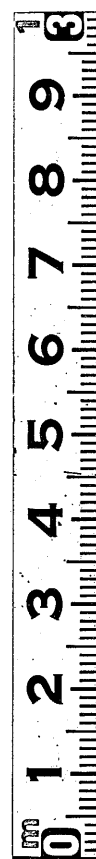


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THEORY AND FACTS

IN PROOF THAT THE

LAWS FOR THE IMPOSITION OF TITHES

ARE ATTENDED WITH

THE MOST CALAMITOUS CONSEQUENCES TO THE COUNTRY,

WITH

PLANS FOR THE REDEMPTION OF TITHES;

AND AN

ILLUSTRATION OF THE THEORY, GIVING A SOLUTION OF THE
INTRICACIES OF THE CORN QUESTION WITH RESPECT
TO IMPORTATION AND RESTRICTION.

BY MAJOR M. H. COURT,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

JOHN HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY.

1826.

TO THE PUBLIC.

HISTORY records, that the lands of ancient Rome were thrown out of cultivation, and converted into pasture; and that the people were fed by distributions of corn received from the remote provinces. How far such an event may have contributed to the decline and fall of that great empire, this is not the proper place for investigation. What substitutes of industry that people may have found for the labours of agriculture, have not been handed down to us. But this we know,—that their virtue declined with their agriculture, and their greatness with their virtue.

The greatness and the glory of the British empire are not less due to the virtue of the people than to their wealth.

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I dedicate to the Public the subject comprized in the few following pages, as the tribute of an humble individual, who is anxious for the wealth and happiness, the virtue and the glory of his country.

Castlemans, Hare Hatch, Berks,
August 1, 1826.

ON TITHES,

&c.

I do not intend to encroach upon the time, nor to weary the patience of my readers, by writing or printing one word more than may be necessary, according to the best of my judgment; to convince their understandings by a just and impartial view of the subject which I have undertaken to submit to their perusal and attention.

It will, I hope, in the course of my argument be made sufficiently manifest, that I neither desire nor contemplate any invasion of the existing rights of any body of men or of individuals. My sole object is to offer such suggestions as appear to the impressions and conviction of my own mind, calculated by their adoption to extend the resources of the country;

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to encourage the industry of our population; and to lay open those sources of increased production, which are now closed and incapable of being brought into activity, by those untoward circumstances, which it is the purpose of this discussion to bring into more particular notice.

I proceed, therefore, without further preface to my subject.

All land possessing natural powers of production, has the capacity to yield a rent, provided that a demand exists for its use and occupation.

The minimum or lowest rent of land, will depend upon the quality and quantity of its natural production, unaided by employment of capital.

The improved rent of land, will depend upon the relative increase of its productive powers, by labour and employment of capital.

Let the minimum of one description of land, be taken as one, with powers of improvement by labour and capital, to have its fertility doubled. And the minimum of another description of land, be taken as two; with powers of improvement by employment of the same labour and capital, to have its fertility tripled.

In the natural state of each description of land; the rent of the former compared with the

latter will be as one to two. In the improved state as one to three.

If one hundred persons of a village, possess an equal right of common, to pasture a sheep or a cow, and one individual transfers his privilege to his neighbour for an equivalent, though he may thereby benefit himself, he does no injury to his neighbour. The value of such equivalent, will depend upon the quality and quantity of the common land to yield food, and the price that the beast may fetch in the market. And this may be considered as an instance of the minimum rent of land, which is the gift of nature, to those enjoying the right of possession.

An example of the improved rent of land, may be taken as follows:—

A landlord has brought under cultivation 500 acres of land, and he employs a capital of £5000. He finds, by experience of the produce and the prices for which it will sell in the market, that he realizes sufficient to pay tithes, assessments, wages of labour, and all other charges attendant upon the farm; and in addition, such surplus produce as will yield to him £500 per ann. besides the interest of his capital and the ordinary profits of trade.

He naturally concludes, that by bringing the

land under cultivation, he has acquired an improved rent of £500, per annum; and as he wishes to retire from the labours of agricultural pursuit, he seeks a tenant who may be willing and able to give to him a rental, corresponding in some degree, with his own experience of its value.

The tenant makes his calculation of the produce which the farm is likely to yield; and the value of the produce he estimates by the prices that he will probably obtain for it in the market. His judgment of the quality of the land, will decide his opinion of the produce, and the cost of labour in obtaining it. Tithes, rates, and assessments are compulsory payments, which he can in no way avoid, nor can he regulate their amount. On the contrary, in forming his calculation of the capacity of his capital to cultivate the farm, he must state these items as fixed quantities; and the wages and amount of labour he can employ for productive uses, will depend upon what remains, after these indispensable charges are paid. The surplus produce of the farm will regulate his contract with the landlord, and in his decision of the rent which he will consent to pay, he will consider the amount of it, solely and exclusively in relation to profits.

Rent is therefore a quantity entirely dependent upon the fertility of the soil and the prices of produce. The landlord must always follow the advance of prices, in raising his rent; and though his personal interest may be concerned in maintaining advanced prices, he can in no way, have been instrumental in originating them.

In eastern countries, where the right of property in the soil is vested in the sovereign, the cultivators are required to deliver one half, one third, or other fixed proportion of the gross produce to government. The cultivator in such instance, must lay aside the amount of such imposition as a fixed quantity of no value to him, and from the remainder, he must seek remuneration of the cost of production of the whole quantity, with his fair expectation of profits. The price which he must obtain in the market for such remainder, must necessarily, in the case of an imposition of one half the gross produce for delivery to government, be double the price he would of necessity require, if he had the whole produce at his own disposal: and the consumers of the produce, must compulsorily by the necessity of the circumstances of the case, yield to the cultivator such a price, or the land will lay waste.

The imposition of tithes by the laws of this country, operates in like manner to force a proportional advance of price upon the consumer. It takes from capital and not from profits, of which it is quite regardless, and the effect of such an impost may be expressed in the words of Mr. Malthus:—

“A rent may be prematurely and immediately created by taking such a portion of the gross produce; but in this case, only the most fertile lands can be cultivated, and profits, wages, and population will come to a premature stop.”

The imposition of tithe must consequently advance the cost of production and prices of the produce. Whereas, rent is preceded by prices and proceeds from profits.

Tithe operates as a cause to augment price.—Rent is subordinate to and the effect of augmented price.

Tithe is forced from the land,—Rent is its natural gift.

Tithe, is forced from the land, by the operation of a law, which counteracts the ordinances of our creator; to increase and multiply and replenish the earth.—Rent, is the natural gift of land; and whether enjoyed by the labourer, the farmer, or the landlord, it equally and in all instances, proceeds from the beneficence of God

to man, in reward of his exertions, and of his observance of the divine laws.

Tithe acts upon the productive powers of the country, as the veto of the king, preceding the discussion of any measure by Parliament, would upon its political constitution. The one does check the employment of capital, our industry, and our population.—The other would strangle our liberties.

Rent is acted upon by the enlargement of our capital, the exertions of industry, and the expansion of population; and to pursue the comparison, it may be likened unto the gracious consent of our sovereign, to the wise measures proposed by an enlightened and liberal Parliament.

Tithe is the parent of adversity.

Rent is the offspring of prosperity.

Notwithstanding the wide difference, so evidently and incontrovertibly existing between rent and tithe, which are as opposite to each other in their action upon the community, as cause and effect; it has been contended,* that, tithe is merely such a distribution of that portion of the gross produce, which, if not granted by law to the tithe owner, would necessarily

* Vide Quarterly Review, No. 58.

revert to the landlord, in the form of rent. If this be the true position of the question, tithe becomes nothing more than a rent charge; and as such it would partake all the qualities of rent.

As this position is so directly at variance with logical inference; let us try if it can be better supported by analytical demonstration.

Let p , be made to represent the gross produce; c , the gross rent, or that surplus which after paying the necessary expences and profits of the farmer, becomes applicable for payment of rent and tithe. Let t , be made to represent the tithe, and r , the net rent, or that portion which is supposed to remain to the landlord after payment of the tithe.

Then $c = t + r$; and $r = c - t$; and the farmers expences and profits which we will call $x = p - c$.

Hence these several quantities are made to appear under the assumed value of c in the following

CULTIVATION TABLE.

	Value of c .	Value of t .	Value of r .	Value of x .	
No. 1	$\frac{9}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{8}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	
2	$\frac{8}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{7}{10} p$.	$\frac{2}{10} p$.	
3	$\frac{7}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{6}{10} p$.	$\frac{3}{10} p$.	
4	$\frac{6}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{5}{10} p$.	$\frac{4}{10} p$.	
5	$\frac{5}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{4}{10} p$.	$\frac{5}{10} p$.	
6	$\frac{4}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{3}{10} p$.	$\frac{6}{10} p$.	
7	$\frac{3}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{2}{10} p$.	$\frac{7}{10} p$.	
8	$\frac{2}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{8}{10} p$.	
9	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	Vanishes.	$\frac{9}{10} p$.	} Extreme point of cultiva- tion.
10	Nothing.	$\frac{1}{10} p$.	Vanishes.	p .	

There can be no dispute, that in the instance of land answering to the description of No. 9; where the gross rent c , is only equal to one tenth of the produce, and where rent appears to vanish by the operation of tithe; that the landlord himself, cannot cultivate his land without a loss, unless the consumer will pay the tithe; in which case, the surplus c would fall to him as rent. The land without any application of capital, will yield to the landlord its natural produce, or minimum rent as grass land, which he would totally sacrifice by cultivation, on the supposition that he paid the tithe.

The votaries of the tithe system are there-

fore reduced to this dilemma ; either, to admit that the tithe must be paid by the consumer ; or, that the tithe throws out of cultivation, all those lands which, but for such a tax, could be cultivated with a profit to the community, to the landlord, and to the farmer ; and which, by giving increase of supply in proportion to the demand, would by the natural and inevitable course of things, either reduce the price of produce, or supply the wants of an increased population. The effect upon the consumer, must be equally the same to impose upon him an increased price ; whether such increase proceeds by check upon production, whereby an augmented value is forced upon a diminished quantity ; or by payment of tax or tithe upon increased produce. But as there is no choice left to man, so long as he chooses to exist, whether he will be fed or not ; the supply must equal the necessary demand of the population for food ; or in proportion to the deficiency of supply, will there inevitably be created, a mortality of the population. The necessity of the case, therefore, fixes upon the votary for tithe, the choice of taxing or starving the people.

But the truth is unquestionable, that the tithe must stand charged to the consumer ; for if the price of ten shillings which is necessary to

bring No. 9, into cultivation, be not granted by the consumer, who will only give, or may only have the means of giving 8s. 10d. $\frac{2}{3}$. then the proportions of No. 9, will attach to No. 8, one degree higher, and each grade of the table will take the place and proportions of that above it ; because if the expences of farming are the same, No. 8, will, at the reduced price, require 900 bushels at 8s. 10d. $\frac{2}{3}$. to supply those wants of the farmer, which at ten shillings the bushel were covered by 800 bushels. No. 8, therefore, is made to take the proportions of No. 9, viz. $c = \frac{1}{10} p$, $t = \frac{1}{10} p$, and rent vanishes, and the consumer must pay the tithe, in order that the landlord may not lose that rent which he owes only to nature.

At whatever point of comparative fertility of the land, you may fix the extreme of the scale, or in other words, the proportions affixed to No. 9, the same reasoning will inevitably follow. For that land which is lowest in the scale of existing cultivation, or that which yields the least profit, must be concluded to have been brought under cultivation, in consequence of the market prices being found, or being thought sufficient to give to the expected produce from such land, that value which would cover the expences and profits of the farmer and the rent of the landlord.

It is manifest, that the construction of the table, and the arguments with which it is accompanied, involve no such evident absurdity as that of land being cultivated that yields no rent. Quite the reverse. The strength of my position consists in the natural necessity of land to pay rent if it is cultivated; and if such rent cannot be paid, the necessity then ensues that it should go out of cultivation, and revert to its natural produce or minimum rent as grass land; which the mercy of heaven has bestowed, which the laws of man, however contradictory to the divine decrees, cannot take from it, and which constitutes the one solitary check upon the rapacity of the Tithe system.

The cultivation table may be considered in the light of an agricultural series of relation, resting upon unerring principles, and which must, at all times, and under all circumstances of variation in the prices of produce and the expences of farming, show the extreme point where cultivation must cease to be profitable to the farmer, to the landlord, and to the community. That is to say, so long as man continues to be beholden to the bounty of heaven for its natural produce or minimum rent; and to stand indebted to the law for the imposition of tithe.

As the necessity of the consumer to pay the tithe has been clearly established, I shall in any

future consideration of the rent of the landlord, consider the gross rent c as the improved rent of land under cultivation or corn land.

On due consideration of the principles upon which the agricultural series is constructed, it will be at once apparent, that if the price of produce remains the same, but the expences of farming are reduced by machinery or improved modes of agriculture, land of an inferior description as No. 10, will then assume the proportions affixed to No. 9. If expences remain the same, and prices rise or fall, then inversely will No. 9 fall or rise in correspondence.

If expences and prices rise or fall together, then the proportions placed against No. 9 will vary their station according as the ratio of variation in each effect may happen to predominate. But the extreme point of the series will, under every circumstance of variation, be found to settle as it is represented in No. 9, viz. $c = \frac{1}{10} p$, tithe paid by the consumer and $x = \frac{9}{10} p$.

The consequences to be inferred from this agricultural series of relation are of the highest importance in the investigation of practical results. As the series is established upon incontrovertible principles, the following corollaries will be equally founded on truth.

1. Tithe is paid by the consumer, and it fixes a tax of ten per cent. upon the capital vested in cultivation, regardless of any consideration, whether the venture is attended with profit to the farmer, or whether with loss, and the tithe upon corn lands presses with ten times the weight that it does upon grass lands. For taking the natural produce or minimum rent of grass land to be $\frac{1}{10}$ of the cultivated produce, and representing it by $\frac{1}{10}p$, the tithe upon that cannot exceed $\frac{1}{100}p$; whereas, upon the same land in cultivation of corn, it will be $\frac{1}{10}p$, as marked in the table. Consequently the tithe upon corn land is to the tithe upon the same land in grass in the ratio of ten to one. And as $\frac{1}{10}p$ is the tax upon the whole cultivated produce, it constitutes a tax of ten per cent. upon the capital vested to bring forth that produce. Such is the encouragement to agriculture. Can we be astonished that there is a deficiency of supply, or a high price of produce?

2. That the rent paid to the landlord can by no possibility enhance or influence the prices of produce, which are, in fact, fixed by the consumers themselves, or rather by the measure of supply in proportion to the demand.

For the price of corn fixes the extreme point of the scale of cultivation, where land will yield

the least profit to the farmer and the least rent to the landlord; and the rise of rents in the superior grades of the scale is nothing more than that natural effect resulting from this simple principle; if my land will yield twice as much surplus as yours at the same expence, I have a right to twice as much rent.

3. It is the interest of the landlord that the extreme point of the series should be brought as low as possible, or in other words, that cultivation should be extended as much as possible; because in proportion as the extreme point of the series descends, will the proportion of the produce he will acquire for his rent increase. For example, if the extreme point be at No. 9, and his land happens to be of the description of No. 5, his rent will be $\frac{5}{9}$ of the produce; but if the extreme point be found at No. 5, by taxation or otherwise, and all other lands be thrown out of cultivation, his proportion will be that of No. 9 only $\frac{1}{9}$ of the produce.

4. It is therefore more to the interest of the landlord, that land should be cultivated at five shillings the bushel in the descent, than that it should be cultivated at ten shillings the bushel in the ascent of the extreme point of the series. Because when the extreme point is at No. 9, his land at No. 5 gives him 500 bushels at five shil-

lings, or £125. per annum. Whereas, if the lands below No. 5 were thrown out of cultivation, and the extreme point were made to ascend to No. 5, then he would only obtain 100 bushels, which, at ten shillings the bushel, will give him only £50. for his rent.

5. The interests of the landlord therefore entirely coincide with those of the community; viz. to have as large a produce at as small expence as possible.

6. It is not true, therefore, as is generally supposed, that prices are high, because lands of an inferior degree of fertility are cultivated. But prices are high, because those lands are not cultivated; and because by the operation of the law of tithe, farmers are discouraged from the attempt at cultivation of them. There is consequently a diminished produce, and I need not say as a further consequence, that there is an increased price.

7. It is clear that so long as the expences of farming remain the same, that the agricultural series cannot be made to descend whilst tithe exists, unless by imposing advanced prices upon the consumer; because at any price by which that series may be supposed to be regulated, any further cultivation would be at the expence of the farmer, or deduction from his necessary

profits. The landlord will always be entitled to at least the natural produce or minimum rent of land, which in ordinary soils and under usual cultivation, cannot be estimated short of one-tenth of its cultivated produce.

8. It is clear also, that by reducing the expences of farming, and thereby increasing the gross rent, the series is made to descend. Because if you cultivate No. 5 at the same expence as No. 4, you bring the former into the place of the latter, and each grade below takes the place of that above, and No. 10, which was thrown out of cultivation, is brought into cultivation and takes the position and proportions of No. 9. Such a descent of the series would have the effect to give a great increase of produce, to increase the supply in proportion to the demand, and consequently to reduce prices. The wealth, the industry, and the population of the country would thus progressively increase; and in proportion with such increase must the community consent that the advantages of the landlord should improve. He is by the insurmountable decree of the Almighty Ruler of all things so situated upon the earth, that if the country prospers, he must also prosper; and if the country declines in its wealth, its industry, and its population, he must also partake of its adverse circumstances.

We have now cast off the fetters of darkness, and clothed ourselves in the armour of light. All supposed collision of interests between the landlord and the public, is found to be the fiction of imagination. Contention between the landlord and the public must now cease, and be exchanged for the universal belief, that the landlord and the public are inseparably united in the same object; to increase the wealth, the resources, and the prosperity of the British empire. Let us therefore embark in one common effort, to make the agricultural series descend with a ratio of as small a price for produce as it is possible to command.

The question then comes, How is this to be done. The answer, Grant compensation to the tithe-owner, and obliterate for ever the name of a tax which can only remind us of adversity. How this may be done, I shall endeavour to show hereafter. At present, let me consider only the effect of so benign, so necessary, and in the present circumstances of the country, so indispensable a measure.

The prices of the necessaries of life must fall, the wages of labour must fall, the expences of farming must fall. Lands now in cultivation will have their produce increased—lands now in pasture will come into cultivation. Produce

will be further increased, prices will further fall, wages will further fall, the expences of farming will further fall, and the agricultural series will further descend. Our manufacturers will receive a further stimulus to supply the increased demand of an active and progressively increasing agricultural population; and what the home market cannot take from them, they will be enabled to export at reduced prices to foreign countries.

The landlord need not be afraid of the reduction of the prices of agricultural produce; for by the descent of the agricultural series, as I have shown above, the deficiency of price which they will receive for that portion of the produce forming rent, will be more than compensated by the increase of its quantity.

Let my readers carefully and diligently contemplate how wide the difference between the measure proposed for the abolition of tithe, and that for which the public are erroneously so strenuous, the repeal of the Corn Laws. I say erroneously, merely with reference to the measure I propose in opposition.

I most cordially and implicitly agree, that if the Tithe Laws are not abolished, the Corn Laws ought to be repealed.

Here then we rest upon a poise; and the issue is to determine, whether we confer a blessing on our own country, or transfer it to foreign nations. Whether we shall give increase to our own wealth, to our own industry, to our own population; or whether we shall remain stationary; until by our own act we have brought foreign nations to a level with ourselves, and at once destroy our present relative superiority. Whether we shall raise a colossus of manufactures, to be supported and fed by foreign nations, and consequently subject to destruction at the mercy of their rulers; or whether we shall preserve that harmony of proportion between agriculture and manufactures, which renders each dependent upon the other, and in their mutual strength, makes the country the guardian of its own safety, the arbiter of its own fate, and the envy of the world.

Such and no less will be the result of that momentous day, "the great, the important day, big with the fate" of England, when parliament may pass its decision upon the question of the repeal of the Corn Laws.

Let me now bring under notice the effect of the repeal of the Corn Laws upon the country, not losing sight that by the measure I pro-

pose should supersede it, *the abolition of tithe*, that whilst you reduce prices you bring land into cultivation, and increase thereby your agricultural produce, industry, and population, at the same time, that you infuse fresh life and spirit into manufactures. Therefore my measure embraces the interests of both sources of public wealth.

If by repeal of the Corn Laws the country is not to be benefited by a reduction of prices, I know not of what use the repeal will be to any body. If prices are reduced, the consequence will be that the agricultural series will ascend. Lands will be thrown out of cultivation, and distress of the agricultural population will take the place of the distress of manufacturers. The wealth of the country, if not diminished, will certainly not be increased; for the export of manufactures will go to pay for that food which we have been accustomed to raise, and could further raise from our own lands and industry. We grant a premium upon the industry of foreign nations, in order that we may maintain a tax and a check upon our own. If parliament were to enact, that all the farmers in England should sell their corn at two thirds of the market price, it would not be more prejudicial to the

country than a forced reduction of price by the repeal of the Corn Laws. The effects of such a bill would be necessarily the same; we should throw back our agriculture and increase the exports of manufactures, and by the sale of them bring that food from other countries with which we can provide ourselves.

Such is the wide and extreme difference between a natural fall of price, occasioned by internal production; and a diminished price extorted by external competition.

But it will be said by the advocates of the repeal, that they intend to have such a protecting duty, as will keep up the present prices and prevent any disasters. But they will still have to contend against this simple question; why should we pay one million, or any other amount of imported produce to foreigners, when such amount could be distributed amongst our own population; giving to the people employment and food together. The protecting duty, after all, is nothing more or less than a tax upon ourselves, to give the benefit of that profit and industry to foreigners, which we could preserve to ourselves. It is surely much better to tax ourselves for our own advantage, than to do so in aid of a foreign country. By taxing ourselves to redeem the

tithe laws, we are paid back again by a reduced price of the necessities of life, and we increase at the same time the industry, the population, and the productions of our common country.

In repealing the Corn Laws, we tax ourselves, in order that England may remain a stationary country. Whereas, to tax ourselves for the repeal of the Tithe Laws, we should be bountifully compensated by the certainty, that England would become a rapidly advancing country.

I hope if the landlords find that the repeal of the Corn Laws is to be determined upon, that they will exert every effort to counteract a protecting duty. The country will then the sooner become sensible of the extreme derangement that such a measure must create, and will the easier be able to rectify it.

It is much better that every evil should at once appear, than that it should be permitted silently and insidiously to prey upon the vitals of our strength; and to undermine, though slowly, yet surely, the sources of the industry, the population, and the wealth of our country. Such are now the progressive effects of the Tithe Laws; such will infallibly become their consummation. Such, with equal certainty, will be the effects of the repeal of the Corn Laws, even with a protecting duty; or in other words, a

duty to perpetuate and to preserve unimpaired the direful and calamitous effects of the Laws for the Imposition of Tithes upon the lands of England.

If you but knew, how you the purpose cherish
Whiles thus you mock it! How, in stripping it,
You more invest it! Ebbing men, indeed,
Most often do so near the bottom run,
By their own fear or sloth."

I will now state some facts which appear to me strictly applicable to the subject which I have been pursuing, and which I expect will fully establish and confirm all the assertions which I have made, and the arguments that I have advanced in support of them. I cannot state these facts from my own knowledge; but they are conveyed to us by a gentleman, whose name will be considered sufficient guarantee of their accuracy.

Those who may require further testimony, may consult the Report of the Board of Agriculture published in 1816.

Mr. Jacob, in his "Considerations upon Protection to Agriculture," observes, "We see in many parts of England, considerable tracks of country attached to farms, under the denomination of downs, which are, perhaps, let for less

than five shillings per acre, and only occupied by a flock of sheep, whose manure is used but upon a small part of the farm, which becoming, from that improvement alone, highly productive, is perhaps valued at five times as much as the downs: now did the tenants pay a higher rent, they would not neglect these extensive fields, but by bringing them under the plough, to which a higher rent would compel them, raise by the convertible system of husbandry, as much artificial green crops as would maintain their present flocks, and devote as much to the growth of corn as would be employed to feed their sheep." This is not a case in which a man requires to be forced into the pursuit of his own interest, and Mr. Jacob has forgotten that there is nothing compulsory in the quality of rent, it flows spontaneously from surplus and profits, which it follows and cannot precede. He should have thus stated the mode of attaining so salutary an object. Tell the tenants and insure to them that they shall be exempt from additional tithe, and enjoy the fruits of the labour, capital, and skill they may employ in bringing them under the plough, they will, *without compulsion*, adopt the convertible system of husbandry, and rents will naturally rise as the concomitant of profits.

In the same work Mr. Jacob again observes, "In the cultivated parts of Scotland the rent of land is much higher than in any part of England; but owing to the liberal application of capital, which creates a most abundant produce, and to the conviction that a smaller portion of land highly cultivated, is more profitable than a larger one negligently managed, the agriculture of that country has advanced towards perfection with unexampled rapidity, in spite of an inclement climate and a soil not naturally fertile."

Is it possible for argument or experience to adduce a more striking and convincing proof than this passage affords, of the paralyzing effect of the Tithe Laws upon the agriculture of England; and through agriculture, upon the manufactures and every branch of the industry of the country.

Here we see, that notwithstanding the rent is higher, yet being a country exempt from the Tithe system, the farmer knows that he will enjoy uninterruptedly the fruits of his exertions and the employment of his capital; he is therefore encouraged to that liberal application of capital, the fruits of which carry irresistible conviction to his mind, that a smaller portion of land highly cultivated is more profitable than a larger one negligently managed.

Here we are carried, not by theory; not by calculation, but by the unerring hand of experience to the practical proof of what a country is capable when its enterprize and energies are unshackled; notwithstanding the difficulties interposed by an inclement climate and a soil not naturally fertile. Is our capital less abundant, are our farmers less intelligent, less active, or less capable and willing to exert themselves? Certainly not. But the Tithe system has thrown a mill-stone round their necks, and they cannot advance a step, unaccompanied with the apprehension, that the law will tax them for their temerity. Remove this obstruction, and the agriculture of England will advance with unexampled rapidity.

Mr. Jacob computes that there are "five millions of acres in England in permanent pasture which might be brought under the plough, and by the introduction of the convertible system of husbandry, they would be enabled to support a proportion of cattle equal to that which they at present maintain, and to contribute a supply of corn more than equal to all our wants in the most calamitous season." No other encouragement is necessary than to tell the owners or occupiers whatever tithe you have paid, that you shall continue to pay, but adopt what system

of husbandry you please, you shall not be subjected to any further imposition.

Mr. Jacob says, p. 61, "That the lands in Great Britain already under cultivation, are almost all capable of such further improvement as may increase their produce far beyond its present quantity."

He observes also, "That to increase the productions of the earth, we must give such encouragement to agriculture, as will convince the most cautious, that in embarking their property in such operations they shall be secured, as far as legislative enactments can secure them, from any risks but such as arise from their own negligence, or from unfruitful seasons." How shall we interpret that encouragement afforded by legislative enactment, which takes away from the farmer *one tenth* of any additional produce he may acquire by vesting additional capital on his farm; regardless as the law is, of any consideration, whether the tenth so taken, be taken from a gainful or a losing adventure. This is surely not the way to stimulate even the most sanguine spirits, much less so, the most cautious.

The fact is, that the law in this case lays the farmer prostrate; and no man of ordinary prudence will strive to contend against such a remorseless enactment.

Mr. Jacob computes the whole demand of Great Britain for the annual consumption amounts to 49,975,459 quarters of all descriptions of corn. An extended improvement of the lands now under cultivation, with what might be expected from the cultivation of the five millions of acres now in permanent pasture, and the large tracts of land now used as sheep walks, it might be computed would yield at the least one-sixth part of the annual consumption, or the wants of the population for sixty days.

No positive encouragement is necessary; all that is requisite, is to remove the discouragement and the insurmountable obstacles opposed by the Tithe Law to the improvement and extension of our agriculture. This done, we shall have no longer to complain of prices, nor of deficiency of produce, nor of starving manufacturers.

I have said nothing about the five millions and a half of acres of waste lands, which Mr. Colquhoun says are capable of being brought into cultivation. They would add to corroborate, but are hardly necessary to enforce the argument. I might almost venture to say, that they may be left for the skill and enterprize of the succeeding generation.

It will be needless to say more in aggravation

of the evils of the Tithe system. Though all may not be equally conscious of the very serious and destructive effects resulting from it, all will equally acknowledge that it has been and is now pressing, with accumulating severity, upon the productive powers of the country.

I shall proceed therefore to the last, and certainly not the least important part of my inquiry: the investigation of the principle, and the mode upon which compensation may be granted to the Tithe-owner, and an enactment made by parliament for the perpetual abolition of Tithes.

If a highway is to be made, a canal to be cut, or a dock to be erected; if a convenience, or even an ornament to the metropolis becomes desirable, the interests of the public, not those of the projectors, are consulted by parliament; and if clearly substantiated, bills are passed to carry them into execution, and individuals, whose grounds or houses happen to interpose, are compelled to surrender their property, whether convenient and agreeable to themselves or otherwise, upon receiving a fair equivalent for the sacrifice, at the arbitration of a jury.

The jury, in such case, does not consider how little the property may have been worth some years back; nor do they listen to any fanciful representations of the interested parties as to

the operation of time to augment the value; but they consider liberally, fairly, and impartially what is the actual value of the property under all circumstances at the existing moment of their decision.

On this principle, do I intend to rest the plans I may offer for compensation to the Tithe-owner; and as it is a question of the deepest concern to the whole of the community, and to so large, so venerable, and so highly respected a body as the generality of the Tithe-owners, the parliament will necessarily constitute the court of adjudication.

As every individual of the community will be benefited by the reduced prices of the necessities of life, all will be equally bound to contribute towards the relief contemplated by the measure.

The Quarterly Review, No. 58, values the annual value of Tithe property as follows, viz.

	£
Total Revenues of Established Church	3,872,138
Amount of Lay Impropriations	1,752,842
Total	£5,624,980

But from this total, there are deductions to be made for revenues of the church, arising from

glebes and estates and other sources, which confer a revenue independent of tithe, and which will of course continue to be held as church property. Taking the annual amount of these revenues at £624,980., there will remain an amount of £5,000,000. Again deducting two per cent. as the contribution of the Tithe-owners in proportion to the rest of the community, which will give £100,000. for further deduction, there will remain £4,900,000. for which annual provision is to be made.

I propose that a tax be imposed of two per cent. on the rents of land, houses, annuities of the public funds, &c. We need not care about the excess of the tax above the amount for which it is raised, because those who live in England can be relieved from the assessed taxes in proportion to the excess; and those who spend their incomes abroad will thereby be compelled to contribute to the relief of their country.

Let the tithe-owner have a permanent and fixed charge upon the land of two shillings upon every acre which now is and heretofore has been chargeable with the payment of tithes. Lands which have been tithe-free, which are now waste, or from any other sufficient cause may have been exempt from tithe, to be declared exonerated

from any imposition of such nature now or hereafter.

In cases where the vicar is distinct from the tithe-owner, and entitled to the small tithes, let the tithe-owner be required to discharge the Vicar's customary dues deducting two per cent.; out of the assessment he will receive from the parish lands. Government will be thereby relieved of all the minor details of the proposed redemption.

The Quarterly Review, No. 58, gives 28,615,680 acres of land to be now subject to payment of tithes. If this be the case, the charge of two shillings per acre will yield £2,861,568, which deducted from 4,900,000 will leave £2,038,432 to be discharged annually from the Exchequer.

In arranging the compensation to the tithe-owner, let the same principle be observed, as in the cases I have above quoted; and to effect this, let each farmer or landlord be required to provide upon oath, a statement of the demands upon his lands for tithes great and small for the year 1826, according to Form No. 1.

Two or three magistrates of the highest capability and credit, might be required by the Lord Lieutenant of the county to assemble in the most central place, or in a principal town

or village of each hundred, there to receive, on a particular day, the statements of each landlord or farmer of such hundred, and to administer the requisite oath upon delivery. Sufficient notice to be given to the landlord or farmer. In the case of sickness of any farmer or landlord, which might render his absence unavoidable, a magistrate may be deputed to receive the statement and to administer the oath at the farm.

From the particulars thus afforded, it is impossible to conceive any thing more simple than the compensation to be awarded in cases where tithes have been settled by composition.

Where tithes have been paid in kind from any farm, the compensation may be estimated by the composition rates which have been paid from the farms immediately contiguous and surrounding it, in the same parish.

Where tithes have been paid on all the farms of a parish in kind, the compensation value thereof may be adjusted with reference to those parishes immediately adjoining and contiguous to it, which have paid composition.

The tithe-owners, rectors, and vicars, may be required to deliver upon oath at the quarter sessions of the county, or to the Lord Lieutenant, a statement of the actual amount of the tithes

they have received, or may be entitled to have paid to them for the year 1826, according to Forms No. 2, and No. 3.

The forms can be printed and distributed to the parties concerned, at the expence of government.

I cannot for a moment imagine any overwhelming difficulty, in forming from these documents a just estimate of the compensation necessary in every instance. There may be trouble, but nothing more, and in a case of such vast importance, who is the man that will hesitate to contribute his time and his talents, in order that his country may be extricated from one of the most unrelenting scourges that ever afflicted a nation.

Nothing more is necessary, than a sincerely disinterested desire on the parts of Government and Parliament—with honour and honesty on the part of the tithe-owners.

Such is the plan proposed, on supposition that the tithe constitutes a charge upon the consumer.

If objections are taken to any plan resting on the conclusions of theory, however just; the object in view can be accomplished with equal justice, by an assessment upon each farm. This assessment to be regulated in strict conformity

with the existing demands upon each farm, subject for the future, to no further augmentation or diminution, than may be made to appear just and necessary, with reference to a fixed and determinate scale, by which every tithe-owner, and every farmer, will be able to comprehend without chance of error, their respective rights and obligations. This scale to be regulated by the rise or fall of the average prices of corn for each year, to be published in the London Gazette, and to be proclaimed in each parish after divine service four successive Sundays.

The Quarterly Review, No. 58, mentions, that the average charge for tithes great and small, in eighteen of the most fertile and best cultivated English counties, according to the Report of the Board of Agriculture in 1812, amounted to about five shillings and six pence per acre, when wheat was certainly not less than £20, per load, or 80s. the quarter.

Now that wheat is only 60s. per quarter, at the utmost, four shillings and three halfpence would become the average.

By placing against 60s. the existing charge against each farm, for great and small tithes for the year 1826, the future assessment of such farm according to the average prices of corn, will be made to appear at one view by reference to the following scale:—

SCALE OF TITHE DUES FOR PERMANENT ASSESSMENT.		1826.—Existing Demand upon each Farm per Acre.																	
Average Price of Wheat per Quarter.	s. d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
		1	0	1	6	2	0	2	3	4	6	3	3	0	3	6	4	0	4
Shillings 80	1	4	2	0	2	8	3	4	4	4	0	4	8	5	4	4	0	4	6
75	1	3	1	10	2	6	3	1	3	1	3	3	4	5	0	5	7	1	6
70	1	2	1	9	2	4	2	1	3	2	1	3	3	1	4	8	4	8	5
65	1	1	1	7	2	2	2	8	3	3	2	3	9	4	4	4	10	5	5
Regulating Point 60	1	0	1	6	2	0	2	6	3	3	0	3	6	4	0	4	6	6	0
55	0	11	1	4	1	10	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	8	4	1	4	8
50	0	10	1	3	1	8	2	1	2	2	6	2	1	3	4	3	9	4	7
45	0	9	1	1	1	6	1	10	2	3	2	3	7	3	0	3	4	3	9
40	0	8	1	0	1	4	1	8	2	0	2	2	4	2	8	4	2	4	7
35	0	7	0	10	1	2	1	5	1	3	1	9	2	2	4	2	7	2	3
30	0	6	0	9	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	6	1	9	2	0	3	2	6

The principle upon which this schedule is constructed, appears to me to be perfectly simple and to embrace the interests of all parties. I am not aware of the least objection, nor of any possible obstacle to its immediate adoption.

If, however, circumstances should appear to render delay necessary in the formation of a plan for redemption or modification of the present Tithe Laws; any inconveniences and injury to the public in consequence of such delay, might be obviated by an immediate Act of Parliament, declaratory of the principle upon which the alteration would be conducted; and that no lands should at any future time, after passing of such act, be subject to a higher imposition of tithes, than that actually imposed for the year 1826, or such other preceding year or years as might be selected; otherwise, than may be consistent with such future law as will be passed for the arrangement of a permanent assessment upon the lands in lieu of tithes. And that all lands which are now by law, or from any other sufficient cause, exempt from tithes, are now and for ever declared, to be free and exonerated from any imposition whatever of such nature.

The consummation of such a work, would fix

a lustre upon the annals of his Majesty's reign, infinitely surpassing the most brilliant events of preceding times. The laurels of Waterloo would fade before its splendour. The smiling fields of Britain, arrayed in golden harvests, would give imperishable record to that auspicious year; when under the reign of the most munificent and glorious of her kings by the measures of an enlightened administration, aided by the counsels of a wise and liberal Parliament, the hands of industry became unfettered, and the earth unbound.

Should we happily witness the accomplishment of so desirable, so necessary a measure, which will inspirit the hearts and give vigour to the hands of the population; we must not too hastily indulge the expectation, that the benefits resulting from it, will be made immediately apparent by a fall of prices. It must be borne in mind, that the great demand for seed, will, as a collateral consequence, have the tendency to occasion a diminished proportion of supply to demand. We may rather hope that the first effect will be, to give increased activity to the market; as the diminution of price which might be anticipated from the redemption of tithes, will, with almost certain probability, be counteracted, in the first instance, by an in-

creased demand for consumption. The lapse of one, two, or three years may be necessary to afford full testimony of the operation and salutary effects of the measure, and we must await patiently, though confidently, the happy result.

Yet bear up a while,

And what your bounded view, which only saw,

A little part deem'd evil, is no more;

The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,

And one unbounded spring encircle all."

We must consider also, that the evil of advanced price, constitutes the least portion of the public injury inflicted by the Tithe Laws. It has been demonstrated; that their most pernicious effects are experienced in the derangement of the whole productive industry of the country.

All that employment of capital, those exertions of industry, and those vents for population; which, in the natural and unrestrained course of human effort, would find occupation in extending agricultural production and manufacturing demand, are left to wither under the blight of those laws which desolate so large a portion of the land.

Owing to the intervention of those laws, agriculture and manufactures are thrown from

the sphere of that mutual action in which it is so necessary that they should be kept, not only with a view to each particular interest, but equally so, in order that we may preserve unimpaired, the strength, the wealth, and the security of the empire at large.

With respect to the two plans which I have proposed for the redemption, there can be no question in my opinion, but that the first as the most effectual, will be infinitely the most politic. If the country should object to so small a Property Tax, as a substitute for its most onerous burthen, the ways and means might with equal advantage, be found in the appropriation of the Sinking Fund, without any deviation from the purposes for which that fund has been created. The Sinking Fund has been established with a view to the gradual diminution of the public debt. What is the tithe but a public debt? Many good effects result from the debt embraced by the public funds. Examine the debt imposed by tithe—trace, if it be possible, one solitary redeeming virtue that it possesses? None, all is void—and it carries in its train, nothing short of sore calamity in the present time, and destruction in futurity.

I have already delivered my opinion respecting the repeal of the Corn Laws, I will only there-

fore add, this my most solemn and sincere injunction: Spare your country; try what she can do for you when her chains are broken, and that she becomes empowered to yield a full and unrestrained developement of her gifts. A few short years will suffice to convince you, whether her soil is ungrateful; or whether hitherto, we have not had to blame the culture. If experience should then determine, that our lands do not yield their fruits with sufficient increase; it will be then time to make a virtue of necessity, and to convey to foreign nations, the produce of our manufactures as the price of our food.

I have now acquitted myself of that first and most sacred duty which every man owes to his country,—to contribute by every means that may lay in his power, either by voice or action, to the diffusion of knowledge and happiness, and to the increase of her resources, strength, and glory.

Let me, therefore, conclude with that well-remembered apophthegm,

“England expects that every man will do his duty.”

APPENDIX.

FORM— No. 1.

County of	Parish of	Name of Farm
Hundred of		
Name of the Landlord.		
Name of the Tenant.		
Name of the Lay-Rector.		
Name of the Rector.		
Name of the Vicar, or any other Corporation or Person to whom Tithes are due.		

Extent and Contents of the Farm in Titheable Acres.

	Acres.	Roods.	Poles.	Composition paid in 1826 in Lieu of Tithes.			
					For great and small.	For great.	For small.
Arable.....				Arable at	shillings per Acre.		
Meadow.....				Meadow	Do.		
Pasture.....				Pasture	Do.		
Copse.....				Copse	Do.		

Contents of each Field of Farm in Titheable Acres.

[illegible]

Particulars of Lands exonerated from Tithes, and the Cause.

Names of Fields.	By Law.	By real Composition.	By Modus.	By Clerical Privilege.
No. —				

Amount paid for Composition of Tithes, 1826.

ount paid for Composition of Tithes, 1828.

To the Rector or other Person	£
To the Vicar	£

The Farm is bounded to the East by West North South.

Attestation and Signature of
Farmer or Landlord to the above. }
Signatures of Magistrates before }
whom delivered. }

FORM No. 2.

County of _____ Parish of _____
Hundred of _____
Account and Description of Farms or other Lands upon which Tithes
have been paid to or collected by me for the year 1826, in the parish
above-mentioned.

[illegible]

Account of Composition paid to me in lieu of Tithes for the several Farms in the year 1826.

[illegible]

Account of Produce collected by me from the Farms from which Tithes
have been collected by me in kind for 1826.

Names of Farms paying in kind.	Contents of Farms.			Quantity and description of produce collected by me from the Farms.				
	Arable	Mead.	Pastu.	Copse.		Tithe on Acres of	Quan. produced Bush.	Loads.
					Wheat			
					Rye			
					Barley			
					Oats			
					Beans			
					Pease			
					Hay, &c.			

The Parish is bounded by the following Parishes and Hundreds
Attestation and Signature of the Rector, or Lay Rector; Signature and
Date of the Lord Lieutenant, or Chairman of the Quarter Sessions: A

FORM No. 3.

County of _____
 Hundred of _____ Parish of _____
 Contents of the Parish in Titheable Acres.

	Acres.	R.	P.	Exempt from Tithe. Acres.	R.	P.	Remarks.
Arable							
Pasture							
Meadow							
Wood							
Water							

Names and Description of Farms and Lands upon which small
 Tithes have been paid or collected by me for the year 1826.

Names of Farms.	Names of Land- lord or Tenant.	Contents of each Farm in Titheable Acres.				Composition.	
		Arable	Mead.	Pastu.	Copse.	perAc.	Total paid by each Farm.

Account of Produce collected by me for small Tithes during the
 year 1826.

[Specify the Description, Quantity, and Value of each Article from
 each Farm or Person.]

The Total Amount and Value received by me for Tithes in the year
 1826, was £.

The Parish is bounded by the following parishes:—

To the East, by Parish _____ Hundred _____ County of _____
 West _____
 North _____
 South _____

The great Tithes are the Property of _____

Attestations and Signature of the Vicar.

LONDON:

IBOTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

*Illustration of Corollary 6th, page 16, of the
 Theory in Proof.*

It is said, in this corollary,—That “it is not
 “true, as is generally supposed, that prices
 “are high because lands of an inferior degree
 “of fertility are cultivated. But prices are
 “high because those lands are not cultivated,
 “and because, by the operation of the law of
 “tithe, farmers are discouraged from the cul-
 “tivation of them. There is consequently a
 “diminished produce, and, I need not say, as
 “a further consequence, that there is an in-
 “creased price.”

If this corollary be just, it necessarily follows,
 that the select Committee of the House of
 Commons on the state of agriculture, in their
 report to parliament, on the 18th of June, 1821,
 committed a mistake, when it adopted the

E

maxim laid down in that report: "*That the cost of growing corn in any country is regulated by the amount of capital necessary to produce it upon lands paying no rent, and that it is the price of the portion of corn which is so raised that determines the price of all other corn.*"

The assertion of such an axiom is nothing more nor less, than the conversion of the paramount powers of a cause, into the subordinate qualities of an effect.

The amount of capital necessary to produce corn paying rent or no rent, cannot with propriety be said to regulate the cost of growing corn; for it is, in fact, the cost of growing corn, that regulates the necessary amount of capital.

By every theory of rent, it is the price that precedes and determines cultivation upon inferior lands. By the axiom of the report, it is the cultivation of inferior land that determines the price, which therefore follows after.

Our experience tells us, also, that it is price which precedes and causes the extension of cultivation upon inferior land.

Theory and fact are therefore equally opposed to the admission of the doctrine inculcated by that report.

It is essentially necessary to controvert a maxim which has been delivered from such high authority, if it be found erroneous; because the public opinion has been guided by it to the conclusion, That the high prices of corn have been occasioned by the extension of agriculture to lands of an inferior degree of fertility.

Concurrent with this notion, another equally erroneous, and, I may say, dangerous opinion appears to have been generated in the public mind,—That in the progressive extension of cultivation upon new land, each successive portion necessarily possessed less powers of fertility than that which preceded it in cultivation. The validity of such an opinion, can only rest upon the proof of the supposition, that the farmer always selected his best land for the extension of cultivation upon his farm.

With respect to this hypothesis, the probability is, that the farmer would select the worst pasture instead of the best; but his conduct in this instance, would no doubt be guided by the situation, and such circumstances of the land, which might, in his judgment, render each portion of it, more eligible for conversion into corn, or more convenient for preservation as pasture.

When mention is made of the extension of cultivation upon lands of an inferior degree of fertility; consideration must be had to the relation of land in cultivation, with land in pasture. The one, has had its powers of fertility brought forth and enlarged by the improvements of cultivation: the other, exists in a quiescent state, and in that state, it is positively land of an inferior degree of fertility; but it is prepared to receive and to recompence, all those improvements which the hands of industry can impart to it; and though in its dormant state it stands as No. 10, yet in its progress to maturity by the labours of man, it will take its station in proportion to the powers of improvable fertility assigned to it by nature, and it will mount in the scale of the cultivation table accordingly.

The doctrine of the report to parliament would also naturally lead the public to the belief, that the cost of cultivation of an acre of inferior land, exceeded the cost of cultivation of an acre of more fertile land. The least knowledge of agriculture, and the least exercise of reflection, would so manifestly lead to the subversion of such a thought, that it is needless to pursue the matter.

Mr. Malthus, in page 169 of his Principles of Political Economy, observes, "*That the last*

land taken into cultivation, in 1813, did not require more labour to work it, than the last land improved in the year 1790, is incontrovertibly proved by the acknowledged fact, that the rate of interest and profits was higher in the later period than in the earlier."

The rate of interest and profits could not evidently have any tendency to increase nor to lessen the quantity of labour necessary to produce a given effect, though it might increase or lessen the cost of such labour; and we may be quite certain, that the last land taken into cultivation in 1813, will not require more labour to work it, than the last land of 1813. What the proportional cost of such labour may happen to be, we cannot say.

There is no doubt that the cost of labour in 1813 was greater than in 1790, and if an increase of prices had not preceded the increase of the cost of labour, we may be very certain, not only that the lands taken into cultivation, between 1790 and 1813, would not have been cultivated, but that many of the lands cultivated in 1790 must have been thrown out of cultivation.

It is the proportion of the cost of labour to the price, that determines the limit or the extreme point of possible cultivation. Whatever

may have the effect to increase the cost of labour in proportion to the price will circumscribe that limit; and, on the contrary, whatever may reduce the cost of labour in relation to the price, will enlarge the limit of cultivation.

Price must evidently take precedence of cost, in regulating the series of cultivation; and it stands to reason, that in a series of effects dependent upon each other, that which comes last in order, cannot govern, but must be the consequence of that which preceded it.

The price of corn, therefore, which is raised upon land paying rent or no rent, and which is the last in order, can never be said to determine the price of corn which is raised upon the lands of superior degree of fertility, which preceded it.

The cultivation of lands of an inferior degree of fertility, so far from imposing the necessity of a high price of corn, is, in fact, the only remedy within the power of the society itself, to counteract a continued advance in the price of corn; and it is the tendency towards such advance, which determines the necessity of the cultivation of lands of inferior fertility, by indicating that the supply from existing cultivation is inadequate to the demand.

The same average prices of corn may con-

tinue, even supposing that land is cultivated through all the gradations, from the highest fertility to the extreme point of possible cultivation. The wages of labour may be the same, and the average price the same, from the first step to the last; but the profits will of course be less, as the land decreases in fertility. But such decrease of profits, will be made manifest by the gradations of rent; not by deduction from the necessary profits of the farmer, nor by raising the price to the consumer.

If corn be at an average of years at 48s. the quarter, land can be cultivated through the the gradations of high and low fertility, equally the same as it could though the average of years were 80s. If this be not the case, it would be impossible to admit the argument of Mr. Malthus, in his Principles of Political Economy, page 147: That an excess of the value of the produce of land, above the value of the labour employed in obtaining it, "*can only be created by the qualities of the soil.*"

The quality of the soil, exists independent of the price; and the excess arising from fertility, will be the same in quantity at 48s. as it could be at 80s. The value of such excess will of course be determined by price.

If land of an inferior degree of fertility,

being brought into cultivation, is sown with two bushels, and it yields a produce of twenty bushels; it will yield the same produce, whatever may be the price. If the excess of the produce above the cost of cultivation be such as to yield a profit of five bushels at a period of high price; it will yield the same profit of five bushels, at a period of a low price; and the money-value of such excess in either case, will be in exact proportion to the money price. For the rent of the new land taken into cultivation, is the same in both instances of price, at 48 or 80, being its natural produce or minimum rent: the quantity of seed is the same; the quantity of feed for horses is the same; the quantity of labour is the same; and the value of all these items of cost bear the same relative proportion to the prices; and consequently afford the same proportions in the result. And this truth is confirmed by Mr. Malthus, p. 166, wherein he says, "that *their permanent value (the productions of the land) in the command of labour is nearly proportioned to their quantity.*" It is the fertility of the land, not the price, which yields the excess; and the only concern of price, is to give the value of that excess in money.

This argument is perfectly substantiated by another position of Mr. Malthus, p. 148, that "*the price of produce cannot by any possibility exceed the value of the labour which it can maintain, and the excess of its price above the cost of production, is subject to a limit as impassable. This limit is strictly dependent upon the natural and acquired fertility of the soil.*"

I shall be asked, in what manner then does price operate to the improvement and extension of cultivation. I reply, that price is the barometer of agriculture; and that advancing prices denote an increase of demand, and afford assurance, that an increased produce will not create a fall of price below the usual average.

I shall suppose, that at a period of agriculture, when its progress is not interrupted by impolitic laws, there exists a vibration of prices between 38 and 42; the average of such period will of course be 40. By the gradual increase of population, occasioning a gradual increase of demand, the vibration advances, so as to give an increase of average to 41 or 42. The farmers, guided by the simplest experience, are encouraged by such continued advance, to extend cultivation upon new land, or to expend capital upon the improvement of the old. The

profits they may have acquired by the advance of prices, in addition to their ordinary savings, have afforded to them the capital necessary for such purposes. The additional produce derived from such improvements and extension of cultivation, create, in the first instance, an excess of supply, which causes price to retrograde to the former average of vibration, 40. The increase of population again produces a rise in the barometer of price, when similar causes proceed in operation to induce corresponding effects as above represented.

There can be no question in my opinion, but that the extension of cultivation upon new lands, is absolutely and indispensably necessary as a preventive to high prices, and so far I consider my corollary fully supported.

Let me now turn to a period of agriculture, with the same average of vibration of 40; but under the untoward circumstances of the infliction of tithe upon additional produce, created by cultivation upon new land.

When the farmer contemplates the breaking up of pasture for conversion into corn; the very first thing that stares him in the face, is the monster tithe, who declares, that the instant he applies the plough, his appetite will require a contribution of ten shillings instead of one, with

which he was before satisfied for the tithe of pasture. The farmer at once revolts at such an imposition, and defers his purpose. An advance of two shillings, which was sufficient encouragement to him when his operations were unclouded by such a visitor, is now considered by him no sort of equivalent for the subjection of himself to such a burthen. He considers that with an advance even to 47, that he would be employing his capital and labour more to the advantage of him, whom he considers his enemy, than it would be beneficial to himself. He still delays, until the intensity of demand, created by the unnatural delay of correspondent supply, produces the high price of 50 or upwards. The farmer no longer hesitates; the profits he assures to himself, overcome his repugnance to comply with the exaction, and he launches the plough into the bosom of the earth.

Now mark the consequences of the effect of tithe to create such ruinous delay of that timely extension of cultivation which would otherwise have checked such an extravagant rise of price. The farmer goes from the extreme of inactivity to the extreme of excitement. He has no longer the barometer to guide his operations. Cultivation is extended beyond bounds; and an extreme depression succeeds to that extreme ele-

vation of price, which, in the mean time, has necessitated an importation from foreign countries, to alleviate the distress it occasioned; and this importation tends to aggravate that evil to the farmer, which has been brought on by his own very natural, and to the public, even necessary, but certainly to himself, improvident conduct.

I appeal to the common sense and common feeling of mankind, that I have not overcharged these the "direful and calamitous effects of the laws for the imposition of tithes upon the lands of England."

I appeal to the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, on the 18th of June, 1821, for a confirmation of my argument. That report says,

"Your Committee feel it an important part of their duty to recall to the recollection of the House, and the country, that in the years 1804 and 1814, a depression of prices,—principally caused by abundant harvests, and a *great extension of tillage, excited by the extraordinary high prices of antecedent years,—appears to have produced a temporary pressure and uneasiness among the owners and occupiers of land, and a corresponding difficulty in the payment of rents, and the letting*

"of farms, in some degree similar to the apprehensions and embarrassments which now prevail; and also, that in many earlier periods similar complaints may be traced in the history of our agriculture."

"Among numerous instances of these complaints which may be found in other publications between the middle of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the late reign, two have been pointed out by one of the witnesses, in which the House *will not fail to remark the great similarity* between the arguments and alarms which were then current, with those which prevail in many quarters at this period.

"That in these earlier and more remote ages of our agriculture these alarms were only temporary, and that the fears of those who reasoned upon their continuance and increase were ere long dissipated by the natural course of seasons and events, is now matter of history. And *it is impossible to look back to the discussions of the years 1804 and 1814, and more especially to the evidence taken before the Committee appointed by the House on the latter occasion, without being forcibly struck with the conformity of the statements*

*“and opinions then produced respecting the
 “ruinous operation and expected continuance
 “of low prices, with those which will be found
 “in the evidence now collected.”*

Again—“Your Committee trust *that this
 “reference to past experience will not be alto-
 “gether useless and unavailing; that the reflections which such a retrospect
 “is calculated to excite, may lead the occu-
 “piers of the soil, as it has led your Com-
 “mittee, to infer, that in agriculture, as in all
 “other pursuits in which capital can be em-
 “barked, there have been, and there will be,
 “periods of re-action; that such re-action is
 “the more to be expected, in proportion to the
 “long continued prosperity of the pursuit, and
 “to the degree of excitement and exertion
 “which that prosperity had called forth.”*

This speaks volumes. I admit the re-action in other pursuits connected with foreign commerce, I deny that it would exist with agriculture freed from check and external competition.

We can be at no loss now, whence to trace the origin of the extreme fluctuations which are complained of in the prices of agricultural produce. It is placed beyond a doubt, that the unjust and impolitic system of the tithe laws is

the cause of the whole evil. Knowing the cause, we can form just conclusions from certain principles.

We have seen that the extension of agriculture upon lands of inferior degree of fertility, can, when no checks are interposed, proceed in a smooth and unruffled current to supply the wants of the society, without any excess of price beyond the ordinary averages. In such a case, the admission of foreign importation could only have an injurious tendency; by disturbing the balance of supply and demand; by displacing the farmer from all controul over his operations; by impeding the progress of agriculture; and by destroying that necessary connexion which ought to subsist between agriculture and every other interest of the community. In such a case, therefore, prohibitory laws against importation would not only be just, but indispensably necessary, for the protection of the welfare of the society, and to guard the natural progress of its population.

Under the system of check upon production occasioned by the tithe laws, it follows, that in order to prevent excessive fluctuation, we must admit the importation of foreign corn; and the consequence will be, that agriculture can

make no advances, until the agriculture of foreign countries is brought to our own level. The question then becomes, how can an increasing population be reconciled with a declining or a stationary agriculture? The difficulties of such a question only more forcibly mark the necessity of removing the check which involves us in such a dilemma.

If we continue to make the Corn Laws a system of measures of expediency for allowing importation at one time, and for restriction at another, according as the circumstances of price may appear to dictate; we shall oppress agriculture by the uncertainty of the law; in addition to the positive check from tithe; and we must expose the society, alternately at one time, to the clamours of the population for food; and at another, to the representations of distress from the agriculturists.

It has now, I trust, by fair and correct demonstration, been clearly and unequivocally proved; that the only remedy for existing evils, and the only possible method of reducing the Corn Laws into an uniform and permanent system of legislation; consists in relieving the country from "*one of the most unrelenting scourges that ever afflicted a nation;*" by a

repeal of that most impolitic, most indefensible, and most destructive law for the imposition of tithes upon the lands of England.

I have now closed my undertaking, but I will not presume to say that it is perfected. My desire has been; not to indulge controversy, but to reveal the truth. My object has been; not to write a book, but to heal the wounds of my country. I stand firm on the rock of honesty of purpose, with a heart emboldened by a consciousness of no guile; and I fearlessly submit this most momentous and most weighty subject to the consideration and decision of the public; but more especially of those, who from the influence of exalted station, high rank, and commanding talents, are most capable to appreciate; and are best empowered to act according to its merits.

I have done my duty. And

"England expects that every man will do his duty."

Castlemans, Hare Hatch, Berks,

Nov. 6, 1826.

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