, has two labourers who have saved enough to become farmers, and a third who has spent 60l. in building himself a tiled and bricked cottage." A man might, I presume gallop over all the heaths and commons in England before he would meet with many examples of this kind from the *privileges of commonage*.

In good earnest, if these privileges are really and finally so advantageous to the poor, as is pretended, the poor must certainly be in the most comfortable condition where these privileges are most extensive, and a satisfactory proof of it must as certainly appear in the lightness of the poor rates. Now, as far as my own observation has reached, or as I have been able to collect authentic intelligence from others,

others, the fact is generally the reverse. Seldom have I passed over an extensive waste, but I have been shocked with the sight of a proportionable number of half-naked, half-starved women and children, with pale meagre faces, peeping out of their miserable huts, or lazing and lounging about after a few paltry screaming geese, or scabby worthless sheep; and as seldom have I found, upon enquiry, that the parochial assessments were not excessively high. "At Chailey, in Suffex, where "there are miles of commons, upon which the "poor have flocks and herds, the parish rates, "instead of being extremely light, are chiefly from "this very cause, 9s. in the pound." (b)

In the parish of Sutton Coldfield in Warwickshire, an ingenious and very obliging correspondent assures me, there are several thousand acres of common, upon which every poor family in the place has the right of commonage, and some individuals keep even twenty sheep a-piece. Besides this, five or six hundred acres are successively enclosed every four or five years, and an acre allotted to each, which he lets or cultivates as he thinks most convenient or profitable. At the expiration of this term, the fences are thrown down, and the land again becomes common, with the feed very much improved from the temporary cul-

(b) Annals of Agriculture, No. 27, p. 221.

tivation

tivation it has had, and a similar enclosure of another part of the common immediately succeeds. So that the poor have here a double advantage; the privilege of turning their little stock upon the common at large, and the allotment of an acre in the temporary enclosure, of which they frequently make a guinea annual rent. And what is remarkable, and particularly to our present argument, these advantages have greatly increased within the last thirty or forty years; the allotments having been enlarged from half an acre to a whole one, and the improvement in the cultivation having rendered the same quantity of double value. Here then surely we shall find the poor in a most comfortable condition, and scarcely any burthen at all to the parish. Just the contrary. The total annual expence of maintaining them was,

In 1742-3	only	£. 195	1	3
In 1766-7		514	18	0
In 1781-2		816	0	0
In 1785-6	even	1025	3	0

Parochial assessments, indeed, within the compass of time here stated have been doubled throughout the kingdom, and in some particular places, even more; but I do not recollect a single instance, large manufacturing towns excepted, where, as here, they have been multiplied more than five times. Part of this prodigious increase is, perhaps, to be ascribed to the increase of population,

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which is now almost twice as great as in the year 1740; I am strongly apprehensive, however, that it has chiefly arisen from the very great and unusual privileges above described. Servants, &c. in the neighbourhood, allured by these temptations, try every stratagem in order to gain a settlement in so flattering a situation. Hence an influx of inhabitants more than adequate to the increased employment; the want of which the rights of common cannot compensate.

Had all the waste lands in this parish, capable of improvement, been gradually inclosed between the years 1740 and 1750, and remained so to this day; had the proper allotments been made to each person, and every one who was able cultivated his own, or accepted a due compensation, with the perpetual extinction of all future claims, the population, I am confident, from the vastly augmented employment, would have been greater than even it is now, and I am inclined to think that the poor rates would not have been so high by one third. On the contrary, if things are managed as they have hitherto been, or even twice the quantity of temporary inclosure should be allowed, I should not wonder if the parochial expences, in the course of twenty years, are more than double their present amount.

For

For even fixt and perpetual benefits to the poor of a parish, though in themselves clear and certain, yet, viewed in their connections and consequences are often highly injurious. In the parish of Debenham in Suffolk there is a charity estate of 200l. a year for the use of the poor, and the parish of Framlingham, in the same county, has one of even 1000l. and yet in each the poor rates are 4s. 6d. in the pound; whereas in the neighbouring parish of Aspall, which has no such delusive advantage, they are scarcely 1s. 6d. "Give the poor," says the sprightly and ingenious Mr. Arthur Young, "a thousand pounds and do you make them the less poor? By no means, but *more* so. Lessen the spur to industry in a class that must be maintained by industry, and you take away what nothing can recompence." Should we therefore allow what our author contends for, that rights of common are not charged with any equivalent rent, and that they are, as in the cases now stated, and doubtless in many others, in themselves alone, a real and certain benefit to the poor; yet would he be far from having proved that they render them so easy and comfortable as they might be from that truest source of virtue and happiness, the constant efforts of their own regular industry. (b)

(b) See Mr. Young's Annals of Agriculture, No. 27, p. 221.

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2. Objection

2. *Objection to Enclosures from the rambling Disposition of Sheep.*

“ IT is a circumstance universally known and acknowledged, we are informed, p. 61, that sheep are of a very *roving* nature, and never thrive well in a state of confinement, however good their pasture; and so fond are they of *change*, that they will quit a good pasture for a bad one; consequently if there were no commons, for the farmers to turn their sheep upon in the spring, when their grounds are shut up to secure the summer crop, they would not keep any thing like the quantity of sheep in the summer which they could very well maintain in the winter.” When our author was about it, I wonder he did not complete the matter, and acquaint us that sheep are of so singular a constitution, that they thrive much better *without* food than *with* it. For it is notorious that enclosures, properly managed, produce three times as much pasture as mere wastes and commons; it is, therefore, somewhat hard if the farmer cannot contrive to keep an equal number of sheep both summer and winter, as if he were to turn his rich fields into barren heaths.

But “ sheep it seems are of so *roving* a nature, that they never thrive in a long state of confinement.” If this be really true, to any considerable

able degree, they must be totally different from all other animals reared for human food, which generally thrive best when still and quiet, and contented with their situation. Nay, the very circumstance of *housed lambs*, and the rapidity with which they fatten, does it not suggest the idea that even full grown sheep supplied with proper food, might be likewise expeditiously and effectually fattened under equal confinement?

Besides, to keep our author's reasoning full in view, what is the confinement necessarily resulting from enclosures? May not separate fields and pastures contain from five to fifty acres, of almost every form and figure? Will not the prudent farmer change his sheep from one to the other, so as to give them as great variety as possible? And will not this afford ample indulgence to their rambling disposition? I see no manner of reason why the poor creatures, with empty bellies and mournful cries, should gallop ten or twenty miles a day over a barren heath, in quest of a wretchedly precarious subsistence, instead of lying down calm and content and fed to the full; unless, indeed, it were intended to keep them in excellent breathing that they might at length figure away at Newmarket, or some other of our public race grounds.

3. *Objections*

3. *Objections from Soil, and Situation.*

That there are soils and situations incapable of improvement by the utmost efforts of human art, may safely be granted. "I am far from thinking," says Mr. B. Pryce of Salisbury, "every com-
" mon would pay for enclosing, and admit of the
" same cultivation as the adjoining lands. But I
" verily believe that four parts in five of the com-
" mons throughout the kingdom are capable of
" great improvement; either by enclosing or al-
" lotting into specific shares; by planting, drain-
" ing, cleansing, or by such management as the
" different soils, situations and circumstances re-
" spectively require, and which they are debarred
" from in their present state. Such improvements
" I am well convinced would be highly beneficial
" both to individuals and to society." No ra-
" tional advocate for enclosures ever wished to ex-
" tend the practice further than this. Let us see how
" the matter stands respecting the soils, &c. specified
" by our author.

"Many extensive wastes," says he, p. 49, "such
" as Salisbury Plain, Newmarket Heath, Odfey
" Heath, &c. being a chalk, rocky soil, are ut-
" terly incapable of improvement by cultivation.
" In their present unenclosed state they maintain
" large breeding flocks of sheep, whence they are
" folded

" folded upon the neighbouring ploughed lands,
" which by that means alone are rendered fertile."

That heaths impart fertility to the neighbour-
ing enclosures is, I believe, not very usual. On
the contrary, who has not frequently beheld the
barren debilitated condition of those lands which
are situate upon the borders of an extensive com-
mon? Mr. Pryce just now mentioned, a man of
very accurate and extensive observation in these
matters, in a letter dated the 2d of January, 1787,
to a friend who has favoured me with the sight of
it, says, "You remember calling on me at Chard-
" stock, near Axminster, last summer, when I
" was valuing that extensive manor, where there
" are upwards of a thousand acres of common-
" able lands. I have before remarked, and it ap-
" peared very striking upon that survey, that
" the *enclosed lands*, on those estates where the
" occupiers depend most upon the common rights,
" are greatly impoverished. The reason of which
" is, that a larger stock being kept than can be
" conveniently maintained, every blade of grass,
" that the enclosed land produces, is annually
" mowed for the support of the cattle in winter.
" The dung of these cattle, is lost upon the commons,
" instead of being returned to the enclosed land;
" which, by this wretched system, becomes much
" impoverished and exhausted, to the great preju-
" dice
" dice

“ dice of the land owner, the occupier and the “ community.”

But granting that ploughed lands are sometimes benefited by sheep being folded upon them from the adjoining commons, might not this advantage, to a much more considerable degree, and with greater convenience, be derived from such commons when enclosed? Grant they are improper to be broken up and subjected to tillage; might not the farmer from the clover and artificial grasses of his arable lands *fold* upon them, and thereby produce a more rich and abundant herbage? And might he not hence in return more profitably fold his arable lands, and thereby render both of them doubly productive? Certainly he might; nor would any evil result from it, but that his wool would be coarser nearly in proportion to the increased richness of his pasture.

This evil, it must be acknowledged would probably follow; (a) as it certainly has followed from some of the enclosures already made. Fine wool is much more scarce, and of course considerably dearer, than it was before they took place.

(a) Mr. Arthur Young, in his annals of Agriculture, has given an exception to this; and Mr. Stone, (page 66 of his Suggestions, &c.) assures us that Mr. Bakewell of Dishley in Lincolnshire, by due attention to his breed, can produce wool of almost what degree of fineness he pleases. This requires further proof.

Should

Should all our pastures, were such a thing possible, be rendered as luxuriant as those of Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, &c. our sheep would all, in a course of years, become of similar bulk with those there produced.

No longer should we see those nimble, dapper little creatures which now appear on the South Downs of Sussex, on Newmarket Heath, or the poorer grounds of Suffolk and Norfolk; nor should we any more possess that fine wool we at present boast. But whatever were lost in *quality*, would be amply supplied in *quantity*; and *shillings* gained instead of *pence*.

The ingenious Mr. Anderson informs us that the sheep fed on the poor lands of Scotland in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen produced wool of so delicate a texture that a pair of stockings were made of it which might be drawn through a common gold ring; that they exceeded the richest silk, were valued at five guineas, and presented to Marshal Keith. *If we cannot hope to make such elegant presents* from our fertile enclosures, let us remember that a fat ox is better than a silk-worm; that a bale of coarse serge is more valuable than a yard of fine broad cloth; and that fifty pair of yarn stockings and fifty fear-nothing coats, to keep warm the legs and backs of fifty poor peasants, are in a national view, of more importance than a single

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pair of hose, though rivalling the most glossy silk, or than the finest cloth which a Scottish loom ever produced, or which ever graced the person of the smartest beau.

“ But so thin is the soil of these commons,” it seems, “ and so chalky and rocky is it underneath, “ that they grow no trees, and are incapable of “ producing them.” But is not the presumption just the contrary? For, as Mr. Lamport rightly observes, do not the most bleak and rocky hills produce firs more solid in their timber, though slower in their growth, than those which are planted in richer soils?

“ There are other commons,” it is said, p. 51, “ which are an absolute sand, and which produce “ scarcely any thing but heath, wild thyme, &c. “ affording very little sustenance even for sheep. “ Such for instance as Esher and Cobham commons, and part of Windsor Forest, Bagshot “ Heath, &c. If upon a survey there should be “ found, at an easy distance, marle or other stiff “ earth to mix with the sand, it would probably “ be a public benefit if they were enclosed and “ cultivated.” It certainly would, nor need we despair of this, even though marle and stiff earth to mix with the sand should *not* be found at an *easy* distance. For by means of navigable canals, might not suitable manure, with very little difficulty, be conveyed

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conveyed from any distance? A hundred miles as well as one? And is there a barren spot in the kingdom which has not its correspondent manure within that compass?

Navigable canals appear absolutely necessary to the full perfection of the agriculture of this kingdom whether in the new or the old enclosures. The objections to them I have hitherto heard, and considered in a general view; whatever force they may have in some local applications, seem to me, when fairly examined, to be of very little weight. It is said they are often a violation of private property, and that they sometimes impair the beauty of gentlemen's estates. Particular injuries are easily compensated, and as to the mere charms of fine views, and delightful prospects, navigable canals more frequently tend to heighten than to diminish them, not only by means of that various shifting scene they immediately introduce, but by that richer luxuriance of pasturage and those higher improvements of culture, which they finally accomplish. —And as to the apprehension that they will lessen the national security by decreasing the number of seamen, it strikes me as the most groundless objection of all. The event would be just the reverse. Not a fish, not a coal, (*f*) the less would be carried to

(*f*) A plan has lately been published of a navigable canal to be made from Lynn to London, through the counties of Norfolk,

to London, or to any other of our ports, a very few of them indeed excepted; while ten times the quantity of both would be conveyed not only to most of our inland counties, but to the internal parts of the maritime ones; and thus two thirds of our people would be furnished with the first necessaries of life, food and fuel, at little more than half the price they are now. This increased consumption of fish would proportionably multiply the number of fishermen; this augmented consumption of coals would equally augment the num-

ber of colliers, both in the mine and upon the coast; who being, as it were failors in embryo, would man our future navies, and "carry protection or terror as far as waters roll, or winds could waft them." In a word, *enclosures, navigable canals, agriculture, our fisheries, and our naval strength seem inseparably united.* The three last will be the natural consequence of the two first; and while we exert ourselves to make them go hand in hand, no bounds need to be set to the fertility of our soil, the increase of our people, or the power, prosperity and glory of Great Britain.

ber, Suffolk, and Essex. But it does not appear to have gained that degree of attention which either the importance of the subject, or the ingenuity with which it has been treated, might justly claim. I have seldom met with a scheme, as far as I am able to judge, of greater plausibility, or more apparently replete with beneficial consequences. The ingenious author has, I believe, among other advantages, hinted at the diminution of expence it would occasion in the carriage of coals; but it seems to have escaped him, that the expediency of this is daily increasing, from the perpetual decrease of our wood, and the approaching necessity of burning almost entirely this species of fuel. Many of the farmers as well as tradesmen, in a great measure, do so already; and, in the course of thirty years, they will all not improbably be obliged to do the same, together with even the poor themselves. How heavy a burthen this will be is not difficult to estimate, when it is remembered that the carriage alone to many places is now 18 or 20s. a chaldron, nearly the original price of the coals; whereas, should the projected canal be made, to no place would it exceed five or six.

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ber of colliers, both in the mine and upon the coast; who being, as it were failors in embryo, would man our future navies, and "carry protection or terror as far as waters roll, or winds could waft them." In a word, *enclosures, navigable canals, agriculture, our fisheries, and our naval strength seem inseparably united.* The three last will be the natural consequence of the two first; and while we exert ourselves to make them go hand in hand, no bounds need to be set to the fertility of our soil, the increase of our people, or the power, prosperity and glory of Great Britain.

General

4. *General Review of a Pamphlet entitled*
 "CURSORY REMARKS UPON ENCLOSURES,
 BY A COUNTRY FARMER."

HAVING examined our author's leading positions, and likewise considered his several miscellaneous objections, I should here have concluded. But since writing the greater part of the preceding pages a new publication has made its appearance intitled *Cursory Remarks on Enclosures, by a Country Farmer*. As the writer we have already attended to chiefly directs his arguments against the enclosure of *waste lands*, this gives a dreadful list of the consequences of enclosing *common fields*. He asserts, (a) that although the farmer of an enclosure can use his land as he pleases, and has the strongest motives to cultivate and improve it to the utmost, yet that his corn will be neither so much in quantity nor so good in quality (b) as that which grows in the open fields; that all near the hedges will be thin and weak; and yet, that thin and weak as it is, the hedges being, we must suppose, necessarily as high as the walls of Babylon, it will so retain the wet, and be made so extremely soft by a shower of rain, or the very dews of heaven, that neither sun nor wind

(a) P. 9, 10.

(b) P. 11.

(c) P. 2.

can

can either dry or harden it; that a few grains thus soaked will so mar the whole, that the poor baker will be forced to spoil our bread with alum, or feed the hogs with his flour; that the kingdom has by enclosures lost two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, the greater part of whom have migrated to foreign countries, and, that, although most of them were previously reduced to a most dreadful state of poverty, they yet carried away with them two millions and a half of money (d), and thereby enabled the Americans to defeat the British troops, (e) and secure their independence; that they notwithstanding left behind them an amazing multitude of miserable wretches, starving for want of employment; which employment, however, we are carefully informed, many of them were unable to perform if they could have got it, they being already worn out with age and infirmity; that the rest, destitute of courage to cross the ocean, have turned thieves and robbers at home, and filled the country with plunder and rapine: In a word, that if this practice of enclosing is suffered to go on, England must be content with *about half* (f) its number of inhabitants; that although enclosures of the most disadvantageous kind do not indeed diminish provisions in the same proportion as they diminish the mouths which are to consume them, and although such provisions are raised at less expence, yet

(d) P. 8.

(e) P. 7.

(f) P. 22.

has

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has their price necessarily encreased from the encrease of enclosures. — Such are the various vague inconsistent reasonings of this writer, which, thus collected together and placed in one view, may very safely be left to destroy themselves.

I would, however, just observe, that it is only to *one* of his great and leading assertions, namely *the tendency of enclosures to depopulate*, that he has given the evidence of *fact*, and that that too is merely of a *single* parish; whereas, in my *Enquiry concerning the Influence which Enclosures have had upon the Population of this Kingdom*, I have given 90 parishes recently inclosed, which, notwithstanding many of them have doubtless been mismanaged, some been converted to pasture, which would have done better in tillage, and others put under the plough which would have been more profitable if grazed; have yet, upon the whole, not only greatly encreased their people, but even considerably more increased them than those parishes that have not been recently inclosed.

Besides, the single instance which this writer has given, is that of a parish in which common fields of arable land have been turned into pasture, which, the warmest advocates for enclosures readily allow diminish the inhabitants upon that particular spot; and we are not unwilling to acknowledge that even 50, or 100, perhaps more, such parishes are to be found

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found in the kingdom; and yet we confidently maintain that the result of the whole is a greatly augmented population.

C O N C L U S I O N.

TO resume our general subject, both speculation and experience concur to establish the utility and expedience of enclosures. Indeed the advantages arising from them, in every view, are so various and almost infinite, that I am really surpris'd that enemies to them can still remain; yet more astonished am I that these enemies should be found among *Englishmen*. *Englishmen* boast the high privilege of independence, the invaluable liberty of converting their private possessions, each man for himself, to the greatest advantage, unconnected with the whims, unsubjected to the fancies and encroachments of those around them. But who can be thus *independent*, who can be thus at *liberty*, while he joins in the restrained cultivation of open fields, or shares in the precarious profits of wastes and commons? That I may not however further enlarge upon the subject myself, (to which a deep conviction of its importance towards the advancement of our agriculture, towards the increase of our national wealth, population and prosperity strongly inclines me,) I will here take my leave of it nearly in the animated words of my obliging and spirited correspondent of Longleat.

“ I beg

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“ I beg leave to ask, says he, the following
 “ questions, and when they are answered satisfacto-
 “ rily, the public will be able to judge for them-
 “ selves.

“ Is it not evident that the inhabitants of this
 “ kingdom are greatly increased? Is it not equally
 “ manifest that the consumption of all kinds of
 “ provisions is increased still more than our peo-
 “ ple? Is not wheaten bread the universal food of
 “ the lowest orders of men in counties where it used
 “ to be confined to the middle and higher ranks?
 “ Is not that bread made of the finest flour? Is
 “ not the consumption of cheese and butter, in
 “ many places, almost trebled? Are not beef and
 “ mutton now eaten almost daily in villages where
 “ formerly the use of them was hardly known, or
 “ not more than once a week? Do not the farmers,
 “ in most parts of the nation, allow their servants,
 “ and workmen three times as much strong beer as
 “ heretofore? Must not this have vastly aug-
 “ mented the consumption of barley? At the same
 “ time, are there not thousands of quarters both of
 “ that and of wheat distilled more than used to be?

“ How has this increased consumption been
 “ supplied, but by an increase of produce? Whence
 “ has arisen this increase of produce, but from an
 “ increase in the *extent*, and still more, amend-
 “ ment in the *mode* of the cultivation of our lands?

“ Is

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“ Is it not for the interest of the community
 “ that the greatest possible produce should be
 “ obtained from every acre of ground, and that
 “ each acre should be applied to the properest use
 “ for which nature designed it?

“ Have not the improvements of late years, by
 “ the use of lime, chalk, marle, &c. and by the
 “ culture of turnips, clover, faintfoin, &c. ren-
 “ dered those *high* and *light* lands abundantly pro-
 “ ductive which before were of little or no value?
 “ And as to the *low* and *heavy* ones, has not the
 “ general introduction of draining been the means
 “ of converting cold, wet arable to dry, healthy
 “ pasture, and of rendering many thousand acres
 “ of boggy, unwholesome meadow sound and pro-
 “ per for breeding and fattening cattle, on which
 “ it was before impossible they should be either
 “ fattened or bred? In these several cases, have not
 “ the rents been doubled, trebled, and even quadru-
 “ pled? And must not the produce have been
 “ enlarged in full proportion to enable the farmer
 “ to pay such heightened rents?

“ If I am answered in the affirmative, allow me
 “ to ask, how could these things have been accom-
 “ plished, unless the common fields and pastures
 “ had been divided and allotted in specific shares
 “ to every proprietor, so that he might have it in
 “ his power to manage his land in that way which
 “ nature

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“ nature intended, and in which, his own experience taught him, it would be most productive and profitable ?

“ If I am answered in the negative, then, in God’s name, let all the ancient enclosures, as well as the new, be again thrown open. Let us no longer boast of our improvements, but let us return to our primitive barbarity, and let our flocks and herds resume the undisturbed possession of the forests. No longer let William the Norman be branded in history for throwing down the enclosures of a few villages to enlarge his forest. We are now told (in what we were foolish enough to think the enlightened age of George III.) that he stopt his hand too soon; for that it is by forests alone we can find subsistence, and that the destruction of them, and the destruction of the kingdom are inseparable.”

F I N I S.

Of W. RICHARDSON may be had, by the same Author,

1. An Essay on the Population of Ireland. Price 1s.
2. Enquiry into the Influence of Enclosures upon the Population of this Kingdom. Second Edition, with Additions. Price 1s. 6d.
3. Confirmation. A Sermon preached at the Visitation of the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London, in the Church of Thaxted, in Essex, on Friday, May 26, 1786. Price 1s.