

THE
STATE OF THE POOR:
OR,
AN HISTORY
OF THE
LABOURING CLASSES IN ENGLAND,
FROM THE CONQUEST TO THE PRESENT PERIOD;
In which are particularly considered,
THEIR DOMESTIC ECONOMY,
WITH RESPECT TO
DIET, DRESS, FUEL, AND HABITATION;
And the various Plans which, from time to time, have been proposed, and adopted, for the
RELIEF of the POOR:

TOGETHER WITH
PAROCHIAL REPORTS
Relative to the Administration of Work-houses, and Houses of Industry; the
State of Friendly Societies; and other Public Institutions; in several
Agricultural, Commercial, and Manufacturing, Districts.

WITH A LARGE APPENDIX;
CONTAINING
A COMPARATIVE AND CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE PRICES OF LABOUR, OF PROVISIONS,
AND OF OTHER COMMODITIES; AN ACCOUNT OF THE POOR IN SCOTLAND; AND MANY
ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS ON SUBJECTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

BY SIR FREDERIC MORTON EDEN, BART.

IN THREE VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY J. DAVIS,
For B. & J. WHITE, Fleet-street; G. G. & J. ROBINSON, Paternoster-row; T. PAYNE, Mew's-gate;
R. FAULDER, New Bond-street; T. EGERTON, Whitehall; J. DEBRET, Piccadilly;
and D. BREMNER, Strand.

Contents of the First Volume.

<i>PREFACE</i>	-	-	-	-	Page i.—xxxi.
----------------	---	---	---	---	---------------

BOOK I.

Of the Poor, from the Conquest to the Present Period.

CHAPTER I.

<i>Of the Poor, from the Conquest to the Reformation</i>	-	-	Page	i
--	---	---	------	---

CHAPTER II.

<i>Of the Poor, from the Reformation to the Revolution</i>	-	-	-	90
--	---	---	---	----

CHAPTER III.

<i>Of the Poor, from the Revolution to the Present Period</i>	-	-	-	227
---	---	---	---	-----

BOOK II.

Of National Establishments for the Maintenance of the Poor: Of the English Poor System: Proposed Amendments: Of the Diet, Dress, Fuel, and Habitation of the Labouring Classes in Great Britain: and of Friendly Societies.

CHAPTER I.

<i>Of National Establishments for the Maintenance of the Poor:</i>				
<i>Of the English Poor Laws: And of Mr. Pitt's proposed Bill</i>				
<i>for the better Relief of the Poor</i>	-	-	Page	411

CHAPTER II.

<i>Of the Diet, Dress, Fuel, and Habitation, of the Labouring</i>				
<i>Classes</i>	-	-	-	491

CHAPTER III.

<i>Of Friendly Societies</i>	-	-	-	590
------------------------------	---	---	---	-----

Omissions in Vol. I.

P. 68. To the Note on *Cadas*, add,—“*Caddis garters* occur in the First Part of the Reign of King Henry IV.; and in some other Plays mentioned by Mr. Steevens, in his Note on the passage: he supposes *Caddis* to be coarse *ferret*. *Caddisses* form part of Autolycus's wares in the Winter's Tale; and are supposed, by Mr. Malone, to have been a narrow *worsted galloon*. He says, he remembers, “when very young, “to have heard it enumerated by a pedlar among the articles of his “pack;” and that there “is a very narrow flight serge, of this name, “now made in France.”

P. 191. After the last line of Text, add, “These coaches and caravans are destructive to the trade and manufactures of the kingdom, “and have impoverished and ruined many thousands of families, whose “subsistence depended upon the manufacturing of wool and leather, “two of the staple commodities of the kingdom: for, before these “coaches were set up, travellers rode on horseback, and men had “boots, spurs, saddles, bridles, saddle-cloths, and good riding suits, “coats and cloaks, stockings and hats; whereby the wool and leather “of the kingdom was consumed, and the Poor people set at work, by “carding, combing, spinning, knitting, weaving, and fulling: and “your cloth-workers, drapers, tailors, saddlers, tanners, curriers, shoemakers, spurriers, lorimers; and felt-makers, had a good employ, “were full of work, got money, lived handsomely, and helped, with “their families, to consume the provisions and manufactures of the “kingdom: but, by means of these coaches, these trades, besides many “others depending upon them, are become almost useless; and they, “with their families, reduced to great necessity; inasmuch that many “thousands of them are cast upon the parishes, wherein they dwell, “for a maintenance.”

THE Reader is requested to correct the following *Errata* with his pen; as many of them materially affect the sense of the passages in which they occur.

VOL. I.

- Pref. page iii, line 6, *for useful, read usual.*
 25, 16, *for mercer, as he, r. mercer: he.*
 69, 3, *from bottom, for sextus, r. secundus.*
 130, 3, *for section, r. Statute, c. 3.*
 152, 14, *delete 2; line 16, for 2s. r. 1s.; for 3, read 2; line 18, for 4, read 3; line 22, for 5, read 4; and line 29, after us, insert 5.*
 269, note, *after Geo. insert 3.*
 273, 11, *after erected, r. in 1723.*
 283, 8, *for they excited, r. it excited.*
 289, 8, *from bottom, for certiorari, r. certiorari.*
 317, last line, *for xii. r. xi.*
 345, 5, *of note, after small, insert part of the.*
 357, 14, *for they are, r. it is.*
 364, first line of note, *after Act, insert (2 Geo. 3. c. 64.)*
 367, 9, *of note, for 1756, r. 1796; and in line 26, of same note, after year, insert a semicolon.*
 416, 10, *for men r. man.*
 417, 5, *of note, for twelve, r. twenty.*
 421, 17, *of note, for unjust, r. injurious.*
 424, 11, *from bottom, for has, r. have.*
 444, 4, *from bottom, for are, r. is.*
 488, 5, *from bottom, for find, r. find.*
 592, 14, *and 16, for quart, r. sextarium.*

VOL. II.

- Page 2, line 9, *from bottom, for amounts, r. amount.*
 15, 12, *for 410, r. 416.*
 35, 21, *for Poor's Rate in 1794, r. Poor's Rate in 1794-5.*
 42, at the end of the page, add, *November, 1795.*
 57, prefix to Table, St. Mary's Quarter.
 70, 1, *for cost, r. costs.*
 85, 7, *for maintain, r. maintains.*
 114, 5, *for gives, r. give.*
 133, Title, *for Cheshire, r. Derbyshire.*
 222, 4, *from bottom of Table, for 1776, r. 1726.*
 240, 5, *from bottom, after framing, erase up.*
 271, 6, *from bottom, after pound, add, in the parish of Abbey Church.*
 280, 4, *for wages, r. labour.*
 314, 4, *for either the, r. either of the.*
 385, 2, *for inhabitants, r. families.*
 395, 2, *of note, after couplet, erase the comma.*
 420, 5, *for 1795, r. 1796.*
 435, 18, *for house, are, r. house is.*
 439, 1, *for nurse, r. nursed.*
 453, 2, *for Thetford, r. Mitford.*
 522, 1, *of note 3, for 1s. 6d. r. 18s. 6d.*
 529, the Table of assessments and disbursements, is a line too low: — the sum £ 155. 15. 8½ is for the year ending in 1782; and so on.
 578, for these assessments were, r. the several assessments in the year were each.
 609, 24, *for nor, r. not.*
 626, 3, *for on, r. of.*
 635, 2, *of note, for were, r. was.*
 649, 2, *before 53, insert £.*
 666, 16, *for following, r. preceding.*

VOL. III.

899, last line, *for £ 18. 412. r. £ 148. 123.*

- Page lxi, *for £ 2. 3s. r. 2s. 3d.*
 lxx, line 20, *for is, r. are.*
 lxxiii, under the year 1680, *for wool the stone, r. wool the pound.*
 lxxxviii, put reference to note 2, *after a sheep at 28lb. in line preceding it.*
 cxvii, *paged cxvi.*
 cccxxxix, *for Clophill, r. Clophill.*
 ccclii, line 11 from bottom, *for 32,005, r. 32,009; l. 13, for 9234, r. 9238.*

APPENDIX.

* * In the Parochial Reports, the year, prefixed to the Baptisms, and Poor's Rates, denotes, in the first instance, the year ending in December; and, in the last, the year ending at Easter in the year prefixed.

P R E F A C E.

BEFORE my Readers sit down to the perusal of the bulky Volumes now put into their hands, it seems incumbent on me to solicit their attention to a few prefatory remarks, on the plan of the following Work ; and the means, by which that plan has been carried into execution.

The difficulties, which the labouring classes experienced, from the high price of grain, and of provisions in general, as well as of cloathing and fuel, during the years 1794 and 1795, induced me, from motives both of benevolence and personal curiosity, to investigate their condition in various parts of the kingdom. As I advanced in my enquiries, the subject became so interesting, that I persuaded myself the result would be acceptable to the Public, if I should be able to lay before them accurate details respecting the present state of the Labouring part of the community, as well as the actual Poor. To collect them, however, to any good purpose, (though to those, who have given such an undertaking but a superficial consideration, it may, perhaps, seem nothing more than the stating, clearly, plain and obvious matters of fact,) was by no means easy. Private opinion, and private passions, will, in spite of us all, too often interfere, and

bias and influence the most honest and intelligent minds, in their judgments respecting even matters of fact. Aware of this, I have, myself, actually visited several parishes, and procured on the spot, (from persons the most likely to supply useful information, and the least likely to be misinformed, or to mislead,) the substance of several of the Reports recorded in the ensuing pages. But as it was impossible that an individual, (engaged in professional avocations,) should find leisure, himself, to visit as many districts as were necessary to form a complete view of the subject, I was happy to find it in my power to prevail on a few respectable clergymen and others to favour me with many accurate, and, I trust, valuable, communications. To other parishes and districts, not thus accessible to me, I sent a remarkably faithful and intelligent person; who has spent more than a year in travelling from place to place, for the express purpose of obtaining exact information, agreeably to a set of Queries with which I furnished him: and that my object in instituting these enquiries, as well as the progress I have made in accomplishing it, may be more obvious to the Reader, a copy of these Queries is here subjoined.

Parish of

Extent and population?

Number of houses that pay the house or window-tax, distinguishing double tenements?

Number of houses exempted?

Occupations of parishioners, whether in agriculture, commerce, or manufactures?

What manufactures?

Price of provisions?

Wages

Wages of labour?

Rent of land, and land-tax on the net rental?

What sects of religion?

Tithes, how taken?

Number of inns or ale-houses?

Farms large or small? What is the most useful tenure? Principal articles of cultivation?

Commons and waste-lands?

Number of acres inclosed, (if easily obtainable,) in any of the last 40 years?

How are the Poor maintained; by farming them; in houses of industry; or otherwise?

Houses of industry, (if any,) their state; numbers therein; annual mortality; diet; expences, and profit, since their establishment?

Table of Diet in the House of Industry or Poor-house.

Table of Mortality annually.

	Breakfast.	Dinner.	Supper.	BIRTHS.		BURIALS.		Year.	Observations.
				Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.		
Sunday.									
Monday.									
Tuesday.									
Wednesday.									
Thursday.									
Friday.									
Saturday.									

A Table of Baptisms, Burials, and Marriages, (distinguishing the Sex,) and of the Poor's Rates, (distinguishing the Net Sum expended on the Poor,) for the following Years, as far as they can be obtained from the Parish Books.

	BAPTISMS.		BURIALS.		Marriages.	Poor's Rates.	Net Sum expended on the Poor.	Rate what in the Pound on the Net or Assessed Rental.	Observations.
	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.					
1680									
1685									
1690									
1691									
1692									
1693									
1694									
1695									
1696									
1697									
1698									
1699									
1700									
1720									
1740									
1760									
1775									
&c.									

Number and state of Friendly Societies?

How many of them have had their Rules confirmed by Magistrates?

Usual diet of labourers?

Earnings and expences of a labourer's family for a year: distinguishing the number and ages of the family; and the price and quantity of their articles of consumption?

Miscellaneous observations¹.

As the scope of these topics of enquiry is confessedly limited, and drawn up on a much lower scale than the not very dissimilar Queries, which Sir John Sinclair, with great judgment and pro-

¹ The Author will be happy to receive any further information on these matters, which any Gentleman may be pleased to communicate. The apprehension, only, that his Work was already too bulky, prevented him from inserting many Parochial Reports, which he is possessed of, in this publication.

priety, saw fit to prefix to the useful Volumes of the Statistical Account of Scotland; or, the no less well executed, but infinitely larger compass, which Sir John Cullum allowed himself, in drawing up his account of a single parish; it may not be deemed unnecessary, here, briefly to state some of the reasons which induced me to insist most on these particular Queries.

The greatest improvement, of modern times, respecting the care of the Poor, or that, at least, which seems to have been most generally aimed at, has been, taking the Parochial Poor out of the hands of overseers and church-wardens, (who were suspected to have neglected or abused the great trust reposed in them during the short period of their continuing in office,) and *farming* them out to individuals. And the reduction of the Rates, which, it will appear, took place, in many instances, immediately on the introduction of this regulation, must be confessed to have been extraordinary, and such as certainly is by no means fully accounted for by those who content themselves with summarily ascribing it all to the existence of former abuses. Whatever was the cause, or whatever has been the effect, of this regulation, it appears to be now very generally, (and, in my estimation, very deservedly,) falling into disesteem. Incorporated districts, work-houses, and houses of industry, have, in many instances of the preceding plan, taken place; and these, too, in many places, at first, and for a while, succeeded to admiration. But these establishments, also, now begin to experience the common fate of all the plans hitherto attempted for the introduction of any general, unexceptionable, and complete system for the management of the Poor; and are no longer thought to answer the good ends expected from them. The public mind is once more afloat; and, like the dove sent out from the ark, anxiously solicitous

solicitous to find, if it be possible, amid the surrounding confusion, some spot of permanent tranquillity, on which the nation may rest. These appeared, to me, to be strong reasons for laying so much stress, as I did, in my Queries, on these points. And I cannot help flattering myself, that there will appear, in the following Reports, many new and important facts, which may enable my Readers to form fair conclusions respecting the probable effects of any future regulations.

The *extent* and *population* of any particular district, together with the *number of houses paying the house or window-tax, of double tenements*, and of such also as are *exempted* on account of poverty, may, at first view, perhaps, seem to be more proper for a general Statistical Enquiry, than for a Work, the professed object of which is, to investigate the State of the labouring Poor, and Poor Laws. It is not, however, in points only which immediately affect the Poor, or institutions framed for their benefit, that their case is to be considered: whatever, in any degree, directly or indirectly, affects them, is of moment in their history. And it is by no means a circumstance of indifference to them, whether a country be well provided with dwellings; or whether it be populous, or but thinly inhabited. But it was not only because the Poor were much concerned in the question concerning the population of the kingdom, that I was induced to go so fully into it; but because it also appeared to me, that many unfavourable, not to say mischievous, inferences, had been deduced, from premises, either misunderstood, or misrepresented. Amid all the pressures and calamities of the times, there is no reason to think that we have to deplore a declining population.

In tracing the causes which lead to poverty, and to the necessity of
soliciting

soliciting parochial relief, it is not merely a matter of curiosity, but of real moment, to ascertain from what classes of society Paupers most generally originate: and therefore, it became an object with me, to learn, from authentic documents, what were the occupations of the people who were the immediate objects of this enquiry. And if it shall appear, as I think it clearly will, from a review of the following Reports, that Paupers, comparatively speaking, are but rarely found among those employed in agriculture, the Public are thus put in possession of an important fact, from which they cannot but draw interesting conclusions.

The *prices of provisions* and of *labour* are so intimately connected with the circumstances of the Poor, that no writer has ever thought of dissociating them, and all regulations (in modern times at least,) respecting them, have had in view, chiefly, if not solely, the convenience and comfort of the Poor. In fact, it is hardly possible to form any accurate judgment of the condition of the labouring classes, in any district of the kingdom, without first knowing what a labouring man can earn, and how much of the necessaries of life he can purchase by his earnings. Sundry particulars relative to these points, meriting very serious and general consideration, are brought forward in various parts of this Work. It appears, for instance, that a labouring man in the county of Cumberland can, and does, earn nearly as much by his labour, as one in the same sphere of life in Hertfordshire; whilst his expenditure, (more especially in the articles of diet and apparel,) is comparatively insignificant. From his superior economical skill and care in culinary contrivances, he can often indulge himself in many savoury dishes, (even of meat,) which the labourer of the South can scarcely ever afford:

and with regard to dress, it will suffice to remark, that, in using clogs instead of shoes, a Northern family saves, at least, a guinea a year. The clogs, which will last two grown persons and four children a twelvemonth, do not cost more than 15s. or 16s. ; whereas, in Hertfordshire, it is not uncommon for a day-labourer, with a large family, to spend £ 3. a-year in shoes. And yet, with all his apparent rusticity, the peasant of the North is as intelligent, as ingenious, as virtuous and as useful a man, as his less provident neighbours; and lives too, as long, and as healthy, and, probably, far more contented and happy, than the South-country labourer, who is for ever receiving, and for ever wanting, assistance and charity.

The *rent of land* is a circumstance bearing so directly on the two preceding Queries, (viz. the *price of provisions*, and the *wages of labour*;) that it is hardly possible to judge of the latter, without knowing the former. Agriculture seems to rest on two grand fundamental points; that is to say, on the land, which is necessarily the basis of all agricultural operations, and the skill and industry, with which it is necessary to cultivate it, in order to render it productive. Now, if it be fit and reasonable, (as it undoubtedly is,) that he, who contributes most, by his labour, to render the soil productive, should receive a share of it's produce, proportioned to his exertions, and the success of them, it is no less fit, that he, who furnishes the first and most essential means of agricultural industry, and without whose contributions there could be no exertions, and, of course, no subsistence, should receive his proper share and proportion of it's increase. Hence, these two objects must, and do, necessarily

necessarily go hand in hand: and it is, therefore, not unfair to presume, that, as things, when left to themselves, rarely miss of finding their own proper level, in general, some fair proportion between capital and labour is observed. If the case be, as there seems to be unquestionable evidence it is, that labourers in manufactures, even such as are deemed the most ordinary, earn much more than their fellow-labourers can hope for, from the most diligent, skilful, and even successful, exertions of their talents in agriculture, the proper inference seems to be, not that labourers in husbandry are hardly and unjustly treated by those who employ them, but that it is the unavoidable result of that marked favour shewn to commerce in preference to the landed interest, which many suppose to have long prevailed in our national councils.

The Query respecting *Sects of Religion*, was not proposed merely with the view of ascertaining the state of religion in the kingdom; a point of information, which, however important in itself, seems not to be within the province of a Work like this: but because it seemed probable, that disputes and divisions must necessarily be unfavourable to industry and economy, by being unfavourable to the reciprocation of good offices, and the mutual disposition to help, and to be helped, which Christian Charity is naturally so well calculated to inspire. It was proposed, also, because it has been not un-
 plausibly advanced by a writer, cited by Mr. Howlett, in his “Ex-
 amination of Mr. Pitt’s Speech,” that the increase of our Poor’s
 Rates is owing to the prodigious increase and growth of Method-
 ism¹. Be this as it may, I shall not venture to assert, what I have
 frequently

¹ The passage, as cited by Mr. Howlett, is as follows: “Of late years, there has been a
 “very general complaint, over every part of the kingdom, of the increase of the Parish

frequently heard contended, that the establishment of many sects in religion is inimical to the progress of industry. Still less do I think my very limited enquiries warrant me in observing, (what might, perhaps, appear to some neither an uncharitable, an harsh, or an unjust surmise,) that, as manufacturers more commonly become Paupers than labourers in husbandry, and as they also are more commonly sectarians, among other causes of so striking a peculiarity, their religious differences are, probably, not the least.

In various points of view, *tithes* are, and ever must be, objects of great moment: it is, therefore, but little to be wondered at, that they have lately engaged so considerable a share of the public attention. It is no part of the design of this Work, to enter into any discussion concerning them, farther than as they are connected with, and relate to, it's immediate object, the prices of labour and provisions, and the circumstances of the labouring classes. On these, tithes certainly have some influence; though, possibly, a remote one. If, however, it should be found, that the prejudices of the people against tithes, have, in several instances, discouraged the occupants of land from raising grain, such a circumstance cannot but affect our

“ Poor. To what cause are we to ascribe this increase? No cause whatever has a more
 “ powerful influence than the increase of Methodists. This religion, in the first place, is a
 “ heavy tax; and, in the second, it encourages idleness; and both of these contribute to
 “ make men poor, and to keep them in that state. I would propose it then, as a subject of
 “ enquiry, Have the Poor's Rates increased with the increase of *Methodism*? Perhaps, up-
 “ on examination, they will be found to have kept pace with the progress of this religion:
 “ and it would give this opinion some weight, if the Rates, in particular places, have cor-
 “ responded with the prevalence of Methodism. A second question might be proposed:
 “ Have the Poor in Scotland, where this profession has fewer votaries, increased with that
 “ rapidity they have done in the Southern part of the island?’ Review of the Policy,
 Doctrines, and Morals, of the Methodists, p. 50.

labourers,

labourers, in two very essential respects; as it must needs diminish the demand for labour, and, at the same time, in some degree enhance the price of bread. Those who may be led to investigate more fully the influence which tithes have upon agriculture, will do well to examine, what proportion of them is held by the clergy, and how much by impropiators; as that is, perhaps, the best means of ascertaining what difference it makes to Labourers, and to the Poor; whether tithing-men be lay-men, or clerks; and whether tithes be taken in kind, or compounded for. For myself, I must confess, that, grateful as I am, along with the great mass of my fellow-subjects, for the blessings of the Reformation, the transfer of tithes from the clergy to lay-impropiators is not that part of it which I contemplate with the most satisfaction. Admitting that lay-men may be not only as well disposed, but as well qualified, to be almoners for the Poor, (which, undoubtedly, was one of the purposes for which tithes were first granted,) they rarely have the same opportunities. An impropiator may, without any blame, reside out of the parish, of which, notwithstanding his non-residence, (to use a Northern phrase,) he *lifts* the tithe: whereas, the circumstances must be strong indeed, which justify the non-residence of a parish-priest. And it is certain, that, as, among all the members into which society is divided, there is not one more respectable than a good parish-priest; so is there no situation, in which the Poor are, in all respects, better off, than they are in those places, where they have the happiness to have a sensible, benevolent, and pious pastor, for their temporal, as well as their spiritual, guardian and guide*.

Of

* The ill-will with which tithes are so often paid, and the doubts, difficulties, and confusion, so frequently occurring, in the various modes of collecting them, cannot but be

Of *ale-houses*, and their influence on the circumstances of the labouring classes, the Reader will find some particulars in the following pages. I must, however, express my regret, that I have not been able to procure intelligence on this head, either so full, or so satisfactory, as I wished for. Before I knew, by experience, the difficulty of obtaining any information, relative to parochial economy, which might be depended on, either for it's accuracy, or sufficiency in other respects, I had flattered myself that I should be able to obtain such information as would shew what quantity of liquor, and of what sorts, was consumed in each parish. In this hope, however, I have been disappointed. The exciseman states, that it is neither within his province, nor his competency, to answer the question; and the victualler refuses it, because he has an evident interest in withholding such intelligence.

So much has already been written on the question respecting

unfavourable to any steady and settled system of labour, industry, and economy. In the History of Cumberland, now publishing, * it is recorded of the parish of Bromfield, that it is possible for five different tithing-men to have, each of them, a legal claim to tithe in one field. The case is stated to be thus:—The incumbent claims the great tithes of all the lands that were in cultivation at the Reformation; a lay-impropriator has the tithe of all those lands in the district, which then lay waste, but have since been improved: these, not many years ago, the impropriator sold to two yeomen of the place, reserving to himself the tithe, not only of all his own improved lands lying there, but also of all such lands as were then unimproved, but should hereafter be improved: some considerable portions of such lands have since been inclosed, and improved; which, after seven years, will undoubtedly be liable to pay tithes: another person has a right to tithe hay, from lands under particular circumstances, from a grant or agreement made during the Border Wars, in consideration of his keeping a *light horse*, to give alarm in case of an invasion. Nothing can exceed the confusion occasioned by these different interfering claims.

the preferableness of *large or small farms*; and such a mass of discordant reasoning, and contradictory evidence, has been adduced on the occasion; and the allegation has been so often repeated, that the labouring classes of the nation have been injured by the consolidation of small farms, that it became an object of some moment to ascertain, in a general manner, (for in a Work which comprehends so much, more could not be attempted,) what was the usual size of farms in different districts of the kingdom. The professed object of this Work is not so much to draw conclusions, either from facts or arguments, as, by putting the Public in possession of such facts as were attainable by one individual, to enable them to draw their own conclusions. Without the most distant idea, therefore, of giving, or appearing to give, any decided opinion as to this great question, the Author trusts it will not be deemed foreign to his purpose, to remark, that, if large farms do, in fact, (as many, with an appearance of great strength of argument, contend they do,) lessen labour, and the expences of labour, and thence enable the cultivators of the earth to bring it's various produce to market at a cheaper rate, it seems decidedly to prove that they are of great national utility. For, to shorten labour, and to lower it's expences, is the great stimulus to all those exertions of genius or skill, by which improvements are promoted. No wise man, therefore, will be inclined to countenance any measures, which tend to damp or discourage a spirit so necessary and useful. If, as to the instance in question, the consolidation of several small farms into one, should be found, (as it is natural to imagine it must, and as, indeed, it has been proved to do,) to bear hard on the owners of small farms, and, perhaps, on cottagers and labourers, this is an evil to be lamented indeed,

indeed, but not of such a magnitude as that it should be suffered to counteract the greater good which may be expected to result from the improvement. At any rate, the inconveniences, and the distresses, thus produced, can be but temporary; whilst the advantages to be expected from a contrary system, are such as promise to be permanent, as well as daily increasing. The argument seems to stand exactly on the same footing that the mills and machines for spinning cotton do, or any other machines or contrivances calculated to lessen labour. One of the immediate effects of all such improvements, no doubt, is to throw many industrious individuals out of work; and thus to create distresses, which are sometimes exceedingly calamitous. Still, however, as the only point of view, in which a nation can regard such schemes of a reform, is to consider how far they actually do or do not promote the general weal, by raising the largest quantity of provisions, or materials for manufacture, at the least cost, their inconvenience to individuals will be softened and mitigated, indeed, as far as it is practicable, but by no means be suffered to counteract any new plans of improvement, of great and real national utility. If this were not the proper line to pursue, it must be confessed, the Turks alone are right, in not suffering a printing-press to be introduced into their dominions, merely because one of its immediate effects would be, the depriving many thousands of unoffending, industrious, hackney writers, of their usual means of earning a livelihood; and all civilized Europe is in an error. It would, however, be not difficult to prove, that the Poor themselves are materially interested in every improvement which tends to increase agricultural, or even manufacturing, produce. There is every reason to believe, that those mistaken poor persons,

persons, in the neighbourhood of Manchester, and elsewhere, who, goaded on by the pressure of a present evil, so vehemently opposed the introduction of spinning-jennies and cotton-mills, lived to be sensible of their error; and to enjoy many real comforts, from the failure of their own first rash projects.

By ascertaining the different *articles of cultivation*, most attended to in the different districts of the kingdom, some judgment may be formed respecting the effects which any of the various schemes of husbandry, (which have, from time to time, solicited the public attention,) produce on the general mass of the people. It would be presumption for a person residing in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields to offer any thing like an agricultural report: I therefore purposely abstain from minute details on farming. Some general information, however, respecting the course of husbandry in various districts, will be found in the following Reports; and there is reason to believe, from a fair comparison of all the cases of the kind, here brought forward, that this is one of the many things which is not likely to be bettered by legislative interference; and which, therefore, may be safely left to its own unfettered exertions.

Something is likewise occasionally said concerning *tenures*; as they undoubtedly more or less influence the operations of agriculture, and the circumstances of agricultural labourers.

Concerning the *rental of land*, and the *land tax*, I have given the best information, which it was in my power to collect. But—these are sensitive plants, which shrink from the hand of the political querist. Whilst, however, an equalization of the land-tax is apprehended, it is, perhaps, not to be expected, that every country gentleman, (even in this enlightened age,) should be ready to communicate

municate information, which may facilitate that great financial operation.

To persons who have but transiently considered the intimate connexion subsisting between each of the various parts that compose the whole of our complicated system of political economy, the two Queries, respecting *commons and waste-lands*, it is probable, may seem better calculated to engage the attention of the Board of Agriculture, than they can be for the discussion of an individual professedly writing on the Poor Laws. On consideration, however, it will be found, that even this topic of enquiry has an intimate bearing on the condition of the Poor. Admitting only, that it must and will have no slight effect on the general circumstances of the kingdom, it cannot but materially affect all the labouring classes of society ; who, it will readily be owned, are a majority of the kingdom. But, in addition to this general effect, there is every reason to believe, that the existence, or non-existence, of commons and waste-lands, has an immediate and intimate connexion with the circumstances of the Poor. The first, and most direct effect of enclosing commons, and reclaiming wastes, will be a demand for more labourers ; and this demand, by being constant and permanent, will prevent no inconsiderable loss to labourers, by lost days ; i. e. days and periods, in which many can find no work. Single days, and even half-days, thus rendered unproductive, may seem to be of little moment, when singly considered, or as they relate to individuals : but the aggregate of them, and their effect on the whole large body of agricultural labourers throughout the kingdom, is a serious amount. And the grievance is still greater, as, like too many others, to which labourers are subjected, it affects those chiefly, if not
solely,

solely, who are employed in agriculture. It is an inconvenience from which the mechanic and artisan, if it be not their own fault, are exempted. Should this regulation be now adopted, work in abundance is cut out, for many years to come, for every working man in the kingdom; and thus all the mischief, which is too naturally to be dreaded, as resulting from the want of employment, combined with the want of necessaries, will be prevented. The best encouragement will thus be given to an increasing population; it being one of the most natural and certain effects of plenty of work, to produce plenty of food; a circumstance, which no less naturally and certainly promotes marriage and population.

If the number of our acres, which are already in cultivation, exceeds the number of our people, as no doubt is the case, it proves only, that, with all our farming knowledge, which is confessedly great, and highly honourable to the age we live in, we are still very far from having attained the height of all agricultural perfection. I can easily conceive it possible for our posterity, at no very distant period, to push improvements, in this way, far beyond any thing now known; and to render the whole kingdom a rich garden. If the enclosure of waste-lands is facilitated, by a better Bill than was presented to the Public last year, we shall have the merit of beginning a work of never-ending and still-increasing utility, as far as these epithets can be applicable to any thing that is merely sublunary; of setting our children an example, worthy their imitation; and leaving them, at least, one instance of our providence, for which they may bless our memory. And if, after all our improved policy and care, it must still be our misfortune, as well as our reproach, to leave them plans and schemes of Poor Laws, costly beyond all calculation, and only a little reduced, we

shall have the consolation, also, of having first put them in the way, and, at least, leaving them in a capacity of being wholly annihilated.

When this Query was first proposed, the Author was not without hopes, that he should be able to obtain such answers to it, as would decide the question, how far commons and waste-lands are, or are not, beneficial to the Poor. The Reader, who does him the honour to peruse the following Reports, will see that, though he has not been wholly disappointed, the event has not quite answered his (perhaps too sanguine) expectations. In every district there exists a variety of complicated circumstances, all of which contribute, more or less, to promote, or to check, improvement. It frequently requires a large experience, aided by much sagacity, to trace, amid a multitude of causes, those particular ones which contribute most to produce a numerous Poor. It was hardly to be expected, that all the persons to whom it was proper he should apply in such a case, should be able to give the information which was wanted; and it was natural to suppose, that some, who were not unable, might be unwilling. This question, like most others, that can now be touched upon, has it's popular and it's unpopular sides: and, where no immediate self-interest, or other partial leaning, interferes to bias the judgment, a good-natured man cannot but wish to think with the multitude; stunned, as his ears must daily be, with the oft-repeated assertion, that, to condemn commons, is to determine on depopulating the country. Hence, his correspondents seem very generally to have passed by this Query. Of the little, however, that is said, the sum is, that the advantages which cottagers and poor people derive from commons and wastes, are rather apparent than real: instead of sticking regularly to any such labour, as might enable them to purchase good fuel, they waste their time, either like the old woman in Otway's

Orphan, in picking up a few dry sticks, or in grubbing up, on some bleak moor, a little furze, or heath. Their starved pig or two, together with a few wandering gossings, besides involving them in perpetual altercations with their neighbours, and almost driving and compelling them to become trespassers, are dearly paid for, by the care and time, and bought food, which are necessary to rear them. Add to this, that as commons, and wastes, however small their value may be in their present state, are undoubtedly the property, not of cottagers, but of the land-owners; these latter, by the present wretched system, are thus made to maintain their Poor, in a way the most costly to themselves, and the least beneficial to the Poor. There are thousands and thousands of acres in the kingdom, now the sorry pastures of geese, hogs, asses, half-grown horses, and half-starved cattle, which want but to be enclosed and taken care of, to be as rich, and as valuable, as any lands now in tillage. In whatever way, then, it may seem fit to the Legislature, to make those cottagers some amends for the loss, or supposed loss, they may sustain, by the reclaiming of wastes, it must necessarily be better for them, than their present precarious, disputable, and expensive advantages, obtained, if at all, by an ill-judged connivance, or indulgence, of the owners of land; and, by an heedless sacrifice of property, of which no one takes any account, and for which, of course, no one thanks them.

Whatever system of enclosure takes place, it might, perhaps, be advisable, that some specific quantity of land should be laid off, from every common that is to be enclosed and improved, not for the avowed Paupers of the district, but for its cottagers and labour-

ers. If, in every township, thus gaining a fresh and large accession of cultivated lands, a competent portion of it were conveniently and judiciously laid out for a garden, and a little croft, enough to maintain a cow or two, together with pigs, poultry, &c.; and enough also to raise potatoes for the annual consumption of the family, together with decent and durable cottages;—I cannot figure to myself a more pleasing or more advantageous state of society. The property of the whole should be vested, at large, in the whole district: and no tenant admitted into, or, when admitted, suffered to remain in, any such tenements, without the consent of a majority of the inhabitants. This would give the people of property sufficient, (but by no means too much,) influence and authority over those who are here supposed to be employed to work for them: and it would place such labourers, not in an abject or servile condition, but in such a state of easy and liberal dependence, as all who know human nature, and its history, will allow to be necessary for their own comfort. It is taken for granted, that, even under such a regulation, such labourers will continue to receive their stipulated wages, as they do at present: the *teft and croft*, (to borrow the ancient terms, still in use in the North, to denote a cottage tenement,) being intended as an extra accommodation and encouragement. Other, and better, regulations might be incorporated with those already suggested; and were such a scheme but once maturely digested, and detailed at any length, the Author has little doubt but that it would be found to be pregnant with utility. Something of this kind obtained in all feudal grants; and something of it still remains, as to those descriptions of useful people, who in Scotland are called *cotters* and *crofters*; and, if I mistake not, some such

such provision was reserved for the labouring classes in the first-settled townships of New England.

A country, disfigured and burthened, as Great Britain every where is, with immeasurable heaths, commons, and wastes, seems to resemble one of those huge unwieldy cloaks worn in Italy and Spain; of which a very small part is serviceable to the wearer, whilst the rest is not only useless, but cumbersome and oppressive. In every well-governed country, the doing no good is regarded as the same thing as doing harm: and, if this maxim fairly applies to lands used in common, with a much greater shew of reason may it be applied to lands which lie absolutely waste and unproductive. They not only often lie in the way of many improvements of the first importance, such as draining, watering meadows, straightening the course of rivers, and so preventing floods; but they do much harm, by the temptations they hold out to remissness, in exertion, and a slovenly husbandry. I love not to dwell on the imperfections only of my country; else a most melancholy view might be given of our wretched policy, in driving, as we annually do, many thousands of useful hands from us, into distant realms, for want of employment and food, whilst we possess such ample and easy means of employing and feeding millions more than our present population. It was thus, we not only furnished the revolted Colonies with the means of effecting their separation from us, (for, it is a fact, which deserves to be noticed, and well attended to, that there is good reason to believe, that a majority of those, who fought against us, in that unfortunate war, were not native Americans, but *true-born* Britons;) and it is thus, that we still largely and effectually contribute to the improvement of their wastes and wildernesses.

There

There are two other facts respecting this topic, which, when duly compared together, and fully considered, seem to me to convey as much information and instruction, as, if detailed, would fill volumes. In the first place, this Island, in proportion to its size, contains, (I believe,) more acres of waste-land than any other civilized kingdom in the world, Russia itself not excepted; whose forests, being neither unproductive nor unprofitable, are hardly to be regarded as wastes. And it is surely remarkable, that whilst, by sea, we are the foremost people in Europe, or in the world; in agriculture, we are, at least, a century behind some other countries, far inferior to us in almost all other respects. I have heard it calculated, that, taken in the aggregate, the whole kingdom of Scotland does not let for more than sixpence an acre, whilst even England reaches to but half-a-crown. I should imagine, that, were it not for the bloody and almost endless wars, which it has been the hard fate of Brabant to be for ever exposed to, that country would let for at least ten times as much as the larger of the above-named sums. Yet is not even Brabant richer in its natural soil, or much more favoured by its climate, than this Island. The other fact, above alluded to, is, that no other kingdom, or country, has so expensive a national establishment for the maintenance of its Poor. It would be too much to assert, that the most unaccountable increase of the Poor, or the immense, novel, and unparalleled expenditure for their support, are wholly ascribable to our neglect of our waste-lands, or to any one other cause whatever. At the same time, it would be an instance of almost wilful self-delusion, not to see and to own, that, among many other causes, which it would not be difficult to specify, this now under consideration is a pretty prominent one.

If

If the view of so striking a matter of fact fills us, as it well may, with sorrow, as well as with surprize, still we have the consolation to reflect, that, bad as our condition is, it is not remediless. It has been observed that, in countries which are liable to particular diseases, the remedies best adapted for the cure of those diseases are also generally found. A similar observation might be made, respecting our political maladies. If, for instance, the long neglect of our commons has contributed, as no doubt it has, to swell our Poor Lists, and Poor's Rates, it is somewhat more than fortunate for us to know, that, along with the poison, we may also find the antidote. Rapid as has lately been the increase of persons becoming burthensome, happily, in a vast majority of the parishes in the kingdom, there are commons, now totally useless, which, by a skilful appropriation at present, and good management hereafter, would be sufficient to render all the present Paupers of the kingdom easy and comfortable, and all the inferior classes of society, among posterity, as independent as it is either possible, or proper, that persons in their sphere of life should be, and (all things considered;) as well off, and as happy, as their superiors.

No institutions ever made a more considerable progress in a short space of time, than has been made, within a few of years, by the *Benefit Clubs*, or *Friendly Societies*. I regret, that it is not in my power, to state either the number of such Societies, or the numbers of their respective members. This is an enquiry far beyond the powers of a single individual. As there, however, is not a district in the kingdom, in which many such Societies are not found, the whole amount of their numbers must be very considerable. These Societies do not owe their origin to parliamentary interference;

nor to private benevolence ; nor even to the recommendations of men of acknowledged abilities, or professed politicians. The scheme originated among the persons on whom chiefly it was intended to operate : they foresaw how possible, and even probable, it was, that they, in their turn, should, ere long, be overtaken by the general calamity of the times, and wisely made provision for it. A stronger proof could not well be given, to shew that the great mass of the people, prompted only by what they themselves saw and felt, were convinced of the inefficacy of all legislative regulations, and therefore resolved, in at least one instance, to legislate for themselves. Rejecting, as it were, a provision gratuitously held out to them by the Public, and which was to cost them nothing, they chose to be indebted for relief, if they should want it, to their own industry, and their own frugality. And I would fain hope, that I do not deserve to be set down as wanting in all due respect for parliamentary wisdom, if, in a case like this, I should declare my preference of the wisdom of the people : I cannot recollect any Act of the Legislature, for many years, that has either produced such important national advantages, or been so popular, as the institution and extension of Friendly Societies.

Under the guidance of this principle, I go on farther to observe, that Friendly Societies have now established, on the broad basis of experience, one great and fundamental truth, of infinite national importance ; viz. that, with very few exceptions, the people, in general, of all characters, and under all circumstances, with good management, are perfectly competent to their own maintenance. The Clubs are formed, as is well known, in general, of persons in all the inferior stations of life ; persons who, in other respects, are by no means dis-

tinguished from their neighbours, by superior wisdom, or better morals ; and who, being neither more industrious, nor more frugal, than others, it may be supposed, neither earn more, nor lay by more of their earnings. And yet I do not find, that any parish has been burthened with the maintenance of a member of any Friendly Society : nor are the instances numerous, of the families of members becoming burthenfome. This being the case, it is evident, that the nation must have saved many thousands of pounds, (perhaps millions,) by these useful institutions. They are beneficial to the nation, not merely by preventing many thousands of their members, who are not less liable to misfortunes, diseases, impotency, and old age, than others, from becoming burthenfome ; but also by countenancing and promoting a spirit of independence, and better habits of industry and frugality, than are usually found among the labouring classes of society.

It is mortifying to reflect, that, in the midst of all these savings, and notwithstanding all the other benefits resulting from these institutions, our Poor's Rates have gone on increasing with such astonishing rapidity as to have doubled their former amount within the last twenty years. Far from imputing this, in any respect, or in any degree, to these Societies, it is fair to suppose, that, had it not been for them, the increase would have been still greater : it proves only, that the inveteracy and malignity of the malady has been such that the best medicine has only checked it : a radical and complete cure is within the competency only of the Legislature. And, perhaps, no better system of treatment can be thought of, than, by a vigorous reform in the Poor-Laws, to promote a practice, which has hitherto been found successful, as far as it has been tried ; and;

by judicious measures, so to encourage these voluntary associations, as to render them general and universal throughout the kingdom.

The remaining Queries, concerning the *Poor*, and the *various modes of maintaining them*; the *diet of labourers*, and the *earnings and expences of labourers' families*, are so obviously connected with my subject, that I feel it unnecessary to detail my reasons for insisting on them. It will, without doubt, be remarked, that, in most of the communications respecting labourers' household accounts, their expences exceed their earnings; more particularly in the statements of weekly receipts and disbursements, which are inserted in the Appendix to these Volumes.

It must be confessed, that the whole annual earnings of a labourer can seldom be ascertained with great precision. Some men are so habitually careless, that they are totally unable to give any satisfactory information; others, who could give tolerable answers, think that enquiries concerning them can have no important object in view, and are therefore inaccurate; and a third class, (which is by far the most numerous,) are so apprehensive that the ultimate object of questioning them is to effect a reduction in their wages, or something equally disagreeable, that they are unchangeably mysterious and insincere.

Beer is an article of expence, of which the labourer will seldom give any, and still seldomer an accurate, account. It is, however, chiefly on the score of earnings, that he confounds all enquiries, either by taciturnity, or misrepresentation. He calculates himself, or endeavours to persuade those who examine him to calculate, his yearly income from the average price of day-labour in his parish. But, as work is now very generally done by the *piece*, it is obvious, that

that statements, formed upon such *data*, must be extremely fallacious : they, however, are not without their use ; and I have, therefore, inserted them : but, the Reader will, I trust, often be inclined to draw the same conclusion, which I have drawn, from them ; that, if the expenditure is not exaggerated, the income is, in most instances, considerably under-rated.

I should never have undertaken the History of the Poor, which is prefixed to this Collection of Parochial Reports, had I foreseen that it would have swelled to what, perhaps, some readers may deem an unreasonable size. But I was persuaded, that the scanty materials which were to be found in our old chroniclers and annalists would necessarily confine this part of my subject to a very narrow compass. Indeed the writers who have professedly treated of these topics are but few ; and it is only in very late, and, comparatively speaking, modern times, that any such historians have existed. For the authorities, therefore, which I have selected, I am persuaded, I cannot offer a better apology, than one which has been tendered by Lord Kames, in his Historical Law Tracts.

“ In tracing the History of Law through dark ages, unprovided
 “ with records, or so slenderly provided as not to afford any regu-
 “ lar historical chain ; we must endeavour, the best way we can,
 “ to supply the broken links, by hints from poets and historians,
 “ by collateral facts, and by cautious conjectures, drawn from the
 “ nature of the government, of the people, and of the times. If we
 “ use all the light that is afforded ; and if the conjectural facts cor-
 “ respond with the few facts that are distinctly vouched, and join
 “ all in one regular chain, nothing farther can be expected from
 “ human endeavours.”

¹ Historical Law Tracts, 3d ed. p. 25.

It may possibly yet be asked, why the Queries have been so few; and why they did not also comprehend other parochial concerns, no less interesting, than Births, Burials, and Poor's Rates? Had the Author undertaken the history of a single parish, omissions respecting its natural history, its antiquities, or its agriculture, would have been inexcusable: but, when it is considered that the object of this Work was to trace the progress of the Poor Laws, and to examine the condition of those principally concerned in them, it will be obvious that a minute attention to particular places, pursued with more time, more labour, and more expence, must have incapacitated him from exhibiting a general view of the subject. The Reader will, therefore, have the candour to consider each part in the proportion, only, which it bears to the whole; nor will he expect that the outlines of a general map of the country can admit of the colouring of a miniature picture. Much, no doubt, may have been omitted, that bears on the present subject; but, in literature, as well as in manufacture, division of labour is to be attended to. He who wishes either to acquire, or to communicate, useful knowledge, will only cultivate a corner of the field.

I have, purposely, and almost wholly, abstained from drawing conclusions from the facts here presented to the Public. To offer

* After all, I will not assert, that my Queries are the best calculated even to acquire the information I wanted: "l'art d'interroger n'est pas si facile qu'on pense. C'est bien plus l'art des maîtres que des disciples; il faut avoir déjà appris beaucoup de choses pour savoir demander ce qu'on ne fait pas. 'Le savant fait et s'enquiert,' dit un proverbe Indien; 'mais l'ignorant ne fait pas même de quoi s'enquérir.'" Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, iv. lett. 3.

detailed Plans of Reform, in that branch of political economy which concerns the Poor, much exceeds my abilities: nor am I inclined to enter the lists in which I should find so many competitors. I shall therefore pursue a very different method from that usually followed by writers on the Poor; who voluntarily impose upon themselves the task, so much, and so justly, complained of by the Israelites, of making bricks without straw; and raise their specious systems, without well authenticated facts to support them. The edifice of political knowledge cannot be reared without its "hewers of stone," and "drawers of water." I am content to work among them; and, whilst others prefer, (and there never will be wanting many who will prefer,) the more arduous task of architectural decoration, to assist in digging the foundation, or in dragging the rough block from the quarry. The glory of the builder may be more enviable; but the drudgery of the mason is practically more useful. The one may embellish the fabric; but without the labours of the other, it would never be reared at all. The industry of the peasant, and the ingenuity of the manufacturer, are the brick and mortar of the political structure; the raw materials, which the Statesman must work with. He will always do well to recollect, that the "jutting frieze," and the "Corinthian capital," generally owe their strength and solidity to the solid brick-work behind them.

For the inelegancies of style, which may be found in this Work, I deem it unnecessary to make any apology. I have endeavoured to be plain, simple, and perspicuous: but have never wasted that time in polishing a sentence, which I thought I could better

employ in ascertaining a fact: and even in matters of fact, thus brought forward, there will, I more than doubt, be too often found something to object to, as inaccurate. Errors there are, and must be, in a Work, whose object is so extensive, and whose details are so circumstantial. Even Parliamentary enquiries concerning the State of the Poor, are not infallible.

Of the utility and tendency of such a Work, the Public will be better judges than it's Author. I hope, however, that I may be permitted, without incurring the imputation of arrogance, to observe, that if these Researches should exhibit increased and increasing comfort in the circumstances of those, whose unremitting labour best entitles them to receive it, it should check the repinings which casual and temporary calamities have excited; and should convince us, that national distress exists only in the misconceptions of the ignorant, or the cavils of the discontented. If, on the contrary, the picture should be a gloomy one, the display of a declining and unprosperous state of society will not be without it's use. To point out an evil, is frequently, not only in morals, but in politics, the shortest road to amendment. Even where the calamity is insurmountable, a knowledge of the causes which render it so, are consoling; since it may teach us to bear patiently what we cannot cure, and to discriminate properly between the errors of establishment, and the imperfections of human nature.

I will here conclude.—That this Work may, in any degree, be subservient to philanthropy and sound policy, is my sincere wish. Conscious that their promotion was my principal view in undertaking it, I repose myself under that satisfaction, which, perhaps,

P R E F A C E.

xxxi

perhaps, superior writers only have a right to indulge; and whilst
“ I am animated by this wish, I look with pleasure on my Book,
“ however defective, and deliver it to the world, with the spirit of
“ a Man, that has endeavoured well ‘.’”

F. M. EDEN.

LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, }
December, 1796. }

^x Johnson's Pref. to his Dict.

B O O K I.

HISTORY OF THE POOR, FROM THE CONQUEST TO THE PRESENT PERIOD.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Poor, from the Conquest to the Reformation.

AMIDST the multiplied enjoyments, which the progress of knowledge has introduced into civilized life, mankind, in one respect, continue unalterably the same: whether destined to guide the plough, or to wield the sceptre; whether employed in the drudgery of mechanical labour, or in the no less toilsome, (though more attractive,) pursuits of science; they all equally feel the pressing calls of those physical wants, which cannot be fully satisfied but by the acquisition of the necessaries of life; or, in other words, those articles which are the best preservatives of the human frame. Under this description may be comprehended, food, raiment, and habitation; the first of which, it is obvious, is indispensable in every state of society, and in every country; and the others, although not equally called for in all, are yet, from climate, and from custom, considered as essentially requisite for the poorest inhabitant of England. But as, whatever might have been the case in Paradisaical regions, or in a Golden Age, the natural produce of our soil is certainly not fully adequate to our subsistence; we can neither be clothed, lodged, nor fed, but in consequence of some previous labour. A portion, at least, of the society must be indefatigably employed, (and, happily, in every well-regulated state, a portion is sufficient,) to supply the necessary wants of the whole. Of

supernumerary hands that are not thus destined to actual labour, a part is occupied in the various arts, to which mankind are indebted for many conveniencies and comforts, and from which a long list of (perhaps superfluous) refinements are ultimately derived. There are others in this great national family, who, though they “neither toil nor spin,” can yet command the produce of industry, but who owe their exemption from labour solely to civilization and order: such are the owners of derivative property; they are peculiarly the creatures of civil institutions; which, for the general benefit of society, have uniformly recognized this fundamental principle, that individuals may acquire property by various other means besides the exertion of labour, and, under certain prescribed forms, transfer it to their contemporaries, or transmit it to their descendants. Envidable, however, as the condition of those, who are emphatically called persons of independent fortune, and who can abundantly command all the necessaries of life, may seem, they owe their superior advantages by no means to any superior abilities of their own, but almost entirely, in a proper sense, to the industry of others. It is not the possession of land, or of money, but the command of labour, which the various circumstances of society place more or less within their disposal, that distinguishes the opulent from the labouring part ¹ of the community: under the latter description I would comprehend those, whose daily subsistence absolutely depends on the daily unremitting exertion of manual labour; without meaning to stigmatize those, who are otherwise employed, as either idle, or useless members of the State. In the strict sense of the term, lawyers, physicians, and other professional men, may, perhaps, be as fairly called labourers, as miners or manufacturers. An excellent moralist well observes, that “every man has his work. The kind of work varies, and that is all the difference there is. A great deal of labour exists, besides that of the hands; many species of industry, beside bodily operation; equally necessary, requiring equal assiduity,

¹ I shall often have occasion to distinguish this class under the appellation of the *labouring poor*, by which I mean those, whose daily labour is necessary for their daily support. I am aware that a very able political writer has said, that it is an unmeaning term, and what “none but the most superficial reasoners can use.” (A. Young, *Northern Tour*, Let. 39.) The same author has, however, very judiciously used the words himself, (*Travels in France*, i. 410. 442. &c.); and I think his meaning is perfectly intelligible, when he speaks of our *labouring poor* as more at their ease than those of France, &c.

“more

“ more attention, more anxiety. It is not true, therefore, that men
 “ of elevated stations are exempted from work ; it is only true that
 “ there is assigned to them work of a different kind : whether more
 “ easy, or more pleasant, may be questioned ; but certainly not less
 “ wanted, nor less essential to the common good’.” The rich, how-
 ever, have the consolation to know, that, even under any mental or
 corporeal disability, or any other worldly misfortune, from which they
 or their families may suffer, it is seldom that the calamity can be aggra-
 vated by the immediate deprivation of the necessaries of life ; whilst,
 with a great part, (probably the greatest part,) of the nation, bodily in-
 firmity destroys all their means of gratifying even their natural wants.
 In a moral point of view, indeed, the rich are undoubtedly, in many
 respects, equally miserable ; but, with regard to their physical necessities,
 the advantage is manifestly on their side, and the fruits of the earth
 are more at their disposal. With them, the use of stock previously
 accumulated, and the anticipation of future resources, often supply
 the deficiencies of the moment. This, too, often happens with
 the community at large : a minister knows, that, in a thriving
 state of society, he can borrow money, and impose efficacious taxes, on
 the well-grounded probability, that the annual labour of the nation
 will create the fund, from which they may be derived ; but in-
 dividuals, in the humbler spheres of life at least, cannot either reason
 or act in this manner. The day labourer is sensible, that, in the season
 “ when every work of man is laid at rest,” when his daily earnings are
 reduced to a miserable pittance, he cannot provide for his increased wants,
 and soften the rigour of a severe winter, by anticipating the ample
 wages of the following harvest : besides the interruption which he expe-
 riences from the inclemency of the seasons, another source of want
 is opened, from the sometimes uncertain, and always variable, demand
 for human industry ; ready and willing to labour, he may not be able
 to find employers. But the most frequent periods of difficulty and
 distress are those, in which, although the employer and the work are
 provided, the labourer is incapacitated by some of those casualties,
 to which human nature is perpetually liable. I need not particularize
 the various cases of complicated distress, to which, at every period of

¹ Paley's Affize Sermon, at Durham, July 29th, 1795. 14.

their existence, the Poor are peculiarly exposed. Helpless infancy, and decrepid old age, are equally incapable of labour; nor are the sturdy peasant, and sedentary artificer, even in the most vigorous period of life, secure from casualty or sickness, which may reduce them to temporary want, or even overwhelm them with irremediable calamity: to such, and even to the idle, under certain restrictions, the law of England, upon humane and benevolent principles, has assigned a competent provision, exacted from the more opulent parts of the community.

The code devised for this purpose, although originally, perhaps, sufficiently simple, has, in the progress of society, undergone such various modifications, as sometimes, and in some respects, well nigh to have lost sight of its first aims and intentions; that the politician and patriot, as well as the philanthropist, are naturally induced to inquire, whether, along with much acknowledged good that it has done, we may not also ascribe to it many great evils, both moral and political: they are led to ask, whether the indigent classes are now proportionably less numerous, or less miserable, than they were formerly; whether they have been benefited by Poor-houses, Houses of Industry, and Friendly Societies; and in what degree the present system and administration of our Poor Laws affect either the progress of industry, or the blessings of domestic life. These, and many similar questions, cannot, as it seems to me, be fully and satisfactorily answered, unless many minute circumstances are previously stated, which have rarely been sufficiently attended to in the plausible and ingenious, but unsolid, speculations of several merely theoretical reasoners on those topics. By some, perhaps, the detail of the earnings and expenditure of a village-family, the economy of a work-house, or the legislative regulations of a box-club, may be deemed frivolous and unimportant. Let it, however, be recollected, that these particulars ultimately concern a class from which the amplest sources of revenue are derived; and, if I mistake not, copious streams of political knowledge, of the highest kind, may be also drawn from the same reservoir. It is from information relative to their domestic economy, their manners, and their opinions, that legislators may acquire deep subjects for reflection, and inexhaustible materials to work with. Perhaps, the best eulogium that can be conferred on any government is, that there is employment for all the people; that their cottages are comfortable; their food wholesome;

and their children well cloathed. It is said of Henry the Fourth of France, that he wished all his subjects could afford themselves a good supper once a week: I have no doubt that the disciple of Sully understood that such an enjoyment would have been a more incontrovertible proof of the wealth of his kingdom, than the splendor of his nobility, or the magnificence of his palaces¹. Certain it is, that, on the welfare of it's labouring Poor, the prosperity of a country essentially depends; and that without adverting to the peculiarities of their situation, no general estimate can be formed of it's population, it's industry, it's strength and power, it's virtue, and it's happiness.

Much light undoubtedly may be thrown on the Poor Laws, from an enquiry into the domestic condition of the people: it is, however, impossible fairly to appreciate the effects of their various ramifications, and to distinguish their immediate consequences from those arising from other institutions, without previously tracing the progress of society, if not from the earliest, at least through the most important, periods of our history. A review of this nature will not only afford us the means of judging, from the experience of past times, how far the legislative provisions of our ancestors have proved expedient, or hurtful; how far their defects are remediable, or their excellencies preservable; but will likewise contribute towards the solution of the important question, so often agitated, and yet so unsatisfactorily decided, whether those, whose only patrimony is their bodily strength, receive a better recompence for their labour, and a larger portion of the necessaries and comforts usually required by that class of society, than was the lot of their forefathers.

To pursue an historical deduction of this nature, little more is necessary than patient investigation; but, to point out defects, or to suggest improvements in this, or any other part of the legislative fabric, requires much comprehensive knowledge, and much practical experience. Politics, like Physics, are unsusceptible of mathematical precision. The philosopher who attempts to explain the properties of matter, and the historian who endeavours to account for the progress of society, will necessarily often deviate from the direct course of enquiry: the one cannot

¹ Rousseau well observes: "Quand il est question d'estimer la puissance publique, le bel esprit visite les palais du Prince, ses ports, ses troupes, ses arsenaux, ses villes; le vrai politique parcourt les terres, et va dans la chaumière du laboureur. Le premier voit ce qu'on a fait, et le second ce qu'on peut faire." *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Tom. 4. Lettre 2.

trace the phenomena of nature to their respective sources, without attending to the agency of collateral causes; nor can the other fully estimate the operation of any branch of civil polity, without taking into his consideration the effects of co-existing establishments. Many institutions, which were incongruous and unconnected in their original contrivance, acquire solidity from practice, become harmonized by time, and at length act with co-operation. No moral system can be formed at once on a regular plan, but must be modified according to circumstances: imperceptible additions, adopted with reference to what is retained, gradually swell into a complicated machine; and the whole composition produces effects, to which the subordinate parts have all contributed; but in what proportion each has assisted, it often becomes impracticable to determine. The causes of national prosperity, from thus eluding the grasp of rigorous demonstration, are subjected to the vague conceptions of fancy and caprice; and are usually interpreted to suit the various prejudices and party interests of mankind. Perhaps no one branch of our political economy more strongly exemplifies the truth of these remarks, than the Poor Laws: their various provisions are so peculiarly interwoven with many excellent, and (perhaps) with many defective institutions, that it becomes extremely difficult to determine, whether it is their joint, or separate influence, that affects the community: still more difficult is it, even when their immediate effects can be recognized, to say, that a radical alteration will correct the evil complained of. The system has insinuated itself into every crack and aperture of the edifice, and, like the spreading ivy, has at length overshadowed the building that supported it: cropping its luxuriant shoots may check its encroachments; but cutting its roots might perhaps endanger the fabric, which the feeble plant first undermined, and now holds together.

OF the domestic comforts enjoyed by the great body of the people, in the periods immediately subsequent to the Conquest, we may form a tolerable estimate, notwithstanding the great deficiency of evidence to mark the manners of private life, from considering the information afforded us by historians concerning their political situation. If we except the baronial proprietors of land, and their vassals the free tenants

tenants and socmen, the rest of the nation, for a long time after this era, seems to have been involved in a state of servitude, which, though qualified as to its effects, was uniform in its principle, that none who had unhappily been born in, or had fallen into, bondage, could acquire an absolute right to any species of property ¹.

The condition, however, of the people, who were thus debarred from tasting the first of social blessings, was not, in other respects, equally abject and miserable: those, denominated villeins in gross, were at the absolute disposal of their lord; and were transferable by deed, sale, or conveyance, from one owner to another ². They were principally employed in menial services about the house, and were so numerous as to form a considerable branch of English commerce. An author, who lived in the reign of Henry the Second, informs us, that such a number of them was exported to Ireland, that the market there was absolutely glutted ³; and another declares, that from the reign of King William the First to that of King John, there was scarcely a cottage in Scotland that did not possess an English slave ⁴. These were probably the captives taken in the predatory inroads on the borders: there can be little doubt but that the English retaliated on their neighbours, and made slaves of such of their Scotch prisoners as could not pay for their ransom. In the various accounts of the marauding expeditions of the moss-troopers of Cumberland, men are often mentioned as the principal part of the booty they brought back ⁵.

Villeins regardant were those who were annexed to manors, and bound to perform the most servile offices of agricultural labour, which was originally unlimited, both with regard to its quality and its duration ⁶. They however were sometimes permitted to occupy small portions of land to sustain themselves and their families, but were removable

¹ Litt. § 177. This was also the case in Scotland:

— “Na bondman may buy or purches his libertie with his awin proper gudes or geir
 “— because all the cattell and gudes of all bond-men are understand to be in the power
 “and dominion of the maister: swa that without consent of his maister, he may not redeme
 “himself out of bondage with his awin proper denires or money.” See the Regiam Majestatem; or the Auld Lawes of Scotland, Buke 2d, Ch. 12. ² Litt. § 181. ³ Giraldus Cambrensis Hibern. Expugn. 770.

⁴ R. Hoveden. 260.

⁵ Ridpath's Border History; and Burn and Nicholson's History of Cumberland and Westmoreland.

⁶ Year Books, 22 H. 6. f. 31.

at the lord's pleasure, and were liable to be sold, with the soil to which they belonged; from which they might also at any time be severed¹. I have made this distinction between villeins in gross, and villeins regardant, as it is laid down by our lawyers and historians. It may, however, I think, be doubted, whether the difference in their condition was more than nominal. The villein regardant seems to have been occasionally employed as a domestic, as well as an agricultural slave: and although he was generally indulged by his lord in the use of a few acres of land, he was liable to be called upon to perform every species of work, however painful or degrading². Other ranks of men, equally servile and dependent, are noticed in ancient records³; particularly the *Bordarii*⁴, who, in consideration of their being permitted to occupy a small cottage, were bound to provide poultry, eggs, and other articles of diet for the lord's table: and the *Cottarii*, or *Coterelli*⁵, who appear to have been much on the same footing with villeins regardant, being employed in the trades of smith, carpenter, and other handicraft arts necessary in the country; in which they had been instructed at the expence of their masters, and for whose benefit they pursued their several occupations⁶.

After the Conquest, various causes co-operated not only to prevent the introduction of a new stock, but also to extinguish the ancient race of villeins. As it was the custom of enslaving captives taken in war, that was probably the foundation, and certainly the support, for many ages, of this not more iniquitous than impolitic system; so it seems that the disuse of the ancient practice of converting captivity into slavery, led the way to its ultimate abolition: and, although history is silent on the subject, I should imagine, that, after the introduction of the Norman line, no Englishman could be a slave, unless by birth or confession. These were the only sources of supply; but they continued, for a long time, sufficiently copious to involve the labouring classes of the community in a bondage, that was marked by every essential ingredient of slavery: we may be convinced of this, by comparing the

¹ Ingulphus, 520. Kennett, Par. Ant. 288. State Trials, xi. 342.

le seignr lessé terre all vill' pur occupier et mainure, unc' il poit quant luy pleist luy comand pur sver en son meason ou en son besoignes. Year Books, 22 H. 6. f. 31.

day Book.

⁴ Spelman's Gloss. Du Cange.

⁵ Spelman's Gloss.

⁶ Ibid.

actual condition of a villein¹ during the three first centuries after the Conquest, with the statement of the general properties of slavery, given us by the learned author of the elaborate argument on "The Negro Case." "Slavery," he says, "always imports an obligation of perpetual service; an obligation which only the consent of the master can dissolve. It generally gives to the master an arbitrary power of administering every sort of correction, however inhuman, not immediately affecting the life or limb of the slave: sometimes even they are left exposed to the arbitrary will of the master; or they are protected by fines, and other slight punishments, too inconsiderable to restrain the master's inhumanity. It creates an incapacity of acquiring, except for the master's benefit. It allows the master to alienate the person of the slave, in the same manner as other property: lastly, it descends from parent to child, with all its severe appendages."²

The progress of Christianity, however, contributed much, not only to alleviate the sufferings of these unhappy people, but also to diminish

¹ The following description of the present condition of Russian boors, from a late publication, entitled, "Letters from Scandinavia", it is probable, exhibits a faithful picture of the English villein in the 12th and 13th centuries. The author says, that "The slavery in which the peasants are held, checks the spirit of improvement in that numerous body of men. A man, who can gain nothing by becoming wiser than his fellows, will hardly be tempted to take much trouble in acquiring superfluous accomplishments, or in bestowing them on his children. A Russian peasant has nothing that can stimulate him to the pursuit of knowledge. He sees himself fixed to a particular spot, from which he can have no hope of removing; and surrounded with beings, ignorant and brutish as himself. His industry, if he has any, is strictly and permanently appropriated. So many days in the week, and so many hours in the day, he knows he must labour for his master: and, be his own necessities what they may, he is sensible that this portion of his time must not be encroached upon. If he possesses horses, or cows, or instruments of his occupation, a large portion of what he can earn by them, goes to the use of his master. If he has a wife and children, these also are but partially his own: his master may command their services, wherever, and in whatever manner, he pleases. He is hardly permitted to stir from his hut, without his master's leave; nor can he earn a single morsel of bread, without his permission. If his children are to be taught any trade, it is the master who orders what that trade shall be, and who is to be the teacher: if they are to go to school, the master sends and removes them at his pleasure; and if they wish to marry, they must do it agreeably to his commands. In a word, a Russian peasant depends on his master for every thing. He cannot, it is true, be sent *out* of the world, without the forms of law; but, by the negative which every master possesses against the marriage of his people, he may be prevented from coming *into* it." Letters from Scandinavia, published in 1796, i. 59.

² State Trials, xi. 340.

their numbers. In the eleventh century, a bull was issued at Rome, for the emancipation of slaves ¹; and, in England, a law was made in a great council held at Westminster in the year 1102, which, at the same time that it evinces an improvement in civilization, clearly proves that the sale of slaves was a very common traffic. The words of the law are: "let no man, for the future, presume to carry on the wicked trade of selling men in market, like brute beasts, which hitherto hath been the common custom of England." ²

Very early instances occur, of lords enfranchising their villeins, at the intercession of their spiritual confessors ³. It is not unreasonable to suppose, that the clergy, whose learning, in a dark age, had given them the exclusive possession of the Courts of Justice, should, in interpreting the Law, (which, we are told, was eager to catch at every thing in favour of liberty,) ⁴ avail themselves of many legal subtleties, which, while they accorded with christian charity, at the same time enabled them to lessen the formidable power of their great rivals, the temporal nobility. It was thus, that acts of good-nature and benevolence, on the part of the lord, were construed into implied manumissions ⁵; till, by a long series of immemorial encroachments, the villein was freed from the base and laborious services of unconditional dependence. We are told, that, in consequence of the arguments used by the Church, against keeping Brother Christians in bondage, "temporal men, by little and little, by reason of that terror in their conscience, were glad to manumitte all their villeins; but the said Holy Fathers, with the Abbots and Priors, did not in like sort by theirs; for they had also conscience to impoverish and dispoyle the Church so much, as to manumit such as were bound to their churches, or to the manors which the Church had gotten, and so kept their's still ⁶." Indeed; such numbers were in their service, that no less than 2000 villeins belonged to some of the richest abbies ⁷.

¹ Smith's Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. ii. 91.

² Eadmer, iii. 68.

³ Sir T. Smith's

Commonwealth, ed. 1635, 250.

⁴ Blackst. ii. 94.

⁵ Litt. § 204-5-6.

⁶ Sir T. Smith, 250.

⁷ Walsingham, 258.

Villeins, in some instances, were very profitable servants to the regular clergy. In the 17th of Richard the Second, the Commons petitioned the king, for remedy against such religious bodies as caused their villeins to marry free women inheritable, in order to obtain their estates by collusion. Cotton, 355.

Of the domestic comforts enjoyed by this class of the people, history has afforded us very little information. If we reason, however, not only from the practice of the masters of slaves in those countries where slavery still subsists, but from the acknowledged and general principles of human nature, we shall be warranted in supposing, that, from motives of interest alone, had there been no other, the lord would, in general, take good care of his vassal, and supply him in infancy, manhood, and old age, with the essential necessities of food and raiment. The state of vassalage¹, in those feudal times, which are sometimes, perhaps, somewhat too summarily reprobated, would not have been so unpropitious to the individual happiness of any member of the community, had they not, from other causes, been also unpropitious to the general weal of society, by engaging mankind so often, as they did, in wars. And, after all that has lately been urged against slavery, on the ground of philanthropy, it is probably most objectionable, from its being, (as it seems to be capable of proof that it is,) injurious to society at large². As the bastard is, in the eye of the law, the son of no man, so a slave is the subject of no state: there is

¹ In speaking of feudal lords and vassals, it is of moment to be careful not to annex any modern ideas of subjection, servility, or slavery, to the terms of villenage, and service. Sir Thomas Craig, in his learned treatise concerning the Jus Feudale, marks the distinction with great accuracy and spirit. He well knows, (he says,) from the use of the terms in the Roman Laws, "*aliud esse servitium à servitute, et longè aliud esse servire, quam servum esse: nam servire nihil aliud erat, quam fidelem operam, aliquando opem et consilium, alicui præbere, &c.*" 3d edit. Lib. I. tit. iv. p. 26.

² A gentleman of much observation, and of a reflecting mind, (well known to a friend of the author,) who had long resided in Arabia, where every man, who is not a master, is a slave, used to argue, with an appearance at least of great plausibility, that "the condition of the labouring part of the community in that country was, in various points of view, more liberal, and comfortable, than it is, or can be, in those countries where their connection with those who employ them is entirely venal. Prompted by a regard for himself, as well as by better motives, the slave is solicitous to conciliate the regards of his master; who, influenced by the same motives, is at equal pains to secure the attachment and the fidelity of his slave. A generous reciprocation of kind offices is thus engendered; and habits of an affectionate intercourse, utterly unlike those perpetual wranglings and altercations, which for ever occur where services are sold and bought for money, are established. The master counts with confidence on the faithful service of his slave; as he, in his turn, does on the care and kindness of the master; and that, at any rate, he shall never feel the want of food and raiment." This, he affirmed, was the unexaggerated state of society in Arabia.

nothing in it that he can inherit, and therefore he has no interest in its welfare.

Between the Conquest and the reign of Edward the Third, there arose a middle class of men, who, although they did not immediately acquire the full power of bartering their labour to the best bidder, were, yet, not subjected to the imperious caprices of a master, and the unconditional services of personal bondage. Of this description were the servile tenants of manors, who, although they were permitted to occupy small portions of land for their own use, were required, at stated periods of the year, to attend to the cultivation of the demesnes of their lords. Previous to the reigns of Henry the Third, and Edward the First, they are not much noticed in ancient records; but in the period immediately subsequent, on every occasion, when it became important for the lord to inquire into the state of his manors and their appendages, the value of his arable and pasture land, the number of his parks, his fish-ponds, his mills, and his mansion-houses, were not more minutely investigated, than the number and condition of his servile tenants, and the extent and nature of the services they were bound to perform. It was extremely essential for him to ascertain whether that part of his estate, which he retained in his own hands, could be cultivated without the intervention of free labourers: and hence we may see the necessity, why a baron, on acquiring a fee, either by purchase or inheritance, and the king's escheators¹, on a forfeiture accruing to the crown, seldom failed to obtain full information relative to manerial rights, by means of an inquisition, composed, in the latter instance, of freeholders of the county, and in the former, most usually, of the principal tenants of the manor.

It is from the inquests thus taken, that we can, perhaps, obtain the

¹ The duty of this ancient officer of the crown was to look to escheats, wardships, and other casualties belonging to the crown. In ancient times, there were but two escheators in England, the one north, and the other south, of Trent; at which time, they had sub-escheators. But in the reign of Edward the Second, the offices were divided, and several escheators appointed in every county for life. Rot. Parl. 29 E. 1. Afterwards, by the statute of 14 E. 3. (c. 8.) it was enacted, that there should be as many escheators assigned, as there were on his accession to the crown, (which was one in every county,) and that no escheator should continue in his office above a year. Co. Litt. p. 13.

best possible evidence relative to the ancient state of agriculture in England. They often describe, very particularly, the quantity of arable, of pasture, and of meadow in a manor; the times at which the various operations of husbandry were carried on; the duty of agricultural servants; their diet; the customs in harvest; and many other particulars highly illustrative of the rural economy of ancient times. From such records, it appears, that, before the reign of Edward the First, the condition of villeins was greatly meliorated; and that, instead of being obliged to perform every mean and servile office, that the arbitrary will of the lord required, they had, at length, acquired a tenure in lands, on condition of rendering services, which were either certain in their nature---as to reap the lord's corn, or cleanse his fish-pond; or limited in their duration---as to harrow two days in the year, or to employ three days in carting the lord's timber ¹.

A tenant

¹ The following extracts, from Dugdale's Warwickshire, shew the diversity of customs which prevailed in different manors.—“The monks' tenants at Honington performed certain services from the feast of St. John the Baptist till Michaelmas; but if the lord would employ them in mowing before Michaelmas-day, he was then to allow them for their work; for which services they were to have one mutton, or 8d. with eight loaves of bread and a cheese, as also 4d. in money; they being to carry hay out of the lord's meadow, and to mow with one man a piece for a day and a half; and, moreover, that each of them should come to the lord's reap, with all his family, excepting his wife, where he was to reap two lands, and carry them; but to perform no more service for that day: and likewise plough four times in the year, scilicet, two felions a-piece, and also sow and harrow the same, having seed found at the lord's barn; and lastly, to harrow two days a-piece, giving ten eggs and one penny for every ale-house; and repair the lord's pool as often as need should require: all which said tenants were to pay to the lord 17s. 4d. for ancient aid; and for carriage of fish, 3s. 4d. per annum; as also 6s. 8d. for maintenance of his corn-cart; and every two yard land to carry one load of wood from Packwood to this town (Warwick), in which week they should do no other work: but none of them to sell his horse colt without licence of the lord.” Dugd. Warw. 457.

Adam Underwood, in the 7th of Edward the First, (1278,) held of the Earl of Warwick, one yard of land, paying for the same seven bushels of oats yearly and a hen, being to work for the lord from the feast of St. Michael the Archangel till Lammas, every other day except Saturday, viz. at mowing, as long as that time should last; for which he was to have as much grass as he could carry away with his scythe; and at the end of the hay harvest, he, and the rest of his fellow-mowers, to have the lord's best mutton except one, or 16s. in money; with the best cheese saving one, or 6d. in money; and the cheese-

vat,

A tenant by villenage, thus circumstanced, was no longer a villein. He was indeed bound to perform certain stipulated work for his lord, generally at sowing-time and harvest, the only seasons which, in the rude state of agriculture, were much attended to: but, at other times of the year, he was at liberty to exercise his industry for his own benefit. As early as the year 1257, a servile tenant, if employed before Midsummer, received wages: and in Edward the First's reign, he was permitted, instead of working himself, to provide a labourer for the lord; from which it is obvious, that he must have sometimes possessed the means of hiring one: and, as it is not natural to suppose, that a tenant

vat, wherein the said cheese was made, full of salt. Dugd. Warw. 426.—In the 7th year of Edward the First, the allowance to servile tenants for reaping, mowing, &c. was a certain quantity of beer, by custom. Dugd. Warw. 443.—At Warmington in Warwickshire, in Edward the First's time, there were twenty tenants that held their lands by a servile tenure, viz. each one providing a labourer one day every week for the lord's employment, or to give 1½d. for every day in the week, which would amount to 10d. and so in the year £2. 3s. 4d.; and that every one of them should plough for the lord thrice in the year, or give 10s. per annum; and mow his meadowing, or give for each day, instead of a man, 2d. which comes to 30s. in the year: that they should carry the lord's hay, or give 40d.; that they should make the lord's hay, or give 10d.; rake his corn, or give 10d.; and lastly, carry once in the year at Warwick, or give 40d.: these services were afterwards commuted for a pecuniary payment. Dugd. Warw. 416.

The profits, customs, services, and tenures of the manor of Brisingham, in Norfolk, in the 15th year of King Edward III. anno 1341, are stated, by Blomefield, as follows:

Memorandum. "That all the commoners upon the commons of this town, both freeholders and copyholders, pay hens eggs, and days works with their plough, to the lord, except those that have liberty of faldage; and that all copyholders are obliged to have their sheep in the lord's fold, from Pentecost to St. Martin." The quit-rents, (in money,) and free rents, were £4. 2s. 2½d. and three roots of ginger, of 1d. value: 95 hens, justly valued at 7s. 2d.: 17 capons, valued at 1½d. each: 5 ducks, valued at 10d.: 539 eggs and more, valued at 3d. a hundred: 212 days work in autumn, the workmen to be maintained by the lord, valued at 1d. a day: 174 afternoon works in autumn, 1d. each, the workmen having no victuals: 25 days work with their carts and horses, and no victuals allowed them, valued at 2d. each day: 120 ALEBEVES*, or as many as will come: 183 journeys at plough, without victuals, if all come in to do their work; and if they do not, they must work half a day for every day of ploughing; the whole valued at 7s. 3½d.: 170 days work and an half in sharing: 174 days work in mowing, every four

* These were general carting days, on which the tenants used to go, or not, as they pleased, and had their name, because the lord used to treat them well with provisions and ale.

tenant by villenage had any power of hiring the pure villein, (who, we have seen, was annexed either to the land, or the person of his lord,) labourers, who were thus hired by servile cultivators, it is probable; were either tenants by villenage, who could assist their neighbours on the spare days, in which they were not bound to work for their lord; or free labourers, who existed (although perhaps not in great numbers) long before the parliamentary notice taken of them in the Statute of Labourers, passed in 1350.

From the allowance of food usually provided during harvest, we may form a just estimate of the general diet, in those days, of the poorest part of the nation; a few fish, principally herrings, a loaf of bread, and some beer, constituted the meal of the mower and the reaper. The lord's best mutton, and the cheese, which, it is said, they were entitled to at the end of the harvest, it is probable, formed the chief articles of that ancient rural feast, called harvest-home, and appear to

days valued at 1d.: 15 hay-makers to make it, as the mowers cut it, they being obliged to make and mow 59 acres, 1 rood; the whole of cutting and getting up is valued at 4d. an acre: 54 days to cut and make the lord's wood, and to finish it before Christmas: 20 days to pull the lord's hemp: 120 days work of a man and horse, every day valued at 1d.: 33 days work of a man, each worth 1d.: besides days made uncertain; because when they don't plough or cart, they are to do other work, as the lord pleases: but there are 220 works more, of half a day each, value certain. 12 chickens, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each: 41 carriages to carry corn, worth 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.: 160 days work in carting out the muck: 41 days to carry the hay, value 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.: 3 days to cart the timber: 14 loads of hay to be threshed, value 2d. a load: 14 loads of corn to be threshed, value 2d. each load: 28 days to make hurdles for the fold: 18 to clean and repair the cow bings; and 10 to repair the horses stalls; all which services were valued at £5. 11s. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ d." Blomef. Norf. i. 35.

"The difference betwixt Nativij and Cotrellij" is thus stated in a MSS. in the British Museum, apparently of the age of Queen Elizabeth.

Nativij are bound for a mesuage and the land to pay the rent; shall plowe every weeke in the yeare one daie at the Lo. will: shall moue in harvest-tyme every weeke two dayes: shall reape from Ste Peter and Paul daie untill Ste Peter day ad'vincla every weeke one day; or pay the Lo. ob. qu.: shall gather the Lo. nutts: shall make the Lo. park-wall over against his land: shall with two men mowe the Lo. corne for a day at the Lo. charge: shall two dayes called beene-dayes reape at their owne charges, and shall carry the Lo. works iij daies with one man and a horse: shall grynd at the Lo. milne: shall mowe the Lo. meadowe, and make the hay after *den* the acre; and shall carry the Lo. corn home every fortnight on the Saturday, and shall plowe at his - - - one day at his seede tyme in Lent, and shall yele ij hens at xtimes.

A cotager:

to me to be a proof that meat and cheese were considered more as rarities than the ordinary articles of consumption of the labourer¹. A consideration of the state of agriculture is alone sufficient to convince us, that the great body of the people were, at this period, miserably deficient in the common comforts of life. This art, no doubt, after the irregularities occasioned by the Conquest had subsided, was considerably improved, by the introduction of new modes of cultivation from Normandy. Many of the barons, who came over with King William, were not only fond of, but, if we are to credit historians, were successful practitioners in, agriculture. Ingulphus speaks highly of the improvements of Robert de Rulos, (the Conqueror's chamberlain,) in the fens of Lincolnshire. He bred horses and cattle: besides enclosing and draining, he embanked the river Welland, which, till then, was continually liable to overflow; and built many substantial cottages on the bank: he planted orchards, and, in short, by converting bogs and marshes into corn fields, rich meadows and pastures, he gave the whole country the appearance of a garden². Such instances, however, from their being so minutely particularized, we may suppose, occurred but seldom; and whilst this commendable Norman was improving the soil, (the most honourable employment for a great man,) his despotic master was spreading desolation in the north of England. To punish an insurrection of his newly-acquired subjects, he carried his revenge so far as to depopulate a very large tract of country: 100,000 men, women and children, are said to have been destroyed, in a few months, by the sword, or by famine. The whole country between the Humber and the Tees, for the extent of 60 miles, was converted into a dreary desert, and remained without houses, and without inhabitants, for many years³. The formation of the New Forest was no less

A cotager that holdeth one cotage, or a croft and a roode land, shall do manuell worke with one man every weeke in the yere for one day. And from the first of August shall also do all manner other worke as the native do.

These are customes of the mannor of Preston in Com. North. The lyke custom in Gretton within the same county.

He shall not marry his daughter without lycence, nor make his son priest. See Harl. MSS. Brit. Mus. No. 368.

¹ See note, p. 13, at bottom. of Eng. 1st edit. i. 178.

² Ingulphus, Oxf. edit. i. 77.

³ Hume's Hist.

detrimental to agriculture: to gratify the King's fondness for hunting, a district of thirty miles of extent, in Hampshire, was laid waste, churches and villages were destroyed, and whole families were compelled, without compensation, to abandon their ancient abodes. Under such practices, no art, that contributes to the happiness of mankind, could have been attended to; since none could have been carried on with security. As the invaders became more permanently established, the barbarous licence, both of the monarch and the nobility, was gradually less exerted, and, at length, by the provisions of Magna Charta, was specifically restrained. From that time, the pursuits of husbandry were carried on with assiduity, if not with success. Order and economy were introduced into rural occupations; and agriculture, if not well understood, appears, at least, to have been a fashionable pursuit, even so early as in the reign of Edward the First. The learned author of *Fleta*, who is supposed to have written about this period, affords very satisfactory proof of the truth of this assertion. In his treatise, although professedly a Commentary on Law, he points out the duty of a steward, a bailiff, and an overseer in husbandry, with great minuteness and precision; nor are the subordinate duties of ploughmen, carters, mowers, swine-herds, cow-drivers, and other domestic employments, unattended to¹. Many of his rules concerning ploughing, sowing, and the management of cattle, would not be condemned even by a modern farmer². The directions respecting the collecting of manure are so particular, that it would seem, that, even in the 13th century, the value of what Arthur Young calls "the enlivening soul of good husbandry," was fairly estimated: we also learn from the same author, that if land only yielded three times the seed sown, the farmer would be a loser, unless corn should sell dear: the calculation is as follows; 3 ploughings, 1s. 6d.; harrowing, 1d.; 2 bushels of seed, 1s.; weeding, $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; reaping, 5d.; carrying, 1d.; in all 3s. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. which is 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. more than the value of 6 bushels³: nothing is said of the rent of the land, expence of manuring, &c. This account would have been more curious, if we had been informed what was esteemed a fair average crop: Sir John Cullum supposes it to

¹ *Fleta*, l. 2. c. 72—88.² *Fleta*, l. 2. c. 72, 73, 76.³ *Fleta*, l. 2. c. 82.

have been 12 bushels¹. How inferior and contemptible is such a produce, in comparison with a modern crop, on drilled land, of 42 bushels an acre²! Such scanty crops are the strongest proofs of indifferent husbandry: nor was the little, that was produced, ever hoarded up with that provident frugality, which, in modern times, has secured to the community a regular and equable supply of the most essential article of subsistence throughout the year. The trade of a corn-dealer seems to have been unknown; nor, except in the Abbey-Granges, do we meet with instances of corn being collected in large quantities. The natural consequence must have been, that the farmers, without capital, disposed of their crops at moderate prices, soon after the harvest: purchasers, who only looked to their immediate wants, having corn cheap, were naturally wasteful and improvident in the consumption: the price, therefore, almost invariably rose as the year advanced, and was frequently at an enormous height just before harvest; and, before a fresh supply could be obtained, the stock of the preceding year was often entirely exhausted. Stow informs us, that, in 1317, the harvest was all got in before the 1st of September; and that wheat, which had before been at 4l. the quarter, fell to 6s. 8d. a twelfth part of the price³. A detail of the prices of grain would furnish us with abundant proof, if proofs were wanting, of the extreme misery of those times, in which the only buyers of corn were the consumers. Five guineas a quarter is a price sufficiently grievous, even at a period when a labourer can earn eighteen-pence a day; but between the Conquest and the accession of Edward the Third, the price of wheat varied from 8d. to £6. 8s. the quarter⁴. This almost incredible price occurred in 1270, and was attended with a famine. The historians, however, of that day, do not tell us that it was produced either by corn-dealers or monopolizers. It was reserved for the politicians of subsequent times, when the supply, by means of an increased capital, was rendered equable throughout the year, to discover, that a class of men, who are the most interest-

¹ Cullum's Hawsted, 181.

² Ann. of Agric. vii. 425.

³ Stow, 218.

⁴ See the annexed Table of Prices, in the Appendix, No. I. I am happy to add, that, since the above passage was written, the price of the quarter loaf, in London, (instead of 15d. which it was last year,) is now (27th Aug. 1796,) only 7½d.

ed in procuring the sale of a commodity, were the cause of its scarcity. To those who estimate the ability of a labourer to support himself, from the proportion his wages bear to the price of provisions, I would observe, that when wheat was at £ 6. 8s. a quarter, a man's day-work, in harvest, was valued at a penny, and out of harvest at a half-penny¹; but wheat was not then, indeed, the general bread-corn of the peasantry.

In these calamitous times, the return of harvest must have been looked for with hardly less eagerness, than that with which the Egyptian farmer is said to watch the overflowing of the Nile; and, perhaps, it is not to "consider the matter too curiously," to suppose, that the enthusiastic joy, with which the rustic feast of harvest-home was anciently celebrated, arose from a thorough conviction, that, on expedition, or delay, in getting in the crop, depended the alternative of plenty or famine. This is not the case at present; labourers may indeed hail the return of harvest, because their wages at that season are somewhat increased; but the price of bread in a village would not be lowered, if our farmers employed the bustling industry of 200 reapers to cut as many acres of wheat, and the business of harvest were terminated in a day. The latest possible period of harvest, at present, could never produce the misery that we hear of in ancient times, in which a late crop, or a bad season, obliged the wretched cultivator to content himself with mean fare, and to make use of food, of which we have no idea²: nor were the inhabitants of cities, notwithstanding the superior advantages which they derived from the introduction of commerce and manufactures, much better provided with the necessaries of life, than the servile tenants and cultivators of a baron's estate. A valuation of the moveable property in the borough of Colchester, made in the year 1296, preparatory to levying a subsidy of a seventh, for carrying on the war against France, enables us to decide, with some degree of precision, what portion of domestic ease and comfort was enjoyed by petty tradesmen and artificers at that period³.

Of household furniture the quantity possessed by each family was very inconsiderable. A bed was valued from 3s. to 6s.⁴: in most

¹ Blomefield's Norfolk, i. 408.

² Ingulphus, Hist. Croyl. 518.

³ Rot. Parl. i. 228. 265.

⁴ p. 229, &c.

houses a brass pot, from 1s. to 3s. value, is to be met with¹; it seems to have been almost the only culinary utensil then used. Two or three of the inferior tradesmen possessed silver cups from 1s. to 2s. value²; a blacksmith had a silver cup, four spoons, and a mazer cup³: silver spoons were also in use; one was valued at 10d.⁴: a cobbler's stock in trade was estimated at 7s.⁵: a butcher's stock of salt meat at £1. 18s.; another's at £1.⁶: a tanner's, at 7s. and 11s.⁷ Almost every family was provided with a small store of barley or oats, usually about a quarter or two of each: rye appears to have been very little used, and wheat scarcely at all. It is probable, that corn was generally ground into flour at home, as hand-mills are mentioned; a pair cost 12d.⁸: soap and candles, with cotton wicks,

¹ Rot. Parl. i. p. 228.² p. 228, 234.³ p. 228.⁴ p. 229.⁵ p. 230.⁶ p. 230. 234, &c.⁷ p. 229, &c.⁸ p. 234. Horses seem to have been sometimes used in the corn mills. Ibid. p. 230.

As bread is the most ancient, as well as the most general food ever used by mankind, so the grinding bread-corn by means of hand-mills, or querns *, (from the Saxon *creapn*,) is probably also the most ancient, as well as the most general, mode of converting grain into flour, and preparing it for bread. It appears to have been the peculiar business of prisoners and slaves to grind at querns. Sampson was so employed: and from Simo's threat to Davus, in the second scene of the first act of the *Andrian* of Terence, it appears to have been the business of Roman slaves. See also the *Afinaria* of Plautus, A. 1. S. 1. l. 16.

It is still the business of slaves in many of the United States of America; where, at least, two-thirds of the grain, that is made into bread, is ground in querns. Wickliffe translates Matt. xxiv. v. 21. "two wymmen schulen be gryndyng in oo querne;" which shews, that in his time such mills were the most common. Harrison (in his description of England, prefixed to Holingshed's Chronicle, 169.) says, that his wife ground her malt at home upon her querne. Wind and water-mills were, undoubtedly, at first erected for the convenience and comfort of the tenantry; although they afterwards became the instruments of great feudal tyranny; such as, in some degree, still exists in Scotland.

When the laird (i. e. lord of the manor,) builds a mill, he obliges all his tenants to have their corn ground at his mill only; and, sometimes, to pay nearly double what the corn might be ground for at another mill. The farms are then said to be *thirled*, or under *thirlage* to the mill: the stipulated quantity of meal given as payment to the miller for grinding the corn is called *multure*; and all corn grown on farms thirled to a mill, is obliged to pay *multure*, whether the corn be ground at that mill, or elsewhere. Sometimes the tenants of one estate are thirled to the mill of another, which, when the dues are high, is a great bar to improvement. Statistical Account of Scotland, i. 29, 30. 432.

* In conformity with other writers, I use *querns* and *hand-mills* synonymously. Strictly speaking, however, a *quern* is that species of hand-mill, which is composed of stones. We grind our coffee in a *hand-mill*, but not in a *quern*.

wicks¹, are noticed: some families possessed a cow or two; but more kept hogs: two or three were the usual number of the stock. From the small provision of fuel in the town, I should infer, that very few houses had chimnies, and that, in this respect, Colchester was very similar to what many of the houses, or rather huts in the northern kingdoms, many in Germany, and particularly in Westphalia, and not a

In Virginia, to this day, or, at least, it was so before the independence of America, when a piece of land is advertised to be sold, it is always, when the fact is so, mentioned as a striking recommendation, that the premises are near to church and mill.

In many parts of England, the tenants of a manor are still bound to grind at the lord's mill. In ancient records, mills are often noticed as property of great value; and landlords, in letting the rest of their estate, generally reserved to themselves the *mill-house*, which was no uncommon appendage to a great mansion. Cullum's *Hawsted*, 201.—Barnaby Googe, in his "Four Bookes of Husbandry," printed in 1578, gives the following account of a house mill: "When, as in a great house, there is greate neede of corne mylles, and the com-
" mon milles being farre of, the way foule, and I at myne owne libertie to grinde at home,
" or where I lyfte, thinkyng to make a mill here at home, when neither place nor aucthoritie
" will serve mee to buyld either a water-mill or winde-mill, and a *querne*, or a *hand-mill*,
" dooth but a little good: and to build a horse-mill werè more troublesome. When I sawe
" the wheeles that they use to drawe water with, turned with asses or men, I thought in
" the like sort the wheele of a mill might bee turned; and after this sort devised I this engine,
" which a couple of asses, guided by a boy, doo easily turne, and make very fine meale,
" sufficient for myne one house, and most tymes for my neighbours, whom I suffer to
" grinde tolle-free." F 10.

In the times of feudal tyranny, the tenants of a manor were not only obliged to pay for grinding at the lord's mill, for which they paid *multure*, but to bake their bread at his oven, for which they paid a toll called *furnage*. See Kennett, *Parochial Antiquities*, 356.—Customary ovens were very common in corporate towns. In the year 1290, the corporation of Newcastle complained to parliament, that the Prior of Tinmouth baked bread at North Shields, which ought to have been baked at the corporation oven at Newcastle. See the second volume, p. 562. "Hostelers in thoroughfare towns," that were not cities, were sometimes allowed to bake their horse-bread at home. *Kitchin on Courts*, tit. *Court Leete*, 31.

As an instance not only of the difficulty there is to wean men from old habits, but also of the rigour of the proprietors of mills in ancient times, I transcribe the following curious law from the Statutes of the Gild at Berwick, said to have been enacted in 1284: "Na man fall presume to grind quheit, maischloch, or rye, with hand-mylnes, except he be compelled be storme and tempest of wether, or be inlaik of mylnes, quhilk shuld grind the samine. And in this case, gif any man grindes at hand-mylnes, he shall give the threttein measure as multer, (i. e. toll). And gif any man contraveins this our prohibition, he fall tìne (i. e. lose) his hand-mylnes perpetuallie; and fall grind his cornes at mylnes payand the twentie-foure measure." *Regiam Magestatem*, Statutes of the Gild, c. 19.; see also c. 42.

¹ So I translate *candel de cotun*, p. 233.

few in Scotland, are at present¹. A few tradesmen had a small stock of faggots, or of tal-wood, probably for the use of their workshops²: sea coal (carbon' marin') occurs more than once, and seems to have been chiefly used by blacksmiths³.

A subsequent valuation, taken at Colchester in 1301, in order to levy a fifteenth, is still more curious, and minute, as to several particulars, which are highly illustrative of the domestic economy of the inhabitants⁴. The catalogue of household furniture appears to have been limited and scanty indeed; and seldom exceeded the following articles:

		s.	d.		s.	d.
A mazer cup, was valued from	-	0	6	to	2	0
A bed,	-	1	6	—	6	8
A tripod,	-	0	3	—	0	9
A brass pot,	-	1	0	—	2	6
A brass cup,	-	0	6	—	1	0
An andiron,	-	0	3½	—	0	8
A brass dish,	-	0	6	—	1	0
A gridiron,	-	0	6	—	1	6
A rug, or coverlet ⁵ ,	-	0	8	—	1	6

Of the handicraft trades, particularly of that of a carpenter, we shall not form an high idea, either from the number or the value of the tools; his whole stock was valued at 1s. and consisted of

¹ That is, with a fire-place, or ingle, in the middle of the floor, and an aperture in the roof, but without any pipe or tube for a chimney.

² Rot. Parl. i. p. .

³ p. 228. 231. 235.

⁴ p. 243.

⁵ So I translate chalon. The word occurs in Chaucer's Reve's Tale:

And in his owen chambre hem made a bedde,

With shetes and with *chalons* faire yspredde. l. 4138.

Mr. Tyrwhitt, the editor of Chaucer, thought, that they were so called from being made at Chalons in France; and, from a passage in the Monast. v. ii. p. 720. is led to suppose, that they were *coverlets*;—aut pannos pictos, qui vocantur *chaluns*, loco lectisternii. Notes on the Cant. Tales, 253.—From *chalons*, perhaps, is derived the modern word *shalloon*. Anciently there was a company of *challon* weavers at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. See Brand's Hist. of Newc. ii. 340.

				s.	d.
A broad axe, valued at	-	-	-	0	5
Another,	-	-	-	0	3
An adze,	-	-	-	0	2
A squire (a square)	-	-	-	0	1
A navegor ¹ ,	-	-	-	0	1
				<hr/>	
				1	0 ²
				<hr/>	

A blacksmith's tools were valued from 2s. to 5s.³: a cobbler's stock at 7s. 5d.: another's at 10s. 6d.: another's at 12s. 2d.⁴: a tanner's stock, including cloaths, &c. at £ 9. 17s. 10d.⁵ This is, comparatively with the others, a great sum; but it must be recollected, that the trade was one of the first in ancient times; and it is remarkable, that, to this day, tanners rank high among tradesmen. Leather was not only used for various military purposes, but formed a considerable part of the common dress of the people, before the introduction, and during the infancy, of the woollen manufacture.

The trades exercised in the town are comprized in the following list:

Baker,	Dyer,	Mustard and vinegar-feller,
Barber,	Fisherman,	Old-cloaths-feller,
Blacksmith,	Fuller,	Sadler,
Bowyer,	Furrier,	Tailor,
Brewer,	Girdler,	Tanner,
Butcher,	Glass-feller,	Tyler,
Carpenter,	Glover,	Weaver,
Carter,	Linen-draper,	Wood-cutter,
Cobbler,	Mercer and spice-feller,	Wool-comber.
Cook,	Miller,	

The business of brewing seems to have been carried on here, as in-

¹ Probably a spoke-shave. [†] Navaja, in Spanish, signifies a razor.

² Rot. Parl. i.

p. 259.

³ p. 255.

⁴ p. 259.

⁵ p. 252.

** gr. Auger - to bore the nave*

deed

deed it was elsewhere in ancient times, by women¹. In general, however, each family brewed at home: the barber brewed for himself². Women also appear to have been millers³: and, I should conjecture, bakers; since one Agnes la Regatere is charged 1d. tax for her stock of saleable bread, which was valued at 15d.⁴

From the number of cows and hogs, and the trifling amount of a butcher's stock, mentioned in the first valuation, I should conclude, that bread, milk, and beer, formed the usual diet of the townsmen: salt meat, however, appears to have been in use⁵, for it is taken notice of in a few instances; and in the inventory of a brewer's stock, tubs for salting are noticed⁶. At some houses there was a stock of hay, probably for the cows in winter, as the valuation appears to have been made at Michaelmas. The whole quantity of wine in the town did not exceed three hogsheds⁷; whence we may infer, that Colchester was entirely inhabited by tradesmen, for at this period wine was the usual beverage of the nobility.

We are indebted to the minute attention of the tax-gatherers, who seem to have taken notice of every thing, that could be comprised under the article of moveables, for the above curious account. It proves to us, that, notwithstanding the exaggerated ideas which many intelligent writers have formed, respecting the wealth of our cities in ancient times, one of the most flourishing in Edward the First's reign, was,

¹ Rot. Parl. i. p. 247. That brewing, baking, and weaving, were usually exercised by women, the nouns *brewster*, *bakster*, and *webster*, which all have a feminine termination, sufficiently prove. See Tyrrwhit's Chaucer, iv. 224. ver. 2019. Since the men have encroached on these employments, the words have assumed an English masculine termination. It is but of late date, and since the general introduction of breweries, that women ceased to be the brewers, both in the north of England, and in Scotland. The female sex, formerly, exclusively carried on many trades, that are now conducted entirely by men. In a statute of Edward the Third, which enjoins artificers to keep to one master, some allowances are made in favour of women who pursue manual occupations. Females of the following description are exempted from the regulations of the statute, viz. brocceresces, pesteresces, tisteresces, fileresces, et oevresces, si bien de leine come de liegne, toile, et de foie, broadesters, kardesters, pyneresces de leine, et toutes autres que usent et oeverent overaignes manueles. (Rot. Parl. ii. 278.) This statute, amongst many others, might be adduced in proof of Blackstone's observation, that women are great favourites with the laws of England.

² p. 257.

³ p. 248

⁴ p. 254.

⁵ p. 258.

⁶ p. 262.

⁷ p. 265.

in point of capital stock, in arts, and in industry, far inferior to many a modern village. The person who united the trades of mercer and spicery-feller, seems to correspond very much with the country chandlers; and it is probable, from the value of his stock, which did not exceed £ 3.¹, that his wares were not more numerous, nor more costly, than the pack of a modern pedlar: the stock of one consisted of the following articles, viz.

	£.	s.	d.
A piece of woollen cloth, valued at	-	-	0 7 0
Silk and fine linen,	-	-	1 0 0
Flannel and silk purses,	-	-	1 4 0
Gloves, girdles, leather-purses, and needle-work,	0	6	8
Other small things,	-	-	0 3 0
	£ 3	0	0 ²

This stock, together with household furniture and utensils, is valued at £ 5. 9s. 3d.³: another mercer's goods are valued at 6s. 8d.⁴: the person who sold these articles is called "mercator," which I have translated mercer, as he seems to correspond, both in name and in trade, with the Scotch merchant. In the inventory of a mercer, are mentioned, quicksilver and verdigrise: the two articles only amounted to 12d.⁵ The trade of the spicer was equally miscellaneous⁶.

The first valuation is not so minute as that in 1301, in which the most trifling articles are circumstantially noticed. A man, whose property was 10s. in money, was charged 8d. for his fifteenth⁷. Alice Maynard was taxed at 1d. for her brass-pot valued 10d. and her towel valued 5d.⁸: nor did the solitary old coat of a baker⁹, not worth 20d. or even

¹ £ 3. in Edward the Second's reign, contained nearly as much silver, as £ 9. do at present. The reader may, therefore, reckon the money price of the different articles, noticed in these valuations, at three times the sum set down. ² Rot. Parl. i. p. 261.

³ p. 261. ⁴ p. 263. ⁵ p. 263. ⁶ p. 244. ⁷ p. 254. ⁸ p. 243.

⁹ I should imagine, that, at this period of our history, the labouring classes were wretchedly provided with cloathing. Even soldiers, who, as Falstaff says, can "find linen enough on every hedge," were, many of them, half naked. The Welshmen, in Edward the Second's army, at the battle of Bannockburn, were known by the poverty of their drefs:

Where'er they yied men might them ken,
For they well near all naked were,
Or linen cloaths had but marc.

BARBOUR, 276.

a hatchet, the only tool a carpenter possessed¹, go scot free. I have no doubt, but that the tax-gatherers were extremely partial to the rich, and oppressive to the poor; for, notwithstanding the above instances of their scrupulous attention to levy the utmost farthing on petty tradesmen, we find that the master and brethren of an hospital, besides their cattle, and corn, only accounted for one household utensil, a brass pot²: and an Abbot and a Prior paid only for their corn and their live stock³: the Rector of St. Peter's seems to have been equally privileged⁴.

At the period when the above taxation was made, Colchester, it is probable, was one of the most thriving towns in England: it appears from the subsidy roll of 1377⁵, that it paid the poll-tax for 2955 lay persons; and may therefore have contained, as Mr. Chalmers supposes, about 4432 inhabitants: it was then the tenth city in England, in point of population, and, probably, now, held nearly the same rank; for the number of inhabitants, (housekeepers, I suppose,) taxed in 1301, amounted to 390, which, if multiplied by 6, (which is rather more than the usual proportion of persons in a family,) will amount to 2340; and allowing for persons not taxable, I should imagine the population of Colchester did not exceed 3000 souls. In point of property, it was still more insignificant⁶: all household furniture, and utensils, cloaths, money, horses, corn, and other provisions, in the town, were valued by the tax-gatherers at £ 518. 16s. 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.; and the fifteenth only produced the trifling sum of £ 34. 12s. 7d.⁷.

From the small quantity of woollen cloth found in this manufacturing town, it would seem that the cloathing arts had not yet made much progress in England. They were known indeed at a very early period, for several Flemish weavers came over with the Conqueror⁸; and in Madox's History of the Exchequer, several instances are mentioned, of weavers paying fines to the king for the conservation of their privileges⁹.

¹ Rot. Parl. i. p. 253.
Estimate, 2d edit. 15.

² p. 253.

³ p. 249. 253.

⁴ p. 256.

⁵ Chalmers's

⁶ From this valuation, Colchester appears to have been a more inconsiderable town than Dunstable; for, by an assessment made in 1275, the effects of the people of Dunstable were found

to amount to £ 548 16 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ and the 15th to £ 36 11 9 $\frac{1}{4}$

The priory effects, 16 4 10 and the 15th to 1 1 8

Ann. Dunstable, 108.

⁷ Rot. Parl. i. 265.

⁸ Brompton, 1003. Gervase, 1349.

⁹ Mad. Excheq.

c. 13. § 3.

In the two succeeding reigns, the woollen manufacture advanced very rapidly, and several minute regulations were passed by the Legislature relative to the fabrication and sale of cloth. In 1197 it was enacted, "that all woollen cloths should be made of the same breadth; that the measure should be uniform throughout the realm; that no trader in wool should stretch, before his shop, or booth, a red or black cloth, or any other thing by which the sight of buyers was often deceived in the choice of good cloth; that no cloth, of any other colour than black, should be sold in any part of the kingdom, except in cities or boroughs; and that in all cities and boroughs, four, or six men, according to the size of the place, should be appointed to enforce obedience to the statute¹." Similar provisions, respecting the breadth of cloth, are inserted in the great charters of John and Henry; but from that time till the beginning of the reign of Edward the Third, the woollen manufacture was unnoticed by the Legislature. However, in 1331, an expert Flemish manufacturer came into England, with his workmen, and was kindly received by Edward, who issued a proclamation, with promises of the like protection to all foreign weavers and fullers, that should settle in England². It is probable that the king was induced to patronize the new comers, in consequence of his connection with the Flemings, by his marriage with Philippa, daughter of the Earl of Hainault. Many Walloon families were persuaded, by the proclamation, to settle in England; and, notwithstanding the outrages of the people, who considered these industrious foreigners as grievous monopolists, the unremitting favour, and countenance of the king, enabled them, in the course of a few years, to obtain a firm footing in various parts of the kingdom³. In 1337, several judicious statutes were enacted for their further protection: by one, it was made felony to export wool; by another, the use of foreign cloth was limited to the royal family; by a third, the importation of foreign cloth was forbidden; and by a fourth, cloth-workers were invited into England, by promises of protection and encouragement⁴. Although the good effects of these wholesome laws was somewhat retarded by the wars with France, which obliged the king, from the

¹ M. Paris, 134. Hoveden, 440.
723. v. 429.

² Rym. Fœd. iv. 496.

³ Rym. Fœd. iv.

⁴ 11 E. 3. c. 1, 2, 3, 5.

exhausted state of his finances, to solicit vast subsidies in wool¹; yet, in less than forty years, the manufacture became so vigorous, that full'd woollen cloths were allowed to be exported²; a decisive proof, that there was a demand abroad, and that England could supply it, without prejudice to the home consumption.

I have given this short account of the progress and establishment of the woollen manufacture, because, I think, that, by drawing the superfluous hands from the country into towns and cities, it contributed, more than any other cause, to meliorate the condition of the labouring classes. The natural tendency of trade, in general, is to collect people together; but the various branches of the woollen manufacture would, for various reasons, in the barbarous times in which it gained a footing in England, be more peculiarly confined to boroughs and cities. As it was at first carried on principally by foreigners, who were exposed to the jealousy of an unenlightened nation, it is probable, that the privileges conferred, by several of our kings, on weavers, fullers, and clothiers, in allowing them to erect gilds, and to be governed by corporate laws, were not more intended for their future advancement, than for their immediate security: it was not more to protect their persons from popular fury, than their property from lawless depredation, that merchants and manufacturers formed themselves into companies under the protection of the sovereign, and carried on their occupations within the walls of a town. We are assured by several historians, that there was so total a want of police and good order in England, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, that robbers formed themselves into bands, under the protection of powerful barons, who employed them in acts of violence and plunder, justified their conduct, and partook of the booty. The king's retinue was often beset and pillaged by banditti; even towns, during the time of fairs, were assaulted and ransacked; and men of rank carried off and confined in the castle of some lawless chieftain, till their ransom was paid³. We meet with several instances, in the Rolls, of persons complaining to Parliament, that their corn had thus been destroyed, their houses burnt, or their effects taken from them. To remedy these

¹ Rot. Parl. ii. 107, &c. ² 50 E. 3. c. 7. ³ M. Paris, 225. Knyghton, 2465. Walsingham, Ypod. Neust. 593.

disorders, a statute was passed in the first year of Henry the Fourth's reign, enjoining nobles, and others, to allow liveries only to their household servants¹; however, it appears from the Rolls of 1406, that esquires and others, jointly or severally continued to give cloth, for liveries, to 200, 300, and even to a still greater number of retainers, to the manifest oppression of their neighbours, and to the promotion of quarrels, extortion, and rapine². The mild influence of commerce at length held out allurements of wealth and independence to the abject dependents of riotous barons, and, by drawing the superfluous hands from the country into cities, in the end established good order and tranquillity.

From the various immunities granted by successive sovereigns to foreign merchants and manufacturers, but more especially to the different branches of the cloathing trade, the inhabitants of cities were not only acquiring the means of enriching themselves, while the occupiers of land were languishing in poverty and servitude; but, from the privilege which they had obtained, of making bye-laws for their own government, and of raising troops for their own defence, they were the sooner enabled to taste the sweets of order and good government. It is to the introduction of this class of men, and to the salutary neglect of the nobility in overlooking the encroaching spirit of the mercantile order, that we are to ascribe many beneficial alterations in the condition of the labouring classes of the community. The superior comforts enjoyed by the artisan, or manufacturer, in a borough, would, no doubt, inspire the servile dependants of a manor with ideas of emancipating themselves from a state, in which they could scarcely obtain the necessaries, and certainly none of the conveniences, of life. If, (as Adam Smith observes,) in the hands of a poor cultivator, oppressed with the servitude of villenage, some little stock should accumulate, he would naturally conceal it with great care from his master, to whom it would otherwise have belonged, and take the first opportunity of running away to a town. The Law was at that time so indulgent to the inhabitants of towns, and so desirous of diminishing the authority of the lord over those of the country, that if a villein could conceal himself from the

¹ Rot. Parl. iii. 428.

² Rot. Parl. iii. 600.

purſuit of his lord for a year, he was free for ever¹. Whatever ſtock, therefore, accumulated in the hands of the induſtrious part of the inhabitants of the country, naturally took refuge in cities, as the only ſanctuaries in which it could be ſecure to the perſon that had acquired it². We have convincing proof, that, before the end of Edward the Third's reign, the villeins found themſelves ſufficiently powerful to protect one another, and to withhold their ancient and accuſtomed ſervices from their lord. In the firſt year of Richard the Second's reign, it was ſtated in Parliament, that villeins, and tenants in villeinage, had combined together to defraud their lords of their rights; that the ſtewards of manors were unable to enforce the uſual and accuſtomed ſervices, to the great injury of the lords: it was ſaid, that corn had remained on the ground uncut; that villeins would even adhere to the king's enemies, to gratify their vengeance againſt their lords; and that, to ſupport their rebellious practices, they had ſubſcribed large ſums of money for their mutual defence³. A few years after, we find both the Spiritual and Temporal nobility complaining, that their villeins fled into trading towns, where the merchants, under colour of their franchiſes, detained them; and that thoſe who ſtill continued in the country, were emboldened to behave ſo inſolently, that their maſters were afraid of exerciſing their power, for fear of loſing them irrecoverably⁴.

By theſe, and ſimilar practices, ſuggeſted, perhaps, originally, by the hardſhips of ſervitude, and promoted by the demand for manufacturing labour, a large portion of villeins was converted into the more uſeful claſs of free labourers. This rank of people is, for the firſt time, ſpecifically noticed by the Legiſlature in 1350; and their regulations, however unjuſt, impolitic, and penal, afford us at leaſt the important information, that labourers in huſbandry, as well as thoſe employed at the loom, now equally worked for hire.

The comparative number of free hands, no doubt, conſiderably increaſed during the beginning of Edward the Third's reign, from his long wars in France, which muſt have obliged him to manumit

¹ Several caſes in the Year Books relate to the reclaiming of villeins, who had run away from their maſters, and hired themſelves as free labourers.

² Wealth of Nations, 8vo. 5th ed. ii. 109.

³ Rot. Parl. iii. 21.

⁴ Rot. Parl. iii. 448.

many of his villeins, to recruit his exhausted armies. Nor was the dreadful pestilence, which raged in 1349, (although highly calamitous to the nation in it's immediate effects,) without its beneficial consequences to the labouring classes, since it inspired those who survived with just ideas of their own importance. It has been justly observed, that there is not a reign, among those of the ancient English monarchs, which deserves to be more studied than that of Edward the Third, nor one where the domestic transactions will better discover the true genius of that kind of mixed government which was then established in England¹. I may add, that there is not a reign, in the early part of our history, which affords more information, from the annals and proceedings of the Legislature, of the state and condition of the poorest classes of the community. The Statute of Labourers, more especially, details many minute circumstances, which enable us to determine, with a tolerable degree of precision, what was the reward of labour, and what degree of independence was enjoyed by the people of England in the 14th century.

It appears, from the complaints of the commons², that no attention was paid to an ordinance which the king had issued, for regulating the wages of labourers. This statute was therefore passed, in order to enforce obedience, by corporal punishments, and pecuniary fines. It states, that, since the pestilence, no person would serve, unless he was paid double the usual wages allowed five years before, to the great detriment of the lords and commons: it was therefore enacted, That,

¹ Hume, 1st ed. ii. 240. ² Et q lui pleise, pur Dieu, avoir regard a ceo q son povere poeple lui ad fait puis le comencement de ses guerres. Et coment puis p celle pestilence sa commune est grantment anentiz et destruitz, dount citees, burghs, et autres villes et hamelles pmie la terre sont descheies, et de jour en autre descheont, et plusours nettement deshabitez q solient eider au tax de disme et quinzisme, et autres charges grantez a lui en eide de sa guerre. Et ore p lours mortz ceste darrien tax conditionele q court a meisme la summe sur ceux q sont remys, sont destruitz et anentiz a grand meschief q a pein poent vivre. Et outre ce, si lui pleise, q'il eit regard a la grande defaute & chierte de Ble q ore est en sa terre, & nomement la grendre partie de la terre gift frische & desgaigne, estre autres meschiefs. Et coment, nient eiant regard as meschiefs suisditz, sur ce commissions sont issuz deprendre Blees, Chars, et autres vitailles, la ou la commune entendit q nulles tiels charges ne prises ne ferroient faitz saunz assent du parlement, et encountre l'estatut. Rot. Parl. 2. 227.

in future, carters, ploughmen, plough-drivers, shepherds, swineherds, deyes¹, and other servants, should be content with such liveries and wages as they received in the 20th year of the king's reign, and two or three years before; and that, in districts where they had severally been paid in wheat, they should receive wheat, or money, at the rate of 10d. a bushel, at the option of their employers: they were to be hired for a year, and other accustomed periods, and not by the day: weeders, and haymakers, were to be paid at the rate of 1d. a day; mowers, 5d. the acre, or 5d. a day; and reapers, during the first week in August, 2d. a day; and from that time, till the end of the month, 3d. a day, without diet, or any other perquisite. Labourers of the above description were enjoined to carry their implements of husbandry, openly in their hands, to market towns, and to apply for hire in a public quarter of the town².

The

¹ *Deyes* were the lowest class of servants in husbandry: they seem to have been employed either at the dairy, or in tending swine. See Du Cange, in v. *Dacia*. Their wages were generally lower than those of other servants. In Scotland, the term always has been, and still is, appropriated, almost exclusively, to *dairy-maids*. In the old translation of the 37 E. 3. c. 14. a *deye* is called a *deyar*. Chaucer, in describing the diet of a poor widow, notices the homely fare of a *dye*.

No win ne dranke she, neyther white ne red:
Hire bord was served most with white and black,
Milk and brown bred, in which she fond no lack,
Seinde bacon, and somtime an ey or twey;
For she was, as it were, a maner *dye*.

The Nonnes Preestes Tale, l. 14848.

The following lines, from the same poem, it is probable, exhibit a fair description of the usual extent and comforts of farming, in Chaucer's days:

Three large fowes had she, and no mo:
Three kine, and eke a sheep, that highte Malle.
Ful footy was hire boure, and eke hire halle.
In which she ete many a slender mele.
Of poynant sauce ne knew she never a dele.
No deentee morsel passed thurgh hire throte;
Hire diete was according to her cote.
Repletion ne made hire never sike;
Attempre diete was all hire physike,
And exercise, and hertes suffisance.

l. 14836.

² In Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, and Berkshire, servants continue to attend the

The wages of threshing were then regulated; a man, for threshing a quarter of wheat, or rye, was allowed $2\frac{1}{2}d.$: for threshing a quarter of barley, oats, beans, and pease, $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ or a certain number of sheaves, or bushels, in places where it had been customary to pay in kind. No person was to quit his own village, in order to obtain work in summer, if he could get employment at the above wages, except the people of Staffordshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Craven in Yorkshire, and the marches of Scotland and Wales, and other parts, who were permitted to leave their own country. Labourers were to be sworn, twice a year, to observe these regulations; and offenders were punishable with three or more days' imprisonment in the stocks. The wages of artificers were likewise settled in the following proportion:

A master carpenter, by the day	-	-	3d.	} From Easter to Michaelmas, without diet.
A master free-mason	do.	-	4	
other carpenters	do.	-	2	
other masons	do.	-	3	
their servants	do.	-	$1\frac{1}{2}$	
Tilers	do.	-	3	
their knaves ¹	do.	-	$1\frac{1}{2}$	
Other coverers of fern				
and straw	do.	-	3	
their knaves	do.	-	$1\frac{1}{2}$	
Plasterers and others,				
workers of mud-walls	do.	-	3	
their knaves	do.	-	$1\frac{1}{2}$	

and

the mopp, or statute, as it is called, (i. e. Michaelmas fair,) in order to be hired. Each person has a badge, or external mark, expressive of his occupation. A carter exhibits a piece of whip-cord tied to his hat: a cow-herd has a lock of cow-hair in his; and the dairy-maid has the same descriptive mark attached to her breast. So in the North of England at the Spring hiring-term, the servants to be hired, who are almost always persons to be employed in husbandry, are to be distinguished from others, who attend the market, by their wearing a large posie or bouquet of flowers at their breasts; which is no unapt emblem of their calling. Even in London, bricklayers, and other house-labourers, carry their respective implements to the places where they stand for hire: for which purpose, they assemble in great numbers in Cheap-side, and at Charing-cross, every morning, at five or six o'clock. So in old Rome, there were particular spots, in which servants applied for hire: "In Tusco vico, ibi sunt homines, qui ipsi se venditent." Plautus, Curculio, Act iv.

¹ *Knave* was formerly very commonly used to signify a servant, or workman's boy. It occurs, in this sense, in the Regiam Majestatem: "all they quha hes milns in ther lands,

and even the price of some commodities seems to have been regulated¹; offenders were liable to imprisonment, till they could find sureties, to serve for the accustomed wages, or to sell their goods in the usual way. The excess above the common wages allowed to labourers might be sued for, by the master. Labourers, artificers, and servants, flying from one country to another, in consequence of these regulations, were to be imprisoned till the next sessions².

Many authors take notice of another Statute of Labourers, supposed to have been passed in 1349; and indeed it is printed as such in the Statute-book: however, it should be remarked, that it is not in French, the usual language of Parliament in those days, but in Latin: it is not inserted in the Rolls; neither do the Commons, (who were then an essential part of the Legislature,) appear to have concurred in it: besides which, we are informed by historians, that the Parliament could not meet this year, on account of the plague: I should, therefore, imagine, that the supposed statute is the ordinance which the King issued, with the advice of his prelates, nobles, and learned men; and which is noted in the preamble of the Statute of Labourers: some of its regulations, however, are worth noticing. It is remarkable, that the first public information we have, that labourers “were rather willing to beg in idleness, than by labour to get their living,” was at a period when there was a scarcity of servants; and that plenty of work seems to have, if not created, certainly increased, the number of beggars. By the ordinance, every able-bodied person, under sixty years of age, not having competent means of support, was bound to serve, if required so to do, in the employment he was most fitted for, at the wages usually given: a subsequent section, in order to compel able men to labour for the necessities of life, imposed the penalty of imprisonment on all persons, who, giving alms, through pretence of piety or charity, should encour-

fall have ane maister, and tua servants, *mil-knaves*, quha fall swere to be leill and trew to the lord of the land, and his men. Stat. Wilh. c. 9. *Knaves*, it is probable, was the common term for an agricultural labourer in Shakspeare's time:

“A couple of Ford's *knaves*, his hinds.”—MERRY WIVES, &c. A. iii. S. 5.

¹ Three years after, the Legislature proceeded a step farther, and authorized magistrates to regulate the rents of houses in towns, where the wool-staple was held. 27 E. 3. ft. 2. c. 16. and the price of iron, 28 E. 3. c. 5. Rot. Parl. ii. 260. ² Rot. Parl. ii. 233. See also the Appendix, No. viii. p. cxlvii. where this Statute is inserted at length.

rage the idleness of sturdy labourers. The other parts of the ordinance have been already recited in the Statute of Labourers.

Such were the severe restrictions imposed on industry: restrictions, which, as Mr. Chalmers justly observes, sufficiently evince, to what a deplorable state of servitude the collective mass of the people was then reduced¹. I am, however, surprised, that, with such a proof of domestic misery before him, he should infer, that slaves had happily departed from the land before the reign of Henry the Third; because the great charter of 1225, in mentioning how men of all sorts should be amerced, only takes notice of earls, barons, churchmen, merchants, freemen, and villeins. In both Magna Charta, and the charters of Henry the Third, obtained in 1225, a class of men are mentioned, who appear to have been considered in the light of moveable property². The prohibition to guardians from wasting the men or cattle on the estates of minors, is a clear proof that villeins, who held by servile tenures, were looked upon in the light of negroes on a rice, a tobacco, or a sugar plantation³. Long after the year 1225, they were considered as a saleable commodity, of which I shall only mention a few instances, from many that may be found among our ancient historians. In 1283, a slave and his family were sold, by the Abbot of Dunstable, for 13s. 4d.⁴: in 1333, a lord granted to a chantry several messuages, together with the bodies of eight natives, (villeins regardant,) dwelling there, with all their chattels and offspring⁵: and in 1339, we meet with an instance of a gift of a nief, (or female slave,) with all her family, and all that she possessed, or might subsequently acquire⁶: as the conveyance does not mention land, she was probably a villein in gross.

From the 25th of Edward the Third, the laws concerning wages, and other visionary regulations, which, however impracticable, were

¹ Estimate, 2d. edit. 7.

² Estimate, 19.

³ See Magna Charta, c. 4.; and

9 H. 3. c. 4.

⁴ Barrington, Observ. on the Ancient Statutes, 4th edit. 7. Notwithstanding the care of the charters to preserve the villein's implements of husbandry, Bracton, who wrote about the end of Henry the Third's reign, seems to think, that a man of this description was entirely at the mercy of his lord, who, (to use the author's language,) "quando-cunque placuerit, auferre poterit a villano suo waynagium suum et omnia bona sua." (Bracton, l. i. c. 9.)

⁵ Ann. Dunst. ann. 1283.

⁶ Dugd. Warw. 729.

⁷ Blount's

Law Dict. title Nief.

perseveringly adhered to by successive Legislatures, afford us the means of tracing, with chronological exactness, the variations either of improvement, or of deterioration, in the condition of labourers for hire, who may now be considered as the persons composing that class, by which the works of agriculture, of handicraft trades, or of manufacture, were carried on: with regard to those who were maintained by navigation, it is probable they were never, like the cultivators of the earth, in a state of downright servitude. The opportunity which their way of life presented to them, if discontented with their condition, of migrating from one country to another, must, in the earliest periods of our history, have rendered their employers more indulgent than other masters, and their situation consequently more comfortable. Of the comparative advantages of a sea-faring life, even in the infancy of commerce, we may form some idea, from the petition presented to Parliament in the eleventh year of Richard the Second¹, wherein the mariners of England complain, that their wages were only 3d. a day²: about this time, the annual pay of a common labourer, in husbandry, was about five shillings³.

In 1360, the Statute of Labourers was confirmed by Parliament, and the observance of it enforced, under penalty of imprisonment for fifteen days, and burning in the forehead with an iron, in the form of the letter F⁴, for offenders that absented themselves from their work, or quitted their place of abode: and magistrates were directed, in case they fled into towns, to deliver them up, under penalty of £10. to the King, and £5. to the masters who should reclaim them⁵. Wages were again regulated; and in order to prevent combinations among artificers, it was declared, “that all alliances and covines of masons

¹ 1387.

² Rot. Parl. iii. 253.

³ Cullum's Hawsted, 103.

⁴ I suppose

to signify, *Fugitivus*. The Romans, in the same manner, used to inscribe on the foreheads of malefactors, the letters C. A. F. which are explained to mean *Cave a Fure*, or, *Cave a Fugitivo*. I think it very probable that Plautus, in calling a thief *homo trium literarum*, alluded to these three letters, rather than to the word *Fur*. Ap. Act. ii. Sc. iv. L. 51.—In another play, he calls a thief *litteratus*, from being branded in the forehead: a pun much on a par with one I have somewhere met with, (I think in the *Epistola Iacchi Etonensis*,) of a postman being called, *hominem literatissimum*.

⁵ 34 E. 3. c. 9, 10. For other regulations respecting the fines and amercements of labourers, see 36 E. 3. c. 14.

and

and carpenters, and congregations, chapters, ordinances, and oaths betwixt them made, should be thenceforth void, and wholly annulled."

The object of this statute seems to have been, to benefit the master, rather than the servant, by fixing a maximum for wages; and although it pointed out a mode by which its provisions might be avoided, by making it lawful "to every lord, or other, to make bargain and covenant of their worke in grosse, with such labourers and artificers, when please them, so that they performe such workes well and lawfully, according to the bargain or covenant with them thereof made¹," I conceive that it was only optional in the *master* to adopt this mode of hiring, and that the labourer was compellable to work for the statute-wages, by the day, or the year, unless his employer could persuade him to work by the piece for less.

Having ineffectually endeavoured to controul the wages of industry, the Legislature attempted, by statutes equally impracticable, to restrict the labourer in the disposition of his slender earnings; and, accordingly, in the year 1363, several acts were passed for the regulation of the diet and apparel² of servants and others, which, although they have been since repealed³, merit some attention, as we may collect from them the state of the people with respect to the two most essential necessities

¹ 34 E. 3. c. 9.

² The extravagance in dress was a common topic of complaint among the historians of this period. One author remarks, that, in the year 1348, the English enjoyed great prosperity and plenty, in consequence of their victories abroad; and that such quantities of furred garments, fine linen, jewels, gold and silver plate, and rich furniture, the spoils of French cities, were imported, that every woman of rank obtained a share. Walsingham, 168.—Another annalist observes, that, in 1388, the vanity of the common people in dress was so great, that it was impossible to distinguish the rich from the poor, the high from the low, or the clergy from the laity, by their appearance. Fashions were continually changing, and every one endeavoured to outdo his neighbour in costliness of apparel. Knyghton, 2729.—These, and similar passages in ancient historians, evince an increasing prosperity in the country. It is not probable, that the spoils of France were sufficient to supply the demands of extravagance, which, I should imagine, was both created and supported by the renovating exertions of commerce. A poor man's vanity would in vain have coveted finer cloaths than he was used to, had not his industry, and the improvements in manufactures, afforded him the means of gratifying it.

³ An ancient statute, however, against excess of diet (10 E. 3. st. 3.) remains unrepealed. It ordains, that no man shall be served at dinner or supper with more than two courses, except upon certain holidays therein specified, on which three courses are allowed. Blackst. iv. 170.

of life: they direct, that the servants, both of lords, and artificers and tradesmen, should be served, once a day, with meat, or fish, and the offal of other victuals, such as milk and cheese, according to their station; and that they should wear cloth, of which the whole piece did not cost more than two marks; that is, scarcely 12d. a yard¹. The cloth used by tradesmen², artificers, and yeomen, was not to exceed two

¹ This is probably the same kind of cloth with that mentioned in 1 H. 4. c. 19. twelve yards of which sold for 13s. 4d. and which was exempted from paying subsidy. The coarsest cloth seems to have been, anciently, manufactured at Kendal, and did not exceed 6s. 8d. the 12 yards, (see 9 H. 4. c. 2.) It was denominated either *blanket* or *ruffet*, according to it's colour. From it's constituting the usual dress of rustics, the great painter of men and manners, Shakspeare, avails himself of the term *ruffet* to describe the bluntness of the country:

Taffata phrases, silken terms precise,
Three piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,
Figures pedantical; these summer flies
Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:
Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express
In *ruffet* yeas, and honest *kerfy* noes.—LOVE'S LABOUR LOST, A. 5. S. 2.

He also very judiciously clothes his robbers (in Henry the Fourth) in Kendal cloth.

Our English lexicographer has, I think, rather hastily animadverted on a passage in Macbeth, in which the word *blanket* is used. On the line "nor heaven peep through the *blanket* of the dark," he says, "I can scarce check my risibility, when the expression forces itself upon my mind; for, who, without some relaxation of his gravity, can hear of the avengers of guilt *peeping through a blanket*." Rambler, No. 168.—Such a criticism is unworthy of the author of the Rambler. *Blanket*, it appears from this statute, did not merely signify a bed-covering; it was one sort of cloth, and probably that of which the curtain of the theatre (which, Mr. Malone supposes, suggested the phrase in Macbeth,) was made. It is by no means improbable, that, in Shakspeare's time, the curtain of the theatre was called *the blanket*, from the name of the cloth of which it consisted; as we now call the painter's cloth *the canvas*: and supposing this to have been the case, the expression is neither mean nor ludicrous.

² The daughters and sons of tradesmen were forbidden to wear any sort of fur, or of *budge*, except of lamb, conie, cat, or fox; a clear proof, that *budge* does not exclusively signify the fur of *lamb*s, as Dr. Johnson defines it in his Dictionary. In the Lib. Quot. Contrarot. is mentioned, pellura diversa tam de *bog*, quam de *agnis*. The expression in Comus,

O foolishness of men! that lend their ear
To those *budge* doctors of the Stoick fur,

was probably suggested to Milton by the furred gowns anciently worn by the clergy, and the furred hoods, which have, more or less, long formed a part of the scholastic habit in our universities.

two pounds the piece, which is about 1s. 6d. a yard. Carters, ploughmen, plough-drivers, ox-herds, neat-herds, shepherds, pig-drivers, deyes, and all other attendants on cattle, threshers, and other labourers employed in husbandry, and others not worth 40s. in money or in goods, were to use no other cloth than what was called blanket and ruffet, of the value of 12d. the yard. Clothiers were directed to make suitable quantities of cloth of the different prices; and mercers and shop-keepers to provide a sufficient assortment of each, in order that the law might be duly observed¹. From this part of the statute it appears, that there was now plenty of woollen cloth, of various prices and fineness, made in England.

This sumptuary law does not merit much commendation, and seems to have been perfectly incompatible with the principles of manufacture and commerce, which, even at this early period, had taken root in the nation. After all, it may be much doubted, whether such regulations ever were practicable: a cotemporary historian informs us, that this law, notwithstanding the severe famine, which then raged, remained unexecuted².

The language of Adam Smith, on this subject, although strong, is perhaps correct and true: "It is the highest impertinence," he says, "in kings and ministers, to pretend to watch over the economy of private people, and to restrain their expence, either by sumptuary laws, or by prohibiting the importation of foreign luxuries. They are themselves always, and without any exception, the greatest spendthrifts in the society; let them look well after their own expence, and they may safely trust private people with their's: if their own extravagance does not ruin the State, that of their subjects

universities. Furred habits were anciently worn by almost every description of magistrates and peace officers. Of the constable, who took him into custody, and who, probably, wore a furred coat, Elwood the Quaker observes, "This was a *budge* fellow; and talked high." Life, 128. Stow, in his Survey of London, edit. 1618, p. 455, mentions, *Budge-Rowe*, a street so called of *budge*, *furre*, and of *skinners* dwelling there." The place and name still remain. See a learned note on this word, (or rather, on a passage in Hamlet,) in Warton's Milton, 2d edit. 220. Another street in the neighbourhood of *Skinners-Hall* is called *Cloak-Lane*. Rumney-*budge*, and white-tawed *budge*, are mentioned in the Book of Rates, (12 Car. 2. c. 4.)¹ Rot. Parl. ii. 278. This sumptuary law also regulated the price of cloth, that was worn by persons of rank.² Walsingham, 179.

" never

“ never will ¹.” Nor are such regulations more impolitic than impracticable. To carry the above statute respecting apparel into effect, it was enacted, that clothiers should make their cloth conformably to the prices appointed by the statute: however, it appears from a subsequent regulation of the Legislature ², that, not being allowed to raise their price, they had contrived to indemnify themselves by shortening the length of a piece of cloth; as the brewers of modern times, (who know that, if they raised the price of beer, one immediate consequence would be their being burthened with a very heavy additional excise,) in order to lessen their losses from the high price of malt, are obliged to lower the strength of their porter, in order to be able to sell as great a quantity for $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. as they did five years ago.

Parliament might, and indeed must, have known, that a limitation of the wages of labour to the ancient rate, whilst the price of all the necessaries of life, but more particularly of corn, the principal article of subsistence in these times, was continually varying, must have exposed the people frequently to great distress, and have impelled them to practise every species of evasion. If the wages fixed by statute were adhered to, the pay of a labourer, or artificer, must have been the same from 1350 to 1370; yet, in the course of that period, the price of wheat varied from 2s. to £ 1. 6s. 8d. ³ The rate of wages, if it was intended for the benefit of labourers, ought, like the assize of bread, to have varied with every variation of the price of provisions: an attempt of this nature would, I confess, be no less absurd than the other. It in fact presumes, that the Legislature are the best judges how much individuals can afford to give for the work they want, and that a master with a capital is at the mercy of a needy workman without one. However, it would have been, at least, consistent in the

¹ Wealth of Nations, ii. 27.

² This statute, enacted in 1373, mentions the usual length of a piece of cloth, and consequently enables us to judge of the value of the different cloths allowed to be worn by the various classes of the nation. It states, that Ray cloth, which should be 28 ells long, and 5 quarters wide; and coloured cloth, which should be 26 ells long, and 6 quarters wide, were diminished, that is to say; the Rays to scarce 22 ells in length, and 4 quarters in width, and the coloured to scarce 22 ells in length, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ quarters in width; and enacts, that they shall be of the old accustomed length. (Rot. Parl. ii. 318.)

³ See the Table of Prices, in Appendix, No. i.

Legislature,

Legislature, whilst they were telling a serving man what he should eat, to specify what he should pay for his food, and to have regulated the price of the essential articles of subsistence, instead of busying themselves in a frivolous statute to secure a cheap supply of hens, pullets, capons, and geese, to great men's tables¹. I consider the regulation of wages as a device confessedly framed by the nobility, and, if not intended, certainly tending, to cramp the exertions of industry. Great proprietors, who, in their zeal to participate in the conveniencies and elegancies offered them by commerce, had gradually relinquished their arbitrary rights over the persons of their dependents, for a pecuniary equivalent, which enabled them to exchange the riotous hospitality of a castle, for the less turbulent, though no less expensive, splendor of the court, and the capital, must soon have discovered, that a man acquired, if not additional bodily strength, at least an additional spur to industry from emancipation: they must have seen the strong allurements held out, both by commerce and manufacture, to the idle occupiers of their manors; and have felt, that the various pretexts for enfranchisement, supported by the subtleties of the courts of justice, would, in the end, had they not been resisted, lead to the utter extinction of villenage. The new system, of working for hire, which was gradually making its way, was, no doubt, more profitable to them, and more conducive to national prosperity, than the labour of slaves: but it may be doubted, whether this great political truth, (not universally assented to, even in the present age,) that the labour of free hands is more productive to the employer than the service of slaves, was, in that unenlightened period, understood, or voluntarily practised, by great proprietors; and, if they could not comprehend the beneficial effects of this important revolution, we cannot be surprised, that they should endeavour to preserve some affinity between the new class of labourers, and the old class of villeins, by limiting their earnings, as they had

¹ 37 E. 3. c. 3. It is probable, however, although the laws of this period are silent on the subject, that the prices of many other articles of subsistence were frequently regulated by the magistrates. In the 10th of Richard the Second, several knights were appointed to make proclamation in the county of Cambridge, (and, probably, in other counties,) that no graziers or sellers of cattle, or horses, &c. should sell them at a higher price than usual. Blomef. Norf. iv. 725.

before controuled their persons. All the restrictions of the Legislature, on personal industry, evince a disposition of this kind; the various statutes, to regulate wages, dress, and apparel, seemed to have been framed with the same view; namely, to curb the aspiring exertions of industry and independency.

The Statute of Labourers was rigorously enforced, and, notwithstanding the many inconveniencies arising from it's provisions¹, it was confirmed by several subsequent Acts of Parliament, passed in Edward the Third's reign². In the year 1376, the Commons made great complaints, that masters were obliged to give their servants and labourers great wages, to prevent their running away; and that the encouragement which they received in these evil practices, often induced them, upon the slightest cause of disgust, to quit their masters: that they wandered thus from country to country; and that many of the runaways turned beggars, and led idle lives in cities and boroughs; although they had sufficient bodily strength to gain a livelihood, if they pleased to work. Many became *staf-strikers*³, and wandered in parties of two, three, and four, from village to village; but that the greater number turned out *sturdy rogues*⁴, and infested the kingdom with frequent robberies⁵. To remedy those evils, the Commons proposed, that no relief should be given to those who were able to work, within boroughs or in the country; that *vagrant beggars*, and *staf-strikers*, should be imprisoned till they consented to return home to work; and that whoever harboured any runaway servant in his service, should be liable to a

¹ The Rolls of Parliament make frequent mention of the evasions of labourers, in which, I have no doubt, they were often indirectly assisted by the clergy; for it appears, from a commission issued to the sheriff of Kent, in the year 1361, that, in consequence of the regulation of wages, carpenters, stone-cutters, and other workmen, employed in the king's service, had quitted it, and got into service at the abbies, and other places, where they could meet with better pay: in consequence of which, prelates and religious houses were forbidden to receive them. Rot. Parl. ii. 450.

² 34 E. 3. c. 9, 10, 11. 36 E. 3. c. 14. 42 E. 3. c. 6. Rot. Parl. ii. 296. 46 E. 3. Rot. Parl. ii. 312. 50 E. 3. Rot. Parl. ii. 340.

³ By *staf-strikers*, I conceive, the Legislature meant cudgel-players, or quarter-staff men.

⁴ *Fortes larounes*.

⁵ The police of Scotland was equally bad. A law of Robert the Second, made in 1347, deems those rebels, "quha travellis as ketharans, eatand the cuntrie, and consumand the gudes of the inhabitants, takand their gudes be force and violence." See Regiam Majestatem. Stat. Rob. ii. c. 12. and Stat. Rob. iii. c. 42.

penalty of £ 10. It does not appear from the Rolls, that the King assented to the above bill, but it seems to have been the ground-work of a subsequent statute; and shews us the early opinions of Parliament on the subject of mendicity. Beggars are, for the first time, noticed by one branch of the Legislature; and from the language of the Commons, we may be convinced, that they were chiefly found in cities and boroughs; where, owing to commerce, and the introduction of manufactures in the early part of this reign, the principal wealth of the nation was accumulated.

In the year 1378, the Commons complained that the statutes of labourers were not attended to, but that persons employed in husbandry fled into cities, and became artificers, mariners, or clerks, to the great detriment of agriculture¹; and, in consequence of these representations, it was enacted, that the statutes passed in the preceding reign should be carried into execution². By the 7th of Richard the Second, justices were enjoined to take security of vagrants for their good behaviour³. In the year 1388, the statutes relative to artificers, labourers, servants, and victuallers, were confirmed; and it was further directed, that no servant or labourer should depart from one part of the country to another, to serve, or to reside elsewhere, or under pretence of going a pilgrimage, without a letter patent, specifying the cause of his departure, and the time of his return; which might be granted at the discretion of a justice of the peace: every vagrant, who could not produce a letter patent, was to be taken up, put into the stocks, and imprisoned until he found surety to return to his former master: servants, however, travelling on the business of their masters, were exempted from the penalties of the act: and apprentices in trades, where they were not much wanted, might be compelled to assist in getting in the harvest⁴. In the same sessions, the wages of labourers⁵ in husbandry were regulated according to the following proportions:

¹ Rot. Parl. iii. 46.

² Rot. Parl. iii. 45.

³ Rot. Parl. iii. 158.

⁴ 12 R. 2.

c. 3. For the other parts of this statute relative to labourers, see Appendix, No. viii.

⁵ It is remarkable, that, notwithstanding the several acts passed for the regulation of wages, the statute says, "that the hire of servants and labourers had not been put in certainty, (i. e. I suppose, not regulated,) before this time." See Appendix, No. viii.

	s.	d.	
A bailiff was allowed, for his annual salary,	13	4	and cloathing once a year.
A master hind,	10	0	} Without cloathing, ¹ or any other per- quisite.
A carter,	10	0	
A shepherd,	10	0	
An ox-herd, or cow-herd,	6	8	
A swine-herd, a female labourer, or deye,	6	0	
A plough-driver,	7	0	

The people were restrained, by pecuniary penalties, from giving or receiving more than the statute allowed: for the first offence, both the giver and taker were to forfeit whatever was given above the regulation; for the second offence, double; and for the third offence, treble: and, if the receiver of excessive wages was unable to pay the penalty, he was to be imprisoned for 40 days². By the same statute, those, who had served in any agricultural occupation, till they were 12 years of age, were restrained from being put to any trade, on penalty of the covenant of apprenticeship being void³. Servants in husbandry, and labourers, were forbidden to carry arms, except in war time; and all unlawful games were prohibited⁴. It was also enacted, that impotent beggars should continue in the cities or villages, where they were resident at the time of passing the act; and if the inhabitants of those places were neither willing nor able to maintain them, they were to be taken to other towns within the hundred, or to the place of their birth, (within 40 days after proclamation made,) where they were to continue for life⁵.

In the following year, 1389, in consequence of an application of the Commons, that the statutes of labourers should be enforced, it was enacted, that "forasmuch as a man cannot put the price of corn, and other victuals, in certain⁶, the justices should, at Easter and Michaelmas, according to the price of provisions, make proclamation, how

¹ Fleetwood (Chro. Pretios. 130.) supposes that diet was allowed to these servants.

² 12 R. 2. c. 4. That part of the statute which imposed fines on the *givers* of excessive wages was repealed, by 4 H. 8. c. 5. ³ 12 R. 2. c. 5. ⁴ 12 R. 2. c. 6.

⁵ 12 R. 2. c. 7. ⁶ Pur ce que homme ne purra myc mettre en certain le pris des bledz, et autres vitailles. Rot. Parl. iii. 269.

much

much every mason, carpenter, and other workman, and labourers, should receive by the day, as well in harvest, as at other times of the year, with or without meat and drink ¹.

It is observable, that in this as well as in the statute of Edward the Third, above quoted ², the Legislature supposed, that the harvest would always take place in the month of August. Mr. Daines Barrington remarks, that a regulation of the wages of labourers in harvest, during the month of August, as it depends on the season, exceeds even the omnipotence of Parliament ³: it may, however, be observed, that if the harvest could have been gotten in in any time in August, a single day or two would probably have sufficed for that purpose ⁴. In the lively picture of ancient husbandry exhibited by the author of the History of Hawsted, we are presented with an instance of the rapidity with which a crop, in the year 1389, was cleared from the ground. The number of acres of corn did not exceed 200, yet above 250 reapers and thatchers were employed in one day, and above 200 in another; so that the whole harvest appears to have been concluded in two days ⁵. A detail of the several transactions relative to a season of the year of such importance in a life of husbandry, from the same author, will enable us not only to form some idea of the state of agriculture in this period, but likewise to ascertain many other curious particulars relative to rural economy, and the circumstances of the labouring classes at this period.

The out-goings of the lord, in harvest, are thus set down:

In 1388, the expences of a ploughman, head-reaper, baker, cook, brewer, deye, 244½ reapers hired for one day; 30 bedrepes ⁶, the men

¹ 13 R. 2. c. 8. Rot. Parl. iii. 269.

² See p. 32.

³ Observ. on Anc. Stat. 266.

⁴ Mr. Capel Lofft (Annals of Agriculture, xxv. 657.) doubts this construction of Mr. Daines Barrington; and supposes, that *Auſt*, in the 25 E. 3. signifies *harvest*, and not *August*. On referring, however, to the Rolls, I find, that the word is *Augſt*; and must therefore doubt his construction: besides, if *auſt*, the French word for *harvest*, had been used with that signification, it would (probably,) have been preceded by the definite article *le*; and the language of the statute would have been, *en la premier semaine de l'auſt*, instead of, *en la premier semaine d'Augſt*. See Appendix, No. viii. ⁵ Cullum's Hawsted, 191.

⁶ *Bedrepes* were days of work performed in harvest-time, by the customary tenants, at the bidding or requisition of their lords: from *biddan*, (Saxon,) to call, or invite; whence likewise the word *beadle*, originally a messenger. *Bederipes* are mentioned in Dugd. Warw. 170, where many customs respecting ancient harvests are minutely noticed. See also Kennett's Parochial Antiquities, 401 and 496, for several particulars relative to *bedrepes*.

fed according to custom with bread and herring¹; 3 quarters 3 bushels of wheat from the stock; 5 quarters 3 bushels of malt from the stock; meat bought, 10s. 10d.; 5 sheep from the stock; fish and herrings bought, 5s.; herrings² bought, for the customary tenants, 7d.; cheese, milk, and butter, bought, 9s. 6d.; salt, 3d.; candles, 5d.; pepper, 3d.; spoons, dishes, and faucets, 5d.³

The following charge seems to be for another day, in the same year, (and, perhaps, it was usual to make two days of harvest, as the corn might not all be ripe at the same time:) 30 bedrepes, as before; 19 reapers hired for one day, at their own board, 4d. each; 80 men for one day, and kept at the lady's board, 4d. each; 140½ men, hired for one day, at 3d. each; the wages of the head reaper, 6s. 8d.; of the brewer, 3s. 4d.; of the cook, 3s. 4d.; 30 acres of oats, tied up by the job, (per taskam,) 1s. 8d.; 6 acres of bolymong³ cut, and tied up

¹ We are not to infer, from this article, that fish was the usual diet of agricultural labourers throughout England. Hawsted was little more than 60 miles from Yarmouth, which was the great mart for herrings. A few years before this period, several statutes had been passed respecting the sale of herrings at Yarmouth fair, which, although they demonstrate the anxiety of the Legislature to promote an important branch of national industry, yet display a great ignorance of the general principles of commerce, and of human nature. Magistrates were empowered to regulate the price of salted fish, by 31 Edw. 3. st. 2. c. 3.; notwithstanding which, Parliament, a few years afterwards, was astonished to find that the sale of herrings at Yarmouth was much diminished, which it attributed "to many merchants, as well labourers and servants coming to the fair to bargain for herring: and every one for malice and envy increasing upon the other; so that if one bid 40 shillings, another would offer 10 shillings more, and a third 60 shillings, and so every one surmounteth the other in the bargain, and such proffers extend to more than the price of the herring upon which the fishers proffered to sell it for at the beginning." 35 Edw. 3. It was therefore enacted, "that persons might buy herring openly; and that no man should enter in bargain upon the buying of the same, till he that first came to bargain should have an end of his bargain, agreeable to the seller; and that none should increase upon other, during the first bargain, upon pain of forfeiture to the king, of double of his proffer." ² Cullum's Hawsted, 189.

³ *Bulmong*, or *bolymong*, is a word still very common in Suffolk; Sir J. Cullum says, it signifies *pease* and *oats* sown together. Harrison, in his Description of Brittain, 110, defines it to be *tares* and *oats*. This strange term, formed, I apprehend, from the Saxon *bolla*, which signified not only a *cup* or *bowel*, but also a *measure*, and *mengan* or *gemengan*, to mingle, was, it is probable, like *maslin*, always a provincial, or country, word. *Draget*, according to Sir John Cullum, signifies *oats* and *barley* mixed together. Hist. of

up by the job, 3s. 4d.; 16 acres of pease, cut by the job, 8s.; 5 acres of pease, and bolymong, cut and tied up by the job, 2s. 6d.; 3 acres of wheat, cut and tied up by the job, 1s. 11d.¹

In 1389, the expences of a carter, ploughman, head-reaper, cook, baker, brewer and shepherd, deye, 221 reapers hired for one day; 44 pitchers, stackers, and mowers for one day; 22 reapers hired one day, for good will; 20 customary tenants, 5d.; cheese, butter, milk and eggs, 8s. 3½d.; oatmeal, 5d.; salt, 3d.; pepper and saffron, 10d.¹; candles, 6d.; 5 pair of gloves, 10d.²; dishes, 1d.; spoons, 1½d.; faucets, 1d.³

Another day, in the same year, 212 reapers were hired for one day, at 3d. each, besides their board; 13 acres of wheat, cut, tied up, and treffeled (trefeland,) at 7d. an acre; 1 acre of oats, cut, tied up, and

Hawsted, 180. Mr. Topham calls it *buck-wheat*: see Liber Quot. Contrarot. xxv.: and Appendix to this Volume, No. i. p. xv. Tussler calls it *dredge*:

Thy *dredge* and thy barley go threth out to malt.—

Sow barley, and dredge with a plentiful hand.

¹ Saffron and Sanders were two articles of great repute in ancient cookery; the latter a fragrant wood, brought from the East-Indies, was principally used for colouring confections red; as saffron was for tinging them yellow. The various modes in which they were applied to pastries and sauces, during the reign of the Heliogabalus of England, Richard the Second, may be seen in “the Forme of Cury;” and in the collection annexed to “the Ordinances of the Household,” printed by the Antiquarian Society. They are likewise noticed in that curious monument of ancient manners, the Northumberland Household-Book, (p. 19.) among the spices, the annual consumption of which exceeded the sum of £25. 19s. 7d. Dr. Percy remarks, that Mr. Weaver supposes saffron to have been first introduced into cultivation in England in the reign of Edward the Third; however, it must have been known long before, for it occurs amongst the charges of Ralph Bourne’s feast at Canterbury, (Lel. Col. vi. 35.) It was anciently raised in several of the eastern counties, but is now principally confined to Cambridgeshire. Of the profits of this article of culture, while it continued a favourite for culinary purposes, we may form some idea, from Harrison’s information, that the produce of an acre was usually worth £20. (Descript. of England, 233.) Moryson, in his Itinerary, (3d part, p. 149,) mentions saffron as an article of export to Spain in Queen Elizabeth’s reign.

² The bursars of New College, Oxford, on Christmas-day, present each of their college tenants with a pair of gloves, which the receiver is sure of displaying on the Sunday following at church, by hanging his hand over the pew, as a mark to his neighbours that he has paid his rent to the college. The rural bridegroom, in Laneham’s Account of the Entertainment of Queen Elizabeth, at Kenelworth-castle, (p. 18.) in 1575, had “a pair of *harvest-gloves* on his hands, as a sign of good husbandry.” ³ Cul-

treffeled,

treffied, at 5d.; 6 yards of canvas for the table, 12d.; grinding 5 quarters 1 bushel of malt, 8d.¹

We may form a still more perfect idea of the bad husbandry of this period, and the consequent misery of labourers, from considering the wretched produce of arable land. In 1390, the crop, from a farm of 57 acres, was 42 quarters 1 bushel of wheat, which are less than 6 bushels an acre; 38 quarters and 2 bushels of barley, from 24 acres, which are rather better than 12 bushels an acre; 34 quarters 2½ bushels of pease, from 22 acres, which exceed 12 bushels an acre; 33 quarters 2 bushels of oats, from 54½ acres, or about 5 bushels an acre. Modern husbandry is never disgraced by such miserable crops as 6 bushels of wheat from an acre. In favourable years, however, the quantity of wheat generally exceeded a quarter, an acre²: and from the passage in Fleta, above quoted³, I infer, that 12 bushels of wheat were considered as an average crop in these times; and to raise even this scanty produce, for a people, who, in 1377, it is probable, did not exceed 2,353,203 souls⁴, a much greater proportion of the cultivated land seems to have been appropriated to tillage, than, from the inconsiderable number of mouths to be fed, we might have supposed would have been the case. This proportion, however, seems to have diminished, as an improved husbandry was gradually introduced⁵; farmers, by degrees,

¹ Cullum's Hawsted, 191.

² Cullum's Hawsted, 187.

³ See p. 17.

⁴ Chalmers's Estimate, 113.

⁵ The following enumerations clearly prove, that, in the 14th and 15th centuries, farms, in general, were not only very small, but almost entirely in tillage. As agriculture improved, the proportion of arable land decreased; and, in the reign of Elizabeth, meadow and pasture acquired their due consideration.

In 1305, A messuage in Norfolk	90 ^{acres.} of arable 5 of meadow 40 of pasture. Blomef. Norf. iv. 569.
1324, A messuage in Norfolk	131½ of arable 7 of meadow 1¼ of pasture. Blomef. Norf. iii. 769.
1339, Eighteen messuages in Norfolk	160 of arable 50 of meadow 10 of pasture 20 of marsh 10 of turbary. Blomef. Norf. iv. 569.
1354, A manor in Norfolk	300 of demesne arable 40 of meadow 19 of pasture 30 of wood 20 of fen for turves. Blomef. Norf. i. 34.

grees, became convinced, that, to have good crops of corn, they must convert a considerable portion of their ploughed fields into pasture, till

	Acres.	
1359, A manor in Suffolk	572 of arable, reduced in 1387 to 321 acres.	
	50 of meadow. Cullum's Hawsted, 183. 5.	
1370, A messuage in Norfolk	140 of arable	
	6 of meadow	
	30 of pasture	
	30 of heath. Blomef. Norf. iv. 27.	
1395, Two messuages in Warwickshire	400 of arable	
	60 of meadow. Dugd. Warw. 557.	
1400, A messuage consisted of	20 of arable	
	3 of meadow	
Another	10 of arable	
	2 of meadow. Rot. Parl. iii. 463.	
1440, A messuage in Warwickshire	12 of arable	
	1 of meadow	
A messuage in Warwickshire	50 of arable	
	5 of meadow	
	5 of wood	
	31 of pasture	
	2 of moor. Dugd. Warw. 588.	
1459, A messuage in Northamptonshire	108 of arable	
	8 of meadow	
	40 of pasture	
	40 of wood. Whalley's Northampt. i. 517.	
1535, A messuage in Northamptonshire	50 of arable	
	5 of meadow	
	5 of pasture. Whalley's Northampt. i. 218.	
1550, Two messuages in Warwickshire	300 of arable	
	50 of meadow	
	200 of pasture	
	60 of wood. Dugd. Warw. 557.	
1553, A messuage in Warwickshire	500 of arable	
	300 of meadow	
	40 of pasture	
	20 of wood	
	200 of heath and furze. Dugd. Warw. 542.	
1555, Six messuages in Norfolk	320 of arable	
	120 of meadow	
	40 of pasture	
	50 of furze and heath. Blomef. Norf. iv. 514.	
1560, Two messuages in Warwickshire	600 of arable	
	60 of meadow	
	600 of pasture	
	120 of wood	
	100 of heath. Dugd. Warw. 557.	
1567, An estate in Norfolk	40 messuages, 20 cottages	
	200 of arable	
	100 of meadow	
	300 of pasture	
	10 of wood. Blomef. Norf. iv. 569.	
1569, A manor in Norfolk	60 of arable	
	20 of meadow	
	40 of pasture	
	300 of furze, heath, and bruery. Blomef. Norf. i. 649.	

✓ at length, during the shallow-sighted administration of Henry the Eighth, and Elizabeth, the Legislature was seized with the groundless apprehension, notwithstanding the cheapness of corn, that the kingdom would be ruined by enclosures.

Notwithstanding the complaints that have so often, (and sometimes, it may be, not without justice,) been made against the vices of the regular clergy, it is probable, that the earliest improvements in agriculture, in England, are ascribable to their exertions¹: their missions to foreign parts enabled them to introduce new articles of cultivation; and the immense revenues belonging to religious houses afforded them the means of carrying on the operations of husbandry with more skill, and success, than could be expected from the nobility, who were frequently called away, to the court, or the camp; and, when they visited their castles, were generally occupied in some subject of domestic warfare. The clergy, we are informed by the canons of the council of Lateran, held in 1179, assisted in the cultivation of their lands. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Becket, when he visited a monastery in harvest, did not disdain to labour in the fields. The trades, necessary for agriculture, seem likewise to have been practised by the monks. All the clergy, in the Saxon periods of our history, were taught some mechanic art, and were obliged, by the canons, to exercise it at their leisure hours². St. Dunstan is reported to have been an excellent blacksmith; and Bede remarks, that the Abbot of Weremouth assisted his monks in their agricultural labours, by guiding the plough, by winnowing corn, and by making various implements of husbandry³: indeed I am fully persuaded, that abbatial government was much more favourable to national prosperity, than baronial authority. The ecclesiastics were mild and indulgent landlords; and, it is probable, their courts were less arbitrary than those of great manorial lords; and

¹ It was, no doubt, in reference to this circumstance, that, in old records, we find the lands, owned and cultivated by monastic persons, so generally described by the term *cultura*. Thus, (in the Bibl. Topog. viii. 838.) the lands of a priory in Leicestershire are thus mentioned: “*de culturâ, quæ vocatur Toftes, de tribus culturis subter Normanton de dominico dominii de Botesford, et de culturâ juxta pontem buttant’ contra le Cliff, &c. et cultura vocata Redwonge,*” &c. See, in the account of Bromfield parish, the remarkable name of a parish called *Helme Cultram*, where there was once a monastery, thus explained. Hutchinson’s Hist. of Cumberland, ii. 304. ² Johnson’s Canons. ³ Bede, Hist. Abb. of Werem. 296.

their dependents were less liable to be torn from their homes and families, than those of the warlike barons. For these causes, the intelligent author of the History and Antiquities of Hawsted, with great reason, imagines, that the villages, under the jurisdiction and protection of an abbey, might invite, and, indeed we know they did ¹, attract settlers from other masters; as those parts in Italy, from whence the Jesuits have been expelled, are said to have been worse tenanted and cultivated than they were before the suppression of the Order ².

It is likely, also, that we are indebted to the clergy for many improvements in gardening. Horticulture had, perhaps, reached a considerable degree of excellence in King Edward the First's reign, before which the ecclesiastical order had firmly settled themselves in different parts of the kingdom: the skill of the monks, in gardening, is highly spoken of by our most ancient historians; and I should imagine, that, before the end of the 13th century, England produced most of the useful vegetables, although, according to Evelyn, even so ordinary, but useful, a legume, as cabbage, was, in 1539, first imported from the Netherlands ³. Gardens, however, were considered as objects of value as early as 1279, and their produce was even specified in judicial records ⁴.

This elegant branch of culture declined, amidst the ravages produced by the contentions of the Houses of York and Lancaster ⁵, and did

¹ See p. 42.

² Cullum's Hawsted, 90.

³ Sylva. Many years after

this, it seems, that England was still supplied with cabbages from Flanders. Bullein, in his "Booke of Simples," written in 1562, observes, on this vegetable, that it "is good to make pottage withall, and is a profitable herbe in a commonwealth, which the Fleminges sell deere, but we have it growing in our owne gardens, if we wold preferre our owne commodity, &c." He adds; "there be greate plenty growing betweene Albrought and Horthforde in Suffolke, upon the sea-shore." Fol. 9.

⁴ Capitale messagium, quod valet per annum cum herbagio et fructu *gardini*. Regist. Hon. de Rich. App. 44.—*Gardinum*, &c. cum herbagis et fructu valet, &c. Ibid. App. 50. 66. 87. 95. The mention of *orchards*, in ancient records, is a strong proof of the existence of *gardens* of *legumes*: the word easily resolves itself into *wort-yard*, or *wurts-yard*: the Saxon is *þyrt-geard*. The word *hortus* is but the Saxon *þyrt* latinized.

⁵ It appears, however, from the mention of oil for fallads, in one of the Paston letters, written in 1466, that vegetables for the table were still cultivated in England; although the common opinion is, that, during the civil wars, most of our fruits and garden-productions were totally destroyed. Paston Letters, i. 288.

not revive till the reign of Henry the Eighth, as we are informed by a curious passage in the description of England, prefixed to Holinshed's Chronicle; which I shall repeat in the author's own words: "Such herbes," says he, "fruits, and roots also, as grow yeerlie out of the ground, of seed, have beene verie plentiful in this land in the time of the First Edward and after his daies; but in proceſſe of time they grew also to be neglected, so that from Henrie the Fourth, till the latter end of Henrie the Seventh, and beginning of Henrie the Eighth, there was little or no use of them in England, but they remained either unknowne, or supposed as food more meet for hogs and savage beasts to feed upon than mankind: whereas in my time their use is not onelie resumed among the poore commons, I meane of melons, pumpions, gourds, cucumbers, radishes, skirrets¹, parsneps, carrets, cabbages, navewes², turneps, and all kinds of salad herbs³; but also fed upon deintie dishes at the tables of delicate merchants, gentlemen, and the nobilitie, who make their provision yearelie for new seeds out of strange countries, from whence they have them abundantlie⁴."

¹ Skirrets approach the nearest to parsneps, of any of the esculent roots, both in flavour and nutritious quality. They are natives of China, but were formerly much cultivated in England; and are still very common in Germany. The ingenious chemist, Margraaf, has published several experiments, which he made in order to extract sugar from beet, and skirrets; from which it appears, that half a pound of skirrets produced $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of pure sugar. His process, though slow and tedious, affords very satisfactory proof, how copiously some of our vegetables are stored with a saccharine salt, which might be drawn from them in abundance by proper management. Bryant's Flora Diœretica, 42. Skirrets are noticed in the *Forme of Cury*, 13. Tuffer, in his 500 Points of Good Husbandry, 40. recommends the setting of them in March. Gerarde calls the Spanish potatoe, skyrrets of Peru. *Herbal*; ed. 1636. 926.

² From Barnaby Gouge's Description of Rapes, I imagine, that *navewes* were turnip-radishes. He says of rapes, that "there are two kindes of them; the firste dooth roote all in length like the radishe, which in many places of Germanie is used for a dayntie meate; the other either groweth in great roundnesse, or els very flatte." *Four Bookes of Husbandry*, &c. f. 30. He adds, that "navewes may be counted in the number of rapes, for rapes in some grounde change into navewes, and in some ground, navewes into rapes." F. 59. Tuffer, in his list of herbes and roots to boile or to butter, notices navewes. See also Gerarde's *Herbal*, ed. 1636. 235.

³ Tuffer, who wrote much about the time of Harrison, gives a catalogue of the herbes and roots then cultivated, both for culinary and medicinal uses. The number mentioned in the cookery receipts of the 14th century, is very inconsiderable. See *Forme of Cury*; and *Ordinances of the Royal Household*, 425.

⁴ Harrison's Desc. of Eng. 208. Cullum's *Hawked*, 93.

Upon

Upon the whole, it may be safely affirmed, that, before the end of the fourteenth century, civilization, and the comforts attendant on order and industry, had made a considerable progress in England: there can be little doubt but that, in 1400, the great mass of the people were, in comparison with their forefathers at the Conquest, rich, thriving, and independent; and, although historians are silent on many points which are intimately connected with an investigation of this nature, their general information will still afford us competent evidence, that the sphere of domestic happiness, the ultimate object of every good government, was greatly extended. The various immunities granted to cities and boroughs; the introduction and firm establishment of the woollen manufacture; the dawning, however faint, of the polite arts; and the humanizing principles of Christianity, are causes which must have powerfully and beneficially operated towards the melioration of the condition of mankind. It is principally to their effect that we are to ascribe the important alteration that appears to have taken place before the time of Richard the Second; not only in the personal dependence, but in the political opinions, of the labouring classes of the community. In the insurrection of Wat Tyler, in the year 1381, (which, notwithstanding the atrocities it produced, seems to have materially contributed towards the extinction of servitude,) the language of the rebels, who were chiefly villeins, bespeaks men not unacquainted with the essential requisites of rational liberty. They required from the king, the abolition of slavery, freedom of commerce in market-towns, without tolls or imposts, and a fixed rent on lands, instead of services due by villenage¹. These requests, which, (as Mr. Hume observes,) though extremely reasonable in themselves, the nation was not sufficiently prepared to receive, and which it was dangerous to have extorted by violence, were, however, complied with: charters of manumission were granted to the discontented villeins, and, although they were revoked² after the rebellion was crushed, and many hundreds of the insurgents executed as traitors, it is probable, that the general spirit which had now manifested itself, among the people, prevented masters from again imposing, and vassals from again submitting to, the harsh, though legal, services of bondage.

¹ Hume, ii. 246.

² Rym. Fœd. vii. 217.

While the united operation of various causes was thus gradually converting villeins into free labourers; another, and not less useful class of subjects, namely, tenantry, had insensibly been formed, and, like the other, seems to have been much indebted, for their advancement, to manufactures and commerce. We know, that, at the Conquest, most of the lands in England were parcelled out among the Norman nobility ¹. Earl Moreton acquired no less than 793 ² manors; and Hugh de Alrincis received from the Conqueror the whole palatinate of Chester ³. The extensive county of Norfolk had only 66 proprietors ⁴. The owners of such extensive possessions resided almost entirely on their estates, and, in most instances, kept them in their own hands. The elder Spencer, in his petition to Parliament in the reign of Edward the Second, in which he complains of the outrages committed on his lands, reckons, among his moveable property, 28,000 sheep, 1000 oxen, 1200 cows, 500 cart-horses, 2000 hogs, 600 bacons, 80 carcases of beef, 600 sheep in the larder, (the three last articles were probably salted provisions,) 10 tons of cyder, and arms for 200 men ⁵; and in the following reign, in 1367, the stock on the land of a great prelate, the Bishop of Winchester, appears, by an inquisition taken at his death, to have amounted to 127 draft-horses, 1556 head of black cattle, 3876 wethers, 4777 ewes, 3451 lambs ⁶. Mr. Hume, therefore, very justly infers, that the greater part of Spencer's estate, as well as of the other nobility in those times, was farmed by the landlord himself, managed by his steward or bailiff, and cultivated by his villeins ⁷. From there being no costly articles of equipage or dress, for which the surplus produce of the land, beyond the lord's immediate wants, could be exchanged, he was naturally led to spend it in riotous and rustic hospitality; which, however, could not but be popular. Commerce, at length, offered allurements of a different kind, and induced him, from motives of personal gratification, to lessen the number of his idle retainers and dependents, and to grant the usufructuary enjoyment of

¹ See Dugdale's Baronage. ² Brad. Introduct. 13. ³ Camd. in Cheshire. ⁴ Allen, Earl of Brittany, had 442 manors: Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, 439: William, Earl Warren, 228, besides 28 towns, or hamlets, in Yorkshire: and in this manner the whole kingdom was portioned out among the Norman barons. (Dugd. Baronage.) ⁵ Rot. Parl. i.

⁶ Biog. Brit. 1 edit. Supplem. 207.

⁷ Hume, ii. 153.

a portion of his demesnes, to a tenant, on condition of receiving a rent, which might enable him to extend his pursuits beyond sumptuous entertainments, field sports, or domestic warfare.

In the infancy, however, of foreign trade and internal manufactures, the consequent scarcity of money must have obliged landlords to have accepted of rents in kind; and we might fairly conclude, that this was actually the case, even if history had been silent on the subject. The revenue, which the sovereign drew from his manors, was originally by returns in kind from the tenants; for the most part, they consisted of the produce of the land itself; though, sometimes, boroughs held land in ancient demesne, on condition of furnishing cloth for the king's household, or importing silks, or other foreign manufactures¹. Notwithstanding the inconvenience of receiving an income in provisions, this system continued long after the Conquest; and, even in Henry the First's time, the rents of the crown were discharged in corn, and other consumable commodities, when they were converted into pecuniary payments, in consequence of great complaints being made by the tenants, of the inconveniencies they suffered in bringing in necessaries, for the king's household, from distant parts of the kingdom². Other landlords, who had been induced to manumit their vassals, and to intrust them with the cultivation of a portion of the waste, for their own benefit, usually furnished their tenants with the seed, cattle, and implements of husbandry, necessary for the farm; and generally received, for rent, half the crop, after setting aside what was necessary for replacing the stock. Such are the metayers of France; a species of tenant, which, Adam Smith, (who has traced, with admirable precision, the various gradations of tenantry, from the servile cultivator of ancient times, the fruits of whose industry were at the disposal of his master, to the independent modern farmer, whose lease affords him equal security with his landlord,) observes, has been long in disuse in England. This ruinous custom, however, was not entirely abolished in this country, even at the beginning of the present century. We are told, by a respectable author in Queen Anne's reign, that it was usual, in some parts of England, and

¹ Observ. on the Land Revenue of the Crown, 28.
2d ed. ii. 291.

² Wealth of Nations, ii. 90.

³ Lytt. Hist. of Hen. the II.

particularly

particularly in Norfolk, for the owners to let their lands “in halves to the tenants;” that is, that the tenant should have one half of the product for charges of the husbandry, and the owner the other half for the use of his ground¹. Dr. Prideaux might have found, from his professional experience, a stronger instance of this species of tenantry in England, than the one he has mentioned. Every tenant, who pays tithe, is, in some degree, a metayer, although not to the same extent with the miserable farmer in France, who paid half his produce to his landlord. Neither can I agree with the Author of the *Wealth of Nations*, in ascribing the origin of tenantry to the mere selfishness of great proprietors: “All for ourselves, and nothing for other people, seems, in every age of the world, to have been the vile maxim of the masters of mankind. As soon, therefore, as they could find a method of consuming the whole value of their rents themselves, they had no disposition to share them with any other persons. For a pair of diamond buckles, perhaps, or for something as frivolous, and useless, they exchanged the maintenance, or (what is the same thing,) the price of the maintenance of a thousand men for a year, and with it the whole weight and authority which it could give them. The buckles, however, were to be all their own, and no other human creature was to have any share of them; whereas, in the more ancient method of expence, they must have shared with at least a thousand people. With the judges that were to determine the preference, this difference was perfectly decisive; and thus, for the gratification of the most childish, the meanest, and the most sordid of all vanities, they bartered their whole power and authority².” The inducements of a great proprietor to lessen the number of his retainers, and to let his estates, may, I think, be accounted for, upon more rational and more obvious motives than those of sordid vanity. The desire of bettering our condition, which is the predominant principle that animates the world, and which, when expanded into action, gives birth to every social virtue, would alike have impelled the lord to prefer comfort to splendor, and the villein to quit his livery for the independence of trade: and it was happy for mankind, that these exchanges produced

¹ Prideaux on the Origin and Right of Tithes. ² *Wealth of Nations*, ii. 125.

essential advantages, not only to the lord and vassal, but to the community at large. A man, who, by dismissing half of his useless domestics, purchased the means of adding to his enjoyments; who could, thereby clothe himself in woollen and fine linen, instead of coarse canvas and a leathern jerkin, or jacket; who could add the wholesome and grateful productions of horticulture to his table; and could render a dreary castle more habitable, by substituting warm hangings for bare stone, or at most white-washed walls; and that elegant convenience, glass, for latticed windows; would act conformably to principles, which are not more natural to the masters, than to the labouring part of mankind.

To the introduction of manufactures, and the consequent emancipation of those who were dismissed by masters, and those also who ran away from them with the adventurous project of trying their fortunes in the lottery of trade, I ascribe the introduction of a new class of men, henceforward described by the Legislature under the denomination of *Poor*; by which term, I conceive, they meant to signify freemen, who, being either incapacitated by sickness, or old age, or prevented by other causes from getting work, were obliged to have recourse to the assistance of the charitable for subsistence. It is impossible that the term could have been applicable to those who still continued in a state of servitude; since the obligation to serve another for life, according to the definition of Grotius¹, imports a reciprocal obligation in the master to provide his slave with, at least, the bare necessities of life: and, indeed, in the early periods of our history, this must, of necessity, have been the case; for, with the exception of those who were engaged in trade and manufacture, and who formed a very inconsiderable portion of the nation, the people in general must have subsisted by agriculture; and as the land was possessed by a few great proprietors, and cultivated by their servile dependents, it was only to territorial lords, that, in periods of distress, a bankrupt tenant, or an aged bondsman, could look for succour. No doubt, in disastrous times, from the failure of crops, or the ravages of warfare, a great landed proprietor was often as much embarrassed to supply the hungry mouths around him with food, as

¹ De Jure Belli, l. ii. c. 5. § 27.

a free labourer was to support himself: and a famine, we may be assured, fell with no less fury on the cottager, than the manufacturer; for, whatever may be the scale of rank in society, whether a community be composed of traders or husbandmen, or whether labour is carried on by freemen or by slaves, the means of subsistence will ever be the measure of population; and the facility of obtaining it, the best criterion of national prosperity. While the nation, however, consisted principally of the two classes of land-holders and servile cultivators, the latter had, at least in ordinary times, a fund to which they might resort for maintenance; and, although they could not acquire property, they were, in general, certain of food; because it was the obvious interest of those, who could command their services, to provide for their support. A West India island, perhaps, exhibits a tolerable picture of the condition of the agricultural class, in this country, soon after the Conquest. The proprietor of a sugar plantation, (although an absentee, and in this respect very different from a baron who resided on his demesnes,) is bound to feed the negroes belonging to his plantation, whether they are disabled by sickness, accident, or old age; nor, in any case, can they become a burthen to the public. We are not, however, to infer, that because there are no Poor on a plantation, and none existed in an ancient manor, that these are proofs of opulence or prosperity. The capital stock of Yorkshire is, perhaps, ten times as great as that of the island of Jamaica; and yet the number of those, who, in that part of England, have no visible means of support, and subsist entirely on charity, I doubt not, exceeds those in Jamaica, of a similar description, in as great a proportion. Rousseau justly enquires, “Why it is that, in a thriving city, the Poor are so miserable, while such extreme distress is hardly ever experienced in those countries where there are no instances of immense wealth?” I should answer, that, in cities, people are more poor, because they are more independent, than in the country. It is one of the natural consequences of freedom, that those, who are left to shift for themselves, must sometimes, from either misconduct or misfortune, be reduced to want. This, however, furnishes no solid argument against the blessings of liberty. A prisoner under the custody

of his keeper, may perhaps be confident of receiving his bread and his water daily; yet, I believe, there are few who would not, even with the contingent possibility of starving, prefer a precarious chance of subsistence, from their own industry, to the certainty of regular meals in a gaol.

It has been frequently urged by the advocates for the slave trade, that the condition of the negroes in the West Indies is, in general, more comfortable than that of many day-labourers in this country. Admitting this position to be true, I think it proves no more than this; that those, who, by their industry, often rise high in the scale of national prosperity, will sometimes furnish instances of extreme misery. Dr. Johnson's remark, on marriage and celibacy, may, perhaps, be applied with propriety to freedom and servitude: the one has many pains; the other no pleasures¹.

However deplorable, therefore, the effects, produced by the want of personal freedom, may have been, it will follow, from the above considerations, that, in the ancient state of society in England, in the first dawn of commerce and manufactures, every individual in the kingdom, not engaged in either of those branches of industry, had an appropriate fund to look to for subsistence; and that, however degraded the general condition of the great mass of the people (then employed principally in agriculture) might be, they were still, unless in extraordinary cases of national misery, assured of the bare necessities of life. The villein, I apprehend, if unable to work, was maintained by his lord; as the pauper is now supported by his parish; and while the most numerous and most needy class of the people consisted of those whose services thus secured them a maintenance, and who were restricted from wandering from the lands to which they were attached, it is obvious, that, however great the aggregate sum of general distress might have been, the Legislature was not called upon to enact laws, either for the punishment of vagrants, or the relief of the impotent and aged. And we may hence account for their silence upon the subject, till the reign of Richard the Second.

¹ Rasselas.

As to those employed in commerce, we know, that, in it's infancy, trade was carried on chiefly by foreigners, who formed small corporations, under the denomination of gilds, or companies; and, as institutions of that nature seem likewise in most instances to have been constructed upon charitable, as well as commercial principles, they afford a strong presumption, that the indigent of that class were supported from the general fund of their respective societies. A decayed weaver, in the 13th century, I make no doubt, was relieved by the weavers' gild; and a poor German mariner, by the merchants of the steel-yard. The numbers, too, employed at first, either in manufacture or trade, must have been very inconsiderable. Very little money circulated in England, even in the time of Henry the III.; otherwise we should not have met with an order of that Prince to restrain a Jew from taking more than two-pence a week for every pound lent to an Oxford scholar; a rate of interest which amounts to more than forty-three per cent.² The temptation of vast profit, in a business of speculation or adventure, favoured by exclusive privileges, and better protected than the more essential, though less hospitable, occupations of agriculture, could be, from the rapacious gripe of lordly authority, together with the prospect of independence, (which a tradesman, who, instead of looking up to a single master, depends on the favours of a thousand customers, thinks he possesses,) gradually lessened the number of servile hands, and, by an increased competition, which at length reduced commercial gain to its proper level, ultimately benefited even agriculture itself. From the inducements held out, every servile hind, that could emancipate himself by artifice, or by favour, considered himself not only sure of protection in a city, but flattered himself with the expectation of a portion of the great gains in manufactures and commerce. These, and many other similar causes, before enumerated, contributed to the diminution of villeins; and when thus, by slow degrees, a new race of men arose in the country, and manufacturers became firmly established, it is remarkable, that the existence of *Poor* was first noticed by the Legislature. The decrease of villenage seems necessarily to have been the era of the origin of the Poor. Manufactures, although they

² Angl. Judaica, 122.

added

gild signifies among the Saxons, a fraternity derived from the word gildan, to pay, because every man paid his share towards the expenses of the corporation. Lord Bacon then places of meeting is frequently called the gild, or gild hall (Blackstone)

added to the capital stock of the nation, yet, by creating a necessity for free hands, and consequently enabling men to make use of the most valuable of all property, their own industry, subjected those, who were any ways incapacitated, from availing themselves of that fund, to the miserable alternative of starving independently.

Without the most distant idea, therefore, of disparaging the numberless benefits derived to this country from manufactures and commerce, the result of this investigation seems to lead to this inevitable conclusion, that manufactures and commerce are the true parents of our national Poor; and to justify the (by no means unreasonable, or captious) opinion of those, who think that it is particularly incumbent on persons engaged in manufactures, and commerce, to help to maintain them. To complain, however, that they have, by the inequality which industry must ever occasion, been the source of misery to some members of the community, is to complain of the causes which have raised us to an unexampled pitch of national prosperity, and of the consequences which are necessarily attached to it.

A new class being thus insensibly created, they very soon, from their numbers, their vices, and their miseries, rose into notoriety. We have already seen, that, in the year 1376, they were first noticed by the Legislature, under the denomination of beggars, staf-strikers, and sturdy rogues¹; and, from the language of a subsequent statute, which I have also mentioned², I should infer, that the district where impotent beggars were directed to reside, was bound to maintain them; and that the justices of peace, who had a considerable latitude of discretionary power, in some cases, regulated both the place of their abode, and the amount of the alms they were to receive. Although the statute only says, that, if the inhabitants of cities and villages, where beggars were resident, at the time of passing the act, were unable, or unwilling to maintain them³, they should be taken to other places within the hundred, rape, or wapentake, or to the place of their birth; yet such a provision would have been frivolous, had it not been understood that the district to which they were removed was bound to maintain them. I conceive this was the case; and that the Legislature acted nearly on the same principle in 1388, that they did in 1601, when they enacted, That if the justices of

¹ See p. 42.

² See p. 44.

³ Ne voilent ou ne poient suffir de les trover.

peace perceived that the inhabitants of any parish were unable to levy, among themselves, sufficient sums for the relief of the Poor, they might tax any other, of other parishes, or out of any parish, within the hundred wherein the parish was; and if the hundred should not be thought able to relieve the parishes which were not able to provide for themselves as aforesaid, that other parishes in the county might be rated¹. The clergy, most assuredly, from the nature of the ecclesiastical establishment, and the eleemosynary principles upon which every donation to religious bodies was conferred, were considered as the peculiar and official guardians of the Poor; and, whatever doubts may be now entertained of any legal claim that the indigent classes of the community have on the much reduced revenues of the Church, it seems clear, from the unequivocal expressions of the Legislature in 1391, that a certain portion of tithe, when appropriated to monastic institutions, was set apart for the purposes of charity: the translation, from the original French, of the statute alluded to, is as follows: “Item, because divers damages and hindrances oftentimes have happened, and daily do happen, to the parishioners of divers places, by the appropriation of benefices of the same places, it is agreed, and assented, that, in every licence to be made from henceforth, in the Chancery, of the appropriation of any parish church, it shall be expressly contained, and comprised, that the diocesan of the place, upon the appropriation of such churches, shall ordain, according to the value of such churches, *a convenient sum of money to be paid and distributed yearly, of the fruits and profits of the said churches*, by those that shall have the said churches in proper use, and by their successors, *to the poor parishioners* of the said churches, in aid of their living, and sustenance, for ever; and also that the vicar be well and sufficiently endowed².”

¹ 43 Eliz. c. 2. § 3. ² 15 R. 2. c. 6. confirmed by 4 H. 4. c. 12. Mr. Andrews, in his History of England, lately published, (vol. i. p. 10.), infers, from the expression of *miseris laicis*, in a charter of tithes granted by king Ethelwulph, a connection between the poor's rate, and the provision for the clergy. The inference is certainly neither very direct, nor clear. Be this however as it may, it is but fair to acknowledge, that, in promoting works of charity, the clergy of these kingdoms have always been, and still are, eminently distinguished: and when they are called on again to take all the Poor of the kingdom under their wing, it will be but reasonable that they should be, at the same time, furnished with the means of relieving them; as else, it would be demanding of them bricks without straw.

In this statute, and in the 12th of Richard the Second, we may observe the great outlines of a system of compulsory maintenance, which is commonly imagined to have originated in consequence of the Reformation. I shall, however, endeavour to shew, that the 43d of Elizabeth, however highly praised for its originality, is nothing more than a development of an ancient system, and a more perfect organization of legal regulations, that, from the lapse of time, had become either impolitic or impracticable.

The statute of Richard the Second, for making a provision for the Poor from the appropriations of benefices, was confirmed in the 4th year of Henry the Fourth; and, in the same sessions, an act was passed, prohibiting labourers of every description from being hired to work by the week, and forbidding them to receive any wages on feast-days, or more than half a day's wages when they only worked on the eve of a festival till noon¹. It had, probably, before the passing of the Statutes of Labourers, been usual, in some places, for labourers to hire themselves by the week; and they, no doubt, availed themselves of local customs, in order to evade the statutes that regulated their pay. In hiring themselves by the week, and receiving wages at the rate of seven days' work, although, from the intervention of the Sabbath, and the frequency of festivals in Catholic times, they only worked four or five days in the week, they effectually frustrated the provisions of former statutes; and, it is probable, that the present statute was enacted in order to compel their adherence to the law, either by hiring themselves for a long term, or a whole year, half a year, or a quarter, or by the day, for which the wages had been specifically appointed by the Legislature.

From the complaints of the Commons, in 1406, we learn, that the inhabitants of the upland country, who had no property in land, (that is to say, agricultural labourers, in order to evade the statutes passed a few years before, for obliging those who had been brought up to the plough till they were twelve years of age, to continue in husbandry all their lives,) had now recourse to the expedient of sending their children into cities and boroughs, and binding them apprentices when they were under that age. It was therefore enacted, That

no man, nor woman¹, whosoever, unless possessed of land, or a rental of twenty shillings a year, should bind a child, of any age, apprentice to any trade or mystery within a city, but that children should be brought up in the occupation of their parents, or other business suited to their condition; they were however allowed to be sent to a school, in any part of the kingdom². This slight attention of the Legislature, to education, affords some proof that the kingdom was becoming more civilized.

From the accession of Henry the Fifth, in 1413, to the death of Richard the Third, I cannot suppose that the country advanced much either in wealth or population. The wars of the former monarch, however glorious to his arms, placed only “a fruitless crown” upon his head; and the lilies of France were purchased too dearly with the harvests of England. Historians inform us, that, before the end of the war, both parties were so much reduced in numbers, that neither the French, nor the English, could muster above 10,000 men in the field. We have a convincing proof of the devastation made by the sword among the gentry, in the language of a statute passed in 1421: it states, “That, at the making of the Act of the 14th of Edward the Third; (1340,) there were sufficient of proper men in each county to execute every office; but that, owing to pestilence and wars, there are not now a sufficiency of responsible persons to act as sheriffs, coroners, and escheators.

However, about the middle of Henry the Sixth's reign, the country seems to have been tolerably thriving; and we may infer, that agriculture had improved, from the passing of an Act, in 1436, which allowed corn to be exported, when the price of wheat did not exceed 6s. 8d. the quarter, and that of barley, 3s. Although the Legislature was not

¹ Mr. Daines Barrington observes, that the first instance in the Statute Book, of an apprehension that a *woman* was not included under the word *man*, occurs in the statute 11 E. 3. st. 3. c. 4. in which it is directed, that neither man, nor woman, who cannot afford to spend 100l. a year, shall wear furs. Obs. on Anc. Stat. 4th ed. 243. An earlier instance, however, in a *deed*, occurs in Sir John Cullum's History of Hawsted, (p. 177.) of a warranty, in 1270, contra omnes *homines et feminas*. One, in 1198, is still more curiously expressed; contra omnes *homines mares et feminas*. Kennett, Par. Ant. 158. For several subsequent instances, see the same book, 175, 176, 185, &c. and Reg. Hon. de Rich. 96. ² Rot. Parl. v. 601.

yet sufficiently enlightened to comprehend, that it was the interest of the nation to allow a labourer to make the utmost of his industry; yet they seem, with respect to farmers, to have at length discovered that high money prices were a national benefit. The act for allowing corn to be exported, states, that, by former laws, no person could carry grain out of the kingdom, without the King's licence; by which farmers, and others engaged in husbandry, were obliged to sell their corn at low prices, to the great detriment of the whole kingdom¹.

By the 6th and 8th of Henry the Sixth, Justices of the Peace were empowered to appoint the wages of artificers and workmen by proclamation; and, in 1444, the wages of agricultural labourers were specifically limited by Act of Parliament², in the following manner.

The Wages, by the Year, were :

	£.	s.	d.		s.	d.	
A bailiff in husbandry was permitted to receive 1	3	4	and cloaths of the value of	5	0	{ with meat and drink.	
A chief hind, carter, and chief shepherd	-	1	0 0 ditto		4	0 ditto.	
A common servant in husbandry	-	-	0 15 0 ditto		3	4 ditto.	
A woman servant	-	-	0 10 0 ditto		4	0 ditto.	
A child under 14 years of age	-	-	0 6 0 ditto		3	0 ditto.	

The Wages, by the Day, were :

	s.	d.		s.	d.
A mower, with meat and drink	-	0 4	— without	0	6
A reaper, carter, with meat and drink	-	0 3	— without	0	5
A woman, and other labourer, with meat and drink	-	0 2½	— without	0	4

A servant in husbandry, intending to quit his master, was bound to give him half a year's warning, or else to serve him the following year.

The Daily Wages, appointed to be taken by Artificers, were :

	Between Easter and Michaelmas.	Between Michaelmas and Easter.
A Free-mason	} with diet, 4d.—without, 5½d.—	} with diet, 3d.—without, 4½d.
A Master Carpenter		
A Tiler	} with diet, 3d.—without, 4½d.—	} with diet, 2½d.—without, 4d.
A Slater		
A rough Mason		
A common Carpenter	} with diet, 2d.—without, 3½d.—	} with diet, 1½d.—without, 3d.
Common workmen		

From comparing the above wages with those allowed by the Legislature, in 1388², it would appear, that the money price of labour had

¹ 15 H. 6. c. 2.

² 23 H. 6. c. 12.

³ See p. 44.

considerably increased within the short space of 40 years: this may be principally ascribed to the great encouragement offered by manufactures and commerce, and the consequent emancipation of villeins. At the accession of Henry the Fourth, I should conceive, that there was but a very small proportion of them remaining in the kingdom. The great drain of men occasioned by Henry the Fifth's wars, and the subsequent bloody contest between the houses of York and Lancaster, eventually contributed to render the whole nation free: the various armies raised, in different parts of the kingdom, by the nobility, who were attached to either of the contending parties, it is probable, consisted of every description of persons which they could collect on their estates. In the heat of civil wars, carried on with the utmost acrimony on both sides, we may be assured, that every one who could bear arms was considered as a welcome reinforcement to the party he espoused; and although, from the frequent and very sanguinary battles which were fought during the contest, we might suppose that the people were the chief sufferers; yet it may be remarked, that the object of contention between the rival families was the acquisition of regal power, and not the destruction of the nation. We are informed, that, at the battle of Northampton, the slaughter fell chiefly on the gentry and nobility, and that the common soldiers were spared by order of the Earls of Warwick and Marche¹. By the progress of arts in England, the people were now become of some consequence²; and both Yorkists and Lancastrians endeavoured, by every popular contrivance, to swell the number of their adherents. It is commonly supposed, and generally remarked, by historians and writers on ethics, that, of all wars, civil conflicts are the least defensible, as being the most ruinous to the wealth and population of a country. In no point of view is it meant here to palliate the evils either of domestic or foreign wars; but, viewing them in their calamitous effects only, I much doubt whether the ravages occasioned by civil contest are not the soonest repaired. In a war between two nations, the object of hostilities is, generally, on both parts, by violence and force, to reduce the enemy to submission. The peaceful labours of that class, from which the resources of a nation are principally derived, are seldom much respected by an

¹ Stow, 409.

² Hume, Hist. of Engl. ii. 371.

invader ; whereas, in a civil contest, the destruction of a party is usually the only object in view : opinion, too, must necessarily be much courted in a country which is unhappily plunged in domestic warfare. The contending parties are anxious to conciliate the affections of the people, on which the issue of the contest must ultimately much depend ; and, however merciless they may be to each other, they have seldom any interest to lay waste their common country. Accordingly, it does not appear from history, that civil wars, however much to be deplored in other respects, have always greatly impeded the progress of nations to prosperity. The fury of Marius and Sylla, and the bloody contest of the Triumvirs, it might have been supposed, would have retarded the advancement of the Roman state ; yet it appears, that, whilst the blood of her citizens was profligately lavished by ambition, she was making a rapid progress in all the arts and refinements of civilized life. So neither did the violence of the League and the Huguenots in France, nor the fatal divisions between King Charles and his Parliament in this country, however destructive to the individuals concerned in them, destroy the spirit of national improvement. The truth is, that wars are chiefly destructive in proportion as they destroy the means and sources of subsistence : could we, possibly, suppose that a civil contest would be limited to the slaughter of human beings, the nation, (if her other resources continued unexhausted,) would, no doubt, in a few years, regain her lost population. The multiplication of every species of animals, and of every other commodity, is regulated on the same principle ; and will be either retrograde, stationary, or progressive, as the demand for labour, (which is created by the capital stock of a country,) diminishes or increases¹. If, therefore, any circumstance takes place, which, without affecting the wealth, should reduce the population, of a country, the market would be so much understocked with labour ; and, the demand of labour continuing the same, all the encouragements to promote marriage, and the multiplication of labourers, would operate in full force, and gradually repair the ravages of any depopulating cause. This, I suppose, was particularly the case after the pestilence in 1349. From the complaints of Parliament soon after that period, we may infer, that labourers availed themselves of

¹ Wealth of Nations, i. 121.

the scarcity of hands, which the pestilence (without diminishing the demand for them,) had occasioned.

During the reign of Edward the Fourth, very little notice was taken by the Legislature of the labouring classes of the community: except by the statutes for regulating apparel¹. Some of their provisions are worth transcribing, as they exhibit a curious picture of the manners and dress of the times. Yeomen, and others under that degree, were forbidden to wear, in the array of their body, any bolsters, or stuff of wool, cotton, or *cadas*², or other stuff in their doublets, except lining.

No person, under the degree of a gentleman, was allowed to wear pikes to his shoes, or boots exceeding in length 11 inches.

Another no less singular clause, conferred on persons of rank, was the exclusive privilege of wearing their cloaths most indecently curtailed.

Servants in husbandry, common labourers, and artificers, were forbidden to wear any cloth, whereof the broad yard exceeded the price of 2s. Their wives were limited to similar restrictions; they were not allowed to wear any kerchiefs, whereof the plight³ exceeded 12d.: no labourers were permitted to wear any close hosen⁴, or any hosen whereof the price exceeded 14d.⁵ Girdles used by men or women

¹ 3 E. 4. c. 5. Rot. Parl. v. 505. 22 E. 4. c. 1. Rot. Parl. vi. 220. ² This word occurs in that curious French account of the siege of Kaerlaverock, Antiq. Repert. ii. 227.

“Meinte riche gamboison guarni

“De foie et *cadas* et coton,” &c.

Cadas is translated *towe*; and a note informs us, that “*cadas*, or *cadarce*, is the *towe*, or coarsest part of the filk, perhaps used with the cotton for stuffing.” The *cadas*, mentioned in the statute, it is probable, was a kind of stuffing very similar to what went under the name of *wadding*, and was used (not above 20 years ago) between the lining and cloth, to make a coat fit well. It is probable that it was woollen; perhaps a coarse flannel. In the Book of Rates (12 Car. 2. c. 4.) a duty of £3. is imposed on every dozen pieces of *caddas*, or *cruel ribband*, exported. One of the coarse woollen manufactures of Kendal still goes by the name of *Caddis*. In Scotland, *caddas* signifies the coarsest thickened sort of plaid. Those who speak the Gaelic language call it *cath-da* (pronounced *cadda*, the *th* being quiescent,) i. e. *soldiers' cloth*. The cotton scraped from linen rags to be put into wounds is likewise called *caddas*.

³ A plight was a yard and a quarter in length: every piece of Flemish lawn contained 16 plights. See Customs of London, by R. Arnold, printed about 1521, O. iii.

⁴ Hosen, or what we now call pantaloons, were worn by the nobility in Ireland, as late as Queen Elizabeth's reign. Moryson's Itinerary, iii. part, 180. They were made of cloth, and usually red.

⁵ 14d. in the Statute of 1463; 18d. in the Statute of 1482.

were not allowed to be "harnesyd with silver¹." From a subsequent part of the statute it appears, that some of the articles of common use were still of foreign manufacture.

"Forasimuch as the kerchiefs daily brought into this reame enducen grete charge and cost in the same, and in effect in waste," it was ordained, "that noo person should selle, in any parte of the reame, eny lawne, nyfels², umple³, or eny other manere of kerchiefs, whereof the price of a plight should excede 10s.; uppon the peyn of forfeiting to the king, for every plight sold at hyer price, 13s. 4d."⁴

From these particulars we may infer, that labourers were now able to clothe themselves better than they could in former reigns. Exactly a century before, (in 1363,) they were only allowed to wear cloth of 12d. the yard; and in 1444, the cloathing of an agricultural servant was not allowed to exceed 3s. 4d.⁵ The dress of the people, in Henry the Sixth's reign, appears to have been simple, and well-contrived: it consisted of shoes, hose made of cloth⁶, a jacket and coat buttoned and fastened round about the body by a belt or girdle, and a bonnet of

¹ Belts, principally of metal, (and very similar, I should suppose, to these ancient girdles,) are still worn by the Tyrolese peasants. Belts were also, a few years ago, very generally worn by the peasants of Cumberland. Many a rustic of that county can well remember having wrestled for the belt, which was the usual prize at rural sports. ² Having never elsewhere seen the word *nyfel*, that I can remember, I can only conjecture, from the word, that it was a napkin of some kind for the hand, or *neif*; the same article as that we now call an *handkerchief*. This is, however, a mere random conjecture. ³ An *umple*, I conceive, was a *wimple*, or covering for the neck. Chaucer distinguishes it from the veil, which covered the head also.

"Wering a vaile instede of *wimple*

"As nonnes don in hir abbey."

ROM. OF THE ROSE, 3864.

It likewise occurs in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, l. 151.

And in Gawin Douglas's Virgil: "With her *wympil* wyvit the blude away."—p. 124. l. 20.

And in Isaiah, c. iii. v. 22. among various articles of female apparel. The wimple may, perhaps, have been a thick cloth cloak. Chaucer, of his wife of Bath, says:

"Upon an ambler esily she fat

"*Twimpled* wel, and on hir hede an *hat*,

"As brode as is a bokeler, or a targe."

PROLOGUE, 471.

Wimble, in Skelton's Elinor Rummin, (Sextus passus,) probably is the same with *wimple*.

⁴ Rot. Parl. v. 505. 4 E. 4. c. 5.

⁵ See p. 38 & 65.

⁶ Dr. Henry (Hist. of G. B. b. 5. c. 7.) adds breeches: hose, however, I conceive, included both breeches and stockings.

cloth..

cloth¹. It is probable that hats were not much used until a century afterwards; although mention is made of them in a statute of Richard the Third, by which the price of a hat is limited at 20d.²

From the picture given by Fortescue, of the miserable condition of the people in France about this period, we may collect, that the English were comparatively well provided with the essential necessities of food and dress. Whatever the diet and cloathing of the labouring classes of the community may have been in his days, it is fair to presume, from his description of the poverty of France, (which he ascribes to the defects of their government,) that no such extremes of wretchedness were known in this kingdom. Of the French, he says: "Thay drynke
" water, thay eate apples, with bred right brown made of rye.
" They eate no flesche, but if it be felden³, a litill larde, or of the
" entrails, or heds of bests sclyayne for the nobles and merchaunts of the
" lond. They weryn no wollyn, but if it be a pore cote under their ut-
" termost garment, made of grete canvas, and cal it a frok. Their
" hosyn be of like canvas, and passen not their knee⁴; wherfor they
" be

¹ Before the reign of Queen Mary, the common covering for the head seems to have been a cap, very similar to the Highland bonnet.

² It is not improbable that hats, like many other improvements in dress, were introduced from France. Mr. Peck supposes, from a passage in Lord Burghley's Diary, that they were at first more worn by children, than men; and says, "they are the first hatts he had read of." Defid. Curios. 574. "27th May 1555 bought at Callice three hats for the children at xxd. each." Defid. Curios. 1. 8. He is, however, mistaken in supposing hats to have been introduced about this period. They were known two centuries before. See Statutes 1 R. 2. c. 7.—4 H. 7. c. 9. (by which the price of a hat was fixed at 20d.) 3 H. 8. c. 15. (when the price of caps, of the best Leominster wool, was fixed at 3s. 4d. and of the worst at 12d.) and by 21 H. 8. c. 9. From the passage above quoted from the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, it seems, that, even in Chaucer's time, the broad-brimmed hat was in use.

³ But *if*, is frequently used by our old writers, for *except*, or *unless*. See the Vision of Peirce Plowman, passim.

⁴ The Editor of Fortescue is mistaken, in supposing that *hosyn* and *stockings* are synonymous. Peck, (Defid. Curios. 572,) says, that Queen Elizabeth was the first person in England that wore *stockings*. Before her time, both men and women wore cloth trowsers, or pantaloons. A ludicrous story is mentioned by Stow, of William Rufus having quarrelled with his chamberlain about a pair of hose, that cost 3s. His majesty did not think them "mete hose for a king;" and would not be satisfied till his chamberlain purchased him another pair; which, although far inferior to the others, pleased him mightily, when he was told that they cost a mark. Stow, 128. This incident probably gave rise to the

“ be gartrid, and their thyghs bare. Their wyfs and children gone bare-
 “ fote ; they may in non otherwyse lyve ; for fume of them, that was
 “ wonte to pay to his lord for his tenement, which he hyrith by the
 “ yere, a scute¹, payyth now to the kyng, over that scute fyve
 “ skuts. Wher through they be artyd² by neceffite so to watch, la-
 “ bour, and grub in the ground, for their sustenance, that their nature
 “ is much wastid, and the kynd of them brought to nowght. Thay
 “ gone crokyd and ar feble, not able to fyght, nor to defend the
 “ realme ; nor thay have wepon, nor monye to buy them wepon withal ;
 “ but verely thay lyvyn in the most extreme povertie and mysferye, and
 “ yet thay dwellyn in one the most fertile realme of the world³. ”

mention of King Stephen, as to a matter of the same sort, in the ballad, “ Take thy auld cloke about thee ! ” See Percy’s *Reliques*, 4th edit. i. 204. In a MSS. account of the household expences of the L’Estrange family, who resided in Norfolk, the price of a pair of silk stockings, in 1591, is charged £ 1. 18s. We have the following curious notices respecting stockings, in the Preface to *Queen Elizabeth’s Progresses*. “ From the household book of Sir Thomas L’Estrange, of Hunstanton, in Norfolk, kept by his wife Ann, daughter of Lord Vaux, it appears, that, in 1533, (25th Henry VIII.) 8s. were paid for a pair of knit hose for him, and 1s. for two pair of ditto for his children ; so that knit hose were not so great a rarity as Stow supposed, when he stated in his *Annals*, 1564, (p. 368,) that, that year, William Rider, apprentice to master Thomas Burdet, at the Bridgefoot, over against St. Magnus, chancing to see a pair of knit worsted stockings in the lodgings of an Italian merchant, that came from Mantua, borrowed them, and caused others to be made by them, which were the first *worsted* stockings made in England, unless we suppose those of the L’Estrange family were of *thread*. In Harrison’s time, *knit hosen* were so common, that the countrywomen dyed them black with alder bark, (*Descrip. of Brit.* p. 13) ; and, in the Norwich Pageant, 1570, were introduced eight children knitting yarn hose. Knit wool-len hose are mentioned in an account of 6th Edward VI. (the year 1552). See *Gent. Mag.* 1778, pp. 314, 350 ; 1782, pp. 76, 168, 229, 434, 471 ; 1783, pp. 38, 127, 139. Stow, in his *Annals*, (p. 869,) says, the Earl of Pembroke was the first who wore *worsted* stockings : but he does not say, as Mr. Granger represents his words, that they were presented him by William Rider. It is only a marginal note to the story of Rider.” See Preface to *Queen Elizabeth’s Progresses*, xxix.

¹ A *scute* was a French gold coin, and the same with an *escu*, or *ecu d’or*, which was denominated from the Legend, “ Dieu est mon *escu* ; ” God is my shield. It was worth 3s. 4d. in Fortescue’s time. . Fortesc. on a. and l. m. 19.

² *Arcted*, compelled, or restrained, from the old French verb *coarctier*.

³ Fortescue on Abs. and Limited Monarchy, 17. His concluding observation will, I hope, long continue to be true : “ But, blest be God ! this lond ys rulid under a better lawe, and therfor the people therof be not in such penurye, nor therby hurt in their persons, but thay be wealtlye, and have al thyngs necessarye to the sustenance of nature. Wherfor thay be myghty, and able to resyste the adversariis of the realme, and to bett other realmes, that do or will do them wrong.” p. 24.

Some

Some good laws were enacted during the reign of King Richard the Third, for the security of the person and property of the subject¹. The true principles of commerce seem, however, as yet, to have been little understood, and the principal branches of manufacture were still carried on by foreigners. The preamble of a statute, passed in 1483², complains, that “artificers, and other strangers, not born under the king’s obedience, do daily resort to the city of London, and to other cities, boroughs, and towns, of the said realm, and much more than they were wont to do in times past; and inhabit, by themselves, in the said realm, with their wives, children, and household; and will not take upon them any laborious occupation, as going to the plough, and cart, and other like business; but use the making of cloth, and other handicraft, and easy occupations; and bring and convey, from the parts beyond the sea, great substance of wares and merchandizes, to fairs, and markets, and all other places of this realm, at their pleasure, and there sell the same, as well by retail as otherwise, as freely as any of the king’s subjects, and will in no wise suffer nor take any of the king’s said subjects to work with them; but they take only into their service people born in their own countries, whereby the king’s said subjects, for lack of occupation, fall into idleness, and be thieves, beggars, vagabonds, and people of vicious living; to the great perturbation, both of the king, and of all his realm.” Aliens are, therefore, forbidden “to make cloth³, or to pursue any handicraft occupation⁴, except as servant to such of the king’s subjects as be expert and cunning, in such feats, arts, and crafts, which the said

¹ 1 R. 3. c. 2. 3. ² 1 R. 3. c. 9. ³ § 10. ⁴ The importance, however, of the newly-discovered art of printing, was fully recognized by the Legislature, who exempted from the penalties of the act, any artificer, or merchant, stranger, of what nation or country he should be, for bringing into the realm, or selling by retail or otherwise, any books written or printed, from inhabiting within this said realm for the same intent, or any scrivener, alluminor, reader, or printer of books. This provision, it is probable, was added for the security of foreign printers then in London. Machlinia and Lettou, contemporary printers with Caxton, were both foreigners. However, notwithstanding the favour shewn by the Legislature to this civilizing art, books continued, many years after, to be very scarce in England. In 1514, the price of “Fitzherbert’s Abridgment” was 40s.: Ames, 1st edit. p. 120. Mr. Daines Barrington conceives, that the readers, mentioned in the statute, were book-sellers, who received money from an audience, who were either incapable themselves of reading, or could not afford to purchase books. *Observ. on Ancient Statutes*, p. 432.

“strangers

"strangers can occupy". They are likewise enjoined to take only English apprentices, or servants, in future².

The Legislature, in 1488, seems to have been apprehensive of bad consequences arising, to the industrious Poor, from the consolidation of small farms. An Act was therefore passed to prohibit "pulling down farm-houses, to which at least 20 acres of land, lying in tillage or husbandrie," were annexed; and farms that contained 20 acres, or more, of arable land, were directed to be kept in tillage for the future³. The language of the statute is a clear proof, that the business of agriculture began now to be carried on by persons of capital⁴. It may, however, be doubted, notwithstanding the high commendations bestowed by Lord Bacon on this law, whether it was ever carried into effect. For a century and a half after this period, depopulation continued to be the theme of the Legislature; and inclosures, and large farms, were prohibited, under severe penalties⁵. From the frequency of these laws, Mr. Hume very justly infers, that none of them were executed⁶.

The accession of Henry the Seventh to the throne may however be considered as the commencement of an era of internal tranquillity and industry. By his marriage with Elizabeth, the heiress of the house of York, all apprehensions of a renewal of the calamities of civil war were happily extinguished. The race of villeins was now almost extinct; and the people, from this period, seem to have gradually advanced towards wealth and civilization. Their progress would, probably, have

¹ § 9.² § 11.³ 4 H. 7. c. 19.⁴ The preamble of the Act is an in-

stance of that gloomy spirit, which has, in all ages, more or less, infected the hypocondriac inhabitants of this island, and represented the kingdom as declining, and depopulated.

"The King remembreth that great inconveniences daily do increase, by desolation, and

"pulling downe, and wilfull waste of houses and townes, within this realme, and laying to

"pasture, lands which customably have beene used in tillage, whereby idlenesse, which is the

"ground and beginning of all mischiefes, daily doth encrease. For where in some townes

"two hundred persons were occupied, and lived by their lawfull labours, now there are oc-

"cupied two or three herdsmen, and the residue fall into idlenesse; the husbandrie, which is

"one of the greatest commodities of this realme, is greatly decayed; churches destroyed;

"the service of God withdrawen; the bodies there buried not prayed for; the patrons and

"curates wronged; the defence of this land, against our enemies outward, feeble and im-

"paired, &c." ⁵ 4 H. 7. c. 16. ⁶ H. 8. c. 5. ⁷ H. 8. c. 1. ⁸ Hist. of

England, iii. 65.

*seems at
act to
prevent
consolidation
of small
farms*

been more rapid, had the attention, which the Legislature shewed to commerce and manufactures, been equally bestowed on agriculture. While, however, in the former, the earnings of industry were judiciously left to the fair operation of demand and competition; in the latter, the unenlightened policy of regulating wages was still pursued, and agricultural labourers, and house artificers, were denied the invaluable privilege of carrying their labour to the best market. The statute for regulating the wages of labourers, passed in the eleventh year of Henry the Seventh¹, strongly marks the impolicy of the times, and must have operated more fatally, towards the discouragement of husbandry, than the practice of enclosing, so much complained of by the Legislature. It is probable, that the difficulty of obtaining labourers, (who were enticed away into the towns by the superior wages offered them by manufacturers,) was a principal cause of the converting arable land into pasture.

From comparing the wages appointed by this statute to be given to servants in husbandry, with those before recited, under the year 1444, it will appear, that, notwithstanding the increase of the price of the necessaries of life, and the increase of the demand for labour, which seems to have taken place between that year and 1496, (11th Hen. VII.) very little alteration had taken place in the price of labour. The preamble of the Act recites, what might naturally have been expected, that the former statutes had not been executed, because "the remedy by the said statutes is not very perfect;" and, to correct all the evils complained of, it is enacted, that the following wages shall be given:

	£.	s.	d.		s.	d.	
To a bailiff of husbandry, by the year, not more than	0	16	8 ²	and for his cloathing,	5	0	{ and meat and drink.
A chief hind, or chief shepherd	-	-	1 0 0	ditto	-	5 0	Ditto.
A common servant of husbandry.	-	-	0 16 8	ditto	-	4 0	Ditto.
A woman servant	-	-	0 10 0	ditto	-	4 0	Ditto.
A child under 14 years of age	-	-	0 6 8	ditto	-	4 0	Ditto.

¹ c. 22. ² This is so set down in Rastell; but, I imagine, it is a mistake, and should be £ 1. 6s. 8d. See 23 H. 6. c. 12.

The daily wages appointed for Artificers are:

	Between Easter and Michaelmas.	Between Michaelmas and Easter.
A Free-mason, Master Carpenter, Rough Mason, Bricklayer, Master Tiler, Plumber, Glazier, Carver, Joiner, Other labourers, (except in harvest,)	with diet, 4d. — without, 6d.	with diet, 3d. — without, 5d.
Master carpenters and masons, having under them six men,	with diet, 2d. — without, 4d.	with diet, 1½d. — without, 3d.
Master carpenters and masons, having under them six men,	were allowed, with diet,	5d. a day. — without, 7d.
In harvest, every mower by the day,	with diet, 4d.	without, 6d.
A reaper, ditto	- 3d.	without, 5d.
A carter, ditto	- 3d.	without, 5d.
A woman, and other labourers, ditto	- 2½d.	without, 4½d.

The daily wages of shipwrights are particularly set down; and labourers and artificers, working by the half-day, are forbidden to receive wages for the whole day: if, when out of service, they refuse to serve at the above wages, they are to be imprisoned till they find surety to serve according to the statute. The penalty for taking more, was 20s.; and for giving more, 40s. The latter part of the statute regulates the hours of work, and of meals: “ And, furthermore, where divers artificers and labourers, retained to worke and serve, wast much part of the day, and deserve not their wages, sometime in late comming unto their worke, early departing therefrom, long sitting at their breakfast, at their dinner, and noone-meat, and long time of sleeping at afternoone, to the losse and hurt of such persons as the said artificers and labourers be retained with in service: it is, therefore, established, enacted, and ordained, by authority aforesaid, That every artificer and labourer be at his worke, between the midst of the moneth of March and the midst of the month of September, before five of the clocke in the morning, and that he hath but half an houre for his breakefast, and an houre and a halfe for his dinner, of such time as hee hath season for sleeping to him appointed by this said statute, and at such time as is here appointed that he shall not sleepe, then hee to have but one houre for his dinner, and halfe an houre for his noone-meate,

“ and that hee depart not from his worke, betweene the midst of the
 “ said moneths of March and September, till betweene seven and eight
 “ of the clocke in the evening; and if they, or any of them, offend in
 “ any of these articles, that then their defaults be marked by him, or
 “ his deputy, that shall pay their wages, and at the weeke’s end their
 “ wages bee abated for such rate of time as they have offended contrary
 “ to this statute. And that, from the midst of September to the midst of
 “ March, every artificer and labourer be at their work in the springing
 “ of the day, and depart not till night of the same day; and the said
 “ artificers and labourers sleepe not by day, but only from the midst of
 “ the moneth of May unto the middle of the moneth of August’.”

The high price of corn in the following year, 1497², was probably the principal cause of this Act being repealed³.

It is observable, that bricklayers are mentioned among the artificers: they do not occur in the statute of 1444. Bricks, however, were very generally known in England, in Henry the Sixth’s reign: we are assured that many castles were then built of brick. The above notice of bricklayers, in a Statute of Labourers, shews that it was then a very common occupation; and I make no doubt there were then many brick-houses in the kingdom⁴. It seems a mistake to suppose that bricks were little used in England till Henry the Eighth’s reign. They are mentioned in the “Annals of Dunstaple,” under the year 1258⁵.

Tilers are noticed in the Statute of 1350⁶; and tiles were used in Suffolk, as early as 1358⁷. Another occupation is likewise mentioned
 in

¹ 11 H. 7. c. 22. Rastell’s Statutes, i. 370. ² See the Table of Prices, in the Appendix, No. I. p. xlii. ³ 12 H. 7. c. 3. ⁴ Dugd. Warw. 509. Leland remarks, that Michael De la Pole, (who lived about the time of Richard the Second,) “built a goodly house of brik again the west end of S. Marie’s chirch, (in Kingston-upon-Hull,) like a palace, with goodly orchard and gardein at large, enclosed with brik; and three houses in the town besides, whereof every one had a tower of brik.” Itinerary, i. f. 55. ⁵ The mode of building common houses in Henry the Eighth’s reign, was, to erect wooden frames, whose interstices were either filled with clay or brick. In consequence of it’s becoming a common practice to destroy such frames, in 1545, it was made felony to cut or destroy frames prepared for the making of houses, 37 H. 8. c. 6. §. 2. Ann. Dunst. 91. ⁶ 25 E. 3. c. 3. ⁷ Cullum’s Hawsted, 94. The tax upon bricks and tiles, imposed in 1784, has been very justly animadverted upon by the Editor of the Annals of Agriculture, ii. 314. The duty on bricks is a great obstacle to improvement in those counties where they are used for draining.

in the statute; namely, that of glaziers, who, I should suppose, were chiefly foreigners. A few years afterwards, when several regulations, respecting foreign artificers, were made by the Legislature, the king's subjects, having £100. a year, were allowed to retain joiners and glaziers in their service¹. Notwithstanding this early notice of glaziers, I much doubt whether glass, although it had long been the ornament of churches, was used at this time in private houses. In 1567, glass was such a rarity, even in the castles of the nobility, that great precaution was taken for its preservation. The following curious article occurs in a survey of Alnwick castle, made in that year: "And, because, "throwe extreme winds, the glasse of the windowes of this and other "my lord's castles and houses here in the country, dooth decay and "waste, yt were good the whole leights of everie windowe, at the departure of his lordshippe from lyinge at any of his said castels, and "houses, and dowering the tyme of his lordship's absence, or others "lying in them, were taken doune and lade up in safety: and at fooche "tyme as ather his lordshipec or anie other sholde lye at anie of the "said places, the same might then be set uppe of newe, with smale "charges to his Lp. wher (i. e. whereas) now the decaye thereof shall "be verie costlie and chargeable to be repayed²."

Glass windows, it is probable, were not introduced into farm-houses much before the reign of James the First. They are mentioned in a lease in 1615³. In Scotland, however, as late as 1661, the windows of the ordinary country-houses were not glazed, and only the upper parts of even those in the king's palaces had glass; the lower ones having two wooden shutters, to open at pleasure, and admit the fresh air⁴.

The duty on tiles likewise operates as a tax on husbandry; and, not only robs the fields of their manure, but exposes a whole village to the perils of conflagration. These injurious taxes tend to restore mud walls, and thatched roofs, into our cottages: they are, however, it must be confessed, not without a precedent: in 1477, the size of tiles was regulated by statute, and searchers were appointed, who were to be allowed, by the tile-maker, 1d. for every 1000 plain tiles, and 1d. for every 100 roof tiles. Rot. Parl. vi. 190. The Board of Agriculture would do essential service to those counties, which are in want of materials for roads, in recommending to Parliament the repeal of this tax, or, at least, a modification, that should exempt bricks, used for making roads, from taxation; this might easily be effected, without subjecting the revenue to fraud, by directing that all bricks used for this purpose should be made of a form that would render them unserviceable for building. Tiles of a particular shape, used for draining, are exempted from the tax, by the 34th Geo. 3. c. 15.

¹ 14 & 15 H. 8. c. 2. § 14. ² North. Housh. book, xvii. ³ Cullum's Hawsted, 209.

⁴ Ray's Itin. 187, 188.

From a passage in Harrison's description of England, I should imagine that glafs was introduced into country-houfes in England, in the reign of Henry VIII. He fays, "Of old time," (meaning, probably, the beginning of the 16th century,) "our cuntry houfes, in fteed of glaffe, did ufe
 "much lattife, and that made either of wicker or fine rifts of oke in
 "chekerwife. I read alfo, that fome of the better fort, in and before
 "the time of the Saxons,—did make panels of horne¹, in fteed of glaffe,
 "and fix them in wooden calmes²; but as horne in windows is now
 "(1584) quite laid downe in everie place, fo our lattifes are alfo growne
 "into leffe ufe, bicaufe glafs is come to be fo plentiful, and within verie
 "little fo good, cheape, if not better then the other³." Glafs is at length introduced into the windows of moft cottages in England; and in this cold and rainy climate, it may, perhaps, be confidered, after the neceffaries of life, a conveniency as defirable as it is elegant. The difcovery and various ufes of this invention, may be fhortly fummed up in the elegant language of the Rambler. He fays, "By fome fortuitous liquefaction was mankind taught to produce a body at once in a high
 "degree folid and tranfparent, which might admit the light of the fun,
 "and exclude the violence of the wind; which might extend the fight
 "of the philofopher to new ranges of exiftence, and charm him at one
 "time with the unbounded extent of the material creation, and at another with the endlefs fubordination of animal life; and, what is yet
 "of more importance, might fupply the decays of nature, and fuccour old age with fubfidiary fight. Thus was the firft artificer in
 "glafs employed, though without his own knowledge or expectation. He was facilitating, and prolonging, the enjoyment of light; enlarging the avenues of fcience, and conferring the higheft and moft
 "lafting pleasures; he was enabling the ftudent to contemplate nature,
 "and the beauty to behold herfelf⁴."

¹ Horn was, anciently, ufed for many purpofes, to which glafs is now applied. The moft fingular inftance of it's utility is to be met with in a watch, near 400 years old, (now in the poffeffion of his Majefty,) which belonged to Robert Bruce, who was King of Scotland, from 1306 to 1329. It has a convex, tranfparent horn, inftead of a glafs. *Archæologia*, v. 519.

² *Clames*, *Calmes*, or *Caums*, is the Scotch word for any kind of mould wherein metal is caft; and, here, probably fignifies the *Frame* or *Cafement* of the window. ³ *Desc.* of Eng. 187. Harrifon adds; "heretofore, all the houfes of our princes and noblemen were often glazed with beril, a fample whereof is yet to be feen in Sudely caſtle; and in divers other places, with fine criſtal." ⁴ Johnson's Rambler, No. 9.

In the same year ¹, in which the wages of labourers and artificers were regulated, vagabonds and beggars were again noticed by the Legislature, and the harsh provisions of former statutes somewhat modified by an Act which declared, "That the king's grace most entirely desireth, among all earthly things, the prosperitie and restfulnes of this his land, and his subjects of the same, to live quietly and surely to the pleasure of God, and according to his lawes, willing alwaies of his pittie, intending to reduce them thereto by softer means than by such extreme rigour therefore purveied in a statute made in the time of King Richard the Second; considering also the great charges that should grow to his subjects for bringing of vagabonds to the gaoles, and the long abiding of them therein, whereby, by likelihood, many of them should lose their lives." In moderating of the said statute, it was therefore enacted, That, instead of being, by examination, committed to the common gaol, "there to remain, as is aforesaid," (that is, till they should find surety to enter into service;) vagabonds, idle and suspected persons, should be set in the stocks three days and three nights, and have no sustenance but bread and water, and afterwards set at large, and obliged to leave the town. For a second offence in the same township, they were to remain in the stocks six days and nights, and to be fed on bread and water: and any persons giving them other meat or drink, while they remained there, were subject to a penalty of 12d. It was also enacted, That every beggar, not able to work, should go, rest, and abide, in the hundred where he was best known, or born, on pain of like punishment. Scholars were liable to the penalties of the Act, unless they could produce letters-testimonial from the chancellor of their respective universities. Sailors, soldiers, and travellers, were ordered to bring letters from their captain, or from the town where they landed, and were directed to travel homewards by the straightest road. Penalties were imposed on officers not carrying the Act into execution; but a mitigation of punishment was allowed, in favour of offenders, if they were women with child, or persons in extreame sickness. Artificers and labourers were forbidden to play at unlawful games, except during Christmas; and two justices were empowered to restrain the common selling of ale in towns and

places where they should think it convenient, and to take surety of the keepers of ale-houses for their good behaviour, as they might be advised at the time of the sessions¹.

By the 19th Hen. VII. c. 12. it was enacted, That vagabonds, instead of being set in the stocks three days and three nights, as directed by the last-mentioned act, should be set there for one day and one night; and should then depart to the city, town, place, or hundred where they were born, or else to the place where they last dwelled or resided for the space of three years.

In the first year of Henry the Eighth, an act was passed for the regulation of apparel; by which (amongst other things) it was enacted, That no serving man, under the degree of a gentleman, should use or wear any gowne or coat, or such like apparel, of more cloth than two broad yards and a half in a short gown, and three broad yards in a long gown; and that in the said gown or coat they should wear no manner of fur, on pain of forfeiture of the said apparel, or the value thereof. And that no serving man waiting upon his master, under the degree of a gentleman, use or wear any garded hose², or any cloth above the

¹ 11 H. 7. c. 2. Rastell's Statutes, i. 357.
with lace or fringe :

² Garded hose are probably hose adorned

“ You are in good case since you came to court, fool; what! *guarded*, *guarded*?

“ Yes, faith! even as footmen and bawds wear velvet.”

The Malcontent, Doddsley's Coll. of Old Plays, iv. 36.

The note to this passage informs us, that Barret, in his *Alvearie*, explains a garment *garded*, to be the same as one *hemmed*, *plaited*, or *fringed*. So, in the Dedication to *Euphues and his England*, 1582: “ If a tailour make your gowne too little, you cover his fault with a broad stomacher; if too greate, with a number of plights; if too short, with a fayre garde, &c.” So in *Albumazar*, A. 3. S. 5. “ two *guarded* footmen;” and in the *Merchant of Venice*, A. 2. S. 2.

“ Give him a livery more *guarded* than his fellows.”

It appears from the Prologue to Henry the Eighth, that the fools of the theatre were dressed

“ In a long motley coat *guarded* with yellow.” l. 16.

“ Rhymes are *guards* on wanton Cupid's hose.” *Love's Labour's Lost*, A. 4. S. 3.

The borders of lace, with which hose, &c. were formerly garnished, it is probable, were somewhat stiff and raised; and hence, in Grey's *Hudibras*, a person so equipped is called *gimp-thighed*. And in *Much Ado about Nothing*, A. 1. S. 1. “ The body of your discourse is sometime *guarded* with fragments; and the *guards* are but slightly basted on neither.” See also BEN JONSON's *Bartholomew Fair*.

the price of 20d. the yard in his hose, except that it be of his master's wearing hose, upon pain of forfeiture of 3s. 4d. And that no man under the degree of a knight wear any garded pinched shirt, or pinched partlet¹ of linen cloth, upon pain of forfeiture of the same shirt or partlet, and for using of the same, 10s. And that no servant of husbandry, nor shepherd, common labourer, or servant to any artificer out of city or borough, nor husbandman having goods of his own not above the value of 10l. use or wear any cloth whereof the broad yard exceeded in price 2s. Nor that any of the said servants of husbandry, shepherds, nor labourers, wear any hose above the price of 10d. the yard, upon pain of imprisonment in the stocks for three days².

In the year 1514, wages were again regulated by statute in the following manner :

			£.	s.	d.
A bailiff of husbandry was allowed to take, by the year, not more than	-	-	1	6	8
and for his cloathing 5s. with diet.					
A chief hind, carter, or chief shepherd, - ditto, - - -	-	-	1	0	0
and for his cloathing 5s. with diet.					
A common servant, - - - ditto, - - -	-	-	0	16	8
and for his cloathing 4s. with diet.					
A woman servant, - - - ditto, - - -	-	-	0	10	0
and for her cloathing 4s. with diet.					
A child under 14 years of age, - ditto, - - -	-	-	0	6	8
and for his cloathing 4s. with diet.					

Artificers were allowed,

A Free-mason,	} by the day, with diet, 4d. without 6d.—with diet 3d. without 5d.	From Easter to Michaelmas,	From Michaelmas to Easter,
Master Carpenter,			
Rough Mason,			
Master Tiler,			
Plumber,			
Glazier,			
Carver,			
Joiner,			
Every other labourer, except in harvest, with diet 2d. without 4d.—with diet 1½d. without 3d.			
The wages of ship-wrights are minutely set down.			

By the 74th Canon of the Canons of 1603, regulating the apparel of ecclesiastics, among other things, it is enjoined, that "all the said ecclesiastical persons above named shall usually wear in their journies cloaks with sleeves, commonly called priests' cloaks, with *guards*, welts, long buttons, or cuts." See BURN'S Eccl. Law. 4to, ed. 1763. ii. 234.

¹ A pinched partlet was probably a ruff. Littleton, in his Dictionary, translates *strophium* as a woman's partlet. Sir Thomas Eliot, in his Dictionary, imprinted by Berthelet, 1538, renders the same word "a mayden's neckerchefe, or lynnene *partlette*." ² 1 H. 8. c. 14.

In Harvest,

A mower was allowed, by the day, with diet,	4d.	—	without,	6d.
A reaper, - - -	ditto, 3d.	—	ditto,	5d.
A carter, - - -	ditto, 3d.	—	ditto,	5d.
A woman-labourer, - - -	ditto, 2½d.			
Other labourers, - - -	ditto, 2½d.			

There are other regulations, as in former statutes, respecting the hours of work, diet, and sleep. Persons not retained in service, and refusing, upon application, to work, were to be imprisoned till they found surety to serve according to the statute¹.

By an Act passed in 1530, beggars were divided into two classes; viz. the aged and impotent, and vagabonds and idle persons; and justices of the peace were empowered to license such persons of the first description, by letter under their seals, to beg within a certain precinct, as they should think had most need. Their names were directed to be registered, and to be certified at the next sessions. Persons authorized to beg, and begging in any other place than the limits assigned them, were ordered to be imprisoned in the stocks for two days and two nights, and fed on bread and water, and were afterwards to be sworn to return immediately to the place they were licensed to beg in. Impotent persons begging without a licence, were to be taken up, and whipped, or set in the stocks, according to the discretion of the justices, and sworn to beg only in such place as the justices should point out².

While the Legislature thus sanctioned mendicity in persons incapacitated from working, they imposed very severe punishments on vagrants, who were able to labour. Every vagabond, whole and mighty in body, who should be found begging, and could give no account how he got his living, was to be tied to the cart's tail, and whipped, (more severely, I should imagine, than impotent beggars,) till his body was bloody by reason of such whipping; and then sworn to return to the place where he was born, or last dwelt for the space of three years, and there put himself to labour. Persons delivered out of gaol had

¹ 6 H. 8. c. 3. ² 22 H. 8. c. 12. This act was only to remain in force a year; it was, however, continued by several subsequent Acts in this reign; but repealed by 21 Jac. 1. c. 28.

liberty to beg for their fees, on procuring a licence from the gaoler, or a testimonial from the clerk of the peace¹.

It is probable that inconveniences arose from begging being thus permitted, encouraged, and even sanctioned by the Legislature; for, within five years, several material alterations were made in the laws respecting the impotent poor. The preamble of the 27th Henry VIII. c. 25. states, That it was not provided by the Act, above quoted, how poor people and sturdy vagabonds should be ordered at their repair and coming into their countries, nor how the *inhabitants of every hundred should be charged for their relieve*, nor yet *for the setting and keeping in worke and labour the said valiant beggers, at their repaire into every hundred of this realme*². From these expressions, the Legislature seems to have been convinced of the necessity of a *compulsory maintenance*; and although a *regular tax* for that purpose was not immediately imposed, yet a perusal of the regulations of the statute will convince us, that it was intended that the Poor, even at this period, should be maintained by the Public.

“ It was enacted, That the mayors, sheriffs, constables, householders,
 “ and all other head officers of every city, shire, town, and parish,
 “ at the repair and coming thither of such poor creature, shall most
 “ charitably receive the same; and all governors and ministers of every
 “ such place shall succour, find, and keep every of the same poor people,
 “ by way of voluntary and charitable alms, within the respective

¹ 22 H. 8. c. 12. ² C. 25. Very similar regulations, respecting the Poor, were adopted on the Continent, about this period. In 1531, the emperor Charles the Fifth published a long edict in the Netherlands, against vagrancy; wherein it was declared, that the trade of begging created idleness, and led to bad courses; none, therefore, except mendicant friars and pilgrims were permitted to beg, under pain of imprisonment, and whipping. Poor people, however, who had suffered by war, fire, or inundations, were likewise excepted. All poor persons, who had resided in the provinces a whole year, were directed to remain in the places where they were settled, and were to share in the alms that were ordered them. Collections for this purpose were to be made at poor-houses, brotherhoods, and hospitals; and the magistrates were to collect alms in the churches, and in private houses, once or twice every week. Idlers and rogues were to be compelled to work. Poor women and orphan children were to be provided for; and the latter put to school, and taught, on Sundays and Holidays, their pater-noster, creed, and ten commandments; and, at a proper age, to be placed out in service, or trade.—And. Hist. of Comm. ii. 55.

“ dispose of the same, or the value thereof, to such common boxes, for
 “ the relief of the poor, in form aforesaid.

“ And to the intent that the money gathered toward the relief of po-
 “ verty, as is above said, may be employed to such charitable uses as
 “ by this Act is limited, and no part thereof be misused by such as have
 “ the collection thereof; it is ordained, That the church-wardens of
 “ every parish, calling unto them six or four of their honest neighbours,
 “ shall have power, every quarter of the year, or oftener by their dis-
 “ cretions, to command every such collector to appear before them,
 “ and to render account of all sums of money by them gathered,
 “ and how employed. And if upon such account it be found that
 “ such collector hath misemployed or imbezelled any part thereof,
 “ they shall carry him before a justice, who shall commit him till he
 “ shall have restored and paid back the same, and also 6s. 8d. for a pe-
 “ nalty, to be employed for the purposes of this Act.

“ And books shall be kept, in every parish, of the money collected;
 “ and how, upon whom, and in what wise, the same was disposed of.

“ And, two or three times in every week, two or three of every
 “ parish within cities and towns-corporate, by the assignment of the
 “ mayor, governor, or constable, some in one week, and some in
 “ another, shall name and appoint certain of the said poor people
 “ found of the common alms, to collect and gather broken meats and
 “ fragments, and the refuse drink, of every householder within every
 “ such parish; which shall be by their discretions distributed evenly
 “ among the poor people found of the said common alms, as they by
 “ their discretions shall think good.

“ Item, It is ordered, that the constables, church-wardens, or others
 “ the collectors of the said alms, which shall at any time forbear their
 “ own business and labour, and shall travel or take any pains in the
 “ execution of this Act, shall have, for their so doing, such compe-
 “ tent wages, of the money of the said collections, as by discretion
 “ of the mayor, justices, and other of the parish, shall be thought
 “ reasonable; which shall be appointed to them, at the making their
 “ accounts before the whole parish.

“ Item, The money collected shall be kept in the common coffer or
 “ box.

“ box in the church ; or else shall be committed to the custody of any
“ other substantial trusty man, as they can agree upon ; where it may
“ be delivered, to the uses before expressed, from time to time as necessity shall require.

“ And no church-warden, collector or collectors of the foresaid charitable alms, shall continue in their said office above the space of one whole year.

“ And the overplus of the collections of rich and wealthy parishes shall be ordered and distributed towards the sustentation of the charges of other poor parishes within the same city, borough, town, or hundred ; by the discretion of the mayor, justices, and high constable of the same.

“ Provided, that where the voluntary and unconstrained alms and charity of the parishioners or people, together with such money as shall be added and given to the same from any monasteries, or other persons, bodies politick, corporate, or other, will not suffice for the sustentation of the poor within the limits of such contribution ; neither the magistrates, officers, nor inhabitants there shall incur the aforefaid penalty of 20s. a month, nor be constrained to any such certain contribution, but as their free wills and charities will extend, provided that what shall be collected be justly distributed as aforefaid.

“ Finally, It is provided, that this Act shall not be prejudicial to any abbots, priors, or other persons of the clergy or other, that by any means be bound to give yearly, weekly, or daily alms, in money, victuals, lodging, cloathing, or other thing, in any monasteries, alms-houses, hospitals, or other foundations or brotherhoods, by any good authority or ancient custom, or of daily charity by keeping of poor men established for that purpose ; nor to any person for receiving of the same, or for their abiding in such hospitals or alms-houses according to such foundation ; nor also for alms in ready money, or otherwise, to be given to mariners or other persons, that shall fortune to come or be set on land from ships perished or lost on the sea ; or to any person that, riding, going, or passing by the way, shall after his conscience or charity give money or other thing to lame, blind, or sick, aged, or impotent people.”

With

With respect to vagabonds, (who in this statute are denominated Rufflers¹ and valiant beggars,) the penalty for begging is extremely severe; for the first offence a vagabond was already subject to a whipping by the former statute, and was to be sworn to return to the place of his birth, or where he resided for the last three years: as, however, he could have no visible means of subsistence during his journey, the present statute directed, that he should be at liberty, at the end of every ten miles, to repair to any constable of a parish in his direct road, and, on producing a testimonial of his having been whipped and passed to his own country, should be entitled to meat, drink, and lodging for one night only, or for one meal. If, after having been apprehended, whipped, and sent home, he should again wander, loiter, or idly use himself and play the vagabond, and absent himself from such labour as he should be appointed unto; he was ordered not only to be whipped again, and sent to the place whereunto he was first appointed, but also to have the upper part of the gristle of his right ear cut clean off. The statute adds this severe clause, that “if he shall again offend, he shall be committed to gaol till the next sessions, and, being there convicted upon indictment, he shall have judgment to suffer pains and execution of death as a felon, and as an enemy of the commonwealth.”

Such were the laws enacted for the maintenance of the Poor, the regulation of wages, and other matters immediately affecting the labouring classes, previous to the important era of the Reformation: they do not evince much knowledge of political economy in the Legislature that formed them, and have not been found to be practicably useful in subsequent times; nor is even the information, which they convey, respecting the general progress of society, always to be depended on. A stranger to our history, who only perused the ancient statute for preventing enclosures, and limiting the wages of labour, would naturally infer, from the grievous complaints, so often reiterated by the Commons, of scarcity, decay of husbandry, and depopulation, that, in the period between the reigns of the First Edward and Henry the Eighth, the

¹ Mr. Malone (in a note on King Lear,) says, that *ruffler*, in Shakspeare's time, signified a noisy boisterous fellow. Here it probably means a disorderly vagabond, or ruffian.

nation had been gradually declining in wealth and prosperity. On the contrary, however, we have every reason to suppose, that, during the 14th and 15th centuries, the great mass of the people had made rapid advances in every branch of civilization. Many manufactures, formerly unknown, had been introduced, and established in the country. The cloathing arts alone, (which, by the patronage of the Third Edward¹, were generally extended throughout England,) would have produced a great improvement in social life, if unshackled by prohibition or monopoly: they are the most beneficial, because they are the most intimately connected with the agriculture of a country. While the consumption of meat necessarily encourages the breed of sheep, our farmers must feel the advantages of a manufacture which takes off a raw material, that would otherwise remain, in a great measure, useless: they cannot feed mutton without producing wool. It is from the sale of these two articles, that they must obtain a fair profit for rearing

¹ It would seem, by the following passage, which, (with the omission of some immaterial sentences,) is almost literally translated from a letter written in Spain in the year 1437, that not only wool, but sheep, were exported in the reign of Edward the Third. This early account of the introduction of English sheep into Spain, has not been noticed by either Anderson or Smith, or any of our other writers on wool:

“The council appointed Gomez Carrillo to go to the admiral; and the king had named Juan Sanchez de Tovar; and it was debated which of them should go; and warm speeches passed between Fernan Sanchez de Berlanga, and Pedro Lafo de Mendoza, son of Inigo Lopez, one of them being related to the one, and the other to the other. Pedro Lafo said, in the king’s presence, that Gomez Carrillo was son to one of the king’s gentlemen or pages, and grandson to King Don Enriques, chief cup-bearer, who was son of Lope Carrillo, gentleman and chief huntsman to Don Juan the First, and that he was not son of *a judge over shepherds*. This was said as a sneer, for Juan Sanchez de Tovar is descended from Fernan Sanchez de Tovar, judge of the royal flocks of sheep and folds. F. S. de Berlanga answered, in the king’s presence, that he understood the sarcasm, but that it was ill aimed, and might be retorted upon himself; for that F. S. whom he reproached as a judge over shepherds, was his equal; that the office of judge and alcaide of the royal flocks, was always held by gentlemen of rank. That King Alfonso *, when he first brought sheep from England by sea, in great ships, (in *naves carracas*,) appointed Inigo Lopez de Orozco to be the first person to begin to exercise that office, from whom Pedro Lafo himself was descended on the part of his mother, and now being informed that himself was descended from a judge over shepherds, he might mock at his pleasure.”

Written from Medina del Campo. A. D. 1437. Epistol. de Cibdareal, p. 126.

* K. Alfonso the last (some historians call him the 10th, some the 11th) died in the year 1350.

sheep; and, consequently, the less they get for the one, the more they must demand for the other. It is justly observed, that whatever regulations tend to sink the price either of wool or raw hides below what it naturally would be, must, in an improved and cultivated country, have some tendency to raise the price of butcher's meat. That the prohibition of exporting wool from England, and from Ireland except to England, has operated in this way, can, I think, admit of little doubt¹. Permission to import it from Spain, duty free, had probably the same effect, and offers an encouragement to the Spanish, at the expence of the English farmer. I have very little doubt, that one cause of the high price of provisions is the disadvantage which farmers lie under in disposing of their wool. While the manufactures are so thriving that they can take off all the wool produced in the kingdom, prohibition is unnecessary; for no other country can give better prices; but if the demand for meat is greater than that for wool, the farmer, if he increases his stock of sheep, must expect to have an unsaleable surplus of wool on his hands. If he proportions his stock of sheep to the demand for wool, he will not be able to supply the demand for mutton. If he could raise wool, like cotton, unconnected with any other production, he would proportion the quantity to the demand; but as this is out of his power, he is obliged to indemnify himself for the reduced price of his superabundant wool, by augmenting the price of the eatable part of the carcase². It is said, that an increase in the price of wool would
exclude

¹ Wealth of Nations, i. 367. In imposing restrictions on the exportation of wool, the Legislature seems to have adopted the principles of a political writer of the 16th century, who says, that, "in order to make tillage as well cherished of every man as pasture, the first way is to make the wool to be of as base pryce to the breeders thereof as the corne is: and that shall be, if yee make a like restraint of it for passing over sea unwrought as yee make of corne: another is to increase the custome of woole that passeth over unwrought, and by that the price of it shall be abated to the breeders, and yet the price over sea shall be never the lesse." A compendious or briefe examination of certayne ordinary complaints, &c. by W. S. 1581.—This piece, in which several important branches of political science, (particularly the subject of enclosures,) are ably discussed in a dialogue between a merchant, a knight, a husbandman, a capper, and a doctor of divinity, has been erroneously ascribed to Shakspeare, and was reprinted with his name in 1751. The book, however, was written, not by William Shakspeare, but by William Stafford, gentleman. See Wood's Fasti, 2d edit. i. 208; and Farmer on the Learning of Shakspeare.

² It is, probably, owing to the shackles which have been laid on the wool trade, that farmers are more solicitous to im-

exclude our manufacturers from the foreign market ; but if we could undersell the French in cottons, even while the island of Tobago was in their possession, and we were obliged to purchase the raw material from them, there seems to be less danger of a decline in our clothing trade, which is now almost, exclusively, carried on by this country : capital and skill, in this instance, as in others, would probably, even if the exportation of wool were permitted, enable the British trader to keep possession of the market.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Poor, from the Reformation to the Revolution.

WHATEVER may have been the benefits ultimately derived from the Reformation, it is now well known, and generally admitted, (as reflecting no discredit on the Reformation, though it does on one of the heads of the reformers), that Henry the Eighth, in his suppression of the monasteries, was more influenced by motives of avarice, and low prejudices, than by zeal for religion. Had he been merely intent on abolishing the errors of Superstition, he would not have thought it necessary to pillage the Catholic and Protestant establishment indiscriminately : neither, however, were spared ; and the parable^{*} which bishop Fisher

prove the carcase, than the wool, of their sheep. We seldom hear of breeders attempting to emulate the fleeces of Rquillon or Segovia : the only question respecting the excellence of a sheep seems to be, (to use Mr. Burke's phrase,) "how he cuts up ; how he tallows in the cawl, or on the kidneys."

* When the dissolution of the lesser monasteries was proposed in convocation, bishop Fisher strenuously opposed it, and compared the king to an axe, which, wanting a handle, petitioned the great trees of the forest for a small sapling : which being obtained, in a short time neither great nor small trees were left standing. The mother monasteries, (he said,) were the handle, whereby the king, at his pleasure, would cut down all the cedars of Libanus. Baillie's Life of Bishop Fisher, 108.

introduced with so much judgment on the dissolution of lesser monasteries, to intimate that the greater would not be spared, might have been applied with equal propriety to the church establishment, which the king professed it was his object to support. When the regulars had been completely stripped of their possessions, he laid violent hands on the revenues of the secular clergy. By one Act, 70 manors belonging to the see of York were vested in the crown. This is indeed denominated a sale. The same Act informs us, that Cranmer, (archbishop of Canterbury,) had conveyed about a dozen parks and manors to the king; and we well know, that they were rather given, than exchanged for an equivalent¹. Mr. Collier justly observes, that the clergy, in this, the next, and queen Elizabeth's reign, made bad bargains, and bartered at Glaucus's disadvantage; but as princes bought cheap of their prelates, they sold, (when they did sell, and did not lavishly and corruptly give away), good bargains to their favourites. It was obvious that the innovations which Henry projected in religion, and his determination to appropriate the revenues of religious houses to his own use, could not but create murmurs in the people, who had been taught to consider these institutions as not more calculated to pious than charitable purposes. To reconcile them, therefore, to the projected alterations, and to persuade the members of both Houses of Parliament to acquiesce in the measure, it was declared, that the estates belonging to the abbies should not be converted to the king's private use, but applied towards the maintenance of a military force; and that no demands thenceforward be made on his subjects, for loans, subsidies, fifteenths, and other aids. At the suppression of the monasteries, however, no provision was made to carry the king's promises into effect; and lord Coke remarks, that the king in the very year², when the great and opulent priory of St. John of Jerusalem was suppressed, demanded subsidies both from the laity and the clergy, and made similar requisitions in the 34th and 37th years of his reign.³ The history of these promises, and the manner in which they were so cavalierly disregarded when they had answered the unhallowed ends of the lavish promiser, should be a caution to mankind, in all future ages, to beware how they repose an implicit confidence in the most specious promises made by any *reformers by vio-*

¹ Parl. Hist. iii. 204.² 32 H. 8. 1540.³ 4 Inst. f. 44; and Parl. Hist. iii. 147.

lance, whether they be overbearing despots like Henry the Eighth, canting puritans like the parliament and their adherents in the time of our First Charles, or blustering and boastful constitution-mongers like many of the modern revolutionists.

The Act for the dissolution of the monasteries was drawn up with such care and circumspection, (not to say cunning,) that it seemed to be rather in compliance with the earnest solicitations of the religious houses themselves, than to gratify Henry's avarice, that their destruction was resolved on. All suspicions of severe usage, and forced surrenders, were attempted to be removed by the obsequious formality with which some of the abbots were prevailed upon, by offers of large pensions¹, to tender a resignation of their houses. Those who resisted, were threatened with severe penalties; exaggerated and incredible stories were published of the disorderly lives of the monks², and, by a promise of a share in the plunder, the nobility were induced to countenance these iniquitous proceedings.

¹ The prior of St. John of Jerusalem had a pension of £1000. a year granted him by 32 H. 8. c. 24. The abbot of Feversham received an annuity of 100 marks; or above half the revenue of the dissolved abbey. Lewis's Abb. of Fav. 22.

² In a curious little tract, entitled, "The Supplication of Beggars," written in 1524, we have a full specimen of the abuse thrown out against both secular and regular clergy. This work was put into the hands of the king by Anna Boleyn, and pleased him much. The chancellor, Sir T. More, thought it worthy of an answer. Burnet, Hist. of the Reformation, 2d edit. I. 160. In order to persuade the king to confiscate the revenues of the church, the author, Simon Fyfe, gives the following, (probably exaggerated,) statement of the sums annually collected by mendicant friars: "Ther are within youre realme of Englande, LII thousande paryshe churches, and this standing that there be but ten householdes in every paryshe, yet are there fyve hondreth thousande, and twentye thousande householdes, and of every of these householdes hath everi of the fyve orders of friers a peny a quarter for everye order, that is, for all the fyve orders five pens a quarter for every house; that is, for all the fyve orders, twenty pens a yeare of every house. Summa fyve hundreth thousand and twenty thousand quarters of angelles, that is cclx thousand half angelles, summa cxxx. thousande angelles, summa totalis xliiii thousand poundes, and cccxxxiii *li. vi s.* and eyghte pens sterlinge." This calculation of the number of the houses, in 1524, is probably much below the truth. 520,000 households multiplied by $5\frac{1}{2}$, (a fair proportion of inhabitants to a house,) give only 2,860,000. Mr. Chalmers's Estimate, 2d edit. 34, has shewn from Harrison's and Sir Walter Raleigh's accounts of the number of fighting men in 1577, and 1583, that the population of England, towards the end of Elizabeth's reign, must have amounted to 4,688,000.

"The Supplication of Beggars" also informs us, what was the price of labour in 1524:

"Who

ings. It is not easy, however, to determine upon what principle of law the estates, which religious bodies were thus compelled to surrender, were vested in the hands of the king. Blackstone calls this a kind of suicide; and observes, that a dissolution is the civil death of a corporation: and in this case, their lands and tenements should revert to the person, or his heirs, who granted them to the corporation, which may endure for ever; but when that life is determined by the dissolution of the body-politic, the granter takes it back by reversion, as in the case of every other grant for life: and hence it appears, how injurious, as well to private as to public right, these statutes were, which vested in king Henry the Eighth, instead of the heirs of the founder, the lands of the dissolved monasteries.¹

It must however be confessed, notwithstanding the violence and injustice with which the abolition of the monastic order was conducted, that their downfall proved, in some instances, highly beneficial to the kingdom.² Mr. Hume has remarked; that the great increase of monasteries, if matters be considered merely in a political light, was the radical inconvenience of the Catholic religion; and every other disadvantage attending that communion, was inseparably connected with their religious institutions. Papal usurpations, the tyranny of the inquisition, the multiplications of holidays, all these fetters on liberty and industry were ultimately derived from the regular clergy.³ Although this is certainly true, it

“Who is she that wyll set her handes to worke to get thre-pens a day, and may have at leste 20 pens a day to slepe an houre with a fryer, or monke, or a preefte? What is he that wolde laboure for a grote a day, and may have at the least twelfe pens a day to be baude to a preeft?”

¹ Blackst. Comm. i. ² I have no doubt, however, but that many evils, which were occasioned by other causes, were ascribed by the populace to the fall of the monasteries. In an excellent old ballad, in Percy's Reliques, 4th edit. iii. 296. “Ignorance,” one of the characters, thus laments the downfall of an abbey, in the broad Somersetshire dialect.

“Chill tell thee what, good vellowe,

“Before the vriers went hence,

“A bushel of the best wheate

“Was zold vor vourteen pence;

“And vorty egges a penny,

“That were both good and newe.”

I have heard persons talk in the same strain, on the ill effects produced by the Albion Mills: had they stood 'till last year, I am persuaded the high price of bread would have been ascribed to them. ³ Hist. of Engl. 1st edit. iii. 197.

may:

may be doubted, whether the best means of removing the abuse were adopted. Corporate bodies, whether sole, or consisting of many, are truly stated to be more susceptible of a public direction by the power of the State, in the use of their property, and in the regulation of modes and habits of life in their members, than private citizens ever can be, or perhaps ought to be ¹. The inconveniences that arose, and which must ever attend a violent revolution in property, might have been avoided, had Henry's obsequious parliament proceeded more gradually in their system of ecclesiastical confiscation. To correct the evils inherent in the monastic order, it was not necessary to destroy every thing connected with it. The institution might have been overthrown without any sensible inconvenience, had the Legislature only prohibited the admission of fresh members into the monasteries. On the contrary, by proceeding with the intemperate zeal which unhappily too often displays itself in reform, the magnificent fabrics, which might have been applied to various useful purposes, were pillaged and overthrown, in order to exclude the possibility of restoration of their ancient privileges ². The monks, to the number of 50,000, were converted into miserable pensioners; and, unaccustomed to the active exertions of industry, were thrown among the busy crowd, to whose manners and modes of life a long seclusion from the world had rendered them indifferent. The necessary consequence of forcing so many helpless individuals into society, was the increase of that class, of which the Legislature had so often complained as a most grievous calamity ³.

It is justly observed, that, among other bad effects which attended the monastic institutions, it was not perhaps one of the least, (though frequently esteemed quite otherwise,) that they supported and fed a very numerous

¹ Reflections, 11th edit. 240. ² The English reformers reasoned very much in the manner of John Knox: the motives assigned for such root-and-branch destruction of the monasteries had worldly knowledge, if not wit, in it: "Leave any of the nests," said one of Henry's minions, "and you may depend on it the rooks will return." ³ In a little work, entitled, "The Supplication of the Poore Commons," published with "the Supplication of Beggars," the author thanked the king for having "weeded out a greate number of valiaunt and sturdye monckes," &c. He however ascribed the penury of the people to "the great and infinite nombre of valiant and sturdye beggers, which had by their subtyll and crafty demancer in begging, gotten into their handes more than the third part of the yearly reuenewse" of the kingdom.

and very idle Poor, whose sustenance depended upon what was daily distributed in alms at the gates of the religious houses. But upon the total dissolution of these, the inconvenience of thus encouraging the Poor in habits of indolence and beggary, was quickly felt throughout the kingdom; and abundance of statutes were made in the reign of K. Henry the Eighth, for providing for the Poor and Impotent, which, as the preambles to some of them recite, had of late years strangely increased¹. Notwithstanding this opinion and expression in the statutes, I very much doubt, whether the monasteries generally and greatly troubled themselves with relieving Poor that did not immediately belong to their own demesnes. The same sort of charity was usually practised by the great nobility on their estates. The truth is, that the abbies were more burthened with the Rich than the Poor. Sheriffs, and other great men, often travelled from abbey to abbey, and from house to house, with great retinues, and not unfrequently, at their departure, extorted considerable presents from the abbot².

Some of the commissioners, who visited the abbies, petitioned the king to spare them; and declared, that the Poor received from them great relief, and the Rich good education³: and the bill for the suppression of colleges and

¹ Blackst. Comm. i. 359. The statutes, however, before this period, often mention the great increase of the Poor. In the 22 H. 8. c. 12. it is said, that, throughout the realm, "vagabonds and beggars have of long time increased, and daily do increase in great and excessive numbers."

² The monasteries often complained of this grievance; and it is probable, that, in consequence of their representations, Henry the Third, in the 42d year of his reign, 1257, obliged the sheriffs to swear, upon entering into office, that they would not, by reason of their bailiwick, take any thing but meat, such as was wont to be brought to the table, and but for one day at most; that they would not carry with them, to the place where they meant to lodge, above five horses; nor would lodge with any person who had less than £40. a year in land, nor with any religious house that had less than 100 marks, £66. 13s. 4d. in land and rent. They also swore, that they would not visit any persons of the above description above once a year, or twice at most; nor then, unless with their consent; and that they would receive no present, or above 12d. in money; and carry with them no more attendants than were necessary for the peace of the county: they were likewise enjoined to cause their serjeants to be sworn, not to receive from any man, clerk or lay, free or villein, lamb, corn, wool, moveables, money, or money's worth. These injunctions concluded with a reason well worth the attention of modern officers of police, "*That the king gave them his own, to the intent they should take nothing from any one else.*" Madox, Hist. Exch. ii. 147. Ryley, Plac. Parl. in App. cxxiii. 533.

³ Ld. Herbert's Hist. of H. 8. Dugdale (in his

and chantries, passed in Edward the Sixth's reign, c. 14, promised that the estates of these foundations should be converted to good and godly uses, in erecting grammar-schools, the further augmentation of the universities, and better provisions for the poor and needy. The rapacity, however, of the courtiers, rendered this project impracticable.

Upon the whole, it may be doubted, whether the manner, in which the suppression of the monasteries was conducted, did not counteract the advantages that might otherwise have been expected from the downfall of a system, pregnant with many abuses, and productive both of religious and political inconvenience.

To direct property from its ancient channel by violent and forcible expedients, and to depart at once from old established systems, must prove a measure of very dubious policy ; and, in the present instance, the evils resulting from the change were immediately and very sensibly felt ; whereas the benefits promised by the change were slow, and not so immediately manifest. There can be no doubt that many of the inconveniencies inherent in mortmain tenure diffused themselves over the possessions of the regular clergy ; and the sage policy of Henry the Seventh, which had unfettered the estates of the lay nobility, was certainly applicable to ecclesiastical property : it should, however, be considered, that it circulates from hand to hand more rapidly than any other, and that, previous to the Restraining Act¹, lands belonging to the church were as much, if not more, exposed to alienation, than a lay inheritance. The advantages which the nation derived from their revenues being transferred to noblemen, were still more problematical. The revenues of monastic bodies, (whose institutions, and modes of life, obliged them to reside where the presence of a landlord is most wanted,) were usually consumed within a large circle of tenants, and offered a ready vent to the commodities of neighbouring markets. Church lands, in the hands of noblemen, were still shackled with the *mortmain* (if I may use the expression) of *family settlements* ; and their produce was generally consumed by absentees.

The abbots were most indulgent landlords, and their tenants found, to

This Warwickshire, 803) remarks, " that while the houses stood, there was no Act for the relief of the Poor, so amply did those houses give succour to them that were in want ; where-
" as in the next age, (39th Eliz.) there were no less than eleven bills brought into the House
" of Commons for the purpose." ¹ 1 Eliz. c. 19.

their cost, that (after their fall) their rents were raised¹, while they had not the same facility in disposing of the produce. The money was spent in the capital, and the farmers living at a distance were exposed to all the oppressions of the new masters, or to the still greater rapacity of their stewards². Of the injury the country must have sustained, from the expulsion of large societies, who not only farmed large tracts of land themselves, but consumed a considerable portion of the produce of their tenants, we may form a tolerable idea from the inventory of the stores belonging to Fountain's Abbey at the dissolution.

They consisted of 2356 horned cattle

1326 sheep

86 horses

79 swine

117 quarters of wheat

12 quarters of rye

134 quarters of oats

392 loads of hay

18 quarters of wheat

18 quarters of barley

90 quarters of barley and malt

2 quarters of oats

} on the demesne lands.

} in the granaries³.

Old Henry Jenkins lamented, with reason, that the days were over in which he used to be invited to the lord abbot's chamber, to feast on quar-

¹ I do not mean to say that high rents are (generally speaking,) a disadvantage, either to the individual tenant, or to the nation at large. The country is interested, that the greatest possible produce should be raised: the tenant, that he may receive a fair profit, after paying his rent, and expences of his stock and labour. A rent that does not prevent the attainment of either of these objects, is the best criterion of national prosperity. It's being high is the strongest stimulus to the farmer to cultivate his land to the utmost. Able writers on this subject have often remarked, that, on the estates of landlords, who pride themselves in demanding low rents, the most slovenly culture is observable: indeed it is probable, that they, who let their estates at half the value, with the most beneficent intentions, even injure those whom they intend to serve, as much as they do the community. The interests of the Landlord and the State always coincide; and it is fortunate for mankind, that those who are concerned in agriculture, (the most essential of the arts,) cannot promote their own private advantage, without benefiting their country. ² Hume's Hist. of Engl. iii. 320. Burton, Monast. Ebor. 146.

ters of a yard of roast beef, and wassel in a black jack : he was probably not the only sufferer. This violent transfer of property, however ultimately beneficial to the kingdom in general, must have at first materially injured the course of industry in that part of the country, of which a religious house formed (in some degree) the metropolis.

The dissolution of the abbies was not the only Act in Henry's reign, by which the impediments to the free circulation of landed property were removed : the application of common recoveries, which, as early as the 12th year of Edward the Fourth, the Judges had declared to be a sufficient bar to an estate-tail², had considerably abridged entailed estates of their privileges. And it was the intention of Henry the Seventh, by the Statute of Fines³, (although, probably to avoid the jealousy of the nobility, the language of parliament was couched in very obscure terms,) to enable tenants in tail to alienate their estates. The Judges, however, (as the learned commentator on the Laws of England informs us,) although willing to construe the expressions of the statute in the way that the politic framers of it desired, hesitated at giving fines this extensive power by mere implication, when the Statute *de donis* had expressly declared that they should not be a bar to estates-tail. But the statute of Henry the Eighth, when the doctrine of alienation was better received, and the will of the prince more implicitly obeyed than before, avowed and established that intention⁴ : and it was accordingly declared, that a fine duly levied by a tenant in tail, should be a compleat bar to him and his heirs, and all other persons claiming under such entail⁵.

The attempts, however, of the Legislature, in this reign, to regulate the price of provisions, do not merit equal praise ; and, as far as they were carried, must have operated towards the discouragement of agricultural industry. By an Act passed in 1532⁶, the price of beef and pork was limited to a halfpenny, and of mutton and veal to three farthings a pound, *averdupois* weight.

The preamble of a subsequent statute passed on this subject is curious, and seems to give a proper reason why the Legislature ought never to interfere in matters of this nature : it states, " That dearth, scarcitie, good cheape, and plentie of cheefe, butter, capons, hens, chickens, and other

² Gilpin, North. Tour, ii. 185.

³ 1 Rep. 131. 6 Rep. 40.

⁴ 4 H. 7. c. 24.

⁵ Blackst. Comm. ii. 118.

⁶ 32 H. 8. c. 36.

⁷ 24 H. 8. c. 4. 25 H. 8. c. 1.

" victuals

“viſuals neceſſary for men’s ſuſtenance, happeneth, *riſeth and chanceth of ſo many and divers occaſions, that it is very hard and difficill to put any certaine priſes to any ſuch things*; and yet nevertheleſſe the prices of ſuch viſuals be many times inhanſed and raiſed, by the greedie covetuoſneſſe and appetites of the owners of ſuch viſuals, by occaſion of ingroſſing and regrating the ſame, more than upon any reaſonable or juſt ground or cauſe, to the great damage and impoveriſhing of the king’s ſubjects.” To remedy theſe ſuppoſed evils, the Lords of the Council, and others of the king’s principal officers, were empowered to regulate the price at which the above-mentioned kind of viſuals ſhould be ſold in groſs or by retail¹. Of the utility of theſe Laws, it is unneceſſary to ſay more than that the firſt was ſuſpended three years after it was enacted², and ſwept from the Statute-book ſeven years afterwards³; and that the other was obliged to be often modified by the perſons authorized to carry it into execution⁴.

Latymer, in his ſermons, a few years after, aſcribes the increaſe “of the price of proviſions to landlords raiſing their rents. Of this, he ſaith, “to much commeth this monſterous and portentuous dearth “made by man, notwithstanding God doth ſend us plentifully the “fruites of the earth mercifully, contrary to our deſertes, notwithstanding “ing to much, which theſe rich men have, cauſeth ſuch dearth, that

¹ 25 H. 8. c. 2.² 27 H. 8. c. 9.³ 33 H. 8. c. 12.⁴ Thus, by a proclamation in 26 H. 8. the butchers of London were empowered to ſell, between the 24th Oct. in that year, and the Nativity of St. John following, at the under-mentioned prices:

Beef and pork at 1½d. the pound.

Mutton and Veal at 0¾d. the pound.

MISCELL. COLL. belonging to the Soc. of Antiquaries, i. 11.

And by proclamation in 36 H. 8. the prices were again altered in the following manner:

Beef not to exceed	0½d. the pound	} Between 15th June, and 25th December.
Mutton -	1d.	
Veal -	1d.	
Beef, -	0¾d.	} Between 25th December, and 15th June.
Mutton, -	1d.	
Veal, -	0¾d.	
Beſt lamb, all the year,	2 0	
Second lamb, -	1 8	
Meanest lamb, -	1 4	
Pork, the pound,	0 0¾	

The prices of poultry were alſo fixed by this proclamation. Ibid. 183.

“poore men, (which live of their labour,) can not with the sweate of their face have a lyving, all kinde of victuals is so deare, pigges, geese, capons, chickens, egges, &c.; these thinges with other are so unreasonable enhaunfed’.”

A subsequent passage from the same author, which has been often quoted, shews us the mode of living among the yeomanry, about the beginning of the 16th century. “My father, (he says,) was a yoman, and had no landes of his owne, onely he had a farme of 3 or 4 pound by year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half a dosen men. He had walke for an hundreth sheepe, and my mother milked xxx kine. He was able, and did finde the king a harnes, with himself and his horse, while (until) he came to the place that he should receive the kinge’s wages. I can remember, that I buckeled his harnes, when he went to Blackheath-field. He kept me to schole, or els I had not bene able to have preached before the kinge’s majestie now. He maryed my sisters with five pound or xx nobles a peece, so that he brought them up in godlynes and feare of God. He kept hospitalitie for his poore neighbours. And some almes he gave to the poore, and all this did he of the sayd farme. Where¹ he that now hath it, payeth xvi pound by the yeare or more, and is not able to doe any thing for his prince, for himselfe, nor for his children, or geve a cup of drinke to the poore.’”

Very early in Edward the Sixth’s reign, the Legislature reiterated the old complaints against “idleness and vagabondrie.” They conceived, “that the godly acts which had hitherto been framed on the subject, had not had the succeſſe which might have been wished;” that it was partly ascribable to the “foolish pitie and mercie of those who should have seene the said godly lawes executed;” and partly owing to “the perverse nature and long-accustomed idlenesse of the persons given to loytering;” and thought that if “the vagabonds, who were unprofitable members, or rather enemies of the commonwealth, were punished by death, whipping, imprisonment, and with other

¹ Sermons, 31.

² *Where* is often used in the Statute-book, and by our old writers, for *whereas*; and sometimes *whereas* is used for *where*. See the old ballad of “Sir Lancelot du Lake;” beginning, “When Arthure first in court began;” in Percy’s *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, 4th ed. i. 215.

³ Latymer’s Sermons, p. 32.

“corporall

AUTHORITY of this UNION will be held on Friday next, the 10th inst., at 1.30 P.M.,
to further consider the Plans and Estimates received in reference to the Drainage of
the County part of the Parish of Westbury-on-Trym.

I am, Sir,

Yours very respectfully,



Clerk.

To Mr. *Wm. J. J. J. J.*

Member of the said Rural Sanitary Authority.

125

The Great Charter of King John
Magna Carta — 15 June 1215
confirmed by King Henry
for the confirmation of the
52 corroborating Statutes
Petition of Right — 1300
 Habeas Corpus — 1300
Bill of Rights — 1689
Act of Settlement — 1701

The English Charters of Liberties
see Thompson
p. 394
First Great Charter
of King John — 1215
Second do — 1217
Third do — 1225
preserved in the
archives of Durham (Cathedral)
First do of Edward I — 1297



“corporall pains, it were not without their deserts¹.” It was therefore enacted, “That if any man, or woman, able to work, should refuse to labour, and live idly for three days, that he or she should be branded with a red-hot iron on the breast with the letter V, and should be adjudged the slaves, for two years, of any person who should inform against such idler. And the master was directed to feed his slave with bread and water, or small drink, and such refuse meat as he should think proper; and to cause his slave to work, by beating, chaining, or otherwise, in such work and labour, (*how vile soever it be,*) as he should put him unto:” and the statute adds, that “if he runs away from his master for the space of 14 days, he shall become *his slave for life*, after being branded on the forehead, or cheek, with the letter S; and if he runs away a second time, and shall be convicted thereof by two sufficient witnesses, he shall be taken as a felon, and suffer *pains of death*, as other felons ought to do².”

Masters were empowered “to sell, bequeath, let out for hire, or give the service of their slaves to any person whomsoever, upon such condition, and for such term of years, as the said persons be adjudged to him for slaves, after the like sort and manner as he may do of any other his moveable goods or chattels³.”

Another clause of the statute directs, that “if any such slave or slaves so adjudged shall at any time after such adjudgment maim or wounde their masters or mistresses in resisting their correction or otherwise, or when they be manumitted or set againe free, or, in the time of their service, shall conspire with any other, or by themselves, go about to murder and kill, or to maim their masters or mistresses, or those that were their master or mistress, or to burne their houses, barnes, or corne, so that *their intent come to an act tending to the effect*, that they should likewise be accounted felons, unless some person would take such offender into their service as a slave for ever.”

Harsh and inhuman as the above parts of the Act may seem, a subsequent clause is more repugnant to every just principle of legislation. It enacts, that “although there be no man which shall demand such

¹ See Preamble to 1 E. 6. c. 3.

² 1 E. 6. c. 3.

³ 1 E. 6. c. 3.

“loiterer

" loiterer or loiterers, yet nevertheless justices of the peace shall be
 " bound to inquire after such idle persons ; and if it shall appear that
 " any such have been vagrant for the space of three days, he shall be
 " branded on the breast with a V, made with an hot iron ; and shall
 " be conveyed to the place of his birth, there to be nourished, and kept
 " in chains, or otherwise, either at the common works in amending high-
 " ways, or in the service of individuals, after all such former condition,
 " space of years, orders, punishments for running away, as are expressed
 " of any common or private person to whom such loiterer is adjudged
 " a slave.

" If vagabonds are carried to places, of which they have falsely
 " declared themselves to be natives, then for such lie they shall be
 " marked in the face with an S, and be slave to the inhabitants or cor-
 " poration of the town, citie, or village, where he said he was born
 " in, for ever."

All persons were empowered to take idle children from vagabonds,
 and to retain them as apprentices, till the boys were 24, and the girls 20
 years of age ; and if they ran away before the end of their term, their
 masters might, upon recovering them, punish them, in chains, or other-
 wise, and use them as slaves till the time of their apprenticeship should
 have expired.

A master was, likewise, authorized to " put a ring of iron about the
 " neck, arm, or leg of his slave, for a more knowledge and surety
 " of the keeping of him."

The latter part of the statute evidently provides a habitation, (al-
 though, perhaps, not a compulsory maintenance,) for the impotent
 poor. The officers of cities, towns, and villages, were directed to see
 them " bestowed and provided for of tenancies, cottages, and other
 " convenient houses, to be lodged in, at the costs and charges of the
 " said cities, towns, boroughs, and villages, there to be relieved, and
 " cured, by the devotion of good people ;" and, in order that no place
 might be burthened with persons flocking from other quarters, the
 magistrates were ordered to " enquire concerning the aged, impotent,
 " and lame, in their district ;" and to " remove such as were not born
 " there, and had not resided there for the last three years, either on

" horseback

removed
 law

punishment for
 false
 declaration:
 slavery for life

“ horseback, in cart, chariot, or otherwise, to the place where they
 “ were born, or had generally dwelt, there to be provided for and
 “ *nourished of almes.*” Those, however, who were at all able to work,
 were to be employed by the town, or by individuals, who would find
 them meat and drink for their work ¹.

The curate of every parish was enjoined to exhort his parishioners
 every Sunday to relieve their poor parishioners.

The following clause is scarcely intelligible : “ Provided always, that
 “ if it shall chance any such adjudged apprentice servant or slave as is
 “ before rehearsed, to have inheritance descended unto him, or his,
 “ or any other waies by the lawes of this realme, ward or bondman, or
 “ *niese of bloud*, by or from any of his auncestors to any person or persons,
 “ that then it shall be lawful to any such person or persons, to whom
 “ any such ward, bondman, or nief shall apperteine, to take and seise
 “ such wards, bondmen, or niefes, and them to retain and keep as their
 “ wards, bondmen, or niefs. And the said wards, bondmen, and niefes
 “ shall be discharged of the said slavery or other servitude or bondage
 “ above rehearsed.”

It appears from this part of the statute, that slavery by birth was not
 yet extinct in England, although Sir Thomas Smith, who was secretary
 to Edward the Sixth, (in speaking of villeins in gross, who were the
 absolute property of their masters, and disposable like other moveables;
 and of villeins regardant, who, I have before observed, were appenda-
 ges of manors ;) says that, of the first he never knew any in England in
 his time; and that there were so few of the latter, that they were
 hardly worth mentioning ².

An Act, so disgraceful to the Legislature, did not remain long on the
 Statute-roll: by the 3d and 4th Edw. 6th, c. 16, it was compleatly
 repealed, and the provisions of the 22d Hen. 8th were revived.

¹ This is the mode, by which the Poor in many of the parishes of the midland counties,
 who are able to work; are still maintained in the winter. They are known under the deno-
 mination of *roundsmen*, from going *round* the town, from house to house, to solicit employ-
 ment. In many places the rule is, that a householder, whose rent amounts to a certain sum,
 shall, in his turn, employ a roundsmen for one day, at a stipulated allowance. See the Second
 Volume of this work, 27. 29. 548.

² Commonwealth of England, ed. 1635, 249.

By the 5th and 6th of Edw. 6th, c. 2. the chief officers in cities and towns, and the ministers and church-wardens in country parishes, were directed annually to appoint two, or more, able persons, to be collectors of the alms of the people for the relief of the Poor. The collectors, on the Sunday after their election, were to "gently ask" and demand of every man and woman, what they of their charity "would be contented to give weekly towards the relief of the Poor," and to register the sum in a book: they were likewise entrusted with the distribution of the money collected; and authorized to employ the Poor in such work as they were able to do. They were to account quarterly with the magistrates of cities, and the ministers and church-wardens of villages; and, on quitting their office, to deliver up the surplus money in their hands, to be put in the common chest of the church, or in some other safe place. The penalty, however, for not accounting is so slight, although perhaps somewhat more formidable than it would now be considered, that, like many Treasurers of modern Friendly Societies, the collectors for the Poor must have often peculated with impunity. The statute says, "if they refuse to account within eight days, (after the expiration of their office,) the bishop of the diocese, or ordinary, shall compel them, *by censures of the church*, to account before such persons as he shall appoint."

The means provided by the statute for the enforcing, and collecting of, alms, appear to have been equally weak and inefficacious. It is said, "that if any person, being able to further this charitable work, do obstinately and frowardly refuse to give towards the help of the Poor, or do wilfully discourage others from so charitable a deed, the parson, vicar, or curate, and church-wardens of the parish where he dwelleth, shall gently exhort him: and if he will not be so persuaded, then, on certificate of such parson, vicar, or curate, to the bishop of the diocese, the bishop shall send for him, to induce and persuade him by charitable ways and means; and so, according to his discretion, to take order for the reformation thereof."

While the Legislature were thus providing for the maintenance of the necessitous, they were not inattentive to the preservation of the morals of the labouring classes of the community. Ale-houses, which had

slightly been noticed in an Act passed in the 11th year of Henry the Seventh, by which Justices of the Peace were empowered to restrain the common selling of ale¹, were again, in 1552, placed under the direction of the magistrates. The Act passed for this purpose recites, "That
 "intolerable hurts and troubles to the commonwealth doth² daily grow
 "and encrease through such abuses and disorders as are had in com-
 "mon ale-houses, and other houses called tippling-houses;" Justices of the Peace are empowered "to put away common selling of ale and beer
 "in common ale-houses; and none shall keep an ale-house but such as
 "shall be admitted in open Sessions, or by two Justices. And the Jus-
 "tices shall take bond and surety, or recognizance, as well against the
 "using of unlawful games, as also for the using and maintenance of
 "good order, as by their discretion shall be thought necessary and con-
 "venient."

By the 2d and 3d Ph. and M. c. 5. many of the statutes concerning beggars, vagabonds, and idle persons, were enforced. The time of appointing collectors, and making collection of alms, was altered from Whitsuntide to Christmas; probably not only because the former was a moveable feast, and the duration of the office very irregular, but, likewise, because at Christmas the Poor were more necessitous than they were at Whitsuntide; but the Rich, it might naturally be expected, would, amidst the good cheer of the greatest festival in the year, be most disposed to be liberal in their contributions³. A penalty of 40s. was also annexed to refusal of the office of collector. If a parish had more Poor than it was able to maintain, the Justices were empowered

¹ So in the Act.

² The author of a pamphlet, lately published, containing much information relative to public-houses, remarks, that, notwithstanding the vast decrease in the value of money, there has been no increase in the penalty on the forfeiture of an ale-house-keeper's recognizance, which is still no more than 10l.; and is, in most instances, a mere matter of form, one publican being security for another.—*Observations and Tracts relative to public-houses*, 6.

³ So thought old Tuffer:

"At Christmas we banquet, the riche with the poore,

"Who then (but the miser) but openeth his doore?

"At Christmas by labour is little to get;

"That wanting, the porrest in daunger are fet.

"—What season then better, of all the whole yere,

"Thy needy poore neighbour to comfort and chere?"

to grant a licence to poor folks to go abroad to beg and receive alms out of their respective parishes, in their own, or in an adjoining county. The magistrates in cities were also empowered "to induce, move, and persuade" the inhabitants of wealthy parishes to contribute towards the relief of the Poor in a more needy parish.

f. 12. 3
All poor folks, licensed to beg out of the limits of a city or town corporate, were ordered to wear, both on the breast and on the back of of their outermost garment, some notable badge, or token, to be assigned to them by the head officer, with the assent of two justices.

43 Eliz. A
Previous to the passing of the "Act for the relief of the Poor," in 1601, (which, having concentrated all the former laws relative to this subject in one point, may be considered as the head-stone of our present establishment,) the Legislature attempted, by various means, to secure a maintenance to the impotent, and employment to the idle, part of the community. It is not, however, from a perusal only of the records of parliament that we can decide on the expediency of the Acts passed for this purpose. In order to ascertain the excellence of any law, it is extremely essential to advert to the manners and customs of the people, and the general circumstances of the country at the period when it was adopted; and to consider how far those evils existed, for which a legislative remedy was proposed: it is with this view that I shall notice a few circumstances relative to the civil and domestic situation of the labouring classes, in the interval between the Reformation and the conclusion of the long (and, in some instances, glorious,) reign of Elizabeth.

Previous to the 16th century, the introduction of manufactures and commerce had produced very important changes in the state of society in England. In pursuing the various occupations of industry, the people had discovered the means of emancipating themselves from the heavy shackles of vassalage and servitude: and the nobility, in judiciously preferring a turn of expence, which promoted the arts, to the coarse enjoyments of baronial splendor, which were the source of idleness and disorder, had necessarily bartered their personal authority for private comfort: and whilst their individual influence over their dependents was thus gradually wasting away, their collective preponderance in the scale of government, which had often enabled them to resist even

kingly power with success, was completely overthrown by the desolating effects of the civil wars between the Yorkists and Lancastrians. So many ancient families were annihilated in the contest; and so many noblemen, on both sides, perished either in the field or on the scaffold, that Henry the Seventh could only summon twenty-eight temporal peers to his first parliament¹: nor was the number much increased during his reign; only thirty-six temporal peers were summoned to the first parliament of Henry the Eighth². By the dissolution of the monasteries, the remaining branch of the aristocracy was destroyed; and, many of the obstacles that had long opposed the progress of industry being thus removed, the middling ranks insensibly advanced to wealth and independence; although it is justly observed, that, in the interval between the fall of the nobles and the rise of this order, many of our monarchs availed themselves of the times, and assumed an authority almost absolute³.

The exercise of the prerogatives of the Crown, in the instances of purveyance and monopolies, was carried by Elizabeth to such an extent, that the progress of improvement in every branch of industry was much retarded, and civil liberty might be said to be completely extinguished.

Of the oppressions arising from purveyance Lord Bacon has given a long detail⁴; and with regard to monopolies, there was hardly a commodity

¹ Dugd. Summons to Parl. ² Dugd. Summons to Parl. 486. ³ Hume, 1st ed. iv. 737.

⁴ I venture to transcribe the passage, (although a long one,) from his works, as it gives a very faithful picture of the hardships sustained by the people from the exercise of this (perhaps the most intolerable) branch of the prerogative. In his speech against purveyors, he says: "First, they take in hand what they ought not to take; secondly, they take in quantity a far greater proportion than cometh to your majesty's use; thirdly, they take in an unlawful manner, in a manner, I say, directly and expressly prohibited by several laws. "For the first, I am a little to alter their name; for, instead of *takers*, they become *taxers*; instead of taking provisions for your majesty's service, they tax your people *ad redimendam vexationem*; imposing upon them, and extorting from them divers sums of money, sometimes in gross, sometimes in the nature of stipends annually paid, *ne noceant*, to be freed and eased of their oppression. Again, they take trees, which by law they cannot do; timber-trees, which are the beauty, countenance, and shelter of men's houses; that men have long spared from their own purse and profit; that men esteem for their use and delight, above ten times the value; that are a loss which men cannot repair or recover. These do they take, to the defacing and spoiling of your subjects' mansions and dwellings, except they

modity of importance that was not consigned to the monopolizing hand of a patentee. Iron, steel, skins, pot-ashes, salt-petre, glass, paper, starch, tin, leather, wool, yarn, sea-coals, and beer, form but a small part of the long list of monopolies: the member¹ in the House of Commons

“ may be compounded with to their own appetites. And if a gentleman be too hard for them while he is at home, they will watch their time when there is but a bailiff or a servant remaining; and put the ax to the root of the tree, ere ever the master can stop it. Again, they use a strange and most unjust exaction, in causing the subjects to pay poundage of their own debts due from your majesty unto them: so as a poor man, when he has had his hay or his wood, or his poultry, (which perchance he was full loath to part with, and had for the provision of his own family, and not to put to sale, taken from him, and that not at a just price, but under the value, and cometh to receive his money, he shall have after the rate of twelve pence in the pound abated for poundage of his due payment upon so hard conditions. Nay, farther, they are grown to that extremity, (as is affirmed, though it be scarce credible, save that in such persons all things are credible,) that they will take double poundage, once when the debenture is made, and again the second time when the money is paid. For the second point, most gracious Sovereign, touching the quantity which they take, far above that which is answered to your majesty’s use; it is affirmed unto me, by divers gentlemen of good report, as a matter which I may safely avouch unto your majesty, that there is no pound profit, which redoundeth unto your majesty in this course, but induceth and begetteth three pound damage upon your subjects, beside the discontentment. And to the end they may make their spoil more securely, what do they? Whereas divers statutes do strictly provide, that whatsoever they take shall be registered and attested, to the end that, by making a collation of that which is taken from the country and that which is answered above, their deceits might appear, they, to the end to obscure their deceits, utterly omit the observation of this, which the law prescribeth. And therefore, to descend, if it may please your majesty, to the third sort of abuse, which is of the unlawful manner of taking, whereof this question is a branch; it is so manifold, as it rather asketh an enumeration of some of the particulars than a prosecution of all.

“ For their price—By law, they ought to take as they can agree with the subject; by abuse, they take at an imposed and enforced price: by law, they ought to make but one appraise-ment by the neighbours in the country; by abuse, they make a second appraise-ment at the court-gate; and when the subjects cattle come up many miles, lean, and out of plight by reason of their travel, then they price them anew at an abated price. By law, they ought to take between sun and sun; by abuse, they take by twilight and in the night-time, a time well chosen for malefactors. By law, they ought not to take in the highways, (a place by her majesty’s high prerogative protected, and by statute by special words excepted;) by abuse, they take in the highways. By law, they ought to shew their commission, &c.” Bacon’s Works, 4to. iv. 305—6. The reader will find a curious account of the compositions paid by the different counties in the year 1593, in lieu of purveyance, in the Appendix to this Volume, No. iv. p. cxi. ¹ Mr. Hackwell.

Commons was well justified, who expressed his surprise that bread was not in the number ¹.

Little doubt, however, can be entertained, that, during the 16th century, the nation was making unexampled strides towards the attainment of opulence and comfort. The frequent proclamations enacted against the practice of enclosing lands that had been used in tillage, which, it is supposed, created a decay of husbandry ²; the various complaints against foreign manufacturers and artificers, who much excelled the English in dexterity and industry; and the numerous acts that were passed in Henry the Eighth's reign for the improvement of highways and bridges, paving of towns, draining of marshes, and other public purposes; and the many private acts for regulating the property of individuals, are strong proofs of the flourishing state of the kingdom.

It must, however, be admitted, that, on the other side, there are many facts mentioned by historians, which might incline us to suppose, that the country was much impoverished, did we not recollect, that, in all ages, the desponding and discontented magnified the excellencies of the past, and undervalued the blessings of their own times. It was a common topic of complaint during every part of the fifteenth century, that our cities were going fast to decay. Mr. Hume supposes that it was in consequence of a more regular police, and a stricter administration of justice, that men of property were now induced to leave the provin-

¹ D'Ewes, Journals, 648. Hume, 1st ed. iv. 706. Parl. Hist. iv. 462. ² Whatever
 may have been the effects of enclosures, it appears, from the able political dialogue, which I have before cited, that *they* had not increased either the price of corn or of meat. One of the speakers remarks: "Synce yee have plenty of all thinges, of corne and cattell. "(as yee say,) then it should not seeme this dearth should belonge of these inclosures; for "it is not for scarcenesse of corne that yee have this dearth, (for, thanked bee God!) corne "is good cheape, and so hath bene these many yeares past continually. Than it cannot bee "the occasion of the dearth of cattell, for inclosure is the thing that nourisheth most of any "other." And again: "I cannot perceve it (enclosing) shoulde bee the only cause of this. "dearth (*i. e.* dearness;) for this inclosynge and greate grasynge, if it were occasion of that "dearth, of any thing it must be of corne chiefly; and nowe, these many yeares past, we "had corne good cheape enough; and the dearth that was then most, was of cattell, as "biefes, and muttuns; and the broode of these are rather increased than diminished by pastures and inclosynge."—A compendious or briefe Examination of certayne ordinary complaints, &c. (published in 1581,) f. 4. and f. 20.

cial towns, and to retire into the country¹. I should rather ascribe the decline of corporate towns² to their exclusive privileges, which, although necessary in the infancy of their establishment, for their preservation, yet, when industry had taken a firm root in the kingdom, became not only unnecessary, but oppressive; as tradesmen were prevented from carrying on their occupations within them, unless they were qualified by patrimony, apprenticeship, or purchase. Of the regular police of the country, during the reigns of Henry the Eighth and Elizabeth, it does not appear that history has furnished us with many proofs: the nation was still far from having attained what could be called a state of civilization and order; and the principal difference between the enormities committed in ancient times and in the fifteenth century, seems to have

¹ Hist. of England, iii. 285. ² The Statute-book affords many instances of the declining state of corporate towns. In the 3 H. 8. c. 8. it is observed, that, by the 12 E. 2. it had been enacted, that "no minister (*i. e.* magistrate) in city or borough, which, by reason of his office, ought "to keep assizes of wines and victuals, as long as he should be attendant to that office, should "merchant wines and victuals." And the reason here given for repealing the Act is, that "many and the most part of all the cities, boroughs, and towns corporate within the "realm of England were fallen in ruin and decay, and not inhabited with merchants and "men of such substance as they were at the time of making of that statute; for, at this "day, the dwellers and inhabitants of the same cities and boroughs be most commonly bakers, "brewers, vintners, fishmongers, and other victuallers; and few or no other persons of "substance be within many of the said cities, other than the foresaid victuallers, at this "day able and sufficient to bear office within the same." This is exactly the picture of many a country town, in which the only business carried on is created by the consumption of the inhabitants. The historians, however, of this period omitted to remark, that, although the manufacturer had deserted cities and boroughs, (as he had no longer need of the protection of corporations,) he had settled in unprivileged places; which, even in the reign of Elizabeth, appear, in many instances, to have been in a very flourishing state. Birmingham, even in Leland's time, was eminent for its cutlery; and Manchester, as early as 1552, appears to have been a place of considerable consequence. An Act, passed in that year, notices its cottons, rugges, and frizes: (5 & 6 E. 6. c. 6.) In an Act passed in 1541, (33 H. 8. c. 15.) it is remarked, that Manchester had a long time been a town well inhabited; and the inhabitants "well set to work in making of cloths, as well of "linen as of woollen, whereby the inhabitants of the said town have gotten and come "into riches and wealthy livings; and, by reason of great occupying, good order, strict and "true dealing of the inhabitants of the said town, many strangers, as well of Ireland, as "of other places, had resorted thither." 33 H. 8. c. 15. It is remarkable, that the Acts passed in Henry the Eighth's reign, for removing rubbish and nuisances from the void places in decayed towns, almost universally respect corporate cities.

been

been, that, in the former, large bodies of men, headed by a desperate chieftain, carried on a species of civil war against their neighbours; and, in the latter, every part of the kingdom was infested with vagabonds and robbers. Writers, who contend that severity of punishment is not the best preventive of crime, are fully justified by the history of this period: never were severe laws issued in greater abundance, nor executed more rigorously; and never did the unrelenting vengeance of justice prove more ineffectual. The prisoners for debt, in the different gaols in the kingdom, are stated by Mr. Hume, on the authority of an Act of Parliament passed in 1512¹, to have exceeded the number of 60,000; and Harrison assures us, that the king executed his laws with such severity, that 72,000 "great and petty thieves were put to death during his reign²." He adds, that, even in Elizabeth's reign, "rogues were trussed up apace;" and that there was not "one year, commonly, wherein 300 or 400 of them were not devoured and eaten up by the gallows, in one place and other³." This account of the disorderly state of the kingdom is strongly corroborated by a statement preserved by Strype, which was written by an eminent Justice of the Peace in Somersetshire, in the year 1596, five years before the memorable Act for the relief of the Poor. In enumerating the disorders which then prevailed in that county, the author informs us, that "forty persons had "there been executed, in a year, for robberies, thefts, and other felonies; "thirty-five burnt in the hand; thirty-seven whipped; 183 discharged: "that those who were discharged were most wicked and desperate persons, who never could come to any good, because they would not "work, and none would take them into service: that, notwithstanding these great number of indictments, the fifth part of the felonies "committed in the county were not brought to trial; and the greater "number escaped censure, either from the superior cunning of the

¹ 3 H. 8. c. 15. I, however, doubt whether the words of the Act warrant Mr. Hume's construction. They are: "Where (whereas) the workers and makers of caps and hats, within "this realme of England, have daily occupied, and set on worke in making of caps and hats "of the king's natural subjects, that is to say, men, women, maidens, and children (borne "within this realme of England,) to the great reliefe and comforte of poor prisoners within "this realme, to the number of threescore thousand persons, and above, in carding, spinning, &c."—Rastell's Statutes, i. 407.

² Description of England, 186.

³ Ibid.

"felons,

“ felons, the remissness of the magistrates, or the foolish lenity of the
 “ people : that the rapines committed by the infinite number of wick-
 “ ed, wandering, idle people, were intolerable to the poor countrymen,
 “ and obliged them to a perpetual watch of their sheep-folds, pastures,
 “ woods, and corn-fields : that the other counties of England were in
 “ no better condition than Somersetshire; and many of them were even
 “ in a worse : that there were, at least, 300 or 400 able-bodied vaga-
 “ bonds in every county, who lived by theft and rapine; and who some-
 “ times met in troops to the number of sixty, and committed spoil on
 “ the inhabitants : that if all the felons of this kind were reduced to
 “ good subjection, they would form a strong army : and that the ma-
 “ gistrates were awed, by the associations and the threats of confede-
 “ rates, from executing justice on the offenders¹.” Such a picture of a
 single county is sufficient to convince us of the deplorable state of the
 whole kingdom. It is, however, very difficult, at this distance of
 time, to discover the causes of these disorders; but it is probable that
 they were in a great measure owing to the difficulty of finding regular
 employment for the superfluous hands which were not required in agri-
 culture. Tillage appears to have improved very considerably, both in
 this, and in the preceding reign : in 1574, twenty bushels of wheat an
 acre were esteemed a fair average crop²; and such a produce would,
 even now, in many parts of England, not be considered as despicable³.
 As husbandry became better understood, the proportion of arable land
 was lessened, and consequently fewer hands were required for the ope-
 rations of agriculture. The useless population of the country would,

¹ Strype's Annals, iv. 290. Hume's Hist. of Engl. iv. 726.

² Harrison says :

“ The yeeld of our corne-ground is much after this rate following : Through out
 “ the land (if you please to make an estimat thereof by the acre,) in meane and indif-
 “ ferent yeares, wherein each acre of rie or wheat, well tilled and dressed, will yeeld
 “ commonlie sixteene or twentie bushels; an acre of barlie, six-and-thirtie bushels; of otes,
 “ and such like, foure or five quarters; which proportion is notwithstanding oft abated
 “ toward the North, as it is oftentimes surmounted in the South.” Descript. of Brit. 110.—
 Hackluyt, in his Accounts of Voyages, (but I cannot recollect in which,) speaks of forty
 bushels of wheat an acre, in England, as a great, but not improbable, crop. ³ In many
 parts of the weald of Suffex, the produce of wheat does not exceed twelve, fourtzen, or
 sixteen bushels an acre.—General View of the Agric. of the Co. of Suffex, 30.

however, in the natural progress of society, have gradually resorted to the various branches of industry, which were opened by the increasing demand for manufactures, had not the injudicious system of taxation, which was pursued at this period, thrown insurmountable difficulties in the way of commercial exertion. The illegal extortions of gifts from the subject, compulsive loans, purveyance, and monopolies, were sufficient to extinguish the enterprising spirit of commerce and manufacture; such arbitrary proceedings (a member of the House of Commons had the courage, even in Elizabeth's days, to remark) brought general profit into private hands, and ended in beggary and bondage¹. Four licences, granted to courtiers, occasioned the ruin of seven or eight thousand of the queen's subjects². Even Burleigh, the ablest statesman of his time, seems to have been an advocate for a system of extortion. In a speech he made to the queen and council, he proposed the erection of a new court, to be intrusted with a general inquisitorial power over the whole kingdom, for the better correction of abuses. By such methods, he asserted, Henry the Seventh had added greatly to his revenues; and he expressed his full expectations, that such an institution would procure a greater accession to the royal treasure, than Henry the Eighth derived from the abolition of the abbies, and the seizure of the property of the church³. This proposition, however, fortunately for the nation, was rejected.

Even subsidies, which perhaps fell less heavily on the people than any other taxes, were levied with great partiality; and their produce was extremely variable and uncertain. A subsidy, which in the 8th of Elizabeth amounted to £120,000. in the 40th year of her reign was only £78,000. It was continually decreasing; and was so far considered as a personal tax, that a man paid only in the county where he lived, although he possessed various estates in other parts of the kingdom⁴. Mr. Hume adds, that the assessors formed a very loose valuation of a man's property, and rated him accordingly: "when rents fell, or parcels were sold off an estate, the proprietor was sure to represent these losses, and obtain a diminution of his subsidy; but

¹ Sinclair, Hist. of the Revenue, 2d ed. i. 132.

² D'Ewes, Journals, 242.

³ Strype's

Annals, iv. 234.

⁴ Hume, Hist. of Engl. v. 126.

“when rents rose, or new lands were purchased, he kept his own secret, and paid no more than formerly. The *small proprietors*, or *twenty pound men*, (for none of less income paid any subsidy,) went continually to decay; and when their estates were swallowed up by a greater, the new purchaser increased not his subsidy.” This appears to me to be far from a satisfactory account, either of the method of imposing this tax, or of the causes of the great decrease in its produce. The tax-gatherers might be (and I have no doubt they were,) extremely partial to persons in authority; but I cannot conceive how the acquisition of the estates of twenty pound men by great proprietors could possibly have lessened the amount of the tax: for, in consequence of the transfer, land, which was before exempted, became rateable to the subsidy; as two houses of five windows each, if converted into one, would now, in consequence of such alteration, be subjected to the window-tax. Neither can the twenty pound men be considered as *small proprietors*. A farm of £200. a year, even in those parts of England which have been the least improved, is, I conceive, not more extensive than one of £20. a year in the reign of Elizabeth; and the owner of £200. a year in land cannot, I think, be considered in the light of a small proprietor. A more obvious way of accounting for the falling off of the subsidy, is to suppose, that the size of estates was rather reduced than diminished. The statutes which enabled the nobility to alienate their estates, the seizure and sale of abbey lands by Henry the Eighth, and the general effects of increasing industry, must have powerfully operated towards a more equal division of property than could possibly have taken place in times, when the nation was poorer, and the shackles of mortmain and entails more rigidly observed. I admit, however, that whilst these powerful causes

Latymer, in his Sermons, takes notice of this practice: “When the Parliament, the high court of this realme, is gathered together, and there it is determined that every man shall pay a XV part of his goodes to the king: then commissions come forth; and he that, in sight of men, in his cattel, corne, sheepe, and other goodes, is worth an C marke, or an C pound, will set him selfe at X pound; he will be worth no more to the king, but after X pound. Tell me now, whether this be theft or no? His cattell, corne, sheepe, in every man’s eyes, shall be worth two C pound; besides other thinges, as mony and plate; and he will marry his daughter, and give with her iijj or v C markes, and yet, at the valuation, he will be a XX pound man.”—Sermons, f. 97.

were

were gradually transferring a great portion of the estates of the church and the nobility into the hands of country gentlemen, (that middling class of proprietors, which was now increasing very fast both in number and opulence,) the race of *cottagers* was going fast to decay: this must ever be the case in an improved state of agriculture. The half-starved proprietor of ten or twenty acres will often be persuaded to part with his land to a rich neighbour, who farms on an extensive scale. These symptoms of increasing wealth, however, often caused great alarm in the Legislature; and it was often attempted to "make farms and houses of husbandry of a standard;" a device, which Lord Bacon dignifies with the appellation of "profound and admirable." Among other effects, which the Legislature ascribed to great farms, the number of sheep is particularly noticed. The Act passed in 1533, for restraining the number of sheep to be kept in one flock to 2000, remarks, that some proprietors had even flocks of 24,000 sheep¹; and ascribes the increase of the price of meat to the increase of sheep², from flocks being monopolized by a few individuals; and yet, from comparing the prices of meat with the prices of corn, it would appear that the former were moderate. Beef and pork were sold at a half-penny a pound³, while wheat, usually, exceeded 18s. the quarter⁴. Dr. Price infers from the language of the statute which regulates the price of beef, veal, pork, and mutton, that these articles, in the 16th century, were the food of the poor⁵. I should, however, imagine, that the consumption of meat was principally confined to cities; and that bread, and that not of

¹ 25 H. 8. c. 13.

² One of the speakers in the dialogue above quoted was of the same opinion: "yea, those sheepe is the cause of all these mischieves, for they have driven husbandry out of the countrey, by the which was increased before, all kinde of victuals, and now altogether sheepe, sheepe, sheepe!" A Compendious or Briefe Examination, &c. F. 5.

³ 24 H. 8. c. 3.

⁴ See Table of Prices, Appendix, No. 1.

⁵ Price, on Revers. Payments, 5th ed. ii. 285. This may be doubted: it appears from Sir John Cullum's History of Hawsted, that, in 1359, the poor land-holders, who were obliged by their tenures to work for the lord in hay-time and harvest, had no other allowance of animal food than two herrings a day each, and some milk from the manor dairy to make them cheese; they had, besides, each man a loaf, of which 15 made a bushel, and an allowance of drink, the quantity of which was not specified. Hist. of Hawsted, 183. In 1386, oat-meal was part of the food of servants: in that year, 12 bushels were used for the food

of the best quality, was the usual and principal diet of the labouring people. The following description from Harrison affords us a very adequate idea of their mean and scanty fare in these days. "The bread throughout the land," he says, "is made of such graine as the soile yeeldeth; neverthelesse the gentilitie commonlie provide themselves sufficientlie of wheat for their owne tables, whilest their household and poore neighbours in some shires are enforced to content themselves with rie or barleie; yea, and in time of dearth, manie with bread made either of beans, peason, or otes, or of altogether, and some acorns among; of which scourge the poorest doo soonest tast, fith they are least able to provide themselves of better. I will not saie that this extremitie is oft so well to be seene in time of plentie as of dearth; but if I should, I could easilie bring my triall." He adds, that the artificer and labourer are "driven to content themselves with horse corne, beanes, peason, otes, tares and lintels'." Respecting brown bread,

of seven. Ibid. 184. In Henry the Eighth's reign, bacon seems to have constituted a part of the diet of labourers. Latymer says, it "is their necessary meate to feede one, which they may not lacke." Sermons, 106. I have no doubt, however, but that it formed a very inconsiderable portion of the labourer's fare; and that, even at the latter end of the fifteenth century, he lived, as the peasants in the North do now, on oat and rye-bread, milk, and pottage. Tuffer remarks:

"No spoon meat, no belly-full labourers thinke."

He adds, that, twice a week, they were allowed roast meat.

"Good ploughmen looke weekely, of custome, and right,

"For rost meat on Sundaies, and Thursdaies at night."—p. 14.

I apprehend, that the substantiality of diet, for which the sixteenth century is renowned, was confined chiefly to the tables of persons of rank: A maid of honour, perhaps, breakfasted on roast beef; but the ploughman, (in these good old times, as they are called,) I fear, could only banquet "upon the strength of water-gruel," as many northern and robust peasants do now. I have inserted a curious specimen of the good living in a nobleman's family in the year 1523, in the Appendix to this Volume, No. v. p. cxvi. The account is extracted from the original cator's book of the household expences of Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, (father of the celebrated, but unfortunate, sonneteer, who was born about 1520, and beheaded in 1547,) at his Halls of Stoke by Neyland in Suffolk, and Huntdonn in Hertfordshire. Some idea of the usual diet of the Poor in Queen Elizabeth's days may be formed from the food allowed in a house of correction, which the reader will find particularly set down in the Appendix, No. viii. p. cxliii.

* Descript. of Engl. 168.

he observes, "there are two sorts¹; one baked up as it commeth from the mill, so that neither the bran nor the floure are anie whit diminished; the other hath little or no floure left therein at all, and it is not onlie the woorst and weakeſt of all the other ſorts, but alſo appointed in old time for ſervants, ſlaves, and the inferiour kind of people to feed upon. Hereunto likewiſe, becauſe it is drie and bricke in the working (for it will hardlie be made up handſomelie into loaves,) ſome adde a portion of rie-meale in our time, whereby the rough drineſſe or drie roughnes therof is ſomewhat qualified, and then it is named miſcelin², that is, bread made of mingled corne, albeit that diuerſe doo ſow, or mingle wheat and rie of ſet purpoſe at the mill, or before it come there, and ſell the ſame at the markets under the aforeſaid name³. In champeigne countries much rie and barleie bread is eaten, but eſpecially where wheat is ſcant and geſon⁴."

The

¹ Of the various ſorts of bread uſed in his time, Hარიſon gives the following deſcription: "Our good workemen deliver commonlie ſuch proportion, that of the flower of one buſhel with another, they make 40 caſt of *manchet*, of which everie loſe weigheth eight ounces into the oven and ſix ounces out. The ſecond is the *cheat* or wheaton bread, ſo named becauſe the colour thereof reſembleth the graie and yellowiſh wheat, being cleane and well dreſſed; and out of this is the courſeſt of the bran (uſually called gurgeons, or pollard,) taken. The *ravelled* is a kind of cheat bread alſo, but it reteineth more of the groſſe, and leſſe of the pure ſubſtance of the wheat: and this, being more ſleightlie wrought up, is uſed in the halles of the nobilitie and gentry onlie; whereas the other either is, or ſhould be, baked in cities and good townes, of an appointed ſize, (according to ſuch price as the corne dooth beare,) and by a ſtatute provided by King John in that behalfe. The raveled cheat, therefore, is generallie ſo made, that out of one buſhel of meale, after 22 pounds of bran be ſifted and taken from it, (whereunto they ad the gurgeons that riſe from the manchet,) they make 30 caſt, everie loſe weighing 18 ounces in the oven, and 16 ounces out; and beſide this, they ſo handle the matter, that to everie buſhell of meale they add only 22 or 23 pound of water, waſhing alſo in ſome houſes there corne before it go to the mill, whereby their manchet bread is more excellent in colour, and pleaſing to the eie. The next ſort is named *browne bread*, &c." Deſcript. of Engl. 169.

² Much maſlin is ſtill grown in the northern counties. Moryſon, who wrote in Elizabeth's reign, remarks, that "the Engliſh huſbandmen eate barley and rye browne bread, and preferre it to white bread, as abiding longer in the ſtomack, and not ſo ſoone diſgeſted with their labour, but citizens and gentlemen eate moſt pure white bread." Itinerary, iii part, 149. The commoneſt bread uſed in England, at this period, it is probable, was barley bread. Lord Coke mentions it as the diet allowed to criminals who ſuffered the *peine forte et dure*. 4 Inſt. c. 12.

³ Deſcript. of Engl. 169.

⁴ "Strange and geaſon" occurs in Spenſer's "Mother Hubbard's Tale, l. 12.: the word *geaſon* is alſo,

The accounts, however, of this author respecting population, it must be confessed, are somewhat contradictory. Depopulation, he says, "is growing by incroaching and joining of house to house, and laieing land to land, whereby the inhabitants of manie places of our countrie are devoured and eaten up, and their houses either altogither pulled downe or suffered to decaie by litle and litle, although sometime a poore man peradventure dooth dwell in one of them, who, not being able to repara it, suffereth it to fall downe, and thereto thinketh himselfe very friendlie dealt withall, if he may have an acre of ground assigned unto him, whereon to keepe a cow, or wherein to set cabbages, radishes, parsneps, carrets, melons, pompons, or such like stuffe, by which he and his poore household liveth as by their principall food, sith they can do no better. And as for wheaten bread, they eat it when they can reach unto the price of it, contenting themselves, in the meane time, with bread made of oates or barlie, a poore estate, God wot! howbeit, what care our great incrochers? But in divers places, where rich men dwelle sometime in good tenements, there be now no houses at all, but hop-yards, and sheads for poles, or peradventure gardens'."

"It is an easie matter," he says, "to proove that England was never lesse furnished with people than at this present; for if the old records of everie manour be sought, and search made to find what tenements are fallen either downe, or into the lord's hands, or brought and united togither by other men, it will soone appeere that in some one manour seventeene, eighteene, or twentie houses are shrunke; I know what I saie by my owne experience; notwithstanding that some one cotage be here and there erected of late, which is to little purpose. Of cities and townes either utterlie decaied, or more than a quarter or halfe diminished, though some one be a little increased here and there; of townes pulled downe for sheepe-walks, and no more but the lordships² now standing in them, I could say somewhat³."

In another passage, however, he speaks very differently; "some," he says, "do grudge at the great increase of people in these daies, thinking a necessarie brood of cattel, farre better than a superfluous

also used in the *Fairy Queen*, Book 6, Canto 4, Stanza 37. It seems to signify *remarkable* or *rare*.

¹ Descript. of Eng. 193.

² Manor-houses.

³ Descript. of Eng. 205.

"augmen-

“augmentation of mankind¹. Certes a greate number complaine of
 “the increafe of povertie, laying the caufe upon God ! as though he
 “were in fault for fending fuch increafe of people, or want of wars that
 “fhould confume them, affirming that the land was never fo full².”

The above accounts uniformly agree in one point, that the condition of the labouring claffes was ftill far from enviable. The middling ranks, however, before the end of the 16th century, appear to have advanced much in opulence and independence³. Harrifon himfelf, notwithstanding his complaint of the wretchednefs of the working people, admits, and describes in animated language, the improved condition of farmers. After particularifing the great changes that had taken place in private buildings, he adds, refpecting the furniture of dwelling-houfes, that “fo common were all forts of treene ftuffe⁴ in
 “old time, that a man fhould hardlie find foure peeces of pewter, (of
 “which one was peradventure a falt,) in a good farmer’s houfe; and
 “yet for all this frugalitie, (if it may fo be juftly called,) they were fcarce
 “able to live, and paie their rents at their daies without felling of a
 COW

¹ Defcript. of Engl. 183.

² Defcript. of Engl. 193.

³ The great

decrease in the value of money, which was a common topic of complaint in Elizabeth’s reign, appears to me to be an unequivocal proof of the increasing prosperity of the country. A writer in 1581 remarked, that it required £200. a year to keep as good a houfe as might have been kept fixteen years before for 200 marks, or £133. 6s. 8d. A compendious or briefe Examination, &c. F. 5. He fays a little after: “I have feen a cap for
 “thirteen-pence as good as I can get now for two fhillings fixe pence: of cloth yee have heard
 “how the price is ryfen. Now a payre of fhooes coft twelve-pence; yet in my tyme I have
 “bought a better for fixe-pence. Now I can get never a horfe fhooed under ten-pence or
 “twelve-pence, where I have alfo fene the common pryce was fixe-pence.” F. 11.—“Can-
 “not your neighbour remember that, within thefe 30 yeres, I could buy the beft pigge or
 “goofe that I could lay my hand on for foure-pence, which now cofteth twelve-pence; a
 “good capon for three-pence or four-pence; a cheken for 1d.; a hen for 2d.; which now
 “cofteth mee double, and triple, the money: it is likewise in greater ware, as biefe and
 “mutton.” F. 14.

⁴ In the beginning of the fixteenth century, “treene ftuffe” was commonly ufed even by the nobility. The Earl of Northumberland and his Counteff, (in 1511,) breakfafted on trenchers. It is probable, that they dined on pewter; as the comp-roller and clerk of the ketchen were directed to purchafe fix dozen of *rughe pewter veffel* for the fervice of the houfe; and to hire 100 dozen of *rughe pewter veffel*, at 4d. the dozen by the year, which I fuppofe were the commoneft fort of pewter plates. Two garnifh of *counterfeit veffel* were alfo hired by the year. Northumberland Houfhould Book, 17. 75: *Counterfeit*

“cow or an horſſe or more, although they paid but 4 pounds at the uttermoſt by the yeare. Such alſo was their povertie, that if ſome one od farmer or huſbandman had beene at the ale-houſe, a thing greatlie uſed in thoſe daies, amongſt 6 or 7 of his neighbours, and there, in a braverie, to ſhew what ſtore he had, did caſt down his purſſe and therein a noble or 6 ſhillings in ſilver unto them, (for few ſuch men then cared for gold, bicauſe it was not ſo readie payment, and they were oft inforced to give a penie for the exchange of an angell,) it was verie likely, that all the reſt could not lay downe ſo much againſt it; whereas in my time, although peradventure 4 pounds of old rent be improved to 40, 50, or even 100 pounds¹, yet will the farmer, as another palme or date tree, think his guines very ſmall, toward the end of his terme, if he have not ſix or ſeven yeares rent lieng by him, therewith to purchaſe a new leaſe, beſide a faire garniſh² of pewter on his cupbord, with ſo much more in od veſſel going about the houſe, three or foure feather beds, ſo manie coverlids and carpets of tapeſtrie, a ſilver ſalt, a bowle for wine, (if not a whole neaſt,) and a dozen of ſpoones to furniſh up the ſute³.”

Of the dreſs about this period, Moryſon obſerves, that “huſbandmen weare garments of courſe cloth made at home⁴, and their wives
“weare

veſſel ſeems to have been pewter, and other metal, gilt or waſhed over. Baſons *conterſete of latyn*, (a mixed metal reſembling braſs,) are mentioned in the Parliament rolls, vi. 141. A *garniſh* conſiſted of 12 platters, 12 diſhes, and 12 ſaucers. Harrifon, Deſcript. of Engl. 237. In 1475, the price of a garniſh of pewter veſſel was 20s. Rot. Parl. vi. 141. In ancient times, pewter veſſel was frequently hired for great entertainments. Dugdale mentions a gild in Warwickſhire, which let out their pewter for feaſts, at 4d. the dozen; which is the ſame price at which the Earl of Northumberland hired his rough veſſel. Dugd. Warw. i ed. 599. One of the articles of expence at archbiſhop Warham’s enthronization dinner at Canterbury, in 1504, was: “de conductione v.c. garniſh. vas. electr. (pewter) capient. pro le garniſh xd. Lel. Coll. vi. 31.”

¹ Latymer, in his Sermons, preached before Edward the Sixth in 1549, makes a ſimilar complaint of this ſymptom of national improvement; the increaſe of rents: “that here before went for 20 or 40 pound by yeare, (which is an honeſt portion to be had *gratis* in one lordſhip of another man’s ſweate and labour,) now is it let for L. or C. pound by yeare. F. 31.

² See note 4.

³ Deſcript. of Engl. 188.

⁴ Ruſſet cloth, it is probable, was one of the houſhold manufactures: about the year 1514, it coſt 1s. the broad yard. North. Houſh. Book, 354. Woollen-weavers of *huſwives* or *houſhold cloth* are exempted

“ weare gowned of the same cloth, kirtles¹ of some light stuffe with
 “ linnen aprons, and cover their heads with a linnen coyfe and a high
 “ felt hat, and, in generall, their linnen is course and made at home² :”
 a description that is very applicable to the north-country men of the
 present day.

It is probable that the husbandry of England, in the 16th century, was
 much in the state that it is now in Scotland; where every little farmer
 has his plot of flax-ground, and the linen for the family is manufactured
 at home. We may be assured that flax, about this period, was grown
 on most farms, since the 24 H. 8. c. 4. obliges every person occupying
 60 acres to sow one rood with flax or hemp seed; and by the 5th
 Eliz. c. 5. one acre in sixty was likewise directed to be sown with
 hemp or flax seed³. It appears from the preamble of the first of these
 acts, that it's principal object was to give employment to the people;
 and from some expressions, which it contains, it would seem that the
 Legislature, even in these early times, had it in contemplation to adopt
 a policy, which has since been carried into execution, of employing
 the Poor in the spinning and weaving manufactures⁴.

Notwith-

by the 5th Eliz. from the restriction imposed on other weavers, (which was probably in-
 tended to prevent a decay of husbandry,) not to take apprentices, whose parents had not
 £3. a year in an estate of inheritance or freehold. See § 30. By a subsequent Section it
 appears, that the weavers of *h saivies* cloth chiefly inhabited the counties of Cumberland,
 Westmoreland, and Lancaster; and Wales. § 32. It is not uncommon for women in the
 Highlands, even at present, to weave at home many coarse articles of domestic use. I have
 heard it remarked in Cumberland, where this practice still exists, that home-made cloth
 is much more durable than that which is made by the regular manufacturer.

¹ A kirtle is a petticoat: the word often occurs in ancient poetry. The reader will probably
 recollect, (though I cannot,) the ballad in which the following expressive passage occurs:

“ She kilted up her kirtle weel,
 “ To shaw her bonny quicets * fae sma’;
 “ An’ wallopit about the reel,
 “ The lightest louter o’ them a’.”

² Moryson, Itin. 3d part, 179. ³ This part of the 5th Eliz. was repealed by
 35 Eliz. c. 7. § 21. ⁴ “ The King’s Highnesse, calling to his most blessed remem-

“ brance the great number of idle people daily increasing throughout this his realme, sup-
 “ poseith that one great cause thereof is by the continual bringing into the same the great

* Ankles.

Notwithstanding, however, these various contrivances to provide work for the able, and relief for the impotent Poor, every Session presented accumulated difficulties in this arduous branch of legislation.

The long reign of Elizabeth is filled with Acts for supplying the deficiencies, or correcting the errors, of former poor laws. The experience of a very few years had proved that the censures of the church were not sufficient to compel collectors for the Poor, on quitting their offices, to account for the money remaining in their hands; and that the *gentle exhortation* of the ministers, and *charitable persuasions* of the bishops, were inadequate to raise the necessary sums for the relief of the Poor. It was therefore enacted¹, very early in Elizabeth's reign, that, if collectors refused to account within eight days after request made to them for that purpose, the bishops of the diocese, or ordinary of the place, chancellors or their commissaries, together with a justice and one of the church-wardens, should have power to commit them to gaol, until they settled their accounts, and paid over the sums due from them: and the statute adds, that if the persons, who had been exhorted by the bishop or his ordinary, shall, "of his froward, wilful mind, obstinately refuse to give weekly to the relief of the Poor, according to his ability; the bishop, or his ordinary, shall bind him, by recogni-

"number of wares and merchandise made and brought out and from the parts of beyond the sea into this realme, ready wrought by manuell occupation: amongst the which wares one kinde of merchandise in marvellous great quantitie, which is linnen cloth of divers sorts, made in divers countries beyond the sea, is daily conveyed into this realme. Which great quantitie of linnen clothes so brought, is consumed and spent within the same: by reason whereof, not onely the saide strange countries, where the saide linnen cloth is made by the policy and industry of making and venting thereof, are greatly enriched, and a merueilous great number of their people, men, women, and children set on worke and occupation, and kept from idlenesse, to the great furtherance and advancement of their commonwealth: but also, contrariwise, the inhabitants and subjects of this realme, for lacke of like policy and industry about the inventing, practising, and putting in exercise like occupation, being compelled to buy all, or the most part of the saide linnen cloth continually spent and consumed within this realme, amounting to inestimable sums of money, in other regions and countries. And also the people of this realme, as well men as women, which should and might be set on worke, by exercising of like policy and crafts, of spinning, weaving, and making of linnen cloth, live now in idlenesse and ociositie, to the high displeasure of almighty God, great diminution of the king's people, and extreame ruin, decay, and impoverishment of this realme."

¹ By 5 Eliz. c. 3.

"zance,

“ zance, to appear at the Quarter Sessions: and at the said Sessions, “ the Justices shall charitably and gently persuade and move him;” and if he will not be persuaded, they are authorized to tax him a weekly sum, and commit him to prison till it is paid: and, by the same Act, the Justices are empowered, if a parish has more Poor than it can relieve, to license persons (who are to wear badges on their breast or back) to beg within the county.

It was not only in an eleemosynary point of view that the parliaments of Elizabeth so frequently noticed the labouring classes of the community; at the same time that they attempted to enforce the provisions of former statutes for the collection of alms for the relief of the indigent, they imitated the short-sighted policy of former Legislatures, in placing the most important of all contracts, namely, the hiring and service of labourers, under the superintendence of the magistrates. It is, however, remarkable, that the 5th of Elizabeth, which again controuls the wages of industry, and properly notices the absurdity of former laws on this subject, gives the very reason, in its preamble, why the earnings of labour should never have been subjected to regulation. It admits, that the old statutes, partly “ through the imperfection and “ contrariety of them, and because they were not answerable to the “ time respecting the advancement of all things belonging to servants “ and labourers, could not be carried into execution without the great “ grief and burden of the poor labourer and hired man:” and indeed it seems very probable, (although history is silent on the subject,) that the injudicious provisions of former statutes, which obliged a man to accept wages, which, in times of scarcity, could not possibly maintain him, may, among other causes, have greatly contributed to the increasing wants of the people, and the consequent establishment of the poor’s rate. The present Act, it may be remarked, immediately follows an Act for the relief of the Poor, and I have no doubt was intended as part of the same system. Its principal object seems to have been to check the great eagerness with which all ranks of people at this period rushed into commerce and manufacture; and to make the rating of wages, (which must have been a great discouragement to agricultural labour, and in some degree have operated to lessen the proportion of arable land,) less burthenome, by enabling the Justices to vary

as by
243 Philp

1-10

the rate, from year to year, according to the difference of seasons, and price of provisions in their respective counties'.

The persons affected by it may be divided into three classes; menial servants, labourers, and apprentices. With respect to the first, all single persons

* The following clauses point out the manner in which the Justices were to proceed in this arduous business:

§ 15. " And for the declaration and limitation what wages servants, labourers, and artificers, either by the year, or day, or otherwise, shall have and receive; be it enacted by the authority of this present parliament, That the Justices of Peace of every shire, riding, and liberty, within the limits of their several commissions, or the more part of them, being then resident within the same, and the Sheriff of that county, if he conveniently may, and every Mayor, Bailiff, or other head-officer within any city or town-corporate, wherein is any Justice of Peace, within the limits of the said city or town-corporate, and of the said corporation, shall, before the tenth day of June next coming, and afterwards shall yearly at every general sessions first to be holden and kept after Easter, or at some time convenient within six weeks next following every of the said feasts of Easter, assemble themselves together; and they (so assembled) calling unto them such discreet and grave persons of the said county, or of the said city or town corporate, as they shall think meet, and conferring together *respecting the plenty or scarcity of the time and other circumstances necessarily to be considered*, shall have authority, by virtue thereof, within the limits and precincts of their several commissions, to limit, rate, and appoint the wages, as well of such and so many of the said artificers, handycraftsmen, husbandmen, or any other labourer, servant, or workman whose wages in time past hath been by any law or statute rated and appointed; as also the wages of all other labourers, artificers, workmen, or apprentices of husbandry, which have not been rated; as they the same Justices, Mayors, or head officers within their several commissions or liberties shall think meet by their discretions to be rated, limited, or appointed by the year, or by the day, week, month, or otherwise, with meat and drink, or without meat and drink; and what wages every workman or labourer shall take by the great for mowing, reaping, or threshing of corn or grain, or for mowing or making of hay, or for ditching, paling, railing, or hedging, by the rod, perch, lugg, yard, pole, rope or foot, and for any other kind of reasonable labourers' service; and shall yearly, before the 12th day of July next after the said assessments and rates so appointed and made, certify the same, ingrossed in parchment, with the considerations and causes thereof, under their hands and seals, into the Queen's most honourable Court of Chancery; whereupon it shall be lawful to the Lord Chancellor of England, or Lord Keeper of the Great Seal for the time being, upon declaration thereof to the Queen's Majesty, her heirs or successors, or to the Lords and others of the Privy Council for the time being, attendant upon their persons, to cause to be printed, and sent down, before the first day of September next after the said certificate, into every county, to the Sheriff and Justices of Peace there, and to the said Mayor, Bailiff, and head officers, ten or twelve proclamations, or more, containing, in every of them, the several rates appointed by the said Justices and other head-officers as is aforesaid; with commandment by the said

"proclamations, .

persons between 12 years old and 60¹, and married ones under 30 years of age², and unmarried women between 12 and 40³, not having a visible livelihood, are compellable by two Justices to go out to service in husbandry⁴, or certain specific trades⁵: and no master can put away his servants, or servant leave his master, before the expiration of his term, without the assent of a Justice⁶; nor even at the end of his term, without giving a quarter's warning⁷. Servants departing from their masters before the end of their term, unless upon some reasonable cause to be allowed by a Justice, or refusing to serve for the wages appointed by the magistrates, are punishable with imprisonment, till they consented to serve⁸. The givers of greater wages than what were allowed by

"proclamations, to all persons, in the name of the Queen's Majesty, her heirs or successors, strictly to observe the same; and to all Justices, Sheriffs, and other officers, to see the same duly and severely observed, upon the danger of the punishment and forfeiture limited and appointed by this estatute: upon receipt whereof, the said Sheriffs, Justices of Peace, and the Mayor and head-officers in every city or town-corporate, shall cause the same proclamations to be entered of record by the Clerk of the Peace, or by the Clerk of the city or town corporate: And the said Sheriffs, Justices, and other the said Mayor and head officers, shall forthwith, in open markets, upon the market-days before Michaelmas then next ensuing, cause the same proclamation to be proclaimed in every city or market-town within the limits of their commission, and the same proclamation to be fixed in some convenient place of the said city and town, or in such of the most occupied market-towns, as to the said Sheriffs, Justices of Peace, and to the said Mayor and head officer shall be thought meet."

§ 16. "And if the said Sheriffs, Justices of Peace, or the Mayor, or head-officer, shall, at their said General Sessions, or at any time after within six weeks then following, upon their assembly and conference together, think it convenient to retain and keep, for the year then to come, the rates and proportions of wages that they certified the year before, or to change or to reform them, or some part of them; then they shall, before the said 12th day of July, yearly, certify into the said Court of Chancery their resolutions and determination therein, to the intent that proclamations may accordingly be renewed and sent down. And if it shall happen that there be no need of any reformation or alteration of the rates of the said wages, but that the former shall be thought meet to be continued, then the proclamations for the year past shall remain in force, until new proclamations, upon new rates, concerning the said wages, shall be sent down, according to the form of this estatute." 5 Eliz. c. 4. § 15. 16.—The reader will find several instances of Justices rating wages under this Act, in the Appendix, No. III. I have no doubt but that many orders of Justices, relative to wages, might be found in the Offices of the Clerks of the Peace in many counties in England: Gutch mentions "a bundle of rates of servants' wages" of the 5th of James the First, as extant, in the Records of the Chancery, at Durham. Miscel. Cur. ii. 164.

¹ § 7. ² § 4. ³ § 24. ⁴ § 7. ⁵ § 3. ⁶ § 5. ⁷ § 6. ⁸ § 9.

the

the statute were made liable to ten days¹, and the takers to 21 days imprisonment².

Labourers and artificers, hired by the day or week, are bound to work, in summer, from five in the morning till between seven and eight at night, and, in winter, from day-light till dark; they are allowed the same time for meals as in former statutes³. Artificers are compellable to serve in getting in the harvest⁴. Labourers, who cannot procure harvest-work in their own countries, are permitted to go into other countries, during the hay and corn harvest, provided they carried with them a testimonial from a Justice of Peace⁵.

The statute enables householders, in time of husbandry, to receive apprentices under the age of eighteen, to serve till twenty-four years of age, by indenture⁶; and the householders in corporate towns, exercising any art, mystery, or manual occupation there⁷, and all persons elsewhere using the trades specified in the statute⁸, are empowered to take apprentices under certain qualifications, to serve them for seven years, provided the term does not expire before the apprentice is twenty-four years of age⁹.

And male children of poor persons, by a subsequent statute, may be apprenticed out by the overseers, with consent of two Justices, till twenty-four years of age, and females till twenty-one, to such persons as are thought fitting¹⁰. Blackstone remarks, that "gentlemen of fortune, and clergymen, are equally liable with others to such compulsion¹¹"; and that the statutes for the regulation of wages extend only to

¹ § 18. ² § 19. ³ § 12. ⁴ § 22. ⁵ § 23. ⁶ § 25. ⁷ § 26.
⁸ § 30. The trades enumerated in the Act are: "A smith, wheel-wright, plough-wright, mill-wright, carpenter, rough mason, plaisterer, sawyer, lime-burner, brick-maker, bricklayer, tiler, slater, helier, tile-maker, linen-weaver, turner, cooper, millers, earthen-potters, woollen-weavers, weaving huswives or household cloth only, and none other cloth; fuller, otherwise called tucker or walker; burner of oare and wood-ashes, and thatcher or shingler." See Appendix, No. viii. p. cliii.—An *helier*, I conceive, is a coverer of houses. In the *Liber Legum* of the city of Worcester, tilers are called *hilliards*. See Green's Worc. App. to ii vol. p. liii.—In "the articles of the good governaunce of the cyte of London," in Arnold's Chronicle, the quest of wardmote, in every ward, is directed to enquire "yf ther be ony house in y^e warde y^t is *hyllled* w^t ony other thyng than tyle, or flat, "or led, for pyl (peril) of fire: Also, if ther be ony chemeni y^t hath a reerdos made uncomly other wyse than it ought to be for pyl of fyre." ⁹ § 26. ¹⁰ 39 Eliz. c. 3.
¹¹ Comm. i. 426.

servants in husbandry; it being impossible for any magistrate to be a judge of the employment of menial servants, or, of course, to assess their wages¹." However, by a subsequent statute, the 5th of Eliz. was interpreted to extend to weavers, spinsters, and all workmen and workwomen whatsoever².

The Legislature, at length, in 1572, directed, that a general assessment, for the relief of the impotent Poor, should be made in every city, village, and hamlet; and that, if any surplus-money remained after providing for their maintenance, it should be applied to setting rogues and vagabonds³ to work, under the superintendence of overseers. With regard, however, to the correction of this class, the law did not proceed with equal moderation, nor endeavour to amend them, as they had done in the case of refractory parishioners, who refused to contribute to the collection for the Poor, by gentle exhortations and admonitions.

first
general
assessment
Act.

Begging, if the offender was above fourteen years of age, was punished, in the first instance, by grievous whipping, and burning through

¹ Comm. i. 428. This observation is applicable to many kinds of agricultural work. By the 5th Eliz. the Justices are empowered to rate "other kinds of reasonable labour or service" (in husbandry,) besides threshing, &c.; yet it must be obvious to every one the least acquainted with farming, that cases must often occur, in the nice and operose branches of agriculture, in which none but the employer and workman can be adequate judges of the difficulty, and consequently of the value, of the service. ² 39 Eliz. c. 12.

expired. ³ To prevent any doubt respecting the term *rogues and vagabonds*, the statute is very particular in specifying who shall be considered as such, and divides them into the following classes:

1. All persons pretending to be proctors, or procurators, *i. e.* persons employed by the clergy to collect the fruits of their benefices.
2. Idle persons, using subtle, crafty, and unlawful games, and plays.
3. All pretenders to palmistry, physiognomy, and fortune-telling.
4. All persons who can give no account of themselves, and who refuse to work for reasonable wages.
5. Fencers, bearwards, common players in interludes, minstrels, not in the service of a baron of the realm, jugglers, pedlers, tinkers, and petty chapmen travelling without licence from two Justices.
6. Counterfeiters of licences to beg.
7. Scholars begging without licence.
8. Shipmen pretending losses at sea.
9. Persons delivered from gaol, who beg without licence.

rogues
vagabonds

the gristle of the right ear, unless some creditable person would take the beggar into his service for a year; and if a vagabond, above eighteen years old, offended a second time, he was liable to suffer death as a felon, unless some creditable person would take him into service for two years; and, if he offended a third time, he was to be adjudged a felon.

By the 18 Eliz. c. 3.¹ the Justices in every county are empowered to purchase or hire buildings, to be converted into houses of correction, and to provide a competent stock of wool, hemp, flax, iron, or other stuff, "to the intent," as the Act says, "that youth might be accustomed and brought up in labour, and then not like to grow to be idle rogues; and that such as be already grown up in idleness, and so rogues at this present, may not have any just excuse in saying that they cannot get any service or work;" and that other poor and needy persons, being willing to labour, may be set on work, the keepers of the stock were authorized to supply poor persons with materials for work, and to pay them for the work they should perform; and the profits arising from the sale of the goods thus produced, were directed to be laid out in keeping up the stock. Idlers were ordered to be sent to the house of correction, there to be kept at hard work.

In the year 1597, several Acts were passed relative to vagrancy and mendicity, and the various regulations of former statutes, in some degree, moulded into an uniform system. Their severe penalties, however, were somewhat modified; instead of being burnt through the ear, a rogue, vagabond, or sturdy beggar, was ordered to be "stripped naked, from the middle upwards, and to be whipped until his body was bloody, and to be sent from parish to parish, the next straight way to the place of his birth;" and, if that was not known, "to the parish where he dwelt last, one whole year²." Incurrible offenders might be

¹ The reader will find the rules and regulations respecting a work-house at Bury in Suffolk, appointed by the Justices in the year 1588, in the Appendix, No. VII. It contains several curious particulars respecting the mode of taxing the hundreds, the diet, punishment, and employment of vagrants, &c. There is a trifling erratum in the last line but one of the preamble, in p. cxxxvi.—"28th year" should be "18th year."

² 31, Eliz. c. 4. "In order to which he shall, after whipping, have a testimonial, mentioning the day and place of his punishment, the place whereunto he is limited to go, and the time allowed for his journey thither." The statute adds: "And if he do not accomplish the order appointed by

"the

be banished by the Justices at Quarter-sessions to such places without the realm as the Privy Council should assign, or condemned to the gallies¹ for

“the said testimonial, then to be eftsoons taken and whipped; and, so often as any default shall be found in him, contrary to the form of this statute, in every place to be whipped till he be repaired to the place limited.” Shakspeare, it is probable, alluded to the 1 Jac. c. 7. (1604-5) which continues this statute, in Edgar’s speech: “Poor Tom! who is whipp’d from tything to tything, and stock’d, punish’d, and imprison’d.” *King Lear*, A. 3. S. 4.—This passage corroborates Mr. Malone’s idea, that the play did not make it’s appearance on the stage before the year 1605.

It will, perhaps, gratify the reader to see the form of a testimonial, which was given to a vagrant after whipping. The following one is copied, *verbatim*, from a MS. among the miscellaneous papers in the British Museum:

“How valyant beggers ough to
“be punyfhed accordinge to Kinge’s statute.

“Wm Payne whipped for a vagraunt strong begger at Chester in the county of the citty of Chester according to the law the xiii day of February in the xxix yere of the reigne of or moast dred soveigne Lord H. th’eight was assigned to passe forth wh and dyrectly from thens to Chippen Warren in the countie of Northampton where he saith he was borne and he is lymittyd to be there wvin xvi dayez then next ensuyng at his pell. I witnez wherof the seale of the offyc of the mairaltie of the citie aforseid and place where he was ponyfshed herunto is sett.”—Harleian MSS. 2057.

“A passe for a begar whipped accordinge to law. 29 H. 8.”

The magistrates appear to have been as particular, in requiring a receipt from a beggar, who had been whipped, as the late King of Prussia is said to have been, with Voltaire, on a similar occasion.

¹ Being sent to the gallies, it would appear, was a punishment actually inflicted at this period. In the 42d year of Eliz. a special commission was issued, “pro condempnatis ad galeas transferendis.”—Rym. Fœd. vii. pt. 2. p. 36. Howel, in his *Londinopolis*, p. 49. mentions a place called Galley-Row, near Tower-Street, where galley-men dwelt. A quay, near Billingsgate, is still called Galley-Quay.—Barrington on the Anc. Stat. 93.—In a MS. in my possession, containing the various expences for the equipment of a fleet, under John of Gaunt, about the year 1373, (see the Appendix, No. I. p. xxiv.) the equipage and furniture of the King’s new galley are particularly set down. Her crew, it appears, consisted of about 160 English sailors, and 20 Spaniards, and about 70 Genoese cross-bow-men, besides officers, carpenters, &c. She must therefore have been a large vessel, and had probably been built after a Genoese model. In this MS. the wages of a cross-bow-man, for a calendar month, are stated at

	£	1	11	8
The wages of a seaman, for a calendar month, were, from	-	-	1	2
to	-	-	0	19
The wages of a Spanish seaman, a day, were	-	-	0	0
Besides his diet, which was valued at	-	-	0	0

for life; and persons returning from banishment were to be adjudged felons¹.

By the same section, four overseers were directed to be chosen in each parish, for setting poor children, and others in want of employment, to work; and for raising weekly, or otherwise, a stock of materials for that purpose. Justices were empowered to levy the rate by distress; and for the relief of the impotent poor, the church-wardens and overseers were authorized, with the permission of the lords of manors, to build convenient houses on the waste, at the general charge of the parish; and to place inmates, or more families than one, in each cottage. Parents of old, blind, lame, and other poor persons, were bound to relieve their children or sick men, as should be directed at the General Quarter-sessions, on penalty of 20s. for every month they failed so to do: and begging, unless for victuals in the parish, (soldiers and sailors with proper testimonials being excepted,) was entirely prohibited².

Several Acts were made for the relief of soldiers and mariners, upon incontrovertible principles of humanity and justice. Every feeling mind must assent to the preamble of the statute, which declares, "That it is agreeable with Christian charity, policy, and the honour of our nation, that such as have adventured their lives, and lost their limbs, in the service of the State, should be relieved and rewarded, to the end that they may reap the fruits of their good deservings, and others may be encouraged to perform the like endeavours." The Legislature properly considered, that their maintenance was a national concern; and therefore every parish was charged to pay such a sum weekly, for their support, as the Justices in Sessions should appoint³.

The following charges occur relative to the King's galley :

in xxx virg' panni rub' empt' p' la Poupe dce galee pc' v'g' iiii' iiii' et in blanket
empt p' bordura ejusde' xiiii' et xlv uln' canabi p' uln vi' et in uno corio
equino pro pannis emendand' et ligand' pc' vis. iiii'.

In King John's reign the Sheriff of Norfolk provided 1000 ears for the King's galleys. Mad. Exch. 4to. i. 371.—Three galleys are mentioned in the list of Queen Elizabeth's navy. Harrison's Descript. of Engl. 201.

¹ With benefit of clergy. See Co. 3 Inst. c. 40.

² 39 Eliz. c. 4.

³ 35 Eliz. c. 4. No parish was to be rated above 6d. nor under 1d. weekly; and the sum-total in any county, where there were above 50 parishes, was not to exceed the rate of 2d. each parish. The above sums were increased to 8d. 2d. and 4d. respectively, by 39 Eliz. c. 21.

Increasing

Increasing inconveniences at length produced the memorable 43d of Elizabeth, which concentrates in one point the accumulated expences *inconveniences* of a long reign, and has continued near two centuries to be the groundwork of every regulation affecting the Poor¹. By comparing this statute with the 39th Eliz. c. 3. it will appear, that it's most material provisions were not, as many persons erroneously suppose, originally framed in 1601: on the contrary, the principal clauses of the former Act, respecting the appointment of overseers, levying the rate, setting the able to work, providing relief for the impotent, and binding out children apprentices, were copied almost verbatim; and the following seem to be the principal alterations introduced by the 43d of Elizabeth.

Instead of sending those who refuse to work to the house of correction, which seems the proper place, Justices were empowered to commit them to the common gaol. The Act, however, does not specify how they shall be employed.

In addition to the clause respecting the erection of cottages on the waste, it is directed, that such buildings shall not, at any time after, be

¹ Although Scotland is now exempted from the heavy burthen of a Poor's Rate, (a tax, which, in England, I have no doubt, exceeds three millions a year,) it is remarkable that a compulsory provision for the Poor was established by law, in the former kingdom, two-and-twenty years before the passing of the 43d of Elizabeth. In King James the Sixth's sixth parliament, held at Edinburgh in 1579, an Act was passed "for punishment of straggling and idle beggars, and reliefe of the pure and impotent;" in which every branch of the poor system,—the punishment of vagabonds; of runaway servants;—the mode of passing soldiers and seamen to their parishes;—the regulation of hospitals for aged and impotent persons;—the settlements of the poor;—their maintenance by the parish;—the appointment of overseers and collectors;—the manner of treating those who refuse to work;—and of putting out poor children apprentices; are more fully detailed than in any English Act of Parliament. The assessment for the Poor is very general: "the haill inhabitantes within the parochin" are to be "*taxed and flented*, according to the estimation of their substance, "without exception of persones, to sik ouklic (weekly) charge and contribution, as fall be "thocht expedient, and sufficient to susteine the saidis pure peopill." Scottish Acts, ed. 1682, i. 417. As the collection, in which this curious Act is contained, is rather scarce, I have inserted it at length in the Appendix, No. X. where the reader, who has leisure and inclination to learn how other nations have managed their Poor, will find a short account, (which, however, was too long for a note in this place,) of the earliest Scotch Acts relative to this subject, and the present state of the Poor in Scotland. I have very little doubt, but that many of the provisions of English parliaments, in the reign of Elizabeth, respecting the Poor, were framed in conformity with the policy of their Northern neighbours.

used for any other habitation, but only for the impotent poor, who shall be placed there from time to time by the churchwardens and overseers.

Grandfathers and grandmothers, as well as parents and children, if not of sufficient ability, are reciprocally called upon to maintain each other.

The clauses relative to the prohibition of begging and vagrancy are entirely omitted.

Besides the ordinary rate for relieving and setting the Poor to work, a sum of money was directed to be raised from every parish, by a weekly rate, not exceeding sixpence, or under twopence, for the relief of the poor prisoners in the King's Bench and Marshalsea, and also such hospitals and alms-houses as shall be in each county; so as that there be sent out of every county, yearly, not less than twenty shillings to each of the above gaols: the surplus money is directed to be distributed, at the discretion of the Justices, for the relief of the poor hospitals of the county, and of those who shall sustain losses by fire, water, or other casualties: and to such other purposes, for the relief of the Poor, as the major part of the Justices at the Quarter-sessions shall think convenient.

Various penalties, from 20s. to £5. are annexed to the non-performance of the duties imposed on the Justices, church-wardens, and overseers; and the sums, which may thus accrue, are ordered to be applied in aid of the fund appropriated for relieving and employing the Poor.

An appeal to the Quarter-sessions is given to persons who find themselves aggrieved by any cess, tax, or other act done by church-wardens or other persons; or by the Justices of the Peace, under colour of this Act.

Officers sued for any thing done in execution of the Act, are empowered to plead the general issue; and in case they recover, they are allowed treble costs.

The island of Foulness in Essex, being extra-parochial, was noticed in a particular clause, and made subject to the general regulations of the Act.

From the last clause in the statute, it appears, that it was only intended

tended to be experimental: it was, however, continued by subsequent statutes, and by the 16th Car. 1. c. 4. made perpetual¹.

It is impossible, at this distance of time, to form any accurate idea of the comparative number of the receivers and payers of parochial contributions, immediately after the establishment of the Poor's Rate. Were I permitted to hazard a conjecture on this subject, I should estimate the number of the Poor, (i. e. persons either receiving, or wanting parochial relief,) at the close of the sixteenth, and beginning of the seventeenth, century, to have borne a less proportion to the other classes of the nation, than the number of those in similar circumstances do at present. London, about the year 1590, (according to the information of a foreign historian,) contained about 160,000 inhabitants². In 1595, (a year of great scarcity,) a survey was made, by the direction of the Lord Mayor, of the number of poor householders within his jurisdiction: they were found to amount to 4132³; but the annalist does not explain whether the number includes all the individuals of each poor family; neither does he mention, what number of Poor, who did not fall within the denomination of householders, was contained in London. Making, however, a very fair allowance for these omissions, we shall be justified in supposing, that the increase of the metropolis has not kept pace with the increase of it's Poor. If we examine the condition of many of our country towns, and even those which are considered as the most advanced in opulence and industry, we shall find a proportion of Poor far exceeding any thing noticed in the reigns of Elizabeth, or James. In the parish of Burwash, in Suffex, for instance, one fourth of the inhabitants appears to be chargeable, and one third of the rental to be appropriated to their maintenance⁴: in Caldegate quarter, in Carlisle, one third of the population partook of the contributions raised last year for the relief of the necessitous⁵: and in Shrewsbury, which is estimated to contain about 20,000⁶ souls, between 5 and 6000 individuals, exclusive of the regular Poor, received charity in the course of the year 1795⁷.

¹ The reader will find the 43d of Elizabeth, at length, in the Appendix, No. VIII. p. clxvii.

² Botero; see Anderfon's Hist of Commerce, ii. 176.

³ Strype's Stow.

⁴ See

2d vol. p. 727.

⁵ See 2d vol. p. 62.

⁶ See a pamphlet printed at

Sheffield, entitled, "The Substance of Mr. Ward's Speech at the Town-hall in Sheffield, on 6th April 1791;" p. 8.

⁷ See 2d vol. p. 641.

In the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, various expedients were proposed in both Houses of Parliament, for employing and providing for the Poor¹; but amongst the many debates which occurred on this subject, it does not appear that any speaker ever properly noticed what seems to have been the principal cause of the distress of the labouring classes of the people at the close of the sixteenth century;---an uninterrupted succession of bad weather, and scanty crops for several years. In the year 1601, however, in which the Act was passed for the relief of the Poor, the season was more favourable; and, I have no doubt, but that many short-sighted politicians, seeing the Poor were less clamorous after the passing of the Act, thought the wisdom of the Legislature had produced what was ascribable solely to the benign operations of Nature. The situation of the Poor, in the two or three last years of Elizabeth's reign, seems to have been more comfortable than it had been for several years. In a debate on the propriety of continuing the Statute of Tillage, a member² observed, that corn was cheap: Sir Walter Raleigh, (who insisted, with great good sense, that the best course was to set tillage at liberty,) added, that France had offered to supply Ireland with corn at 16s. the quarter³.

It was not only to the decay of tillage that Elizabeth's parliaments fancifully ascribed the distresses of the Poor: the increase of poverty was also imputed (as it has been in modern times,) to the great size of the metropolis. So serious an evil was this unequivocal symptom of national prosperity considered, that, in 1581, a proclamation was issued,

"rie at x s. ; malt at viii s. a bushell. To relive the poore every alderman and worshipfull man, and every burgisse of this cittie that was of any worth, were apointed every daie to finde with victuall at his table, so many poore people that wanted worcke, whereby the poore of our cittie were all relived, and kept from starving or rising."

¹ See D'Ewes's Journals.

² Mr. Johnson—Much good sense is contained in his speech. It is thus shortly reported by D'Ewes: "In the time of dearth, when we made this statute, it was not considered that the hand of God was upon us; and now corn is cheap: if too cheap, the husbandman is undone, whom we must provide for, for he is the staple man of the kingdom." Journal, 674.

³ D'Ewes, Journal, 674. The same speaker, in a debate on monopolies in 1601, assured the House, that, before the grant of a patent to him of the wardenship of the stannaries in Cornwall, the workmen in the mines could only earn 2s. a week, finding themselves. He adds; "since my patent, whosoever will work, may; and, buy tin at what price soever, they have four shillings a week truly paid." Id. p. 646.

forbidding

forbidding the erection of new buildings within three miles of the city gates, and limiting the number of inmates in a house to one family. This proclamation was enforced, with some additions, by an Act passed in 1593; and in 1602, the Queen issued a proclamation¹, which, as it collects all the absurd restrictions of former laws against enlarging the capital into one view, and notices several particulars illustrative of the circumstances of the poorer part of the inhabitants of London, I shall transcribe at length.

It directed: That no new buildings should be erected within three miles of London or Westminster:

That one dwelling-house, either in London or Westminster, should not be converted into more:

That inmates should quit such tenements as had been divided within the preceding ten years, unless they had an estate therein for life or years; in which case, at the expiration of such terms, the tenement should be reduced to its former state:

That all sheds and shops, erected within seven years, should be pulled down:

That empty houses, built within seven years, should not be let to any person, unless the owners of the houses should be content to dispose of them, for the reception of the Poor of the parish, at such rent as the parish should allow:

That buildings on new foundations, in an unfinished state, should be pulled down.

¹ Rym. Fœd. xvi. 448. In the beginning of the proclamation, her majesty declares, "that
"foreseeing the great and manifold inconveniences and mischiefs which daily grow, and
"are likely more and more to increase unto the state of the city of London, and the sub-
"urbs and confines thereof, by access and confluence of people to inhabit the same, not
"only by reason that such multitudes could hardly be governed by ordinary justice to
"serve God and obey her majesty, without constituting an addition of more officers, and
"enlarging of authorities and jurisdictions for that purpose; but also, could hardly be pro-
"vided of sustentation of victual, food, and other like necessities for man's relief, upon
"reasonable prices: and finally, for that such great multitudes of people inhabiting in small
"rooms, whereof many be very poor, and such as must live by begging or worse means;
"and being heaped up together, and in a sort smothered, with many families of children
"and servants in one house, or small tenement, it must needs follow, if any plague, or other
"universal sickness come amongst them, it would presently spread through the whole city
"and confines, and also into all parts of the realm." See Anderson's Hist. of Comm. ii. 209.

In the year 1630, Charles the First issued a similar proclamation against building houses on new foundations, in London or Westminster, or within three miles of the city gates, or the king's palace. The proclamation also forbade the receiving of inmates in houses there, which, (it was said,) would multiply the inhabitants to such an excessive number, that they could neither be governed nor fed. There are, however, some judicious regulations in this proclamation, for the prevention of fire, and the preservation of the health of the inhabitants. All new houses were directed to have party-walls, and fronts of brick; and the windows to be higher than wide, both for the admission of air, and for rendering the piers between them more solid and substantial than they would otherwise have been¹. These provisions have been considerably enlarged by subsequent statutes; particularly by the Building Act², the enforcing of which, (there can be no doubt,) has greatly contributed towards the health, the safety, and the beauty, of the metropolis.

Among the various funds appropriated to the relief of the Poor, previous to the establishment of a compulsory maintenance by the 43d of Elizabeth, I should mention a branch of supply, which, although perhaps inconsiderable in its produce, even amidst the much complained of profligacy of modern times, has been thought worthy of notice by every Legislature during the two last centuries. I allude to pecuniary forfeitures, which, for many statutable offences, and particularly for those relative to profaneness or immorality, are now applied in aid of the Poor's Rate. As early as the year 1558, church-wardens were empowered to levy twelve-pence upon every parishioner who omitted going to church on a Sunday³: in 1570, a moiety of the forfeitures for detaining goods belonging to a bankrupt's estate, was directed to be distributed, by the commissioners, to the Poor within the hospitals in the city or town where the bankrupt happened to be⁴: and in the same parliament, half the penalty for not wearing a woollen cap on a Sunday was appropriated to the same purpose⁵. In 1581, the fines imposed for saying mass, for neglecting to attend divine service, and for other acts

¹ Rym. Fœd. xix. 177. Miscell. Collection belonging to the Society of Antiquaries, vi. 17.

² 19 Car. 2. c. 3. 22 Car. 2. c. 11. 6 Ann. c. 31. 33 Geo. 2. c. 30. 14 Geo. 3. c. 78. (usually called, "The Building Act.")

³ 1 Eliz. c. 3. § 11.

⁴ 13 Eliz. c. 7.

⁵ 13 Eliz. c. 19.

against the established church, were given, one third to the informer, one third to the Queen for her own use, and one third to her for the use of the Poor of the parish in which the offence was committed¹; and by a subsequent statute, the Lord Treasurer, Chancellor, and Chief Baron of the Exchequer, were authorized to dispose of a third part of the forfeitures incurred for not coming to divine service, towards the “relief and maintenance, as well of the Poor, and of the houses of correction, as of impotent and maimed soldiers².” It was perhaps owing to the recollection of the intimate connection that had formerly subsisted between the Church and the Poor, which the dissolution of the monasteries had recently destroyed, that the Legislature, instead of dividing the penalty between the crown and the informer, thus diverted it from its usual course, and made the omission of religious duties conducive to charity.

Other sources of penal contribution were gradually opened; and the laws for preservation of game and of fish, preventing tippling, swearing, disorderly conduct on the Lord’s Day, and many other offences, were, even in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, enforced by pecuniary fines; of which a moiety was usually allotted to the Poor of the parish where the offence was committed³. No information is to be met with relative to the annual amount of the penalties applied to this purpose, at any period of our history. The lovers of good order may, however, be assured, that the Poor’s Rate has never derived much aid from the punishment of immorality, notwithstanding the innumerable statutes passed of late years, some of which appropriate a part, and others the whole, of a pecuniary forfeiture towards the relief of the Poor. Parlia-

¹ 23 Eliz. c. 1.

² 29 Eliz. c. 6. § 7. On the same principle, as it would seem, in an Act against profaneness, made in the Parliament of Scotland, in the year 1695, ratifying sundry preceding Acts of a like tenor, it was enacted, that “such of the saids Judges as shall refuse, neglect, or delay to put the saids laws in execution, upon application of any minister, or kirk-session, or any person in their name, giving information, and offering sufficient probation against the offender—shall, *toties quoties*, be subject and liable to a fine of one hundred pound Scots, to be applied for the use of the Poor of the parish where the scandal complained on was committed, &c. &c.” Made in the fifth session of the first Parliament of King William. Edinburgh, ed. 1695, p. 420. See 3d volume of Scottish Acts, &c.

³ 23 Eliz. c. 10. 2 Jac. c. 9. & 27. 3 Jac. c. 12. 4 Jac. c. 4 & 5. 7 Jac. c. 11: 21 Jac. c. 20. 3 Car. c. 1. &c.

ment seems to have been aware, that the produce was not worth attending to, since, among the questions, to which the overseers of the Poor were obliged to make returns upon oath, in the years 1776 and 1786, no query was inserted in order to ascertain the receipts arising from penal forfeitures.

During the reign of James the First, a few additions were made to the laws respecting vagrancy and mendicity. The Act of Elizabeth, for the punishment of rogues and vagabonds, was continued and explained; and its provisions were enforced by additional severities¹. One of the clauses of King James's Act, respecting rogues, who, having been banished, should return into the kingdom, merits insertion. It says, that the statute of Elizabeth, respecting them, was somewhat defective; "for that the said rogues, having no mark upon them to be known by, "may return or retire themselves into some other part of this realm "where they are not known, and so escape the punishment which the "said statute did intend to inflict upon them." It was therefore enacted, that rogues, adjudged incorrigible and dangerous, should be "branded on the left shoulder with a hot iron of the breadth of a shilling, "having a Roman R upon it, and placed to labour; and if, after such "punishment, they were found begging and wandering, they were to "be adjudged felons, and to suffer death without benefit of clergy²." The harsh penalties of this Act continued in force till the 12th of Anne³, when they were somewhat modified; and, at length, a just distinction was made between idle disorderly persons, and rogues and vagabonds. It is not my intention to review the various Acts that have been passed on this subject; but I cannot avoid remarking, that the provisions, even of modern statutes, relative to this branch of Penal Law, appear to me, in some instances, unnecessarily severe. By the Vagrant Act, a person wandering abroad and begging, is deemed a rogue and vagabond; and the Justices at Quarter-sessions are empowered to inflict a public whipping, and six months imprisonment, for the first offence; and, for the second, two years imprisonment; and, during such imprisonment, whipping, in such manner, and at such times and places

¹ See 2 Jac. c. 7. This Act was continued by 3 Car. c. 4. and 16 Car. c. 4. but repealed by 12 Ann. st. 2. c. 23. § 28.

² 2 Jac. c. 7.

³ 12 Ann. c. 23.

within their jurisdiction, as, according to the nature of such person's offence, they, in their discretion, shall think fit¹. A woman wandering and begging, if delivered of a child in a parish to which she does not belong, is made liable to public whipping, and six months imprisonment². It is not unreasonable to suppose, that the great disproportion between the offence and the punishment is the principal reason why this statute is so seldom carried into execution.

King James's first parliament appears to have been guided by the same principles which influenced former Legislatures to attempt the difficult, though specious, task of regulating the wages of industry. The 5th of Elizabeth, we have seen, had already empowered the Justices to rate the wages of artificers, handicraftsmen, husbandmen, and *other labourers, whose wages had, in times past, been rated*: it is probable, that this general expression in the Act had occasioned some doubts as to the extent of the power of the Justices. The preamble to the statute of James therefore declares, that "whereas the said Act (of Elizabeth) had
 "not, according to the true meaning thereof, been duly put in execution,
 "whereby the rate of wages for poor artificers, labourers, and other persons, whose wages was meant to be rated by the said Act, have not
 "been rated and proportioned according to the plenty, scarcity, necessity, and respect of the time, which was politickly intended by the
 "said Act, by reason that ambiguity and question have risen and been
 "made, whether the rating of all manner of artificers, workmen, and
 "workwomen, his and their wages, other than such as by some statute
 "and law have been rated, or else such as did work about husbandry,
 "should or might be rated by the said law: Forasmuch as the said law
 "hath been found beneficial for the commonwealth," the powers of rating wages were extended to "labourers, weavers, spinsters, and workmen or workwomen whatsoever, either working by the day, week, month, year, or taking any work at any person's hand whatsoever, to be done in great, or otherwise³." Mr. Ruggles conceives, that this enlargement of the powers of the 5th of Elizabeth is a proof of the good effects arising to the public from the rating of wages; because, if the experience of forty years had proved it to be replete with more mischief

¹ 17 G. 2. c. 5. § 3. 4. 9.² § 9. 25.³ 2 Jac. c. 6.

than use, it could not be supposed that the Legislature would have extended the practice, and made the power general, which had hitherto been confined to particular classes of workmen¹. This supposition is unnecessary to account for the conduct of the Legislature. King James's parliaments may have reasoned in the same manner, that many modern

¹ At the same time he admits, that Justices seldom enforced the execution of these Acts; a circumstance which proves, that the provisions of the statute, however specious, were not reducible to practice. Ruggles' Hist. of the Poor, i. 105.—I have no doubt, however, but that, in addition to instances which the reader will find in the Appendix to this Volume, No. III. antiquarian industry might, on searching the Offices of the Clerks of the Peace, collect the rates of wages, appointed by Justices, in various parts of England. I however much doubt whether the Justices of any county, after they had once settled the assize of labour, in pursuance of the 5 Eliz. altered it once in the course of half a century. The clause, which directed the Rate, fixed on by the Justices, to be continued, if there should be "no need of any reformation or alteration," afforded them a fair loop-hole to escape from the most arduous task, that (in my opinion) can be imposed on any set of magistrates, (however diligent or enlightened,) of proportioning the reward of labour, from year to year, *to the plenty or scarcity of the time, and other circumstances necessary to be considered*: nor do I think the following clause of the Act, (although the penalty it imposes was a heavy one,) when it is considered *who* were to decide on the remissness of the Justices, was much calculated to enforce the setting of the assize, from time to time, according to change of circumstances: "And be it further enacted, by authority of this present parliament, That if all the said Justices of Peace, "resiant within the counties where they are or shall be Justices of Peace, Mayors, and head "officers, do not, before the tenth day of June next coming, and afterward yearly, appear and "assemble at the said General Sessions, or within six weeks next after the said General Sessions, and limit and rate the wages of the said servants and labourers, or shall not consider "whether the former Rates made be meet to be continued, or to be altered and reformed in "manner and form aforesaid, or be negligent or remiss in the certificate thereof, in form "above written; that then every Justice of Peace of the county, and every Mayor or head "officers of the city or town-corporate, in whom any such default or negligence shall be "found, being within the said county, city, or town-corporate, at the time of the said next "assembly, or at the time of the said Sessions, or the times of the said Rates of Wages to be "set, within six weeks next after every such Sessions, and not visited with any such sickness "as he could not travel thither without peril and danger of his life, or not having any other "lawful and good excuse, to be allowed by the Justices then assembled for the rating and "taxing of wages, as is aforesaid, or by the more part of them, upon a corporal oath and "affidavit, to be taken and made openly before the said Justices, upon the Holy Evangelists, "by some credible person assessed and taxed in the Book of Subsidy of that county, to the "clear value of five pounds at the least, or by such other person as the most part of such "Justices shall allow and accept to take such oath, shall, for such default or negligence, forfeit, unto the Queen's Majesty, her heirs and successors, ten pounds of lawful money of England." 5 Eliz. c. 4. § 17. The reader will find the whole of this statute in the Appendix, No. VIII. p. cliii.

politicians

politicians attempt to prove, that great benefits have been derived from taxation:—"during the last 100 years increasing taxes have been followed by increasing improvement; therefore taxes have been beneficial." So, too, before the independence of America, it was said, that the colonies were the great source of wealth to the mother-country; yet, since their emancipation, the industry and commerce of England have been greater than ever; and, I verily believe, that they might still increase, without the aid of a new tax, or a new colony. They have thriven in spite, and not in consequence, of imposts and colonial monopoly: and there is equal reason to believe, that the condition of labourers, in Elizabeth's reign, was improved in spite, and not in consequence, of the statutes for the rating of wages.

It is not one of the least objections to this statute, that, by extending the authority of Justices to the rating of the wages of *any workmen or work-women whatsoever*, it must have frequently afforded master-manufacturers ample means of domineering over their workmen. In those parts of England, where the opulence of such persons enabled them to acquire the rank of Justice of the Peace, it is probable the workmen were placed entirely under the controul of their employers. The Legislature seems to have been aware that this evil would occur in one branch of business at least; for it was provided by the last clause of the Act, "That no clothier, being a Justice of Peace in any precinct or liberty, should be any rater of any wages for any weaver, tucker, spinster, or other artisan, that depended upon the making of cloth: and in case there were not above two Justices of the Peace within such precinct, but such as were clothiers, that, in such case, the wages should be rated and assessed by the major part of the common council of such precinct or liberty, and such justice, or justices, as were not clothiers¹." The Act also rendered the return of the certificate of the rates of wages into Chancery unnecessary, by directing them to be proclaimed, sealed, engrossed, and preserved among the records of the city or county in which they were appointed².

At the same time that the Legislature thus controuled the earnings of industry, it manifested its anxiety that no part of the maximum of

¹ § 9.

² § 8.

wages, which Justices were authorized to regulate, should be squandered in the haunts of idleness and immorality. In the same Sessions, an Act was passed to restrain inordinate tippling in ale-houses: the preamble of which justly observes, that "the ancient, true, and principal use of inns, ale-houses, and victualling-houses, was for the receipt, relief, and lodging of wayfaring people travelling from place to place, and for the supply of the wants of such people as were not able, by greater quantities, to make their provision of victuals; and not meant for entertainment and harbouring of lewd and idle people, to spend and consume their money and their time in lewd and drunken manner." It was therefore enacted, That if any inn-keeper, victualler, or ale-house keeper, permitted any person, in any city, town, village, or hamlet, to continue drinking and tippling in his inn or ale-house, "other than such as should be invited by any traveller, and should accompany him only during his necessary abode there; and other than labourers and handicraftsmen in cities and towns corporate, and market-towns, upon the usual working days, for one hour at dinner-time to take their diet in an ale-house; and other than labourers and workmen, who, for the following of their work by the day, or by the great, in any city, town corporate, market-town, or village, shall, for the time of their said continuing to work there, sojourn, lodge, or victual in any inn, ale-house, or other victualling-house, other than for urgent and necessary occasions, to be allowed by two Justices of Peace; he should forfeit ten pounds to the use of the Poor of the parish where such offence was committed".

From these expressions it appears, that, at this period, it was common, even for country labourers, both to eat their meals and to lodge in inns and ale-houses; but whether this mode of living was occasioned by the injudicious regulations of Elizabeth's parliaments, which prohibited the erections of cottages, and the statutes of inmates, which, (in the city of London, and probably in other corporate towns,) limited the number of inmates, in a house, to one family²; or whether it was the natural

¹ 2 Jac. c. 9. This Act, also, limited the price of a full ale-quart of the best beer to one penny, and of small-beer to one halfpenny; § 3. By a subsequent Act, however, some encouragement was given to brewers of beer. See 3 Jac. c. 11.

² In the debate on continuing the statutes respecting tillage, before alluded to, the Secretary of State, (Cecil,) who spoke

natural and intermediate step, in the progress of society, from the absolute dependance of the slave on his master for both diet and habitation, to the improved condition of the free labourer, who, at present, rarely resides under the same roof with his employer; I shall not pretend to determine.

The 43d of Elizabeth, which, Lord Coke says, was but a probationer¹, was continued by several statutes², passed in this and the following reign, and received some inconsiderable additions, relating, principally, to the binding poor children apprentices³. Of the amount of the rate annually levied under this Act, at this period, history is silent. The situation of the Poor, even after the passing of the 43d of Eliz. for providing a compulsory maintenance for them, is represented, by some authors, as exceedingly deplorable; and the assessments for their relief are said to have been so low, that many perished for want⁴. The Act of James, which directed, that houses of correction should be provided in every shire, for setting idle and disorderly persons to work⁵, must have occasioned a considerable increase to the Rate; for, although it does not specify what fund shall be applied to erect, or otherwise provide, houses of correction, yet it directs, that all the statutes in force for erecting and building of houses of correction shall be put in execution; and it may be presumed, that, by the 18th of Elizabeth⁶, (which was still in force), the expence was to be defrayed from a County Rate, not exceeding two years taxation; a very indefinite expression; but which probably signified a sum equal to two years collection for the Poor⁷. A sub-

spoke in favour of the proposed bill, remarked: "If we debar tillage, we give scope to the depopulator; and then if the Poor, being thrust out of their houses, go to dwell with others, straight we catch them with the Statute of Inmates; if they wander abroad, they are within the danger of the Statute of the Poor to be whipt." — D'Ewes, Journal, 674.

¹ 2 Inst. 733. ² 2 Jac. c. 25. § 23. ³ 21 Jac. c. 28. ⁴ 3 Car. c. 4. ⁵ 2 Jac. c. 25. § 23. ⁶ 7 Jac. c. 3. ⁷ Sinclair, Hist. of the Revenue, 2d edit. i. 136. Stevens, Hist. of Taxes, 254, 262. The author of a pamphlet, published in 1698, entitled, "Bread for the Poor," says, that "though parishes were enabled (by the 43d of Elizabeth) to make rates, and the owners of estates obliged to the payment, yet, in many places, no such rates were made in 20, 30, or 40 years after; and when they were first made, and, in many years after, the money, so risen, was inconsiderable to the present charge." See "A Collection of Pamphlets concerning the Poor," printed in 1787. 4to, p. 59. ⁸ 7 Jac. c. 4. ⁹ 18 Eliz. c. 3. entitled, "An Act for setting of the Poor on work, and for the avoiding of idleness." ¹⁰ See an instance of Justices acting under this Act, in the Appendix, No. VII. p. cxxxvi.

sequent

frequent statute authorised individuals to endow hospitals and houses of correction; notwithstanding which, it appears, from the preamble to the 7th of James, that they had not been built according to the intention of the Legislature; and the provisions of former statutes were therefore enforced by a penalty of five pounds, which was imposed on every Justice within every county where a house of correction was not built or provided¹. The salaries of the masters and governors were directed to be paid by the treasurer of the Poor²; and those alone must have added heavily to the county charges.

Lord Coke was of opinion, that Justices of the Peace were authorised, by this Act, to commit to the house of correction idle or disorderly persons, although they had lawful means to live by. He conceived, that houses of correction were the only possible means of compelling them to labour; and that this excellent work (as he called it,) was, without question, feasible; for, he says, that, “upon making of the 39th of Elizabeth³, and a good space after, whilst Justices and other officers were “diligent and industrious, there was not a rogue to be seen in any part “of England; but when Justices became remiss, rogues swarmed again⁴.” He adds, that few were committed to the house of correction without coming out better⁵. This is an effect directly contrary to that which, I fear, is produced by this species of coercion in modern times.

That the Poor Laws, even as early as the reign of James the First, were suspected to operate as a premium upon idleness, seems manifest from the language of a statute passed in 1609⁶, which declares, “that “many wilful people, finding that they, having children, have some hope “to have relief from the parish wherein they dwell, and being able “to labour, and thereby to relieve themselves and their families, do “nevertheless run away out of their parishes, and leave their families “upon the parish;” it was therefore enacted, That all such persons, running away, should be deemed incorrigible rogues; and that, if any man or woman, able to work, should *threaten* to run away, they should be sent to the house of correction, and treated as wandering rogues.

The many other salutary laws which were passed during this reign for furthering the administration of justice⁷, for preventing frauds in

¹ 7 Jac. c. 4. § 3. ² § 6. ³ 39 Eliz. c. 4. ⁴ 2 Inst. 729. ⁵ 2 Inst. 734.
⁶ 7 Jac. c. 4. ⁷ 2 Jac. c. 10. c. 23. 3 Jac. c. 7. c. 8. 4 Jac. c. 3. 7 Jac. c. 1. c. 5.
 21 Jac. c. 8. c. 12. c. 13. c. 14. c. 15. c. 16. c. 23. c. 26.

manufactures¹, encouraging agriculture², and promoting foreign commerce³, demonstrate, that a spirit of industry had taken deep root in the nation; and although its domestic economy at this period is little noticed by historians, we may infer, from the natural operation of such powerful causes as the extension of manufactures and commerce, that the condition of the people was much improved.

It was fortunate for the nation, that the folly of their Sovereign was chiefly displayed in court splendour, and in lavish bounties to undeserving favourites: his profusion, however, was counterbalanced by his aversion to war, which produced a longer peace than, I am sorry to observe, has been enjoyed in any subsequent reign. Two-and-twenty years of almost uninterrupted tranquillity must (as Mr. Chalmers very justly observes,) have produced the most salutary effects on the industry of the people; though this circumstance has cast an unmerited ridicule on the king⁴. As James, however, did not, (except on pressing occasions for money,) consult his parliament, between 1609 and 1623, we cannot obtain much knowledge of the state of the kingdom, during that period, from a perusal of the Statute-book. Of the laws enacted towards the close of this reign, the Act for securing the subject against antiquated claims, of the crown, on lands which had been enjoyed 60 years⁵; the Act for putting down monopolies⁶; and the Act for repealing the absurd laws of Henry the Eighth and Elizabeth, for promoting tillage⁷, merit great commendation. It is, however, mortifying to a philosophic mind, to reflect, that, whilst so many wise measures were adopted by the great council of the nation, neither a Coke, nor a Bacon, should oppose the law, suggested by royal superstition, for making it felony *to consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, feed, or reward, any evil and wicked spirit*⁸. It is still more mortifying to reflect, that the enlightened Sir Matthew Hale left a man for execution who was convicted on this act⁹; and that even in the present century, a British Jury could be persuaded that the crime of witchcraft

¹ 2 Jac. c. 22. ² 4 Jac. c. 11. c. 13.
³ 7 Jac. c. 3. c. 18. c. 20. ⁴ 3 Jac. c. 6. c. 11. ⁵ 4 Jac. c. 9. ⁶ 21 Jac. c. 9. ⁷ Estimate, 2d edit. 37. ⁸ 21 Jac. c. 2. ⁹ 21 Jac. c. 3. ¹⁰ 21 Jac. c. 28.
¹¹ § 11. ¹² 2 Jac. c. 12. repealed by 9 Geo. 2. c. 5. ¹³ See the "Tryal of Witches" at Bury St. Edmonds, on March the 10th, 1664, before Sir Matthew Hale, knight, edit. 1716.

could exist; and that a woman could converse with the devil in the shape of a cat¹.

The high price of butcher's meat in King James's reign, (the necessary consequence of improvement,) is an indubitable proof, that flesh meat must have constituted a very inconsiderable portion of the diet of labourers at the beginning of the last century. Mr. Hume remarks, that he had not been able, by any enquiry, to learn the common price of butcher's meat during the reign of James the First². Mr. Birch, however, in the life of Prince Henry, published in 1760, has collected the prices paid for flesh by the purveyors of the prince's household, (probably about 1610,) from which it appears, that beef was about

¹ See the trial of Jane Wenman for witchcraft before Mr. Justice Powell, at Hereford, on March the 4th, 1711—12.; and Arnot's Criminal Trials in Scotland, p. 369. The 9th of George the Second (c. 5.) has put an end to all executions for what Blackstone (Comment. iv. 61.) calls a *dubious crime*. It is said, this Act passed in consequence of an old woman's being drowned at Tring, by her too credulous neighbours, who suspected her of witchcraft. In Ireland, there is still a statute, inflicting capital punishment upon witches, unrepealed. It was passed in the 28th Eliz. and describes every species of the crime as minutely as the English statute: and even provides for the trial of Peers, who might happen to be charged with the crime. See Christian's Blackstone, iv. 61. note; and 1 Ld. Mountm. Hist. of Irish Parl. The Scotch law against witches is still severer than the English. It subjects both the witch and her confederate to the penalty of death. The Act is but a short one; and as the Collection of Scotch Laws is become a scarce book, I think the curious reader will be gratified with a sight of it. It passed in Mary's ninth parliament held in 1563, and probably suggested the English Act to her superstitious son.

"Item, For-sa-meikle as the Queenis Majestie and the Three Estaites in this present parliament, being informed that the heaveie and abominable superstition used by diverse of the lieges of this realme, be using of witchcraftes, forcerie, and necromancie, and credence given thereto in times by-gane, against the law of God; and for avoyding and away-putting of all sik vaine superstition in times to-cum, it is statute and ordained by the Queenis Majestie, and the Three Estaites foresaidis, that na maner of person nor persones, of quhat-som-ever estate, degree, or condition they be of, take upon hand, in onie times hereafter, to use onie maner of witchcraftes, forcerie or necromancie, nor give themselves furth to have onie sik craft or knowledge theirow, their-throw abusand the people: nor that na persoun seik onie helpe, response or consultation at onie sik users or abusers foresaidis of witchcraftes, forceries, or necromancies, under the paine of death, asweil to be execute against the user, abuser, as the seiker of the response or consultation. And this to bee put to execution by the Justice, Schireffis, Stewards, Baillies, Lordes of Regalities and Royalties, their Deputes, and uthers ordinar Judges competent within this realme, with all rigour, having power to execute the same." Scottish Acts, ed. 1632, i. 321.

² Hist. of Engl. 1st ed. v. 128.

3³/₄d. and mutton 3³/₈d. the pound¹. At this time the wages allowed by Justices, in a midland county, to men employed in agricultural work, were from 6d. to 10d. the day, without meat; and to women hay-makers, 4d. the day, without meat². In these rates of wages, the Justices seem to have calculated that half the day's earnings were equivalent to diet for one day: in modern times, however, a much greater proportion of the daily pay of a labourer is appropriated to the purchase of the single article of bread. Some idea of the general diet of the labouring classes in King James's reign, may, perhaps, be formed from the following particulars, (respecting a seaman's diet,) extracted from a little tract, entitled, "Britaine's Buffe," published in 1615; in which the author recommends the fitting out buffes to enable the English to rival the Dutch in the herring-fishery. As this publication is not often to be met with, I flatter myself that a short section, in which the prices of various articles are minutely set down, will not be unacceptable to the reader.

" Victual and Fuell for 16 men and boyes serving in the buffe for
 " the herring-fishing time, and the time of her setting out, and of
 " her return home; viz. from the 24th of May, untill the 21st
 " of September, which is 112 dayes; that is, 16 weeks; that is,
 " four months.

" BEERE.

" The prices of flesh as the Prince payeth, and the weight, as they are agreed for with
 " the purveyors.

" An ox should weigh 600 lb. the four quarters; and commonly £9. 10s. or thereabouts.

" A mutton should weigh 46 lb. or 44 lb. and they cost by the stone 2s. 3d.*, the stone being 8 lb.

" Veals go not by weight, but by goodnefs only: their price is commonly 17s. or thereabouts.

" Lambs at 6s. 8d. the piece." Birch's Life of Prince Henry, 449: See also Ordinances of the Royal Household, 339; and Archæologia, ii. 200.

The usual weight of oxen now sold in Smithfield is 800 lb.; and of sheep 80 or 85 lb. The prices of many other articles of provision, in King James's reign, may be found in a MS. containing the expences, &c. of Queen Anne of Denmark's household. Harleian MSS. No. 157. Brit. Mus.

² See Appendix, No. III. p. xcv.

* Owing to a typographical error, which the reader is requested to correct with his pen, this is printed £2. 3s. in the Table of Prices, in the Appendix, No. I. p. lxix.

“ BEERE.—To allow for every man and boy a gallon of “ beere a day, (which is the allowance made in the king’s “ ships ¹), that is, for the faide 16 persons, 16 gallons; that “ is just halfe a herring-barrell-full a day, that is for the “ whole voyage, or 16 weekes, or 112 dayes, 56 such bar- “ rels of beere. Seven of these herring-barrels containe “ a tun of beer; so as the faide 56 herring-barrelles-full “ of beere do make just 8 tun of beere, which, at 40s. “ a tun, come to - - - - £ 16 0 0			
“ BISKET.—To allow for every man and boy (as in his Ma- “ jesty’s ships) a pound of bisket a day, that is for every “ man and boy for the faide four moneths or 112 daies “ an 100 waight of bisket, that is for the faide 16 persons “ 1600 waight of bisket, which, at 13s. 4d. a 100 weight, “ will come to - - - - 10 13 4			
“ OATMEALE or PEAZE.—To allow, amongst the said 16 “ persons a gallon a day, that is halfe a pint a peece eve- “ ry day, that is 112 gallons for them al for the said 112 “ daies, or 4 months, which comes to just 14 bushells; “ which, at 4s. a bushell, will cost - - 2 16 0			
“ BACON.—To allow also for each man and boy 2 pounds “ of bacon for 4 meales in a weeke, that is for each per- “ son for the said 16 weekes 32 pounds, that is 4 stone of “ bacon; and so, for the faide 16 persons, 64 stone of ba- “ con; which, at 2s. 2d. a stone, will come to - 6 18 8			
Carried over - £ 36 8 0			

¹ The contract between King James and two undertakers, in the year 1622, for victualling the Navy, specifies not only the kind of provisions, but the quantity allowed to each sailor. Some comparison may, perhaps, be drawn from it, of the usual diet of labourers in that age.

The record says: “Every man’s daily allowance was one pound of biscuit, one gallon of beer, and two pounds of beef, with salt, four days in the week; or else, instead of beef, for two of the four days, one pound of bacon, or pork salted, and one pint of pease, as heretofore hath been used and accustomed; and, for the other three days of the week, one quarter of stock-fish, half a quarter of a pound of butter, and a quarter of a pound of cheese; except that on Friday only, one meal of fish, butter, and cheese, was allowed. Herrings, or other fish, according to the season, were to be provided in lieu of stock-fish.”

The allowance to the contractor was, for every man’s victuals, in harbour, seven-pence halfpenny, and, at sea, eight-pence the day. Rym. Fœd. xvii. 443. 445.

Brought over - £ 36 8 0

" FRESH FISH.—They may take, daily, out of the sea, as
" much fresh fish as they can eate.

" BUTTER.—To allow every man and boy (to butter their
" fish, or otherwise to eate as they like,) a quarter of a
" pound of butter a day, that is for each person 28 pounds
" of butter, that is halfe a firkin of Suffolk butter; and so,
" for the sayd 16 men, 8 firkins of butter, at 20s. the firkin 8 0 0

" CHEESE.—To allow every of the said men and boyes
" halfe a pound of Holland cheefe a day, that is for each
" person 56 pounds, that is halfe a hundred waight of
" cheefe; and so, for the said 16 persons, to allow 800
" weight of Holland cheefe; which, at 2½d. the pound,
" that is 11. 3s. 4d. the hundred, will cost - 9 6 8

" VINEGAR.—To allow, amongst the said 16 persons, three
" pintes of vinegar a day, that is for the said 112 dayes
" 42 gallons, that is a teirce of vinegar; which, at 6l.
" a tunne, calke and all, will cost - 1 0 0

" FUELL.—To allow, for the dressing and boyling of their
" victuall, 800 of Kentish faggots, that is seaven faggots
" a day, and 16 faggots over in the whole time; which
" 800 faggots, at 8s. the 100, coms to - 3 4 4

" Summe of all the said foure months victuall is £ 57 19 0"

The wages of the crew are high, compared with the contemporary earnings of agricultural labour.

The monthly pay of the master or captain of the buffe						
was estimated at	-	-	-	-	-	£ 5 0 0
Two mates, each	-	-	-	-	-	1 4 0
Six other men, each	-	-	-	-	-	1 0 0
Six other men, each	-	-	-	-	-	0 16 0
A boy	-	-	-	-	-	0 6 0

The author had great expectations that his project of a herring-fishery¹ would convert beggars and vagabonds into rope-makers, shipwrights,

¹ A herring-fishery was a favourite project with several writers about this period. The Author of "England's Way to win Wealth," &c. published in 1614, warmly recommends the establish-

wrights, and other useful artificans : that it would “ encourage the magistrats to punish idleness ; and enable the nation to relieve the poor, “ aged, and impotent, more plentifully, than could be done, whilst *vagrant rogues* shared in the alms of the charitable.” The plan, however, miscarried ; and, notwithstanding the sage advice of Sir Walter Raleigh, and other great men, on this subject of the utmost national importance, little attention was paid to the fisheries till the reign of Charles the Second.

The price of corn, during King James’s reign, (Mr. Hume informs us,) was rather higher than it was in the middle of the following century. By a proclamation, issued in 1523, for establishing public magazines whenever wheat fell below thirty-two shillings a quarter, rye below eighteen, and barley below sixteen, the Commissioners were empowered to purchase corn for the magazines¹. These prices, therefore, may be considered as low : it appears, from the Windsor Table of Prices,

establishment of a herring fishery as the best employment for the Poor of this nation, and the best means of reviving the trade of the towns on the eastern coast of the kingdom ; which he represents as greatly decayed from what they were in former times. According to his report, the fishing towns of Colchester, Harwich, Orford, Aldborough, Dunwich, Warderwich, Swold*, Yarmouth, Blackley, Wells, Lynn, Boston, and Hull, were exceeding poor and beggarly. At Yarmouth, he says, there were, in the preceding winter, three hundred idle men, who could get nothing to do, living very poor for lack of employment ; who, most gladly, would have gone to sea in pinks, if there had been any for them to go in.

He concludes with the following advice : “ Wherefore, seeing that we can excel all other nations wastefully to spend money, let us, in one thing, learn of other nations to get thousands out of his Majesty’s seas, and to make a general profit of the benefits that Almighty God doth yearly send unto us in far greater abundance than the fruit of our trees ; which although they be more chargeable in the gathering together, yet is the profit far greater unto this kingdom and commonwealth of all his Majesty’s subjects, increasing the wealth of the adventurers ; as also, for the enriching of merchants, and maintaining of trades, occupations, and employing of ships, and increasing of mariners, which now do but little or nothing ; as also, for the setting of poor and idle people on work, which now know not how to live ; and to teach many a tall fellow to know the proper names of the ropes in a ship ; and to hale the bow-line, that now, for lack of employment, many such, by the inconvenience of idle living, are compelled to end their days with a rope by an untimely death ; which, by the employment of the buffes, might be well avoided, and they, in time, become right honest, serviceable, and trusty subjects.” Harleian Miscellany, iii. 390. See likewise a pamphlet, entitled, “ The Trades Increase,” printed in 1615, in the Harleian Miscellany, iv. 202. ¹ Rym. Fœd. xvii. 526.

* Probably Southwold in Suffolk.

that the average price of middling wheat, (Winchester measure,) from 1606 to 1625, was £ 1. 14s. 1 $\frac{8}{9}$ d. the quarter; whereas the average price for 20 years, ending in 1745, was £ 1. 9s. 10 $\frac{4}{9}$ d.; and, for 19 years ending in 1764, £ 1. 11s. 8 $\frac{4}{9}$ d¹. It is not easy to conceive, that, whilst such high prices continued, a labourer, whose wages, on an average, it is probable, were about 8d. a day, could have been as well provided with the most important necessaries of life as he is at present. It should likewise be remarked, that many esculent plants, which are now cultivated in the fields, and, in a scarcity of corn, are found to be admirable substitutes, even for wheaten bread, were, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, either little known, or exclusively confined to the tables of the rich. Potatoes, which are now, very generally, used by the Poor in every part of England, where fuel is cheap, were, in King James's reign, considered as a great delicacy². They are noticed among the different articles provided for the Queen's household: the quantity, however, is extremely small, and the price is 2s. the pound³. In 1619, two cauliflowers cost 3s. and sixteen artichokes 3s. 4d.; prices which would now be deemed extravagant⁴; but they were then regarded as rarities, as they are still in the remote parts of the kingdom. Tea and sugar, which are now to be met with in most cottages in the southern parts of England, were still greater rarities. The latter is, indeed, noticed by many authors, even as early as the fourteenth century⁵, but continued to be very dear, even in James's reign. Tea, it is probable, was then scarcely known; and, certainly, was little used in England. Botero, who wrote about 1590, seems to allude to tea, in the following remark: "The Chinese," he says, "have also an herb, out of which they press a delicate juice, which serves them instead of wine; it also preserves their health, and frees them from all those evils that the immoderate use of wine doth breed unto us." Mr. Munn, in his Treatise in favour of the East India Trade, published in 1620, enumerates most of

¹ See Appendix, No. I. p. lxxix. By 21 Jac. c. 28. § 3, it was enacted, That, when wheat was not above one pound twelve shillings the quarter; rye, twenty shillings; pease, beans, and malt, sixteen shillings, at the port to which they were brought to be shipped, they might be exported. There is a similar regulation in 3 Car. c. 4. § 24. ² Harl. MSS. No. 157. Brit. Mus. ³ Alleyn's Diary, Lysons's Environs of London, i. 98. ⁴ See Appendix, No. I. p. xxxvii. note 2d; and *Forme of Cury*, xxvi. ⁵ Anderson, *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 178.

The commodities then imported from India into Europe, but does not notice tea. The India Company, established in 1600, does not appear to have traded to China for several years; but the establishment of a new company, in 1637, with permission to trade to China, and Japan,¹ may, perhaps, have contributed to the introduction of tea into England. No notice is taken of tea in the Book of Rates annexed to the Act² passed in 1660, for granting Charles the Second a subsidy of tonnage and poundage upon all merchandize exported and imported; but, in a subsequent Act, passed in the same Sessions, tea, coffee, and chocolate, were subjected to an excise. It is, however, singular, that the duty was imposed on the *liquor* composed from these articles, and not on the simple articles themselves³: from which I infer, that none of these liquors were made by private families, but were purchased, ready mixed, from the compounder. These duties were repealed by the 1st of William and Mary, which declares, that the collecting of them was “not only very “troublesome and unequal upon the retailers, but required such attendance of officers, as to make the neat receipt very inconsiderable⁴.”

The prices of the raw material of our staple manufacture appears to have been very high during the greatest part of King James's reign. It fell, however, in 1622, from £1. 13s. the tod, to 18s.⁵ This seems to have been the consequence of a proclamation⁶, which the King issued

on

¹ Anderson, Hist. of Commerce, ii. 372. ² 12 Car. 2. c. 4. ³ “For every gallon of coffee made and sold, to be paid, by the maker thereof, four-pence. For every gallon of chocolate, sherbet, and tea, made and sold, to be paid, by the maker thereof, eight-pence.” 12 Car. 2. c. 24. § 15. ⁴ 1 W. & M. Stat. 2. c. 6. ⁵ Smith on Wool, 2d ed. ii. 242.

⁶ On this measure, the Author of the Memoirs of Wool, makes the following judicious observations: “If we look into the history of this part of King James's reign, we shall find, that, having quarrelled with his parliament, he had dissolved it, and was determined to govern without the advice and aid of that great council; and that, being in the utmost distress for money, he had recourse to extraordinary and illegal measures for extorting it from his subjects. Now, that, under these circumstances, he should choose to prohibit, in good earnest, the exportation of wool, and thereby forego a revenue that probably brought him something, and to which he was legally entitled, is what all persons acquainted with those circumstances, the character and dispositions of that prince, will think strange, or rather incredible. It is, therefore, to be suspected, that the real intention of the proclamation mentioned, was not to prevent the exportation of wool, but either to exact, under

on the 20th of July, in that year, to prohibit the transportation of wool from England, and from Ireland, except to England. I do not suppose, that, in general, the dramatic effusions of Shakspeare would be admitted as good evidence of the price of commodities in his time; nor should I venture to quote him, but that Mr. Hume (very properly in my opinion,) has not thought it beneath the dignity of history to remark, that Dame Quickly “tells Falstaff, that the shirts which she “had bought him were holland, at eight shillings an ell; a very high “price at this day, even supposing, what is not probable, that the best “holland, at that time, was equal in goodness to the best which can “now be purchased.”

I cannot meet with any publication immediately concerning the Poor in King James’s reign before 1622. In that year, there appeared a small pamphlet, intitled, “Greevous Grones for the Poore, done by a “Well-wisher, who wisheth that the Poore of England might be so “provided for, as none should neede to go a beggin within this realme.” By M. S. London.

“the colour of licences, more money, from such as should be desirous of exporting it, than “by statute they were obliged to pay; or else, by taking less than the statute required, to “promote the exportation of wool by licences, rather than in a clandestine manner, without “paying any duty. This is a rational supposition, both from the circumstances premised, “and from the tenour of this commission, and from other circumstances, which will appear “hereafter.” *Memoirs of Wool*, 2d ed. i. 114.

¹ Hume has *a yard*; erroneously. See 1st part of Henry the Fourth, A. 3. S. 3. In the same play, (A. 2. S. 4.) we have the following charges for a tavern supper:

Item, a capon	-	-	-	-	2s. 2d.
Item, fauce	-	-	-	-	os. 4d.
Item, sack, two gallons	-	-	-	-	5s. 8d.

Shakspeare (it has been remarked,) has here fallen into an anachronism in furnishing his tavern with *sack* in the time of King Henry the Fourth, which was not sold by *vintners* till the 33d year of King Henry the Eighth, 1543. Mr. Malone, on the authority of Florio’s *First Fruits*, published in 1578, informs us, that twenty years before the appearance of this play, “claret wine, red and white, is sold for five-pence the quart, and *sacke* for six- “pence; muscadell and malmsey for eight.” He, therefore, conjectures, that, in the course of twenty years, sack had risen to eight-pence, or eight-pence halfpenny the quart, and that Shakspeare’s computation was right. This was probably the case; for, although the learned editor adds, that, a few years after Shakspeare’s death, sack was two shillings the quart, I find, that, by a proclamation in 1632, it’s price was fixed at nine-pence the quart by retail. *Rym. Fœd.* xix. 405.

² *Hist. of Engl.* 1st ed. v. 127.

The author of this tract complains, that the Statutes respecting the Poor, although excellent, were not enforced. He is astonished that “ although the commons with common commodities in some towne “ be woorth an hundred, or two hundred pounds a yeere, or more; yet “ the Poore of the same towne, unto the third part of the towne in “ number, shall not be thereby releevd to the value of fortie shillings “ in a yeare: so are the commons furcharged by the rich: and the “ profit of their towne-lands employed to beare other common charges “ withall.” He adds, that “ though the number of the Poore do “ dailie encrease, there hath beene no collection for them, no not these “ seven yeares, in many parishes of this land, especiallie in countrie “ townes; but many of those parishes turneth forth their Poore, yea “ and their lustie labourers that will not worke, or for any misdemeenor “ want worke, to begge, filch, and steale for their maintenance, so that “ the country is pittifully pestered with them: yea, and the maimed “ fouldiours, that have ventured their lives, and lost their limbes in our “ behalfe, are also thus requited: for when they return home, to live “ by some labour in their naturall countrey, though they can worke “ well in some kinde of labour, everie man sayeth, Wee will not bee “ troubled with their service, but make other shifte for our businesse. “ So are they turned forth to travaile in idlenesse, (the highway to hell,) “ and seeke their meate uppon meares, (as the proverbe goeth,) with “ begging, filching, and stealing for their maintenance, untill the law “ bring them unto the fearfull end of hanging¹.”

During the reign of Charles the First, the Legislature were too much occupied in redressing sensible grievances, and in discussing questions of high constitutional importance, to attend to the subordinate calls of internal police. We therefore meet with little information, either in or out of parliament, relative to the circumstances of the Poor, before the restoration of Charles the Second. The Acts for the punishment of rogues and vagabonds, and for the relief of the Poor, were continued²; and the laws against drunkenness enforced³: but few additions to the existing laws were made.

¹ Greivous Crimes, &c. 15.

² 3 Car. c. 4.

³ 3 Car. c. 3.

Charles imitated the example of his father, in attempting to govern without the assistance of his parliament. We should, therefore, in vain examine the Statute Book for information relative to the labouring classes of the people at this period. The following rules and orders, however, which were issued by the Privy Council in 1630, for the regulation of many important branches of police, will afford us some insight into the state of the Poor, and the progress of the Poor's Rate: I shall, therefore, as they are not very long, without apology, lay the whole of them before the reader.

“O R D E R S.

1. THAT the Justices of Peace of every shire within the realme doe divide themselves, and allot amongst themselves what Justices of the Peace, and what Hundreds, shall attend monethly at some certaine places of the shire. And, at this day and place, the High Constables, Petty Constables, and Church-wardens and Overseers for the Poore of those Hundreds, shall attend the said Justices. And there inquirie shall be made, and information taken by the Justices, how every of these officers in their severall places have done their duties, in execution of the lawes mentioned in the commission annexed, and what persons have offended against any of the said lawes.
2. Where neglect, or defect, is found in any of the said officers, in making their presentments, condigne punishment to be inflicted upon them by the Justices, according to law.
3. When offences are presented at one meeting, then the penalties of the lawes offended, to be leavied and brought to the Justices at their next meeting.
4. When the penalties are leavied, the Justices are to take care that the same be employed accordingly as by the statutes are appointed.
5. For encouragement to men that doe informe and prosecute others for offending against these lawes, or any of them, libertie to bee left to the Justices of Peace, that doe meete, to reward the informer or prosecutor, out of part of the money leavied upon his or their presentments or information.

Though the Statute doe not prescribe this, yet this is not against the law that gives the penaltie to the Poore, which penaltie, nor no part thereof, would else come unto the Poore, but by this meanes.

6. That the severall Justices of Peace of every shire doe, once every three moneths, certifie an account in writing to the High Sheriff of the countie, of their proceedings in this way; whom they have punished, what they have levyed, and how they have imployed it.
7. That the High Sheriffe, within foureteene dayes after this account delivered, doe send the same over to the Justices of Assize for that county, or to one of them; and the Justice, or Justices, that receive the same, to certifie it in the beginning of every terme next after to the Lords Commissioners. And if any of the Justices of Peace shall faile to make such account to the Sheriffe, then the Sheriffe shall certifie such default to the Lords Commissioners.
8. The Justices of Assize in every circuite are to enquire, and specially to marke, what Justices of the Peace are carefull and diligent in execution of these lawes, and the directions given, and who are negligent and remisse. And what other things of note happen in their circuits, to make report thereof to the King, upon their returne from their circuits every halfe yeare."

" D I R E C T I O N S .

1. THAT the Lords of manours and townes take care that their tenants, and the parishioners of every towne, may be releevd by worke, or otherwise at home, and not suffered to straggle, and beg up and downe in their parish.
2. That stewards to lords and gentlemen, in keeping their leetes twice a yeere, doe specially enquire upon those articles that tend to the reformation, or punishment, of common offences and abuses; as of bakers and brewers for breaking of assizes: of forestallers and regraters: against tradesmen of all sorts, for selling with under-weights, or at excessive prises, or things unwholsome, or things made in deceit: of people, breakers of houses, common theeves, and their receivers: haunters of taverns or alehouses; those that goe in good clothes, and fare well, and none knowes whereof they live; those
that

- that be night-walkers, builders of cottages, and takers in of inmates ; offences of victuallers, artificers, workemen, and labourers.
3. That the poore children in every parish be put forth apprentices to husbandry, and other handy-crafts ; and money to be raised in the parishes for placing them, according to the law ; and if any party shall refuse to take the said apprentice, being put out according to the law, such party as shall refuse to take the said apprentice, to be bound over to the next quarter-sessions, or assizes, and there to be bound to his good behaviour, or otherwise ordered, as shall be found fit.
 4. That the Statute of Labourers, for retaining of servants, and ordering of wages betwixt the servant and the master, be not deluded by private contracts, before they come to the statutes¹ ; and the common fashion of effoynging many absent, not to bee allowed of course, as is used.
 5. That the weekly taxations for the reliefe of the Poore, and other purposes mentioned in the 43d Elizabeth, bee, in these times of scarcitie, raised to higher rates in every parish, than in times tofore were used ; and contributions had from other parishes to helpe the weaker parishes, especially from those places where depopulations have beene, some good contribution to come, for helpe of other parishes. And where any money, or stocke, hath beene, or shall be given to the reliefe of the Poore in any parish, such gift to be no occasion of lessening the rates of the parish.
 6. That the petty constables in all parishes be chosen of the abler sort of parishioners ; and the office not to bee put upon the poorer sort, if it may be.
 7. Watches in the night and warding by day, and to bee appointed in every towne and village, for apprehension of rogues and vagabonds, and for safety and good order.
 8. And because it is found by dayly experience, that the remissenesse and negligence of petty constables is a great cause of the swarming of rogues and beggars² : therefore the high constables in their severall divisions,

¹ See p. 32.

² The great increase of beggars, about this time, was probably owing to King Charles's having, in 1629, disbanded his army in Ireland ; the consequence of which was, that swarms of vagabonds immediately flocked over into England. To remedy this

divisions, are specially to be charged to looke unto the petty constables, that they use diligence in their offices, and the high constables to present to the Justices of Peace, the defaults of the petty constables, for not punishing the rogues, or not presenting those that are relievers of the rogues and beggars, the law inflicting a penalty upon the constable for not punishing them, and upon such party as shall relieve them.

9. If in any parish there be found any persons that live out of service, or that live idly and will not worke for reasonable wages, or live to spend all they have at the ale-house, those persons to be brought by the high constables, and petty constables, to the Justices at their meetings, there to bee ordered and punished as shall be found fit.
10. That the correction-houses in all counties may bee made adjoining to the common prisons, and the gaoler to be made governor of them, that so he may imploy to worke prisoners committed for small causes, and so they may learne honestly by labour, and not live idly and miserably long in prison, whereby they are made worse when they come out, then they were when they went in; and where many houses of correction are in one county, one of them, at least, to bee neere the gaole.
11. That no man harbour rogues in their barnes or out-housings. And the wandering persons with women and children, to give an account to the constable or justice of peace, where they were married, and where their children were christened; for these people live like salvages, neither marry, nor bury, nor christen; which licentious libertie make so many delight to be rogues and wanderers.
12. And because the highways in all counties of England are in great decay, partly so growne, for that men think there is no course by the common law, or order from the state to amend the same: and the worke days appointed by the statute are so omitted, or idly performed, that there comes little good by them. Therefore the Justices of Peace

this evil, a proclamation was issued, commanding them to return to Ireland; and ordering them to be conveyed from constable to constable to one or other of the following sea-ports, viz. Bristol, Minehead, Barnstaple, Chester, Liverpool, Milford, and Workington: if they were found begging afterwards, they were to be punished as rogues and vagabonds. Rym. Fœd. xix. 72.

at these monethly meetings, are to take speciall care of; and not only to cause the surveyors of the highwayes to present the same; but by their owne viewe, to informe themselves, that at the next quarter sessions after every meeting, they may present all such neglects and offences, (as upon their owne view,) and the offenders there to bee punished according to law¹.

The year 1630 is also distinguished for a very singular expedient for relieving the Poor, which was recommended to the good people of London and Westminster in a proclamation issued in that year for preventing the dearth of corn and victual. It requires no great knowledge of human nature, nor much acquaintance with the modes and habits of life of the inhabitants of this great city, to discover, that such a plan, even at the present moment, (when the incentives and disposition to charity are certainly not lessened,) could not possibly be carried into execution. I shall, however, on account of it's curiosity, lay a part of the proclamation before the reader. Our wonder at it's contents may probably be lessened, when we recollect, that this recommendation to the citizens of London, to abstain from their usual meals, was made at a period when they permitted their houses to be ransacked, and could be persuaded to "preserve carefully in proper vessels, all human urine, and as much of other animals as could be collected," for the use of his Majesty's patentees of salt-petre².

"Whereas by an ancient and laudable custom no suppers were wont
 "to bee kept on Fridayes, or the eves of feasts commanded to be fasted,
 "nor upon Wednesdayes or Saturdayes in the Ember weekes and time
 "of Lent, but a generall abstinence from suppers on those nights: and
 "the same course is to this day, for the most part, observed, not only in
 "his Maiestie's most honourable household, and in the families of most
 "of the nobilitie and great men of the kingdome; but also in the innes
 "of court and chancerie, and in the colledges and halls of both univer-
 "sities, and all other publique places of good order, and in the houses
 "of many knights and esquires that are most commended for good
 "house-keeping according to the ancient manner of England, for

¹ Printed by Robert Barker, &c. London, 1630. (In the British Museum.)

² Rym. Fœd. xviii. 813.

" which

“ which this realme hath heretofore been so much honoured. Howbeit
 “ that good and laudable custome is daily more and more neglected,
 “ and that good order broken, especially in tavernes, innes, ordinaries,
 “ houses of dicing and playing, cookes’ houses, and other victualling-
 “ houses, where commonly there is more waste and excessse on the fast-
 “ ing nights, than in any time of the weeke besides.

“ His Majestie therefore doth straightly charge and command, that
 “ his said ancient and laudable custome be strictly observed in all and
 “ singular tavernes, innes, ordinaries, houses of dicing and play, cookes’
 “ houses, and other victualling-houses ; and that no suppers be in them
 “ or any of them, or by the owners of them or any of them, or their
 “ servants had dressed or provided for to be eaten either in their owne
 “ houses, or elsewhere, upon any the fasting nights aforesaid ; and that
 “ in the bonds or recognizances to bee taken of them for observation
 “ of Lent and fish-dayes, this article be specially remembred and pro-
 “ vided for.

“ And as his Majestie doeth commaund this course to be observed in
 “ the places aforesaid, so he doth, with the advice of his Privie Counsell,
 “ commend the same course to the rest of his subjects in their private
 “ families, in this time of scarcity ; and that they would, out of that
 “ which shall be saved by this abstinence, and by their sober and mode-
 “ rate dyet at other times, charitably and bountifully employ some good
 “ proportion towards the reliefe of those that shall be in penury and
 “ want, and would be glad to be refreshed with the meanest of that
 “ foode which is superfluously spent in rich men’s houses.

“ And for the same end, his Majesty, by like advice of his Privie
 “ Counsell, doeth will and ordayne, that the usuall feasts at the halles of
 “ companies in London, which at other times have beene, and may be
 “ used, be, during the time of sicknesse or dearth, this yeare forborne.

“ And because the sayd societies and companies shall, by this meanes
 “ of putting over their feasts, spare much money of that which hath
 “ beene heretofore usually spent that way, his Majestie doeth specially
 “ recommend it unto them, that those who should have borne the
 “ charge of those feastes, would allow, if not more, yet at the least
 “ the one halfe of what that charge would have come unto, towards
 “ the reliefe of the Poore ; which being orderly disbursed, will be a

"great comfort unto them, and will be a matter of great charitie in
 "the doers thereof; and being by them accordingly performed, his
 "Majestie will graciously accept thereof, and will find meanes to give
 "them their due commendation and right; as on the contrary, hee
 "shall have cause to remember the hardnesse of their hearts, which in
 "this time of want shall shew themselves so mercilesse, as not to distri-
 "bute upon the Poore, one halfe of that which they would be content
 "to spend on a feast, which may well bee spared¹."

We may form some idea of the general expences of living about the middle of King Charles's reign, from the prices directed, (by proclamation, in 1633,) to be observed in London, by poulterers, victuallers, and wood-mongers. They are thus set down in the Fœdera:

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
A fat cignet, of the best sort, until				A dozen of greene birds			
All-hallontide	0	7	0	A dozen of all other small birds	0	0	4
The like cignet, from All-hallontide				The best fat goose in the market	0	2	0
to Lent	0	9	0	The like best fat goose at the poul-			
The best pheasant cocke	0	6	0	terer's shop	0	2	4
A pheasant henne	0	5	0	A greene goose	0	1	2
A pheasant pout	0	3	4	A capon, fat and crammed, of the best			
A turkey-cocke, the best in the market	0	4	4	sort, in the market	0	2	4
The like best turkey-cocke at the				The like best fat and crammed capon			
poulterer's shop	0	4	4	at the poulterer's shop	0	2	6
The best turkey-henne in the market	0	3	0	A capon, or caponet, fat, of the se-			
The like best turkey-henne in the				cond sort, in the market	0	1	10
poulterer's shop	0	3	4	A capon, or caponet, fat, of the se-			
A turkey-cocke, of the second sort,				cond sort, at the poulterer's shop	0	2	0
in the market	0	3	6	A pullet, fat and crammed, of the best			
The like turkey-cocke, of the second				sort, in the market	0	1	6
sort, at the poulterer's shop	0	3	8	The like best fat and crammed pullet			
A turkey-chicken	0	1	6	at the poulterer's shop	0	1	8
A godwitt	0	3	0	A pullet, of the second sort, in the			
A ruffe	0	2	6	market	0	1	4
A heron	0	2	6	The like pullet, of the second sort, at			
A bitterne	0	2	6	the poulterer's shop	0	1	6
A curlew	0	2	6	A henne, of the best sort, in the			
A wild ducke	0	0	8	market	0	1	0
A tame ducke	0	0	8	The like henne at the poulterer's			
A teale, a widgeon, or a whynder	0	0	5	shop	0	1	2
A duckling	0	0	5	A chicken, of the best and largest sort,			
A partridge	0	1	0	in the market	0	0	5
A woodcocke	0	0	8	The like best and largest chicken at			
A dozen of larkes	0	0	10	the poulterer's shop	0	0	6
A quaille	0	0	8	A chicken, of the second sort, in the			
A pewit	0	0	10	market	0	0	4
A snipe	0	0	4	The like chicken, of the second sort,			
A ballard plover	0	0	4	at the poulterer's shop	0	0	5
A greene plover	0	0	6	A rabbit, of the best sort, until All-			
A dozen of blackbirds, fieldfares, or				hallontide	0	0	7
thrushes	0	1	0				

¹ Miscell. Coll. belonging to the Society of Antiquaries, vi. 217. Rym. Fœd. xix. 195.

NATIONAL EDUCATION LEAGUE.
SPECIAL NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The Financial Year closes on the 30th September.

Subscribers who have not yet paid their Subscriptions are respectfully requested to remit them to the TREASURER, 17, Ann Street, Birmingham, before the close of the month, when the Books are then passed to the Auditors.



of one hundred marks, for seventeen years, permitted the Duchefs Dowager of Richmond, and Sir Francis Crane, to fabricate farthing tokens of copper. Private tokens, however, continued in circulation till the year 1635, when they were put down by proclamation¹.

In 1646, there was published a small quarto tract, in six pages, intitled, "Stanleye's Remedy: or, the Way how to reform Wandring "Beggars, Theeves, High-way Robbers, and Pick-pockets." As this little work (which, owing, as may be supposed, to it's scarceness, has seldom been quoted,) contains several not incurious particulars relative to the circumstances of the Poor in those unhappy times, it is presumed that a transcript of the greater part of it will not be deemed unfuitable to the nature of this work; and, I trust, not prove unacceptable to the reader.

"STANLEYE'S REMEDY: Or, the Way how to Reform Wandring Beggars, Theeves, High-way Robbers, and Pick-pockets: Or, an Abstract of his Discoverie; wherein is shewed, that Sodome's Sin of Idlenesse is the Poverty and Misery of this Kingdom: By some Well-wishers to the Honour of God, and the Publike Good, both of Rich and Poore. London, printed for the Good of the Poore. 1646."

"THE recantation and conversion of Mr. Stanley, sometimes an inns-of-court gentleman: (he) afterwards by lewd company became a highway robber in Queen Elizabeth's reign. Having his life pardoned, hee loaths his wicked course of life, and writes to King James, shewing a meanes and remedy, how the Poore of his kingdom may be greatly relieved, by the means of work-houses, in all cities, market-townes, and all able parishes in the kingdom; and how, by this meanes, wandring, begging, idlenesse, and an untimely shamefull

Poor would lose the great conveniency of their copper coins. The King remarks, in his proclamation, that the Scotch copper coins, in consequence of their general currency through both England and Ireland, had been productive of general benefit. Anderson, Hist. of Comm. ii. 314.

¹ Rym. Fœd. xix. 760. It appears, however, from Drake's History and Antiquities of York, that private copper coins continued to pass till the year 1672.

" end,

“and, will be much prevented amongst manie. Idleneffe and prodigality being the grand causes¹.”

“Master Stanley, a gentleman of the innes of court, a great high-way robber, in Queen Elizabeth’s reign, being taken, and having made manie friends to the queen for his life, the queen pardoned him: it pleased God to reforme his life, that he writ a booke, and dedicated (it) to King James², wherein he revealed abundance of wickednesse in this kingdome, which is a great impoverishing to the common-wealth.

“The grand wickednesse of this kingdome, which makes the kingdome not onely poore, but also verie wicked, he sheweth to be three forts, viz.

“1. All forts of roaguish wandring vagrants.

“2. All forts of theeves, high-way robbers, pick-pockets, and such like.

“3. All such houses as maintaine bawderie, and such like idleneffe, which doth not only waft men’s estates, over-throw men’s bodies by the French pox, but also dangers their soules. Now to reforme these three grand sins of this kingdome, he saith will be very easie, if his majestie will ordaine houses of correction, or work-houses, in everie county, both in cities and market-townes, and so in these words following, he writes to the king.

“The common-wealth of England shall save as much yearly, as your majestie’s subsidies amount unto, by providing work-houses, and houses of correction, in everie countie, according to the intent of the statute, besides the quietnesse and safetie it will bring to every county, where such houses shall be erected and provided. For I do account there are about 9725 parishes in England; and if there were but two vagrant persons, or idlers, or drunkards, or other dissolute people, which do not labour for their living, in every parish of the kingdome,

¹ Here follow several quotations from the Proverbs, and a wooden cut representing a cripple.

² I have some doubts, whether this tract is not a transcript of some parts of Mr. Stanley’s book, written in King James’s reign: if it is so, it clearly proves, that the principal object of the 43d of Elizabeth, the setting the Poor to work, was little attended to, even in the beginning of the last century.

“the

“ the number were 19450 such idle persons. Now if we esteem the diet
 “ and maintenance of these numerous idle, theevish, drunken persons, to
 “ be at 3d. a day a-piece, which these idle persons spend in the common-
 “ wealth, and get nothing, it amounteth to £ 243. 2s. 6d. everie day;
 “ and by the weeke it comes to £ 1701. 17s. 6d. and by the yeare it
 “ amounteth to £ 88740. 12s. 6d. This great sum of money is spent idly,
 “ besides the great sums of money the vagrants, and idlers, get by begging,
 “ stealing, and other misdemeanours; and the common-wealth loseth
 “ that now, which might bee well saved by their labours, if they were
 “ set to work. But it is thought by some honourable, grave, and wise
 “ counsellours of state, that there are not so few as 80,000 idle vagrants
 “ in this land, that prey upon the common-wealth; which losse being
 “ estimated and valued, would amount to a very great sum, which
 “ reckoned comes to £ 1000. a day, which by the year amounts to three
 “ hundred threescore and five thousand pounds; and there is left no
 “ other way to reforme them, but by setting them, or the greatest
 “ number of them, to worke, in all market-townes, in houses of in-
 “ struction, or correction; and those that will not worke in neither of
 “ these houses, but are resolved to live a refractorie life, they may be
 “ sent either to sea, (to rid the land of them,) or sold to the English
 “ plantations, to see whether God will turne their hearts, and amend
 “ their lives, that they may not come to a shamefull end, but rather
 “ hope they may returne to their countrey againe with joy.

“ Another great singular profit the erection of these houses would
 “ bring to your majestie’s poore subjects of this realm, that if anie honest
 “ poore man or woman had businesse to travell from anie remote place
 “ of your dominions, to your majestie’s house and court, or any of your
 “ majestie’s courts of Westminster, or upon their urgent occasions, and
 “ wanting meanes to beare their charges in their journey, they may,
 “ for their better reliefe and comfort, repaire everie daye’s journey to
 “ one of the work-houses, and there be honestly lodged; and staying
 “ there two or three daies, they may earne money by their worke, to
 “ carrie them to another work-house, and so forwards to the place
 “ whereunto they would repaire, without being distressed, or wanting
 “ reliefe, or troubling the constables with passes, and not to give them-
 “ selves to begging or stealing, as thousands doe in this land, pretending
 “ distresses

“ distreffes in their journey, whereas in truth they are verie idle vagrants, and counterfeit begging, maunding fouldiers.

“ I will now divert my pen from ſpeaking any further in theſe cauſes, for the reforming of this kingdom in generall, and come neare to the famous city of London, with the two counties of Middleſex and Surrey, being the ſuburbs and confines of the ſame, wherein are a number of the king’s majeſtie’s pallaces, noblemen’s houſes, as alſo houſes of men of worth, and merchants houſes are ſeated; in which counties, as alſo in other counties of this kingdome, a number of gentlemen have left their dwellings in the countrey, and repaire to the city of London, who thereby doe bereave the Poore of verie great reliefe: I would it were amended!

“ But for a good example to all gentlemen in citie and countrey, I will embolden my ſelfe to ſpeak of a godly and charitable gentleman, one Mr. Harman, a Warwickſhire gentleman, dwelling about Sutton-Colſill, who ſeeing his pariſh to be peſtred extreamly with ſturdy beggars and wandring rogues, did take order, that they ſhould be all ſent to his houſe, and preſently he ſet them to work, to gather ſtones forth of his grounds, and gave them ſome ſmall releefe in meat and drink, and a penny a day, and held them hard to work, (having luſtie ſtout ſervants to ſee to them,) and when he had made an end of gathering his owne grounds, hee ſet them to work in his neighbours’ grounds, and paid them their wages; which thing, when all the reſt of the wandring beggars and rogues underſtood, they durſt not one of them come a begging in that pariſh, for feare they ſhould be made to work: and for the younger ſort of the idle poore in his own pariſh, this was ſuch a diſcipline for them, that they did betake themſelves to honeſt labour, and ſo the old, aged, and true poore of his pariſh, were verie much the better releevd.

“ I would to God there were more ſuch Harmans in England! but I feare there are either too few, or none at all, that do take the like care for the abandoning of idleneſs as he did.

“ The generall rule of all England is to whip and puniſh the wandring beggars, and to brand them according to the forme of the new ſtatute, and ſo mark them with ſuch a note of infamie, as they may be affured no man will ſet the mon work, and ſo many Juſtices execute

“ one branch of that good statute, (which is the point of justice ;) but
 “ as for the point of charitie they leave undone, which is to provide
 “ houses and convenient places to set the Poore to work, which ought
 “ to be done in equitie and justice, as well as the other.

“ The Poore may be whipped to death, and branded for rogues, and
 “ so become felons by the law, and the next time hanged for vagrancie,
 “ (by an act made in the dayes of Queen Elizabeth, of famous memo-
 “ rie,) before any private man will set them to work, or provide houses
 “ for labour, and stock and materialls for them. 'The publike must
 “ joyne their shoulders to the work, else it will never be done.

“ The right end and intent of punishing of rogues, is but the destruc-
 “ tion of vices, and saving of men ; but here is no care taken to relieve
 “ them. The statute commands, that the vagrants should repaire to
 “ the places where they were borne, or last dwelled : there are thou-
 “ sands of these people, that their place of birth is utterly unknowne,
 “ and they had never any abiding place in their lives, or ever retained in
 “ service ; but were and are vagrants by descent.

“ To conclude, it is verie lamentable that poore rogues and beggars
 “ should be whipped, or branded according to law, or otherwise punished,
 “ because they are begging, or idle, and do not work, when no place is
 “ provided for them to set them to work. I have heard the rogues and
 “ beggars curse the magistrates unto their faces, for providing such a law
 “ to whip and brand them, and not provide houses of labour for them ;
 “ for surely many would go voluntarily to the work-houses to work, if
 “ such houses were provided for them : so that the penalties which the
 “ statute appoints, were verie fit to be severely put in execution upon
 “ such persons that do relieve a rogue, or other vagabonds at their
 “ doores, that may go unto a work-house and will not, where hee
 “ may have reasonable and comfortable maintenance for his labour.

“ I make no doubt, (most gracious Sovereigne !) but it is evident to
 “ all men, that beggerie and theeverie did never no more abound within
 “ this your realme of England ; and the cause of this miserie is idlenesse,
 “ and the only meanes to cure the same must be by his contrarie, which
 “ is labour ; for tell the begging souldier, and the wandering and sturdy
 “ beggar, that they are able to work for their living, and bid them go to
 “ work, they will presently answer you, they would work if they could

“ get it. But if work-houses were set up in all able parishes, it will
 “ take away all such defensorie and usuall answers, and then it will be
 “ tried whether they will work or not.

“ Christian reader! if this direction of Mr. Stanley’s doth relish well
 “ with you, as a little meanes for the stirring up of the committee of al-
 “ dermen and common-councill men of the citie of London, who do with
 “ all earnestnesse endeavour to set up wayes and meanes to employ all
 “ the Poore in and about the citie of London, that so it may be a pre-
 “ sident to all the kingdome: wee say, if this paper doth relish well,
 “ then we shall endeavour to print the whole work of Mr. Stanley’s,
 “ which will contain about three sheets of paper, which will discover
 “ much wickednesse, which being suppressed by godly authoritie, will
 “ be great joy to godly people.

“ And whereas the Dutchmen in the low countries do much desire
 “ England to go on with the work of charitie, in employing and re-
 “ leeving the Poore, as they do theirs. Therefore it shall be our prayer,
 “ that this good work may be countenanced by the Parliament, because
 “ it tends much to reformation, which our happie and honourable Par-
 “ liament doth much desire and seek after.”

Of the poverty and distress of the kingdom at this period, there can be no doubt, but the civil war must have been one principal cause. The heavy contributions exacted by the Parliament, and the extraordinary supplies furnished to the King by those who remained attached to his cause, at the same time that they demonstrated the great resources of the country¹, must needs have much impeded the subsequent pro-
 gress

¹ The sums levied on the nation in the course of eight years, (including confiscations, compositions for estates, and other sources of revenue,) fell little short of 100 millions sterling. Chalmers, Estimate, 2d ed. 40.

Lord Clarendon speaks in the following animated language, of the prosperity of England before the year 1640, notwithstanding the unwise and unwarranted exertions of prerogative, or the no less unwise and unwarranted means unhappily taken to oppose such encroachments: “ I must be so just as to say, that, during the whole time that these pressures were
 “ exercised, from the dissolution of the Parliament in the fourth year, to the beginning of this
 “ (the long) Parliament, which was above twelve years, this kingdom enjoyed the greatest
 “ calm, and the fullest measure of felicity, that any people in any age, for so long time to-
 “ gether, have been blessed with, to the wonder and envy of all other parts of Christendom.

“ In

gress of industry and improvement. It is, however, consolatory to reflect, that, amidst the desolating effects of civil dissension, the nation got rid of the prejudice, (which had too long prevailed both in England and on the Continent,) that the pursuits of trade were incompatible with high rank. Hume remarks, from Lord Clarendon, that the prevalence of democratic principles engaged the country gentlemen to bind their sons apprentices to merchants¹; and indeed, even before this period, industry had taken so deep a root in England, that it was not possible for the shock of domestic warfare, however violent, to annihilate it. It continued to send forth such vigorous shoots, (even after the subversion of the government,) that, in 1651, the legal rate of interest was reduced from 8 to 6 per cent.² Mr. Chalmers justly remarks, that “the civil wars, which began in 1640, unhappy as they were, while they continued, both to king and people, produced in the end the most salutary influences, by bringing the higher and lower ranks closer together, and by continuing in all a vigour of design, and activity of practice, that in prior ages had no example³.”

Of the thriving condition of England during the short period of the commonwealth, we have the concurrent testimony of several contemporary authors⁴. The great increase of trade, high price of wool,

“In this comparison I am neither unmindful of, nor ungrateful for, the happy times of Queen Elizabeth and King James. But—the happiness of the times I now mention, was invidiously set off by this distinction, that every other kingdom, every other state, was entangled and almost destroyed by foreign or domestic wars, while these kingdoms were alone looked upon as the garden of the world. Scotland in a competency at least, if not excess of plenty, and in a temper free from rebellion. Ireland, which had been a sponge to draw, and a gulph to swallow, all that could be got from England, was reduced to that degree of husbandry and government, that it not only subsisted of itself, and gave this kingdom all that it might have expected from it, but really increased the revenue forty or fifty thousand pounds a year, besides a considerable advantage to the people by the trade and traffic from thence. When these out-works were thus fortified, it was no wonder if England was generally thought in a state of security and great happiness. Trade increased to that degree, that we were the exchange of Christendom, (the revenue from thence to the Crown being almost double to what it had been in the best times,) and the bullion of neighbour Kings brought to receive a stamp from the mint of England.”

¹ Hist. of Eng. 1st ed. vi. 123.
2d ed. 40.

² Thurloe's State Papers, 1. 472.

³ Estimate,

⁴ “When this late tyrant, or protector, (as some calls him,) turned out the Long Parliament, (in April, 1653,) the kingdom was arrived at the highest pitch of trade, wealth,

wool', and advance of rents about the year 1652², are indubitable proofs, that industry, and its attendant comforts, had not deserted the land.

It is probably owing to these circumstances that we meet with little information, except what can be collected from pamphlets, relative to the condition of the Poor, and the operation of the Poor System, which had now continued in force half a century. In a tract, published in 1650, intitled, "A cleare and evident way for enriching the Nations of England and Ireland, and for setting very great numbers of Poore on work," the author, who signs himself I. D. among other projects for employing the Poor, recommends the fitting out buffes: he calculates, that, if 20 buffes are built and put into a sea-coast town, where there is not one ship before, "there must be, to carry, recarry, transport, and make provision for one buffe, three ships; likewise every ship setteth in work 30 severall trades and occupations, and 400 persons

"and honour, that it, in any age, ever yet knew. The trade appeared by the great sums offered then for the customs and excise; nine hundred thousand pounds a year being refused. The riches of the nation shewed itself in the high value that land and all our native commodities bore, which are the certain marks of opulency." *The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell*; *Harleian Miscellany*, i. 281.

	£.	s.	d.	
¹ In 1641, three years wool, in Lincolnshire, was	1	4	0	the tod.
1648, wool was	-	-	-	1 17 6
1649, wool was	-	-	-	2 0 0
1651, ordinary English wool	-	-	-	1 8 0
After 1650, and before 1660, wool was from	-	1	2	6
		to	-	3 0 0
In 1660,		from	-	1 17 4
		to	-	2 2 0
1670,	-	-	-	1 8 0
1677,	-	-	from	0 13 0
		to	-	0 15 0

Smith, *Memoirs of Wool*, 2d ed. ii. 242.

During the time of the commonwealth, the price of wheat was very fluctuating: in 1649, the price of nine bushels of the best wheat in Windsor market was £4.; in 1650, £3. 16s. 8d.; in 1651, £3. 13s. 4d.; in 1652, £2. 9s. 6d.; and in 1653, £1. 15s. 6d. See Appendix, No. 1.

² Child, *Discourse of Trade*, 1st ed. 49. He says, that, in 1621, the current price of land in England was twelve years purchase: p. 44. It appears from Davenant, that the price of land, in 1666, had risen to 14 or 16 years purchase. Whitworth's edit. i. 359. Grant, in his *Observations on the Bills of Mortality*, written in the beginning of Charles the Second's reign, remarks, that, in the north of England, lands are worth but sixteen years purchase; and in the west, above eight-and-twenty.

" by

“ by sea and land, insomuch as 300 persons are not able to make one
 “ fleet of nets in four months for one buſſe, which is no small employ-
 “ ment; thus, by 20 buſſes, are set on work near 8000 persons by sea
 “ and land, and an increase of above 1000 mariners, and a fleet of 80
 “ sail of ships belonging to one town where none were before.”
 Among other circumstances to which he ascribes the increase of Poor,
 he dwells much on our neglect of the herring fishery, and the superior
 skill and industry of the Dutch. On the subject of manufactures, he
 complains bitterly against the practice of sending undressed cloths abroad¹.
 He therefore advises the dressing and dying cloths at home, and the
 promoting the fisheries, which he thinks will give employment to
 the “ blind, lame, and others by sea and land, from 10 or 12 years and
 upwards.” It is probable that the repeated complaints and convincing
 statements of this and other writers, of the profit that was to be ob-
 tained from the fisheries, induced the Rump Parliament, in the following
 year, 1651, to pass the celebrated Navigation Act, by which it was
 enacted, that no fish should be imported into England or Ireland, nor ex-
 ported from thence to foreign parts, nor even from one port of the king-
 dom to another, but what was caught by our own fishermen².

In 1662, the important statute, which is the foundation of the
 present law of settlements, was enacted, not only for the purpose of
 determining who should be considered as the Poor of each parish, but
 to prevent labourers, in general, before they became actually charge-
 able, from wandering from their usual places of abode; lest particu-
 lar parishes, which, from their situation, their privileges, or other
 circumstances, held out inviting prospects to new comers, should,
 in the end, be overburthened with Poor³. Previous to the passing
 of

¹ “ There hath been,” he says, “ about 80,000 undrest and undyed cloths yearly trans-
 “ ported; which, in 55 years, is neere 20 millions that would have been gained by the la-
 “ bour of poore workmen in that time, with the marchants gains,” &c.—“ There would
 “ have been gained in that time about three millions, by increase of custome upon commo-
 “ ties returned for clothes dressed,” &c.—“ There hath been also transported in that time
 “ yearly by bayze, five Northern, and Devonshire kerſies white about 50,000 clothes, ac-
 “ counting three kerſies to a cloth, whereby hath been lost about five millions, which would
 “ have come to poor workmen,” &c.

² Anderson, Hist. of Commerce, ii. 416.

³ “ Whereas the necessity, number, and continual increase of the Poor, not only within the
 “ cities of London and Westminster, with the liberties of each of them, but also through the

of this act, the industrious Poor were at liberty to seek employment wherever it was to be had: none were obliged to reside in the places of their settlement, but such as were unable, or unwilling, to work¹; and those places of settlement, it will appear from a brief enumeration of the various alterations which took place in the law on this subject, were, at the passing of the 13 & 14 Car. II. only such where they were born, or had made their abode, (if they were impotent Poor,) for three years, or, if vagabonds, one year only.

In 1388, impotent beggars were directed to repair to the place of their birth, in order to be maintained there². In 1494, the law became extremely vague: beggars, and others not able to work, were ordered to repair to the place where they had last dwelled, or were best known, or were born³. A few years afterwards the law was again altered; and they were compelled to abide in the place where they were born, or had “made last their abode by the space of three years⁴:” this was afterwards explained to be the place where they had been “for the most part conversant, and abiding, for the space of three years⁵.” By an act passed in 1597, rogues and vagabonds were to be sent to the place of their dwelling, if they had any; if not, to the place where they “last dwelt, by the space of one year;” if that could not be known, then to the place of their birth⁶. So that, as Dr. Burn observes, there were two kinds of settlement all along; by birth, and

“whole kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales, is very great, and exceeding burthen-
 “some, being occasioned by reason of some defects in the law concerning the settling of the
 “Poor, and for want of a due provision of the regulations of relief, and employment, in such
 “parishes or places where they are legally settled, *which doth enforce many to turn incorrigible*
 “*rogues*, and others to perish for want, together with the neglect of the faithful execution
 “of such laws and statutes as have formerly been made for the apprehending of *rogues and*
 “*vagabonds*, and for the good of the Poor: for remedy whereof, and for the preventing the
 “perishing of any of the Poor, whether old or young, for want of such supplies as are
 “necessary,—be it enacted, That whereas by reason of some defects in the law, poor people
 “are not restrained from going from one parish to another, and therefore do endeavour to
 “settle themselves in those parishes where there is the best stock, the largest commons o
 “wastes to build cottages, and the most woods for them to burn and destroy; and when
 “they have consumed it, then to another parish; and, at last, become *rogues and vagabonds*:
 “to the great discouragement of parishes to provide stocks, where it is liable to be devoured
 “by strangers.” Preamble of the 13th and 14th Car. 2. c. 12.

¹ Blackst. Comm. i. 361. ² 12 R. 2. c. 7. ³ 11 H. 7. c. 2. ⁴ 19 H. 7.
 c. 12. ⁵ 1 E. 6. c. 3. 3 E. 6. c. 16. 14 Eliz. c. 5. ⁶ 39 Eliz. c. 4. 1 Jac. c. 7.

by inhabitancy; first, for any indeterminate time; next, for three years; and then, (in the case of vagabonds), for one year¹. It is observable, that these regulations affected only impotent Poor, and vagabonds. Labourers in husbandry, and other employments, were allowed (both by the 12th of Richard the Second, and the 5th of Elizabeth,) to quit the shire or county where they had last served, on providing themselves with a testimonial, (signed by the head-officer, and two substantial householders of their parish,) specifying their lawful departure, and the name of the place at which they had last resided: and, it is probable, from the language of the statute, that, in ordinary cases, every labourer was entitled to such a testimonial as a matter of course.

By the 13th and 14th of Charles the Second, it was enacted, That the residence in a parish, necessary in order to procure a settlement, should be reduced to forty days; and that, within that time, it should be lawful for any two Justices of the Peace, upon complaint made by the church-wardens, and overseers of the Poor; to remove any new-comer to the parish where he was last legally settled, either as a native; householder, sojourner, apprentice, or servant, for the space of forty days at the least, unless he either rented a tenement of ten pounds a year²; or could give such security for the discharge of the parish where he was living, as the two Justices should deem sufficient³. This single clause of
a short

¹ Burn's Justice, iii. 333. In Scotland, the Poor were directed by the Act passed in 1579, to reside "quhair they were borne, or had their maist commoun resort, or residence, the last seven zeires by-past." Scottish Acts, i. 417.

² The reason of fixing ten pounds a year for the value of the tenement is, because it requires such a stock that the man is not to be presumed likely to become chargeable. Burrow's Sett. Cases, 10.

³ The 13th and 14th Car. II. c. 12. likewise directs, by section 21, that, "whereas the inhabitants of the counties of Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Northumberland, the bishoprick of Durham, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, and many other counties in England and Wales, by reason of the *largeness* of the parishes within the same, have not nor *cannot reap the benefit* of the Act of Parliament made in the three-and-fortieth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth for relief of the Poor:" the Poor within the several townships and villages within the several counties shall be kept and set on work within their respective townships and villages in which they are lawfully settled; and that there shall be yearly chosen, according to the directions of the said Act, two or more overseers of the Poor within every of the said townships or villages, according to the directions of the Act of Elizabeth. Under this clause they may, if they think proper, elect as many as four
overseers;

a short act of parliament has occasioned more doubts and difficulties in Westminster-hall, and has (perhaps) been more profitable to the Profession

overseers; but not fewer than two. The lesser number is, however, most usually preferred both in townships and parishes. The object of the statute of Charles the Second seems to have been not so much to increase the number of overseers acting for a district, as to diminish the size of districts where they were inconveniently large. (See Ann. of Agric. xxvii. 322.) In the case, however, of Peart against Westgarth, (3 Burr. 1610.) in which it appeared that the parish of Stanhope, in the county of Durham, was 20 miles in length, and 8 miles at a medium in breadth; that from the 43 of Eliz. (1601.) to 9 Geo. 1. (1723.) there had been a joint appointment of four overseers, who were chosen respectively from four different townships of which the parish consisted, and collected the Rates in their respective township; but that the assessments were levied under one entire assessment upon the whole parish, carried to one fund, and applied to the joint relief of all the Poor of the parish; and that, in consequence of an order of Justices in 1723, there had ever since been separate appointments of overseers, and each township had separately maintained its own Poor;—the court thought that it ought to have appeared that there was an inability in the parish to reap the benefit of the 43 Eliz.; and that the sessions had no power to make such an order to divide parishes, or, (as Mr. Justice Wilmot expressed himself,) “to fitter them in pieces.” Lord Mansfield said the policy of the 13 and 14 Car. II. was mistaken; that it went upon wrong principles; and that the divisions ought rather to be enlarged than diminished. His Lordship expressed himself in similar language in the case of the King against Uttoxeter, (Douglas 350.) In the case, however, of the King against Sir Watts Horton, (1 Term Rep. 377,) Mr. Justice Buller seemed to think that the largeness of the parish, (which was 14 miles in length and 10 in breadth,) and its great population, were sufficient evidence that it could not have the benefit of the statute. And in the case of the King against Leigh, in which it appeared that separate overseers had been appointed in a small township (containing only three or four small houses) in a large parish by usage of sixty or seventy years, and there was no evidence that before this period the parish had reaped the benefit of the Act of Elizabeth, the Court of King’s Bench confirmed the appointment. The opinion of Lord Kenyon, as reported, seems to be strongly in favour of subdivision rather than extension of districts for maintaining the Poor. “It has been doubted, (he said,) by country gentlemen, whether the Poor are better maintained in large or small districts, though the former has been said judicially in this court. In small divisions the officers are more attentive to their duty, and, in the part of the country with which I am acquainted, the Poor are better provided for in the small districts. Therefore, as the usage in this case coincides with our ideas on the policy, and as we are warranted by the adjudged cases on this point, we think it highly proper that the division of this parish, which has subsisted so long, should continue, and consequently that the order of Sessions should be affirmed.”

Buller J. said, that, “before a parish can be subdivided into smaller districts for the maintenance of their Poor, it must appear that they cannot have the benefit of the 43d of Elizabeth. But it is material to consider the meaning of the phrase, that a parish cannot reap the benefit of that statute. It does not mean that it is absolutely impossible for them to maintain their own Poor as a parish, for that would not be the case even if the parish were 100 miles in circumference, but that it is inconvenient for them so to do. Now, in judging

fession of the Law, than any other point in English jurisprudence. It has been justly remarked, that this law was deficient with regard to subjects

“judging on a question of convenience, there can be no doubt on the facts of this case; for
 “it is stated, that for sixty or seventy years past, and perhaps for all preceding times, this
 “parish have not maintained their own Poor jointly. I entirely agree with my Lord Chief
 “Justice, that the greater care is taken of the Poor in small than in large districts. And if in
 “any case we were to find that it was formerly inconvenient to the parish at large to maintain
 “their own poor jointly, though it were convenient for them to do so now, we would not
 “assist them in overturning the old practice; for that would operate as a discouragement to
 “the efforts of individuals to reduce the Poor Rates, which have succeeded in many small
 “districts. I even go further; for, though it should appear that a parish had enjoyed the
 “benefit of the 43 Elizabeth, yet, if they could not now maintain their own Poor jointly, we
 “would permit them to divide themselves, provided there be such legal divisions in the parish
 “as are capable of supporting their own Poor separately under the provisions of the statute
 “of Charles the Second.” The other Judges concurred in opinion. (3 Term Rep. 748.)

The *largeness* of parishes, (which is noticed in the Act of King Charles,) appears to me to be a stronger reason for a subdivision, than a great population. In a populous, but small, parish, the overseers have all the Poor under their eye. In some parts of the North of England it would take an overseer a long day's journey to traverse his parish. Nor can this inconvenience be remedied by appointing an additional number of overseers. The 43d of Eliz. mentions only four, three, or two overseers; and in the case of the King against Loxedale, Lord Mansfield said, that, if more were allowed, great inconveniences would follow. The 39 Eliz. c. 3. which is *in pari materia*, and therefore may be considered as explanatory, only allows four overseers. The only instance to be met with in the Law Books, of more than four overseers in a parish, is the case of the King against Newell, (4 Term Rep. 266.) in which it was decided, that,—where a parish consisted of two separate districts, each of which had immemorially made a separate rate; but the money, when raised, was blended together in one joint fund, though applied in certain proportions; and the Sessions did not find it as a fact that the parish could not reap the benefit of the 43 Elizabeth,—the districts were not entitled to maintain their own Poor separately and distinctly, though, since the year 1648, they had had in the whole more than four overseers, and though the hamlet part had immemorially had a constable of its own. Though the general Poor Acts, however, do not allow of more than four overseers, some of the local acts appoint a greater number. The 23 Geo. II. c. 35, (passed in 1740,) which enables the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields to appoint nine overseers, shews the opinion of the Legislature, that the Justices had not power under the 43 Eliz. to appoint what number they pleased. In the parish of St. Andrew's, Holborn, there are eight overseers; but then there are three divisions, and overseers for each; and orders of removal are made from one division to another. In the parish of St. Giles's, there are eight overseers; but only four are appointed by the Justices, and the other four serve voluntarily as assistants. (Burn's Justice, iii. 312.) It would seem that the courts would not quash an order appointing only *one* overseer, if it did not appear that others were not appointed by other orders. (Bott's Poor Laws by Const. i. 15.) Nor are the words *substantial householders*, (43 Eliz. c. 2. § 1.) always

subjects of a foreign realm. A Scotchman, or an Irishman, if they committed no act of vagrancy, could not be removed under the authority of the 13th and 14th of Charles the Second; for this plain reason, because they could never become chargeable to the parish in which they resided: if they fell sick, or from any other cause were rendered incapable of earning a livelihood, no person in this country was bound by statute, (how strongly soever he might be by moral and religious obligation,) to relieve them: however, as they might, and still may continue undisturbed, without the entanglement of a certificate, and consequently from the facility of gaining a settlement, if not for themselves, yet for their children, (born in this country,) their servants and apprentices, they were, in one respect, placed in a much better condition than an English subject¹. This glaring defect in our laws, by which strangers were rendered the only persons capable of residing in any part of England without the possibility of molestation, is, at length, happily corrected; and an English labourer is now authorized to remain, in any place which he may choose for his residence, till he becomes actually chargeable². The full effects, however, of this apparently wise, as well as benevolent, regulation, time only can shew.

The law respecting settlements unavoidably led to the commission of frauds, both by poor persons, who were desirous of obtaining settlements, and by the parish-officers, who allowed them to acquire settlements, by a clandestine residence in the parish they came to: it was therefore enacted, by the 1st of James the Second, that the forty days continuance of any new comer should be accounted only from the time of his delivering notice, in writing, of the place of his abode, and the number of his family, (when he had any,) to one of the church-wardens or overseers.

to be taken in their strict sense; for, where it appeared that a township consisted only of a mansion-house and 400 acres occupied by a lady; a small house, with one acre of land, occupied by a poor man with a large family; and a cottage, with about 5 roods of land, the property of, and occupied by, a day-labourer; the court supported the appointment of the two poor persons, and the lady, as overseers. (The King against Stubbs, 2 Term Rep. 406.) The number of overseers is not an immaterial thing either to the officers of the parish, or the persons for whom they are trustees: a greater number than four would render the office a burthen, by making it come round the sooner; and, (what would probably have some weight with the clergy,) would destroy the balance between the overseers and church-wardens.

¹ Burn's Justice, iii. 337.

² 35 Geo. III. c. 101.

of the parish to which he should remove¹: and in order to prevent parish-officers from collusively receiving such notices, it was further enacted, by the 3d of William and Mary, that the forty days continuance in a parish should be accounted only from the publication of such notice, by it's being read in the church, immediately after divine service, on the Sunday after it was delivered to the overseer².

While, however, the Legislature thus restrained the Labouring Poor from obtaining settlements by a notice, (which Dr. Burn truly observes, is only "putting a force on the parish to remove them,") it appointed other ways, by which a person might gain a settlement without the publication of a notice; namely, by being charged to the public taxes, and paying them; by executing an annual office in the parish, and serving in it a year; by serving an apprenticeship in the parish; by being lawfully hired into any parish for a year³, and (as a subsequent statute requires,) continuing in the same service a twelvemonth⁴.

Concerning these regulations, Adam Smith remarks, that "nobody can gain a settlement by either of the two first ways, but by the public deed of the whole parish, who are too well aware of the consequences to adopt any new comer, (who has nothing but his labour to support him), either by taxing him to parish rates, or by electing him into a parish-office. No married man can well gain a settlement in either of the two last ways. An apprentice is scarcely ever married; and it is expressly enacted, that no married servant shall gain any settlement by being hired for a year. The principal effect of introducing settlement by service, has been to put out, in a great measure, the old fashion of hiring for a year, which before had been so customary in England, that, even at this day, if no particular term is agreed upon, the law intends that every servant is hired for a year⁵. But masters are not always willing to give their servants a settlement by hiring them in this manner; and servants are not always willing to be so hired, because, as any last settlement discharges all the foregoing, they might thereby lose their original settlement in the places of their nativity, the habitations of their parents and relations⁶."

Besides renting a tenement of ten pounds a year, (mentioned in the

¹ 1 Jac. 2. c. 17.

² 3 W. & M. c. 11. § 3.

³ 3 W. & M. c. 11.

§ 6. 7. 8.

⁴ 8 & 9 W. 3. c. 30. § 4.

⁵ Burrow's Sett. Cases, 299.

⁶ Smith, Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. i. 214.

13th and 14th of Charles the Second), and the four other modes above enumerated in the statute of King William, there are yet four other ways of obtaining a settlement, through which it is probable that by far the greater part of the labouring Poor in this kingdom are actually settled, although the cases relative to apprenticeship, service, and paying parish-rates, appear from the Law Books to have occasioned the greatest litigation. Bastards acquire a settlement by birth¹: and legitimate children are settled in the place where they are born, when the father's last legal settlement is not known; when it is, it is the settlement of the child. However, after seven years of age and forty days, a child may acquire a settlement of its own; for, by the 5th of Elizabeth, and the 17th of George the Second, children at seven years of age may be bound apprentices; and, by residing in a parish forty days, under their indentures, they will obtain a legal settlement: women gain a settlement by marriage: and persons, who possess an estate of their own, (however inconsiderable,) in the parish, have been adjudged to be irremovable, upon this equitable interpretation of the Statute of Charles the Second, that it was enacted against wanderers and vagabonds, and did not intend to make a man removable from an estate of his own, however small it might be, whether he acquired it by descent, or purchased it with an intent to gain a settlement². In order, however, to prevent persons from eluding the main purpose of the Act, (which seems principally to have had in view the exclusion of all new comers, who did not bring with them any substantial property,) it was enacted, by the 9th of George the First, that no person should acquire a settlement by the purchase of an estate of less than £ 30. for a longer time than such person should reside on such estate³.

¹ Blackstone, in his Commentaries, (I. 363.) says, the place of birth is generally the place of settlement of a bastard child. This rule, however, admits of several exceptions. Bastards born in a parish into which the mother has been admitted through the collusion of parish-officers; bastards born after an order of removal; on the road, during removal; after the removal, and before the appeal; born whilst the mother is in a state of vagrancy; in prison; in a lying-in hospital; in an incorporated district; and bastards born under a certificate have, by various adjudged cases, and acts of parliament, been deemed to belong to the place where the mother was last legally settled. The 35 Geo. 3. c. 101. § 6. seems to do no more than confirm the decision in the case of the King v. Icelford, (Const's Poor Laws, ii. 4.) in which it was held, that a bastard born after an order of removal was obtained, and before actual removal, is not by such birth settled where born, but shall go to the mother's parish.

² Burrow's Sett. Cases, 10.

³ 9 Geo. I. c. 7.

Of the inconveniences occasioned by the Law of Settlements, Adam Smith, and Lord Kames, have spoken in very energetic, (and, in most instances, very just,) terms of reprobation. With many of their ideas on this subject I perfectly coincide. "To remove a man, who has committed no misdemeanor, from the parish where he chooses to reside, is an evident violation of natural liberty and justice; and an oppression, to which the people of England, though jealous of their liberty, but, like the people of most other countries, never rightly considering in what it consists, have, for more than a century together, suffered themselves to be exposed without a remedy." Neither of these writers, however, seem to be warranted by fact in their supposition, that the price of labour, in their own country, is far more equal than it is in England: and that the inequality here is principally occasioned by the obstruction which the Law of Settlements gives to a poor man, who would carry his industry from one parish to another without a certificate. Lord Kames says¹: "In Scotland the price of labour resembles water, which always levels itself: if high in any one corner, an influx of hands brings it down." But, (to use an observation of Mr. Howlett's,) I am persuaded, that, had his Lordship lived to peruse the statistical account of Scotland, he would have much altered his sentiments: he would there have discovered, that the price of labour is as various in the Northern part of Great Britain, as in the Southern; and the slightest view of Leeds, Liverpool, and innumerable other places, would have convinced him, that the circulation of labour is as free, and the scarcity of hands in one place as amply supplied by their superabundance in another, on the South side of the Tweed as on the North².

Although, however, there is not a greater inequality in wages in England than in Scotland, there are many evils, which, beyond all doubt, may be fairly ascribed to the Law of Settlements: in particular, the great proportion of bastard children, that is to be met with in every parish³ here reported, seems to have originated generally, if not always, from the discouragement, which this branch of the Poor System has, of late, uniformly presented to matrimony. Mr. Greaves, in an address to

¹ Sketches, ed. 1788, iii. 74.

² Howlett's Examination of Mr. Pitt's Speech, 16.

³ See the Second Volume.

both Houses of Parliament, very justly reprobates the mistaken policy of those parish-officers, who, as soon as a young man enters into that state of life, which is the most likely to render him a good member of society, endeavour to get him removed to the place of his last legal settlement, upon the pretence that he may soon have a family, which may possibly bring a charge upon the parish. "Young men," he adds, "intimidated by frequent examples of such cruel treatment, are unwilling to marry; and this leads them frequently to debauch young women, and then leave them with child in a very helpless condition. Thus they get into an unsettled and debauched way of life, acquire a habit of idleness, and become a burthen upon the public¹." Even an industrious man, who was not burthened with a wife or family, was (till very lately,) subject to be removed, if he could not give such security for the discharge of the parish, as two Justices of the Peace should judge sufficient: and that many vexatious removals must have been the consequence of this undefined authority, no one, who knows any thing of human nature, can entertain a doubt. I shall mention a single instance, which I have received from good authority, of the baneful effect of the power, which the 13th and 14th of Charles the Second vested in parish-officers, to remove such persons as were likely to become chargeable; and I do it with less reluctance, because similar instances never can occur again, whilst the Act passed last year², to prevent the removal of poor persons until they became actually chargeable, continues unrepealed:—A few years ago, in consequence of the increased population of a village in the West-riding of Yorkshire, a shoemaker, who resided in a distant part of the country, was induced to remove thither, with his family and stock, which consisted only of the implements of his trade, and an industrious pair of hands. An old inhabitant of the parish, of the same vocation, who had long enjoyed all the business which it afforded as exclusively as one of King James's patentees could have done, was alarmed at the intruder. With true monopolizing spirit, he represented to the parish-officers, that the village could only maintain one of his trade: the probability of the new comer's becoming charge-

¹ See Lord Kaimes's Sketches, iii. 73.

² 35 Geo. III. c. 101.

able was strongly urged; and his removal was, at length, determined on. The Rector, however, who was a man of property, judiciously interfered; and, by threatening to let a small tenement of ten pounds a year to the poor man, (whose only "security for the discharge of the parish" was his industry,) silenced the clamour which had been raised against him. The short sequel of the story is, that the new comer firmly established himself, and, notwithstanding a great competition in his trade, (for there are now not two only, but five shoemakers in the parish,) earns a comfortable maintenance for himself and a large family.

The inconveniences necessarily resulting from the Law of Settlements, were soon recognized by the Legislature: the preamble of the Act passed in 1697, respecting certificates, declares, that many poor persons, chargeable to the parish, township, or place where they live, merely for want of work, could in any other place, where sufficient employment is to be had, maintain themselves and families without being burthensome to any parish; but not being able to give such security as will or may be expected and required upon their coming to settle themselves in any other place, and the certificates that have been usually¹ given in such places having been oftentimes construed into a notice in handwriting, they are, for the most part, confined to live in their own parishes; and are not permitted to live elsewhere, though their labour

¹ Before the passing of this Act, certificates (very similar to the ancient testimonials,) were granted by Justices of the Peace to labourers going from their own parishes to work in harvest. The humanity of this branch of the Law of Settlement seems to have been fully equal to its policy: if the labourer fell sick, or became impotent, during his employment in harvest, two Justices of the Peace were empowered to remove him to his own parish, at the very moment when of all others he was the most incapable of travelling. See 13th and 14th Car. II. c. 12. § 3. Among the various exertions of parochial authority, instances of ill treatment of persons in this situation must, I fear, often occur. Several may be found upon record; and, indeed, it may be presumed, that sufficient evidence of the fact was laid before Parliament; since, in the 35th of the present King, (c. 101. § 2.) it is stated, that "poor persons are often removed or passed to the place of their settlement during the time of their sickness, to the great danger of their lives:" To rectify which abuse, Justices are now required, in case any poor person is brought before them, in order to be removed by virtue of any order of removal, or of being passed by virtue of any vagrant pass, to suspend the removal, until they are satisfied that it may safely be exerted without danger to the pauper; and the charges incurred by such suspension are directed to be paid by the parish to which such person is ordered to be removed.

is wanted in many other places, where the increase of manufactures would employ more hands. It was, therefore, enacted, that if any person, coming to reside in a parish, should deliver to the church-wardens or overseers, a certificate under the hand and seal of the church-wardens and overseers of the parish where he was last legally settled, and allowed and subscribed by two Justices of the Peace, he should not be removable merely on account of his being likely to become chargeable, but only on his becoming actually chargeable to the parish: and that then, and not before, it should be lawful to remove such person, and his children; and the parish, which granted the certificate, should be obliged to pay the expence both of his maintenance and his removal¹. It appears that some doubts arose on the construction of this Act, by what means a certificated person could obtain a settlement in the parish where he came to reside, and whether a certificate did not amount to a notice in writing in order to gain a settlement²; it was therefore enacted, in the following sessions, that no certificated person should gain a settlement by any Act whatever, except either by renting a tenement of ten pounds a year, or by executing some annual office in the parish. And an apprentice, or servant, of a certificated person, cannot gain a settlement by such apprenticeship or service³.

It is not only from the language of Parliament, that we collect, that, as yet, it had been found impracticable to carry the provisions of the 43d of Elizabeth into effect, for providing maintenance for the impotent, and employment for the able, Poor. Increasing difficulties in this branch of legislation excited the attention of individuals; and, in the period between the Restoration and Revolution, many projects were suggested, by men of great eminence both in legal and political knowledge, for the better execution and improvement of the Poor Laws. Sir Josiah Child, in his "New Discourse of Trade, which, (he informs us in his Preface,) was written before the year 1669, dedicates a long chapter to an inquiry "concerning the Relief and Employment of the Poor." He conceives, that the sad and wretched condition of the Poor,

¹ 8 and 9 W. 3. c. 30. This Act also directs, that persons who receive parochial aid shall wear a badge on the right shoulder.

² See preamble of 9 and 10 W. 3. c. 11.

³ 12 Ann, c. 18. § 2.

(of which, he seems to think, there can be no doubt,) is owing to a radical error of the laws, in leaving it to the care of every parish to maintain their own Poor only; the consequence of which is, “the shifting off, sending, or whipping back, the poor wanderers, to the place of their birth, or last abode.” He gives the following instance of the inefficacy of the law relative to settlements, and of the inattention of the parish-officers to the administration of that branch of their duty which relates to removals. “A poor idle person, (he says,) that will not work, or that nobody will employ in the country, comes up to London, to set up the trade of begging: such a person, probably, may beg up and down the streets seven years, it may be seven-and-twenty before any body asketh why she doth so, and if, at length, she hath the ill-hap, in some parish, to meet with a more vigilant beadle than one in twenty of them are, all he does is but to lead her the length of five or six houses into another parish, and then concludes, as his masters the parishioners do, that he hath done the part of a most diligent officer: but suppose he should yet go further to the end of his line, which is the end of the law, and the perfect execution of his office; that is, suppose he should carry this poor wretch to a Justice of the Peace, and he should order the delinquent to be whipt, and sent from parish to parish, to the place of her birth, or last abode, which not one Justice of twenty, (through pity, or other cause,) will do: even this is a great charge upon the country; and yet the business of the nation itself wholly undone; for no sooner doth the delinquent arrive at the place assigned, but, for shame or idleness, she presently deserts it, and wanders directly back, or some other way, hoping for better fortune; whilst the parish, to which she is sent, knowing her a lazy, and perhaps a worse qualify’d person, is as willing to be rid of her as she is to be gone from thence.” The author was aware, that, according to this statement, it might be retorted upon him, that much of the mischief happens either from badly executing the laws, or from not executing them at all. To this objection, however, he replies; “that better execution is not to be expected; that there never was a good law made that was not well executed, the fault of the law causing a failure of execution; it being natural to all men to use the remedy next at hand, and rest satisfied with shifting the evil from their own doors;

“ which in regard they can so easily do, by threatening or thrusting a poor body out of the verge of their own parish, it is unreasonable and vain to hope that ever it will be otherwise.”

On the laws against inmates, he has the following very judicious observations. “ Such laws,” he says, “ and empowering the parishioners to take security before they suffer any poor person to inhabit amongst them; it may be, they were prudent at the times they were made, (and before England was a place of trade,) but *I am sure in cities and great towns of trades they are altogether improper, and contrary to the practice of other cities and trading towns abroad*: the riches of a city, as of a nation, consisting in the multitude of inhabitants; and if so, you must allow *inmates, or have a city of cottages*. And if a right course be taken for the sustentation of the Poor, and setting them on work, you need invent no stratagems to keep them out, but rather to bring them in. For *the resort of Poor to a city or nation well managed, is in effect the conflux of Riches to that city or nation*; and therefore, the subtle Dutch receive and relieve, or employ, all that come to them, not enquiring what nation, much less what parish they are of.”

To remedy the evils complained of, he proposes the following plan, to be (he says) at first “ only experimented in those parts of the kingdom which are the vitals of our body politick, and which being once made sound, the cure of the rest will not be difficult:

1. “ That the city of London and Westminster, borough of Southwark, and all other places included within the bills of mortality, may, by Act of Parliament, be associated into one province for the relief of the Poor.

2. “ That an assembly be incorporated by Act of Parliament, under the title of ‘ Fathers of the Poor,’ who shall wear some honourable medal, *after the manner of the Familiars of the Inquisition in Spain*: that they have, besides the authority of Justices of the Peace, some *less limited power* given them in relation to the punishment of their own and parish-officers, who are to be subordinate and accountable to them and their deputies in all matters relative to the Poor.

3. “ That the Fathers of the Poor may have liberty to assess and receive into their common treasury, for relief of the Poor, so much money from every parish as they yearly paid to that purpose any of the three years preceding their incorporation.

4. “ That

4. "That they may receive charitable contributions on the Lord's day, and at any other time they may think fit: and that they have power to purchase lands, erect and endow work-houses, hospitals, and houses of correction.

5. "That they may have power to send such Poor beyond the seas as they shall think fit, into his Majesty's plantations; taking security for their comfortable maintenance during their service, and for their freedom afterwards.

"That they may have power to erect petty banks, or lumbards, for the benefit of the Poor; may have half of what is paid at all play-houses¹; and a patent for farthings; and to do whatever else his Majesty and Parliament shall think fit to recommend to them, *or leave to their discretion.*

6. "That the treasure that shall be collected for this purpose shall be accounted sacred; and that it be felony to misapply, conceal, lend, or convert it to any other purpose whatsoever."

With regard to the employment of the Poor, who are to be placed under the management of this corporation, he says; "the girls may be employed in mending the cloaths of the aged; in spinning, carding, and other linen manufactures; and many in sewing linen for the exchange, or any house-keepers that will put out linen to the matrons that have the government of them: the boys in picking oakum, making pins, rasping wood, making, hanging, or any other manufactures of any kind; *which* (he justly observes) *whether it turns to present profit or not, is not much material, the great business of the nation being first but to keep the Poor from begging and starving, and enuring such as are able to labour and discipline, that they may be hereafter useful members to the kingdom.*"

The advice of this acknowledged oracle in trade will ever carry with it great authority: his proposals, however, concerning the Poor, whether framed by him, or by his father, (who, he says, had much studied

¹ This idea was probably borrowed from the Dutch mode of providing for their Poor. In most parts of Holland the third part of the money received at play-houses, by mountebanks, and music-booths, and at Amsterdam half the money so received, is appropriated to the relief of the Poor. Mr. Alcock, in his *Observations on the Poor Laws*, published in 1752, says, that above £6000. a year is collected at the play-house in Amsterdam for this purpose.

the subject,) do not, I think, exhibit quite so much knowledge in this arduous branch of political economy, as he certainly possesses in others. To remedy the evils arising from a Poor's Rate by an additional tax, and to raise a fund by the coinage of farthing tokens, (the circulation of which had already been found by experience to be extremely injurious to the labouring Poor,) are expedients which shew that even Sir Josiah Child, like Necker, was more qualified to manage the detail of a counting-house, than to correct the errors of legislation¹: nor is the constitution of the society, which he recommends as the means of carrying these measures into effect, at all calculated for the meridian of a free country. Poor's Rates of ten millions a year would be less intolerable than seventy municipal despots: for such I conceive his "seventy Fathers of the Poor" would have been, (as much as the seventy Tyrants of Athens,) when vested with an authority to transport a man to the colonies, (whose only crime was idleness or poverty,) for an unlimited time, without the formality of a trial, or the intervention of a jury. The proposal is more objectionable than the harsh code of Edward the Sixth, which made a man who lived idly for three days, the slave, for two years, of him who informed against him; and we cannot be surprised, that it met with no countenance: even in the arbitrary days of Charles the Second, the authority of magistrates, who were not only to have been clothed in the garb, but vested with the powers, of papal inquisitors, would not, I am persuaded, have been patiently submitted to; and I trust, if any future political projector should hereafter recommend the converting of parochial administration into inquisitorial police, that his advice will be equally unsuccessful.

The earliest account I can meet with, respecting the amount of the Poor's Rate, is to be found in a pamphlet published in 1673, intitled; "The grand Concern of England explained²." The author estimated

¹ I admit, however, with great readiness, that Sir Josiah Child's writings contain many profound remarks, and many important political maxims. It is to be wished that the following wise and just observation was invariably attended to by Legislators—"They that can give the best price for a commodity, shall never fail to have it, by one means or other, notwithstanding the opposition of any laws, or interposition of any power by sea or land; of such force, subtlety, and violence, is the general course of trade."

² See the Harleian Miscellany, viii. 524.

the sum annually expended for the relief of the Poor to have been nearly equal to an assessment of £70,000. a month, or £840,000. a year. "This," he says, "is employed only to maintain idle persons; doth great hurt rather than good; makes a world of poor more than otherwise there would be; prevents industry and laboriousness; men and women growing so idle and proud, that they will not work, but lie upon the parish, wherein they dwell, for maintenance; applying themselves to nothing but begging or pilfering, and breeding up their children accordingly; never putting them upon any thing that may render them useful in their generations, or beneficial either to themselves or the kingdom."

He, therefore, proposed, that, instead of giving the Poor weekly allowances, both old and young should be set to work in spinning of linen, woollen and worsted; carding, combing, knitting, working plain work or points, making bone lace, or thread or silk laces, &c. He offers the following remark on the benefit which might be derived from thus employing the Poor: "if all now maintained in their idleness were set to work, and paid out of the money raised as aforesaid, those that now have two shillings or three shillings a week, might, by their work, earn so much; or, suppose, they could earn but one shilling six-pence a week, and nevertheless receive three shillings, it is half in half saved; so that a moiety of what now is collected from the people might be spared to them, and yet the Poor be as well, or better; maintained than now."

Fanciful writers have ascribed the increase of the Poor's Rate to various extraordinary causes: but, I believe, no modern politician ever thought of imputing the distress of the labouring classes to the number of saddle horses being diminished, in consequence of the introduction of stage-coaches. This the author of this pamphlet attempts to prove, in a very circuitous manner: his arguments against the use of stage-coaches are extremely similar to the objections which have been generally adduced against the abridgment of labour by the introduction of machinery; which, as it often enables one man to perform the work of an hundred, must, it has been contended, necessarily deprive the remaining ninety-nine of the means of subsistence. On this subject, however, I shall let the author speak for himself.

Among

Among his various projects for the improvement of England, his seventh proposal is ; “ that the multitude of stage-coaches and caravans, now travelling upon the roads, may all, or most of them, be suppressed ; *especially these within forty, fifty, or sixty miles of London, where they are no way necessary* : and that a due regulation be made of such as shall be thought fit to be continued.—For, will any man keep a horse for himself, and another for his man, all the year, for to ride one or two journies, that, at pleasure, when he hath occasion, can step to any place where his business lies, for two, three, or four shillings, if within twenty miles of London, and so proportionably into any part of England? No, there is no man, unless some noble soul, that scorns and abhors being confined to so ignoble, base, and sordid a way of travelling, as these coaches oblige him unto, and who prefers a public good before his own ease and advantage, that will breed or keep such horses. Neither are there near so many coach-horses either bred or kept in England now, as there were saddle-horses formerly, there being no occasion for them, the kingdom being supplied with a far less number. For, formerly, every man that had occasion to travel many journies yearly, or to ride up and down, kept horses for himself and servants, and seldom rid without one or two men ; but now, since every man can have a passage into every place he is to travel unto, or to some place within a few miles of that place he designs to go unto, they have left keeping of horses, and travel without servants ; and York, Chester, and Exeter stage-coaches, each of them, with forty horses a piece, carry eighteen passengers a week from London to either of these places, and in like manner as many in return from these places to London ; which come, in the whole, to eighteen hundred seventy-two in the year. Now, take it for granted that all that are carried from London to those places are the same that are brought back, yet are there nine hundred thirty-six passengers carried by forty horses ; whereas, were it not for these coaches, at least five hundred horses would be required to perform this work. Take the short stages within twenty or thirty miles of London, each coach with four horses carries six passengers a day, which are thirty-six in a week, eighteen hundred seventy-two in a year : If these coaches were suppressed, can any man imagine these eighteen hundred seventy-two passengers, and their

“servants, could be carried by four horses? Then reckon your coaches
 “within ten miles of London, that go backward and forward every
 “day, and they carry double the number every year; and so proportion-
 “ably your shorter stages within three, four, or five miles of London.
 “There are stage-coaches that go to almost every town within twenty
 “or twenty-five miles of London, wherein passengers are carried at so
 “low rates, that most persons in and about London, and in Middlesex,
 “Essex, Kent, and Surrey, gentlemen, merchants, and other traders,
 “that have occasion to ride, do make use of; some to keep fairs and
 “markets; others to visit friends and to go to and from their country-
 “houses, or about other business, who, before these coaches did set up,
 “kept a horse or two of their own, but now have given over keeping
 “the same; so that, by computation, there are not so many horses, by
 “ten thousand, kept now in these parts, as there were before stage-
 “coaches set up: by which means breeding of good pad-nags is dis-
 “couraged; and coach-horses that are bred, by cruelty and ill usage of
 “stagers, are destroyed¹.”

In:

¹ In the following passage we meet with some curious particulars relative to the expence
 of travelling in the last century: from which it would seem, that, if the expedition with
 which we can now travel, and the superior excellence of our conveyances, be considered,
 we can perform a journey more comfortably, and probably also more cheaply, than our fore-
 fathers. “From London to Exeter, Chester, or York, you pay 40s. a-piece in summer time,
 “45s. in winter, for your passage; and as much from those places back to London: be-
 “sides, in the journey they change coachmen four times; and there are few passengers but
 “give 12 pence to each coachman at the end of his stage, which comes to eight shillings in
 “the journey backward and forward, and at least three shillings comes to each passenger’s
 “share for coachmen’s drink on the road; so that in summer time the passage backward and
 “forward to any of those places costs four pounds eleven shillings, and in winter five pounds
 “one shilling, and this only for eight days riding in the summer, and twelve in the winter.
 “Then, when the passengers come to London, they must have lodgings, which perhaps may
 “cost them five or six shillings a week, and that in fourteen days amounts to ten or twelve
 “shillings, which makes the four pounds eleven shillings either five pounds one shilling, or
 “five pounds three shillings; or the five pounds one shilling, five pounds eleven shillings, or
 “five pounds thirteen shillings, besides the inconveniency of having meat from the cooks
 “at double the price they might have it for in inns. But, if stage coaches were down, and
 “men travelled as formerly on horseback; then, when they came into the inns, they would
 “pay nothing for lodgings; and, as there would excellent horses be bred up and kept by
 “gentlemen for their own use, so would there be by others that would keep them on pur-
 “pose to let, and would, as formerly, be let at ten or twelve shillings *per* week, and in many
 “places

In a very miscellaneous work published by Andrew Yarranton in 1677¹, are contained various projects, relative to trade and manufactures, for the employment of the able Poor in England. For this purpose he proposes that the linen and iron manufactures should be encouraged by a heavy duty on foreign commodities made of those articles. He considers Warwick, Leiceſter, Northampton, and Oxfordſhire, to be the fitteſt places for the production of flax, and the beſt ſituations for the linen manufacture; for which he gives the following reaſons: “*First,* “*their land is excellent good to produce flax. Secondly, they are in-* “*land counties, and have no ſtaple manufacture at preſent fixed with* “*them; whereby their Poor are idle, and want employment. Thirdly,* “*they are counties the beſt furniſhed, at all times, with corn and fleſh,* “*of any counties in England, and at cheapeſt rates. Fourthly, they* “*are in the heart of England; and the trade, being once well ſettled* “*in theſe counties, will influence their neighbouring counties in the*

“*places for fix, eight, or nine ſhillings per week. But, admitting the loweſt price to be twelve* “*ſhillings per week, if a man comes from Yorke, Exeter, or Cheſter, to London, be five* “*days coming, five days going, and ſtay twelve days in London to diſpatch his buſineſs,* “*(which is the moſt that country chapmen uſually do ſtay,) all this would be but three weeks,* “*ſo that his horſe-hire would come to but one pound ſixteen ſhillings, his horſe-meat at* “*fourteen-pence a day, one with another, which is the higheſt that can be reckoned upon,* “*and will come but to one pound five ſhillings, in all, three pounds one ſhilling, ſo that* “*there would be at leaſt forty or fifty ſhillings ſaved of what coach-hire and lodgings will* “*coſt him, which would go a great way in purchaſing riding-cloaths, ſtockings, hats, boots,* “*ſpurs, and other accoutrements for riding; and, in my poor opinion, would be better ſpent in* “*buying theſe things, by the making whereof the Poor would be ſet to work, and kept from* “*being burthenſome to the pariſh, than to give it to theſe ſtage-coachmen to indulge that* “*lazy idle habit of body that men, by conſtant riding in theſe coaches, have brought upon* “*themſelves: Beſides, if thus their money was ſpent, they would ſave a great deal, which* “*now, if men of any eſtates, they pay for the relief of thoſe Poor, who, for want of the work* “*they had before theſe coaches were up, and might have again if they were put down, are* “*fallen upon the ſeveral pariſhes where they live, for maintenance; which charge would be* “*quickly taken off, if they were reſtored to their work.”* Harl. Miſcell. viii. 544.

¹ Entitled, “*England’s Improvement by Sea and Land. To out-do the Dutch without* “*fighting, to pay debts without money, to ſet at work all the Poor of England with the* “*growth of our own lands. To prevent unneceſſary ſuits in law; with the benefit of a* “*voluntary regiſter. Directions where vaſt quantities of timber are to be had for the build-* “*ing of ſhips; with the advantage of making the great rivers of England navigable. Rules* “*to prevent fires in London, and other great cities; with directions how the ſeveral com-* “*panies of handicraftſmen in London may always have cheap bread and drink.”*

“*ſame*

“ same manufacture in sending their flax and threads with ease and
 “ cheapness down the river Thames, Avon, Trent, and St. Eades: all
 “ which navigable rivers come into these counties. And I affirm it is
 “ not possible to set up this trade in any other part of England with
 “ success but in these places, because in most part of England there are
 “ fixt manufactures already that do in great measure set the Poor at
 “ work. In the west of England, clothing of all sorts, as in Gloucester,
 “ Worcester, Shropshire, Staffordshire, and a small part of Warwick-
 “ shire: in Derby, Nottingham, and Yorkshire, the iron and wollen
 “ manufacture: in Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex, the wollen manu-
 “ facture: in Kent, Suffex, and Surrey, some cloth, iron, and materials
 “ for shipping. Then to counties to raise provisions and to vend them
 “ at London to feed that great mouth, are Cambridge, Huntington,
 “ Buckingham, Hartford, Middlesex, and Berks. And if you rightly
 “ weigh and consider how England is fixed in all parts as to the growth,
 “ trade, manufacture, and vending thereof, there are no counties in
 “ England that this desirable gainful improvement of the linen manu-
 “ facture possibly can be managed in, with the like success, as in the
 “ fore-mentioned counties. For as common honesty is necessary for
 “ trade, and without it trade will decay: so any manufacture fixed in
 “ any place where it may be better accommodated, thither it will go,
 “ and so remove from the place where it was first set up; and the dis-
 “ couragements it received there many times keep it from fixing any
 “ where else. About seven or eight years since, there was a proposal of
 “ setting up the linen manufacture in and near Ipswich, a town of
 “ two hundred void houses, to be had for little, and near the sea: but I
 “ coming to that town was pressed hard to give my opinion, whether the
 “ linen trade might be there set up with success? After I had rid about
 “ the town as far as Cattaway Bridge, and observed the influence that the
 “ Colchester trade had there; as also the stuff and say trade, whereby
 “ the Poor were comfortably supplied: I then found it was impossible
 “ to go on with success, and gave my reasons; upon which all was laid
 “ aside, and my reasons approved.”

To the question,—Who had encouraged him to publish this discourse
 on the linen manufacture, and paid him for the trouble he had taken in

collecting information abroad? he gives the following answer : “ I was,” he says, “ an apprentice to a linen-draper, and so I knew something of “ linen ; and finding the Poor unemployed, I with my wife did promote “ the making of much fine linen with good success. And being employ- “ ed, and my charges born, by twelve gentlemen of England, to bring “ into England a manufacture out of Saxony and Bohemia made of iron “ and tin, there I did see what I here set down ; and in Holland and “ Flanders I tryed and observed their way and manner of trade in the “ linen manufacture¹.”

Of the state of the iron manufacture, which he thinks will furnish additional employment for the Poor, he gives this interesting account : “ First,” he says, “ I will begin in Monmouthshire, and go through the “ Forest of Dean, and there take notice what infinite quantities of raw “ iron is there made, with bar-iron and wire ; and consider the infinite “ number of men, horses and carriages, which are to supply these works, “ and also digging of iron stone, providing of cinders, carrying to “ the works, making it into sows and bars, cutting of wood, and “ converting it into charcoal. Consider also, in these parts the woods “ are not worth the cutting and bringing home by the owner to burn in “ their houses : and it is because in all these places there are pit coals “ very cheap. Consider also the multitude of cattel and people there- “ abouts employed that make the land dear : and what with the benefit “ made of the woods, and the people making the land dear, it is not “ inferior for riches to any place in England. And if these advantages “ were not there, it would be little less than a howling wilderness. I “ believe if this comes to the hands of Sir Baynom Frogmorton, and “ Sir Duncomb Colchester, they will be on my side. Moreover, there “ is yet a most great benefit to the kingdom in general by the sow iron “ made of the iron stone and Roman cinders in the Forest of Dean ; for “ that metal is of a most gentle, pliable, soft nature ; easily and quickly “ to be wrought into manufacture, over what any other iron is, and it “ is the best in the known world : and the greatest part of this sow “ iron is sent up Severne to the forges, into Worcestershire, Shropshire, “ Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Cheshire, and there it’s made into “ bar-iron : and because of its kind and gentle nature to work, it is now

¹ P. 55.

“ at Sturbridge, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Sedgley, Wafall, and Bur-
 “ mingham, and thereabouts, wrought and manufactured into all small
 “ commodities, and diffused all England over, and thereby a great trade
 “ made of it; and when manufactured sent into most parts of the
 “ world. And I can very easily make it appear, that in the Forest of
 “ Deane, and thereabouts, and about the materials that come from
 “ thence, there are employed, and have their subsistence therefrom, no
 “ less than sixty thousand persons. And certainly if this be true, then
 “ it is certain it is better these iron-works were up and in being, than
 “ that there were none. And it were well if there were an Act of
 “ Parliament for inclosing all commons fit or any way likely to bear
 “ wood in the Forest of Deane, and six miles round the forest; and
 “ that great quantities of timber might by the same law be there pre-
 “ served, for to supply in future ages timber for shipping and building;
 “ And I dare say the Forest of Deane is, as to the iron, to be compared
 “ to the sheep’s back, as to the wollen: nothing being of more ad-
 “ vantage to England than these two are. And if woods are not pre-
 “ served in and near the forest, to supply the works for future ages, that
 “ trade will lessen and dye as to England, and betake herself unto some
 “ other nation or country. And now in Worcestershire, Shropshire,
 “ Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Derbyshire, there are great and
 “ numerous quantities of iron-works, and there much iron is made of
 “ metal or iron stone of another nature, quite different from that of the
 “ Forest of Deane. This iron is a short soft iron, commonly called
 “ cold-shore iron, of which all the nails are made, and infinite other
 “ commodities: in which work are employed many more persons, if
 “ not double to what are employed in the Forest of Deane. And in
 “ all those countries the gentlemen and others have moneys for their
 “ woods at all times when they want it, which is to them a great benefit
 “ and advantage; and the lands in most of these places are double the
 “ rate that they would be at if there were not iron-works there. And
 “ in all these countries now named, there is an infinite of pit coals, and
 “ the pit coals being near the iron, and the iron stone growing with the
 “ coals, there it is manufactured very cheap, and sent all England over,
 “ and to most parts of the world. And if the iron-works were not there,
 “ the woods of all these countries to the owners thereof would not be

“worth the cutting and carrying home, because of the cheapness of the
“coals and duration thereof.”

Of the benefits to be derived from these trades, if once well fixed in England, Yarranton makes very flattering calculations. Like many other writers, however, on the same subject, he seems to have fallen into the gross mistake, that *all the Poor were able to work*; and, consequently, might be employed in some useful manufacture. He says, “Admit there be in England and Wales a hundred thousand poor people unemployed, and each one costs the publick four-pence the day in food; and if these were employed they would earn eight-pence the day; and so the publick, in what might be gained and saved, will advance twelve-pence the day by each poor person now unemployed. So a hundred thousand persons will be to the benefit of the publick, if employed, one million and a half yearly in these two manufactures of iron and linen.” 100,000 persons, at 4d. the day each, cost yearly £608,333. 6s. 8d.; and as this is nearly the sum at which the Poor’s Rate was estimated by contemporary writers, it would appear that all the Poor have been taken into Mr. Yarranton’s account as persons able to do something.

His expedient for providing poor tradesmen with cheap meat and drink does not merit greater praise: it is equally practicable with the advice given to children to catch birds by putting salt on their tails. After proposing the establishment of bank-granaries, he tells the artisan: “When thou comest to have in thy possession twenty pounds; either from thy friends, or by thy own labour, then lay it into the bank-granary, some for wheat, some for malt; admit thou wast now to begin, for thy twenty pounds thou shalt have six score bushels of wheat; and three-score bushels of malt: this corn and malt shall serve thee three years, being seven in family, thy self, wife, a man, a maid, and three children. Now, my dear child, here is bread and drink sufficient, and that is a comfort; and thy self, wife, servants, and children, at perfect liberty to follow your several and respective im-
“ploys; and certainly thou art a very bad husband, if thou dost not on
“a sudden advance thy estate, and get moneys in bank-corn; because
“thou hast nothing to pay for bread and drink³.”

¹ P. 57.² P. 61.³ P. 171.

The linen manufactory seems to have been a favourite project for employing the Poor at this period. In the same year in which Mr. Yarranton published his very multifarious work, a writer who signed himself R. H. recommended the establishment of working alms-houses or hospitals in every county as the best expedient to perfect the trade and manufacture of linen cloth¹.

He estimates the number of beggars, and other persons out of employment, at one hundred thousand, who, he thinks, by means of spinning-engines which he had invented, might be enabled to earn more than their own livelihood, and prove a considerable advantage to the public. He thus attempts to demonstrate the utility of his plan.

“ I. This manufactory is an employment for the weakest people, “ not capable of stronger work, viz. women and children, and decrepit “ or aged people, now the most chargeable ; as likewise for beggars and “ vagrants, who live idly, and by the sweat of other men’s labours, and “ can no way so effectually be brought to industry and order as when “ reduced into so narrow a compass or confinement, under fitly qualified “ rulers, officers, and regular government.

“ II. These working alms-houses may raise and supply the nation “ yearly with a sufficient stock of linnen cloth, the finest sort excepted, “ if true measures be taken, and the design effectually prosecuted : as,

¹ See “ Proposals for building in every county a working alms-house or hospital, as the best expedient to perfect the trade and manufactory of linnen cloth, whereby, 1. all poor people and their children from five or six years old may be employed and maintained ; as also all beggars, vagrants, &c. restrained and for ever prevented, and so all the parishes eased of that intolerable burden. 2. Many hundred-thousand pounds kept at home, which now every year goes out of the kingdom for linnen, whereby our wealth becomes a prey to other nations. 3. Much land improved in every county to great advantage of landlord and tenant. Humbly offered to the consideration of the great wisdom of the Nation now assembled in Parliament.” By R. H. London, 1677. It appears, that Richard Haines was the author of this long-titled treatise, from an answer to it which was published in the following year by Philo-Anglicus, entitled, “ Bread for the Poor,” &c. Haines’ tract is printed in the Harleian Miscellany, iv. 464. He wrote several other pamphlets about this period, containing similar proposals for the establishment of work-houses. They contain very little worth attending to ; although their titles are very long, and high-sounding. The reader, who is desirous of consulting them, will find the greatest part in the British Museum. A list of them is subjoined in the Appendix, No. xviii.

“ for example, £1,352,000. worth of cloth may yearly be spun in them
 “ only, because that is made in private families, thus demonstrated:

“ 1. It is well known by experience, that three-fourths of a pound of
 “ thread, worth 12d. per pound spinning, will make one ell of cloth,
 “ worth 2s. per ell; which three-fourths of a pound two spinners
 “ may spin in one day:—hence it follows,

“ 2. That 2000 spinners will spin thread enough in one day to make
 “ a thousand ells of cloth, worth £100. And working but 260 days in
 “ the year, may spin £26,000. worth of linnen cloth in a year.

“ 3. Suppose then there be as many publick work-houses as there are
 “ counties, which are 52; and in every work-house, one with another,
 “ 2000 spinners, (though in some more, some less;) then according to
 “ these reasonable measures, there will be the fore-mentioned sum of
 “ £1,352,000. worth of cloth spun in one year; which is what we un-
 “ dertook to demonstrate¹.

It appears, from the mode he proposes to raise money for building the
 hospitals and providing materials, that he estimated the rental of Eng-
 land at upwards of £14,580,000. and the Poor's Rate at upwards of
 £700,000. He says, “ Suppose every parish one with another, through-
 “ out the nation, relieves as many poor people, beggars, &c. as doth
 “ amount to twelve-pence in the pound; so that every hundred pound
 “ *per annum* pays £5. *per annum* to the Poor; now if every hundred
 “ pounds *per annum* pay £5. towards building such hospital; then,
 “ whereas more than half their Poor consists in children, women, and
 “ decrepit weak persons, unfit for any other employment, but such as
 “ may fitly be removed to this hospital; it follows, more than half their
 “ charge will for the future be abated; yea, many parishes have
 “ scarce any Poor to provide for.

“ Wherefore, as for raising money, we will take our measures thus:
 “ In England there are commonly accounted 9725 parishes, and 52 coun-
 “ ties; so that, one with another, there are 187 parishes to each coun-
 “ ty; and each parish supposed to be worth £1500. *per annum*; some
 “ more, some less; at the rate of 12d. per pound, it will amount to the

¹ Harl. Miscell. iv. 465.

“ sum of £1425. in each county, which undoubtedly will compleat
 “ the house and materials’.”

In the following year, (1678,) he published another small tract², in which he says, that several very judicious persons had expressed their approbation of his proposals in the main, but at the same time had declared that they must oppose him, unless he could propose such a system of government for his work-houses, as would secure the nation in these four points, viz. the Country from being cheated of the money which was raised for building the houses; the Poor from being abused; knaves and unfit persons from being officers, and bearing rule; and justice from being checked in redressing grievances, and punishing offenders.

For this purpose, he offers the following plan. He says, that “ since
 “ all parishes are to contribute to this work, and every parishioner is
 “ concerned in the charge, and may reap benefit by it, if honestly ma-
 “ naged; therefore, because it cannot be supposed, that any people will
 “ cheat or injure themselves, let each person in every parish be con-
 “ cerned in or about the government and inspection thereof, as follows.

“ I. That it be enacted, that all contributing parishioners, or the
 “ greatest part of them, meet quarterly in their own parish, and elect
 “ one or more as their representatives or delegates for this inspection;
 “ and so every parish to chuse and send their representatives every quar-
 “ ter of the year, to inspect the state of that alms-house, or hospital, to
 “ which they do belong. Each parish neglecting to chuse, or person
 “ chosen neglecting (unless in case of sickness) to give his attendance at
 “ the time appointed, to forfeit to the treasury of the said

¹ Harl. Miscell. 466.

² For a little pamphlet of seven pages, the title; like the preceding one, promises great things. It is—“ A Model of Government for the Good of the Poor, and the Wealth of the
 “ Nation, with such a Method and Inspection, that Frauds, Corruption in Officers, Abuses
 “ to the Poor, ill Administration of Materials, &c. therein, may be prevented; the stock
 “ rais’d and preserved; all poor people and their children for ever comfortably provided
 “ for; all idle hands employed; all oppressed parishes eased; all beggars and vagabonds for
 “ the future restrained; poor prisoners for debt relieved, and malefactors reclaimed, to their
 “ own comfort, God’s glory, and the kingdom’s wealth and honour: Humbly offered to the
 “ consideration of the great wisdom of the Nation, viz. his most excellent Majesty and both
 “ Houses of Parliament. By R. Haines.”

“ hospital.

“ hospital. Each representative to be allowed 2s. 6d. a day by his parish
 “ for the time he is out on this affair on horseback, and 1s. 6d. being
 “ out on foot ; provided that none continue out above six or seven days
 “ at one time. Or, if this seem too burthensome, two, three, or more
 “ small parishes may join to this purpose as one.

“ II. That these representatives of each parish, being assembled, may
 “ have full power to elect governors ; prescribe rules and orders ; chuse
 “ trustees ; appoint offices and officers : to see and inquire into the wel-
 “ fare of their respective parishioners, who are sent thither, and see they
 “ be not abused or discouraged : to hear and redress all their grievances ;
 “ correct and reform all disorders : to call each officer and trustee to an
 “ account, and to continue them in office, or turn them out, and elect
 “ new ones, when, and as often as they judge necessary. To which
 “ purpose, they may subdivide themselves into several committees, and
 “ dispatch much business in little time.

“ III. That all men in this assembly may be of equal authority, and
 “ no one person over-rule the rest ; and to that purpose that their chair-
 “ men continue but for one day ; and so, daily, whilst they sit, a new
 “ one be chosen by themselves : and who shall also, before they are
 “ admitted, oblige themselves by oath, or solemn promises, to do those
 “ things that are just and honest : to suffer no wrongs or injuries to pass
 “ uncorrected : to do nothing for favour or prejudice : but to perform
 “ all that lies in his power for the safety and public good of the stock
 “ and house ; and to give a just and true account to the parish at his
 “ return, when they shall call for it.

“ IV. That no known drunkard, gamester, swearer, or rude and
 “ disorderly person, shall be permitted to have any office in that go-
 “ vernment ; but that, for the encouragement of such as are sent to
 “ the house to earn their living, all inferiour offices, or places of prefer-
 “ ment, may be conferred on such of the house as most deserve, if
 “ capable.

“ V. That if it be known any person or persons, directly or indirect-
 “ ly, hath given or taken any bribe or fee, or offered so to do, in order
 “ to obtain, or confer, any office or trust, or do improve his interest to
 “ promote or continue any drunkard, gamester, or dishonest and scan-
 “ dalous person in office ; that then every such person shall thence-
 “ forth

“ forth for ever be incapable of having or holding any office in the said
 “ work-houses, or giving any vote concerning the same in any assembly
 “ parochial or representative.

“ VI. That the assembly of representatives have power to enjoin all
 “ officers and trustees, either by oath or solemn promise, that they shall
 “ act according to such rules and orders as shall be agreed on in the
 “ said assembly : that they shall not conceal any wrongs or ill practices
 “ in any concerned in the government, but discover the same to the
 “ next assembly : that they shall, every quarter, give a fair and just ac-
 “ count to that assembly of all monies by them received or disbursed ;
 “ what goods they buy or sell, and the quantities and prices ; and what
 “ goods or money they have in their custody. And that any one breach
 “ of their oath or promise herein shall be punished as in the case of
 “ perjury ; and besides, the offender to make satisfaction for what he
 “ hath detained, embezzled, or defrauded, to the house, or those that
 “ entrusted him.

“ VII. That for the building and first stocking such work-houses,
 “ every parish and parishes, united as aforesaid, shall, (till the same are
 “ finished, and government settled,) send such their representatives every
 “ fortnight or four weeks, who shall carry the portion of money pay-
 “ able thereunto by such parishes respectively. And that all expeditors,
 “ overseers, and trustees employed for carrying on the work, shall be
 “ chosen by such representatives, and be accountable to them every fort-
 “ night, till the house be finished and settled as aforesaid.”

He recommends filling the work-houses with the children of poor
 persons who are chargeable to the parish ; and to send them out to trades,
 or service in husbandry, at the age of thirteen or fourteen : and that
 persons imprisoned for debt, vagrants, and felons, (except those who
 have been convicted of murder or treason,) be sent thither. He adds,
 that if there be any doubt whether the inhabitants of the respective
 houses will be able to maintain themselves, his answer is, “ that a
 “ man who hath his strength may, by reasonable labour, earn 18d. a day ;
 “ a woman 9d. or 10d. a day. Men or women, who are impotent, and
 “ can do nothing but sit still and employ their hands, may earn with
 “ ease 8, 9, or 10d. a day : yea, any one that could earn 6d. a day here-
 “ tofore, shall in this house as easily earn 9d. or 10d. a day. A child of a

“ moderate understanding, at four or five years old, which cost the
 “ parish 1s. 6d. or 2s. per week keeping, may, after two months teach-
 “ ing, earn 3d. per day the first year; the second year 5d. a day; the
 “ third year 7d. a day, and the fourth year 9d. a day: so that at nine
 “ years of age they may earn more than any woman by the same kind
 “ of employment can do without the help of our engine: so that all
 “ may live comfortably on so easy an employment as cannot possibly do
 “ them hurt. And by this means all the nation will suddenly be
 “ brought up to such an excellent profitable way of industry, that no
 “ nation in the world can exceed us, which, without this expedient,
 “ can never be effected with such expedition, profit, and ease.”

Mr. Haines published several small tracts relative to the Poor, chiefly with a view to promote the establishment of work-houses. Most of them are to be found in the British Museum: but as they contain little more than long high-sounding titles, I feel it is extremely unnecessary to trouble the reader with extracts that could afford him very little information.

In 1678, Mr. Thomas Firmin published a letter to a friend, (Archbishop Tillotson,) entitled, “ Proposals for the employing of the Poor, especially in and about London.” It appears to have attracted considerable notice; for, in 1681, it was re-published, with considerable additions¹. His interesting account of an establishment, which he had set

on

¹ Both letters are re-published in a collection of pamphlets concerning the Poor, in quarto, printed in the year 1787.—Mr. Thomas Firmin, (whom Abp. Tillotson, in his sermon at the funeral of the Rev. Mr. Thomas Gouge, calls “ a worthy and useful citizen,”) was born at Ipswich in Suffolk, in 1632; where he served an apprenticeship to a linen-draper. Early in life he seems to have been deeply involved in the perplexing subtleties of Sectarian controversy: and at length attached himself closely to the celebrated Socinian, Mr. John Biddle. When this noted leader of his party, in 1648, was put into Newgate, his zealous disciple, Firmin, delivered a petition in his behalf to the Protector, who gave him this short answer: “ Why, you carle-pate boy you! do you think I’ll shew any favour to a man, who denies his Saviour, and disturbs the Government?”—Soon after, he became a considerable trader in London; by which he might have acquired a very considerable fortune, had he not been employed in all conceivable methods of serving the public. Improving on a plan, as Archbishop Tillotson says, first set on foot by Mr. Gouge, “ many hundreds of poor children, and others, who lived before unprofitable both to themselves and to the public, were continually maintained at work, and taught to earn their own livelihood much in the same way.

“ The

on foot for providing work for the Poor in the parish of Aldersgate, London, contains many judicious observations, extremely applicable to similar institutions, and will, I trust, be not unacceptable to the reader.

Of the motives that influenced him to embark in this undertaking, he says :

“ Having found many poor people, to whom I distributed the charity
 “ of several worthy persons, either to have no employment at all, or at
 “ least none that was certain and constant, by means whereof they were
 “ reduced to great necessity; I got a friend to buy flax ready dressed,
 “ and deliver it to such poor people as either could spin, or were willing
 “ to learn : now of these in a short time he had so many that did con-
 “ stantly (or at such times when they had no other or better employ-
 “ ment) fall upon this work, that it became one man’s business to
 “ attend it; which my friend not being able to do, I resolved to build a
 “ house fit for the laying up hemp and flax, and convenient for the dress-
 “ ing them; by which means I hoped to have them much cheaper, and

“ The generous assistance and charity of many worthy and well-disposed persons, of all ranks,
 “ enabled him to bear the unavoidable loss and charge of so vast an undertaking : and his
 “ own forward inclination to charity, and unwearied diligence and activity, fitted him, in an
 “ extraordinary manner, to go through the incredible pains of it.”

His charity was so unconfined and impartial, that he began to exert himself in collecting money for the deprived nonjurors, upon the foot of a scheme drawn up by Mr. Kettlewell ; till he was deterred from proceeding in it by some of his great friends, who told him that his scheme was illegal, being calculated for the support of the enemies of government.

His heterodoxy was so avowed and notorious, that the good Archbishop himself did not escape the imputation of Socinianism ; merely, as may be supposed, from his acquaintance with Firmin ; who yet should rather, as it would seem, have been called an Arian, than a Socinian. Yet, when the Archbishop, not long after, published four sermons in defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, Firmin was the foremost to answer them : and his answer is such an one as might be expected from a man of considerable acuteness and clearness of understanding, totally unacquainted with the learned languages, and logic and philosophy, and withall not a little bigoted to his own sect or party. Bishop Burnet speaks of him as remarkably industrious in propagating pamphlets and books, written in favour of his own opinions, after the Revolution. He died on the 20th of December 1697, in the 66th year of his age ; being attended in his last illness by his intimate friend Dr. Edward Fowler, who had been advanced to the see of Gloucester in July 1691.

This account is extracted from Dr. Birch’s Life of Abp. Tillotson, p. 319; and from the Abp.’s Sermon on the death of Mr. Gouge.—See Tillotson’s Works, 9th ed. 1728. i. 212.

“ to employ servants of my own, who should manage this new trade in
 “ such a way as should be with the least loss and disadvantage.

“ This building I soon erected in the parish of Aldersgate, to which
 “ place I directed all the poor people above mentioned to go and receive
 “ flax; and, when they had spun it, to carry it to the same place, and
 “ receive their money for it; which I found to be very much for the
 “ help and relief of many Poor; some of them being able to earn three-
 “ pence, and some four-pence a day, working only at such times as
 “ they could spare from their other necessary occasions; who being to
 “ work in their own houses, and when they could with most conveni-
 “ ence attend it, many of them became so much pleased with it, that
 “ so much money given them for doing nothing would not have done
 “ them half so much good as that which they got by their own labour
 “ in this employment.

“ By which experiment, I perceived, that the only way to provide for
 “ our Poor, and to bring them to labour, is to provide such work for
 “ them as they may do at their own homes; which, though never so
 “ mean and homely, is more desired than any other place; and the way
 “ which several persons have proposed, of bringing them to a public
 “ work-house, will never effect the end intended: for, suppose a woman
 “ hath a sick husband or child, or some infirmity upon herself, in all such
 “ cases she may do something at home, but cannot leave her own house.
 “ And supposing that none of these should happen, which yet is very
 “ frequent, not one person of twenty will endure the thoughts of work-
 “ ing at a public work-house. True indeed, for vagrants and sturdy
 “ beggars who have no habitation, and must be held to their labour as
 “ galley-slaves are tied to their oars, such public work-houses are
 “ very necessary; and I wish we had more of them, and that those we
 “ have were employed to this purpose, to which they were at first de-
 “ signed and intended: but for such poor people as have habitations of
 “ their own, and who are known in the parish where they live, and
 “ would take pains at home, it is altogether unreasonable and unprofit-
 “ able (in my judgment) to force them to a public work-house.

“ If any parish that abounds with poor people would set up a school
 “ in the nature of a work-house, to teach poor children to work, who
 “ wander

“wander up and down the parish and parts adjacent, and between begging and stealing get a sorry living, but never bring any thing unto their parents, nor earn one farthing towards their own maintenance, it would in a short time be found very advantageous, not only to the poor children, who by this means, whilst young, should be inured to labour, and taught to get their own living, but also to their parents, who should hereby both be freed from any charge by keeping them, and also in time be helped by their labour, as it is in other places.

“And further, the parish would by this means be freed from much charge that now they are at, either to keep these children, or to allow their parents something toward it; nothing being thought a greater argument for a large pension, than that a man or woman hath six or seven children; whereas, unless they were all born at one time, or came faster into the world than ordinarily so many children do, it is very hard if some of them be not able to work for themselves. I myself have at this time some children working to me, not above seven or eight years old, who are able to earn two-pence a day, and some, that are but a little older, two shillings a week; and I doubt not to bring any child about that age to do the like: and still as they grow up and become proficient, even in this poor trade of spinning, they will be able to get more and spin better than older people. Neither would I have these schools confined only to spinning, but to take in knitting, and making of lace or plain-work, or any other work which the children shall be thought most fit for; and this is that which (as I am informed,) is practised in other countries with so great advantage, that there are few poor children, who have attained the age of seven or eight years, that are any charge to the parish or burden to their poor parents; and Mr. Chamberlain, (in his book entitled, *The Present State of England*, p. 137,) hath observed, that in the city of Norwich it hath been of late years computed and found, that (yearly) children from six to ten years of age have gained twelve thousand pounds more than what they have spent, and that chiefly by knitting fine jersey stockings’.”

In a subsequent part of his letter, he gives the following interesting account of his work-house. He says—"The house being finished, I acquainted the parish of St. Botolphs, Aldersgate, that if they had any poor people who wanted employment, and would work, I would supply them therewith, upon these conditions, viz. that they should not take away their pensions from any I employed, nor give pensions to any but such as would, being able, follow this or some other employment towards their own maintenance; by means of which, and the pension received from the parish, they might be provided for without begging: for I have long observed, that a very great number of those persons that are found begging in the streets, are such as do receive some pension from the parish in which they live, but that being too small to maintain them without work, they make up the rest by begging; which, I conceive, might very easily be prevented by the inhabitants of every parish, as it is already in that we are now speaking of; there being no person here who hath a pension and is able to work, but is supplied therewith; and with these together are enabled to make good provision for themselves, and live much more happily than before. And if at any time any of these persons should be found begging in the streets, the parish hath promised to take away their pensions, and I have assured them to take away their work, and let them shift for themselves as they can, which must be by begging or stealing; but wherever they beg, it shall not be in this parish, or at least not with any good success: for the parish, having called over all their poor people, and appointed work for those that are able, have thought it convenient to give a badge, with the three first letters of the parish's name upon it, to such, and only such, as they found incapable of any labour; by virtue of which badge they are permitted to go into the parish at such an hour of the day, and receive such broken bread and meat as their neighbours have to give; who also have promised to give it to those, and to no others: for by this badge, which is made of blue and yellow bays, pinned upon their sleeve or breast, they are known by the inhabitants to be those very persons whom the deputy, common-council men, and church-wardens, have judged fit to receive such charity. And I know not why

“any body should be offended, that the parishioners should invite their
 “poor neighbours once a day to come to their houses, to receive such
 “bread and meat as they are willing to bestow; neither would I have
 “these poor people go under such a dishonourable name as beggars,
 “but to be called invited guests¹.”

He is aware that there were some objections to his plan; particularly, that it would be difficult to find a sufficient capital and stock of materials to employ all the Poor who might apply for work. To obviate this difficulty, he answers, that “there are few parishes but are stocked
 “either with money, or with so many good men as would willingly
 “lend gratis, if not give considerably toward, the carrying on of so
 “good a work as is the employing the Poor; but in case either of these
 “should fail, the parish may as easily raise a stock to set the poor
 “people at work, as raise money by a rate to keep them in idleness.
 “It is very well known that some parishes about London do raise some
 “thousands of pounds *per annum* for the relief of their Poor; and yet,
 “as the matter is handled, very few who are not, through age or sickness,
 “confined to their houses, but do beg up and down the streets.
 “To prevent which, I know no better way than by providing work for
 “all such as are able; and when this is done, if they will not work,
 “nor be kept from begging, their pensions should be taken away, and
 “their persons secured as idle beggars, in a house of correction, where
 “they shall be made to work, or forbid to eat, according as the
 “apostle St. Paul adviseth.

“But further, to encourage the setting up of this linen manufacture
 “for the use of the Poor, I desire it may be considered, that there is no
 “commodity I know of, of the like value, that can be set up with less
 “stock: three parts of four, even of that cloth which comes not to
 “above 2s. an ell, will be paid for work to the spinner and weaver;
 “and many times a woman will spin a pound of flax, that cost but six-
 “pence or seven-pence, to that fineness that she will receive twelve-
 “pence or fourteen-pence for her pains; which will make an ell of cloth
 “worth three shillings, at which rate five parts of six will be paid for
 “labour: nay sometimes I have seen a pound of flax not worth above

¹ Collection, &c. p. 6; 7.

“ 1s. 6d. at most, spun to that fineness that the pound of thread made
 “ of it hath been worth eight or ten shillings; and in other parts I have
 “ seen a pound of flax, not much higher in value, spun to that fineness
 “ that it hath been worth three or four pound sterling; which is a great
 “ encouragement to falling upon this trade, and bringing young chil-
 “ dren to this employment, who in a few years may arrive to as great
 “ proficiency as in other countries; whereas now, for the most part,
 “ our poor children are brought up in sloth and idleness, and taught
 “ nothing in their younger years, when they are most fit to learn, what
 “ might serve to maintain them when they are old. And for these
 “ children more especially, which are kept upon charity, either by the
 “ several parishes, or in hospitals, nothing can be more adviseable, (in
 “ my poor judgment,) than that all these children, except some few that
 “ may be designed for more liberal employments, should, together with
 “ their learning to read, be taught to work, as in Holland and other
 “ places, and not all their time, from 7 to 15 years, spent in play, or
 “ poring upon a book; for by this means they get such a habit of idle-
 “ ness, that very often they will not take to any labour at all; or if they
 “ are forced unto it, it is with great reluctance: whereas, if whilst
 “ young they were taught to work, they would fall in love with it, and
 “ if old would not depart from it.

“ Moreover, I desire it may be considered, that, in this trade, all sorts
 “ of persons, whether young or old, male or female, may find employ-
 “ ment; if of years able, they may beat hemp, dress flax, or make
 “ them ready for the spinster; and when spun, may be employed in
 “ weaving it; and those of both sexes that are not able for these, may
 “ be put to spinning: and why boys, while young, as well as girls, may
 “ not take to it in England for want of other employment, as in other
 “ places, I see no reason.

“ OBJ. The next objection that I have met with is this; What will
 “ you do with all the yarn these people shall spin? If you weave it
 “ into cloth, the commodity is brought over so cheap, that you will
 “ never be able to sell without much loss.

“ ANS. I must confess this objection hath too much truth in it to
 “ be wholly removed: the best answer I can make to it at present is
 “ this, that we had much better lose something by the labour of the

“ Poor, than lose all by letting them live in sloth and idleness : for suppose you should give six-pence for that work which is really worth but five-pence, there will five-pence really be got to the nation, though one penny should be lost by the parish. Yet, besides, let it be considered, that if the person has not been employed, there would not less have been spent, but rather more; forasmuch as six-pence that is got by labour, doth many times go farther than ten-pence given for doing nothing: all that time that people are idle, they will be spending, if they have it ; and if they have it not, it is likely they will be worse employed. All that I can farther say to this objection is this, That it is to be hoped, in time, as our people grow more skilful and industrious, we shall be able to sell as cheap as our neighbours ; especially if we once shall be provided with flax and hemp of our own growth ; and in the mean time it is better to lose something in a way that will make our poor people better and skilful, than to suffer them to live in idleness, to their utter ruin, and a greater damage to the kingdom’.

Many of the following remarks are extremely judicious, and bespeak an intimate acquaintance with the subject he professes to investigate ; and it will be obvious to all, whose leisure and curiosity may lead them to make the comparison, that his project for finding work for the Poor at home, forms the basis of a principal part of Mr. Pitt’s bill.

He says—“ If I had £100. a year to settle on a poor parish, I would do it after some such way as this :

“ Twenty pounds a year I would appoint for an able and honest woman to teach forty of the poorest children to read, and to spin flax or hemp, first upon the single, and then upon the double wheel ; which when they had well learned, they would be in a capacity to get their own living. Five pounds a year I would allot for the rent of a large room, to teach the children in. Twenty-five pounds a year I would assign for the buying of hemp and flax, to teach the children to spin upon.

“ Twenty-five pounds a year I would allot for the payment of the poor children that should spin the same, allowing one penny for every

¹ Collection, &c. p. 4, 5.

“ 600 yards of yarn, which the children should every week be paid for,
 “ and carry home to their poor parents, or else be laid out for them in
 “ such things as they needed.

“ Fifteen pounds a year I would allot for the weaving of such yarn,
 “ and whitening such cloth as should be made of the yarn.

“ Eight pounds a year I would allow for the buying such wheels and
 “ reels as the children should use, which, at their going out of the house,
 “ I would have given unto them.

“ The remaining two pounds I would appoint to be laid out for a
 “ dinner for the trustees; which should be upon a day prefixed: upon
 “ which day they should audite the accounts for the year past, and dis-
 “ tribute the cloth, which was made; some of it to the poor children
 “ that spun the yarn, and the rest to other poor people in the parish,
 “ especially the aged and impotent; it being more easy for them to get
 “ a meal's meat to feed their hungry bodies, than a shirt to cover them;
 “ neither is the charity much less to clothe the naked than to feed the
 “ hungry; nor the promise greater to the one than to the other. How-
 “ ever, by a deed of charity I should do both; and also, by teaching the
 “ children to read and learn their catechisms, you should instruct their
 “ minds, which is a piece of charity no whit inferiour to the feeding their
 “ bodies or clothing their backs: for without knowledge, Solomon
 “ saith, ‘ the heart cannot be good;’ and God by the prophet com-
 “ plains, ‘ that his people perish for lack of knowledge.’

“ This settlement I would so make, that it should not be in the power
 “ of the parish, nor yet of the trustees, to alienate to any other use or
 “ purpose whatsoever; but, upon so doing, it should come to the hospi-
 “ tal of Christ-church, or some such like foundation; the governours
 “ whereof would always take care that the trust were performed; or in
 “ case it was not, would soon take it out of their hands.

“ Having thus proposed, as I conceive, a very likely way to prevent
 “ idleness in the younger sort, my next care shall be to prevent it in
 “ those that are of age; which I judge may be done by each parish, if
 “ they would provide such work for them as they might carry to their
 “ own houses, which, though never so mean and homely, are more de-
 “ firable than any other place; which also is the way that I have taken
 “ in the parish aforesaid, and which is the way that all the countries

“take for the spinning of those vast quantities of yarn which is every year made use of for the making of bayes, serges, sayes, and stuffs of all sorts. And that which some have proposed, of bringing them to a public work-house, will never effect the end desired; for, suppose a woman hath a sick child or husband, or some infirmity upon herself, in all which cases she may do something at home, but cannot leave her own house: and supposing that none of these should happen, which is yet very frequent, not one person of many will endure the thoughts of going to a public work-house. Sometimes it happens, nay very frequently I have known, that persons of good education, and well related, have fallen into great poverty; which for these reasons, and lest they should fall into contempt by the discovery, they are willing to hide as much as they can, and therefore cannot expose themselves to work in a public place.

“True, indeed, for vagrants and sturdy beggars that have no habitation, and will not work unless they are held to it as galley slaves are tied to their oars, such work-houses are very necessary, and I wish we had more of them, and that those we have were employed to that purpose; but for such poor people as have habitations of their own, and are known in the places where they live, and that would take pains at home, it is altogether unreasonable and unprofitable, in my poor judgment, to bring them to a public work-house.”

The following passage not only affords us information respecting the prices of the important articles of flax and hemp about the year 1680; but likewise shews, that, even at that period, some parishes contracted with undertakers for the employment of their Poor:

“When I first began to employ the Poor in spinning, the best direction I could receive was to pay for spinning the same price that the flax and hemp stood me in, or what those sorts were generally sold for: but this I soon found to be in a very unequal way; forasmuch as some people would spin a much finer thread than others, and better deserve eight-pence for spinning a pound of flax that cost but six-pence, than another four-pence: so that after a little time I brought all the poor people to spin 600 yards for a penny, were the thread finer or

¹ Collection, &c. p. 19, 20.

“ coarser, which was three knots or lays about a half-yard reel, which
 “ makes just 600 yards; and since then, with much ado, finding the
 “ loss to be great, I have brought them to 50 yards more, which yet is
 “ much less than is spun in other places. In the contract which the city
 “ of Bristol made with one Mr. King and others, for the employment of
 “ 500 of their poor people, or more, in spinning, for the first year he
 “ was obliged to pay them two-pence halfpenny for 1600 yards of yarn,
 “ which is much about the price that I pay the poor people here, be-
 “ cause they being either wholly to learn, or much to seek, might not
 “ be discouraged; but after the first year, by this contract he might
 “ alter the price, provided he never brought them to spin above 800
 “ yards for a penny. And I doubt not, if our people could be brought
 “ to spin as much here, there would be no loss by the linen we make,
 “ but rather profit; but the mischief of it is, our people have neither
 “ been brought up to work hard or to fare hardly; and the trade of
 “ begging being known to be easy and gainful, they will much rather
 “ range about forty or fifty parishes in a day, and get a penny in each
 “ parish, than work hard in one to get six-pence or eight-pence, which
 “ they must do in this employment. So that till the magistrate do his
 “ duty, and see the laws put in execution against beggars, or the people
 “ grow so wise as not to encourage this wicked course of life, I have
 “ little hope to see this matter much amended.

“ Having given you an account of the price I pay for spinning, I
 “ shall now tell you what I pay for flax and hemp, (though this is
 “ sometimes more or less as the markets rise or fall,) as also what I
 “ pay for dressing them, and for weaving the cloth I make; because I
 “ would give the greatest encouragement I could to the setting up this
 “ manufacture, for the employment of our poor people, till some other
 “ or better way shall be found out.

“ For Riga hemp at this day I pay 20s. a hundred, which is very low;
 “ for Quinborough about 22, which is cheap; for Muscovia flax about
 “ 44 a hundred; for Quinborough about 40s. a hundred; for Holladay
 “ about 36; for Paternoster flax about 30; (all which prices are very
 “ high to what they are at some times;) for English flax about 5½d. a
 “ pound, undressed; which prices I rather insert to give buyers a little
 “ aim, than for a standing rule. For beating of hemp I pay 4s. 8d. a

“ cwt. For dressing hemp, long and short, 11d. a dozen pound ; for
 “ dressing flax I give 3d. a stone, accounting 8 pound to the stone.

“ For weaving cloth I pay the several prices following : for yarn
 “ spun to 6d. and 7d. a pound, for every ell of cloth $\frac{1}{2}$ ell wide, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. ;
 “ for that which is 3 quarters and $\frac{1}{2}$ wide, $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. ; for that which is
 “ yard-wide, 4d. ; for that which is ell-wide, 5d.

“ For yarn spun to 9d. and 10d. a pound, I pay $\frac{1}{2}$ more for every
 “ half quarter of an ell, rising as before ; in that of 7d. or 8d. and the
 “ like in that which is still finer ; for coarse cloth, yard and half-quarter
 “ wide, I pay 3d. an ell ; and for facking about 3d. a yard’.

It does not appear that Mr. Firmin’s work-house in Aldersgate continued long in a thriving state : his account of its success, four years after its erection, is rather discouraging to those who expect much from similar institutions. “ This, I am sure,” he says, “ is the worst that
 “ can be said of it, that it hath not yet been brought to bear it’s own
 “ charges. The reason of which I have already given in part ; how-
 “ ever, this doth greatly satisfy me, that every penny that hath been lost
 “ by it, either by myself, or by those friends who have helped to bear it,
 “ hath been many times gained to the Poor and to the Public. Neither
 “ hath the loss been so great as to affright any man that is able and hath
 “ a good mind, from undertaking the like ; for in above £4000. laid
 “ out the last year in the management of the whole affair, reckoning
 “ house-rent, servants’ wages, loss by learners, with the interest of the
 “ money employed in the concern, there was not above £200. lost ;
 “ one chief reason of which I must attribute to the kindness of several
 “ persons that took off some of the commodities I made at the price
 “ they cost me ; and in particular to the East India and Guinea Com-
 “ pany, who gave me encouragement to make their Allabas cloths and
 “ coarse canvases for their pepper-bags, which in former times they used
 “ to have from other countries. It is most certain, that unless a higher
 “ impost be laid upon foreign linen, it will not be possible for us, at
 “ present, to make it so cheap as it is brought over ; for our poor peo-
 “ ple will neither work so hard nor live so cheap, as generally the Poor
 “ of other places do : therefore we must be content to lose something

“ in this way, or find some other to employ our people in ; for employed they must be, as we tender the good of their souls or bodies. And I am of opinion, notwithstanding all I have yet heard or read to the contrary, that the setting up the linen manufacture would be many ways of advantage to this country, although, to provide against the worst, I have made a good progress in the woollen manufacture also ; inasmuch that, had not the price of wool advanced so much lately, I doubt not but by this time to have made one of one : but of this I shall give no further account at present¹.

“ All that I have more to say, is to request that such persons as have any kindness for my undertaking, to assist me therein, by taking off my hands some of the cloth the poor people shall make, at the price it stands me in, though it be a little dearer than they might have cloth elsewhere. I have met with some persons so charitable, that not having occasion for any for their own use, have bought good quantities to give away to the Poor, who have been as thankful for it as for money, there being many thousands that have not above one shirt to their backs, and many that have none ; inasmuch that within less than two years I have given away to men, women, and children, above 3000, whose bodies have been greatly refreshed by them : and I doubt not but many have blessed God for them, and prayed for their benefactors².”

In 1683 was published a short treatise, entitled, “ A Discourse touching Provision for the Poor,” which is said to have been written by Sir

¹ Among other plans for the benefit of the Poor in the metropolis, the author recommends the establishment of a city fund or bank for advancing money upon pawns, at moderate interest, to the necessitous. He observes, that the Poor “ are fain to go to such brokers as will not lend twenty shillings a week under six-pence, which comes to twenty-six shillings a year ; by which trade they make above two hundred and thirty pounds of one in a year’s time, to the ruin of many poor people. Neither (he adds) are our tally-men many of them much better, who trust poor persons with twenty shillings worth of goods, or rather with twelve or fourteen shillings worth instead of twenty shillings, to pay them by six-pence a week ; wherein after they have failed for some time to pay, they hurry them into prison, with great charge for arrest and proceedings at law, which many times thrice exceeds the first debt.” Collection, &c. p. 11.—Pawnbrokers are now obliged, by Act of Parliament, to content themselves with more moderate profit : they are, however, allowed 20 per cent. for goods which remain in pawn with them a twelve-month, and proportionally for a less time. (36 Geo. III. c. 87.)

² Collection, &c. p. 44.

Matthew Hale; it does not, however, appear from any part of its contents at what period of his life this great man turned his attention towards the investigation of this important subject; but there is every reason to suppose that this small work was written long before his death, which happened in 1676. Many concurrent circumstances induce me to think, that it was drawn up before the Restoration. It is not probable, that whilst he was engaged in the toils of professional duty at the bar, he had either leisure or inclination to enter into an enquiry not immediately connected with jurisprudence. In 1653, he was appointed one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas; but, upon the death of Cromwell, in 1658, he refused to accept a new commission under the protector Richard; and retired into the country, where he sedulously secluded himself from his profession until the Parliament assembled which called home Charles the Second. Being returned a member for the county of Gloucester, he was again immersed in public affairs very early in 1660: towards the end of the year he was created Lord Chief Baron; and, in 1671, appointed to the high situation of Lord Chief Justice of England, which he resigned a few months before his death, in 1675. His particular account of the Gloucestershire woollen manufacture¹, which he recommends as a proper employment for the Poor, seems to me to be more characteristic of a Country Gentleman than of a Lord Chief Justice; his price of wool (12d. the pound) is much too high for any period subsequent to the Revolution²; and the important Act relative to Settlements, which was passed in 1662³, is not mentioned: so that, from these, and various other, circumstances, I am fully persuaded, that this little work, if it is the production of Sir Matthew Hale, was written by him during his retirement in 1659. But, to proceed to his discourse itself:—

In commenting on the 43d of Elizabeth, he remarks, that “it makes two provisions: first, for the impotent Poor, that are not liable to work: and it is a good provision for such if duly executed. But,”

¹ See p. 220.

² One writer, indeed, mentions the price of wool about the year 1671, at 12d. the pound. This rise, however, in the price appears to have been occasioned by an extraordinary exportation. Smith on Wool, 2d ed. i. 171. After the Restoration, the price of wool was usually under 6d. the pound. See Appendix, No. I. p. lxxxiii.

³ 13 and 14 Car. II. c. 12.

he says, “ the plaister is not so large as the sore ; there are many Poor
 “ who are able to work if they had it, and had it at reasonable wages,
 “ by which they could support themselves and their families, which
 “ oftentimes are many. These are not within the provision of the law,
 “ and if they come for exhibitions, they are denied, or at least have but
 “ very small, and such as cannot support them and their families.
 “ And indeed if they should have sufficient exhibition for the support of
 “ them and their families, the parishes where they live were not able
 “ to supply them in a proportion answerable to their necessities, or
 “ answerable to that supply which a full employment would afford
 “ them : for instance, a poor man and his wife, though able to work,
 “ may have four children, two of them possibly able to work, two of
 “ them not able : the father and mother are not able to maintain
 “ themselves and family in meat, drink, clothing, and house-rent, under
 “ 10 shillings *per* week ; and so much they might probably get if im-
 “ ployed : this amounts to £26. *per ann.* ; if there were 40 such fami-
 “ lies in a great parish, and they lived upon this exhibition collected by
 “ rates, it would arise to above £800. *per ann.* which in many parishes
 “ exceeds the yearly value of their land or rents, yet when these persons
 “ are kept on work, thus much must be gotten by them, and without a
 “ supply equivalent to this, they must live by begging or stealing, or
 “ starve : therefore the second provision is,

“ 2. For those Poor that are able to work, and in reference to them,
 “ it gives power to raise stocks by rating the parishioners, and setting
 “ the Poor on work.

“ The effects of this provision are,

“ 1. In the execution of the law already made ; for let any man
 “ look over most of the populous parishes in *England* ; indeed there
 “ are rates made for the relief of the impotent Poor, and it may be,
 “ the same relief is also given in a narrow measure to some others
 “ that have great families, and upon this they live miserably, and at
 “ best from hand to mouth, and if they cannot get work to make out
 “ their livelihood, they and their children set up a trade of begging at
 “ best. But it is rare to see any provision of a stock in any parish for
 “ the relief of the Poor. And the reasons are principally these : 1. The
 “ generality of people that are able, yet unwilling, to exceed the present
 “ necessary

“ necessary charge, they do propose to live for an hour, rather than to
 “ project for the future ; and although possibly trebling their exhibition
 “ in one gross sum, at the beginning of the year, to raise a stock, might
 “ in all probability render their future yearly payments for seven years
 “ together less by half or two thirds, than what must be without it ; yet
 “ they had rather continue on their yearly payments, year after year,
 “ though it exhaust them in time, and make the Poor nothing the bet-
 “ ter at the year’s end. 2. Because those places where there are most
 “ Poor, consist for the most part of tradesmen, whose estates lie princi-
 “ pally in their stocks, which they will not endure to be searched into,
 “ to make them contributory to raise any considerable stock for the Poor ;
 “ nor indeed so much as to the ordinary contributions : but they lay all
 “ the Rates to the Poor upon the rents to lands and houses, which alone,
 “ without the help of stocks, are as well by law rateable as lands, both
 “ to the relief and raising a stock for the Poor. 3. Because the church-
 “ wardens and overseers, to whom the power is given, are inhabitants
 “ of the same parish, and are either unwilling to charge themselves, or
 “ to displease their neighbours in charging more than they needs must
 “ towards the Poor : and although it were to be wished and hoped that
 “ the Justices of Peace would be forwardly to enforce them if they
 “ might, though it may concern them also in point of present profit ;
 “ yet if they would do any thing herein, they are not impowered to
 “ compell the church-wardens and overseers to do it, who most certainly
 “ will never go about it, to burden, as they think, themselves, and dis-
 “ please their neighbours, unless some compulsory power were not only
 “ lodged by law, but also executed in some that may have a power over
 “ them to enforce it, or to do it, if they do it not, and to do it effec-
 “ tually, if they do it either partially, or too sparingly. 4. Because peo-
 “ ple do not consider the inconvenience that will in time grow to them-
 “ selves by this neglect, and the benefit that would in a little time ac-
 “ crue to them by putting it in practice, if they would have but a little
 “ patience, as shall be shewn hereafter.

“ II. The second defect is in the law itself ; which are these :

“ 1. No power from the Justices of Peace, or some superintendent
 “ power, to compel the raising of a stock where the church-wardens
 “ and overseers neglect it.

" 2. The act chargeth every parish apart, where it may be they are able to do little towards it; neither would it be so effectual as if three, four, or five or more contiguous parishes did contribute towards the raising of a stock proportionable to their Poor respectively.

" 3. There is no power for hiring or erecting a common house, or place for their common work-house."

He, therefore, proposes the following remedy, which I shall detail at length; as many subsequent projectors have considered the subject in the same point of view, and suggested alterations in the Poor Laws extremely similar to those here recommended :

" 1. That the Justices of the Peace, at the Quarter-Sessions, do set out and distribute the parishes in their several counties into several divisions, wherein they are respectively placed, viz. one, two, three, four, five or six parishes to a work-house, according to the greatness or smallness, and the accommodation of the several parishes.

" 2. That, at that Sessions, the church-wardens and overseers of the Poor of the respective parishes bring in their several Rates for the relief of their respective Poor upon oath. And that the said Justices do assess three, four, or five yearly pays to be levied and collected at one or two entire sums, within the time prefixed by them for the raising of a stock to set the Poor within those precincts on work; and to build or procure a convenient work-house for employing the Poor, if need be, in it, and for lodging materials, and for instructing children in the trade or work.

" 3. That there be yearly chose, by the same Justice, a master for each work-house, with a convenient salary out of the said stock, or the proceed thereof, to continue for three years; and two overseers to see the issuing and return of the said stock, and to take accounts, quarterly or monthly, of the master, as they shall think fit.

" 4. That the stock be delivered to the overseers, and by them issued to the master, as there shall be occasion; and that they also, from time to time, receive the proceed of the said stock, and the accompts for the same.

" 5. That at the end of every year the master and overseers give up their accounts to the two next Justices of the Peace, at times by

“ them prefixed, and publicly notified to the inhabitants of each precinct, to the end that they may take any exceptions to such accounts if there be cause.

“ 6. That the master and overseers of every respective work-house stand and be incorporate by the name of Master and Overseers of the respective precincts, and capable to take in succession, by will or otherwise, lands, goods, money, or other legacies or gifts for the benefit of the Poor within their respective precincts.

“ 7. That they may also be accountable, as well to their respective successors, as also to the Justices of the Peace at the Quarter-Sessions, for the benefit and proceed and employment of such gifts and bequests.

“ 8. That they be disabled to grant any lands to them given or bequeathed for any longer term than one year, and at an improved rent.

“ 9. That if any person, that is able to work, and not able to maintain himself, shall refuse to do so, he may be forced thereunto by warrant of two Justices of Peace, by imprisonment and moderate correction in such work-house.

“ 10. If any person employed by the master shall imbezzel, or willfully prejudice or spoil his work, he shall, upon complaint and proof thereof by the party grieved to any Justice of Peace, and, by warrant from him, receive imprisonment, or moderate correction, by warrant from such Justice.”

Of the benefits that would arise from the adoption of his plan, Sir Matthew Hale seems to have entertained very sanguine ideas. The manufactures of ferges, kerseys, and baizes, which were confined to Devonshire, Norfolk, and Colchester, and the manufacture of various sorts of linen cloth, which was carried on in some (but, probably, a very inconsiderable,) degree in Lancashire, would (he thinks,) be communicated to other places, and be gradually diffused over the whole kingdom. Numbers of Poor, (he says,) might, by these means, be employed in dressing hemp and flax, in spinning, weaving, bleaching, and the like. To the objection, that both materials, and persons to instruct the Poor in the various branches of work, were

wanting, he answers, that, “ if once the manufacture were begun to
 “ be put into a method by this way, all men would quickly sow hemp
 “ and flax in some parcels of their tillage, and possibly some lands that
 “ were not so fit for other tillage would be employed in this. Two
 “ acres of hemp and flax in every parish would employ multitudes,
 “ which now people neglect to sow, because they have no way to vent
 “ or employ it : and for instructors, when once the alarm is abroad of
 “ such a design, it will draw over workmen from other foreign parts ;
 “ and by this means we gained, or at least recovered the skill of making
 “ woollen cloth from other parts, as appears by undeniable evidence.
 “ And if it shall be said that this will defraud and straiten us of labourers
 “ in our woollen manufactures, there can be no fear of that, for we
 “ have Poor enough to be employed in both ; and it is most certain,
 “ that the populousness of the kingdom still increaseth, notwithstanding
 “ its great exhaustings by wars and plagues, and foreign plantations ;
 “ and consequently the Poor will be proportionably increased ; so that
 “ we may reasonably suppose, that in one seven years, by the blessing of
 “ God, the very proceeds, that will be able and fit to work, of poor fa-
 “ milies, will be more than double what they now are, which will con-
 “ tinually increase in a kind of geometrical progression, whereby there
 “ will be enough for double the employment that is now for them.”

Of the general utility of manufactures, as furnishing employment for numbers of people, he gives the following very satisfactory proof, in an instance, which, (he says,) he had exactly tried and examined, and found to be true.

“ The ordinary process and time, and charge of making a common
 “ course medly cloath, of our Gloucestershire wool, at this day, is ;

“ I. In every such cloath, of about 32 yards long, there is ninety
 “ pounds of wool, which will cost, at this day, at 12d. per pound, four
 “ pounds ten shillings, viz. ordinary in a grey cloath.

“ 54lb. of abb.	} £ 4. 10s.
“ 34lb. of warp	
“ 2lb. of mixture	

“ II. The charge of making this cloath.

“ I. Parting

			£.	s.	d.
	Brought over	-	4	10	0
" 1.	Parting and picking	- -	0	3	0
" 2.	Colouring	- -	0	16	0
" 3.	Breaking and spinning the abb, at $2\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb.	-	1	7	9
" 4.	Breaking and spinning the warp, at 5d. per lb.	-	0	18	6
" 5.	Cards and oyl	- -	1	0	0
" 6.	Weaving, spooling, and warping	-	1	1	3
" 7.	Milling and burling	- -	0	12	0
" 8.	Sheering and dressing	- -	0	18	0
" 9.	Drawing	- -	0	1	6
" 10.	Carriage and facturage	- -	0	7	0

" So the whole charges come to - - £ 11 15 0

" Out of which deducting the materials of wool, and cards, and oil,
 " there remains entirely for the expence of work to the amount of
 " £ 6. 5s. It is true, at this day, this cloath yields not above £ 12. to be
 " fold, which is only 5s. profit; but when trade is quicker, it may
 " yield £ 13. or more.

" 3. The people employed in bringing about this cloath to be ready
 " are 14, viz. three weavers and spoolers, two breakers, six spinners,
 " one fuller and burler, one sheerman, one parter and picker: the wea-
 " vers supply the office of spooler and warper.

" 4. These will bring about the first cloath in about two months
 " space; but being continued in a constant tract, the cloath will be
 " brought about in three weeks time; for all the other workmen are
 " at work, and fit the cloath for the weaver in that space that he is wea-
 " ving the first cloath.

" 5. Consequently, this one loom thus employed all the year round,
 " allowing two months to the first cloath, and three weeks to every
 " other, will make fourteen returns the first year, of cloath ready made
 " for sale, and sixteen returns every year after.

" 6. Consequently, that which this yields for bare wages to these
 " fourteen poor workmen for the first year is £ 87. 10s. and for the
 " following years is £ 97.; and by this computation it is easy to see
 " what every workman can gain a week, being full employed.

" 7. About

“ 7. About £100. stock will for ever keep this loom going, and maintain these 14 workmen; and consequently a stock of £1400 will keep on foot four looms work, and keep on work 56 persons, and be able to abide the ordinary delays of sale incident to the markets.

“ 8. But if it could be supposed that the cloath could be sold as soon as made, (which is not, I confess, reasonably to be expected,) then a stock of £24. would, by its continual return, provide materials and pay the workmen for one loom's work in perpetuity: but because the returns by sale cannot be as speedy as the work is done, the stock must be near £100 to abide the delay of a month, two, or three, or more, in point of sale, and likewise to buy wool seasonably for work. And by this it appears, that although £100. stock, by its sixteen returns, yields but an inconsiderable advantage to the master at five shillings *per* cloath, viz. but four pounds in the year; yet it yields a considerable advantage to the poor workers, viz. near £100. *per annum*; and consequently a stock of £400. yields near £400. *per annum*; and consequently these 56 poor people, that are kept on work with this stock of £400. could not live better if the parish were at the expence of £400. *per annum* to relieve them; nor indeed so well, considering they are by this means kept in a way of employment and honest industry: and yet, without some supply, either by wages or contribution, these 56 poor people, being destitute of wages or contributions to this value, or near it, must live by stealing or begging, or starve.”

The following are the objections which he supposes will be made against his plan: 1st. that yearly contributions for the relief of the Poor are less burthenfome than four years collection, which must be paid before-hand in order to provide a stock: 2d. that many idle people will rather beg than work: 3d. that no considerable advantage can be expected from a stock of £400. when, perchance, in a line of trading, 4 or 5000£. employed by masters in a parish are but sufficient to set the Poor on work: 4th. that private manufacturers, who endeavour, for their own interest, to make the most of their trade, often meet with great losses, which impair their stocks; and that a public concern, which cannot be expected to be managed with such prudence, must often be in the same condition: 5th. that the Poor may have

have work, if they will apply for it; and that the setting up of a public trade will only make workmen more independent and less solicitous of employment with private traders, which will tend to the decay of trade : 6th. that the Poor, who are not employed, are either such as cannot or will not work, or will steal and purloin the work ; and that such will undo the work-house : 7th. that there will be great difficulty in procuring persons sufficiently faithful and trusty, to have the superintendence of such a concern.

To the first objection the author thus replies :—" If a man had a rent of inheritance issuing out of his land, he would not think much of giving 16 years' purchase to buy it in : and the charge that goes out for the Poor, as it is as much and as certain a charge as a rent, so it is evident to us that it hath increased yearly ; and, of necessity, the longer things are continued in this careless way, it must increase in an excessive proportion ; and to give four years' purchase to abate it, or if it were but to keep it in stay, were good husbandry. 2. Besides this, let a man consider what other losses do accrue by the want of a due proportion of work, and an industrious education for the Poor, in thieving and stealing, and sending such malefactors to gaols at the charges of the parish, in prosecuting them at assizes and sessions, in cutting and destroying of woods, pulling of hedges, and trespasses on corn and grass thereby, in alms-giving at the door : these would be, if not altogether prevented, at least in a great measure they would, when that most unchristian and indeed inhuman way of living among most ordinary indigent people is remedied by convenient employment and wages."

To the second objection he says, that the establishment of work-houses will render working more profitable than begging ; that the educating of children in industrious habits will remove their propensity to become beggars ; and that, when men are once convinced that the Poor may have work upon reasonable terms, the laws both against beggars, and those who relieve them, will be cheerfully put in execution.

The stock, he thinks, " would be a great help to the Poor in a time of scarcity of work, although it should lie still in a time of plenty of work. The supply of work, for a month or two, or three, in a year, " when

“ when traders for advantage give over, keeps industry on the wheels, and yields a considerable supply :” and, “ in good times, when there is no need of it, it is as capable of increase and improvement as private men’s stocks are.” He adds, “ that if once such a stock were going, it would not only increase by itself, but it would have continued accession by charitable gifts, which would do five times the good thus employed, than employed, as they are, in doles and little yearly pensions, which consume and come to nothing, but are swallowed up in the present necessity of the Poor, and leave but small signs of advantage behind them.”

Admitting there might be a loss on the stock every year, he thinks it would be but gradual, and not annihilate the stock in less than five or six years; during which period the nation would be well repaid by the industrious education which would be thus provided for the Poor.

His answer to the fifth objection is: “ 1. It is true, when trading is quick, possibly they may have work enough; but upon any check in trade, they are oftentimes turned off, unless they will work at extreme low wages, and ill paid. 2. When work is so plentiful at private hands, there may be an intermission or relaxation of the employment of the common stock; especially if they can have better wages at private hands; for it will be enough for this to be supplemental of the defects of work at others hands, and it sufficiently attains its end if it may be a refuge in the time of need for those that would work and cannot get it, and an expedient to enforce those to work who can and will not.”

To the sixth objection, he says, that sometimes the honestest men cannot procure work, and that this will be a reserve for them; and that, as soon as a work-house and stock are once settled, others will be compelled to work, by the laws against vagrants being enforced.

Respecting the difficulty of finding proper masters for the work-houses, he says: “ there be many poor and honest men, who for a small salary, and a room or two to work and lodge in, in the work-house, would be fit enough to undertake the employment of a master: and yet he would have no great trust upon him; for the stock would be lodged in the hands of the overseers, and they to deliver it out, and take weekly or monthly accounts: which overseers may be substan-

“ tial men, and at no great trouble; and eligible either by the Justices
 “ of Peace, or parishioners, yearly, or once in three years; and their
 “ trouble would be no greater than the trouble of overseers of the poor,
 “ or church-wardens in any parish.”

He concludes with recommending his plan as a debt which we owe to
 our nature as Men; a work highly necessary for us as Englishmen; and
 our first duty as Christians. “ The want of a due provision for education
 “ and relief of the Poor in a way of industry, is (he says,) that which
 “ fills the gaols with malefactors, and fills the kingdom with idle and
 “ unprofitable persons, that consume the stock of the kingdom without
 “ improving it, and that will daily increase, even to a desolation, in
 “ time. And this error in the first concoction is never remediable but
 “ by gibbets and whipping. But there must be a sound, prudent, and
 “ resolved method for an industrious education of the Poor, that will
 “ give better remedy against these corruptions than the after-gains of
 “ penalties can.”

Richard Dunning, in his “ Plain and Easy Method, shewing how the
 office of Overseer of the Poor may be managed, whereby it may be
 £9000. per annum advantage to the County of Devon, without abating
 the weekly relief of any Poor,” (published in 1685,) was of opinion
 that the statutes in force, if duly executed, were sufficient to reduce
 the number of Poor. He says, “ It has been an aspersion unjustly cast
 “ on the statutes of the 43d Elizabeth for relief of Poor, that the law
 “ hath made multitudes idle and careles: and that allowing them a
 “ refuge for relief from their parishes, hath caused them the less to
 “ provide for themselves. Indeed, by that law, the parish is (as they
 “ commonly say,) *bound to find them*; but that in a far other and larger
 “ sense than they mean, viz. *work* for those that *will* labour, *punish-*
 “ *ment* for those that *will not*, and *bread* for those that *cannot*; and if
 “ the two first parts of that law were duly observed, the Poor would
 “ not only be reduced to a small number, comparatively to what they
 “ now are, but there would be no such Poor as idle and wandering
 “ rogues and vagabonds, as the statute of the 29th of the same Queen
 “ shews there were before that time: and the punishment appointed for
 “ such loose persons being that they be whipt, and sent to the place of
 VOL. I. G g “ their

“ their birth, as an admonition to the inhabitants of that place to bring up their children better.”

He proposes, that all poor persons who cannot give a satisfactory account of themselves, shall be provided by the overseers with lists of the persons they are to work with; and if they do not work according to direction, that they shall be committed to the house of correction. His calculation, however, of the sum, which he will save to the county by thus employing the Poor, seems founded on very slender data¹; and the methods by which he proposes to enforce his regulations are liable to many objections. The chief information which his work contains, is that a Devonshire day-labourer, by threshing and other agricultural work, could earn 5d. a day all the year round, and his diet, which he estimated at 5d. a day more. Women, he thinks, in the county of Devon, could earn their diet, worth 18d. a week, and 6d. a week wages.

¹ “ £40. per annum in the parish of Winkley is somewhat more than £1000. in the subdivisions; and £1000. per annum in the subdivision is somewhat more than £9000. per annum in the county: consequently that which may be done elsewhere, as well as in Winkley, as what is hereby proposed, may, and is £40. per annum clear advantage to the parish of Winkley, and will be £9000. per annum advantage to this county.” His chief method of raising this sum of £40. in the parish of Winkley, is by preventing the beggars from wandering about the country, and obliging them to work so many days with each of the parishioners, who contribute towards the Poor’s Rate. Those who receive relief from the parish, he proposes should bring a certificate from the person who had employed them between the pay-days, in order to entitle them to any further allowance from the parish.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Poor, from the Revolution to the Present Period.

I SHALL now proceed to notice the principal publications which have appeared upon this subject, and the various legislative alterations which have been made in our code of Poor Laws since the Revolution.

Of the circumstances of the labouring classes of the nation at that important period, we may form a tolerable estimate from the information contained in Dr. Davenant's Political Essays, and the able calculations of Gregory King, which were drawn up with a view of ascertaining the wealth and population of the kingdom.

In the "Essay upon the probable means of making a people gainers in the balance of trade,"¹ Dr. Davenant presents us with the following curious computation of Gregory King's, which he says he had examined very carefully, tried by some little operations of his own upon the same subject, and compared with the schemes of other political arithmeticians.

¹ Published in 1699. Whitworth's edition, ii. 184.

*A Scheme of the Income and Expence of the several FAMILIES in England,
calculated for the Year 1688.*

Number of Fa- milies.	Ranks, Degrees, Titles, and Qualifications.	Heads per Fa- mily.	Number of persons.	Yearly income per Family.	Yearly in- come in general.	Yearly income per head.	Yearly expence per head.	Yearly increase per head.	Yearly in- crease in general.
				£. s.	£.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£.
160	Temporal Lords - - - -	40	6,400	3,200 0	512,000	80 0 70	0 0	10 0 0	64,000
26	Spiritual Lords - - - -	20	520	1,300 0	33,800	65 0 45	0 0	20 0 0	10,400
800	Baronets - - - -	16	12,800	880 0	704,000	55 0 49	0 0	6 0 0	76,800
600	Knights - - - -	13	7,800	650 0	390,000	50 0 45	0 0	5 0 0	39,000
3,000	Esquires - - - -	10	30,000	450 0	1,200,000	45 0 41	0 0	4 0 0	120,000
12,000	Gentlemen - - - -	8	96,000	280 0	2,880,000	35 0 32	0 0	3 0 0	288,000
5,000	Persons in greater offices and places	8	40,000	240 0	1,200,000	30 0 26	0 0	4 0 0	160,000
5,000	Persons in lesser offices and places	6	30,000	120 0	600,000	20 0 17	0 0	3 0 0	90,000
2,000	Eminent Merchants and Traders by sea	8	16,000	400 0	800,000	50 0 37	0 0	13 0 0	208,000
8,000	Lesser Merchants and Traders by sea	6	48,000	198 0	1,600,000	53 0 27	0 0	6 0 0	288,000
10,000	Persons in the Law - - - -	7	70,000	154 0	1,540,000	22 0 18	0 0	4 0 0	280,000
2,000	Eminent Clergymen - - - -	6	12,000	72 0	144,000	12 0 10	0 0	2 0 0	24,000
8,000	Lesser Clergymen - - - -	5	40,000	50 0	400,000	10 0 9	4 0	0 16	32,000
40,000	Freeholders of the better sort	7	280,000	91 0	3,640,000	13 0 11	15 0	1 5 0	350,000
120,000	Freeholders of the lesser sort	5½	660,000	55 0	6,600,000	10 0 9	10 0	0 10 0	330,000
150,000	Farmers - - - -	5	750,000	42 10	6,375,000	8 10 8	5 0	0 5 0	187,500
15,000	Persons in liberal arts and sciences	5	75,000	60 0	900,000	12 0 11	0 0	1 0 0	75,000
50,000	Shop-keepers and Tradesmen	4½	225,000	45 0	2,250,000	10 0 9	0 0	1 0 0	225,000
60,000	Artisans and Handicrafts - - - -	4	240,000	38 0	2,280,000	9 10 9	0 0	0 10 0	120,000
5,000	Naval Officers - - - -	4	20,000	80 0	400,000	20 0 18	0 0	2 0 0	40,000
4,000	Military Officers - - - -	4	16,000	60 0	240,000	15 0 14	0 0	1 0 0	16,000
500,586		5½	2,675,520	68 18	34,488,800	12 18	11 15 4	1 2 8	3,023,700
50,000	Common Seamen - - - -	3	150,000	20 0	1,000,000	7 0 7	10 0	0 10 0	75,000
364,000	Labouring People and Out-servants	3½	1,275,000	15 0	5,460,000	4 10 4	12 0	0 2 0	127,500
400,000	Cottagers and Paupers - - - -	3¼	1,300,000	6 10	2,000,000	2 0 2	5 0	0 5 0	325,000
35,000	Common Soldiers - - - -	2	70,000	14 0	490,000	7 0 7	10 0	0 10 0	35,000
849,000	Vagrants, as Gipsies, Thieves, Beggars, &c.	3¼	2,795,000	10 10	8,950,000	3 5 3	9 0	0 4 0	562,500
			30,000		60,000	2 0 4	0 0	2 0 0	60,000
500,586	Encreasing the wealth of the kingdom	5½	2,675,520	68 18	34,488,800	12 18	11 15 4	1 2 8	3,023,700
849,000	Decreasing the wealth of the kingdom	3¼	2,825,000	10 1	9,010,000	3 3 3	7 6	0 4 6	622,500
1,349,586	Neat Totals*	4½	5,500,520	32 5	43,491,800	7 18	7 9 3	0 8 9	2,401,200

* Every political arithmetician acknowledges Gregory King's accurate researches in disquisitions of this nature. In the Table, however, before us, it would seem, from the calculations of Dr. Price, Mr. Howlett, and other writers on Population, that he assigned too moderate an average for the number of persons in a family. In other respects his estimate, no doubt, contains much correct information.

The

The following extracts from a very copious Table in the "Essay upon Ways and Means," which was published in 1695, shew the proportion of Poor's Rate borne by each county in England about the year 1685. The column containing the respective contributions of each county towards the assessment for ship-money in 1636, affords a tolerable idea of the comparative rental of different parts of the kingdom at that period; as the column containing the produce of each county towards the aid of 4s. in the pound, (the commencement of the present land-tax,) does for the year 1693. The produce of the excise on ale and beer, the number of houses, and the population of each county, in 1690, which I have calculated according to Davenant's proportion of six persons to a house², are added as supplemental proofs to enable us to appreciate the prosperity and resources of England at the Revolution. Of the estimate of the Poor's Rates in the last column, Dr. Davenant remarks, that "it was collected with great labour and expence by Mr. Arthur Moore, a very knowing person." He had not the account of Wales: but, according to the proportion which the principality bore to the rest of the kingdom in other taxes, its Poor's Rate was calculated at about £33,753.; and consequently the Poor's Rate of the whole kingdom was supposed, with great probability, to amount to about £665,362.

¹ Whitworth's edition, I. 39.

² Whitworth's edition, I. 19. This proportion, of six persons to a house, is, however, too high; as Gregory King's, of $4\frac{1}{3}$ to a family, is too low: Mr. Howlett, from very satisfactory data, estimates the average of persons to a house at $5\frac{2}{3}$. I refer the reader, for a very full discussion of this subject, to Mr. Chalmers's Estimate, 2d edit.

	Produce of each County, according to the Assessment of the Ship-money, 1636.	Produce of each County in the Aid of W. & Ma. 1693.	Produce of each County for Excise on Beer and Ale, in the year 1689.	Number of Houses in each County, according to the Hearth Books of Lady-day, 1690.	Population of England in 1690, according to Davenant's Proportion of six Persons to a House.	An Estimate of the Poor's Rate for 1 Year, made in the latter end of King Charles the Second's Reign.
	£.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.			£.
Bedfordshire	3,000	25,554 15 1 ¹ / ₄	5,549 7 3	12,170	73,020	6,911
Berkshire	4,000	41,054 0 9 ¹ / ₂	9,105 12 9 ¹ / ₂	16,996	101,970	9,800
Buckinghamshire	4,500	47,661 1 1	7,261 16 5 ¹ / ₂	18,688	112,128	14,800
Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely	3,500	32,844 16 3 ¹ / ₄	10,442 7 1	18,629	111,774	9,120
Cheshire and Chester	3,000	28,596 14 0	9,836 10 4 ¹ / ₂	25,592	153,752	5,796
Cornwall	5,500	31,976 0 0	10,595 12 3 ¹ / ₂	26,613	159,678	9,257
Cumberland	800	3,713 18 4	5,746 10 4	15,279	91,674	4,988
Derbyshire	3,500	24,093 19 10 ¹ / ₄	11,960 12 4 ¹ / ₂	24,944	149,664	7,953
Devonshire and Exon	9,000	82,086 6 2	34,525 7 11	56,202	337,211	34,764
Dorsetshire and Pool	5,000	33,116 7 9	7,568 11 7 ¹ / ₂	17,859	107,154	13,885
Durham, Northumberland, and Berwick	2,300	25,146 11 11	21,216 8 3	53,345	320,070	13,620
Essex	8,000	90,895 14 7	21,676 4 5	40,545	243,270	37,346
Gloucestershire and Gloucester	5,500	47,523 13 2	14,704 8 3	31,476	206,856	19,600
Herefordshire	3,500	20,409 2 6	6,256 5 9 ¹ / ₂	16,744	100,404	8,637
Hertfordshire	4,000	42,973 5 4 ¹ / ₂	13,264 2 11 ¹ / ₂	17,488	104,928	10,760
Huntingdonshire	2,000	15,497 5 1	4,437 7 4 ¹ / ₂	8,713	52,278	5,850
Kent	8,000	83,450 3 5	24,647 15 10 ¹ / ₂	46,674	280,044	29,875
Lancashire	1,000	21,300 0 0	14,501 4 4 ¹ / ₂	46,961	281,766	7,200
Leicestershire	4,500	35,083 9 7	8,258 18 9 ¹ / ₂	20,448	122,688	11,600
Lincolnshire and Lincoln	8,000	72,265 11 10 ¹ / ₄	15,949 4 5 ¹ / ₂	45,019	270,114	31,500
Northamptonshire	6,000	48,111 12 10	9,845 17 8 ¹ / ₂	26,904	161,424	21,516
Nottinghamshire	3,500	27,276 2 6 ¹ / ₄	5,837 10 4 ¹ / ₂	17,818	106,908	11,760
Norfolk and Norwich	7,800	84,729 14 10 ¹ / ₄	26,899 11 6 ¹ / ₄	56,579	339,474	46,100
Oxfordshire	3,500	39,038 12 8 ¹ / ₂	11,804 9 6	19,627	117,762	7,950
Rutland	800	5,555 3 11	1,435 8 8	3,661	21,961	3,730
Salop	4,500	29,035 15 0	9,874 9 3	27,471	164,826	13,375
Staffordshire and Litchfield	3,000	27,028 10 5	10,927 7 0	26,278	157,668	7,150
Somersetshire and Bristol	9,000	73,728 18 7 ¹ / ₄	31,133 9 2	45,900	275,400	30,263
Southamptonshire	6,000	55,188 5 2	11,160 18 7 ¹ / ₂	28,557	171,342	13,173
Suffolk	8,000	74,201 18 3 ¹ / ₄	19,635 9 8 ¹ / ₂	47,537	285,222	25,750
Surry and Southwark	3,500	66,984 17 0	34,234 1 10 ¹ / ₂	40,610	243,660	15,600
Suffex	5,000	60,819 12 0	7,730 10 1 ¹ / ₂	23,451	140,701	18,720
Warwickshire and Coventry	4,000	39,864 12 9	11,639 3 10	22,700	136,200	9,800
Worcestershire and Worcester	3,500	33,144 0 0	12,793 10 1 ¹ / ₂	24,440	146,640	10,640
Wiltshire	7,000	51,672 7 11 ¹ / ₂	10,679 8 8 ¹ / ₂	27,418	164,528	18,240
Westmoreland	600	3,014 7 4	2,322 16 1	6,691	40,146	1,890
Yorkshire, with York and Hull	12,000	91,620 13 8 ¹ / ₄	52,226 19 8 ¹ / ₂	121,052	726,312	26,150
Wales, North and South	10,500	51,256 6 8	26,431 18 4	77,921	467,526	33,753
London, Middlesex and Westminster	20,180	307,140 8 5 ¹ / ₄	140,358 13 2	111,215	667,290	56,380
Grand totals	206,980	1,977,713 17 1 ¹ / ₄	694,476 2 5 ¹ / ₄	1,319,215	7,915,290	665,362
Of the eleven home counties, viz. Surry and Southwark, Hertford, Bedford, Cambridge, Kent, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Berks, Bucks, and Oxon, total is	57,800	632,388 19 6 ¹ / ₂	148,520 19 5 ¹ / ₄	335,543		214,122
Of the rest of England, excluding London, Middlesex, and Westminster, total is	129,000	1,038,184 9 1	369,596 9 10 ¹ / ₂	872,457		394,860

On the first of the preceding tables Dr. Davenant makes the following observations: "Mr. King," he says, "divides the whole body of the people into two principal classes, viz.

	Heads.
"Encreasing the wealth of the kingdom	2,675,520
"Decreasing the wealth of the kingdom	2,825,000

"By which he means, that the first class of the people, from land, arts and industry, maintain themselves, and add every year something to the nation's general stock; and besides this, out of their superfluity, contribute every year so much to the maintenance of others.

"That, of the 2d class, some partly maintain themselves by labour, (as the heads of the cottage families,) but that the rest, as most of the wives and children of these, sick and impotent people, idle beggars and vagrants, are nourished at the expence of others, and are a yearly burthen to the public, consuming annually so much as would be otherwise added to the nation's general stock.

"The bodies of men are without doubt the most valuable treasure of a country; and, in their sphere, the ordinary people are as serviceable to the commonwealth as the rich, if they are employed in honest labour and useful arts; and, such being more in number, do more contribute to increase the nation's wealth, than the higher rank.

"But a country may be populous and yet poor, (as were the ancient Gauls and Scythians,) so that numbers, unless they are well employed, make the body politic big, but unwieldy; strong, but unactive; as to any uses of good government. Their's is a wrong opinion, who think that mouths profit a country that consume its product: and it may be more truly affirmed, that he who does not some way serve the commonwealth, either by being employed himself, or by employing others, is not only a useless, but a hurtful member to it.

"As it is charity, and what indeed we owe to human kind, to make provision for the aged, the lame, the sick, the blind, and the impotent; so it is a justice we owe to the commonwealth, not to suffer such as have health, and who might maintain themselves, to be drones, and live upon the labour of others.

"The bulk, of such as are a burden to the public, consists in cottagers, and paupers, beggars in great cities and towns, and vagrants.

"Upon

“ Upon a survey of the hearth-books, made in Michaelmas 1685, it
 “ was found, that of the 1,300,000 houses in the whole kingdom, those
 “ of one chimney amounted to 554,631; but some of these having land
 “ about them, in all our calculations we have computed the cottagers
 “ but at 500,000 families. But of these a large number may get their
 “ livelihood, and are no charge to the parish; for which reason, Mr.
 “ King very judiciously computes his ‘cottagers and paupers decreasing
 “ the wealth but at 400,000 families;’ in which account he includes
 “ the poor-houses in cities, towns, and villages; besides which, he reckons
 “ 30,000 vagrants, and altogether to make up 1,330,000 heads. This
 “ is a very great proportion of the people to be a burden upon the other
 “ part, and is a weight upon the land interest, of which the landed
 “ gentlemen must certainly be very sensible’.

“ If this vast body of men, instead of being expensive, could be ren-

In another essay, Dr. Davenant informs us, that the Poor’s Rate raised for their relief, which, in 1689, we have seen, amounted to £ 665,362, had considerably risen before the year 1695, in consequence of a great decay in the foreign trade and home manufacture; and that, in time of peace, we paid nearly as much to the Poor, as to the maintenance of the Government, and for our protection.

This great political writer seems to have been fully sensible of the abuses which existed in parochial expenditure, and makes the following, (in some points very judicious,) observations on the subject. He says, “ As this money is managed in most places, instead of relieving such as are truly poor and impotent, (which the laws design,) it serves only to nourish and continue vice and sloth in the nation.” And he goes on to observe: “ If public work-houses were set up in every town and county, and if the works and manufactures proper for every place and country were fixed and established in it, the Poor would be encouraged, and invited to labour and industry; especially if the magistrate made use of his coercive power upon such as are vicious and idle.

“ The real and true objects of charity would cost the nation but little to maintain; and it is to be doubted they have the least share in the public reliefs.

“ The wisdom of a parliament may in time find out a way to make such persons useful and profitable to the nation, who, at present, are a heavy burthen upon it.

“ If all the hands in this kingdom, that are able, were employed in useful labour, our manufactures would so increase, that the commonwealth would be thereby greatly enriched, and the Poor, instead of being a charge, would be a benefit to the kingdom.

“ If the Poor were always certain of work and pay for it, they would be glad to quit that nastiness which attends a begging and lazy life.

“ And if the Poor were encouraged, and, where there is occasion, compelled to maintain themselves, the pound-rate would be much less in every county.”—*Essay upon Ways and Means*, Whitworth’s edition, i. 72.

dered

“ dered beneficial to the commonwealth, it were a work no doubt highly
 “ to be promoted by all who love their country.

“ It seems evident to such as have considered these matters, and who
 “ have observed how they are ordered in nations under a good polity,
 “ that the number of such, who, through age or impotence, stand in real
 “ need of relief, is but small, and might be maintained for very little ;
 “ and that the Poor Rates are swelled to the extravagant degree we
 “ now see them at, by two sorts of people ; one of which, by reason of
 “ our slack administration, is suffered to remain in sloth ; and the
 “ other, through a defect in our constitution, continue in wretched
 “ poverty, for want of employment, though willing enough to under-
 “ take it.

“ All this seems capable of a remedy : the laws may be armed against
 “ voluntary idleness, so as to prevent it ; and a way may probably be
 “ found out to set those to work who are desirous to support themselves
 “ by their own labour : and if this could be brought about, it would
 “ not only put a stop to the course of that vice which is the consequence
 “ of an idle life, but it would greatly tend to enrich the commonwealth ;
 “ for if the industry of not half the people maintains, in some degree,
 “ the other part ; and besides, in time of peace, did add every year
 “ nearly 2,500,000 to the general stock of England ; to what pitch of
 “ wealth and greatness might we not be brought, if one limb were not
 “ suffered to draw away the nourishment of the other, and if all the
 “ members of the body politic were rendered useful to it ?

“ Nature, in her contrivances, has made every part of a living creature
 “ either for ornament or use ; the same should be in a politic insti-
 “ tution rightly governed.

“ It may be laid down for an undeniable truth, that where all work,
 “ no body will want ; and to promote this would be a greater charity
 “ and more meritorious, than to build hospitals, which very often are
 “ but so many monuments of ill-gotten riches attended with late re-
 “ pentance.

“ To make as many as possible of these 1,330,000 persons, (whereof
 “ not above 330,000 are children too young to work,) who now live
 “ chiefly upon others, get themselves a large share of their maintenance,
 “ would be the opening a new vein of treasure for some millions sterling

“ *per annum*, it would be a present ease to every man of substance, and
 “ a lasting benefit to the whole body of the kingdom.”

He very justly remarks, that nothing goes on well in this country, in which particular men do not one way or other find their account ; and rather than a public good should not go on at all, it is better to give private men some interest to set it forward. “ For which reason,” (he says,) “ it may be worth the consideration of such as study the prosperity and
 “ welfare of England, whether this great engine of maintaining the Poor
 “ and finding them work and employment may not be put in motion by
 “ giving some body of undertakers a reasonable gain to put the machine
 “ upon its wheels.”

With this view he lays before the public the following scheme for setting the Poor to work, which, he informs us, was composed by a Gentleman of great abilities, and laid before the House of Commons the preceding Sessions of Parliament, in 1698.

“ 1st. That such persons as shall subscribe and pay the sum of
 “ £300,000. as a stock for and towards the better maintaining the im-
 “ potent Poor, and for buying commodities and materials to employ
 “ and set at work the other Poor, be incorporated and made one body
 “ politic, &c. by the name of the Governor and Company for main-
 “ taining and employing the Poor of this kingdom.

“ By all former propositions it was intended that the parishes should
 “ advance several years’ Rates to raise a stock ; but by this proposal the
 “ experiment is to be made by private persons at their risque ; and
 “ £300,000. may be judged a very good stock, which, added to the
 “ Poor Rates for a certain number of years, will be a very good fund
 “ for buying commodities and materials for a million of money at any
 “ time. This subscription ought to be free for every body ; and if the
 “ sum were subscribed in the several counties of England and Wales, in
 “ proportion to their Poor Rates, or the monthly assessment, it would
 “ be most convenient ; and provision may be made that no person shall
 “ transfer his interest but to one of the same county, which will keep
 “ the interest there during the term ; and as to it’s being one corpo-
 “ ration, it is presumed this will be most beneficial to the public. For,
 “ 1st, all disputes on removes, which are very chargeable and burthen-
 “ some, will be at an end, this proposal intending, that wherever the
 “ Poor

“ Poor are, they shall be maintained and employed. 2dly, It will
 “ prevent one county which shall be diligent, imposing on their neigh-
 “ bours who may be negligent, or getting away their manufactures from
 “ them. 3dly, In case of fire, plague, or loss of manufactures, the stock
 “ of one county may not be sufficient to support the places where such
 “ calamities may happen; and it is necessary the whole body should
 “ support every member: so that hereby there will be a general care to
 “ administer to every place according to their necessities.

“ 2. That the said corporation be established for the term of 21 years.

“ The corporation ought to be established for 21 years, or otherwise it
 “ cannot have the benefit the law gives in case of infants, which is their
 “ service for their education; besides, it will be some years before a
 “ matter of this nature can be brought into practice.

“ 3. That the said sum of £300,000. be paid in and laid out for the
 “ purposes aforesaid, to remain as a stock for and during the said term
 “ of 21 years.

“ The subscription ought to be taken at the passing of the Act, but
 “ the corporation to be left at liberty to begin either the Michaelmas
 “ or the Lady-day after, as they shall think fit. And per
 “ cent. to be paid at the subscribing to persons appointed for that pur-
 “ pose, and the remainder before they begin to act; but so as £300,000.
 “ shall be always in stock during the term, notwithstanding any divi-
 “ dends or other disposition; and an account thereof to be exhibited
 “ twice in every year upon oath before the Lord Chancellor for the
 “ time being.

“ 4thly, That the said corporation do by themselves or agents in every
 “ parish of England, from and after the day of during
 “ the said term of 21 years, provide for the real impotent poor, good and
 “ sufficient maintenance and reception, as good or better than hath at
 “ any time within the space of years before the said day
 “ of been provided or allowed to such impotent Poor, and
 “ what other growing impotent Poor shall happen in the said parish
 “ during the said term.

“ By impotent Poor is to be understood all infants, &c. old and de-
 “ crepid persons not able to work; also persons who, by sickness or any
 “ accident, are for the time unable to labour for themselves or families;

“ and all persons, (not being fit for labour,) who were usually relieved
 “ by the money raised for the use of the Poor ; they shall have maintenance, &c. as good, or better, as within years they used to
 “ have.

“ This does not directly determine what that shall be, nor is it possible,
 “ by reason a shilling in one county is as much as two in another ; but
 “ it will be the interest of the corporation that such Poor be well provided for, by reason the contrary will occasion all the complaints or
 “ clamour that possibly can be made against the corporation.

“ 5thly, That the corporation do provide (as well for all such Poor
 “ which on the said of shall be on the Poor books, as for
 “ what other growing Poor shall happen in the said term, who are or
 “ shall be able to labour or do any work) sufficient labour and work
 “ proper for such persons to be employed in. And that provision shall
 “ be made for such labouring persons according to their labour, so as
 “ such provision do not exceed $\frac{3}{4}$ parts as much as any other person
 “ would have paid for such labour. And in case they are not employed,
 “ and set to work, then such persons shall, until materials or labour be
 “ provided for them, be maintained as impotent Poor ; but so as such
 “ persons who shall hereafter enter themselves on the Poor's books, being
 “ able to labour, shall not quit the service of the corporation, without
 “ leave, for the space of six months.

“ The corporation are to provide materials and labour for those that can
 “ work, and to make provision for them, not exceeding $\frac{3}{4}$ parts as much
 “ as any other person would give for such labour ; for example, if
 “ another person would give one of these a shilling, the corporation
 “ ought to give him 9d. And the reason is plain : 1st, Because the
 “ corporation will be obliged to maintain them and their families in all
 “ exigencies, which others are not obliged to do, and consequently they
 “ ought not to allow so much as others. 2dly, In case any persons able to
 “ labour shall come to the corporation when their agents are not prepared with materials to employ them, by this proposal they are to
 “ allow them full provision as impotent Poor until they find them
 “ work, which is entirely in favour of the Poor. 3dly, It is neither
 “ reasonable nor possible for the corporation to provide materials upon
 “ every occasion for such persons as shall be entered with them, unless
 “ they

“ they can be secure of such persons to work up those materials : be-
 “ sides, without this provision, all the labouring people in England will
 “ play fast and loose between their employers and the corporation ; for
 “ as they are disobliged by one, they will run to the other, and so neither
 “ shall be sure of them.

“ 6thly. That no impotent Poor shall be removed out of the parish
 “ where they dwell, but upon notice in writing given to the church-
 “ wardens or overseers of the said parish, to what place of provision he
 “ or she is removed.

“ It is judged the best method to provide for the impotent Poor in
 “ houses prepared for that purpose, where proper provision may be made
 “ for several, with all necessaries of care and maintenance. So that
 “ in some places one house will serve the impotent Poor of several
 “ parishes ; in which case the parish ought to know where to resort,
 “ to see if good provision be made for them.

“ 7thly, That in case provision be not made for the Poor of each
 “ parish in manner as aforesaid, (upon due notice given to the agents of
 “ the corporation,) the said parish may order their Poor to be main-
 “ tained, and deduct the sum by them expended out of the next pay-
 “ ments to be made to the said corporation by the said parish.

“ In case any accident happens in a parish, either by sickness, fall,
 “ casualty of fire, or otherwise, and that the agent of the corporation
 “ is not present to provide for them, or, having notice, doth not imme-
 “ diately do it, the parish may do it, and deduct so much out of the next
 “ payment ; but there must be provision made for the next payment ;
 “ and there must be a provision made for the notice, and in what time
 “ the corporation shall provide for them.

“ 8thly, That the said corporation shall have and receive, for the said
 “ 21 years, that is to say, from every parish yearly, so much as such
 “ parish paid in any one year, to be computed by a medium of seven
 “ years, namely from the 25th of March 1690, to the 25th of March
 “ 1697, and to be paid half-yearly ; and besides, shall receive the benefit
 “ of the revenues of all donations given to any parish, or which shall
 “ be given during the said term ; and all forfeitures which the law gives
 “ to the use of the Poor ; and to all other sums which are usually col-
 “ lected by the parish for the maintenance of the Poor.

“ Whatever was raised for, or applied to the use of, the Poor, ought
 “ to

“ to be paid over to the corporation ; and where there are any donations
 “ for maintaining the Poor, it will answer the design of the donor, by
 “ reason there will be better provision for the maintenance of the Poor
 “ than ever ; and if that maintenance be so good as to induce further
 “ charities, no doubt the corporation ought to be entitled to them. But
 “ there are two objections to this article : 1st, That to make a medium
 “ by a time of war is unreasonable. 2dly, To continue the whole tax
 “ for 21 years does not seem to give any benefit to the kingdom in that
 “ time. To the 1st, it is true we have a peace, but trade is lower now
 “ than at any time during the war, and the charge of the Poor greater ;
 “ and when trade will mend is very uncertain. To the 2d, it is very plain
 “ that although the charge may be the same to a parish in the total, yet it
 “ will be less to particular persons, because those who before used to
 “ receive alms, will now be enabled to be contributors ; but besides, the
 “ turning so many hundred thousand pounds a year (which in a manner
 “ have hitherto been applied only to support idleness) into industry,
 “ the employing so many other idle vagrants, and sturdy beggars, with
 “ the product of their labour, will altogether be a present benefit to the
 “ lands of England, as well in the rents as in the value ; and further,
 “ the accidental charges in the streets and at doors, is, by a very modest
 “ computation, over and above the Poor Rates, at least £300,000. *per*
 “ *annum*, which will be entirely saved by this proposal, and the persons
 “ set at work ; which is a further consideration for it's being well re-
 “ ceived, since the corporation are not allowed any thing for this service.

“ The greater the encouragement is, the better the work will be per-
 “ formed ; and it will become the wisdom of Parliament in what they
 “ do to make it effectual ; for should such an undertaking as this prove
 “ ineffectual, instead of remedying it, it will increase the mischief.

“ 9thly, That all the laws made for the benefit of the Poor, and for
 “ punishing of idle vagrant persons, be repealed, and one law made
 “ to continue such parts as are found useful, and to add such other
 “ restrictions, penalties, and provisions, as may effectually attain the end
 “ of this great work.

“ The laws hereunto relating are numerous, but the judgments and
 “ opinions given upon them are so various and contradictory, and differ
 “ so in sundry places, as to be very inconsistent with any general scheme
 “ of management.

“ 10thly, That proper persons be appointed in every county to determine all matters and differences which may arise between the corporation and the respective parishes.

“ To prevent any ill usages, neglect or cruelty, it will be necessary to make provision that the Poor may tender their complaints to officers of the parish; and that those officers, having examined the same, and not finding redress, may apply to persons to be appointed in each county and each city for that purpose, who may be called supervisors of the Poor, and may have allowance made them for their trouble; and their business may be to examine the truth of such complaints; and in case either the parish or corporation judge themselves aggrieved by the determination of the said supervisors, provision may be made that an appeal lie to the Quarter Sessions.

“ 11thly, That the corporation be obliged to provide for all public beggars, and to put the laws in execution against public beggars, and idle vagrant persons.

“ Such of the public beggars as can work must be employed, the rest to be maintained as impotent Poor; but the laws to be severely put in execution against those who shall ask any public alms.”¹

It appears from the following transcript from a single printed sheet, intitled, “ Proposals humbly offered by John Appletree² Esq. for the better maintenance of the Poor of the county of Worcester,” that the idea of establishing a house of industry in an incorporated district was thought of in that county about this period. No date is affixed to these proposals; but as Mr. Appletree was Sheriff of Worcester in 1696, his plan, I think, will with propriety follow that recommended by Davenant.

“ Proposals humbly offered by John Appletree, Esq. for the better Maintenance of the Poor of the County of Worcester.

“ THAT an Act may pass impowering the Justices of the Peace, or other Commissioners to be named in the said Act, to incorporate

¹ “ Essay upon the Probable Means of making a People Gainers in the Balance of Trade.” Whitworth’s edition, ii. 207.

² It appears from Nash’s Worcestershire, (i. 21.) that John Appletree Esq. (the same person, I apprehend, with the author of these proposals,) was Sheriff of Worcestershire, in 1696. His scheme is preserved among the miscellaneous papers in the British Museum, but does not occur in the catalogue.

“ such

“ such and so many parishes together in the county, within their re-
 “ spective limits, for which they shall act as they shall judge conve-
 “ nient, and to give them full power to authorize the overseers of the
 “ Poor of each parish, together with the consent of the inhabitants, or
 “ major part of them, paying to the poor-levies, at their parish meet-
 “ ings or vestry, to assess any sum not exceeding 12d. in the pound, to
 “ be paid yearly for seven years, (if thought convenient,) over and
 “ above what they now annually pay to the relief of the Poor of each
 “ parish; which 12d. in the pound, or so much of it as the said Justices
 “ or Commissioners, or any one or more of them, shall think fit, to be
 “ employed in the building of a work-house and store-house common
 “ to the said parishes so incorporated, and the remainder to be employ-
 “ ed as stock to buy materials of work, cloathing, and dyet, for the
 “ Poor in the said work-house.

“ And that the said Justices or Commissioners, or any of them,
 “ may have full power, by their warrants, to take up all beggars, va-
 “ grants without passes, and suspicious persons, and send them to the
 “ work-house within the precinct so taken, there to be kept to work
 “ till delivered by warrant under the hands and seals of or more
 “ of the said Justices or Commissioners: that if the said person so de-
 “ tained shall remain idle and incorrigible, then to be lawful for the
 “ Governor of the work-house where the said idle or incorrigible person
 “ shall be, to whip the said person, or otherwise to correct him or her
 “ in the discretion of the said Governor, provided such correction be at
 “ the check of the said Justices or Commissioners.

“ And that the said Justices, or Commissioners, or any of them,
 “ within their precincts or limits, may have power, by warrant under
 “ their hands and seals, to compel, if they see requisite, such and so
 “ many parents, children, and others, in the said parishes, that shall
 “ receive weekly pay of the officers of the said parishes, to work in
 “ the said work-house belonging to the said parish, and there to dwell
 “ so long as the said Justices or Commissioners, or any of them,
 “ shall think fit. And that the said Justices may have power by their
 “ warrants to compel, under the penalty of , all church-wardens,
 “ overseers of the Poor, constables, tything-men, and head-boroughs of
 “ each parish in the said county, to inclose, where there is common or
 “ wast-

“ waft-ground, provided it be done in divers places of the faid parifhes,
 “ and not in one or two places only, but with the confent of the Lord
 “ of the foyl, and majority of freeholders: and that it may be lawful
 “ for the faid Juftices or Commiffioners to fet and let, for one-and-
 “ twenty years, the faid part of the common fo inclofed, towards raif-
 “ ing a ftock for the faid parifhes, whereby to fave the aforefaid affeff-
 “ ments of 12d. in the pound, or fome part of it; and the faid Juftices
 “ or Commiffioners to have the government, or to appoint governors of
 “ the faid ftock, and of the aforefaid 12d. in the pound; and to direct
 “ the building of the faid work-houfe; as alfo to appoint what apparel,
 “ wages, and dyet, fhall be ufed and allowed in the faid work-houfe
 “ or houfes; and to inflict any punifhment, not exceeding whipping
 “ or imprifonment for one year, in the faid work-houfe or houfes. And
 “ that the faid Juftices fhall have power to direct a jury of twelve, of
 “ the moft fubftantial inhabitants of each parifh within the limits, to
 “ ftint or limit the commoning of each perfon having a right of com-
 “ mon within the faid parifh, where waft is fo inclofed and let, according
 “ to the pound-rate, as they ftand charged in the Poor’s books or
 “ levies: And further, that in cafe there fhall not be waft lands fuffi-
 “ cient in any of the faid parifhes, that then it may be lawful for any
 “ perfon having land in any common plow’d field, to inclofe a part or
 “ all of his faid land, if any be in the faid parifhes, having warrant fo
 “ to do from any or more of the faid Juftices or Commiffioners,
 “ paying as a ftock to the Poor of the faid parifh, a fixth part of the yearly
 “ value of the faid lands by the acre, as they are now worth, to be let
 “ at the rate of twenty years’ purchafe, to be adjudged by the faid
 “ Juftices and a Jury of the parifhes where fuch inclofure is made.

“ So that if the faid land be worth 2s. per acre, then the value for in-
 “ clofing fuch acre to be 6s. and 8d., and fo proportionably for more
 “ or lefs, to be paid within fix months after fuch inclofure; and for non-
 “ payment, then a diftreffs to be taken by warrant from the faid Jufti-
 “ tices or Commiffioners: but yet if any perfon fhall fo inclofe, he
 “ muft difcommon proportionably for fuch inclofure, the whole field
 “ lands to be ftinted as above-faid; and alfo muft pay to the parfon,
 “ rector, vicar, or impropiator yearly ever after, as a modus, fo much
 “ per ann. as he now annually by computaion or otherwife pays; and

“ that the said Justices or Commissioners have power to set out apprentices with the said stock or stocks, as many children of both sexes as they think convenient; and that the said Justice shall have full power to transact all matters relating to the said poor people and work-house, as to the governour, governess, and dyet, work and apparel of the people therein, by appointing salaries, punishments, and rewards, of each respective person in the said work-houses, that in their judgments shall deserve, not exceeding in punishment as before, nor in reward above a-third part of each person's gain respectively; the residue to be employed to the maintenance of all lame, decrepit, old, impotent, and lunatick persons in the said limits.

“ That the said Justices, or any other persons concerned in the stock of the said houses, shall be liable to an account at every Quarter Sessions, if the overseers require it, and thereof give notice to the said Justices, or other persons any way by them employed; and if the majority of the Justices of the said Quarter Sessions shall be convinced that any Justice or Justices, person or persons whatsoever, have imbezelled the stock, or any part of the stock of any work-house, or belonging to the Poor of any work-house in the said county, that they shall sign a warrant of distress to levy double the value of such stock so embezelled upon the said Justice or Justices, for the use of the said Poor; and as for all other person or persons concerned under the Justice or Justices, Commissioner or Commissioners, they shall be found guilty of for embezelling as aforesaid.

“ That it may be lawful to employ the poor people so put into the said work-house, in any manufacture of linen, woollen, hempen, silk, iron, leather or clay, and to entertain any person to instruct the said Poor in the said manufactures; and the said work-houses belonging to the said Poor, not to be liable to pay any excise for any meat, drink, or materials, they shall eat, drink, or work up, upon certificate of or more of the said Justices or Commissioners, that the meat, drink, or materials for work are only for the use of the Poor of such work-house.

“ Lastly, That where any parish is oppressed with Poor to such a degree as not to be very well able to pay the said 12d. in the pound yearly more than their ordinary annual levies, then it may be lawful for

“ for the officers of the said parish, with the consent of the said Justices
 “ or Commissioners, or any or more of them, in their limits, to set
 “ and let any lands formerly given, or which hereafter shall be given,
 “ to the use of the Poor of the said parish, for the term of twenty-and-
 “ one years, or three lives, reserving what rent they shall think fit;
 “ the fine and rent to be employed as aforesaid. And that there may
 “ be a comptroller-general to visit the said work-house, and to inspect
 “ the accounts of the governours of the said houses, who shall have
 “ power to examine his behaviour and accounts, and to make report of
 “ the condition of each work-house every Quarter Sessions; such in-
 “ spections or visiting to be at least once in a quarter; and to have for
 “ his pains a salary of per ann. out of every hundred pounds of
 “ stock, which each particular work-house shall appear to have, annu-
 “ ally at every Easter Sessions; the account to be stated by or more
 “ of the said Justices, who are to give their warrants to the governours of
 “ each work-house to pay the same to the said comptroller, who is to
 “ be chosen by the majority of the said Justices, not to be displaced but
 “ for his neglect, mismanagement, or evil practice.”

Every thing that has fallen from the pen of Locke, relative to the Poor System, must be highly deserving the attention of the political enquirer. His warm zeal for the promotion of the best interests of mankind; his knowledge of the principles, and his experience in the practice, of government, were such, that, in the investigation of this important subject, (we may be assured,) he would use his utmost exertions to discover the causes of the greatest of national maladies, the increasing distresses of the labouring classes of the community; and would point out those remedies, which, to his penetrating judgment, appeared the best calculated to afford relief. I shall, therefore, without apology, present the reader with the observations and advice of this great philosopher. They are the more worthy of consideration, as many of his suggestions appear to have formed the basis of part of the plan, which is now under discussion, for enforcing and amending the Poor Laws: if they are not a model of perfection, they will, at least, afford this consolation to the many patriotic, though unsuccessful, philanthropists, who, since his time, have attempted the arduous task of repairing this portion of the

legislative fabric, that even so great a man as Mr. Locke attempted it to but little purpose. No argument, however, of the impracticability of his proposals, can be adduced from the circumstance of their not having been attended to by the Legislature, to which they were recommended. The circumstances of the period, in which he brought forward his scheme, should be particularly attended to. It has been well observed, that “ the war, which engrossed the attention of the
“ nation, during the eight first years after the Revolution; the formidable preparations made by France to invade this kingdom; the actual invasion of Ireland, and the encouragement given to those attempts, by the dark and dangerous intrigues of a powerful body of domestic mal-contents, were circumstances very unfavourable to the re-
“ formation of evils, which had been accumulated by the neglects and
“ misfortunes of half a century ’.”

It was in the capacity of one of the original Commissioners of the Board of Trade, (to which the consideration of a proper method for employing the Poor had been referred in the year 1696,) that Mr. Locke drew up this report, which, in the following year, was presented by them to the Lords Justices of the kingdom. In it he makes the following important remarks on the state of the Poor, and the causes which have principally led to poverty. He says, “ The multiplying of
“ the Poor, and the increase of the tax for their maintenance, is so general an observation and complaint that it cannot be doubted of: nor
“ has it been only since the last war, that the evil has come upon us;
“ it has been a growing burthen on the kingdom, these many years;
“ and the two last reigns felt the increase of it, as well as the present.
“ In investigating the causes of the evil, Mr. Locke observes, that the
“ evil has proceeded neither from scarcity of provisions, nor from want
“ of employment for the Poor, since God has blessed these times with
“ plenty, not less than the former. The growth of the Poor must there-

“ An Account of the origin, proceedings, and intentions of the Society for the Promotion of Industry in the Southern district of the parts of Lindsey, in the county of Lincoln, 3d edition, 128. This edition contains the Report of the Board of Trade to the Lords Justices, respecting the relief and employment of the Poor; drawn up in the year 1697, by Mr. John Locke, one of the original Commissioners of that Board; with Notes by the Editor.”—(the Rev. R. G. Bouyer, of Willoughby, Lincolnshire.)

“ fore have some other cause ; and it can be nothing else but the relaxation of discipline, and the corruption of manners.” He thinks, that, upon a very moderate computation, it may be concluded, that above one half of those, who receive relief from the parishes, are able to get their livelihood ; and divides all those, who are allowed a parochial maintenance, into three classes : first, those who can do nothing towards their own support ; secondly, those who can do something, although they cannot entirely support themselves by their labour ; thirdly, such as can maintain themselves by their own labour. These again he subdivides into two sorts ; namely, those who have numerous families of children, whom they cannot, or pretend they cannot, support by their labour ; or those who pretend they cannot get work, and live only by begging.

With respect to vagabonds, he recommends enforcing the laws in being, and enacting several new regulations for the suppression of vagrancy : and, in order to take away all pretence of being idle for want of work, it is proposed, that if any one complains of wanting work, and is willing to work at a lower rate than is usually given in his parish, which rate is to be regulated by the guardian, and no one in the parish should accept such person at the rate proposed, then a list of the inhabitants shall be made out, and each person in his turn be obliged to employ the poor man, or to pay him the wages appointed by the guardian.

As, however, “ the greatest part of the Poor maintained by parish. Rates are neither wholly unable, nor unwilling, to work for their livelihood, but, either through want of work being provided for them, or their unskilfulness in working, do little that turns to any public account” ; it is proposed, “ that working schools shall be set up in each parish,” and “ that the materials, to be employed in the schools and among other poor people of the parish, shall be provided by a common stock in each hundred, to be raised out of a certain portion of the Poor’s Rate :” that a store-keeper shall be appointed by the guardians, to purchase and deliver out the wool and other materials, with a salary to be paid from the Rate of each parish ; and, over and above his salary, 2s. in the pound, to be paid yearly, for every 20s. that shall be lessened in the Poor’s Rate of each parish, from the first year of his management. Materials from the stock are to be distributed at the schools,

schools, or to poor people, who demand relief, to be wrought by them at home, who are to receive for their work, what the owner and store-keeper shall agree upon: and if they disagree, the price of the work is to be determined on by three or more guardians of the hundred. By these means it is conceived that the labour of grown people, who, being decayed from their full strength, could yet do something, and of the wives of labourers, who, being principally occupied in looking after their children, cannot go abroad to seek for work, and in the broken intervals of their time do nothing at home, may be made productive to the public; and what their earnings fall short of a full maintenance, may be supplied out of a parish allowance.

Mr. Locke is of opinion, that a man and his wife, in health, might be able, by their ordinary labour, to maintain themselves and two children: "more than two children under three years of age," he says, "will seldom be found in one family;" and, therefore, if all the children above three years old be taken care of by the parish, the parents, while they remain in health, cannot be burthened by any number of children. Under this idea, the Report proposes, that children between three and fourteen years of age, of all such as demand relief from the parish, shall be obliged to attend the working-schools. It is likewise proposed to distribute bread, and, in cold weather, the addition of water-gruel, which may be prepared by the fire in the school-room, rather to the children whilst at school, than to allow a proportionable allowance to their parents for that purpose.

In the Report he observes, that an allowance given once a week, or once a month, to the father, in money, is not seldom spent at the ale-house, whilst his children are left to perish at home, unless the charity of neighbours relieve them. It was expected that, computing all the earnings of children from three to fourteen years of age, the nourishing and teaching them, would, upon the whole, be fully repaid to the parish; whereas every child, which from its birth was maintained by the public, in the ordinary way, before the age of fourteen, cost its parish 50 or 60 £. It was likewise proposed, that the handicraftsmen in each hundred should be bound to take every other of their apprentices from among the boys in some one of the

schools, at the age they pleased, to be bound to them till the age of twenty-three years, that is the length of time might more than make amends for the terms usually given with apprentices; and that freeholders of £25. a year, or persons renting £50. a year, might choose out of the school, what boy each of them pleased, to be his apprentice in husbandry, upon the same conditions. And that whatever boys were not by these means bound out apprentices before they reached the age of fourteen, should, at the Easter meeting of the guardians, be bound to such gentlemen yeomen and farmers within the hundred, as held the greatest number of acres of land in their hands, who should be obliged to take them for their apprentices till the age of twenty-three, or bind them out, at their own cost, to some handicraftsman.

Poor people, not able to work, in corporate towns, where there are no hospitals to receive them, he thinks, should be lodged three or four, or more, in one room, and more in one house, where one fire may serve, and one attendant may provide for many of them, with less charge than when they live scatteringly.

These are the principal heads of the regulations proposed by Mr. Locke. It is probable that a law framed in conformity with his suggestions would have now existed for near a century, had not the alterations between King William and his Parliament, which were carried on with great acrimony towards the latter part of his reign, prevented them from paying a due attention to this important branch of police. The King, in his speech from the throne, the year after the delivery of the Report of the Board of Trade, recommended the adoption of some effectual expedient to employ the Poor¹; and, in each of the following

¹ On this occasion, he used the following words: "I think it would be happy, if some effectual expedient could be found for employing the Poor, which might tend to the increase of our manufactures, as well as remove a heavy burthen from the people." Chandler's Debates, iii. 92.

In the succeeding Sessions, (1699,) he mentioned the subject more fully: "The increase of the Poor is become a burthen to the kingdom, and their loose and idle life, does, in some measure, contribute to that depravation of manners, which is complained of, I fear, with too much reason. Whether the ground of this evil be from defects in the laws already made, or in the execution of them, deserves your consideration. As it is an indispensable duty, that the Poor, who are not able to help themselves, should be maintained,

following Sessions, he again mentioned the measure as one he had much at heart. Such, however, were the jealousies which then prevailed, that the Commons paid little attention to his Majesty's speech; and, instead of an address of thanks, their answer was filled with captious remonstrances.

In 1705, a Bill, framed by Mr. Locke in conformity with the above Report, was introduced into the House of Commons, but did not pass into a Law¹.

In 1698, a pamphlet was published at Exeter, intitled, "Bread for the Poor," by R. D.² who, from his allusions to a former publication, appears to have been Richard Dunning, a writer whom I have already

"tained, so I cannot but think it extremely desirable, that such as are able and willing should not want employment; and such as are obstinate and unwilling, should be compelled to labour." King's Speech, Chandler's Debates, iii. 107.

No notice was taken of this part of his Majesty's speech. The next year, however, he repeated his advice: "The regulation and improvement of our trade is so public a concern, that I hope it will ever have your serious thoughts; and if you can find proper means of setting the Poor at work, you will ease yourselves of a very great burthen; and at the same time add so many useful hands to be employed in our manufactures, and other public occasions." Chandler's Debates, iii. 128.

¹ The following is an Abstract of Mr. Locke's Bill of the 3d and 4th of Anne:

"Two or more Justices may appoint overseers in extra-parochial places.—40 days residence in extra-parochial places, after delivery of notice in writing to overseers, to be sufficient to gain a settlement.—Overseers may put out Poor to work with such persons as will hire them: Poor persons refusing to work to be whipped, and kept to hard labour in the house of correction for a period not exceeding 20 days.—Overseers neglecting to raise a stock to set the Poor to work, to forfeit £5.—Overseers may employ the Poor with the stock; and hire other tradesmen of the parish, if necessary, on paying them the usual wages.—Poor persons refusing to work upon the stock to be whipped, &c. (as before.)—Parishes may join stocks; and are to contribute in such proportions as shall be directed by the Justices at Quarter Sessions.—The work is to be carried on, under the rules and orders of the overseers and Justices.—Workers embezzling materials, and receivers and buyers of embezzled materials, to be whipped and kept to hard labour 20 days.—Justices may appoint an assistant or assistants, experienced in trade, to instruct the Poor; dispose of manufactured goods; keep accounts of money received by overseers, &c. Such persons to be removable by the Justices.—Overseers, with consent of the inhabitants, may hire houses for work-shops and work-houses.—Justices may make orders respecting the manufacturing, selling of goods, &c.—Entries respecting indentures, certificates, &c. to be preserved, and delivered by overseers to their successors, under a penalty of £5.—No money to be allowed to overseers for drinking, &c.—Persons aggrieved may appeal to the Quarter Sessions.—Order of Justices final."

² This pamphlet is one in the quarto collection, published in 1787.

noticed

noticed under the year 1686. In his introduction to this work, he says, that whoever would take the trouble of inspecting the Poor accounts of a few parishes in Devonshire, would find that the charge of maintaining them had, in some places, advanced from 40s. to £40. a year, and was likely to double in a short time. According to a moderate computation, drawn from parishes where the assessments were moderate, he estimated the Poor's Rates of the whole county at £38,991. 13s. 5d.: a sum which he says is £30,000, a year more than the Poor cost 50 or 60 years before; and adds, that, notwithstanding such advance in maintaining them, yet the wages they received were greater than formerly, work more plentiful, and provisions cheaper. Of this extraordinary increase he justly remarks, that, "whether the public is in danger is worth the considering: if within one age the charge to the Poor in Rates be advanced four-fold, and so in this one county comes to £39,000. per annum, then the kingdom, according to the proportions observed in some former assessments, that charge is far more than one-and-twenty times so much; consequently above £819,000. per annum. Add to this what they receive by begging, and what they might get in the time they now spend idly, or worse; which few but will agree is more than the Poor Rates; so the same being but another such sum, and added to the former, makes up £1,638,000. per annum."

The author says, that "where there is an effect, there is a cause; and as the effect is certain and visible in the excessive charge of maintaining the Poor, so, that there is a cause producing such effect, is as certain." He then enumerates the causes to which he ascribes the increase of the Poor's Rate. They are, first, profuseness of diet: of this he observes, that "not only more ale and brandy are sold than formerly in single ale-houses and brandy-shops, but the number of such houses and shops is also increased: that the money spent in ale and brandy, in small country shops and ale-houses, amounts to a vast and almost incredible sum, did not their payments for excise manifest it: that a very small and inconsiderable part thereof is spent by gentlemen or travellers, or housekeepers that pay Rates to the King and Poor: that such as are maintained by parish-pay seldom drink any other than the strongest ale-house beer, which, at the rate they buy it, costs 50s. or £3. a hogthead:

VOL. I. K k

“hoghead: that they feldom eat any bread save what is made of the
“finest wheat flour sold by common bakers.”

This Mr. Dunning proposes to remedy by providing the Poor with house-rent, meat, drink, cloaths, and all other necessaries, instead of giving them an allowance in money: he also recommends badging them; and that their daily portions of food be limited as to quantity, quality, weight, and measure, according to their ages, sexes, and other circumstances.

The second cause, he says, is idleness. “Persons once receiving
“parish-pay presently become idle, alledging that the parish is bound
“to maintain them; and that in case they should work, it would only
“favour a parish, from whom, they say, they shall have no thanks.”

The remedy he proposes, is to provide all that can contribute to their own maintenance with suitable employment; which he thinks may be done by a work-house, or an equivalent with a work-house, in every parish; or with a stock, or an equivalent with a stock¹. He here alludes to his publication in 1686, by which, he says, he had briefly demonstrated a means of “employing the Poor with an inconsiderable
“charge, and without the common charge of raising, hazard of en-
“trusting, and care of managing a stock.”

Giving

¹ What this equivalent is appears from the following account, which he gives of the benefits derived from the establishment of a work-house in Exeter, (for which an Act of Parliament was passed in 1698.)

“The work-house in the city of Exeter is said by some constantly to employ 100 persons; by others it is said that not six are employed therein constantly: now both these seeming
“contradictions are true.

“It must, by the way, be considered, which is too well known, that in every town, how
“well-traded soever, many tradesmen are out of work, and destitute of employment; not
“for that the trade or place doth not afford employment sufficient, but that such destitute
“persons have brought themselves out of credit and work, either by their sottish, careless,
“silly, or other ill demeanour. And such being numerous, and some of them having fam-
“ilies to provide for, would, as such are apt to do, complain to the magistrate for work,
“or rather from the overseers; then to maintain them idle was a great charge, to promise
“them work a great difficulty: those that knew them not would not employ them, because
“strangers; those that knew them, knew them too well to trust their trade and stock in
“their hands; yet maintained they must, yea, will be. This inevitably drew on a great
“charge, and yet their mutinies a greater danger. But since the setting up this work-house,
“whereof

Giving excessive parish-pay to the Poor is, he thinks, another cause, which has greatly increased extravagance and idleness in them, and discouraged industry in others; the allowance commonly given to persons maintained by a parish being three times as much as an honest labourer, who with his wife maintains three children, can afford himself. The following is his computation of the earnings and outgoings of a day-labourer in husbandry in the county of Devon: I insert it verbatim, as, in my opinion, it furnishes, when compared with the present state of a labourer in that county, many very important results, highly deserving attention from the political enquirer.

“As it is not strange to see labourers to have 4 or 5 children a-piece, which they maintain by their labour, so it is common to see many maintain three children a-piece in a decent manner: now, admitting the wife maintains herself and one child, which is the most a woman can, and what few will do; what is needful to maintain himself and

“whereof the governour is ready provided to employ all that come, the magistrates are not now at a loss to know how to answer such complaints, but assign them to the master of the work-house for employments. And now those careless surly sorts find themselves at a loss: they must either humour and comply with the tradesmen that have stocks, and serve them; or work in the common work-house, and submit to that government; which, though no prison, is in common acceptation near a-kin to a Bridewell. Being reduced to this dilemma, they will choose the first, and rather comply with a master of their own choosing than of the mayor's: by this means it comes to pass, that the work-house, which doth not actually employ six persons in it, doth yet virtually and effectually employ 100. Such a work-house seems not attainable in country parishes; but that which is equally advantageous, and may be called an equivalent, may be had in all places; with this difference, that the city work-house requires a stock and salary: in the stock, there is a charge raising, and hazard in intrusting; but in this equivalent there is no such charge or hazard; for men in husbandry in the country, by giving them lists to work round the parish, and others of trades, to agree with a tradesman for employing them in weaving, combing, spinning, and to assign them to work accordingly; and withall, to order them to give a weekly, or other constant account at the pay-board, that they do work accordingly, or are otherwise daily employed in some honest labour, is very advantageous; for those that are so employed, and the wages not being great, can be no damage to the employer of them. And the general averfeness and abhorrence of the Poor to go about with lists and desire work, and work according to such appointments, and to give a constant account thereof, is altogether as effectual as a city work-house to make such persons to get work for themselves; and their wages not being too large, the employers of them will be sure to be at no loss, and the willing to employ them.”

" two children the husband must bear; he must pay house-rent, which,			
" in 2os. yearly; is weekly upwards of	-	-	cs. 4d.
" He must buy wood, which cannot be less than	-	o	3
" His own cloaths, in 2os. yearly, cost above	-	o	4
" His Sunday's diet 2d. and working tools weekly 1d.	-	o	3
" There remains of his week's wages, to maintain two chil-			
"dren, meat and drink, cloaths, attendance, washing,			
"&c. scarce above 1d. a day for each child,	-	1	2
" So weekly both cost	-	2	5

" His wages or income.

" Herein loss of work through bad weather, holydays, &c. are not computed: the charge of maintaining a young child and an infirm person unable to bear labour being near the same.

" His full wages, in some part of the county, are, weekly, 2s. 6d.—in others 2s. 8d.—in some places less; and where more is paid, house-rent and wood are dearer."

From this statement it appears, that, in the distant county of Devon, in the latter end of the last century, a labourer's income was about £6. 10s. a year: such, however, is the vivifying effect of industry and commerce, that, now, few labourers, in the same county, receive less than three times that sum. It is not probable that Mr. Dunning has estimated the earnings of his labourer much below the actual truth: any gross mis-statement would have been so easily detected in the county in which he published his book, that we cannot suppose that he intentionally undervalued them. The earnings, however, of a Devonshire labourer, when compared with the contemporary earnings of persons in the same class, as stated by other writers, appear to be extremely low. Sir Matthew Hale, I have before shewn¹, computes the necessary expence of a labourer's family, (which he supposes to consist of a man, his wife, two children able to do something, and two not able,) at ten shillings a week, or twenty-six pounds a year; and reckons, that if they cannot earn this sum by their labour, they must make it up either by begging or stealing. It must, however, be remarked, that he resided in the cloth-ing county of Gloucester, and probably formed his average of the an-

¹ See p. 216.

nual earnings of labourers from the ordinary receipts of the manufacturers of superfine cloth. In 1688, Gregory King estimated the ordinary income of labourers and servants at fifteen pounds a year to a family, which he supposed to consist, one with another, of three and a half persons¹. Both these instances are much higher than Mr. Dunning's estimate of the earnings of a day-labourer; though not more so than the income of a Middlesex labourer exceeds the ordinary wages in the distant counties of England, or in Scotland.

The fourth cause of the increased expence of maintaining the Poor, he supposes to be their living in separate houses. "Several of them," he says, "have ordinarily one house a piece entirely to themselves, which "would conveniently serve three or four of them; and the same fire, "candle light, and attendance, that now serves but one, might serve "three or four; and, in many particulars, they might assist, help, and "comfort one another; only their unwillingness to have their idleness, "filching, profuseness in diet, discovered, makes them extreme averse "against such cohabiting."

In an "Essay towards regulating the Trade, and employing the Poor of this kingdom," (published about the year 1700,) Mr. Cary seems to agree with Mr. Dunning in ascribing the increase of the Poor's Rates to idleness: this, he says, "hath proceeded, partly from "the abuse of those laws we have, and partly from want of better: "licenses for ale-houses were at first granted for good ends; not to "draw men aside from their labour by games and sports, but to support "and refresh them under it; and as they were then a maintenance to "the aged, so poor families had opportunities of being supplied with "a cup of ale from abroad, who could not keep it at home. Great "observation was also made to prevent idle tippling: our fore-fathers "considered that time so spent was a loss to the nation, whose interest

¹ Of the calculations of Sir Matthew Hale and Gregory King, Adam Smith remarks, that, though different in appearance, they are, at bottom, nearly the same. Both suppose the weekly expence of a labourer's family to be about twenty-pence a head. *Wealth of Nations*, 5th ed. i. 117. It should, however, I think, be considered, that Gregory King's estimate of the average of the number of persons in a family is too low, (see p. 228.) His average, therefore, of earnings is too high.

² For the titles of other publications by Mr. Cary, on the same subject, see the Appendix to this volume, No. xviii.

“ was improved by the labour of it's inhabitants; whereas ale-houses
 “ are now encouraged to promote the income of excise, on whom there
 “ must be no restraint, least the king's revenue should be lessened. But,
 “ above all, our laws to set the Poor at work are short and defective,
 “ tending rather to maintain them so, than to raise them to a better way
 “ of living; and render the Poor more bold, when they know the parish-
 “ officers are bound either to provide them work, or to give them
 “ maintenance ¹.”

As the best means of restraining idleness, he proposes the establishment of work-houses, in which the Poor of both sexes and all ages may be employed, in beating hemp, dressing and spinning flax, or in carding and spinning wool and cotton. He thinks also, that if a reward was given to the person who should spin the finest thread of either, (as is done in Ireland for linen,) to be adjudged yearly, and paid by the county, or in any other manner that should be thought convenient, it would much promote industry and ingenuity, and contribute to the improvement of our manufactures. “ Nor should these houses (he thinks) hinder any who desire to work at home, or the manufacturers from employing them; the design being to provide places for those who care not to work any where, and to make the parish-officers more industrious to find them out, when they know whither to send them, by which means they would be better able to maintain the impotent.

“ It seems also convenient, that these work-houses, when settled in cities and great towns, should be not only parochial, but one or more in each place, as will best suit it; which would prevent the Poor's being sent from parish to parish, and provided for no where ².”

He also proposes that Justices should have power to assign youth to artificers, husbandmen, manufacturers, and mariners; and to bind them apprentices, for a time certain, at such ages as they thought proper. As for those of elder years, who will rather beg than work, he thinks they should be forced “ to serve the King in his fleet, or the merchants on board their ships: the sea (he says,) is very good to cure sore legs and arms, especially such as are counterfeits; against which the capstern, with the taunts of the sailors, is a certain remedy.”

On the inequality of the Poor's Rates in different parishes of the

¹ A Discourse on Trade, &c. 2d. ed. 1719. p. 104.

² Id. p. 107.

same

same city, he makes the following just observations. Care (he says,) should be taken “that the Poor’s Rates be made with more equality in cities and great towns; especially in the former, where the greatest number of Poor usually residing together in the suburbs and out-parishes, are very serviceable by their labours to the Rich, in carrying on their trades; yet when age, sickness, or a numerous family, make them desire relief, their chief dependence must be on people but one step above their own conditions; by which means these out-parishes are more burthened in their payments than the in-parishes are, though much richer; and is one reason why they are so ill inhabited, no man caring to come to a certain charge: and this is attended with another ill consequence, the want of better inhabitants making way for those disorders which easily grow among the Poor; whereas, if cities and towns were made but one Poor’s Rate, or equally divided into more, these inconveniencies would be removed, and the Poor maintained by a more equal contribution.”

He passes high encomiums on an Act passed in the 7th and 8th of William the Third¹, by which the different parishes in the city of Bristol were incorporated, and the management of all parochial concerns within the city vested in a corporation.

As this Act, however, was adapted only to cities and great towns, and could not be a model for the counties at large, he proposes, in order to carry his charitable designs into effect throughout the kingdom, that power may be given, by Act of Parliament, for parishes “to incorporate for building hospitals, work-houses, and houses of correction, for the better maintaining and employing their Poor, under the management of such corporations; which in the counties must be by uniting one or more hundreds, whose parishes must be comprehended in one Poor’s Rate, and each of them contribute to the charge thereof; not by bringing them to an equal pound rate on their lands and personal estates, as in cities and great towns, but by taxing every parish according to what it paid before; there not being the same parity of reason for that way of raising money in the hundreds, as there is in cities and towns; because in the former the parishes do not receive an equal benefit from the labour of the Poor of other parishes, as

¹ 7 & 8 W. III. Private Acts, c. 32. See also 12 Ann. st. 2. c. 15. Private.—and 4 Geo. I. c. 3. Private.

“they

*Bristol
Incorporation
1705*

“ they do in the latter ; which hospitals, work-houses, and houses of
 “ correction, to be provided at the general charge of the parishes thus
 “ united, according to the proportion that each of them pays to the
 “ Poor.

“ The Guardians of these corporations consist of all the Justices of
 “ the Peace inhabiting within the several parishes thus united, together
 “ with a number of inhabitants chosen out of each parish, in proportion
 “ to the sum of money it pays ; which choice to be made every year,
 “ or once in two years, when one half of those that were first chosen
 “ must go out, and the remainder stay in to instruct those who were
 “ last chosen ; the electors to be the freeholders of *per annum* :
 “ and, on the death of any guardian, another to be chosen in his room
 “ by the parish for which he served. That the Guardians being thus
 “ settled, they shall have power to chuse a Governour, Deputy Gover-
 “ nour, Treasurer, and Assistants, yearly ; and to hold courts and make by-
 “ laws, and appoint a common seal ; and also to summon the inhabitants
 “ to answer to matters relating to the corporation ; and to compell all
 “ people who seek for relief, to dwell in their hospitals and work-
 “ houses, if they see fit ; and to take in young people of both sexes, and
 “ breed them up to work, who they shall also be obliged to teach to
 “ write and read, and what else shall be thought necessary, and then to
 “ bind them out apprentices ; and likewise to provide for the aged and
 “ impotent, and to assist those whose labours will not maintain their
 “ charges ; and to apprehend rogues, vagrants, and beggars, and cause
 “ them to be set at work ; and also to inflict reasonable correction where
 “ they see it necessary ; and to entertain proper officers, and pay them
 “ out of the stock : with a clause to secure them from vexatious suits ;
 “ and they must be obliged, once in at least, to hold a general
 “ court, where the Governour, Deputy Governour, or one half of the
 “ Assistants, together with such a proportionable number of the Guar-
 “ dians as they shall agree on, shall be present.

“ That the court shall, once in six months, agree and settle how much
 “ money will be necessary for maintaining and employing the Poor for
 “ the six months next ensuing ; and certifie the same to the Justices in-
 “ habiting within the said hundred or hundreds, at a meeting to be held
 “ for that purpose ; who shall proportion the same regularly on each
 “ parish, and grant out their warrants to proper persons to assess the
 “ same ;

“ same; and afterwards other warrants to collect, and pay it to the
 “ treasurer of the corporation : with a power to inflict penalties on the
 “ assessors and collectors, if they refuse or neglect their duties, in assess-
 “ ing, collecting, and paying the said money, according to their war-
 “ rants.

“ That each corporation be one body politic in law, and be capable of
 “ suing and being sued ; and be enabled to purchase, take and receive
 “ lands, tenements and hereditaments, goods and chattels, for the be-
 “ nefit of the Poor.”

It was probably in consequence of the prosperous beginnings of the Bristol work-house, which seem to have been chiefly owing to the active exertions of Mr. Cary, and the other promoters of the establishment, that city work-houses came much into vogue during the reigns of King William and Queen Anne. Two years after the passing of the Bristol Act, Exeter¹, Hereford², Colchester³, Kingston upon Hull⁴, and Shaftesbury⁵, were authorised to erect work-houses for the employment and maintenance of their Poor : and these establishments were soon after extended to Lynn⁶, Sudbury⁷, Gloucester⁸, Plymouth⁹, Norwich¹⁰, and other places.

I may here repeat the observation, which I made concerning a former period : few Acts were passed during the reign of Queen Anne relative to the Poor ; and consequently little information concerning either the excellencies or defects of parochial administration is to be found in the Statute-book. From the existence, however, of abuses in one branch of the police—the charges for vagrants, I am led to think that the other—the maintenance of the Poor, was far from being economically managed. Of the former it is remarked, in an Act passed in 1702, for the continuation of the 11th and 12th of King William, for the more effectual punishment of vagrants, and sending them whither by law they ought to be sent, that “ great sums have been levied and expended
 “ for the conveying of vagrants ; and that some Justices of the Peace
 “ give greater allowance to constables for conveying of vagrants than

¹ 9 & 10 W. 3. c. 33.² 9 & 10 W. 3. c. 34.³ 9 & 10 W. 3. c. 37.⁴ 9 & 10 W. 3. c. 47.⁵ 9 & 10 W. 3. c. 48.⁶ 12 W. 3. c. 6.⁷ 1 Ann.

ft. 1. c. 34.

⁸ 1 Ann. ft. 2. c. 11.⁹ 6 Ann. c. 6.¹⁰ 10 Ann. c. 6.

“ may seem to be necessary ; and that the owners of horses, waggons, carts, or other necessary carriage for conveying such vagrants, are often extravagant in their rates and demands :” It was therefore enacted, that the Justices of the Peace, at the first Quarter-Sessions that shall be held for the several counties, ridings, divisions, and liberties, after the commencement of this Act, wherein they are commissioned to act, and so yearly at every Easter Sessions during the continuance of this Act, are hereby empowered and required to ascertain and set down the several Rates that shall for the year ensuing be allowed for maintaining and conveying, and carrying of such vagrants as shall be passed or carried through their respective counties, ridings, divisions, and liberties; of which said Rates the clerks of the peace are hereby required to give copies to each Justice *gratis*, that they may accordingly regulate the allowances which they shall have occasion to tax, upon the back of the certificates by them to be given to the several petty constables. And that no chief or high constable shall pay the Rates taxed upon the certificates brought to them by their petty constables, unless they shall, at the same time, produce to them a receipt from the constables of the adjacent counties, to whom they are ordered to deliver the said vagrants, of their having received such vagrant, or vagrants, directed to be conveyed to them by the said order; which said constables of the said adjacent counties are hereby required to receive the said vagrant or vagrants, and at the same time to give such receipt as hereby is required.

“ And it was further enacted, That if any chief constable, petty constable, or other such officer, shall refuse or neglect to do their several duties by this Act enjoined, they shall for every offence forfeit the sum of 20s. ; which said several forfeitures and penalties shall be recovered and recoverable as other forfeitures and penalties by this Act are appointed to be recovered¹.”

The ingenious De Foe, in 1704, published an address to Parliament, intitled, “ Giving Alms no Charity² ;” in which he lays down the

¹ 1 Ann. st. 2. c. 13.

² This ingenious tract was republished by De Foe, with several other pieces, in 1705; and reprinted in the Collection of Pamphlets concerning the Poor in 1787. See Chalmers's Life of De Foe, 27.

following

following heads as fundamental maxims, which he attempts to make out by strong facts and powerful arguments.

“ 1. There is in England more labour than hands to perform it; and consequently, a want of people, not of employment.

“ 2. No man in England, of sound limbs and senses, can be poor, merely for want of work.

“ 3. All our work-houses, corporations, and charities for employing the Poor and setting them to work, as now they are employed, or any Acts of Parliament to empower overseers of parishes, or parishes themselves, to employ the Poor, except as shall be hereafter excepted, are, and will be public nuisances, mischiefs to the nation, which serve to the ruin of families, and the increase of the Poor.

“ 4. That it is a regulation of the Poor, that is wanted in England; not a setting them to work.

On the first he remarks, that “ the meanest labours in the nation afford the workman sufficient to support himself and family, which could never be if there was a want of work;” and adduces the following forcible proof, that the poverty of the people is not owing to any difficulty in finding employment. He says, “ I humbly desire this Honourable House to consider the difficulty of raising soldiers in this kingdom; the vast charge that the kingdom is at to the officers to procure men; the many little, and not over honest, methods made use of to bring them into the service, and the laws made to compel them. Why are gaols rummaged for malefactors, and the mint and prisons for debtors? The war is an employment of honour, and suffers some scandal in having men taken from the gallows, and immediately, from villains and house-breakers, made gentlemen soldiers. If men wanted employment, and consequently bread, this could never be; any man would carry a musket rather than starve, and wear the Queen’s cloth, or any body’s cloth, rather than go naked, and live in rags and want. It is plain the nation is full of people, and it is as plain our people have no particular aversion to the war; but they are not poor enough to go abroad. It is poverty makes men soldiers, and drives crowds into the armies; and the difficulties to get Englishmen to list is, because they live in plenty and ease; and he that can earn 20s. *per* week, at an easy steady employment, must be drunk or mad when he

“ lifts for a soldier to be knocked o’ th’ head for 3s. 6d. *per* week : but
 “ if there was no work to be had, if the Poor wanted employment, if
 “ they had not bread to eat, nor knew not how to earn it, thousands of
 “ young lusty fellows would fly to the pike and musket, and chuse to
 “ die like men in the face of the enemy, rather than lie at home, starve,
 “ perish, in poverty and distress.

“ The distresses of the Poor,” he thinks, “ are either owing to infir-
 “ mities merely providential, as sickness and old age ; or to the impro-
 “ vidence of the labouring classes. Good husbandry,” he says, “ is no
 “ English virtue : it may have been brought over ; and in some places
 “ where it has been planted, it has thriven well enough : but it is a
 “ foreign species ; it neither loves, nor is beloved by an Englishman.
 “ The English get estates ; and the Dutch save them : and this obser-
 “ vation I have made between Foreigners and Englishmen, that where
 “ an Englishman earns 20s. a week, and but just lives, as we call it, a
 “ Dutchman grows rich, and leaves his children in very good condition.
 “ Where an English labouring man, with his 9s. per week, lives wretch-
 “ edly and poor, a Dutchman with that wages will live tolerably well,
 “ keep the wolf from the door, and have every thing handsome about
 “ him. In short, he will be rich with the same gain as makes the
 “ Englishman poor ; he’ll thrive when the other goes in rags, and he’ll
 “ live when the other starves, or goes a-begging.

“ We are the most *lazy diligent* nation in the world : there is nothing
 “ more frequent than for an Englishman to work till he has got his
 “ pocket full of money, and then go and be idle, or perhaps drunk, till
 “ it is all gone, and perhaps himself in debt ; and ask him in his cups
 “ what he intends ? he’ll tell you honestly, he’ll drink as long as it
 “ lasts, and then go to work for more. I make no difficulty to promise,
 “ on a short summons, to produce above a thousand families in England,
 “ within my particular knowledge, who go in rags, and their children
 “ wanting bread, whose fathers can earn their 15 to 25s. a week, but
 “ will not work ; who have work enough, but are too idle to seek after
 “ it, and hardly vouchsafe to earn any thing but bare subsistence, and
 “ spending money for themselves.

“ I can give an incredible number of examples in my own knowledge
 “ among our own labouring Poor. I once paid 6 or 7 men together

“ on

“ on a Saturday night, the least 10s. and some 30s. for work, and have
 “ seen them go with it directly to the ale-house, lie there till Monday,
 “ spend it every penny, and run in debt to boot, and not give a farthing
 “ of it to their families, though all of them had wives and children.

“ From hence comes poverty, parish charges, and beggary. If ever
 “ one of these wretches falls sick, all they would ask was a pass to the
 “ parish they lived at, and the wife and children to the door a-begging.

“ If this Honourable House can find out a remedy for this part of the
 “ mischief; if such Acts of Parliament may be made as may effectually
 “ cure the sloth and luxury of our Poor, that shall make drunkards take
 “ care of wife and children, spendthrifts lay up for a wet day, idle lazy
 “ fellows diligent, and thoughtless settish men careful and provident :

“ If this can be done, I presume to say there will be no need of
 “ transposing and confounding our manufactures, and the circulation of
 “ our trade : they will soon find work enough, and there will soon be
 “ less poverty among us. And if this cannot be done, setting them to
 “ work upon woollen manufactures, and thereby encroaching upon those
 “ that now work at them, will but ruine our trade, and consequently in-
 “ crease the number of the Poor.”

De Foe points his arguments very strongly against Sir Humphrey Mackworth's bill¹, the chief object of which was the setting the people to work for the various manufactures, which had been before exercised in England. Such a scheme he considers as perfectly fallacious. “ The manufactures,” he says, “ are such as are managed to a full
 “ extent, and, the present accidents of war and foreign interruption
 “ of trade considered, rather beyond the vent of them than under it.

“ Suppose now a work-house for the employment of poor children
 “ sets them to spinning of worsted. For every skein of worsted these
 “ poor children spin, there must be a skein the less spun by some poor

¹ This bill, (Mr. Chalmers, in his life of De Foe, p. 25, informs us,) “ had been passed by
 “ the Commons with great applause, but received by the Peers with suitable caution. De Foe,
 “ considering this *plausible project* as an *indigested chaos*, represented it, through several Reviews,
 “ as a plan which would ruin the industrious, and thereby augment the Poor. Sir Humphrey
 “ endeavoured to support his work-houses, in every parish, with a parochial capital for car-
 “ rying on parochial manufacture. This drew from De Foe his admirable treatise, which
 “ he intitled, *Giving alms no Charity*.”

“ person

“ person or family that spun it before ; suppose the manufacture of
 “ making bays to be erected in Bishopsgate-street, unless the makers of
 “ these bays can find out at the same time a trade or consumption for
 “ more bays than were made before, for every piece of bays so made
 “ in London, there must be a piece the less made at Colchester.”

He appeals to the House of Commons whether this can be called employing the Poor, “ since it is only transporting manufacture from
 “ Colchester to London, and taking the bread out of the mouths of the
 “ Poor of Essex, to put it into the mouths of the Poor of Middlesex.”

He says, “ If these worthy Gentlemen, who shew themselves so for-
 “ ward to relieve and employ the Poor, will find out some new trade,
 “ some new market, where the goods they make shall be sold, where
 “ none of the same goods were sold before ; if they will send them to
 “ any place where they shall not interfere with the rest of that manu-
 “ facture, or with some other made in England ; then indeed they will
 “ do something worthy of themselves, and they may employ the Poor
 “ to the same glorious advantage as Queen Elizabeth did, to whom this
 “ nation, as a trading country, owes its peculiar greatness.

“ If these Gentlemen could establish a trade to Muscovy for English
 “ serges, or obtain an order from the Czar, that all his subjects should
 “ wear stockings, that wore none before, every poor child's labour in
 “ spinning and knitting those stockings, and all the wool in them, would
 “ be clear gain to the nation, and the general stock would be improved
 “ by it ; because all the growth of our country, and all the labour of a
 “ person who was idle before, is so much clear gain to the general stock.

“ If they will employ the Poor in some manufacture which was not
 “ made in England before, or not bought with some manufacture made
 “ here before, then they offer at something extraordinary.

“ But to set poor people at work on the same thing that other poor
 “ people were employed on before, and at the same time not increase
 “ the consumption, is giving to one, what you take away from another ;
 “ enriching one poor man, to starve another ; putting a vagabond in an
 “ honest man's employment, and putting his diligence on the tenters to
 “ find out some other work to maintain his family.”

He reprobates the idea that it is the business of the Legislature
 to find the Poor work, and to employ them, rather than to oblige
 them

them to find work for themselves. He says, "From this mistaken
 " notion come all our work-houses, and corporations. The erection of
 " parochial manufactures, in order to parcel out work to every door, will,
 " he thinks, be ruinous to the manufacturers themselves; will turn
 " thousands of families out of their employments; and will take the
 " bread out of the mouths of diligent and industrious families, to feed
 " vagrants, thieves, and beggars, who ought much rather to be com-
 " pelled by legal methods to seek that work which it is plain is to be
 " had." He says, "Begging is, in the able, a scandal upon their industry;
 " and in the impotent, a scandal upon the country. Giving alms is no
 " charity: people have such a notion in England of being pitiful and
 " charitable, that they encourage vagrants, and, by a mistaken zeal, do
 " more harm than good. The poverty of England does not lie among
 " the craving beggars, but among poor families, where the children are
 " numerous, and where death or sickness has deprived them of the la-
 " bour of the father: these are the houses that the sons and daughters of
 " Charity, if they would order it well, should seek out and relieve. An
 " alms ill directed may be charity to the particular person, but becomes
 " an injury to the public, and no charity to the nation. As for the
 " craving Poor, I am persuaded I do them no wrong when I say, that if
 " they were incorporated, they would be the richest society in the nation:
 " and the reason why so many pretend to want work is, that, as they can
 " live so well with the pretence of wanting work, they would be mad
 " to leave it and work in earnest.

" And I affirm, of my own knowledge, that when I wanted a man
 " for labouring work, and offered 9s. per week to strolling fellows at
 " my door, they have frequently told me to my face, that they could
 " get more a begging; and I once set a lusty fellow in the stocks, for
 " making the experiment."

The author adds many other interesting observations upon the sub-
 ject. It is, however, very justly observed by Mr. Ruggles, that al-
 though De Foe pretends, that he could propose a regulation of the Poor,
 which would *put a stop to poverty, beggary, parish-charges, assessments,*
and the like, he waves the performance of his promise, for this very in-
 adequate reason; because he will not presume to lead a body so august, so
 wise, and so capable, as the Honourable Assembly to whom his treatise
 is addressed.

X A very learned writer in the reign of Queen Anne, after admitting, that, before the Reformation, the Poor were in general maintained by the Clergy, proposed, as the most obvious and effectual remedy for the great and growing evil of Poor's Rates, then estimated at a million a year, to put all the Poor in the nation once more upon the church lands and tithes, which maintained them before; and that the Clergy should have their share, for as much of them as was left in their hands. It was added, that if the impropiators objected to this, a just and adequate consideration should be given them for their lands and tithes so held, by a tax raised for that especial purpose; and then the Poor be thrown, altogether and entirely, on the Clergy; together with such restored lands and tithes. Whatever objections there may have been to such a plan, I am persuaded, that, in point of expence, the nation would have effected a considerable saving, if the Legislature of that day had listened to the proposal¹.

In 1714, John Bellers re-published his "Proposals for employing the Poor in a College of Industry²," with some additional observations. The following introductory remarks to his plan are, in a great measure, both original and true :

"The Poor," he says, "without employment, are like rough diamonds; their worth is unknown.

"Whereas regularly labouring people are the kingdom's greatest treasure and strength; for, without labourers, there can be no Lords: and if the poor labourers did not raise much more food and manufacture than what did subsist themselves, every Gentleman must be a labourer, and every idle man must starve.

"The best materials for building, put together without order or method, are little better than rubbish, until they are regularly placed.

¹ See Leslie's Essay on the Divine right of tithes, in his works, fol. ed. 1721. ii. 873. He states the Poor's Rates to be at about a million a year. The author of "A present remedy for the Poor," published in 1700, estimates this tax at the same sum: he says, "there is every year a million of money collected in this kingdom from all parishes for the relief of the Poor."

² In a tract intitled, "An Essay towards the Improvement of Physick," &c. See the Catalogue of English Publications relating to the Poor in the Appendix to this Volume, No. xviii.

“ And the best horses, whilst wild at grass, are but useless and chargeable; and the same are mankind, until they are regularly and usefully employ’d.

“ But every man, so employ’d, adds two hundred pounds, or more, to the value of the kingdom; land without people being of no worth.

“ And this treasure are the Poor; but the polishing of these rough diamonds, that their lustre and value may appear, is a subject highly worth the consideration and endeavour of our greatest Statesmen and Senators.”

After recapitulating the advantages which he thought might be expected from his College, which, he says, will not only provide for the usual Poor, but find work for the disbanded army, he thus attempts to compute what we may be supposed to lose annually, by neglecting to supply the Poor with regular employment.

He says: “ Supposing that there are seven millions of people in the nation, and that one in fourteen, either will not work, or that wants it; that is, five hundred thousand men, women, and children.

“ And reckoning that they might earn, one with another, six-pence a day, a head, it comes to twelve thousand five hundred pounds a day, which is seventy-five thousand pounds a week.

“ That makes three millions nine hundred thousand pounds a year, which the nation loseth.

“ To which add but 12d. a-head, a week, the nation may be at, parish rates, and other gifts to the Poor, and it comes to one million three hundred thousand pounds a year: which account, in the whole, makes the loss, a charge to the nation, to be

“ *Five Millions Two Hundred Thousand Pounds a Year.*

“ Some may reckon this account too large, (though, if but half the sum, it’s worth looking after;) but let them consider, that five hundred thousand people, at three acres a head, may improve one million and five hundred thousand acres of land, at 10s. an acre, a year.

“ That comes to seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year; and then, add the hands and lands in North Britain and Ireland, that lie useless, and they will add large sums to the reckoning.

“ But if we suppose only half this money lost; that is, two millions

“ and a half a year, yet this is as much as the revenues of the crown
 “ of Great Britain have been in the time of peace; and, being a trea-
 “ sure that lies hid in our own bowels, that we need not run the
 “ hazards of war, nor compassing of the globe, to come at, it gives the
 “ greater encouragement to try one or two good specimens, which may
 “ make the discovery of it at home beyond all contradiction.

“ Twenty shillings saved every year, and put to interest at six per
 “ cent., or used in trade or husbandry with the same advantage, in
 “ fifty-eight years time comes to five hundred pound.

“ Therefore, two millions and a half thus saved, or got yearly, by a
 “ full and suitable employing of our Poor, for the improving of all the
 “ several parts of the nation's riches, would, in that proportion, in
 “ fifty-eight years, come to one thousand two hundred and fifty mil-
 “ lions, which is four times as much as all the lands in the kingdom
 “ are now worth; for if they are fifteen millions a year, at twenty
 “ years' purchase, that comes but to three hundred millions.

“ Whereas in fifty-eight years time, such a body, as our present in-
 “ digent Poor are, would be able, (if employed about it,) to turn all
 “ our waste-lands into fruitful fields, orchards and gardens, and their
 “ mean cottages into colleges, and fill our barns with plenty of bread,
 “ and our store-houses with manufactures, which would greatly incou-
 “ rage the increase of our people.”

Little alteration was made in the Poor System by the Laws passed during the reign of George the First. The Act of Queen Anne, which enjoined woollen manufacturers to pay their workmen in money, was enforced by additional penalties¹; and in order effectually to employ the Poor, in the silk and woollen manufactures, the use of printed calicoes, either in apparel, household stuff, or furniture, was prohibited, by an Act passed in 1720².

It appears from the 5th of George the First³, that it was not an uncommon practice for persons to quit their parish, and to go abroad, leaving their wives and children a burthen upon their parish, although they had estates, which might contribute to maintain them: it was therefore enacted, that church-wardens, or overseers of the Poor, in any

¹ 1 Geo. I. St. 2. c. 15.

² 7 Geo. I. St. 1. c. 7.

³ 5 Geo. I. c. 8.
parish

parish where the wife or children of any person were so left, might, by warrant from any two Justices of the Peace, seize the goods and chattels, and receive so much of the rents and profits of the lands and tenements of husbands, fathers, or mothers, who ran away from their parishes, as the Justices should think necessary for discharging the parish for the maintenance of the wives or children who were left.

In the 9th year of this reign, an Act was passed for amending the laws relating to the settlement, employment, and relief of the Poor¹: it recites, that, under colour of a proviso in the 3d and 4th of William and Mary, (which directed that no person should receive relief from a parish, but by authority under the hand of a Justice of the Peace,) many persons had applied to Justices, and, upon undue suggestions, false or frivolous pretences, had obtained relief, which had greatly contributed to the increase of the parish-rates; and enacts, that no person should be relieved until oath should be made before such Justice, of some matter which he should judge to be reasonable cause; and until the person had applied to a vestry, or to two of the overseers, and had been refused relief; and such Justice had summoned two of the overseers of the Poor, to shew cause why such relief should not be given². It was, likewise, directed, that the names of every person, whom the Justice should think fit to order to be relieved, should be entered in a book to be kept for that purpose, as one who is to receive relief as long as the cause continued, and no longer; and that no officer of any parish should, (except upon sudden and emergent occasions,) bring to account any money given to persons not registered in the book, under penalty of five pounds³.

On this clause Mr. Ruggles remarks, that the “ money distributed in
“ the weekly lists forms no very material proportion of the expences
“ of a parish; and in the distribution of money, there is no room for
“ lucrative jobs, no knavish contracts for furnishing the various arti-
“ cles of consumption, and the overseer, keeping a fair account, can
“ have no profit; and, possibly, as money is the common representative
“ of all necessities of life, so it is the greatest, most convenient, and
“ best appropriated relief to the individual⁴.”

This, however, it will be seen in the Second Volume of this Work, is far from being generally the case. In several parishes, the greater

¹ 9 Geo. I. c. 7.

² § 1.

³ § 2.

⁴ History of the Poor, i. 199.

part of the parochial disbursements is expended on the weekly list; and, in some, the list of Poor consists entirely of weekly pensioners. The Legislature very judiciously imposed a check on this discretionary power, with which the 43d of Elizabeth had invested overseers, by thus requiring the concurrence of a Justice, and the solemn declaration of the party applying for relief; but such is the state of human nature, that it is to be found, that even this check, (framed, as it manifestly is, with great care and caution,) is but too frequently vain and illusory. There are few more difficult points to decide, than whether a labourer, in a particular parish, can support a family of four or five children by his labour; yet, I conceive, the spirit of the Poor Laws requires that the parish-officers should be fully convinced he cannot, before they deem him an object worthy of relief. In large and populous parishes, it must often be the case, that the magistrate has neither leisure to investigate, nor means of ascertaining, the circumstances of every Pauper that comes before him. The overseer, it is true, lives more immediately among the Poor; but if he happens to be a tradesman at all interested in conciliating the good-will of his neighbours, the powerful calls of self-interest, perhaps, may sometimes suggest to him, that a liberal expenditure of parish money will ensure him the custom of his fellow parishioners. Even if he is a substantial independent yeoman, he will often be overpowered by the cravings of the idle, or the clamours of the profligate: or, if uninfluenced by that bias, which neighbourly intercourse and connexions often, very naturally, create; he will eagerly grasp at that reward, to which no man in a public station is indifferent: in the remotest corner of the kingdom, the administrator of parochial finance is usually a candidate for village popularity. This is an honour to which the weekly bedè-roll of the overseer is, perhaps, the best introduction.

The 9th of George the First also provides, that the church-wardens and overseers of the Poor of any parish, with the consent of the major part of the parishioners, in the vestry, or other public meeting for that purpose assembled, upon usual notice given, may purchase or hire any house or houses in the parish or place, and contract with persons for the lodging, employing, and keeping of poor persons. And, in case any poor person shall refuse to be lodged, kept, and maintained, in such
house

house or houses, such person shall be put out of the parish-books, and not entitled to relief¹.

Where parishes are small, two or more of such parishes, with the approbation of a Justice of Peace, may unite in purchasing or hiring houses for these purposes. And church-wardens, &c. of one parish, with the consent of the major part of the parishioners, may contract with the church-wardens, &c. of any other parish for the lodging and maintenance of the Poor.

But no poor persons, or their apprentices, children, &c. shall acquire a settlement in the parish, town, or place, to which they shall be removed by virtue of this Act².

Another section of the Act regulates the acquisition of settlement by purchase: it directs, that no person shall acquire a settlement by purchasing an estate, for which less than 30*l.*, *bonâ fide*, shall have been paid, and that no person shall gain a settlement by paying the scavengers or high-way rates³.

The other sections of the Act⁴ regulate the notices to be given before prosecuting appeals at the Quarter Sessions; and direct, that, in case any appeal against a removal is determined in favour of the appealing parish, the Justices shall award so much money to the appellant as shall appear to have been expended on the Pauper between the time of the undue removal and the determination of the appeal.

Very soon after passing this Act, many parishes availed themselves of the powers, which it conferred, in hiring, or erecting work-houses, and letting out their Poor to a contractor; and in a publication, which appeared in the year 1725, intituled, "An Account of several Work-houses," it is said, that this method of maintaining the Poor had met with approbation, and success, throughout the kingdom. This work was reprinted in 1732, with considerable additions; and, in its enlarged state, affords much curious information respecting sixty work-houses in the country, and about fifty in the metropolis. The principal projector and undertaker of most of these establishments, was a Mr. Matthew Marryott, of Olney, in Buckinghamshire, whose activity appears, in several instances, to have reduced the Poor's Rates very consi-

¹ This part is altered by 36 Geo. c. 23.

² § 4.

³ § 5. 6.

⁴ § 8. 9.

derably.

derably. The indefatigable zeal of the planners of the various work-houses, was, in most instances, (not only where Mr. Marryott was the manager or contractor, but in other places,) for the few years preceding the publication of the account of the work-houses, rarely unsuccessful: but, from comparing the present state of those parishes which erected work-houses, in consequence of this Act, with their condition seventy years ago, it would seem that the expectations entertained by the nation, that great and permanent benefits would be the result of these establishments, have not been realized. From the following view of the state of several parishes, (which had adopted work-houses,) between 1720 and 1732, their expences for the Poor in the year 1776, and their assessments in the years 1783, 1784, and 1785¹, it will appear, that the charge of maintaining their Poor has advanced very rapidly, notwithstanding the aid of work-houses, and, perhaps, as rapidly as in those parishes which have continued to relieve the Poor by occasional pensions at their own habitations.

The work - house in St. Andrew's Holborn ² ,			
was opened in June 1727. Before that pe-			
riod, the Poor's Rate was	-	-	£ 1000 0 0 a year.
Before the year 1730 it was reduced to	-	-	750 0 0
In 1776 the net expences for the Poor were	-	-	1329 11 4
1783 the assessments	-	-	1538 10 3
1784 ditto	-	-	1606 3 10
1785 ditto	-	-	1589 6 10

The work-house in St. Giles's in the Fields³, was opened in 1726. The expences for one year ending April 18, 1727, were as follows:

For Baking	-	-	-	£ 2 13 4
Milk	-	-	-	59 1 3
Butcher's meat	-	-	-	180 0 6
Cheese	-	-	-	81 7 2
Bread and flour	-	-	-	321 6 6
Oatmeal	-	-	-	26 3 9
Pease	-	-	-	0 10 0
Beer	-	-	-	161 12 6
Shop-goods	-	-	-	61 7 5 $\frac{1}{4}$
Herbs	-	-	-	8 9 6 $\frac{1}{4}$
Mackarel	-	-	-	1 6 4
				<hr/>
				903 18 3 $\frac{1}{2}$

¹ Taken from the Returns to Parliament in 1776 and in 1786.

² Account of several work-houses, 2d ed. 6.

³ Ibid 43.

FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE PRESENT PERIOD. 271

There were 235 persons, (old and young,) in the house this year: so that the diet of each person, on an average, came to 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. a week for each person¹.

In 1776 the net expences for the Poor were	-	£	5156	1	6
1783 the assessments	-	-	-	5195	2 3
1784 ditto	-	-	-	5355	0 0
1785 ditto	-	-	-	6232	9 2

The Poor's Rates in the parish of St. Paul's, Bedford², before the erection of the work-house, were from 4s. to 5s. in the pound, and usually amounted to £ 300. a year.

After the work-house was opened, the disbursements

in 1721 fell to	-	-	-	£	197	11	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
in 1722 to	-	-	-	-	177	5	7 $\frac{3}{4}$

In consequence of the small-pox }
 raging for 3 months, which }
 obliged the parish to hire several } they rose in 1723 to 304 0 0
 nurses at 6s. 8d. and }
 10s. a week, }

In 1776 the net expences for the Poor were	-	-	716	16	3
1783 the money raised by assessments	-	-	830	6	6
1784 ditto	-	-	826	12	7
1785 ditto	-	-	837	4	7

At Westham in Essex³, the work-house, which was built about the year 1726, reduced the Rates one half: in the year 1727, the expences of 40 or 45 Poor in the work-house amounted to £ 230 3 11 or £ 5. each person.

In 1776 the net expences for the Poor were	-	-	1707	3	9
1783 the money raised by assessments	-	-	2509	7	5
1784 ditto	-	-	2329	1	11
1785 ditto	-	-	2899	6	3

¹ At Hanslope, in Buckinghamshire, in 1724, the lodging, clothing, and diet of every Poor person in the work-house, on an average, cost 18d. a week; (p. 91.) and the board of every Pauper in Newport-Pagnel work-house, about 12d. a week, (p. 93.)

² P. 78.

³ P. 109.

The work-house at St. Albans¹ was opened about the year 1722: of it's utility the writer gives the following flattering account:

In the year 1720, (he says,) we were rated

	6s. in the pound, and disbursed	-	£	566	19	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
1721	4s. in the pound, and disbursed	-		516	19	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
1722	3s. in the pound, and disbursed	-		387	0	0
1723	3s. in the pound, and disbursed	-		275	14	2
1724	2s. in the pound; and the disbursements,					
	it was expected, would not exceed			200	0	0

In 1776 the expences for the Poor in the borough
of St. Albans were

		-		235	3	0
1783	the money raised by assessment	-		455	4	10
1784	ditto	-		414	10	3
1785	ditto	-		438	0	2

At Hemel-Hempsted, in Hertfordshire², Mr. Marryott, in 1720, undertook to take care of the Poor, at the charge of the parish, for three years, upon receiving for himself or deputy £40. a year, and a coat of 30s. value.

He succeeded so well, that the expence of maintaining the Poor, which, before the plan was adopted, amounted to £730. a year, was reduced, in the year ending at Easter 1722, to

	In 1776 the expences for the Poor were	-		822	4	10
	1783 money raised by assessment	-		858	11	0
	1784 ditto	-		966	14	3
	1785 ditto	-		966	15	7

At Chatham³, a work-house was erected in 1725. Before it's establishment the charge of maintaining the Poor, at a medium of seven years, cost the parish

The average of the two years 1729 and 1730 was

		-		574	0	0
	In 1776 the expences for the Poor were	-		1092	1	8
	1783 money raised by assessment	-		1537	8	1
	1784 ditto	-		1309	3	10
	1785 ditto	-		1504	18	9

¹ P. 111. It is not clear whether the writer comprehends, in his account, the borough only, or the three parishes of which the town of St. Albans consists.

² P. 116.

³ P. 125.

The work-house at Maidstone¹ was built in 1720. Of the two years immediately preceding it's establishment, the Poor's Rate in one, amounted to £929. and in the other, to £1062.; which had been the usual charge for several years. The charge of maintaining the Poor in the work-house in the year ending in 1724, (including weekly payments allowed to several out-pensioners,) amounted to £530 0 0

In 1776 the expences for the Poor were	-	-	1555	7	10
1783 money raised by assessment	-	-	2251	14	6
1784 ditto	-	-	2241	10	0
1785 ditto	-	-	2271	9	1

At Stroud², before the work-house was erected, the Rates amounted to £230. a year, and were expected to fall to £100.

In 1776 the expence of maintaining the Poor in this

parish was	-	-	£429	9	4
In 1783 money raised by assessment	-	-	495	15	0
1784 ditto	-	-	495	15	0
1785 ditto	-	-	495	15	0

At Tunbridge the average expence of maintaining the Poor for 22 years, before the erection of the work-house, was £570. a year. For five years after the erection of the house, in 1726, it was about £380³.

In 1776 the expences for the Poor were	-	-	£1114	0	3
1783 money raised by assessment	-	-	1365	8	11
1784 ditto	-	-	1493	11	7
1785 ditto	-	-	1695	19	1

The charge of maintaining the Poor at Harborough⁴, in Leicester-

¹ P. 127. ² P. 131. The weekly charge for diet of each person in the work-house was 1s. 8½d.

³ P. 141. The assessments, however, were kept, as they had been several years before the house was built, till the year 1730, in order to defray the expence of building the work-house, which amounted to £840., and other charges: but, in that year, all the money borrowed having been paid off, the assessments were reduced one half.

⁴ P. 144.

shire, was reduced from £170. to £100. a year, in consequence of a work-house being erected about 1722.

In 1776 the expences for the Poor were	-	-	£ 314	5	5
1783 money raised by assessment	-	-	478	12	11
1784 ditto	-	-	370	11	9
1785 ditto	-	-	351	13	3

In the parish of St. Martin's, Leicester¹, it was expected that the work-house, erected in 1724, would reduce the charges of the parish from £250. or £300. to £100. a year.

In 1740 the Poor's Rate in this parish amounted to ²	£ 244	17	3½
1760 ditto ³	-	-	736 18 8
1776 the expences for the Poor	-	-	620 5 5
1783 money raised by assessment	-	-	889 1 11
1784 ditto	-	-	931 1 11
1785 ditto	-	-	981 7 0

In the year ending in 1794 the Poor's Rate was⁴ - 1109 14 6

Of the work-house at Peterborough⁵, the following account was written in November 1724 :

The number of the aged poor people } 30 { Those that are able are em-
now in this work-house is - }
The number of children is - 19 { Those that are able are em-
- }

49 in all.

The expence for maintaining the house from Lady-day	} £ 159	5	5½
1724, to Michaelmas following, in victuals and drink,			
including apparel and bedding	-	-	-
The labour of the Poor during that period produced	-	10	15 3¼
Out of purse	-	148	10 1¼
The last eight years' charge, one with another, was	-	499	18 6¼
But the first half-year, since the erecting the house of maintenance, buying of furniture, brewing-vessels, cloathing, and repairs, amounts to	-	220	13 5¾
The last half-year since Lady-day (1724) amounts to	-	113	14 6¾

¹ P. 146

² See the Second Volume, p. 387.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ P. 156.

The expences for the Poor in Peterborough, in 1776, were					£919	16	6
The money raised by assessment in 1783					-	910	14 7
Ditto - - - 1784					-	904	0 2
Ditto - - - 1785					-	905	17 9

Of the Bristol work-house, (called the Mint¹;) which was opened in 1696, the expence, (exclusive of benefactions for establishing it, which amounted to £6000.) at first was £2376. a year. The project, however, of employing the Poor in it, did not succeed²; and, before the year 1714,

¹ The corporation, in their annual accounts, distinguish the work-house by the name of St. Peter's Hospital. This I have therefore adopted in the account of Bristol, which the reader will find in the Second Volume of this work. The work-house, however, is better known to the inhabitants by the name of the Mint. It was so called, because the clipped money, which was called in, in King's William's reign, was re-coined there.

² Of the difficulties which the Corporation met with in setting the work-house a-going, Mr. Cary, (a merchant in Bristol, and one of the principal promoters of the undertaking,) gives the following interesting account, which, I trust, will not be unacceptable to the reader:

"The first thing we did was to choose four Guardians for each of our twelve wards, as the statute does direct, which, with the Mayor and Aldermen, amounted to 60 guardians, and made up our court. The court being thus constituted, at our first meeting we chose our officers appointed by the said Act, viz. a governor, a deputy governor, twelve assistants, a treasurer, a clerk, and a beadle.

"This being done, we ordered the guardians who dwelt in each parish to bring in an account of all the Poor in their respective parishes; their names, ages, sexes, and qualifications. Also an account of the charges expended for maintaining them in each of the last three years, that so we might bring it to a medium. We also appointed certain standing rules for the better governing our debates, and ordered all things done in the court to be fairly entered in a journal. We likewise considered which would be most for the advantage of the corporation, to build work-houses, or to purchase such houses, which, being already built, might be altered and made fit for our purpose.

"These things spent much time, and it was about the month of September before we could settle the medium of the Poor's Rates, in order to certify to the mayor and aldermen what sum was necessary to be raised on the city for the next year.

"But here we met with an unexpected *remora*; Mr. Samuel Wallis was succeeded in his majoralty by Mr. J. H.; and this change made a great alteration in our affairs: for whereas the former had given us all the encouragement we could expect from him, and had done us the honour to be our first governour, the latter resolved to obstruct us all he could; and, because the power of raising money was vested in him and the aldermen, he absolutely refused to put that power in execution.

"This, together with his other endeavours to brow-beat the corporation, kept us at a stand

1714, the corporation, which managed it, had not only spent all the benefactions, but had got considerably in debt; so that it was found necessary

“ till October (97) only our court met, and discourst things, and we laboured to keep up
 “ the spirits of our friends, who began to sink under these discouragements, and to despair of
 “ success, the work seeming difficult enough in itself; our undertaking being nothing less
 “ than to put to work a great number of people, many of which had been habited to laziness
 “ and beggary; to civilize such as had been bred up in all the vices that want of education
 “ could expose them to; and to clothe, lodge, and feed them well, with the same sum of
 “ money which was distributed among them when they begged, lay in the streets, and went
 “ almost naked.

“ Yet all this would not have discouraged us, could we have prevailed on Mr. Mayor to
 “ have joyned with us. We often sought it, and he as often refused us, till, his time being
 “ expired, his successor granted our request; and then, having lost much time, we were
 “ forced to make large steps.

“ The first we made was, a vote to take on us the care of all the Poor of the city; and,
 “ as I remember, this vote passed in October or November 1697, though we had then no
 “ money raised, nor could we expect any till after our Lady-day 1698. So that from the
 “ passing that vote to this time is about two years.

“ The next step was, to appoint a committee of 12 to hear the complaints of the Poor, to
 “ relieve them, and set them at work; six whereof were to go out every month, and to be
 “ succeeded by six more, to be chosen by balloting.

“ We had formerly obtained from the mayor and common council in the majoralty of
 “ Alderman Wallis, the grant of a work-house, which then lay unoccupied, and the court
 “ had appointed a committee to place as many girls in it as it would conveniently contain both
 “ as to lodging and working. This is that we called the New Work-house.

“ But all things having stood still so long, we resolved now to lose no more time; yet we
 “ had no money, nor could we expect any in less than 6 months from the Poor's Rates;
 “ therefore we resolved to make our several loans for 12 months without interest to the cor-
 “ poration, on the credit of their common seal; in which design many of the citizens lent
 “ their assistance, whereby we became soon masters of about £600. stock. Likewise our
 “ guardians, who were appointed to pay the Poor in their several parishes, voluntarily ad-
 “ vanced their weekly payments till they could be reimbursed by the treasurer. The other
 “ stock we employed to furnish beds and other necessities for our house, cloaths and pro-
 “ visions for our children to be taken in, and materials for their working.

“ We had now two committees; one for the Poor, the other for the New Work-house.

“ The committee for the Poor met twice every week: and in this committee we proceeded
 thus:

“ First, we voted that the Poor of the city should be visited in their respective parishes,
 “ and that new Poor's Rates should be made; and accordingly we ordered the guardians of
 “ each parish to bring together the Poor on a certain day in some convenient place, where
 “ the committee met, and without partiality endeavoured to provide for every one according
 “ to their wants. We likewise took notice of all the young girls that were on our Poor's

“ books,

necessary to apply to Parliament, that year, for permission to raise the Rates to £3500. Before the year 1731, they had, by good management, paid off their debts, and saved the sum of £3000.

In

“ books, and of such whose parents took no due care of them ; and these we recommended
“ to the committee of the New Work-house, to be taken in and employed by them.

“ Our Poor's Rates we made in this manner : Every one that expected relief came before
“ us with their whole families, except such as were impotent and could not come : in our
“ books we put down the name of the man, the woman, and each child ; together with the
“ qualifications of all, either as to age, health, civility, &c. what each person did or could
“ get by the week, and in what employment. We likewise set down for what reason the
“ charity was bestowed, that when that should cease, or we could find out any other way to
“ provide for it, the charity should likewise cease.

“ Having thus seen the state of all our Poor, and provided for them, the committee sat
“ twice a week in the public court, to hear and provide for all casual complaints ; which we
“ did in this manner : We ordered that the Poor in their respective parishes should first ap-
“ ply themselves to their guardian or guardians, who were to relieve them as they saw fit, till
“ the next sitting of the committee, when they were to bring them up with their complaints,
“ if they were able to come ; and this we did, lest the committee (three whereof made a
“ *quorum*) should be deceived, who could not be supposed to know the state of all the Poor
“ in the city ; and by this means we had the opinion of the guardian of each parish : nor
“ could he easily deceive us, because he brought the Poor with him, and thereby the com-
“ mittee became judges of the matter laid before them. At these meetings, care was taken
“ of the various cases and exigencies which offered, and in all things there was a regard, as
“ much as could be, to put people on living by their own labours.

“ To such as were sick, we gave warrants to our physician to visit them ; such as wanted the
“ assistance of our surgeons, were directed to them, and all were relieved till they were able to
“ work ; by which means the Poor, having been well attended, were set at work again, who by
“ neglect might, with their families, have been chargeable to the corporation. For some we
“ provided clothes, for others work ; where we found people careful, but wanted a stock to
“ employ themselves and their children, we either lent or gave it ; where they wanted
“ houses, we either paid the rent, or became security for it ; where we found them oppressed,
“ we stood by them ; where differences arose, we endeavoured to compose them : so that in
“ a little time all the complaints of the Poor came to this committee, (which saved our ma-
“ gistrates a great deal of trouble,) and care was taken that none went away unheard.

“ The committee at first sat twice a week, but now only once in a fortnight ; not that we
“ grew slack in the care of our Poor, but because, their number being so much abated, by
“ those received into our several work-houses, the business does not require their meeting
“ oftner.

“ The other committee, (*viz.* that for the New Work-house,) having first furnished it in
“ order to receive in the young girls, began with such as were recommended to them by the
“ committee for the Poor ; and this method hath been generally observed ever since, both by
“ that committee, and also by the committee since chosen for our other work-house ; not that
“ either of them depends on the other, but because the first application for relief is made
“ to the committee for the Poor.

In the year ending in 1746, the Rates were

advanced from - - - - - £ 3500. to £ 4500.

In

“ But before we took in the girls, we first considered of proper officers to govern them ;
 “ and these consisted of a master, whose business was to receive in work, and deliver it out
 “ again, and to keep the accounts of the house, &c.

“ A mistress, whose business was to look after the kitchen and lodgings, to provide their
 “ meals at set times, and other things which related to the government of the house.

“ Tutresses to teach them to spin, under each of which we put five-and-twenty girls.

“ A school-mistress to teach them to read.

“ Servants in the kitchen, and for washing, &c. ; but these we soon discharged, and caused
 “ our biggest girls to take their turns every week.

“ We also appointed an old man to keep the door, and to carry forth and fetch in work, and
 “ such kind of services.

“ Being thus provided, we received in 100 girls, and set them to work at spinning of worsted
 “ yarn ; all which we first caused to be stript by the mistress, washed, and new clothed from
 “ head to foot ; which, together with wholesome diet at set hours, and good beds to lie on,
 “ so encouraged the children that they willingly betook themselves to their work.

“ We likewise provided for them apparel for Sundays ; they went to church every Lord’s
 “ day, were taught their catechisms at home, and had prayers twice every day : we ap-
 “ pointed them set hours for working, eating, and playing ; and gave them leave to walk on
 “ the hills, with their tutresses, when their work was over, and the weather fair ; by which
 “ means we won them into civility, and a love to their labour. But we had a great deal of
 “ trouble with their parents, and those who formerly kept them, who, having lost the
 “ sweetness of their pay, did all they could to set both their children and others against us ;
 “ but this was soon over.

“ Hitherto things answered above our expectations : our children grew sober, and worked
 “ willingly ; but we very much questioned, whether their labours, at the rates we were
 “ paid, would answer the charge of their maintenance ; and if not, our great doubt was,
 “ how we might advance it, without prejudicing the manufactures.

“ To clear the first, we supposed ourselves in a fair way, having appointed their diets to be
 “ made up of such provisions as were very wholesome, afforded good nourishment, and
 “ were not costly in price, (viz.) beef, pease, potatoes, broath, pease-porridge, milk-porridge,
 “ bread and cheese, good beer, (such as we drank at our own tables,) cabbage, carrots, tur-
 “ nips, &c. in which we took the advice of our physician, and bought the best of every sort.
 “ They had three meals every day ; and, as I remember, it stood us, (with soap to wash,) in
 “ about 16d. *per* week for each of the 100 girls. We soon found the effect of their change
 “ of living. Nature, being well supported, threw out a great deal of foulness, so that we
 “ had generally 20 down at a time, in the measles, small-pox, and other distempers ; but
 “ by the care of our physician, and the blessing of God on his endeavours, we never buried
 “ but two, though we have had seldom less than 100 in the house at any time.

“ Having thus provided for their diets, we next appointed their times of working ; which,
 “ in the summer, was ten hours and a-half every day, and an hour less in the winter ; by which
 “ means

In the year ending in 1756, the Rates amounted to	£	4500	0	0
1766, ditto	-	-	-	6732 7 3 $\frac{1}{2}$
1776, ditto	-	-	-	11500 0 0
1786, ditto	-	-	-	12000 0 0
1796, ditto (See the 2d Vol. p. 202)	13000	0	0	In

“ means we answered the two objections raised against the Poor, (viz.) that they will not work, and that they spend what they get in fine feeding.

“ But we soon found that the great cause of begging proceeded from the low wages for labour; for, after about eight months’ time, our children could not get half so much as we expended in their provisions. The manufacturers, who employed us, were always complaining the yarn was spun coarse, but would not advance above 8d. per pound for spinning, and we must either take this, or have no work. On the other side, we were labouring to understand how we might distinguish, and put a value on our work, according to it’s fineness. This we did by the snap reel, which when we were masters of, the committee made an order, that the master should buy in a stock of wool, and spin it up for our own accounts, and then proceeded to set the price of spinning by the snap reel, wherein we endeavoured to discourage coarse work, and to encourage fine, because we saw the latter was likely to bring more profit, not only to the Poor, but to the kingdom in general. We likewise ordered some things to be made up of the several sorts of yarn, at the rates we had set them; and, on the whole, we found the commodities, made of fine yarn, though they were much better than those made of coarse, yet stood us in little more; because, what the one exceeded in the charge of spinning, was very much made good in abatement of the quantity used. We therefore sent to the manufacturers, and shewed them what experiments we had made; but finding them still unwilling to advance above the old rate, the committee voted, that they would give employment to all the Poor of the city, who would make application to them, at the rates we offered to work, and pay them ready money for their labour.

“ We soon found we had taken the right course, for in a few weeks we had sale for our fine yarn, as fast as we could make it; and they gave us from 8d. to 2s. per pound for spinning the same goods, for which, a little before, they paid but 8d.; and were very well pleased with it, because they were now able to distinguish between the fine and the coarse yarn, and to apply each sort to the use for which it was most proper: since which, they have given us 2s. 6d. per pound, for a great many pounds; and we spin some worth 3s. 6d. per pound spinning.

“ By this means we had the pleasure of seeing the childrens’ labour advanced, which, a little before I came up, amounted to near £6. per week, and would have been much more, but that our biggest girls we either settle forth, or put in the kitchen; and those we receive in, being generally small, are able to do but little for some time after.

“ The encouragement we had received on this beginning, put us on proceeding further: the court resolved on purchasing a great sugar-house, out of the money directed by the Act to be raised for building of work-houses, and fit it up for receiving in the remainder of the Poor, (viz.) ancient people, boys, and young children; which was accordingly done,

“ and

A work-house, (which was called a house of maintenance,) was opened at Lady-day 1727. The house and ground cost £450. which were borrowed by the parish.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
In 1727, Utensils and other articles cost	120	0	0				
Maintenance of the Poor	-	418	7 7				
					538	7 7	
							In

“count for each house is so stated, that it shews, at one sight, what the house is indebted, what debts are outstanding, and from whom; what goods remain in the house, and the quantity of each specie.

“At the making up these accounts, nothing, unless very trivial, is allowed, for which an order is not produced, or found entered in our books; so that it is very difficult to wrong the corporation of any thing, if the guardians should endeavour it.

“These committees keep their Journal-books, wherein all they do is fairly transcribed, and signed by the chairman.

“This is what at present occurs to my memory touching our work-houses at Bristol; I have been as brief as the nature of the thing would admit: the success hath answered our expectation; we are freed from beggars; our old people are comfortably provided for; our boys and girls are educated to sobriety, and brought up to delight in labour; our young children are well looked after, and not spoiled by the neglect of ill nurses; and the face of our city is so changed already, that we have great reason to hope these young plants will produce a virtuous and laborious generation, with whom immorality and profaneness may find little encouragement: nor does our hopes appear to be groundless; for, among 300 persons now under our charge within doors, there is neither cursing nor swearing, nor prophane language, to be heard, though many of them were bred up in all manner of vices, which neither Bridewell nor whippings could fright them from; because, returning to their bad company, for want of employment, they were rather made worse than bettered by those corrections; whereas the change we have brought on them is by fair means. We have a Bridewell, stocks, and whipping-post, always in their sights, but never had occasion to make use of either.”

Of the difficulties, experienced by the corporation, the author of the Letter, (in the Account of the Work-houses,) relative to Bristol, gives the following account:

“From their first erection in the year 1696, to the year 1714, they continued to put the Poor to work; I mean, those they had in their work-house called the Mint. And they tried them upon a great many different sorts of work, to make them useful toward their support, but not only without any benefit from their labour, but to the great loss of the corporation. For as soon as they came to do any thing tolerably well, that they might have been assisting to the younger and less practised, they went off to sea, or were apprenticed in the city; by which means the public were so far benefited, though the corporation bore the loss of the charge of teaching them, and of all the tools with which they were to work, and of the materials for it. For they made nothing perfect or merchantable from their work, but only spoiled the materials. So that instead of lessening the

	£.	s.	d.
In the year ending at Michaelmas 1728, the Poor cost about	395	0	0
In 1776, the expences for the Poor were	-	-	758 19 7
1783, money raised by assessment	-	-	1271 17 0
1784, ditto	-	-	639 12 0
1785, ditto	-	-	972 4 6

At Bradford, in Wiltshire¹, the work-house, erected in 1727, reduced the Rates, which had usually been £700. or £800. a year before the year 1731, to less than £400.

" charge of maintaining the Poor, they increased it; infomuch that, in the beginning of the
 " year 1714, they had not only spent every year's income, but had sunk all their benefactions,
 " and borrowed several thousand pounds of the city. It was then found necessary, to pre-
 " vent their utter ruin, to petition the Parliament to grant them power to raise the sum
 " of £3500. per annum upon the inhabitants, which was granted them. And then they imme-
 " diately laid aside their projects of labour, and set themselves to find out those who had no
 " right of settlement in this city, and sending them away to the places to which they belonged.
 " They have, by this means, and a frugal management, in a great measure retrieved their
 " former losses, and do now not only support their Poor, but have paid off their former
 " debts, and got back £3000. of the benefactions they had sunk: but I do not find that
 " they have set them to any constant work, till about a year and a half ago, when a Gentle-
 " man of this city, a great dealer in malt and corn; entered into an agreement with the Cor-
 " poration of the Mint, or Poor, according to which, he is to furnish the Poor there, to the
 " number of 50 or 60, chiefly children, with a master-workman, (to whom, I think, he gives
 " £50. per annum salary,) for teaching them to weave and make sacks to hold corn, and
 " to provide likewise the tools and materials, that is, hemp, flax, &c. and to build a shed
 " upon the river-side near the house to work in; in consideration of which, he is to have
 " the benefit of their labour, that is, of the sacks they make, giving a small gratuity to each
 " as he thinks fit, and they have their maintenance from the public, as before; and this, as
 " I hear, is likely to succeed, they making and selling sacks or bags to hold corn, &c. cheap-
 " er and better than we were wont to have them; but you see their labour saves nothing
 " to the Public, and yields but little to the Poor themselves; it only keeps them from idleness,
 " and may hereafter be profitable both to the Public and to them." Letter from Bristol, in "An Account of several Work-houses, 160."

It appears from this account, that the way by which the magistrates of Bristol reduced the charges of maintaining the Poor, was by driving away Paupers, who were not settled in the city. Several other authors mention the same circumstance. Joshua Gee, who published a Treatise on Trade and Navigation, about 1728, remarks, that "the magistrates of Bristol have that city under such excellent regulation, that foreign beggars dare not appear; they are not troubled with obnoxious fights, so common with us: their work-houses are terrible enough to them; for, as soon as any of them are espied in the city, they are taken up and whipped."

¹ P. 164.

In 1775 the assessments were	-	-	£ 2815 12 1
1785	-	-	- 2415 15 0
1795	-	-	- 2063 17 10 ¹

The way in which these work-houses, on their first establishment, effected a reduction in parochial expenditure, was by deterring the Poor from making applications for relief. Whatever objections may be made against this mode of maintaining the Poor, it appears, that, whilst they were managed by active undertakers, the ideas which they excited in the Poor, spurred on many to labour for a livelihood, who would not work as long as they were permitted to receive a weekly allowance from the parish.

In the account of Beverley we are told, that, on opening the work-house, notice was given to the Poor, that the weekly pensions were to cease, and that such as were not able to maintain themselves and families might apply to the governors of the work-house. The result of this was, that, though before the opening of the house 116 persons received the parish allowance, not above eight came in at first, and in the subsequent winter, (1727—8,) the number in the house never exceeded 26, although all kinds of provisions were excessively dear, and the season very sickly: and as to the extraordinary allowances, (the payments for bed-ridden Poor, sick families, and other occasional demands of that nature,) they did not rise beyond 12 or 13s. a week at any one time during that year, and sometimes not beyond 6 or 7s.²

A letter from Oxford, dated Jan. 1726—7, says, that, from the good effects of work-houses, the Poor's Rate, which was very heavy, had sunk one half in that parish which was most burthened, and in some was entirely taken away. "Some who received alms of the parish," it is said, "appear to have money of their own, and strive to work, to keep themselves out of these (as they call them) confinements³."

The writer of the account of the work-house at Maidstone sufficiently explains the cause of the great reduction of the Poor's Rate which had taken place in that parish; and at the same time justly animadvert upon the inconveniencies that must result from leaving the management

¹ See the Second Volume, p. 784.

² P. 169.

³ P. 157.

of work-houses in large towns to overseers annually elected. The following remarks deserve attention: he says, “the advantage of a work-house does not only consist in this, that the Poor are maintained at less than half the expence which their weekly pay amounted to, but that very great numbers of lazy people, rather than submit to the confinement and labour of the work-house, are content to throw off the mask, and maintain themselves by their own industry. And this was so remarkable here at Maidstone, that, when our work-house was finished, and public notice given, that all who came to demand their weekly pay should immediately be sent hither, little more than half the Poor upon the list came to the overseers to receive their allowance.

“Were all the Poor in our town obliged to live in the work-house, I believe we might very well maintain them for £350. a year at the utmost. But many of them find interest enough to receive their usual weekly pay, and get themselves excused from living in the house. And thus it will happen, more or less, in all great towns, where the work-houses are left to the management of overseers annually elected. And therefore, from what I have seen here at Maidstone, I conceive it to be a matter of absolute necessity, that the direction of a work-house should be left to some single person, to be chosen by the parishioners; and not a number of overseers, who are more liable to a great variety of applications in favour of particular persons among the Poor, and more likely to act in an arbitrary way in the management of the house, than any single elective person will presume to do. By these means, too, the appointment and choice of the work, in which the Poor are to be employed, will be carried on in a regular and uniform manner, and not be left to the humour or interest of annual officers, to be changed and altered as they shall please; for different overseers will have different interests; and where the direction is left to them, it will probably happen, as it has, in fact, here at Maidstone, that the Poor shall be one year employed in the linnen, and another in the woollen manufactory; and this merely as it suits the interest of the managers.

“A *work-house* is a name that carries along with it an idea of correction and punishment; and many of our Poor have taken such an aversion

“aversion to living in it upon that account, as all the reason and argument in the world can never overcome. Therefore it will be a means of preventing a great deal of trouble, and avoiding a greater expence than you can imagine, to have the work-house called by a foster and more inoffensive name¹.”

Independently of thus reducing the number of Paupers, the work-houses appear, at first, to have maintained them at a much lower rate than they could be supported upon weekly pensions at their own homes. Before the erection of the work-house at Hampstead, in the year 1727, the Poor received from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. each person in out-pensions; in the house they cost about 2s. a week each person².

Of the usual expence of maintaining a Pauper in the reign of George the First, we may form some estimate from the following particulars:

At Hanslope, in Buckinghamshire, the diet, lodging, and cloathing of the family in the work-house, (including repairs of furniture and master's wages,) in the year 1724, cost about 18d. a week each person³.

At Westham in Essex, the maintenance of each person in the work-house, for the year 1727, cost about £5.⁴

Two parishes in Hertford entered into a contract with the master of their work-house, by which he agreed to maintain their Poor at 1s. 10d. a week each person⁵.

The diet in Stroud work-house cost 1s., 8½d. a week each person⁶.

In St. George's Hanover-square, in 1730, 154 Poor were lodged and dieted four weeks for £55. 1s. 7d. or nearly 1s. 9½d. a week for each person⁷.

In St. Giles's, Bloomsbury, the diet of a Pauper, in 1727, cost 1s. 5¾d. a week⁸.

It is probable, that the annual expence of maintaining a Pauper,

¹ It was probably for this reason that many of the work-houses erected in the reign of George the First were called *Houses of Maintenance*, to soften the appellation of a *Work-house*, against which the Poor might be prejudiced. Account, &c. 85. It is for the same reason, I presume, that the poor-house at Empingham is called the *House of Protection*. See the Second Volume, p. 602. In Philadelphia, the work-house, which is also an house of correction, and one of the best I ever heard of, whilst it was chiefly under the steady controul of the Quakers, was called “*The Bettering House*.”

² P. 50. ³ p. 91. ⁴ p. 109. ⁵ p. 116. ⁶ p. 131. ⁷ p. 27. ⁸ p. 44.

either in, or out of, the work-house, is, at present, double what it was seventy years ago. The diet, however, provided in the houses on their first establishment, seems to have been equally good with what it is at present. In most of the work-houses meat dinners were served three or four times a week. At Bedford more especially, (a place which has long held out great encouragement to Paupers,) the food of the family in the work-house, (it will appear from the subjoined bill of fare,) was better than the most industrious labourer, either then, or at present, could afford himself at his own habitation :

	Breakfast.	Dinner.	Supper.
Sunday.	Bread and Cheese.	Boiled beef and suet pudding.	Bread and cheese.
Monday.	Broth.	Cold meat left on Sunday.	The same.
Tuesday.	Bread and cheese.	Boiled beef, and a little mutton and suet pudding.	The same.
Wednesday.	The same as Monday.	The same as Monday.	The same.
Thursday.	The same as Tuesday.	The same as Tuesday.	The same.
Friday.	The same as Monday.	The same as Monday.	The same.
Saturday.	Bread and cheese.	Hafty-pudding, or milk-porridge.	Broth, or bread and cheese.

The writer adds : “ Their bread is wheat dressed down, and made into large household loaves by a woman in the house. Their drink is beer, turned in from the public brew-house at three halfpence per gallon. The overseers do sometimes put a cow upon the common for them; and that nothing may be wasted or lost, they have a pig or two bought in, to live upon their wash, and dregs, and fragments; which, when well grown, is fed and killed for the house. They have also a little garden for herbs, onions,” &c. ¹

The author of the “ Fable of the Bees” strongly reprobates the enthusiastic passion with which the nation was seized about this period for the establishment of charity-schools for the education of the children of the Poor. “ Those,” he says, “ who spend a great part of their youth

¹ P. 81.

² Mandeville’s Fable of the Bees was published in 1714: he reprinted it in 1723, together with remarks; and an Essay on Charity-Schools. His observations on the nature and effects of civil society are, in general, very ingenious; in some instances, profound; and in none deserving of that high tone of reprobation which his book is said to have experienced. One fundamental error, however, runs through the whole of his work: he confounds superfluous gratifications with vices.

“ in learning to read, write, and cypher, expect, (and not unjustly,) to
 “ be employed where those qualifications may be of use to them. Go-
 “ ing to school, in comparison to working, is idleness; and the
 “ longer boys continue in this easy sort of life, the more unfit they
 “ will be, when grown up, for downright labour, both as to strength
 “ and inclination. Men who are to remain and end their days in a la-
 “ borious, tiresome, and painful station of life, the sooner they are put
 “ upon it at first, the more patiently they will submit to it for ever,
 “ after. Hard labour, and the coarsest diet, are a proper punishment to
 “ several kinds of malefactors; but to impose either on those that have
 “ not been used and brought up to both, is the greatest cruelty, when
 “ there is no crime you can charge them with.

“ The Poor,” he says, “ have nothing to stir them up to labour but
 “ their wants, which it is wisdom to relieve, but folly to cure. The
 “ maxim is not less calculated for the real advantage of the Poor, than
 “ it appears to be for the benefit of the Rich. For, among the labouring
 “ people, those will ever be the least wretched as to themselves, as well as
 “ most useful to the Public, that, being meanly born and bred, submit to
 “ the station they are in with cheerfulness; and, contented that their chil-
 “ dren should succeed them in the same low condition, inure them from
 “ their infancy to labour and submission, as well as the cheapest diet and
 “ apparel; when, on the contrary, that sort of them will always be the
 “ least serviceable to others, and themselves most unhappy, who, dissatis-
 “ fied with their labour, are always grumbling and repining at the mean-
 “ ness of their condition; and, under pretence of a great regard for the
 “ welfare of their children, recommend the education of them to the cha-
 “ rity of others; and you shall always find, that, of this latter class of Poor,
 “ the greatest part are idle sottish people, that, leading dissolute lives them-
 “ selves, are neglectful to their families, and only want, as far as it is
 “ in their power, to shake off that burden of providing for their brats
 “ from their own shoulders.”

He is, however, far from desirous of excluding the children of the
 labouring Poor from the possibility of rising in the world; and only
 objects to the training them up in those habits, that will render them
 unfit for the station of life to which the greater part of them are una-
 voidably

voidably destined. His remarks on these heads are highly worthy the consideration of the advocates of Sunday-schools.

“ There is no degree of men in Christendom, that are pinned down, they and their posterity, to slavery for ever. Among the very lowest sort there are fortunate men in every country ; and we daily see persons, that, without education, or friends, by their own industry and application, raise themselves from nothing to mediocrity, and sometimes above it, if once they come rightly to love money, and take delight in saving it ; and this happens more often to people of common and mean capacities, than it does to those of brighter parts. But there is a prodigious difference between debarring the children of the Poor from ever rising higher in the world, and refusing to force education upon thousands of them promiscuously, when they should be more usefully employed. As some of the Rich must come to be poor, so some of the Poor will come to be rich, in the common course of things. But that universal benevolence that should every where industriously lift up the indigent labourer from his meannefs, would not be less injurious to the whole kingdom, than a tyrannical power, that should, without a cause, cast down the wealthy person from their ease and affluence. Let us suppose, that the hard and dirty labour throughout the nation requires three millions of hands, and that every branch of it is performed by the children of the Poor ; illiterate, and such as had little or no education themselves. It is evident, that if a tenth part of these children, by force and design, were to be exempt from the lowest drudgery, either there must be so much work left undone, as would demand three hundred thousand people ; or the defect, occasioned by the numbers taken off, must be supplied by the children of others, that had been better bred¹.”

He strongly recommends employing the Poor, (instead of squandering money on beggars,) in works of great public utility. He says, (what is probably not beyond the truth,) that “ there is above three or four hundred years work for a hundred thousand Poor more than we have in this island. To make every part of it useful, and the whole tho-

¹ The Fable of the Bees, ed. 1795. 515.

“ roughly

“roughly inhabited, many rivers are to be made navigable; canals to be cut in hundreds of places; some lands are to be drained, and secured from inundations for the future; abundance of soil is to be made fertile; and thousands of acres rendered more beneficial, by being made more accessible ‘.’”

By the 3d of George the Second, some inconsiderable additions were made to the laws concerning certificates, and certificated persons: respecting the former, it was directed, that the witnesses who attest the execution of certificates, shall make oath before the Justices, who allow the certificate, that they saw the same signed and sealed by the parish-officers; and that the Justices shall certify that such oath was made before them; and that the certificate so allowed, and oath of the witnesses so certified by the Justices, shall, without other proof, be admitted as evidence in every court of justice¹: respecting certificated persons, it appears that the Act of King William³, (which was itself an Act for supplying some defects in the laws for the relief of the Poor,) had omitted to make any provision for reimbursing parishes the charges they incur in re-conveying certificated persons to the place of their settlements, or for maintaining them when sick till they were in a condition to be removed; to remedy which, this Act provides, that overseers shall be reimbursed the expence they are put to in re-conveying certificated persons to their parishes, when they become chargeable⁴.

By the 5th of George the Second, Justices at the Quarter-Sessions were authorised to rectify defects of form upon appeals, and to proceed to determine them; and to oblige persons suing for writs of *certiorari* to remove orders made on such appeals into his Majesty's court of King's Bench, to give security to prosecute the same with effect⁵.

It appears from the 6th of George the Second, that the laws in being were not sufficient to provide for the securing and indemnifying parishes, and other places, from the great charges arising from bastards: it was therefore enacted, that if any single woman shall be delivered of a bastard child, or shall declare herself to be pregnant, and that the child is likely to become chargeable; and shall, upon oath before one

¹ An Essay on Charity, in the Fable of the Bees, edit. 1795, 200.

² 3 Geo. 2. 29. § 8.

³ 8 & 9 W. 3. c. 30.

⁴ 3 Geo. 2. c. 29. § 9.

⁵ 5 Geo. 2. c. 19.

or more Justices, charge any person with having gotten her with child; they may immediately apprehend and commit such person to prison, unless he gives security to indemnify the parish¹; but that, if the woman charging him shall die, or be married before she is delivered, or shall miscarry, he shall be discharged from his recognizance²; and, if committed to prison, and no order shall be made, in pursuance of the 18th of Elizabeth, within six weeks after the woman's delivery, he shall be set at liberty³; and that no woman shall involuntarily be obliged to filiate the child, of which she is pregnant, till one month after her delivery⁴.

Several Acts of Parliament were passed in the 5th and 6th year of George the Second, for obliging the projectors of the Charitable Corporation to account with their creditors⁵. This corporation was established, about the year 1730, to lend money to the Poor upon pledges; but the whole was turned only to an iniquitous method of enriching particular people, to the ruin of such numbers, that it became a parliamentary concern to obtain relief for the unfortunate persons who suffered by the project; and three of the managers, who were members of the House of Commons, were expelled⁶.

By the 17th of George the Second, which recites, that, "by reason of their unlimited power, overseers and church-wardens frequently, on frivolous pretences, and for private ends, make unjust and illegal Rates in a secret and clandestine manner, contrary to the true in-

¹ 6 Geo. 2. c. 31. § 1.

² 6 Geo. 2. c. 31. § 2.

³ 6 Geo. 2. c. 31. § 3.

⁴ 6 Geo. 2. c. 31. § 4.

⁵ See Appendix to this Volume, No. ix. p. ccliv.

⁶ See note on 100th line of the 3d Epistle in Mr. Pope's Moral Essays. The editor adds, that, by the report of the committee appointed to enquire into this iniquitous affair, it appeared, that, when it was objected to the intended removal of the office, that the Poor, for whose use it was erected, would be hurt by it, Bond, one of the directors, replied, *Damn the Poor!* This, with some other genuine apophthegms used by some of the persons concerned, are noticed by Mr. Pope in the following lines in his Essay:

"Perhaps you think the Poor might have their part?—

"Bond damns the Poor, and hates them from his heart:

"The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for a rule

"That ev'ry man in want is knave or fool:

"'God cannot love,' (says Blunt with tearless eyes),

"'The wretch he starves'—and piously denies:

"But the good Bishop, with a meeker air,

"Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care."—Moral Essays, iii Ep. 99 L.

"tent

“tent and meaning of the 43d Eliz. ;” it was enacted, that every Poor’s Rate should be published in the church¹, and, that the parish-officers should permit every inhabitant to inspect the Rates, on paying a shilling², under penalty of £20.³ Copies of the Rates were also directed to be entered in a book for public perusal, and to be delivered over from time to time to the new and succeeding church-wardens or overseers of the Poor. The following clause, however, on this subject, there is great reason to apprehend, is very little attended to in many parishes in the kingdom⁴.

The first section of the 38th chapter of the 17th of George the Second, enacts, that “the overseers of the Poor shall yearly, and every year, within fourteen days after other overseers shall be nominated and appointed to succeed them, deliver in to such succeeding overseers, a just, true, and perfect account in writing, fairly entered in a book or books to be kept for that purpose, and signed by the said church-wardens and overseers, hereby directed to account as aforesaid, under their hands, of all sums of money by them received, or rated and assessed, and not received ; and also of all goods, chattels, stock, and materials, that shall be in their hands, or in the hands of any of the Poor, in order to be wrought ; and of all monies paid by such church-wardens and overseers so accounting ; and of all things concerning their said office : and shall also pay and deliver over all sums of money, goods, chattels, and other things, as shall be in their hands, unto such succeeding overseers of the Poor : which said account shall be verified by oath, or by the affirmation of persons called Quakers, before one or more his Majesty’s Justices of the Peace ; which said oath or affirmation such Justice or Justices is and are hereby authorised and required to administer, and to sign and attest the caption of the same, at the foot of the said account, without fee or reward . and the said book or books shall be carefully preserved by the church-wardens

¹ 17 Geo. 2. c. 3. § 1.

² 17 Geo. 2. c. 3. § 2.

³ 17 Geo. 2. c. 3. § 3.

⁴ In the Returns to Parliament in 1776, the amount of annual expenditure in several parishes is wanting ; and, in the perusal of the Second Volume of this work, the Reader will find, that, in many parts of the kingdom, the preservation of parochial records has not been considered as a matter of great importance, notwithstanding the very earnest directions of the Legislature on the subject.

“ and overseers, or one of them, in some public or other place in every
 “ parish, township, or place; and they shall, and are hereby required
 “ to permit any person there assessed, or liable to be assessed, to inspect
 “ the same at seasonable times, paying sixpence for such inspection; and
 “ shall, upon demand, forthwith give copies of the same, or any part
 “ thereof, to such person, paying at the rate of sixpence for every
 “ three hundred words, and so in proportion of any greater or less
 “ number.”

The second section of the Act directs, that, “ in case such church-
 “ wardens and overseers of the Poor, or any of them, shall refuse or
 “ neglect to make and yield up such account, verified as aforesaid, with-
 “ in the time herein-before limited or appointed, or shall refuse or ne-
 “ glect to pay and deliver over such sum or sums of money, goods,
 “ chattels, and other things in their hands, as by this Act is directed; in
 “ either of the said cases, it shall and may be lawful to and for any two
 “ or more Justices of the Peace, to commit him or them to the com-
 “ mon gaol, until he or they shall have given such account, or shall have
 “ paid or yielded up such monies, goods, chattels, or other things in
 “ their hands, as aforesaid.”

Though the statutes for rating of wages did not directly invest the
 Justices with power to compel the payment of wages for work rated
 according to statute, yet the superior courts have recognized the au-
 thority which Justices have exercised in ordering the payment of such
 wages, as they were, by law, empowered to rate¹. As no power,
 however,

¹ In the case of the *Queen and Gouche* (Mich. 1 Ann.) it appeared, that an order was made by the Justices for the payment of wages, for husbandry work: the exception was, that the wages did not appear to be statute wages. It was, however, observed by the Court, that though the statute gives Justices only a power to set the rate for wages, and not to order payment, yet, grafting hereupon, they have also taken upon them to order payment; and the courts of law are indulgent in remedies for wages; and therefore they would intend it such wages as were within the statute, unless the contrary appeared upon the face of the order. 2 Salkeld, 441.

In a subsequent case it was held, that an order to pay 40s. for wages generally was good; and the Court said, they would intend it for wages in husbandry, since the contrary did not appear. Salk. 484. In the case, however, of the *King and Helling*, the Court held such an order was bad. *Strange*, 8. And in the *King and Cleg*, in answer to a remark from Judge Fortescue, that, in the case of servants' wages, although jurisdiction is given only in husbandry,

however, was given them by statute to admit the oath of the person claiming wages as evidence, the law was found to be extremely defective; and, by the 20th of George the Second, Justices were empowered to determine all differences between masters and servants in husbandry, hired for one year or more; or between masters and artificers, handicraftsmen, miners, colliers, keelmen, pitmen, glassmen, potters, and other labourers employed for any certain time, or in any certain manner, although no rate or assessment of wages had been made by the Justices that year; and to examine such servants upon oath; and to make order for the payment of wages, not exceeding ten pounds, with regard to any servant, (in husbandry,) nor five pounds with regard to other labourers; and, on non-payment, to direct the same to be levied by distress.

They were likewise empowered to hear the master's complaint upon oath, and to punish an offending servant, by abating part of his wages, or by discharging him; and, in the case of apprentices, to discharge, or commit them to the house of correction for any time not exceeding one calendar month; and in case of misconduct on the part of the master, to discharge the servant or apprentice: and by the 32d of George the Third, (c. 57.) the Justices may order the master to deliver up the cloaths of parish apprentices, and to pay a sum not exceeding £10. to place him with another master, when the apprentice has been discharged through the misconduct of the master.

By the 31st of George the Second, apprentices were relieved from the hardships they suffered, in being removed from places in which they had been unwarily bound by deeds not properly indented; and it was enacted, that "no person bound apprentice by any deed, writing, or contract, not indented, being first legally stamped, shall be removed from the parish in which he is bound apprentice, and has resided forty days, on account of such deed, writing, or contract, not being indented only."

The same Act also directs, that the words "other labourers, employ-

husbandry, yet orders had been held good, when it did not appear that the service was in husbandry, Chief Justice Parker remarked, that "this was always wondered at, and was actually contradicted in the case of the King and Helling." Strange, 475.

¹ 31 Geo. 2. c. 11. § 1.

“ed for any certain time, or in any other manner,” in the Act “for the better adjusting and more easy recovery of the wages of certain servants,” passed in the twentieth year of George the Second¹, shall be construed to extend to servants in husbandry, although hired for a less time than a year².

Of the very general and comprehensive words above quoted, Dr. Burn remarks, that they, perhaps, ought not to be understood without some limitation; and that it is unnecessary to extend them to any of the workmen in the woollen, linen, cotton, iron, leather, fur, hempen, or other manufactures, as the Law hath provided other methods to enforce the payment of wages due to persons employed in manufactures: and the 22d of George the Second takes no notice of this Act, but, in respect to the payment of manufacturers’ wages, provides various regulations, which, if the 20th of George the Second had been supposed to extend unto such persons, would have been superfluous and impertinent³. With less reason, he thinks, can the word *labourers* be said to extend to footmen, coachmen, carriers, and such like; but from the company in which it is ranked, namely, miners, colliers, and keelmen, it seems most properly to signify such persons, (not being brought up to, or employed in, trades,) as procure their subsistence by bodily labour⁴.

When

¹ 20 Geo. 2. c. 19.

² 31 Geo. 2. c. 11. § 3.

³ § xx.

⁴ Justice, tit. Servants, § xx. On Dr. Burn’s construction of these words, Mr. Caldecott remarks, that “if this is to be taken as the true construction of the word *labourers* in this Act, I conceive, that the words ‘for any certain time, or in any other manner,’ are merely opposed to the words in the preceding branch of the same section, *for one year or longer*; and mean only to describe hirings either for some definite period less than a year, or conditional hirings, and hirings for less than a year, under those loose indefinite engagements made under the custom of many of the particular trades enumerated in the Act: neither is it easy to suggest why the Legislature should by particular Acts interpose on behalf of agriculture and particular manufactures, if the same remedies were open to all descriptions of persons, and in every occupation under the general law.” Mr. Caldecott adds, that “it is also remarkable, that the very phrase and wording of the statute 5th Eliz. c. 4. § 5, which, if it were holden to extend to servants in general, and were to be read as some writers give it, would determine this point, is stated by different writers and different editors of the Statutes in terms directly contradictory. By some editors of the Statutes, as Keble, Bill, and the executrix of Newcomb, King’s printers, and the assigns of Richard and Edward Atkins, Esquires, in 1706, and Serjeant Hawkins, it is given thus: ‘No person which shall retain any servant, shall put away his said servant, unless it be for some reasonable or sufficient

When it is considered that this Act was framed with a reference to the Statutes of Elizabeth and James, concerning which it had been more than once decided in the courts of justice, that the jurisdiction of Justices of Peace only extended to the rating of agricultural wages, it is not to be wondered at; that courts of justice should have considered themselves obliged to restrain the jurisdiction of Justices. The cases, however, to be found in the Law-books on this subject, it must be owned, are extremely contradictory; and many Judges seem to have been inclined to extend the 5th of Eliz. to servants generally. The inclination, it must be confessed, is supported by the practice of the Justices, (who do not hesitate to compel the payment of wages of every description of servants,) and by general convenience. Whatever doubts, however, may have heretofore prevailed respecting their jurisdiction, it seems to be now settled by a late case, which was decided on the rigid rules of Law; that an order of Justices for compelling the payment of wages is void, if it does not state that the servant is employed in husbandry¹.

Various

'cient cause or matter, or be allowed before one Justice.' This reading, if the true one, "gives an authority to the masters of servants in husbandry, at least, to discharge them on sufficient cause; and in the case of the King v. the Inhabitants of Hanbury, (Burr. Sett. Cas. 324.) it is stated by Mr. Ingram *arguendo*, and not contradicted, that the statute runs "in the disjunctive. On the contrary, by other editors, as Rastell, Pulton, Cay, Pickering, and Ruffhead, and by Mr. Dalton in his Justice, it is thus read: 'unless for some reasonable or sufficient cause or matter, to be allowed before one Justice.' This reading, in cases "of husbandry at least, confines the power of discharging servants to the magistrate: and the "general tenor of the Act seems to support this reading; for, § 8, which inflicts a penalty on "the master who puts away his servant, &c. follows, in all the editions, the reading adopted "by the later editors; setting out, in the very words of § 5, the necessity of an allowance by "a magistrate to protect the master, and not referring at all to any other branch of that "section; which, had it run in the disjunctive, would have been necessary, and therefore "would most probably have been done: and the next section of the Statute, which inflicts "penalties on the servants that depart from their service, &c. runs in the same manner. The "circumstance, also, of the discharge of apprentices not being left under this Act to the discretion of the master, but to the judgment of the magistrate, strongly confirms the last "reading." Cald. 16. I have adopted the reading "to," in the transcript of the Statute inserted in the Appendix, No. VIII. p. cliv.

¹ The King and Hulcott, Hil. Term, 1796: 6 Term Reports, 583. In this case, in answer to a remark, that the words in the 5th Eliz. c. 4. § 5. were general, "no person who-
" shall

Various attempts were made during the reign of George the Second, both in and out of Parliament, to procure a radical alteration in the system of parochial administration introduced by the 43d of Elizabeth.

In 1735, Mr. Hay, a member of the House of Commons, published his "Remarks on the Poor Laws"; in which he makes many judicious observations on the Settlement Code. The obligation which each parish is under to maintain its own Poor, and the consequence of that, a distinct interest, are, he thinks, the roots from which all the evils relating to the Poor have sprung. He forcibly reprobates a system, which abridges a poor man of his liberty, on a suggestion or apprehension of his being likely to become chargeable. It is true, that, by the Certificate Act, his liberty is enlarged, and he may reside with a certificate in another parish, which will prevent him from being removed till he is actually chargeable. Mr. Hay, however, justly remarks, that this law is defective, because "it leaves it in the breast of the parish-officers, whether they will grant a poor person a certificate or no: whereas they ought to be compellable to do it; or, which would be much better, every poor person should be put on the foot of a certificate man, and not be removeable till he is actually chargeable."

As to the inconvenience resulting from the Law of Settlements, from the trouble they create to the magistrate, the burthens they impose on the parish, and the hardships to which they subject the persons who are the objects of it, he appeals to the experience of Gentlemen who serve their country in the commission of the Peace, whether half the business of any Quarter-Sessions does not consist in deciding appeals on orders of removal.

"The consequence of these disputes to the parishes concerned," he says, "is a great deal of trouble to their officers; first, in conveying the Poor removed to the places of their settlements, oftentimes at a great distance; and afterwards, in attending with evidence on the appeal; which does

"shall retain *any servants, &c.*" it was observed by Lord Kenyon, that "the statute 20 Geo. 2. c. 19. was passed to give Justices power over servants not in husbandry;" which affords a fair presumption, that the 5th of Elizabeth was understood by the Legislature to relate wholly to them.

¹ They were re-published, with an Appendix, in 1751; and re-printed in 1794, in an edition of Mr. Hay's works, in two volumes 4to.

“not always end at the Sessions, but is sometimes removed into Westminster Hall; and perhaps, at last, the order is qualified: so that it sometimes happens to cost a parish as much to remove a poor family, as it would do to maintain them.”

Of the oppression arising to the Poor themselves, he remarks, that “a poor man is no sooner got into a neighbourhood, habitation, and employment that he likes, but, upon humour or caprice of the parish, he is sent to another place, where he can find none of these conveniences: not certain long to continue there; for, perhaps, after the appeal, he is sent back again, and then hurried to a third place; and sometimes is a great while before he knows where he shall be at rest. In the mean time, he is at expence in removing his family and goods; or, perhaps, not able to carry them with him, is forced to sell them to a disadvantage: he loses his time, and is obliged to neglect his work, which is his only support: so that ’tis no wonder if by this treatment he is very much impoverished; and, from being only likely to become chargeable, is made actually so.”

To whatever extent these evils may have existed at the period when Mr. Hay wrote his remarks, it is consolatory to reflect, that the Poor are no longer liable to be removed at the caprice of parish-officers, on the ground that they are likely to become chargeable. This writer, indeed, seems to have coloured his description of the effects of the Settlement Code much too highly. Instances of vexatious removals may have occurred; and I have no doubt that such did, now and then, occur. We must know very little of human nature, to suppose that twenty thousand, (annually elected,) officers invested with discretionary power would not sometimes have abused it: but I am far from agreeing with Mr. Hay, who supposes that these oppressions were very generally practised; or believing, as Adam Smith seems to think, that “there is scarce a poor man in England, of forty years of age, who had not in some part of his life felt himself most cruelly oppressed by the Law of Settlements.”—“Their operation,” Mr. Howlett justly remarks, “considered in a general view, has been very trifling indeed. How seldom do the young and healthy, while single, find any difficulty in changing their residence, and fixing where they please? Does the tradesman or manufacturer, while his trade or his manufacture flourishes,

Of the above numbers, the males and females were in the following proportion :

Of the 1st class 329 were men, and 495 were women: 166 more than men.

2d	-	952	-	-	917	-	-	35 fewer.
3d	-	135	-	-	74	-	-	61 fewer.
4th	-	162	-	-	119	-	-	43 fewer.
5th	-	40	-	-	13	-	-	27 fewer.
		<hr/>		<hr/>				
		1618		1618				

From this account, it would seem, that, in London at least, three-fourths of the inhabitants are strangers, and that fewer women than men emigrate from the place of their birth, particularly if it is to go into foreign countries. I admit, that this solitary instance does not authorize very general conclusions on the subject. Any person, however, in tolerably easy circumstances, who will give himself the trouble of ascertaining the place of birth of the individuals which compose his family, will find, that but few, if any, are natives of the parish in which he resides.

Mr. Hay's account of the conduct of overseers, appears to be not less exaggerated, than his statement of the effect of the Laws of Settlement. "The overseers," he says, "are to raise taxes for their relief, and the majority of the parishioners are to nominate the persons who are to be relieved, and in what manner: and if any person is refused relief that wants it, he may complain to a Justice of Peace, who may order it. As this relief is to come out of the pockets of the parishioners, it is not their interest to be over-liberal; and they esteem him the best officer, who keeps the parish-rates lowest, let the Poor be ever so much oppressed. So that they are often lodged in such houses, as will not defend them from the weather; cloathed in rags, that will not cover their nakedness; want fuel to keep them warm, and proper food to sustain nature; so that many turn beggars and thieves, out of necessity."

From his situation as member of Parliament, Mr. Hay availed himself of the general attention which his remarks had excited, in bringing the consideration of the Poor System before the Legislature; and it appears from the Journals of the House of Commons, that a com-

mittee was appointed “to consider the Laws in being relating to the
 “maintenance and settlement of the Poor, and to consider what further
 “provisions might be necessary for their better relief and amendment.”
 Mr. Hay, on the 2d of May 1735, reported the resolutions of the committee, which were soon after agreed to by the House, with some inconsiderable alterations. They are as follow :

RESOLVED,

“1. THAT it is the opinion of this committee, that the laws in being
 “relating to the maintenance of the Poor of this kingdom, are defective;
 “and notwithstanding they impose heavy burthens on parishes, yet the
 “Poor, in most of them, are ill taken care of.

“2. That it is the opinion of this committee, that the laws relating to
 “the settlement of the Poor, and concerning vagrants, are very difficult
 “to be executed, and chargeable in their execution; vexatious to the
 “Poor, and of little advantage to the Public; and ineffectual to promote
 “the good ends for which they were intended.

“3. That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is necessary, for the
 “better relief and employment of the Poor, that a public work-house or
 “work-houses, hospital or hospitals, house or houses of correction, be
 “established in proper places, and under proper regulations, in each
 “county.

“4. That it is the opinion of this committee, that, in such work-house
 “or work-houses, all poor persons able to labour be set to work, who
 “shall either be sent thither, or come voluntarily for employment.

“5. That it is the opinion of this committee, that, in such hospital or
 “hospitals, foundlings, and other poor children not having parents able
 “to provide for them, be taken care of; as also, all poor persons that
 “are impotent or infirm.

“6. That it is the opinion of this committee, that, in such house or
 “houses of correction, all idle and disorderly persons, vagrants, and
 “such other criminals as shall be thought proper, be confined to hard
 “labour.

“7. That it is the opinion of this committee, that, towards the charge
 “of such work-houses, hospitals, and houses of correction, each parish
 “be assessed or rated; and that proper persons be empowered to re-
 “ceive

“ ceive the money so to be assessed or rated, when collected; as also,
 “ all voluntary contributions, or collections, either given or made for
 “ such purposes.

“ 8. That it is the opinion of this committee, that such work-houses,
 “ hospitals, and houses of correction, be under the management of pro-
 “ per persons, regard being had to such as shall be benefactors to so
 “ good a work.

“ 9. That it is the opinion of this committee, that such persons as
 “ shall be appointed for the management of such work-houses, hospitals,
 “ and houses of correction, be one body-politic in law, capable to sue
 “ and be sued, and of taking and receiving charitable contributions and
 “ benefactions in money for the use of the same, with proper restrictions
 “ as to the powers of such bodies politic.

“ 10. That it is the opinion of this committee, that, for the better un-
 “ derstanding and rendering more effectual the laws relating to the
 “ maintenance and settlement of the Poor, it is very expedient that they
 “ be reduced into one Act of Parliament.”

In the following sessions, Mr. Hay brought in a Bill framed in con-
 formity with these resolutions. It dragged heavily through a few stages,
 and, after considerable delay, opposition¹, and mutilation, expired before
 the

¹ Of the difficulties, which the Gentlemen, who were ordered to bring in the Bill, expe-
 rienced, Mr. Hay gives the following account :

“ When it was presented, they found much of that zeal abated, which had appeared in the
 “ House when it came into the resolutions. If some few difficulties occurred, which were real,
 “ many more were started, which were only imaginary. Those who had depopulated their
 “ parishes, and were grown easy in their Poor’s Rate, were alarmed, for fear such a law might
 “ end in an equal Rate throughout the country. So that private and parochial interest, which
 “ is ever vigilant and active, gained ground against that which was public, which is generally
 “ too careless and indolent. The leading men in the House, best able to promote such a design,
 “ were taken up with State affairs, and little regarded it : and, perhaps, in general disliked any
 “ thing that carried the appearance of an innovation. The Bill was put off, from time to time,
 “ till it was too late to pass ; though it was suffered to go through the committee, and was
 “ printed with the amendments, and sent into the country for further consideration.

“ The next year, the same Gentlemen were again ordered to bring in a Bill, or Bills, to the
 “ same purpose ; and had the honour to have the Master of the Rolls, (Sir J. Jekyll,) Mr. Ogle-
 “ thorpe, and Mr. Winnington, to be nominated with them. The first of those Gentlemen,
 “ who had declared himself a friend to the Bill in the beginning, began to be staggered with
 “ the

the third reading. The following is the substance of the Bill, as originally proposed :

“ Each county to be laid out into one or more districts by the Quarter Sessions.

“ Twelve persons residing in each district of a certain estate in land to be guardians of the district. Lists of the persons so qualified, residing within the district, to be returned to the Quarter Sessions, like those of persons qualified to serve on Juries ; and the names of the guardians to be drawn like those of jurymen.

“ Six annually to go out of office, the first year by lot, and ever after the six who had been longest in office, and six new ones to be chosen in the same manner.

“ Benefactors to be guardians for a time, in proportion to the sum given.

“ The guardians to be a corporation capable of taking benefactions of goods and chattels, (but not of lands,) for the use of the Poor ; and to make bye-laws and rules (to be approved by the Justices of Assize) for their better government.

“ To appoint a treasurer, removable at pleasure, residing and having an estate in the district, and giving security.

“ Guardians, with consent of the Quarter Sessions, to displace any guardian, for a reasonable cause.

“ To purchase lands in fee, near the middle of the district, with a certain number of acres.

“ To build houses on them for the use of the Poor ; and, within six months after they are finished, to furnish them, and provide a stock to set the Poor to work ; and to carry on any trade or business there ; and to take the benefit of their labour for the use of the work-house.

“ The land to be purchased, and buildings erected, by money to be given by Parliament.

“ the objections made to particular parts of it ; and, apprehending it might be difficult to pass the whole, advised the Gentleman, who presented it the year before, to divide it into two Bills, by cutting off the part relating to vagrants from the rest. That Gentleman submitted to authority, contrary to his own sentiments ; and complied with a proposal, which not only created trouble to him and to his fellow-labourers of the preceding year, in new-moulding those Bills, but which extremely maimed and disfigured their first general plan.”

“ The houses to be furnished, and the stock provided, by money given
 “ by charitable persons ; and what more is wanting, by a Rate, not ex-
 “ ceeding half of what had been raised in any parish or place, in any
 “ one of the three years immediately preceding.

“ Guardians to meet at the work-house the first Thursday in every
 “ month, at a certain hour, under a penalty ; six to constitute a *quorum* ;
 “ and to meet at other times on a summons ; with power to cause
 “ overseers, and others, to appear.

“ Overseers always to attend the first Thursday in June, September,
 “ December, and March, when the guardians are to ascertain the sum
 “ the overseers are to raise for the ensuing quarter for each parish or
 “ place, which (after the houses are finished and furnished) shall be in
 “ proportion to the numbers sent from such parish or place.

“ On the last Thursday in August, Justices of the Peace to meet in
 “ the work-house to nominate new overseers, with the same power of
 “ levying the quarterly sums, as is given by 43 Eliz. and the old over-
 “ seers then to deliver up their accounts.

“ Charities given to the Poor of any parishes, (and not otherwise
 “ appropriated,) and the profits arising from the sale, or letting of their
 “ present work-houses, to go in aid of their Rates.

“ Overseers to set up a box to receive charities, in all places of divine
 “ worship, to be kept under two different locks and keys ; and to be
 “ publicly opened once a quarter, and the money found in it to be paid
 “ by the overseers to the treasurer.

“ All other charities for the use of the Poor of any district, and
 “ moneys arising from the labour in the work-house, and fines or for-
 “ feitures for their use, shall be paid to the guardians, and by them to
 “ the treasurer, within a month after they receive them. Treasurer to
 “ issue no money without order of the guardians ; and to account every
 “ quarter, or oftener, if required.

“ All other officers and servants, at all times when required, to ac-
 “ count, to two or more guardians, for every thing that shall come to
 “ their hands, or be under their care.

“ Two Justices, or Quarter Sessions, may commit any guardian,
 “ treasurer, officer, servant, or overseer, refusing to account ; may levy
 “ double the sum, which they shall, on their accounting, find to be mis-
 “ applied ;

“ applied : may fine any overseer 20s. for not attending the last Thursday
 “ in August, or being otherwise negligent in office ; and persons fraudu-
 “ lently imbezbling the goods of the work-house, to be deemed guilty
 “ of felony.

“ Any sum given in charity, or arising from the labour of the Poor, or
 “ from fines and forfeitures, if under £100. the guardian shall apply
 “ to the expence of the next quarter ; if above £100. they shall place it
 “ out at interest, on such government securities as the next Quarter
 “ Sessions shall direct, and apply only the interest.

“ After the work-house of any district is finished and furnished, guar-
 “ dians to give notice to the overseers to bring in the Poor of their re-
 “ spective parishes, which they shall do within a month ; and for ever
 “ after to convey thither all impotent Poor, bastards and foundling chil-
 “ dren wanting relief, as also all children above the number of three,
 “ of such married persons as desire it, and will make oath that they are
 “ not worth above £5. besides their goods and apparel ; and never, for
 “ the future, shall relieve any person, except on sudden and emergent
 “ occasion, as pestilential distemper, sickness, accident, or infirmity,
 “ which might endanger the life or health of the person in removing to
 “ the work-house ; and during the continuance of such occasions only ;
 “ of which the overseer shall within two days give notice to some Justice
 “ of Peace, who shall order such relief as is necessary, and settle and
 “ allow the expence thereof, which shall be paid or allowed by the trea-
 “ surer to the overseer producing such order.

“ Two Justices, on complaint, may examine, and finally determine,
 “ if a person sent to the work-house was legally settled in the parish
 “ from which he was sent ; and, if he was not, shall order the parish to
 “ which he belonged to pay 40s. to the work-house.

“ Every person, for the future, to be deemed legally settled in any
 “ place where he continued a year without being chargeable ; and, if
 “ he gained no such settlement, then at the place of his birth ; and if
 “ not born in the kingdom, then where he should happen to want
 “ relief.

“ Justices, at Quarter Sessions, to settle Rates and Allowances by
 “ the mile, for conveying the Poor to the work-houses, which they are
 “ to order the treasurer to pay, or allow to the overseers.

“ Two Justices may order the goods and rents of persons to be
 “ seized, who are relieved in the work-house, or who shall run away
 “ and leave wife, or child, or bastard child, to be there relieved, and
 “ make such allowance out of them as they shall think fit, which shall
 “ go in aid of the next quarterly payment of the place aggrieved.

“ The same power as at present in the Quarter Sessions, to oblige
 “ father and mother, grand-father, and children, and grand-children,
 “ of poor persons, to relieve them.

“ Guardians may keep children in the work-house to the age of 21;
 “ or, with the consent of two Justices, may bind them apprentices to any
 “ persons willing to take them; or may compel such persons to take them
 “ apprentices in agriculture, or the sea service, as are liable so to do at
 “ present. But none to be compelled to take them under 10 years of age.

“ The present law relating to apprentices, in every respect, to con-
 “ tinue in force.

“ As also the present law relating to bastardy.

“ Guardians may give reasonable correction to the Poor in the work-
 “ house, not conforming to rules, or misbehaving themselves; may fine
 “ their officers or servants, for evil intreating them, in a sum not ex-
 “ ceeding 40s. to be detained out of their wages, or levied by distress,
 “ if confirmed by the next Quarter Sessions, who are to determine all
 “ differences between them and the guardians concerning wages.

“ All fines and forfeitures, given to the use of the Poor by any law
 “ in being, to go to the use of the work-house of the district where
 “ the offence is committed: to be paid to the guardians, and by them
 “ to the treasurer.

“ Head-officers and Justices, in cities and corporations, to have au-
 “ thority to do any thing in execution of the Act, within their jurisdic-
 “ tion, as any two Justices may within the county.

“ The Act not to extend to work-houses established in any cities or
 “ towns, by particular Acts of Parliament; but such cities and towns
 “ shall be deemed distinct districts by themselves.

“ Lord Chancellor may at all times appoint commissioners to visit
 “ any of the work-houses, to alter any of their bye-laws and or-
 “ ders; and to make new, (to be approved by the Judges of the Assize);
 “ to enquire into the conduct of the guardians and others; and to pu-

“ nish them by fine or removal; and to inquire into charities given to the use of the Poor; and how they have been applied.

“ The Act not to give the guardians, or any other persons, power over any alms-house, hospital, or other charitable gift, already settled, and particularly appropriated.

“ The remaining part of the Bill concerns vagrants and houses of correction, and differs from the present Vagrant Act only in these particulars. The Lord Chancellor was to appoint commissioners to inspect the condition of the houses of correction, who might order the old ones to be altered, new ones to be erected, fitted up, and furnished in what manner they thought proper; which the Justices of Peace were to execute, in a certain time, under a penalty. Benefactions were to be applied, in the first instance, towards the expence; and what sums more were wanted, were to be raised by a County Rate.

“ Twenty shillings were allowed for apprehending a vagrant, who was to be committed till the next Quarter Sessions; where if he was adjudged to be a rogue, he was to be confined to hard labour for a year; and if an incorrigible rogue, for seven years, or to be transported for that time. And an incorrigible rogue offending a second time, was to be confined or transported for life.

“ Vagrants, under 14, were to be sent to the work-house of the district, there to be provided for, like other Poor; and the expence to be charged to the place where they last begged or misordered themselves, and passed unapprehended, which was to be the last legal settlement of every vagrant, to which the Sessions, (after punishment,) if they thought proper, might order the master of the house of correction at once to convey him, without the trouble of passing him through other hands.

“ In the last clauses, all the Laws relating to the Poor were particularly enumerated, which were to be repealed.”

An Act passed in 1744, ¹ respecting that class of Poor, who are considered by the Legislature, as the out-casts of Society; namely, rogues and vagabonds. From perusing the long catalogue of actions, which denominate a man a disorderly person, a vagabond, or an incorrigible

¹ 17 Geo. II. c. 5. Extended by 23 Geo. III. c. 88.

rogue, the reader may, perhaps, incline to think that many of the offences specified in this Act, and in subsequent Statutes on the same subject, are of a very dubious nature; and that it must frequently require nice legal accumen to distinguish whether a person incurs any, and what, penalty, under the Vagrant Laws.

By the 17th of George the Second, and subsequent Vagrant Acts, three descriptions of offenders are specified, namely, idle and disorderly persons; rogues and vagabonds; and incorrigible rogues.

Idle and disorderly persons are punishable with one month's imprisonment: Such are,

- 1, Persons threatening to run away and leave their wives and children on the parish.
- 2, Persons who tiddle in ale-houses, and spend their money, without making a sufficient provision for their families. (See 32 Geo. 3. c. 45.)
- 3, Persons who unlawfully return to the parish or place from which they have been legally removed, without bringing a certificate.
- 4, Persons, who, not having wherewithal to maintain themselves, live idly, without employment, and refuse to work for the usual wages.
- 5, Persons begging in the streets and highways.

Rogues and vagabonds¹ are punishable with whipping and six months' imprisonment: and are defined to be,

- 1, Persons going about as patent gatherers, or gatherers of alms, under pretence of loss by fire, or other casualty.
- 2, Fencers, bearwards, strolling players of interludes or other entertainments.
- 3, Minstrels², (except those licensed by the Lord Dutton in Cheshire.)

4, Persons

¹ See Note, page 309.

² The Author of the ingenious Essay on the Ancient English Minstrels, (prefixed to "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," vol. 1. p. xix.) describes Minstrels to be "an order of men in the middle ages, who united the arts of poetry and music, and sung verses to the harp, of their own composing; who appear to have accompanied their songs with mimicry and action; and to have practised such various means of diverting, as were much admired in those rude times, and supplied the want of more refined entertainments; whom these arts rendered extremely popular and acceptable, in this and all the neighbouring countries; where no high scene of festivity was esteemed complete, that was not set off with the exercise of their talents; and where, so long as the spirit of chivalry subsisted, they were protected and caressed, because their songs tended to do honour to the ruling passion of the times, and to encourage and foment a martial spirit."

- 4, Persons pretending to be, and wandering in the habit of, Gipsies¹.
- 5, Fortune-tellers, pretending skill in palmistry, physiognomy, &c. or using any subtil craft to deceive or impose upon others.

6, Persons

To this specious and pleasing account, a writer, (the editor of *Ancient Songs* from the time of King Henry the Third to the Revolution, and of several other valuable publications,) whose abilities in objecting are unquestionable, urges many strong objections; and shews, that when, (by the Statute, I suppose, of 39 Eliz. c. 4. § 2.) “Minstrels, wandering abroad,” were included among “rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars,” they had no great reason to complain; as vagabond was a title to which the followers of their profession had long been accustomed. And this he proves by the following reference: “Item pur eschuir plusieurs diseases et mischies q’ont advenuz devaut ces heures en la Terre de Gales, par plusieurs Westlours, Rymours, *Ministrals* et autres *Vacabondes*, or—deignez est, &c.” Stat. 4. H. iv. c. 27. In the Rolls of Parliament, iii. 508, the words are, *Minstrales*, ou *Vacabundes*.”

The fact seems to have been, that Minstrels were the Saxon successors of the Welsh Bards: and yet we do not find the word used before the Norman Conquest. That Bards, in their original institution and practice, were highly respectable, there is sufficient historical evidence; but that *Minstrals*, when known only by the name of *Minstrels*, ever held any considerable rank in society, can only be matter of conjecture: and there is still greater reason to doubt, whether any description of Englishmen ever exercised the united arts of music and poetry: but the existence of the *French Minstrels*, and the *Provençal Troubadours*, is very well ascertained. Even the origin of the name of Minstrel seems not yet to have been clearly ascertained. It is, however, capable of proof, that Bards, even in Wales, at length degenerated into characters not much better than modern strolling ballad-singers; and in Scotland, into Bairds, i. e. Jesters or Fools: (see the Scotch Act, passed in 1579, in the Appendix to this Vol. No. x.) and that *Minstrels*, even before Elizabeth’s Acts, had become itinerant fiddlers. In still later periods, in Scotland, the term was considered as synonymous with fiddler. Thus, in Ross’s *Beggar’s Song*:

— “When I of any weddings hear,
 “I’ll cast me to be there:
 “Then will I to the *Minstrels* say,
 “(For they are never scant)
 “With leave of the good company,
 “Play me the Beggar’s Rant.”

In *Hardyknute* it is used to signify a bag-piper:

“To join his King, a-down the hill
 “In haste his march he made;
 “While, playand pibarchs, *Minstrals* meit,
 “Afore him statelie strade.”

In the following passage, in Spencer’s *Epithalamion*, the use made of the term *Minstrel* seems decisive of its signifying any description of musicians:

“Hark! how the *Minstrils* ’gin to shrill aloud
 “Their merry musick, that resounds from far!
 “The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling croud,” &c.

¹ The laws in England against Gipsies, in former times, were extremely severe. By the 22 H. 8. c. 10, they were directed to leave the kingdom, and not to return under pain

- 6, Persons playing or betting at any unlawful games or plays.
- 7, Persons who run away and leave their wives and children upon the parish.
- 8, Petty chapmen, and pedlars, wandering abroad without a licence.
- 9, Persons wandering abroad, and lodging in ale-houses, out-houses, or the open air, and not giving a good account of themselves.
- 10, Persons wandering abroad, and pretending to be soldiers or sailors, without proper certificates from their officers, or testimonials from magistrates.
- 11, Persons wandering abroad, and pretending to go to work in harvest, without a proper certificate from the parish.
- 12, Persons having implements of house-breaking, or offensive weapons, with a felonious intent.
- 13, Persons concerned in illegal lottery transactions, as described in the Lottery Acts 27th, 33d, 34th, and 35th Geo. III.

Incorrigible rogues¹ are punishable with two years' imprisonment; and are thus described:

- 1, Persons styled End Gatherers, buying, collecting, or receiving ends of yarn, in the woollen branch, against the statute 13 Geo. I. c. 23. § 8.

2, Persons,

pain of imprisonment and forfeiture of their goods and chattels. By the 1 and 2 Ph. and M. c. 4. and 5 Eliz. c. 20. it was enacted, that if any person should import a Gipsy into this kingdom, he should forfeit £40.; and that, if the Egyptians themselves remained one month in this kingdom; or if any person, being fourteen years old, (whether natural-born subject or stranger,) who had been seen in the fellowship of such persons, or had disguised him, or herself, like them, should remain with them one month, at one, or several times; it should be felony, without benefit of clergy: and we are informed, that, at one Suffolk Assizes, no less than thirteen Gypsies were executed, upon these Statutes, a few years before the Restoration. Blackst. Comm. iv. 166. The 23d Geo. III. c. 51, declares, "that the 5 Eliz. "is and ought to be considered as a Law of excessive severity," and repeals it. Gypsies are now only punishable under the Vagrant Act. The Scottish Laws treated Gypsies with no less severity than the Act of Elizabeth. By an Act passed in 1609, "Sorners and common "thieves, commonlie called Egyptians," were directed "to passe forth of the kingdom, "under the paine of death, as common notorious and condemned thieves." Scottish Acts, 1, 850.

¹ When a person is convicted of being a rogue and vagabond before a Justice of the Peace, the Justice may order him to be whipped, or imprisoned till the next sessions, or for any less time; and if imprisoned till the next sessions, the Justices may then order a further imprisonment

✓
criminal law
against

see Bail
Dei

- 2, Persons, who, being rogues and vagabonds, have escaped after being apprehended, or who shall refuse to be examined by a magistrate, or who shall give false accounts of themselves after warning them of their punishment, or who refuse to be conveyed by a pass.
- 3, Persons, who shall escape out of any house of correction, before the period of their imprisonment expires.
- 4, Persons, who, being punished as rogues and vagabonds, shall again commit the same offence.

In the year 1751, a pamphlet was published, intituled, "Considerations on several Proposals for the better Maintenance of the Poor." This, I imagine, was written to prove that the alterations proposed by Mr. Hay, (who re-published his "Remarks on the Laws relating to the Poor," this year,) and by Mr. Henry Fielding, in his "Inquiry into the Cause of the late Increase of Robbers," were unnecessary. The anonymous writer of the "Considerations," objects to leaving the Poor to be maintained by voluntary contributions, or accidental charity only; and thinks that thousands would perish, and much confusion would arise, if laws, which had subsisted for nearly two hundred years, were thus suddenly repealed. He thinks the divisions of the country into parishes are sufficiently large; and that a multitude is more easily governed, by being divided into subordinate parts, than they could be in great and unwieldy numbers. He remarks, that the nation was, in general, better governed, when the counties were di-

ment for six months: female vagabonds are subject to the same imprisonment, but in no instance are liable to whipping. 32 Geo. 3. c. 45. And the Justice, or the Court of Quarter Sessions, may, if they think proper, order a vagabond, after punishment, to be conveyed to his place of settlement by a pass; but no Justice of Peace shall order any vagrant to be conveyed by a pass, who has not been actually whipped, or imprisoned for at least seven days, which shall be certified in the pass. 32 Geo. 3. c. 45. The object of this was to correct an abuse, which much prevailed, of removing Paupers by a pass, who had committed no act of vagrancy, and who ought to have been removed by an order of removal. An order of removal, and a vagrant pass, operate very differently: in the first instance, the parish removing pays all travelling expences; in the other, they are defrayed by each county through which the vagrant passes. No appeal lies against a vagrant pass; so that the parish, to which the vagrant is conveyed, must be at the expence of sending the vagrant back again, by an order of removal, to his place of legal settlement. Burn, tit. Vagrants, c. 10. Christian's Blackstone, iv. 168, note.

vided

vided into hundreds, and the hundreds into decennaries; when every man of the decennary was answerable for the rest, and no man might depart from his dwelling without the consent of his fellow pledges.

He proposes that the counties should be divided, by the Justices in Sessions, into as many smaller districts as they should think proper: that the petty constables should visit, weekly, the houses in their respective districts, and set down the names of all the inhabitants and lodgers; with their trades and ways of life, and whether their behaviour was orderly, and their children decently provided for, and employed; and should make their returns once a month to the high constables: that the high constables should make a monthly return, (at a Special Sessions of the division to be held for that purpose,) containing the names of inhabitants and lodgers; the number of public-houses, and the behaviour of the ale-house keepers; and whether gaming, or other evil practices, were carried on in such houses; the number of the Poor in each parish; and an account how they were relieved, and employed; what work-houses were established in the division, and what more were wanted: that the Justices of these Special Sessions should each be allowed half-a-guinea a day from the county treasurer. High-constables, on the monthly returns, 5s. a day; petty-constables, 2s.6d. a week, for visiting every week, and making monthly returns.

In all this, (he adds,) there will be no innovation upon our Constitution; but a nearer approach to the spirit and meaning of it, and almost all in the old forms: in the execution of this plan, the expence will not be great; but, on the contrary, the general savings to the Public will be immense, if, by these means, the Poor can be well employed, and the idle and profligate restrained.

Mr. Alcock, in 1752, proposed a plan, in many respects very similar to that recommended by Mr. Hay. He quotes the Dutch, as exemplary managers, in providing maintenance for the impotent, and employment for the vagrant Poor; and thinks the way they have chiefly succeeded has been by hospitals. He therefore proposes, that a work-house or hospital should be erected in the center of every hundred; upon the following plan: "It should consist of three parts, one for the "impotent, and the able and honest industrious Poor; one for the sick; "and one for the confinement, labour, and correction of vagrants, idlers, "and

“ and sturdy beggars. It should be strong and plain : grandeur here is
 “ absurd ; for surely palaces are not proper for Paupers. The build-
 “ ings need not be of large extent ; for, I am convinced, the inhabitants
 “ would not be very numerous. That part intended for a house of cor-
 “ rection, should be particularly strong. If possible, the building should
 “ be erected near some river, and where there is a good deal of waste-
 “ ground. The river might serve for mills of various sorts, and for
 “ many purposes in trade and manufactures, as well as culinary uses ;
 “ and the waste-ground might be taken in and improved, and serve
 “ for the production of roots and vegetables, corn, &c. ; for rope-yards,
 “ for bleaching, and drying hemp, flax, yarn, wool, and for many other
 “ purposes, which it is not necessary here to enumerate. If possible,
 “ also, it should be near some church, that the Poor might have the
 “ benefit of divine service every Sunday, and other days of public wor-
 “ ship.

“ All persons, that begged, or asked for relief, should directly be sent
 “ to this house, and be immediately admitted, on an order signed by
 “ the minister and overseers for the time being, or by a majority of
 “ the church-wardens and overseers of every parish. No money, but
 “ what passed through this house, should be charged by the overseers.
 “ Here the Poor should be well taken care of, and supplied with whole-
 “ some diet, cloathing, and lodging : materials should be provided for
 “ the employment of all those that should be able to work, as hemp,
 “ flax, wool, leather, yarn, both linen and woollen ; iron, wood, &c. ;
 “ and likewise proper implements and working tools, as spinning-
 “ wheels, cards, turns, knitting, and other needles, looms, shovels, axes,
 “ hammers, saws for stone and timber, and, perhaps, some sort of
 “ mills, where a stream could be had, as corn, fulling, paper-mills, &c.
 “ Here several sorts of business, and some small manufactures, might
 “ be carried on, as spinning, weaving, stocking and net knitting, saw-
 “ ing, rope-making, wool-combing, particularly in the West of Eng-
 “ land, where the woollen-trade is considerable ; flax-dressing, particu-
 “ larly in the North, where a good deal of hemp and flax is grown.
 “ The manufacture of pin-making would employ a number of Poor.
 “ A skilful manager would find work of some kind or other for every one.
 “ The lame of foot might use their hands for many good purposes. The

“ blind might turn a windlass, a wheel, or grinding-stone. Even children might soon be brought to do many things ; to knit stockings or nets, to wind thread or yarn, and assist the weavers, &c. The aged, if they could do nothing else, might overlook, instruct, and direct, others, in those several branches of business they were skilled in.

“ The labour of the house,” he thinks, “ would go a great way to maintain them: the cloathing should be an uniform: the charge of building, and all other expences, should be borne by the several parishes of the hundred; each parish paying a proportion, according to a medium of what they had paid to the Poor for four years last past. The money should be assessed, and collected in the same manner as at present.

“ The two overseers, and minister of the parish, if he thought proper to join with them, should be the acting officers for a year, and should have the management of the ordinary business of the hospital. And each parish in the hundred should take the management by rotation, beginning alphabetically, according to the initial letters of each parish. No person should be capable of being chosen overseer, that had not £40. a year leasehold, or £20. a year land. The accounts of the two acting officers should be audited and passed every quarter, at a general meeting of all the overseers of the hundred, and the ministers of the respective parishes, together with the Justices of the hundred; and the determination of a majority of those that attended, should be final: in case of fraud, or wilful mismanagement in the acting officers, the majority should have a power to levy, by distress and sale of the offender’s goods, so much money as would make satisfaction. Market-towns should have an hospital of their own, and not be admitted as members of the united hundred; because their numbers might cause a good deal of trouble to the house, and, upon a decay of trade, accidents of fire, sickness, &c. which towns are most liable to, might bring an extraordinary charge of Poor, and their payments would not be in proportion to their burthen.”

The advantages that would arise from such establishments, Mr. Alcock thinks, would be, 1st, a reduction in the number of Poor. “ For

“ to be sent to the Poor-house, however well they might be taken care
 “ of there, would look like a sort of exile, and be deemed some hardship,
 “ and punishment: and many, that now live lazily on monthly pay, in
 “ order to avoid going thither, would be content to labour, and fare
 “ harder, and make a shift to subsist. For they would consider they
 “ must work at the hospital: and therefore, that it’s better to live
 “ among their friends, and work at home.” That this has been the
 effect of work-houses, in many parts of England, the reader will find
 various instances in the Second Volume of this Work.

2d. The hospitals would increase labour and industry.

3d. The consequence of an increase of labour, and a diminution of
 the number of the Poor, would be a reduction of the Poor’s Rate.

Mr. Alcock says, that “ the whole sum laid out on the Poor-account
 “ in South Britain, for four years preceding his publication, amounted,
 “ at a medium, to near three millions yearly, according to the accounts
 “ given in to Parliament, in 1751, which is equal to a land-tax of six
 “ shillings in the pound.”

He also proposes, that vagrants and disorderly persons should be taken
 up, and kept to hard labour for a week, in the house of correction, in
 the hospital; that, for a second offence, they should be whipped, and
 confined to hard labour for a month; and for a third offence, should
 be confined till the next Quarter Sessions, and, on proof of their being
 incorrigible rogues, should be transported, “ *made slaves of, or what-
 ever else the Quarter Sessions should think proper.*” This is a very lax
 and undistinguishing expression for defining the punishment of idleness;
 which, indeed, is an offence of so dubious a nature, that it may be
 doubted, whether the wisest course which a Legislator can pursue, is not
 to leave it to the punishment, that arises from these difficulties, which
 idleness, (more especially, when combined with poverty,) will never
 fail to experience.

In 1753, a bill was brought into the House of Commons, by Mr.
 Potter, son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, for taking and register-
 ing an annual account of the total number of people, and of the total
 number of marriages, births, and deaths; and also, of the total number
 of persons receiving alms in every parish and extra-parochial place in
 Great Britain.

This bill was violently opposed by Mr. Thornton, the member for York, as subversive of the last remains of English Liberty, and merely intended, in a period of exigency and distress, to facilitate the calculations of the political arithmetician, and to enable the tax-gatherer to exact the utmost farthing of a capitation. It appears from his speech, that the numbering of the People, and the return of the Poor's Rate, were to be annual. The bill passed the House of Commons; but was thrown out by the Lords, upon the second reading. Notwithstanding the very popular arguments which were urged against this measure, and which, it is probable, caused its rejection, I think it is much to be regretted that Mr. Potter's proposals were not adopted. Of political arithmetic, or "the art of reasoning by figures, on matters relating to government," a correct knowledge of the numbers and condition of the people is the principal foundation. To ascertain, by enumerations taken from time to time, that the population of a country has gradually increased, is, perhaps, in other words, to determine, that the great business of Government has been wisely and prosperously administered. Davenant justly remarks, that, as "the wealth of all nations arises from the labour and industry of the people, a right knowledge of their numbers is necessary to those who will judge of a country's power and strength. And this is so far from being a matter of mere speculation, as some think, that many conclusions may be drawn from thence, which are both useful and reducible to practice". Such information,

¹ See Davenant, on the use of Political Arithmetic: Whitworth's ed. i. 138. The following judicious observations, on this subject, are annexed to a Return of the Population of Corfe Castle, containing the age, profession, trade, &c. of every inhabitant; communicated to the Editor of the Annals of Agriculture, by W. M. Pitt, Esq. M. P.

"From such returns great parochial advantages would be derived, wheresoever they might be adopted; and, if they were general, great national benefit would result therefrom.

"They would enable the clergyman, parish-officers, vestry, and contributors to the Poor's Rates in general, in any place, to form a perfect judgment on the situation and wants of every distressed person or family, to discriminate between the deserving and dissolute or idle, and to provide employment for those who are in want of it, and especially for children, as they successively become able to undertake work.

"They would enable the magistrates to form an opinion on the propriety of applications for parochial relief, on the one hand; and of the refusal of it, by the parish-officers, on the other; to discover whether that very important part of the Statute of the 43d of Elizabeth, the providing work for the Poor, be not neglected; and, from an accurate

formation, more especially when combined with correct accounts of the produce of the different branches of the revenue, of the proportion which the opulent classes bear to those who can barely subsist, and to those, who, from their poverty, (instead of being able to contribute any thing towards the exigencies of the State,) are the greatest burthen on the more able or more industrious part of the community, is the groundwork, on which every able minister will both reason, and act, whether called upon to remedy the local disadvantages of a part, or to manage the general interests of the whole, of the empire. Of the utility of one part of Mr. Potter's plan, the object of which was to ascertain the number of the Poor, and the expence of maintaining them, the Legislature themselves seem to have been fully convinced; for, in the year 1776, the overseers, of every parish in the kingdom, were enjoined, by Act of Parliament, to make returns, upon oath, to various questions relative to the

“ knowledge of the characters and situations of the individuals, to correct such abuses as
 “ may be within the reach of their authority, or report to the Quarter Sessions any matters
 “ which may require the interference and control of that Court.

“ The exact population of the kingdom; the degrees of salubrity of different places; the
 “ proportion between the sexes, at various periods of life; the numbers of persons employed
 “ and unemployed; the cause of the want of employment, whether idleness or necessity;
 “ the proportion between persons supported by charity, and the whole population; the num-
 “ ber capable of bearing arms for the defence of the State; the proportion between those
 “ employed in agriculture and in trade, and between those of different trades and callings,
 “ with respect to each other; and the increase or decrease of any, or all, manufactures,
 “ would thus be ascertained.

“ The best *data* for calculating the value of annuities and reversions would also be esta-
 “ blished, as well as a check on frauds on the revenue; and the plan would very materially
 “ tend to the improvement of the police and good order of the country.

“ Returns similar to these might be easily obtained by the following mode of proceeding:

“ The church-wardens and overseers of every parish in England, Wales, and the town
 “ of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and the kirk-elders of every parish in Scotland, should provide a
 “ sufficient number of blank tables, similar to the specimen here produced, to insure uni-
 “ formity in the returns, and should then set down the names of all the house-keepers resi-
 “ dent at the time within the parish, affixing a number to each house, in such order as to
 “ enable them, with the least possible trouble, to go from house to house to collect the in-
 “ formation required. Every thing necessary being thus previously prepared, they should
 “ proceed throughout the whole kingdom, on one and the same day, that a person may not
 “ be set down in more places than one, (suppose on the 24th of June,) to take an account of
 “ the inhabitants, according to the form here given. In smaller parishes, the inquiry
 “ may

the amount of assessments, number of Poor, work-houses, and the particular expences of the charges of settlements, removals, appeals, and other litigations, concerning the Poor; and in the year 1786, similar measures were adopted by Parliament, for acquiring further information on the same subject. We cannot, therefore, disapprove of the principles upon which the Bill in 1753 was founded, without equally condemning the Acts which passed in 1776 and 1786, relative to the same subject. The extreme necessity, however, not only of obtaining full, but periodical statements, from year to year, of the condition of the Poor, seems now to be so sensibly felt, that the appointment of proper persons, to report the state of each parish, forms a principal feature in the plan lately brought forward by Mr. Pitt, for the amendment of the Poor Laws¹.

At this period the Poor Laws seem to have attracted very general

“ may be best made by one person; in larger, by two, three or more, dividing the parish
 “ amongst them. The returns should then be carefully examined, mistakes corrected, deficiencies supplied, and two copies prepared; the one to be kept among the parish records;
 “ the other to be delivered, at the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions, to the Clerks of the Peace
 “ of the counties of England and Wales, or to the Sheriff's Deputy of the counties of Scotland: the persons who drew up the returns should be sworn as to their accuracy, and
 “ should produce a certificate from the clergyman or minister of the parish, stating, that
 “ he has himself examined the returns; that they are, to the best of his knowledge, just
 “ and true; and that they were made on the 24th of June. These returns should be filed
 “ among the records of the county; and the Clerk of the Peace, or Sheriff Deputy, (as
 “ the case may be,) should, previous to the 1st of December, make two abstracts of them;
 “ the one to be also preserved among the records of the county, to be referred to by magistrates, when they may think proper; the other to be transmitted to his Majesty's Secretary of State for the home department, who shall cause a general abstract to be made of
 “ the information procured from the whole kingdom, to be laid before his Majesty and
 “ both Houses of Parliament. The persons making the returns should be allowed to charge
 “ to the parish account, one farthing for every name inserted therein; and the Clerk of the
 “ Peace, or Sheriff's Deputy, shall receive, from the county stock, one shilling for every
 “ parochial return which he shall abstract. Penalties should be inflicted on parish-officers,
 “ &c. in case of neglect, and on persons refusing to give, or giving false, information.”
 Annals of Agric. xxvi. 189.

It appears to me, that the population of the kingdom might be calculated with great correctness from the lists, which, by the Militia Act, are directed to be returned to the Deputy Lieutenants, of males between the age of 18 and 45 years, in every parish in the kingdom, with the assistance of Dr. Price's Tables on the Rate of Human Mortality.

¹ See the Heads of Mr. Pitt's Bill, in the Appendix to this Volume, No. xii.

attention,

attention, both in and out of Parliament¹. Two Schemes, in the forms of Acts, drawn up by two persons of rank, Sir Richard Lloyd, and the Earl of Hillsborough, were published in the year 1753; but neither of them passed into a Law.

The Earl's Scheme repeals all the Poor Laws; and destroys the whole system of settlements and removals: it, however, re-enacts, with some alterations, the clauses respecting the appointment of overseers, the manner of levying the Rates, the ordering of bastard children, binding out apprentices, and the mutual liability of parents and children to maintain each other: he proposes, that, in every county, there shall be one corporation, consisting of such persons as shall subscribe not less than £ 5. annually, towards the relief of the Poor of the county; that they shall be called governors of the Poor; have power to purchase lands; make bye-laws; appoint officers, with salaries, as clerk and treasurer; and also a steward, to superintend and direct the whole economy of the establishment; to provide diet, apparel, materials, implements of work, utensils, and furniture; to sell the produce of the work, and to enforce the observation of rules made for order and decency: and that they shall likewise have power to appoint an apothecary; and a master and matron, to instruct the boys and girls in the various branches of manufacture.

He then proposes, that, in every county, one or more hospitals, with convenient ground adjoining, be erected, and be furnished with proper materials and implements for work; that none be admitted into the hospital, except the children of parents not able to maintain them; all exposed and deserted children; diseased persons, who cannot work, and are too poor to purchase medicines; idiots, lunatics, lame, old, blind, and others, having no means to maintain themselves: and that

¹ The ingenious Author of the Police of France, who wrote in the year 1753, observes, "that, notwithstanding the plentiful provision for the Poor in that country, there was a general complaint of the increase of beggars and vagrants; and adds, that the French political writers, dissatisfied with their own plan, had presented several memorials to the ministry, proposing to adopt the English parochial assessments, as greatly preferable. This, (Lord Kames remarks,) "is a curious fact; for, at that very time, people in London, no less dissatisfied with these assessments, were writing pamphlets in praise of the French hospitals." Sketches, B. 2. Sketch 10.

such persons, (but no other kind of Poor whatsoever,) be admitted upon the recommendation of a governor: that each hospital shall contain three distinct apartments, for the children, the aged, and the diseased; and that the boys and girls shall lodge and work apart from each other.

Physicians and surgeons, who attend, and the minister of the parish, if he visits the sick, and instructs the Poor in religion, shall be governors without subscribing.

The charges of the building, furniture, and materials, are to be paid out of the contributions, and out of such money as may be granted by Parliament for that purpose, and further, out of an assessment, for two years, of 3d. in the pound each year. And for maintaining the Poor admitted into the said hospitals, an assessment is to be laid yearly, of 6d. in the pound: and the profits of any work that may be done in the said hospitals, to be also added to the revenue of the said hospitals, and applied towards the sustentation thereof. Besides this, the church-wardens and overseers are to make collections in the church on Sundays, and from house to house at certain times, and distribute the same, together with other special benefactions, to such as shall have most need, according to their several necessities: and the overseers, with leave of the Lord of the manor, may inclose and improve commons, not exceeding ten acres a year, for the use and benefit of the Poor.

All vagrants, idle and disorderly persons, and persons able to work, (and having no means to maintain themselves otherwise than by their labour, and refusing to work,) to be sent to the house of correction of the place where they shall be apprehended, there to be kept to hard labour, for such time, and in such manner, as shall be thought proper.

The Scheme of Sir Richard Lloyd recites, that the education of the children of the Poor cannot be so well effected, nor the Poor be so comfortably maintained in small numbers, and distinct families, as in large and well-ordered houses set apart for that purpose: and proposes, that the Justices, in Sessions, shall divide their county into as many districts as they think proper; and that they, and other persons of considerable property, to be chosen as jurors, shall be guardians of the Poor within the respective districts: that subscribers of certain sums shall be additional guardians: that they shall be a body corporate, make bye-laws, choose committees, and appoint treasurers, and other officers,
with

with convenient salaries: they are likewise empowered to purchase land, and thereon to build *a house of industry*, and other convenient buildings, for lodging and employing the Poor within the district; and to provide furniture and materials for work: the expence to be defrayed by a lottery and by voluntary contributions, and, (if requisite,) by assessments: the charges for the relief and employment of the Poor afterwards, from time to time, to be raised by an assessment on the several parishes, in proportion to the number of Poor they send to the house. The rest of the Poor Laws he leaves untouched.

Of this Scheme, Dr. Burn remarks¹, that it does not oblige the overseers to send all their Poor to the house of industry, but only to pay for those they do send; others not so fit to be removed thither, may, he supposes, be sustained at home, out of the Poor's Rate, as before. In Lord Hillsborough's Scheme, this kind of relief, on sudden emergencies, seems to rest wholly on voluntary contributions.

Under the year 1753, may be noticed a work by the late Henry Fielding, intituled, "An-Enquiry into the causes of the late increase of robberies:" as, although published in 1751, it appears to have been intended as introductory to his "Proposal for making an effectual provision for the Poor," which came out in the year 1753, I shall therefore consider them as one work.

In the former, he reviews the Poor Laws very fully. He thinks the plans of Lord Hale and Sir Josiah Child are inadequate either to remedy the defects in the laws, or in the execution of them. He divides the Poor into three classes:

- 1st. Such Poor as are unable to work.
- 2dly. Such as are able and willing to work.
- 3dly. Such as are able to work, but not willing.

Of the first class, he says, "there are but few. An utter incapacity to work must arise from some defect occasioned either by nature or accident. Natural infirmities are greatly the most, (perhaps the only considerable,) ones; for as to accidental maims, how very rarely do they happen! and, I must add, how very nobly are they provided for when they do happen! Again, as to natural incapacities, they are but few, unless those two general circumstances, one of which must, and

¹ History of the Poor Laws, 196.

“ the other may, befall all men ; I mean the extremes of youth and age :
 “ for, besides these, the number of persons who really labour under an
 “ utter incapacity to work, will, on a just inspection, be found so trifling,
 “ that two of the London hospitals might contain them all.” I most
 perfectly agree with him, in his firm persuasion, that this class might be
 safely left to voluntary charity, unenforced by any compulsive law.
 The great bounty to beggars will, he thinks, prove the truth of his
 assertion ; “ for, at a time when every man knows the vast tax which is
 “ raised for the support of the Poor, and when all men of property must
 “ feel their contributions to this tax, mankind are so forward to relieve
 “ the appearance of distress in their fellow-creatures, that every beggar,
 “ who can but moderately well personate misery, is sure to find relief and
 “ encouragement ; and this, though the giver must have great reason to
 “ doubt the reality of the distress, and when he can scarce be ignorant
 “ that his bounty is illegal, and that he is encouraging a nuisance.
 “ What then must be the case, when there should be no such tax, nor
 “ any such contribution ; and when, by relieving a known and certain
 “ object of charity, every good man must be assured that he is not only
 “ doing an act which the Law allows, but which Christianity, and hu-
 “ manity too, exact of him ? However, if there be any person who is yet
 “ unwilling to trust the Poor (of this description) to voluntary charity ;
 “ or if it should be objected, that there is no reason to lay the whole
 “ burden on the worthier part of mankind, and to excuse the covetous
 “ rich ; and that a tax is therefore necessary to force open the purses of
 “ these latter ; let there be a tax then, and a very inconsiderable one
 “ would effectually supply the purpose.”

Of the second class, he remarks, that, to provide for these, seems to
 have been the chief design of the statute of Elizabeth, as well as of
 several laws enacted since. That the design has failed, he thinks, arises
 from the Legislature having left the whole work to the overseers.
 “ They have rather told them what they are to do, (viz. to employ the
 “ industrious Poor,) than how they shall do it. It is true the original
 “ Act directs them, by a parochial tax, to raise a convenient stock of
 “ flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron, and other ware and stuff, to set the
 “ Poor on work : a direction so general and imperfect, that it can be

“no wonder, considering what sort of men the overseers of the Poor have been, that it should never have been carried into execution.”

This finding employment for the industrious Poor is, he admits, business of great difficulty; but he thinks it is not impracticable, and says, that he has thought of a plan for the purpose, which he will produce whenever he shall see the least glimpse of hope that his labour in drawing it out at length would not be absolutely and certainly thrown away.

With respect to the most numerous class of Poor, those who are able to work and not willing, he is of opinion, that the Law has not been deficient in providing good regulations for obliging them to work. The statutes empowering the magistrates to rate wages, are, he thinks, as much for the benefit of the labourer as of his master. “It is the same thing,” he says, “to have the liberty of working or not at your own pleasure, and to have the absolute nomination of the price at which you will work.”

In a subsequent pamphlet published in 1753, he laid before the public the scheme which he had hinted at in his former publication. The following is a summary of its principal contents. He proposes to make trial, first, in the county of Middlesex, as he was best acquainted with the state of the Poor there, and the well-regulating them was of the greatest advantage to the Public; and the plan, if found to answer, might be easily extended over the whole kingdom.

He recommends erecting, in the county of Middlesex, a large building, consisting of three courts: the two outermost to be called the county-house, and the innermost the county-house of correction; with a chapel and offices: the county-house to be large enough to contain 5000 persons, and the house of correction 600 persons: that the house be under the management of commissioners, who shall meet once a fortnight: that the governor shall have very large powers, particularly with regard to the buying of implements and materials for employing the people in the house in all kinds of manufacture, and once a month to hold a market for the disposal of the goods manufactured in the house: that any person convicted of being a rogue or vagabond, or persons wandering without a pass, may be sent to the county-house, or county-house

“ monies due to the said labourer from the sale of his manufacture, till
“ the whole shall be repaid.

“ Upon application made by any nobleman, gentleman, merchant,
“ tradesman, farmer, or substantial householder, dwelling within the
“ county of Middlesex, or within twenty miles of the said county-house,
“ to the governor, or deputy, signifying that such nobleman, &c. is
“ desirous to take into his service any labourer or labourers then con-
“ fined in the said county-house, it shall be lawful for the governor or
“ deputy, and he is hereby required to deliver over the said labourer or
“ labourers to such person so applying, and to deliver to each of the
“ said labourers, a certificate, in the words following :

‘ County-house, Middlesex.

‘ A. B. is delivered to C. D. as his servant to serve him until
‘ , and then to return to the said house. Dated the 5th of
‘ August, 1753. E. F. Deputy Governor.’

“ Provided, nevertheless, that where such servant shall be hired for a
“ year certain, the clause relating to his return shall be omitted ; and
“ when any labourer shall be so hired, as aforesaid, for any less time than
“ one year, the person so hiring such labourer shall deposit, in the hands
“ of the said house, one half of the labourer’s wages for the time he
“ shall be so hired : and if he shall be hired for any longer time than
“ two months, then one month’s wages to be deposited ; which money
“ so deposited shall be paid by the receiver to every such labourer imme-
“ diately upon his return to the said house, deducting one penny in every
“ shilling. And if such labourer shall depart, or be lawfully discharged,
“ from his said service, before the wages so deposited shall become due,
“ the receiver shall return the whole to the person depositing the same,
“ deducting only as above ; but if the said labourer shall abide with his
“ said master during the limited time, and shall not return within two
“ days after the expiration thereof, (sickness, or other lawful impediment,
“ excepted,) then shall the money deposited be forfeited to the use of
“ the said house ; of all which retainers, deposits, repayments, and for-
“ feitures, a double entry shall be made by the receiver and store-keeper.

“ And if any person so hiring any labourer, as aforesaid, shall discharge the same before the expiration of the term for which he was so hired, he shall forfeit the whole money deposited by him as above; which money shall be paid to such labourer at his return to the said house: provided, that it shall be lawful, on reasonable cause shewn, to the satisfaction of any one Justice of the Peace, either by the master or labourer, for such Justice to discharge such labourer, and to send him back to the county-house, or order him to the county-house of correction, at his pleasure. And if such labourer shall have been hired into any foreign county, the Justice of such county may, if he pleases, commit him to the house of correction there: provided, likewise, that if such labourer shall, by sickness, or any accident, be rendered incapable of working, it shall be lawful for his master, at his expence, to turn him to the county-house, to be provided for in the infirmary of the said house; in which case, the money deposited shall be paid to him to whom it shall appear to be due.

“ And if any labourer so hired, as aforesaid, for less time than one year, shall not, at the end of his term, return to the said house; or if any labourer whatsoever, so being hired, shall run away or depart from his master's service before the expiration of his term, unless for some default in his master or mistress, or shall assault his master or mistress, or shall refuse to work at the command of his said master, or his agent, or be guilty of any misdemeanor in his said service, it shall be lawful for any Justice of the Peace, if such master shall reside in the county of Middlesex, to commit the said labourer to the county-house of correction, there to be first severely whipped, and to remain to hard labour till the next sessions, when he may be further dealt with by the Justices at their discretion: or, if the said master shall reside in any other county, then to be sent by a Justice of that county to the house of correction there, to be severely whipped, and to remain for any time not exceeding three, nor less than one calendar month; provided that no person, who comes voluntarily to the said house, shall be forced into such service contrary to his own consent and option.”

There are other rules, for regulating the hours of work, of rest, and recreation; the appointment of officers; the jurisdiction of the governor; the

the punishment of petty offences ; and the instruction of labourers in all kinds of manufactures ; upon the due execution of which, Mr. Fielding says, the success of his plan will principally depend.

In answer to the objection, that he has computed the number of the Poor in the county of Middlesex at too small a number, and has not provided for one half of them, he observes, that a great number of those who are in Bridewell, (or ought to be inhabitants of that place,) do not properly belong to the county, but are vagabonds from all parts of the kingdom, allured from their own homes by the hopes of labour, and the encouragement which this great town holds out to beggars and thieves : but when, instead of such inviting prospects, a work-house, or a Bridewell, shall present itself to their eyes, the number of vagabonds will disappear, and the house be fully sufficient for providing for all the able Poor. The aged, the infant, and the accidentally impotent, Poor, may, he thinks, with great safety, be left to voluntary contributions. He cites Sir William Petty's Political Arithmetic, to prove, that the proportion of impotent Poor does not exceed 1 in 500 ; and that £6. a year for each individual of this description would be an ample maintenance. The following is his computation of their number in the county in which he wishes his scheme to be tried: " If the people in Middlesex amount to 200,000, the impotent Poor will be 2,400 ; the expence of maintaining which number will be £13,600. The above excellent author (Petty) estimates the children under seven years of age at the rate of one-fourth of the people : these then, according to my estimate in Middlesex, will be 300,000 ; of these, I presume, not above 1 in 150 will be a burthen on the public. This number, then, will be 3000 ; for whom £3. each, one with another, will be sufficient, and which will make the sum of £9000. The whole expence, therefore, of the impotent Poor in Middlesex will be £22,600. about the fourth part of what it now is. And if the number of hospitals, infirmaries, and various donative charities within this county of Middlesex, do not reduce this sum, so as to bring the whole expence to one-sixth part of what it now is, I am greatly deceived, or those must be grossly misapplied."

This plan, Dr. Burn observes, seems to have been intended as supplementary to the schemes offered by Sir Richard Lloyd and Lord Hill-

borough: but, notwithstanding the very sanguine hopes, which Fielding¹ himself entertained, that it would prove in the highest degree effectual, it does not appear that it received any attention from the Legislature. It is probable, they thought that the great expence of erecting the building proposed, the salaries of a numerous train of officers, the dungeons, cells, and fasting-rooms, would not be relished by the public. The institution seems more calculated for a populous city, than for the generality of country parishes. It must, however, be admitted, that, in many particulars, this publication exhibits both the knowledge of the magistrate, and the energy and expression of the novel-writer. The following remarks, in the introduction to his proposal, are animated and just: they evince so much observation of the habits and manners of the vagrant and the beggar, that, we may be assured, many of the most interesting scenes, in his works of fancy, were drawn from real life.

“ That the Poor are a very great burthen, and even a nuisance, to this kingdom; that the laws for relieving their distresses, and restraining their vices, have not answered those purposes; and that they are at present very ill provided for, and much worse governed, are truths, which every man, I believe, will acknowledge. Such have been the unanimous complaints of all writers who have considered this matter, down from the days of Queen Elizabeth; such is apparently the sense of our present Legislature, and such is the universal voice of the nation.

¹ Of the good effects of Henry Fielding's activity as a magistrate, his brother John published a short account in 1758; it was owing to a plan of police projected by him, and presented to the Duke of Newcastle in 1753, that a notorious gang of street-robbers, (which at that time infested the metropolis, and not only pillaged, but cut and wounded those they stooped,) was brought to condign punishment. Very soon after this, Henry Fielding's ill-state of health totally disqualified him from continuing in the fatiguing office of acting magistrate in the metropolis: he therefore resigned his situation to his brother, (the late Sir John Fielding,) who had been an assistant magistrate to him for three or four years. In the above-mentioned publication, he gives an account of several of his projects for the improvement of the police of this great town. Concerning beggars, he says, he had formed and executed a plan, in conjunction with the Justices of four parishes, which had effectually answered this end; for, within the space of six weeks, no more than five beggars could be found in one whole week together in the four parishes.

This little tract also contains proposals for employing the children of thieves, or the deserted offspring of idle and profligate parents, in the sea-service; and for the preservation of those unfortunate females, who become prostitutes from necessity.

“ The

“ The facts must be very glaring that can produce this unanimous concurrence in opinion; and so in truth they are. Every man, who hath any property, must feel the weight of that tax which is levied for the use of the Poor; and every man of any understanding must see how absurdly it is applied. So very useless, indeed, is this heavy tax, and so wretched it's disposition, that it is a question whether the Poor or the Rich are more dissatisfied, or have indeed greater reason to be dissatisfied; since the plunder of the one serves so little to the real advantage of the other; for, while a million yearly is raised among the former, many of the latter are starved; many more languish in want and misery; of the rest, many are found begging or pilfering in the streets to-day, and to-morrow are locked up in gaols and bridewells.

“ Of all these deplorable evils we have constant experience before our eyes. The sufferings of the Poor are indeed less observed than their mis-deeds; not from any want of compassion, but because they are less known; and this is the true reason why we hear them so often mentioned with abhorrence, and so seldom with pity. They starve, and freeze, and rot among themselves; but they beg, and steal, and rob among their betters.”

Several other proposals respecting the Poor made their appearance in 1758: a pamphlet written by James Massie ascribes the increase of the Poor to monopolizing farms, and enclosures of common lands: it also asserts, that the decrease in the number of labourers, and many other evils, have been occasioned by removing multitudes from the solid basis afforded them by agricultural employment, to the artificial and fluctuating basis of trade. He proposes that an equal assessment should be laid on the full rental of all persons of property; that poor persons should be entitled to relief in every part of England, where they happened to be when they became chargeable; and that a sufficient number of poor-houses for their reception should be established in each county.

Mr. Bailey, a member of the Society for promoting Arts and Commerce, in the same year, published a Treatise on the Utility of Work-houses; in which he gives the following list of trades, which, he thinks, are suited to such establishments. He remarks, that they require but little room for each person to work in, and a very small stock of money and materials; and may therefore be set up, some in one parish, and

some in another, according to the circumstances of each place, and the number and ability of the Poor.

A List of useful Trades and Employments.

To swingle flax.	To make gloves.
To heckle flax.	To knit cawls for wigs.
To spin flax.	To pick hairs for barbers.
To spool linnen and woollen.	To make thread and hair buttons.
To twist linnen and woollen yarn.	To make flays and harnesses for the weavers.
To wind quills for the weavers.	To make all sorts of wicker ware.
To card tow and wool.	To make straw and chip hats for the women.
To weave linnen and woollen.	To make bone lace.
To weave linsley-woolsey.	To make bee-hives and haffocks.
To buck and bleach linnen.	To make matches and mops.
To weave wadding.	To cut corks.
To weave bed-lace.	To make baskets and door mats.
To make hair-sieves.	To teaze oakum and beat hemp.
To warp for the weavers.	To make English carpets and tapestry.
To knit stockings, caps, &c.	To make <i>papier maché</i> .
To knit nets.	
To make pegs for the tilers.	
Ditto for the shoe-makers.	
To make paste-board boxes.	

A manufactory, consisting of 150 Poor, may, he thinks, be employed in the following manner :

	People.
To attend the sick and young infants, - - -	5
To instruct children and others in their occupations, - -	6
To dress the victuals, and clean the house, - - -	4
To salt and cut the victuals, - - -	1
To do the tailor's work for men, women, and children, -	2
To make and mend the linen, stockings, &c. - - -	4
To wash and get up all the linen, - - -	6
To make and mend all the shoes, - - -	2
Sick, superannuated, and children that are too young to do any fort of work, - - -	20

	People,
Brought over	50
Old and infirm people, and children who can earn only 1d. a-day,	20
Such grown people and children as can earn only 2d. a-day,	20
Apprentices, and such people as are in health, may, after a few months practice in weaving, warping, swingling, heckling, whitening, &c. earn 4d. per day one with another; after the first year 6d. per day; and at the expiration of two years, 8d. or 10d. per day; and for the four or five last years, from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per day,	60
	<hr/> 150 <hr/>

According to the common way of providing for the Poor,
if 150 people are maintained at the rate of 2s. 4d. per
week each, the sum total per day will be - - £ 2 10 0

If the same number of people are employed according to the following plan, their earning will be	-	£ 2 10 10
30 employed about family affairs,	-	0 0 0
20 sick people and infants,	-	0 0 0
20 old people and children, at 1d. per day,	-	0 1 8
20 grown people and children, at 2d. per day,	-	0 3 4
10 apprentices and grown people, at 4d. per day,	-	0 3 4
10 ditto, after a year's practice, at 6d. per day,	-	0 5 0
15 ditto, after two years practice, at 8d. per day,	-	0 10 0
20 ditto, for the last four or five years, at 1s. per day,	-	1 0 0
5 ditto of the most expert, 1s. 6d. per day,	-	0 7 6
		<hr/> £ 2 10 10 <hr/>

In order to encourage parishes to set up work-house manufactories, he proposes the following expedients :

“ First. Notice shall be given, in writing, of the institution of every
“ manufactory established on this plan, to the Register of the Society for

“ the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, at their
“ Office in London.

“ Secondly. The said Society shall give such premiums as they may,
“ from time to time, think proper, to the use and support of such work-
“ houses, so registered, as shall produce the greatest number of yards,
“ in proportion to the number of hands so employed, of dowlas, canvases,
“ tarpaulin, sail-cloth, or linsey-woolsey, made and manufactured
“ therein, from English flax or hemp, within a certain time to be li-
“ mited by the said Society.

“ Thirdly. A certificate under the hands and seals of the president,
“ managers, rector, vicar or curate, and two or more of the church-
“ wardens or overseers of the parish wherein the manufactory is situat-
“ ed, shall be sent to the Society, from each work-house which shall
“ put in a claim to a premium, setting forth the quantity and quality
“ of the cloth, and the number of people (their sex and ages,) employ-
“ ed in each manufacture ; and certifying also that the Poor have not
“ been oppressed or ill-treated.

“ Fourthly. Some premiums shall be given also to and for the use of
“ that registered work-house, which (in proportion to the number of
“ people employed in any trade or occupation,) produces, within a time
“ to be limited, the greatest clear profit from the labour of the people
“ maintained therein. A certificate of which to be sent to the Society’s
“ Office, signed as above ; and, with the said certificate, a daily, weekly,
“ and monthly list of all the work done, and people concerned in each
“ employment, specifying their names, sex, and ages.

“ Fifthly. Some premiums shall be given to any person, either a native
“ or foreigner, who shall set on foot, introduce, or discover, any new
“ manufacture, trade, or employment for the Poor, in either of the
“ said registered houses : such new manufacture or employment, if
“ approved of by the managers, shall be experienced and proved for the
“ space of months ; and if the profits arising from the same
“ shall answer to the satisfaction of the managers, &c. they shall forth-
“ with send a full and particular account and description of the said new
“ manufacture, with the number of people employed therein, and the
“ clear profit arising therefrom, to the said Society’s Office ; and that a

“certificate of the truth thereof be signed and sent to the said Society, “in the same manner as before mentioned.”

He adds : “It may be of great use that the governor of any house that gets a premium from the Society, shall have a gratuity from the parish, and the Poor a holiday, after the premium is paid, by way of encouragement.”

He lays down rules to be observed by the governor and matron of the work-house, the schoolmaster and mistress, and the Paupers ; but as the Reader will find fuller details on this subject in the Second Volume of this Work, I think it unnecessary to transcribe them. Such, however, of Mr. Bailey’s Tables relative to the quantity of provisions necessary for different numbers in a work-house, and the weekly accounts of the governor, as appear to me likely to be useful, are put together in a small compass, and inserted in the Appendix to this Volume¹. It is much to be desired, that printed forms, of this nature, (though they might be constructed with considerable improvements,) were used in all work-houses.

Considering the multiplicity of Acts of Parliament which have passed during the 36 years of the present reign, very few general alterations of consequence have taken place in the Poor System, except with regard to removals, the vexatious consequence of which, it is hoped, will in a great measure be prevented by the Act passed in 1795², for preventing the removal of poor persons till they become actually chargeable. Several local Acts, however, have been passed, of considerable importance to the places immediately concerned ; and, indeed, some of them, which affect numerous classes of the community, might, perhaps, without impropriety, be considered, rather as general, than as local, regulations. Of this nature are the various Acts which have been enacted since the year 1760, for the improvement of the police, and the correction of parochial abuses in the metropolis. When we reflect, that, in population, London contains above a tenth of the inhabitants of Great Britain³,
and

¹ See Appendix, No. xv.

² 35 Geo. 3. c. 101.

³ In the Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, (2d edit. p. 405,) the number of houses in this great city is stated at 162,000 houses, warehouses, and other buildings. Allowing 12,000 for warehouses, churches, &c. there will remain 150,000 houses ; which, if multiplied

and that, in point of commerce, the preeminence of this favoured emporium, above the rest of the kingdom, is still more conspicuous,

multiplied by 6, (which, it would seem, is not too great a proportion of inhabitants for a house in a large city,) will produce 960,000 inhabitants; a population, which, I am persuaded, though I do not possess sufficient documents to prove the fact, is far from being over-rated.

To a reasonable mind, I conceive, the increased consumption of various commodities will afford very satisfactory proof of the increased population of the metropolis, in the course of the present century. Thus, for instance,

In 1732	the number of black cattle fold in Smithfield	was	76,210	; and of sheep	514,700
1794	ditto		109,064	ditto	717,990
Increase in 62 years			32,854		203,290

This increase will appear more prodigious when we consider, that, in the beginning of the century, oxen fold in Smithfield, on an average, weighed only 370lbs. and sheep only 28 lbs.: whereas, at present, the former weigh 800 lbs. and the latter 80 lbs.; but as the number of calves and lambs are not specified in the Smithfield returns, (see Appendix, No. I. p. lxxxvii.) I shall only reckon an increase of one-fourth in weight, as estimated in the 1st Report of the Select Committee appointed to take into consideration the means of improving the wastelands of the kingdom, p. 12. According to this proportion, the consumption of the two periods will be as follows:

				Consumption in 1732.
In 1732,	{	76,216 cattle, at 370 lbs. each,	-	28,197,700 lbs.
	{	514,700 sheep, at 28 lbs. each,	-	14,411,600 lbs.
				Consumption in 1794.
In 1794,	{	109,064 cattle, at 462½ lbs. each,	-	50,442,100 lbs.
	{	717,990 sheep, at 35 lbs. each,	-	25,129,650 lbs.

The increased consumption of coals in London, and it's environs, is no less remarkable:

In 1744	the quantity of coals imported into London	was	-	467,625 chaldrons:
In the year ending on the 10th of October	1795		-	912,236

See Ann. of Agric. xxvi. 18c.

Some part of this quantity, it must be admitted, is carried up the Thames, and not consumed in the metropolis. Many parts, however, (and particularly Oxfordshire,) which were formerly supplied with coal from London, are now, by means of canals, supplied from the inland counties. I remember, (in a hard winter about ten or eleven years ago,) coals brought from London selling in Oxford at 10s. 6s. the sack, of three bushels, or £6. 6s. the chaldron. The increased consumption of malt liquor, in the metropolis, would, I am persuaded, turn out to be no less astonishing, if it could be accurately ascertained. Dr. Price, indeed, contends, that there is evidence of a declension in our population, from the circumstance of the excise on beer having produced more at the Revolution than it did in 1768. Observ. on the Popul. of E. & W. 21.—Many objections might be made to his conclusions; but it is sufficient to observe, that, with the exception of the three years ending in 1689, other periods in the last, and in the beginning of the present, century, exhibit a much inferior consumption, than that,

which,

ous¹, it must be admitted, that the preservation of order in the capital, the encouragement of it's industry, and the promotion of the comforts of it's inhabitants, are objects of great national importance. In 1761, the Legislature very humanely interfered in the behalf of a class of beings, who, from their age and situation, were peculiarly exposed to neglect and ill-treatment;—the infant Poor in the work-houses within the bills of mortality: and in the Sessions of 1761 and 1762 an Act was passed for the regular uniform register, (according to the form of two schedules contained in the Act,) of all Parish Poor under four years of age within the bills of mortality. This Act seems to have been intended as merely preparatory to further regulations on the same subject. Mr. Hanway, (whose philanthropic exertions on this occasion are well known,) remarks, that the bill, if it did not at once accomplish all that was necessary to be done, was the surest way of investigating the subject;

which, notwithstanding the increased tax, takes place at present: and to this it may be added, that wine, which was little drank at the Revolution, or even forty years ago, is, (or at least *was*, two years ago,) very generally drank by middling tradesmen. The consumption of spirits is likewise much greater than it was an hundred years ago; though less than it was in the dram-drinking period of 1752. Before the stoppage of the distilleries last year, 3,000,000 gallons of gin and compounds were drank in the public-houses in the metropolis. See the *Treatise on the Police*, 2d ed. 40.

Concerning the Population of England, very different conjectures have been formed. Dr. Price, (in his *Essay on Rev. Paym.* 5th ed. 1. 247.) estimates it at five millions, allowing five persons to a house, and reckoning from the surveyor's books the number of houses at a million. Of the fallibility of evidence, derived from such documents, the Reader will find sufficient proof in the Appendix to this Volume, No. XIV. Mr. Howlett, in his *Examination of Dr. Price's Observations on the Population of England and Wales*, calculated the number of people at 8,691,597: Arthur Young, a few years ago, computed it at 8,500,000: but the concurrent opinions of political arithmeticians agree, (as Mr. Ruggles, in his *History of the Poor*, justly observes,) that the higher numbers are nearest the truth.

¹ The following estimate, (which is taken from the interesting *Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*,) exhibits abundant proof of the extended commerce of the metropolis:

subject; and it is probably owing to his forcible representations of the dreadful mortality occasioned by the practice of nursing parish children within the walls of crowded work-houses, that an Act was passed in the Sessions of 1767, for obliging all parishes, within the bills of mortality, to send all parish children, under six years of age, within a fortnight

ABSTRACT of the Imports into, and Exports from, the Port of London, for one Year, ending on the 5th of January 1795: formed upon the present Value of Commodities, as nearly as it can be ascertained.

Names of the Countries.	Value of Imports into London.	Value of Exports from the Port of London to Foreign Parts.	
		Brit. Manufactures.	For. Merchandize.
Ireland - - - - -	£ 2.209.501 3 4	£ 168.687 18 3	£ 914.352 4 4
British West Indies - - -	6.072.117 5 0	2.249.043 13 11	579.453 6 0
Conquered Islands - - -	1.226.064 13 8	260.976 0 11	110.817 18 0
British American Colonies - -	307.412 13 0	654.842 19 4	251.551 6 2
Guernsey and Jersey - - -	91.936 1 2	12.001 13 10	21.616 16 8
Gibraltar - - - - -	12.947 16 8	83.473 14 11	69.315 2 8
Honduras Bay - - - - -	14.696 4 2	2.029 18 11	2.550 16 2
South Fishery - - - - -	197.680 8 6	21 6 8	
Asia, including East Indies - -	8.916.950 2 10	3.398.680 1 4	185.190 16 0
Africa - - - - -	66.013 8 4	90.593 12 9	188.743 16 6
Turkey - - - - -	641.860 19 2	32.065 12 0	123.776 7 2
Streights - - - - -	8.389 14 0		
Venice - - - - -	82.107 16 0	6.203 17 11	16.305 7 2
Italy - - - - -	1.215.012 15 0	80.980 18 9	340.786 0 8
Spain - - - - -	1.070.697 18 0	205.096 4 4	265.169 3 4
Portugal - - - - -	644.610 3 8	182.780 6 2	119.813 12 0
Madeira - - - - -	7.479 16 8	27.998 6 10	6.886 18 2
Canaries - - - - -	6.763 19 10	20.116 18 4	377 5 2
France - - - - -	130 6 8	3.216 5 3	63.625 10 6
Austrian Flanders - - - - -	137.249 5 0	129.413 9 7	887.642 18 10
Holland - - - - -	1.203.515 3 6	114.458 3 7	1.968.687 3 4
Germany - - - - -	1.089.307 19 4	1.044.634 18 0	6,176.100 14 8
Prussia - - - - -	196.657 3 2	54.380 14 0	272.719 17 4
Poland - - - - -	104.978 10 4	7.022 11 10	57.067 2 4
Sweden - - - - -	262.727 3 4	33.845 5 6	111.457 14 4
Russia - - - - -	1.269.688 9 6	95.519 8 8	491.247 9 2
Denmark and Norway - - -	166.366 1 0	147.340 5 11	545.509 19 8
Greenland - - - - -	26.753 11 2		
United States of America - -	811.511 18 8	2.251.280 12 1	429.248 7 8
Florida - - - - -	16.239 16 0	38.067 0 3	8.855 0 0
Foreign West Indies - - -	56.240 2 0	1.767 13 10	60 0 0
Prize Goods - - - - -	1.572.868 8 8		included in the account of each country.
	29.706.476 17 4	11.396.539 13 8	14.208.915 14 6

R E C A-

¹ Letters on the Importance of the Rising Generation, i. 89.

night after they were born in, or received into, the work-houses, to a distance not less than three miles from any part of the cities of London and Westminster, to be nursed¹ till they are six years of age, and maintained afterwards till they were put out apprentices, or returned to the work-house: the Act further directed, that, for the maintenance of every such child put out to nurse in the country, not less than two shillings and sixpence a week should be paid for the first six years of their age; and not less than two shillings a week from that time until the child was taken away. As an inducement to nurses to take proper care of the children entrusted to them, a sum not less than 10s. was ordered to be paid to every nurse, who had nursed a child one year, to the satisfaction of the five guardians of the parish poor children, who were directed to be chosen every three years from the Noblemen and Gentlemen within each parish in the metropolis; or in case such persons would not accept the office, from the most respectable of the inhabitants, the church-wardens and overseers excepted. The parish-officers were likewise empowered and directed to provide proper cloathing for every child sent into the country, and to defray all expences for conveyance, medicines, burials, and other charges on account of the children². The Foundling Hospital was authorized to take in parish children upon the same terms³.

RECAPITULATION.

The aggregate value of goods imported into London in one year	-	£29.706.476	17	4
Idem value of British merchandize exported	-	£11.396.539	13	8
Idem value of foreign merchandize, ditto	-	14.208.915	14	6
			25.605.455	8 2

Idem value of goods imported in upwards of
9000 coasting vessels, averaged at £500. each £ 4.500.000 0 0

Idem value of goods exported coastways in about
7000 vessels, at £1000. each - - 7.000.000 0 0

11.500.000 0 0

Total amount of property shipped and unshipped in the river Thames in

the course of a year, estimated at - - - 66.811.932 5 6

besides the tackling, apparel, provisions, and stores of above 13,500 ships and vessels, (including their repeated voyages,) which lade and unlade in the course of a year, estimated (in what may be called *moving property*, liable to depredation and plunder,) at three millions sterling more! Treatise, &c. 2d ed. p. 60.

¹ 7 Geo. 3. c. 39. § 2. 3.

² § 4.

³ § 10.

Respecting apprentices, the Act very judiciously remarks, that “it often disturbs the peace of domestic life, checks marriage, and discourages industry, to place out boys to the age of twenty-four years;” and enacts, that, for the future, parish-officers shall be at liberty to bind out boys and girls apprentices for the term of seven years, or till they attain the age of twenty-one years, and no longer¹: and, in order to encourage masters of apprentices to treat them properly, it was forbidden to bind out parish children with a less fee than £4. 2s.; of which 40s. were directed to be paid to the master or mistress within seven weeks after executing the indentures, and the remaining 42s. after the apprentice had served three years².

Forms for registers and lists of Parish Poor until they are apprenticed are contained in several Schedules annexed to the Act³.

That this Act has preserved the lives of many thousand children, who would otherwise have perished, there can be little doubt. Dr. Price allows that it has prevented a great number of deaths; and says, that, before it passed, almost all parish infants in the metropolis died in the first six years⁴. Its operation should be taken into consideration in all calculations drawn from burials within the bills of mortality, respecting the population of London. Mr. Howlett, indeed, in his Examination of Dr. Price’s Essay upon Population, reckons, that a deficiency of 2100 burials a year has been occasioned by this Act⁵.

It may, perhaps, be thought to argue a want of humanity to object to laws which are confessedly framed for the purpose of preserving, and have, no doubt, in the course of the last thirty years, preserved, the lives of thousands of human beings. Infants, it must be admitted, whether we consider their innocence, the perils to which they are exposed, and their inability to relieve their wants, (or even to signify them, except by cries, which are not always heard, or understood,) are peculiarly entitled to our fostering care and protection. I think, however, that it is rather as *individuals*, than in our *collective* capacity, that we are bound to relieve deserted children and orphans. Of the latter the proportion

¹ 7 Geo. 3. c. 39. § 14. ² § 15. ³ § 13. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. These forms are inserted in the Appendix, No. xvi. Forms, rather more simplified, would answer many good purposes in country work-houses.

⁴ Observ. on Rev. Payments, 5th ed. i. 259.

⁵ Examination of Dr. Price’s Essay on the Population of England and Wales.

in every country, that has not been visited by extraordinary calamities, will, according to the usual course of nature, be very inconsiderable; and may be fairly left to the discretionary interference of individuals, without the probability either of exhausting benevolence, or of exposing it's objects to perish from neglect. Of deserted children, there is every reason to suppose, that their extraordinary number in the two most opulent countries in Europe, France and England, has been occasioned by the liberal provision made for their reception in public charities. We are assured that, previous to the Revolution, a third of the children born in Paris were annually received into the "Enfans Trouvés," the Foundling Hospital of that metropolis; and in our own, in consequence of the indiscriminate admission of foundlings, (which was sanctioned in 1756, by the Legislature, probably with a view of recruiting the nation, then engaged in an expensive and depopulating contest,) the number of infants admitted into the hospital annually, increased from 100 to 4000, and would, probably, if the Legislature had not interfered in 1760, very soon have consisted of half the children born within a hundred miles of London. Mr. Hanway, in his account of the institution, informs us, that infants from villages, 50, 100, or even 200 miles distant, were sent to town, oftentimes in a manner too shameful to relate, to take their fortune with the parish children of the metropolis². There seems to be but little difference in the tendency of foundling hospitals, properly so called, and parochial institutions for the relief of the Poor, (whether acting by work-houses, houses of industry, or pecuniary allowances,) if the parent, by deserting his child, can oblige them to rear and maintain it. That many of the poorer class of the community avail themselves of the liberality of the Law, and leave their wives and children on the parish, the reader will find abundant proof in a subsequent part of this Work; and perhaps enough to justify the remarks of Arthur Young on

¹ The Paris Almanack for the year 1768, mentions, that there were baptized 18,576 infants, of whom the Foundling Hospital received 6025. The Almanack for the year 1773, says, that of 18,518 children born and baptized, 5989 were sent to the Foundling Hospital. Lord Kames's Sketches, B. ii. Sk. 10. The author of the Police of France, says, that a *third* of all that die at Paris die in hospitals. See Dr. Price's Essay on Rev. Paym. 5th. ed. i. 290.

² Letters on the Importance of the Rising Generation, i. 84. He says, the annual mortality among parish children in London was frequently 60 or 70 in a hundred.

this subject, that “foundling hospitals,” (and it is by no means clear, that other national charities, which relieve the infant Poor, may not be included,) “encourage that vicious procreation, which, from its misery, “does not deserve the name of population: the encouragement afforded “by foundling hospitals, is an encouragement also of vice and inhumanity, and a public premium given to the banishment of the best “feelings of the human bosom¹.”

The Dean of Gloucester², in a pamphlet published in 1760, considers the defects of the Poor System to be the division into parochial districts; the maintaining the Poor in separate families; and the annual election of parish-officers. “Every person,” he observes, “who is elected only “for twelve months, will naturally adopt that scheme which will give “him the least trouble during his office, whatever it may give his successor, or however it may affect the public: nor will he give himself “much concern about any plan that is offered to him, if it cannot be “brought to bear within the compass of his own year; but must be attended with present clamours against himself, whilst it reserves the “praise and honour for his successor.”

He proposes, “that, instead of single parishes for the maintenance of “the Poor, several should be incorporated together for this purpose, “though to be distinct and separate in all other respects as before.

“That this incorporation be effected in the following manner:—Let “the vestries of those parishes which are within any market town or “city, and also of all others whose parish-churches are within the distance of six measured miles of such market town or city, have the “liberty of incorporating together, and of making that town or city the “centre of their incorporation; and after any three of such parishes have “incorporated together by mutual consent, let each of the others, as

¹ Young’s Travels through France, i. 440. He says, that, of 101,000 children received into the hospitals in sixteen years, only 15,000 survived. The mortality among the parish children in London, previous to the passing of the second of George the Third for an uniform register, was equally great. Mr. Hanway mentions instances of every child received into the work-houses under a twelvemonth old, dying within the year. Some parishes, however, even before the passing of the Act in 1767, adopted the salutary measure of sending their children to be nursed in the country. See Hanway’s Letters on the Importance of the Rising Generation.

² Dr. Tucker, the enlightened author of *Cui Bono*, and other able political tracts.

“they

“ they become willing to associate or incorporate, have the liberty of so doing without being liable to be rejected by those who have already incorporated : all incorporations, when once formed, and notified to the Justices of Peace for the county at their Quarter Sessions or adjournment, are there recorded, are to be held valid, and not to be dissolved.

“ If any parish-church should be equally near to two, three, or four cities or towns, the centres of their respective incorporations, such a parish may incorporate with which it pleases : if it be nearer to one centre, and yet be within six miles of the other, it must nevertheless incorporate, (if it doth at all,) with the nearest ; unless the Justices at their Quarter Sessions or adjournments should, at the petition of the parishioners, see reason to dispense with this rule. If there should be no centre within the distance of six measured miles, then such a parish must incorporate with that which happens to be nearest, unless the parishioners should petition the Justices, and obtain their consent to be incorporated elsewhere. But no incorporations whatever should exceed the bounds of their respective counties : and wherever it can be done, the incorporating parishes ought to confine themselves to the divisions already known and established, viz. *hundreds*.

“ To induce these incorporations to be formed, all the burthen-some Poor in each of the parishes, that shall incorporate, shall be maintained and supported by the taxes that shall be hereafter mentioned ; but those parishes which will not incorporate, shall maintain their own Poor, according to the present method.

“ That all persons residing for three months in the year, or upwards, within these associated districts, possessed of the yearly value of £50. for life, above all charges, or of £1000. in money or effects, shall be deemed the hereditary legal and perpetual guardians of the Poor within such districts ; and, together with them, the mayor and aldermen, or other chief officers of each town within the district ; and also the minister and church-wardens and chapel-wardens of each parish or chapel for the time being. If any person will commence a subscriber of three guineas or more yearly, or thirty guineas for life, he shall be deemed a guardian, although not qualified in other respects.

“ That these guardians shall meet some time in the month of Janu-

“ary or February, in every year, to elect a president, and four vice-
 “presidents, out of their own body; which president and vice-presidents
 “shall be obliged to serve in their respective offices for one whole year,
 “dating from the 25th of March next ensuing: and if the Society shall
 “judge it expedient, for the good of the charity, that all or either of
 “these Gentlemen should be continued longer in office, then, at the next
 “time of election, they may chuse one or more of them for another
 “year, and so on for a third. The penalty, in cases of refusal, to be as
 “follows:

“ The person elected for president to forfeit,			
“ the first year, for not serving	-	-	£ 20 0 0
“ the second year	-	-	10 0 0
“ the third year	-	-	5 0 0
“ And each of the vice-presidents to forfeit,			
“ the first year, for not serving	-	-	10 0 0
“ the second year	-	-	5 0 0
“ the third year	-	-	2 10 0

“ That, as soon as may be after the election of a president and four
 “vice-presidents, an yearly catalogue shall likewise be made of all the
 “guardians of the district: and this catalogue shall be distinguished into
 “columns, viz: such as are guardians by right of £50. a year for life—
 “such as are so by virtue of a stock or capital in money or goods of £1000.
 “—and such as are so by virtue of their voluntary subscriptions or con-
 “tributions. Therefore, if any person shall think himself aggrieved by
 “being inserted in this list, he may appeal to the General Quarter
 “Sessions.

“ That regular court-days shall be held at the Poor-house once a
 “month: that fines be imposed on absentees: that these courts shall
 “have the power of making what bye-laws and regulations they judge
 “necessary for the government, maintenance, and employment of the
 “Poor.”

The taxes for the support of the Poor, the Dean thinks, are not
 founded on a judicious principle. He says, the *first* view in imposing
 such taxes should be to remove or lessen all such causes and temptations
 as may have contributed towards making the people poor; so that
 similar evils may be prevented in future: and after that is accomplished,
 then,

then, *secondly*, to raise a sum of money sufficient to maintain those who are already become poor, and to defray such expences as cannot now be prevented, and therefore must be submitted to. With this view, besides taxes on the stock in trade, dwelling-houses, and lands of bachelors, and childless widowers, he proposes laying heavy taxes on coffee-houses, taverns, inns, and ale-houses; on billiard tables, and other apparatus for play; on theatres, puppet-shews, fights of wild beasts, and other spectacles of the like nature, exhibited for profit or gain; on music, gardens, bowling-greens, cock-pits, horse and foot-racers; on dogs; and on electioneering; and that the turnpikes be doubly taxed on Sundays, and a moiety of their receipts applied to the use of the Poor. If these taxes should not prove sufficient, all lands and stock should be moderately assessed.

He likewise proposes the establishment of a Court of Conscience in each district, for the recovery of any sum not exceeding £5.; but loads the processes of the Court with double sixpenny stamps, one moiety whereof he gives to the Poor of the district.

The remainder of his tract relates to the general economy of the poor-houses, and the particular regulations of the work-shops and manufactures in which the Poor are to be employed.

Mr. Cooper, in a treatise, published in 1763, intituled, "Definitions and Axioms relative to Charity, Charitable Institutions, and the Poor Laws," recommends the establishment of houses of industry. County-houses, however, he thinks, would be too large, and Parochial houses too small. He therefore proposes, that, in every large hundred, or, where the hundreds are small, in every two or three hundreds united together, there should be a building erected, which should contain an infirmary for the sick, and such Poor as are unable to work; a work-house for those who are able; and a house of correction for those who are not willing: and that these houses should be under the management of the Gentlemen and Clergy in their respective hundreds.

He says, this plan had been put in execution with good effect, in the two small hundreds of Colneis and Carlford, in the county of Suffolk, (incorporated by the 29 Geo. 2. c. 79.) and that in four years, between 1758 and 1762, they had saved above £2000¹.

¹ See Burn's Hist. of the Poor Laws, 201.

In Burn's Justice of the Peace, which was published in 1754, are a few remarks relative to the origin of the compulsory provision for the Poor. The author seems to agree with those writers who think that the maintenance of the Poor was anciently an ecclesiastical concern; that a fourth part of the tithes of parishes was originally set apart for this purpose, and distributed by the Bishop, with the assistance of the church-wardens, and other principal inhabitants; and that, afterwards, when the tithes of parishes became appropriated to monasteries, those societies contributed towards the relief of the Poor.

This

Afterwards, when fees were endowed with land, the Bishops receded from their claim to a fourth part; and tithes were divided into three parts; of which one was considered as designed for the entertainment of strangers, and relief of the Poor. Kennett, on Impropriations, 14, 15. I do not find, notwithstanding the assertions of Dr. Burn, and other writers on this subject, that the Poor considered themselves entitled to a maintenance from the Clergy, under a stronger claim, than, what it is fair for them to presume they have, to be relieved by every person who is sensible of the benevolent tenets of Christianity, and possesses the means of practising the chief virtue inculcated by the Gospel. There seems to be no reason for supposing, that this obligation, however respected, by a pious, charitable, and opulent ecclesiastic, was ever the general law of the land. Indeed, I have already shown, that it was owing to the extinction of *villains*, that a *national* Poor arose. The fifteenth of Richard the Second, c. 6. which requires, that, upon every appropriation of a benefice, a convenient portion of the profits should be reserved for the Poor, was, I imagine, framed for the purpose of making the parish some compensation for the injury they sustained in the benefice being transferred from an incumbent, who resided with them the greatest part of the year, to a religious body, who, perhaps, only sent a preacher to officiate twice or thrice a week. I have no doubt, but that the Poor found the relief thus provided for them, a very inadequate compensation for the loss of their parish priest, who was their instructor and adviser both in spiritual and temporal concerns, and, (whilst the stipends of the secular officiating clergy were commensurate with their duties,) the liberal dispenser of charity and hospitality. The Legislature seems to have thought that parishes, (notwithstanding the fund assigned to the Poor, by the Statute above cited,) were greatly injured by appropriations; for, by the 4th of Henry the IVth (c. 12.) it was enacted, that, in every church, which should be appropriated, there should be ordained a Vicar perpetual, covenantably endowed to instruct the people, and maintain hospitality in his parish. It does not appear whether this Statute exonerated the religious houses from contributing towards the relief of the Poor of the parish: but no instance can be met with, of appropriators being called on to consign any specific portion of their revenues to this purpose. It is true, that, in one of the Acts of Dissolution, (27 H. 8. c. 28.) it was required, that all persons, to whom the King should demise the scites and demesnes of any of the dissolved houses, should continue to exercise hospitality there; but this clause seems to have been disregarded, and was repealed in the twenty-first year of King James I.

If,

This able magistrate entered more fully into the subject in his "History of the Poor Laws," which he published in 1764. The object of this Work was, (as he informs us in his Preface,) to "set forth, what laws for the Poor were anciently in this kingdom; what the laws are now; and what proposals have been made by ingenious and public-spirited men, from time to time, for the amendment of the same." He divides the Poor into three classes, and arranges the Statutes relative to them under a three-fold division. "Acts," he says, "have been made for the employment of some; for the encouragement of others; and for the maintenance of the rest:" the first class he denominates servants, labourers, and artificers; the second, rogues and vagabonds; and the third, impotent Poor...

He concludes a very full historical deduction of the Statutes, on this subject, with some judicious observations of his own; and offers a short abstract of the principal proposals, which had been made before his time,
for

If, therefore, it should ever again be contended, (from the circumstance of church-wardens being entrusted with the management of the Poor, and other peculiarities in our Poor System, extremely analogous to ecclesiastical institutions,) that the maintenance of the indigent classes should be thrown on the Church, it should at the same time be recollected, that a very small fund, which relieved them, is now in the hands of the Clergy; and that their principal revenue, (which the Legislature expressly charged with the support of the Poor,) is almost entirely enjoyed by lay-impropriators. In making these observations, I am no advocate either for the extension of tithes, (which might, perhaps, be commuted, without injury to any party concerned;) or for an ecclesiastical Poor System, though I think it could not be a greater national evil than the far-famed code of Elizabeth.

I have already mentioned a proposal of this nature, made by Leslic, in the reign of Queen Anne: to which I will add a few judicious observations, made by a more modern writer on the same subject. Mr. Alcock, in his "Observations on the Defects of the Poor Laws," published in 1752, after alluding to a project of this sort, which had again been brought forward, remarks, that "in fact, it is not true, that the Church maintained the Poor," in ancient times. "The religious houses did no otherwise than the religious houses abroad; and the hospitable masters of other houses did, and do now, live generously, keep a plentiful table, and give the surplus to the Poor. The abbies, monasteries, &c. as being rich bodies, and not encumbered with wives and children, and expensive families, were able to contribute largely: but, could what the Poor received from them be a sufficiency? Meat and drink were only given here; at least, not commonly any thing else: the Poor had still lodging, cloathing, firing, &c. to find; that is to say, the greater part of the necessaries of life. Private charities were quite needful, and were as much bestowed then as ever. Collections were made on the Sabbath-days, and at several other times. Poor boxes, now
VOL. I. Y y "fallen

for remedying the defects in the Poor Laws: the reason, he thinks, why none of them have succeeded, is, that they generally take it for granted that the 43d of Elizabeth was the first compulsory Statute, and propose expedients which had occurred to the Legislature long before. The plans he notices are those suggested by Sir Matthew Hale, Sir Josiah Child, Mr. Cary, Mr. Hay, Mr. Alcock, the Author of "Considerations on several Proposals lately made for the better Maintenance of the Poor," published in 1752, the Earl of Hillsborough, Sir Richard Lloyd, Mr. Fielding, and Mr. Cooper.

Dr. Burn objects to all these schemes: he says, they aim at too much at once. "To repeal all the present laws relating to the Poor; to abolish the whole doctrine of settlements; to be at a certain expence in erecting work-houses, with an uncertain prospect of their success; these, and other like proposals, though they may possibly be good in

"fallen in a manner into disuse, were kept up in the churches, and received the secret alms of many generous benefactors. Upon a recovery from a fit of sickness; upon returning safe from a voyage, or a long journey; upon the birth of an heir; upon any signal success, or blessing, the thankful never failed to repair hither, and shew, by their regard to the Poor, their gratitude to God." He adds: "If the abbies maintained the Poor, how came the Poor not to have been equally destitute in other Protestant countries, on the secularization of them? and how came the Poor Laws not to have passed here in England immediately on the dissolution, or secularization, when the Poor, we must suppose, were most to seek for a maintenance, and no new resources were as yet opened? How did they subsist the latter part of Henry the Eighth; all the reign of Edward the Sixth; of Queen Mary, and of Queen Elizabeth, till about a year before her death, that is, near seventy years in the whole? We don't read of any extraordinary sufferings of the Poor during this time, nor of any tumults or risings amongst the lower sort of people on account of their distress, though many on account of the alteration in religion."

Of the practice, on the Continent, of appropriating a portion of ecclesiastical revenue to charitable uses, the author of a very interesting book, lately published, gives the following account:—"Suivant les anciens canons de l'église, les biens ecclésiastiques d'un diocèse étoient en commun; un quart appartenait à l'évêque; un quart au clergé; un quart étoit destiné au frais du culte, par conséquent, à la construction et à l'entretien des églises; et un quart étoit le pain des Pauvres. Si l'évêque avoit des biens de patrimoine suffisans pour subsister, il ne devoit point prendre son quart. Nul prêtre ne devoit être ordonné qu'il n'y eut un titre à lui conférer, qui donnât charge d'âmes; et la fonction ecclésiastique donnoit seule droit aux bienfaits de l'église. Si le secours du Pauvre est un devoir pour tout Chrétien, c'est une dette de rigueur pour l'ecclésiastique, son nécessaire prélevé."—Rapport fait à sa Majesté Louis XVIII. note, p. 79. Ascribed to Monsieur de Monthon, formerly Conseiller d'Etat.

"them-

“ themselves, yet seem to put too much to the hazard; since it may happen, in an unexperimented case, that the remedy may be worse than the disease.”

He proposes two regulations: the first is, to prevent common begging: till this be done, he says, all other regulations of the wisest Legislature upon earth will be vain and fruitless. The infallible way to restrain beggars and vagrants is to “*give them nothing*. If none were to give, none would beg; and the whole mystery and craft would be at an end in a fortnight. Let the laws continue to apprehend and punish the mendicants; but let something also be done effectually against those who encourage them. If the principal is punished, it is not reasonable the accessory should go free. In order to which, let all who relieve a common beggar be subject to a penalty.”

His other regulation is intended to correct the fundamental error of leaving the Poor almost wholly to the care of the overseer¹. He says,
“ The

¹ Dr. Burn exhibits the following animated, though somewhat too highly coloured, picture of a parish overseer. He says, “ the office of an overseer of the Poor, seems to be understood to be this: to keep an extraordinary look-out to prevent persons coming to inhabit without certificates, and to fly to the Justices to remove them; and if a man brings a certificate, then to caution the inhabitants not to let him a farm of £ 10. a year, and to take care to keep him out of all parish offices; to warn them, if they will hire *servants*, to hire them half-yearly, or by the month, or by the week, or by the day, rather than by any way that shall give them a settlement; or if they do hire them for a year, then to endeavour to pick a quarrel with them before the year’s end, and so to get rid of them: to maintain their Poor as cheap as they can at all events; not to lay out two-pence in prospect of any future good, but only to serve the present necessity: to bargain with some sturdy person to take them by the lump, who yet is not intended to take them, but to hang over them *in terrorem*, if they shall complain to the Justices for want of maintenance: to send them out into the country a begging, (for why cannot they go, as well as others they will mention, who are less able in body? and the feebler they are, the more profitable will be their peregrination): to bind out poor children apprentices, no matter to whom, or to what trade, but to take special care that the master live in another parish: to move heaven and earth if any dispute happens about a settlement; and in that particular, to invert the general rule, and stick at no expence: to pull down cottages: to drive out as many inhabitants, and admit as few, as possibly they can; that is, to depopulate the parish, in order to lessen the Poor’s Rate: to be generous indeed, sometimes, in giving a portion with the mother of a bastard child, to the reputed father, on condition that he will marry her; or with a poor widow, (for why should she be deprived of the comforts of matrimony?)—always provided, that the husband is settled elsewhere: or if a poor man, with a

“ The remedy, in this case, is not to abolish the office altogether. Let
 “ the overseers of the Poor continue ; but let there be a general super-
 “ intendant over a certain number of parishes, as the Justices in Ses-
 “ sions shall find most convenient. Let the overseers collect the Poor
 “ Rate ; but let them be under the direction of their superior, as to the
 “ disposal of it. This is not any new imagination : for it occurred to
 “ the wisdom of Parliament in the Statute of 14 Eliz. c. 5. After
 “ *collectors* for the Poor were appointed, there was to be appointed the
 “ *overseer* of the Poor. And their several offices are distinguished in
 “ their title : the former were to *collect* ; the latter was to *oversee* ;
 “ that is, to direct the maintenance, and to provide employment.

“ These offices were afterwards united, under the name of *collec-*
 “ *tors and governors of the Poor* ; and after that, as they still continue,
 “ under the general name of *overseers of the Poor*. And this seems to
 “ be the particular reason why they are required to be substantial
 “ house-holders ; as thereby supposed to be more capable of executing
 “ the several branches of the office. And this might do very well in
 “ those days : for the maintenance of the Poor was the thing principally
 “ intended. Their employment was but a secondary consideration, and
 “ came in long after the regulations for their maintenance. And the
 “ reason is, trade and manufacture were then little attended to. There
 “ was in very deed little or no employment for the Poor. And therefore,
 “ the special office of *overseer*, which was then thought of and esta-
 “ blished, did not continue, but was sunk in the other office of *collector* ;
 “ that is no reason, considering the great difference in the circumstan-

“ large family, appears to be industrious, they will charitably assist him in taking a farm in
 “ some neighbouring parish, and give him £ 10. to pay his first year's rent with : and if any
 “ of their Poor has a mercantile genius, they will purchase for him a box, with pins, needles,
 “ laces, buckles, and such like wares, and send him abroad in quality of a petty chapman ;
 “ with the profits whereof, and a moderate knack at stealing, he can decently support him-
 “ self, and educate his children in the same industrious way.—But to see that the Poor shall
 “ resort to church, and bring their children there to be instructed ; to contract with a master,
 “ that he shall procure his apprentice, at proper times, to be taught to read or write ; to pro-
 “ vide a stock of materials, to set the Poor on work ; to see the aged and impotent comfort-
 “ ably sustained, the sick healed ; and all of them clothed with neatness and decency : these,
 “ and such like, it is to be feared, are not so generally regarded, as the Laws intended,
 “ and the necessity of the case requires.”

“ ces of the times, why it ought not now to be restored in it's intire
 “ vigour. Here is now work for all the Poor, if they were ten times
 “ as many as they are; here are more Poor now to be provided for,
 “ because we are become much more populous; here is scope to make
 “ the Poor exceeding useful, and to render their lives comfortable and
 “ easy.

“ But this is not to be done by the present church-wardens and over-
 “ seers, not one in twenty of whom is adequate to the performance;
 “ and if he were, the short duration of his office would not admit it.
 “ Therefore, let there be a *general overseer*, within each hundred, (for
 “ instance,) for that seems the most apposite division; or, if a hundred
 “ shall be too large, there may be two or more within such hundred.

“ The said overseer should be, not a person of the most eminent
 “ rank and dignity; for it is not to be supposed that such persons will
 “ sufficiently attend. He should not be of the lowest rank, lest some-
 “ thing of authority should be wanting. In general, a person about the
 “ degree of a high constable, seemeth the most proper; and the high
 “ constable himself, in some hundreds, perhaps, might be appointed,
 “ with a reasonable addition to his salary: for it is essential to the exe-
 “ cution that such persons have salaries. People may talk as much as
 “ they please about serving the Public for nothing. Many public spi-
 “ rited men, no doubt, there are in the nation; perhaps there were
 “ never more than in this present age. But this sort of men is not al-
 “ ways the most active; and it is certain the business of the world is
 “ done by another sort of people. From the highest subject to the low-
 “ est, no man chuses to serve for nothing. Nor is it reasonable they
 “ should; therefore, this overseer must be paid; and that should be
 “ according to the extent of his office. Each parish or township under
 “ his jurisdiction, should be required to pay so much in the pound, ac-
 “ cording to their Poor Rate.

“ His business should be, to require the church-wardens and over-
 “ seers within his district, to bring him an account in writing, and re-
 “ new the same from time to time, of all the Poor within their respec-
 “ tive parishes; distinguishing therein their age, ability of body, disposi-
 “ tion of mind, trade and other employment, and what they are most
 “ apt and fit for; and from thence take his measures for their relief and
 “ employ-.

“employment. And particularly, to provide work, according to the
“manufactures of the several places; or to set up some easy manufac-
“ture, if there shall chance to be none.”

In the year 1772, Baron Maseres published a “Proposal for establish-
“ing Life Annuities in parishes, for the benefit of the Poor¹,” to which
is annexed a Draft of a Bill, which, in the following year, (1773,) was brought into the House of Commons by Mr. Dowdeswell, and supported by Sir George Saville, Mr. Burke, and many other members of eminent abilities. It passed in that House, but was thrown out by the Lords, in consequence of a speech from Lord Camden.

As this plan received the approbation of the present Chancellor², and the able political arithmetician Dr. Price, by whom it is highly spoken of in the Supplement to his excellent Treatise on Reversionary Payments³, I shall transcribe a short account of its design and provisions, which the original contriver has introduced into his work, intitled, “The Principles of the Doctrine of Life Annuities⁴.”

“The design of this Bill,” he says, “was to encourage the lower
“ranks of people to industry and frugality, by laying before them a
“safe and easy method of employing some part of the money they could
“save out of their wages or daily earnings, in a manner that would be
“most strikingly for their benefit. It was observed, that their wanting
“opportunities of this kind was probably one very principal cause of their
“neglecting so obvious a piece of prudence: that they knew, for the
“most part, but little of the public funds; and that, when it happened
“that they were acquainted with them, the smallness of the sums they
“would be entitled to receive, as the interest of the money they could
“afford to lay out in them, was no encouragement to them to dispose
“of it in that way. For, what inducement, for instance, can it be to
“a poor man, who has saved £ 10. out of his year’s wages, to invest

¹ It was first published in the Public Advertiser of July 22, 1771, under the signature of Eumenes; and afterwards re-published, with improvements, under the same signature, in the Lewis Journals, of Oct. 14 and 21, of the same year.

² The Principles of Life Annuities, 40.

³ Observ. on Rev. Payments, 5th ed. i. 141.

⁴ P. 34.

“ it in the *Three per cent* Bank Annuities, to consider that it will produce
 “ him about 6 or 7 shillings a year? It is but the wages of three days’
 “ labour. And, if they lend their money to tradesmen of their acquaint-
 “ ance, as they sometimes do, it happens not unfrequently that their
 “ debtor becomes a bankrupt, and the money they had trusted him with
 “ is lost for ever; which discourages others from saving their money
 “ at all, and makes them resolve to spend it in the enjoyment of present
 “ pleasure. But that, if they saw an easy method of employing the
 “ money they could spare in such a manner as would procure them a
 “ considerable income in return for it, in some future period of their
 “ lives, without any such hazard of losing it by another man’s folly or
 “ misfortune, it was probable they would frequently embrace it; and
 “ thus a diminution of the Poor’s Rate on the estates of the Rich, an
 “ increase of present industry and sobriety in the Poor, and a more
 “ independent and comfortable support of them in their old age than they
 “ can otherwise expect, would be the happy consequences of such an
 “ establishment. To effect these useful purposes, the Bill provides as
 “ follows:

“ 1st, That in every parish in England or in Wales, in which there
 “ were two church-wardens, and two or more overseers of the Poor;
 “ that is, four, or more, parish-officers intrusted with the care of the
 “ Poor, it should be lawful for the body of the rateable inhabitants of
 “ such parish, that is, of those inhabitants who contributed to the
 “ Poor’s Rate, to grant Life Annuities, payable every quarter of a
 “ year, to such of the inhabitants thereof as should be willing to pur-
 “ chase them, at the prices set down in the tables annexed to the Bill,
 “ which were computed upon a supposition that the interest of the
 “ money was only *three per cent*.

“ 2dly, That the money received from the purchasers of these an-
 “ nuities should be vested in the *Three per cent* Bank Annuities, in the
 “ name of the parish which had granted it: and the dividends duly re-
 “ ceived by them every half-year, and employed in the purchase of new
 “ stock, so as to be improved at compound interest, to the end that it
 “ may be able to answer the annuities bought with it, when they shall
 “ become due.

“ 3dly, That, for the afore said purposes of granting these Life An-
 “ nuities,

“nuities, and receiving the money paid for them, and holding the stock
 “purchased with it in the Bank Annuities, and the other purposes of
 “this Bill, the said rateable inhabitants of every such parish should be
 “made a body politic corporate, and have a common seal.

“4thly, That if the parish fund in the *Three per cent* Bank Annuities
 “should, by the mismanagement of it, or from any other cause, prove
 “insufficient to supply the Life Annuities charged upon it, the Poor’s
 “Rate should be made a collateral security to the poor purchasers of
 “these annuities, for the payment of them, and should be increased to
 “such a degree as should be sufficient to make good the deficiencies.

“5thly, That no such annuity should be granted to any one person of
 “more than £20. sterling a year.

“6thly, That no such annuity should be granted to any of the inha-
 “bitants of a parish, but such as were legally settled in it, or had a right
 “to be relieved by it, in case they became poor and helpless.

“7thly, That no such annuity granted to any man should commence
 “before he was compleatly 50 years of age; nor to any woman before
 “she was compleatly 35 years of age.

“8thly, That no sum less than £5. should be received by the ma-
 “nagers of these annuities, as the price of any such annuity.

“9thly, That the ministers and church-wardens, and overseers of the
 “Poor, should be the overseers and managers of these annuities for the
 “whole body politic and corporate of the rateable inhabitants of the
 “parish, and should receive the money from the purchasers of them,
 “and vest it in the *Three per cent* Bank Annuities, and receive the di-
 “vidends, and employ them in the purchase of fresh stock, and pay the
 “annuities to the purchasers when they became due: and that, for the
 “transacting of the said business at the Bank, they should give a power
 “of attorney to some person residing in London.

“10thly, That, nevertheless, the said managers should not have the
 “power of granting any of these annuities, without the consent of
 “the rateable inhabitants of the parish, who should be assembled in
 “vestry, for that purpose, after public notice of such intended meet-
 “ing given in the parish church, on two Sundays, immediately after
 “Divine service. And in these meetings of the parishioners, it should
 “be necessary not only that the majority in number of them should

“ consent to granting the annuity proposed, but that those, who so con-
 “ sented, should have paid more than half the last Poor’s Rate paid by
 “ all the rateable inhabitants so assembled.

“ This restraint was intended to prevent the renters of small tenements in the parish from involving the parish in the contingent bur-
 “ then on the Poor’s Rate, that might arise from these annuities,
 “ against the will of the more substantial inhabitants.

“ And it was further provided, that no such annuity should be
 “ granted, unless there were present at the meeting, in which it was
 “ granted, at least twelve of the said rateable inhabitants of the parish,
 “ except in parishes where the whole number of rateable inhabitants
 “ was less than 19; and, in that case, it should be necessary that at
 “ least two-third parts of the whole number of inhabitants should be
 “ present at it.

“ And in the 11th and last place, it was provided, that the purchasers
 “ of these annuities should not be permitted to alienate them, without
 “ first making an offer of them to the parish, at the price they are
 “ worth at the time of such offer being made, according to the tables
 “ annexed to the Bill, or at some lower price : and that such of them
 “ as should, at the time of purchasing them, consent to a clause that
 “ should declare them to be absolutely unalienable, should, in conse-
 “ quence of such consent, be incapable of alienating them at all.

“ The reason of this restraint upon the alienation of these annuities
 “ was to guard the poor owners of them against their own folly and
 “ weakness, by making it impossible for them to sell their annuities
 “ for a small part of their true value, over a pot of ale, and without a
 “ proper degree of deliberation.

“ The reason of computing the values of these Life Annuities, upon
 “ the supposition of so low a rate of interest as *three per cent*, was to
 “ make the fund arising from the money paid for them be amply suffi-
 “ cient to answer them when they should become due; so that it should
 “ be almost impossible, without great negligence in the management of
 “ this fund, that there should ever be a necessity of having recourse to
 “ an augmentation of the Poor’s Rate to make good it’s deficiencies.
 “ Yet even at this low rate of interest, the purchasers of the annuities
 “ would usually get *nine or ten per cent* for their money, if they pur-

“ chased them only 5 years before the time of their commencement;
 “ and *thirty* or *forty per cent*, if they would be content to wait for them
 “ 25 or 30 years; which men under 30 years of age might do, with-
 “ out any inconvenience. And the hope of this, it was presumed,
 “ would be a sufficient inducement to them to employ some part of
 “ their money in this way, and to be diligent in their callings, and fru-
 “ gal in their expences, with that view.

“ The only objection that seemed likely to be made to this project,
 “ was the difficulty of carrying it into execution, arising from the in-
 “ ability of the church-wardens and overseers of the Poor of the parish
 “ to manage the money received from the purchasers of the annuities,
 “ without an agent in London for that purpose; who would probably
 “ be, for the most part, either some stock-broker, or banker, or banker’s
 “ clerk, or other man of business, that dealt in money transactions;
 “ whom it might be difficult to engage in an employment of this kind,
 “ without paying him for his trouble, in a manner that the parish fund
 “ could hardly afford. But this objection is not so strong as it appears to
 “ be: because the business of this kind, to be done in London, would
 “ not be so much as might at first be apprehended; and the price of
 “ brokerage upon buying and selling the parish stock in the Bank An-
 “ nuities, and receiving the dividends of it when they became due, is
 “ no great matter. But how far this difficulty was likely to hinder
 “ the execution of the Bill, could not be known with any tolerable de-
 “ gree of certainty, without giving it a trial. And therefore the House
 “ of Commons passed it. But that the experiment might be as little
 “ hazardous as possible, and parishes might not be involved by it, against
 “ their wills, in the danger of these remote incumbrances, the Bill was
 “ made entirely optional, and the rateable inhabitants of every parish
 “ were left at liberty to grant, or not grant, any of these annuities, as
 “ they should think fit, and, even after they had granted some such, to
 “ desist from granting any more. And this full liberty of proceeding
 “ herein, according to their own judgments and inclinations, was
 “ thought, by the Gentlemen who supported the Bill in the House of
 “ Commons, to be a complete answer to the objection above-men-
 “ tioned, arising from the supposed difficulty of carrying it into exe-
 “ cution.”

Baron Maseres notices another objection, “ that the option above-mentioned was not given to the right persons, or to those who were most likely to be affected by the burthens which the granting these annuities might hereafter bring upon the parishes. For that the option was given to the rateable inhabitants of the parish, who were, for the most part, only renters of the lands they occupied ; whereas the burthen upon the Poor’s Rate, arising from the supposed deficiency of the Annuity-fund, was not likely to be felt till many years after the granting of the annuities, when the leases of the renters, who had voted for the granting them, would be at an end, or, if they were renewed, would have been renewed at a lower rent than before, in consideration of the approaching and probable increase of the Poor’s Rates arising from the said supposed deficiency ; which would be an injury to the freeholders of the land, who are possessed of the permanent property of it :—and that, therefore, the consent of the said freeholders ought to be obtained to every act by which the lands of the parish might be exposed to the danger of such a future burthen.”

To this objection he answers, that “ the rateable inhabitants of parishes are of three sorts ; either owners of the houses and lands which they occupy ; or renters of them under long leases for 21 years, or for three lives, and often with a right of renewal ; or renters of them under short leases for one or two years, or merely at the will of the owners without leases. If they are of the first sort, they are the very persons in whom the noble author of the observation thinks the option of granting, or refusing to grant, these life-annuities, ought to have been vested. If they are of the second sort, that is, renters of the lands they occupy under long leases, they then are more likely to feel the burthen brought upon the parish by the supposed augmentation of the Poor’s Rates than the freeholder or owner of the reversion, and therefore are fitter than he is, according to the principle of the observation, to be trusted with the power of bringing this contingent burthen upon the parish. And lastly, if they are renters of the lands they occupy under short leases, or at will, (which is the case supposed in the objection,) they are, in consequence of the precariousness of such a tenure, so much under the influence of their landlord, that, if he should but signify his pleasure to them, by his steward, or

“ by a letter, that he does not chuse that any of these annuities should be
 “ granted in the parish, lest his lands should be exposed to such a future
 “ increase of the Poor’s Rate, they will be sure to give their votes
 “ against them. So that in all these cases, the interests of the persons
 “ who are most likely to be affected by the apprehended burthen on the
 “ Poor’s Rate, are sufficiently protected by the provision that vests
 “ this option in the rateable inhabitants of the parish. And besides,
 “ experience shews, that the inhabitants of parishes in general, as well
 “ those who rent lands and houses by the year, or at will, as those who
 “ have more permanent interests in them, are wonderfully averse to
 “ every thing that has even a remote tendency to increase the Poor’s
 “ Rate. And consequently there is no reason to apprehend that they
 “ would consent to grant any of these parish-annuities whenever there
 “ was the smallest danger of their being ill-managed, and producing, in
 “ consequence thereof, an augmentation of the Poor’s Rate, in order to
 “ make good the deficiencies of their proper fund.”

I confess that this scheme, however well calculated for the benefit of small tradesmen, does not appear to me to be quite so well contrived to assist the *labouring Poor*. There are few persons in that sphere of life, with families, who could possibly accumulate £10. from their earnings in less than two years; and to a man who receives a shilling or eighteen-pence a day, the temptation which the sum, accumulating in his drawer, would present, would be so great, that we must suppose him to possess an uncommon degree of self-denial to wait till it amounted to the sum requisite to purchase the parish annuity. Even if he should acquire the sum of £10. what great temptation would he have to vest it in a fund, from which he could receive no benefit till he was 50 years of age? The period at which the annuity becomes payable, is too remote to interest a young man of 25, or 30, to assign so large a sum as £10. to the parish; more especially as, if any casualty or sickness happened to him in the interval, neither he nor his family could possibly receive any benefit from it. Friendly Societies are in every respect better calculated to attract the notice of the industrious labourer¹. They offer him the

¹ In some instances, where the allowances from Friendly Societies do not become payable to a subscriber till he has been a member two or three years, the expectation of benefit seems too remote to allure the labouring classes, who live from hand to mouth, to enter into these institutions.

gratification of spending a social hour with his neighbours once a month, and of securing to him a decent allowance in any future sickness, for a sum which seldom exceeds three-pence a week. This is so trifling a deduction from his weekly earnings, that I am convinced no member of a box-club has ever been sensible of any diminution in his domestic comforts from paying it. He cannot save ten pounds, in order to purchase a life-annuity, to commence when he is 50 years of age, without letting the savings of many a day's earnings lie a long time idle and unproductive. The great excellency of Societies, which depend upon frequent periodical subscriptions, is, that they call for a portion of a man's earnings very soon after he has received them; and do not leave him exposed to the temptation of squandering, or of being cheated of, an accumulated sum. Every institution of this nature, to be palatable to those for whose benefit they are intended, should depend on moderate, but frequent, payments. A Friendly Society, which required one annual payment of 10s. or 12s., would, I am persuaded, have very few subscribers.

In 1773, the statute-labour on highways, which had been imposed on agricultural labourers¹, was more accurately expressed than it had been in former Acts of Parliament, and the various Laws on the subject reduced into one Act². This capitation tax, (for in no other light can it be

¹ The ancient Statutes respecting highways empower Justices, with the assent of the constables of towns, &c. to tax the inhabitants for the reparation of the highways. See 22 H. 8. c. 5. By the 2 & 3 P. & M. c. 8. every cottager or labourer, who was not a hired servant by the year, was compelled to work four days in the year on the highways. This duty was extended by the 5th of Eliz. c. 13. to six days. Several other similar Acts were enacted in subsequent reigns.

² By 13 Geo. 3. c. 78. of which the following are the principal clauses, which directly affect the labourer: "And be it enacted, that every man inhabiting in any parish, township, or place, and being of the age of eighteen, and under the age of sixty years, not chargeable in any of the respects aforesaid for lands, tenements, woods, tithes, or hereditaments, of the yearly value of four pounds or upwards, and not being *bond fide* an apprentice or menial servant, nor having performed the said duty, or paid the composition for the same, in any other parish, township, or place, for that year, shall, by themselves, or one sufficient labourer for every of them, upon every of the said days, (that is, six days in the year,) on which they shall be called forth by the said surveyor, together with the said other labourers, work and labour in the amendment of the said highways. § 35. And every inhabitant lia-

ble

be considered,) was at length repealed in the year 1794; and a very humane clause was added, to empower two Justices to exempt poor persons, occupying rateable tenements, from highway assessments, if it appeared to them that such poor persons, by reason of age, sickness, a numerous family, or misfortune, were deserving objects of relief. There is a singular clause in one of the Highway Acts², which directs the magistrates at their Easter Sessions to assess and rate the prices of all land-carriage of goods to be brought into any place within their jurisdiction by any common waggoner or carrier. This Statute, which does not seem to be repealed, is, I presume, as little enforced as those which direct the rating of wages.

In Lord Kames's very animated Sketches of the History of Man, published in 1774, we meet with several pertinent remarks on the evil tendency of the Poor System. "The English plan," he says, "beside being oppressive, is grossly unjust. If it should be reported of some distant nation, that the burden of maintaining the idle and profligate is laid upon the frugal and industrious, who work hard for a maintenance to themselves; what would one think of such a nation? Yet this is literally the case of England." I am surprised to find this observation in an Author who declares "resolutely against a perpetual tax for the Poor;" for to leave the Poor to voluntary charity, whatever advantages it might produce in other respects, would necessarily take the burthen from the shoulders of the hard-hearted, and unfeeling, (who are now, as far as the regulations of human wisdom can oblige them, compelled to contribute in proportion to their abilities,) and throw it entirely on the considerate and the benevolent.

"ble to perform such duty or labour, as aforesaid, and not chargeable in any other respect, as aforesaid, shall and may compound for the same, if he, she, or they, shall think fit, by paying to the surveyor the sum of four-pence for and in lieu of every such day's duty or labour respectively." § 38. The Justices are also empowered, when they think wages high, and extravagant, "to order the labourers liable by this Act to perform or compound for statute duty, or such part of them as they shall think fit, to perform six days labour upon such highways *in kind*, in case so many days' duty shall be required, upon being paid for such labour the usual and customary wages given to labourers in such parish, township, or place, deducting thereout the sum of four-pence for each day's duty so performed, being the composition hereby allowed for labourers." § 39.

¹ 34 Geo. 3. c. 74. § 1 & 5.

² 3 W. & M. c. 12. § 24.

He asserts, that depopulation, inequality in the price of labour, and extravagant wages, are occasioned by the Poor Laws ; that unhinging or suspending the exercise of charity relaxes every social virtue, by supplanting the chief of them ; and that, in fact, the tax for the Poor has contributed greatly to the growth of that groveling passion of selfishness in England. "English authors," he says, "who turn their thoughts to the Poor, make heavy complaints of decaying charity, and increasing poverty ;" and yet, in another part of his work, he asserts that "every English town is infested with an endless number of beggars ;" a proof, I think, that charity is not decayed, and that the groveling passion he alludes to is not the national vice of Englishmen. I agree with Dr. Woodward, the late bishop of Cloyne, (who has detected many of the mistakes and inconsistencies which are to be found in this, (in many respects ingenious,) Scotch writer,) that the present age, whatever its characteristic vices may be, is an age of alms-giving. The evil, perhaps, most to be complained of, is, that benevolence is exercised without discrimination or selection, and that idleness is encouraged by what Lord Kames calls "an overflow of charity in the good people of England."

It is singular, that, notwithstanding his great dislike to permanent taxes for the support of the Poor, this writer himself suggests a plan which is in effect a national establishment for the support of the indigent. The following is his "Specimen of a Plan for a Reform in the Poor Laws." It does not, I think, evince a strong capacity for legislative regulation. "Let a tax," he says, "be imposed by Parliament on every parish for their Poor, variable in proportion to the number ; but not to exceed the half of what is necessary : directing the landholders to make up quarterly a list of the names and conditions of such persons as in their opinion deserve charity ; with an estimate of what each ought to have weekly. The public tax makes the half, and the other half is to be raised by voluntary contribution. To prevent collusion, the roll of the Poor, and their weekly appointment, with a subscription of Gentlemen for their part of the sum, shall be examined by the

¹ In an "Address to the Public on the Expediency of a regular Plan for the Maintenance and Government of the Poor, &c. By Richard Woodward, LL. D. Dean of Clogher." London, 1775.

“ Justices of Peace at a quarterly meeting ; who, on receiving satisfaction, must order the sum arising from the public tax to be distributed among the Poor contained in the roll, according to the estimate made by the landholders. As the public fund lies dead till the subscription be completed, it is not to be imagined that any Gentleman will stand out ; it would be a public imputation on his character. Far from apprehending any deficiency, confident I am, that every Gentleman would consider it as honourable to contribute largely. This agreeable work must be blended with some degree of severity, that of excluding from the roll every profligate, male or female. If that rule be strictly followed out, the innocent Poor will diminish daily ; so as in time to be safely left upon voluntary charity, without necessity of any tax.

“ But, must miserable wretches, reduced to poverty by idleness or intemperance, be, in a christian country, abandoned to diseases and famine ? This is the argument, shallow as it is, that has corrupted the industry of England, and reduced multitudes to diseases and famine. Those who are able to work, may be locked up in a house of correction, to be fed with bread and water ; but with liberty of working for themselves.” As for the remainder, he thinks that an hospital for the sick, the wounded, and the maimed, is a right establishment, productive of good, without doing any harm : that a sort of hospital for servants, who for twenty years have faithfully adhered to the same master, would be extremely beneficial ; and that a house of correction is necessary for the punishment of vagrants. He says, “ I heartily approve every regulation that tends to prevent idleness—common begging ought absolutely to be prohibited, even at the hazard of a few lives.” Yet if the compulsory maintenance for the Poor were annihilated, would not many of the impotent Poor necessarily become beggars ? He adds, “ An officer must be appointed in every parish, with a competent salary, for apprehending and carrying to the work-house every strolling beggar. Those who are able to work may be locked up in a house of correction, to be fed with bread and water ; but with liberty of working for themselves.” On this plan Dr. Woodward very sensibly observes : “ This mixed multitude must include the real Poor, as well as the Impostor. Here is palpably a legal establishment ;

“ an

“ an house, a maintenance, (though a scanty one,) officers in and out
 “ of the house provided at the public expence. It is open to all—they
 “ need only beg to be admissible; but those who cannot work must be
 “ confined to their wretched appointment of bread and water, whilst the
 “ sturdy vagabond adds to it the full produce of his labour. The only
 “ difference then between Lord Kames’s and other plans for a work-
 “ house, is, that he allots much better maintenance to the Impostor than
 “ the real Poor, or indeed the industrious labourer; for he gives him the
 “ entire profits of his work, besides the accommodation and allowance
 “ of the house. In this plan he contradicts too his former ideas; for,
 “ with respect to those who were reduced by their profligacy, he had
 “ before suggested a curious mode of discrimination, ‘ to shut up those
 “ ‘ who are able to work in an house of correction,’ to leave the helpless
 “ at large. ‘ If,’ says he, ‘ by oversight or neglect, any happen to die of
 “ ‘ want, the example will tend more to reformation than the most pa-
 “ ‘ thetic discourse from the pulpit’.”

Among the less considerable alterations which have taken place in the Poor Laws during the present reign, may be noticed the Act, which passed in 1775², for repealing the Act of Elizabeth against erecting cottages, unless four acres of land were laid to each cottage. Indeed there does not seem to be much danger, at present, of cottages becoming too numerous. I know several parishes, in which the greatest difficulty, the Poor labour under, is the impossibility of procuring habitations. The present is said to be an age of speculation, and particularly so in building; but adventurers in this line, I believe, seldom think of erecting cottages in country parishes, on the contingent possibility of letting them to labourers’ families. Neither can labourers themselves, who wish to migrate from their parents, and set up for themselves, although they may possess the small sum requisite to erect a cottage, always obtain permission from the lord of a manor to build one on a common. I am acquainted with one parish, in the neighbourhood of a populous city, in which, from the difficulty of procuring tenements, or small plots of land to build on, poor people have, more than once, availed themselves of a long night, to rear a hovel on the road-side, or on the common.

¹ See Dr. Woodward’s Address to the Public on the Expediency of a regular Plan for the Maintenance and Employment of the Poor (of Ireland.)

² 15 Geo. 3. c. 32.

Several Acts were passed between the year 1760 and 1780, for the incorporation of parishes, districts, and hundreds, in different parts of the kingdom; which vested them with power to borrow money, erect houses of industry, and frame local regulations for the government of their Poor. Of some of these institutions the Reader will find an account in the Second Volume of this Work.

It appears from the 20th of George the Third, that some doubts had arisen, whether persons were compellable to receive such poor children as should be bound apprentices to them under such local Acts: it was therefore enacted, that *all persons*, to whom any children shall be appointed to be bound, in pursuance of any Act for the relief of the Poor in any particular district in England, shall be obliged to provide for them, under the penalty of ten pounds; but that no person shall be obliged to take a poor child apprentice, except he be an inhabitant and occupier of lands in the parish to which such child belongs. The Act likewise directs, that bastards born in houses of industry shall belong to the mother's parish¹.

The patriotic exertions of Mr. Gilbert, in attempting a reform in the Poor Laws, are well known to every person who has studied the subject. As early as the year 1765, he brought forward a Bill in the House of Commons, for remedying the evils which were principally complained of; the distresses of the Poor, and the misapplication of the money raised for their relief. For this purpose, he proposed to divide every county into large districts, composed of a whole hundred, or at least a great number of parishes. His Bill, after much investigation, and after receiving considerable amendments, passed the House of Commons; but, (as Mr. Gilbert informs us, from some circumstances unconnected with its merits,) it was defeated by the Lords, in a very full House, on a division of 66 against 59.

Between that period and the year 1787, no general Bill for the relief or regulation of the Poor was introduced into either House of Parliament: Mr. Gilbert, however, at different times, in that interval, proceeded, under the sanction of Parliament, to make enquiries, as a groundwork for future proceedings.

¹ 20 Geo. 3. c. 36.

As a preliminary to future discussion, an Act was passed in 1776, by which the overseers of the Poor throughout England and Wales were directed to make returns, upon oath, to the following questions relative to the state of the Poor :

1. What was the amount of the assessments for the relief of the Poor in the year ending at Easter 1776 ?

2. How much of those assessments was applied for the relief, or on account of, the Poor ; and how much for the payment of county-rates, or any other purposes ; distinguishing also the amount of what was paid for the rent of work-houses, or paid, or allowed, for habitations for the Poor ; and if any Poor reside in houses built at the expence of the parish, township, or place, state the total annual value of such houses ?

3. What number of Poor have received constant relief during that year ; and what has been the expence thereof, as near as the same can be estimated ?

4. Is there a work-house in the parish ? If so, what number of Poor will it accommodate ?

5. What was expended in litigations about settlements, removals, appeals, or other disputes concerning the Poor within that year ; distinguishing how much of such expences arose from disputes with parishes, townships, or places, not within the county, riding, division, precinct, tithing, franchise, liberty, city, or county corporate, wherein such parish, township, or place lay ?

The following is the total result of the Returns from the overseers for the year 1776¹:

Money raised by Assessment ;—in England	-	£ 1,679,585	0	0
Wales	-	-	40,731	14 7
		<hr/>		
		£ 1,720,316	14	7
		<hr/>		

¹ See Annual Register for 1777. There is a trifling difference between the sum mentioned in this account, as the net expences for the Poor, and the sum mentioned under that head, in returns of the overseers in 1786. See page 370.

Amount of County-rates	-	-	in England	£131,387	18	11
			Wales	6,268	11	9
				<hr/>		
				137,656	10	8
				<hr/>		
Expended on the Poor	-	-	in England	1,523,163	12	7
			Wales	33,640	13	8
				<hr/>		
				1,556,804	6	3
				<hr/>		
Expended in Rents	-		in England	78,176	4	0
			Wales	2,120	10	7
				<hr/>		
				80,296	14	7
				<hr/>		
Expended in Litigation	-	-	in England	33,935	18	0
			Wales	1,136	2	8
				<hr/>		
				£35,072	0	8
				<hr/>		

In the year 1782, Mr. Gilbert made another effort to procure a reform in the Poor Laws: for this purpose he prepared and presented three Bills; the first, for amending and rendering more effectual the laws in being relative to houses of correction; the second, for the better relief and employment of the Poor; the third, for amending and rendering more effectual the several laws in being relative to rogues, vagabonds, beggars, and other idle and disorderly persons. The first and second of those Bills passed into Laws: the third was thrown out in the House of Commons.

¹ By the first Act, Justices, at their Midsummer Quarter Sessions, are empowered to nominate a Justice, in each district, to visit the houses of correction within his jurisdiction, and to make a report thereof at the next Michaelmas Quarter Sessions. They are, likewise, empowered to make orders for the regulation of the houses of correction, and for providing mills, looms, and implements for employing persons committed to such houses; and an account in writing of the works performed by them is to be given in by the keeper at every Quarter Sessions. Felons are directed to be kept in separate apartments from other prisoners; and the keepers authorised to handcuff the refractory. See likewise 17 Geo. 2. c. 5.; and 24 Geo. 3. st. 2. c. 55.

Of

Of the Bill respecting the Poor, Mr. Gilbert remarks, that it was only intended as a temporary expedient, to afford some relief to distressed parishes, until an Act, upon a more general and extensive plan, could be procured ¹.

It appears, from it's preamble, that, for want of proper regulations and management in the poor-houses, and controul over the persons who engaged in such contracts, the practice of letting out the Poor had been productive of great oppression. Dr. Burn remarks, that, in many places, the overseers contrived to contract with obnoxious persons, of savage dispositions, for the maintenance of the Poor; not with a view of making their situation more comfortable, but to hold out a work-house as a terrible alternative to those who would not acquiesce in the pittances which the parish-officers thought fit to allow them. And, (he adds,) one such task-master oftentimes undertook for the Poor of several parishes or townships ². The 22d of George the Third ³, therefore, repeals so much of the Act of George the First as empowers parish-officers to contract with any persons for maintaining and employing their Poor; and directs Justices of Peace within the limits where the poor-house of the united parishes is intended to be situated, to appoint guardians for each parish, with all the authority given to overseers of the Poor, except with regard to the making and collecting of Rates: the Justices are likewise empowered and directed to appoint a governor of the poor-house, and a treasurer; and, upon the recommendation of the guardians, to choose a visitor, whose duty is, either by himself or deputy, to inspect the accounts and management of the poor-house from time to time, and to settle the accounts between the guardians and the treasurer; to adjust all questions which may arise concerning the persons who ought to be sent to the poor-house; and, in general, to give such directions to guardians, governor and treasurer, concerning these matters, as he thinks proper. The other clauses of the Act specify the description of persons which may be sent to the poor-house; the mode of administering relief; the steps which are to be taken with respect to idle persons, who neglect to provide for their families, and poor persons who cannot get employment; the regulations for the internal management of the

¹ Considerations, &c. 5.

² Burn's Justice, iij. title Poor, (relief.)

³ 22 Geo. 3. c. 83. See Appendix, p. clxxxii.

house, and various other matters, so fully and minutely, that it would be impossible to give the Reader a clear idea of the provisions of the Act by any moderate abstract : I must therefore refer him to the Appendix of this Volume, in which he will find the Act at length, together with the forms of appointment of officers, notices of meetings, and other proceedings relative to incorporated districts.

That few incorporations of parishes have taken place under this Act is not to be wondered at, when it is considered, that, although it empowers the parishes uniting to borrow money upon the security of the Poor's Rate, it directs that the persons sent to the poor-house shall be maintained at the general expence of the parishes uniting. The author of a very interesting account of the Shrewsbury House of Industry¹ remarks, that “ it does
 “ not appear to have been the intention of the Legislature to provide, by
 “ these general Acts, (the 9th of George the First, and 22d of George
 “ the Third,) for the establishment of houses where the Parochial Poor
 “ may be furnished with employment. For the last Act expressly ordains,”
 as quoted by Burn, “ that no person shall be sent to the house, except
 “ such as are become indigent by old age, sickness, or infirmities ; and
 “ except such orphan children as shall be sent thither by order of the
 “ guardian and visitor, and such other children as necessarily go with their
 “ mothers for sustenance. With respect to idle and disorderly persons,
 “ and those also who cannot get employment, it directs, not that they
 “ shall be taken into the house, and there set to work ; but that the
 “ former shall be punished agreeably to the Vagrant Act, and the latter
 “ *hired out* by the guardians². It likewise directs, that the guardians
 “ shall be *annually* chosen, which would be attended with all the disad-
 “ vantage of annual overseers. It does not invest the guardians with
 “ those powers which are absolutely necessary for the due government
 “ and employment of such a family, nor empower them to enact those
 “ particular bye-laws and regulations which local circumstances will
 “ always require³.” It is, therefore, not extraordinary that several
 districts,

¹ Mr. Wood.

² § 32.

³ See the 29th § ; which expressly says, that no person shall be sent to the poor-house, except such as are become indigent by old age, sickness, or infirmities, and are unable to acquire a maintenance

districts, which have been incorporated since the passing of this Act, instead of adopting its provisions, should have preferred making a trou-

maintenance by their labour; and except such orphan children as shall be sent thither by order of the guardians of the Poor, with the approbation of the visitor; and except such children as shall necessarily go with their mothers thither for sustenance. The 30th §, I conceive, does not authorize the guardian to send children above the age of seven years, who have parents, to the 'poor-house; nor even those under that age, without the consent of their parents: I say this, however, with great deference; for I know it is the opinion of many able magistrates, that, under this Act, they are empowered to send children, above seven years of age, who are capable of working, to the poor-house, and to employ them there. (See the 30th §. & 35th §.) At the last Surrey Quarter Sessions, held at Kingston in October 1756, a question arose on this statute in the case of "Reigate Foreign against Whately and others." A woman, at Reigate, had applied to the guardians of the poor-house, lately erected there, for relief for her daughter, who was upwards of seven years of age, but in a bad state of health. The guardians offered to take the child into the house, which the mother objected to, (as her daughter was dying of a consumption: this fact, however, did not come before the Court;) and applied to a Justice, who ordered her relief at home. The order was appealed against. The question to be decided seemed to be, whether the relief offered by the guardians was *proper relief*? (see § 35.) The point, however, argued, was rather, whether the magistrates were bound by this Act to send a Pauper, above the age of seven years, to the poor-house; or whether they were vested with a discretionary power to grant them pecuniary relief at home? The Court were of opinion, that, in this case, the magistrates might exercise their discretion; and the order of Justices was confirmed. I am warranted in the opinion that poor-houses, erected under Mr. Gilbert's Act, are confined to cases of age, infancy, or infirmity; and that they are intended merely as asylums for the decrepid, and schools for orphan children, and children under seven years of age, who may be sent thither with the consent of their parents, by the sentiments delivered in a report instituted by order of the Epiphany Quarter Sessions in Hampshire last year. (See Annals of Agric. xxv. 376.) and the remarks of a well-informed member of the Legislature on this subject. (See Sir William Young's Considerations on the Subject of Poor-houses, &c. p. 29.) The 36 Geo. 3. c. 23.; which enables a Justice, notwithstanding the 9 Geo. 1. c. 7. (which compels Paupers to enter the parish work-house,) to direct the overseers to distribute relief to poor persons at their own houses, does not extend to districts incorporated under Mr. Gilbert's or other Acts. As its preamble says that the provision of 9 Geo. 1. c. 7. which obliged poor persons to go into the work-house, "in certain cases held out conditions of relief injurious to the comfort and domestic situation and happiness" of the Poor; and as many cases may occur, in which the sending a Pauper into a poor-house erected under Mr. Gilbert's Act, might have the like tendency, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the Legislature thought the Justices had so necessary a discretionary power, under Mr. Gilbert's Act, to relieve the Poor at home. I must, however, confess, that I have heard it urged that the 4th § of the 36 Geo. 3. c. 23. affords a very contrary presumption.

ble some

blesome and expensive application to the Legislature for such special Act of Parliament as they thought best calculated for their particular establishment.

In the year 1786, another Act passed¹, for obliging the overseers of the Poor to make returns, on oath, to certain questions relative to the state of the Poor. A penalty of £ 50. was imposed on officers making false returns: and persons taking false oaths were made subject to the pains and penalties of those convicted of wilful and corrupt perjury.

The questions contained in the Act are as follows :

Question 1st. What money was raised by assessments for the relief of the Poor in the respective years ending at Easter 1783, 1784, and 1785?

2d. What number of Poor received constant, and what number occasional, relief, during each of the said three years, as near as you can ascertain the same?

3d. How much was paid out of the said money in each of the said three years, for expences of overseers in journies, and attendances on magistrates and others; and how much for entertainments at meetings of the inhabitants, on affairs relative to the Poor?

4th. What payments were made out of the said money for law-business, and for orders, examinations, certificates, and other proceedings respecting the Poor, in each of the said three years?

5th. How much of the money collected under these assessments was applied for the payment of county rates, or any other, and what purposes, that did not concern the Poor?

6th. How much of the money so raised has been expended in providing materials and utensils for setting the Poor to work?

In 1786, the committee of the House of Commons, after unremitting attention and labour, reduced the chaos of returns transmitted from the overseers to a regular arrangement; and a very voluminous abstract was printed for the information of the Public on this very important, (but, I fear, notwithstanding this mass of additional information, hitherto

¹ 26 Geo. III. c. 56.

little understood,) branch of political economy. The Returns exhibited every parish in England and Wales, placed alphabetically under it's respective county, and hundred; and comprizing, in fourteen distinct columns, the following particulars relative to the state of parochial concerns :

1. Name of the hundred, &c.
 2. Name of parish, township, &c.
 3. For the year 1783,
 4. For the year 1784,
 5. For the year 1785,
- } Money raised by assessment.
6. Medium of those three years.
7. Medium of money applied for county purposes, including vagrants, militia, constables' expences, prosecution of felons, county bridges, gaols, houses of correction, &c.
8. Medium of expences for purposes which did not concern the Poor; viz. repairing churches, roads, clocks, stocks, pounds; salaries to ministers, parish clerks, sextons, watchmen, &c.
9. Medium of net money annually paid for the Poor.
10. Net expences for the Poor in 1776, taken from the returns then made to Parliament.
11. Medium expences of overseers in journies, and attendances on magistrates, &c.
12. Medium expences of entertainments at meetings relative to the Poor.
13. Medium expences of law business, orders, examinations, and other proceedings relative to the Poor.
14. Medium of money expended in setting the Poor on work.
- } Expences not applicable to the Poor.
- } Heads of particular Expences.

The following is an Abstract of the Overseers Returns in 1776 and 1786¹:

Names of the Counties in England.	Medium of net money annually paid for the Poor, for the years 1783, 1784, & 1785.	Net expenses for the Poor in 1776 ² , taken from the Returns then made to Parliament.	Names of the Counties in England.	Medium of net money annually paid for the Poor, for the years 1783, 1784, and 1785.	Net expenses of the Poor in 1776, taken from the Returns then made to Parliament.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.		£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Bedford - -	20,977 0 11	16,662 17 1	Southampton - -	58,956 9 3	48,928 8 2
Berks - -	47,006 10 1	36,713 2 8	Stafford - -	40,963 13 7	32,088 17 1
Bucks - -	45,340 0 3	31,745 16 0	Suffolk - -	69,407 8 1	56,804 0 5
Cambridge - -	26,175 12 10	18,079 10 10	Surrey - -	66,155 10 0	49,743 19 8
Chester - -	39,292 0 11	29,644 13 2	Suffex - -	72,577 10 10	54,734 8 7
Cornwall - -	28,531 19 9	22,004 11 10	Warwick - -	59,557 9 2	44,070 11 0
Cumberland - -	11,687 13 4	8,029 19 2	Westmoreland - -	5,616 12 3	2,834 8 0
Derby - -	22,924 15 3	17,441 1 8	Wilts - -	62,893 1 8	54,021 10 10
Devon - -	80,681 11 5	62,481 2 6	Worcester - -	34,508 19 9	26,735 0 9
Dorset - -	31,528 8 6	24,538 5 8	York, East Riding - -	15,499 7 10	11,036 9 7
Durham - -	19,530 12 4	14,440 13 4	North ditto - -	18,365 16 7	12,676 1 8
Essex - -	94,569 14 6	74,067 3 5	West ditto - -	66,695 3 3	50,688 1 5
Gloucester - -	64,895 5 8	53,812 3 1			
Hereford - -	16,727 18 2	10,393 7 2		£ 1,943,649 15 10	£ 1,496,129 6 3
Hertford - -	32,779 9 8	25,486 9 0			
Huntingdon - -	12,162 14 5	7,659 3 11	Names of the Counties in Wales.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Kent - -	106,606 7 11	80,150 10 0	Anglesey - -	930 5 6	169 1 9
Lancaster - -	73,363 14 8	52,220 0 11	Brecon - -	4,237 10 2	2,407 15 2
Leicester - -	30,805 5 0	24,339 16 4	Cardigan - -	2,248 1 4	1,084 18 1
Lincoln - -	43,024 2 6	31,930 8 7	Carmarthen - -	5,671 3 3	2,948 4 8
Middlesex - -	94,012 17 7	80,226 18 0	Carnarvon - -	1,579 6 1	471 17 5
London - -	52,657 11 6	49,067 0 2	Denbigh - -	9,762 0 0	5,364 14 8
Westminster - -	48,856 2 1	44,969 3 1	Flint - -	7,076 5 5	4,043 12 0
Monmouth - -	8,108 1 3	5,575 1 7	Glamorgan - -	8,817 10 9	5,300 19 11
Norfolk - -	94,670 17 5	64,296 13 10	Merioneth - -	2,256 1 9	1,046 16 5
Northampton - -	46,079 8 7	35,232 15 8	Montgomery - -	8,970 17 2	5,508 15 7
Northumberland - -	20,737 16 2	14,608 12 0	Pembroke - -	5,150 15 1	3,049 8 3
Nottingham - -	18,068 8 9	11,833 1 11	Radnor - -	3,888 13 7	2,254 9 11
Oxford - -	36,109 3 5	28,750 4 9			
Rutland - -	3,537 5 1	2,664 6 6		£ 60,588 10 1	£ 33,650 13 10
Salop - -	33,937 2 3	22,316 10 1			
Somerset - -	66,267 0 9	50,271 5 2			

¹ See Parliamentary Register, xxxix. 438.

² Lord Kames (upon what authority I know not,) asserts, that, in 1773, the Poor's Rates amounted to £ 3,000,000. Sketches, B. ii. Sk. 10.

Money raised by Assessment,

For the year 1783	- -	England	£ 2,068,585 7 1
		Wales	63,901 5 1
			<hr/>
			2,132,486 12 2
			<hr/>
For the year 1784		England	2,117,432 11 0
		Wales	68,456 16 8
			<hr/>
			2,185,889 7 8
			<hr/>

FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE PRESENT PERIOD. 371

For the year 1785	England	£2,115,775	2	5
	Wales	69,129	16	6
			2,184,904	18 11
Medium of those years	England	2,100,587	16	11
	Wales	67,161	16	9
			2,167,749	13 8

Expences not applicable to the Poor.

Medium of money applied for county purposes—Va-				
grants, militia, bridges, gaols, &c.—England	-	£113,714	15	6
Wales	-	5,565	11	4
			119,280	6 10

Medium of Expences not concerning the Poor—Re-
pairing churches, roads, salaries to ministers, &c.

England	-	43,223	5	7
Wales	-	1,007	15	4
			44,231	0 11

Medium of net money annually paid for the Poor—

England	-	1,943,649	15	10
Wales	-	60,588	10	1

Net expences in 1776		2,004,238	5	11
		1,529,780	0	1

Increase		474,458	5	10
----------	--	---------	---	----

Net expences for the Poor in 1776, taken from
the returns then made to Parliament—England

England	-	1,496,129	6	3
Wales	-	33,650	13	10

3 B 2		1,529,780	0	1
-------	--	-----------	---	---

Heads of particular Expenses.

Medium of expences of overseers in journies, attendances on magistrates, &c.

England	£23,545	0	10
Wales	948	17	8
	<hr/>		
	24,493	18	6

Medium expences of entertainments at meetings relative to the Poor

England	11,329	15	11
Wales	383	4	10
	<hr/>		
	11,713	0	9

Medium expences of law, orders, examinations, and other proceedings relative to the Poor—

England	53,757	11	0
Wales	2,033	11	6
	<hr/>		
	55,791	2	6

Medium of money expended in setting the Poor to work

England	15,680	14	9
Wales	211	14	1
	<hr/>		
	15,892	8	10

By another Statute, passed in the same year¹, the ministers and church-wardens of each parish were directed to make returns upon oath, in writing, to the following questions:

Question 1st. What charitable donations have been given, by deed or will, for the benefit of poor persons, within your parish, (or place); by whom, when, in what manner, and for what particular purpose, were they given, to the best of your knowledge, information, and belief?

¹ 26 Geo. III. c. 58.

Question 2d. Were the said respective donations in land or money ; in whom are they now vested, and what is the annual produce thereof respectively, to the best of your knowledge, information, and belief?

The Committee, appointed to consider the Returns made by the minister and church-wardens to these questions, having caused the produce of the different charities, (as far as they could be collected from the Returns, which were in many instances very defective and obscure,) to be cast up in each county, found the annual amount of the produce of land and money appropriated to charitable uses to be as follows :

Money in England,	-	£ 46,173	9	9	
Wales,	-	2,070	0	8	
					£ 48,243 10 5
Land in England,	-	206,301	8	8	
Wales,	-	4,166	0	2	
					210,467 8 10
Making together a total of	-				£ 258,710 19 3

The Committee added, that they had reason to believe, that very considerable further sums would appear to have been given for similar purposes, whenever proper means could be found for completing their discoveries, by extending the enquiry to corporations, companies, and societies, as well as feoffees, trustees, and other persons.

In 1786, Mr. Acland published a Scheme for enabling the Poor to maintain themselves, by subscribing a small portion of their earnings to a general society, constructed, in many respects, on principles extremely similar to those on which the numerous box-clubs, which are now to be found in every part of the kingdom, were formed. As his ideas received the approbation of that able calculator and philanthropist Dr. Price, and the utility of these institutions is becoming every day more apparent, (and indeed so much so, that one part of Mr. Pitt's Bill proposes the establishment of parochial funds, which are partly to be supported by the subscriptions of the persons for whose benefit they are principally intended,) I shall make no apology for laying before the

Reader the principal outlines of a plan, which Mr. Acland explains very fully, and very satisfactorily.

He proposes, that there shall be established, by the authority of Parliament, throughout the whole kingdom of England, one general Club or Society, to which every male or female, between twenty-one and thirty years of age, shall be obliged to subscribe to the common stock, in the following manner: that is to say—Every person, on arriving at the age of twenty-one, or on being so far emancipated as to receive, if a man, for his own use, the daily hire of, or above, 10d. a day; or, being a servant in a house, the clear wages of 1s. 6d. a week, or £4. a year: or if a female, for her own use, the daily hire of, or above, 6d. a day, or the clear wages of 1s. 3d. a week, or the yearly sum of £3., shall pay into the common stock 2d. a week, if a male, or 1½d. if a female; and that all such persons shall be bound to contribute under certain penalties: with the exception, however, of such persons as shall, through any sickness, disorder, or accident, be incapable of maintaining themselves; or that shall be above the age of thirty, or, being married, shall have one or more children: and such as shall come under either of these predicaments, shall not be compellable to subscribe; but persons married, and having children, may, if they choose it: but no person shall be entitled to pay from the club, but for such children only as shall have been born in wedlock, nine months at least after the commencement of his or her subscription. All persons likewise shall be permitted, but not compelled to subscribe, from thirty to fifty, that are in perfect health, and will pay one year's subscription by way of entrance-money, together with the addition of one shilling for every year compleat that they shall, at their entrance, exceed thirty.

All persons possessed of freehold, or leasehold, estates to the amount of £10. a year, and upwards, shall be obliged ¹ to contribute in the following

¹ Mr. Acland likewise proposes, that all persons possessed of lands or leasehold estate of or above the value of £10. a year, and not worth the sum of £1000. exclusive of land, though at liberty to subscribe any sum not exceeding 1s. a week, yet, on account of the stability of their property, and their contributions to the Poor's Rate, shall not be compellable to subscribe at all. No monied property, however, he thinks, should exclude from subscription: but all persons of supposed personal property of £1000., who refuse to declare that they are
not

lowing manner : that is to say, that every male shall be at liberty to subscribe any sum he pleases, not less than 2s. nor more than 1s. a week ; and every female, in the like manner, any sum not less than 1½d. nor more than 1s. a week ; for which 1½d. every female subscriber, during any time that she shall, by sickness, or any other affliction, (not brought on by any unlawful action,) be confined to her room, and be incapable of labour, shall receive 3s. a week ; and for any subsequent time that she shall be incapable of earning 3d. a day, (in the estimation of the minister, church-wardens, and overseers of the Poor, assisted by the parish apothecary,) she shall receive 2s. a week during her incapacity ; and after the age of sixty-five, 10½d. a week, till seventy ; and, after that period, or any time before, that the above-mentioned persons think her incapable of earning 3d. a day, the weekly sum of 1s. 4½d. ; and after seventy-five, or any time before, that she is adjudged to be incapable of labour, 3s. a week, during life : and for every legitimate child more than two that shall be alive at the same time, and be under eight years of age, she shall, in her own right, be entitled to the weekly sum of 1s.

And, in like manner, that the weekly contributor of 2d. whether male or female, shall be entitled, in the first instance, to 6s. a week, and in the second, (while under an incapacity of earning, the man 6d. or the woman 3d. a day,) to 3s. a week ; and, for every living child more than two, (under the above restrictions,) to 1s. 4½d. a week ; and after sixty-five, to 1s. a week ; and after seventy, to 1s. 7½d. a week ; and after that period, or any time before, that he or she may be rendered incapable of all labour, to 3s. 6d. a week.

not worth that sum exclusive of real property, should be compellable to contribute 3d. a week, and to increase that contribution by 1d. a week for every £1000. they shall be deemed to be worth. There are, I think, insuperable objections to this part of the plan : in a commercial country, it cannot be expected, that a man should either himself know the amount of his personal property, or, if he did, be inclined to divulge it to the parish-officers. “ An inquisition into every man’s private circumstances, and an inquisition, which, in order to accommodate the tax to them, watched over all the fluctuations, would be a source of such continual and endless vexation as no people could support.”—Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*, 5th ed. iii. 295.—The objections to a *direct* tax on personal *capital* do not apply to an *indirect* tax on *income*.

He proposes, that, in case either parent should die, the widow or widower shall receive the allowance allotted for children, equally the same as if both parents were alive: and that all orphan children of deceased members shall receive the pay allotted to the parents' subscription, until eight years of age; with this exception only, that the sum which the parents must in either case have subscribed, shall be deducted out of their weekly receipts; and the surplusses that may accumulate over and above the necessary nurture of the orphans, shall be vested in church-wardens and overseers of the parish for the time being, and be deemed part of a parochial fund, for which the parish at large shall be responsible, when called for in a summary way, before one or more neighbouring Justices, on the complaint of any friend of the orphans.

The plan also provides, that no person shall, except in the instance relating to children, be entitled to any weekly receipt, unless it can be proved, to the satisfaction of the minister, &c. that such person is neither worth £1000. nor has an annual income, from any source whatever, amounting to £50. a year: nor shall any person, in the fourth and fifth instances, be entitled to any receipt on account of age, who shall not, in like manner, make it appear that they have not £500. nor £25. a year¹.

No man not having two children, and no woman not having one child to maintain, shall, in the first instance, (that is, during confinement to their rooms,) receive full pay for any longer time than four months, on account of any one illness; but after such period, only such pay as is provided in the second instance, (that is, while they cannot earn more than 3d. a day,) and is commonly called walking-pay. Any man having two children, or woman, one child, to maintain, shall be entitled to

¹ But as there might be cases, (against which it is impossible to provide,) of persons having large families, from whom it would be unjust to withhold the result of their own contributions, at the same time that their necessities required it, Mr. Acland proposes, that, in such cases, the Justices, at their Quarter Sessions, should have a discretionary power, on the unanimous petition of the minister, church-wardens, and overseers of the Poor, to order such payments to be made out of the associated fund, to such person, if sick or aged, notwithstanding their private fortune, as the weekly contribution entitled such person to receive. So, by Mr. Pitt's Bill, allowances are directed to be made to industrious Poor, not able to support themselves and families by their labours, although they may possess some little property of their own.

his or her full pay, for any time that he or she shall be confined in any hospital: but any man having less than two children, or woman not having any child, to maintain, shall, during such confinement, be entitled only to walking-pay.

It is further proposed, that every member, on being taken ill, or on meeting with any accident whatever, shall notify the same to the minister, or, in his absence, to one or other of the church-wardens or overseers of the Poor, (of the parish to which that member belongs,) who, on such notice, shall, as soon as may be, but within twenty-four hours after the receipt of the same, under the penalty of 10s. to be forfeited to the use of the Poor of the parish, be obliged to attend, or to find some proper person to attend for him, and inspect the situation of the said member; and, if need require, to send for the parish apothecary to inspect, judge, and take care of, the disorder, or other accident, under which the person may labour; and in order that all poor persons may have proper care taken of them during any illness, every parish is required to agree with some neighbouring apothecary to provide medicines and attendance for the Poor; and such members of the club as are not deemed able, by the minister, &c. to provide themselves: and one moiety of the apothecary's salary shall be paid by the parish, and the other out of the weekly contributions of the club.

The following Table shews the allowances, which Mr. Acland proposes giving to the different classes of subscribers. It is obvious that the higher classes receive less for their subscription than the lower: on which Mr. Acland remarks, that the reason of making this distinction is this; that the lower classes of subscribers, on account of the relief which their subscription gives the public, are, without doubt, entitled to an allowance, beyond what their own contribution would, of itself, afford: but the rest, receiving from the stock a very desirable convenience, ought to pay for that convenience, and therefore there is no need to give them so good a bargain.

The weekly Subscriber of	shall be entitled to receive weekly					
	In the first Instance,	In the second Instance,	In the third Instance,	In the fourth Instance,	In the fifth Instance,	In the sixth Instance,
	For bed-lying pay.	Walking do.	Ditto for chil- dren more than 2.	65 Years of Age.	70 Years of Age.	75 Years of Age ¹ .
<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
0 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 0	2 0	1 0	0 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 0
0 2	6 0	3 0	1 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 0	1 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 6
0 3	7 6	3 6	1 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 9	4 0
0 4	8 6	3 9	1 9	1 3	1 10	4 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
0 5	9 0	4 0	1 10	1 4	1 11	4 9
0 6	9 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 3	1 11	1 5	2 0	5 0
0 7	9 9	4 6	2 0	1 6	2 1	5 3
0 8	10 0	4 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 1	1 7	2 2	5 6
0 9	10 3	4 9	2 2	1 8	2 3	5 9
0 10	10 6	4 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 3	1 9	2 4	6 0
0 11	10 9	4 11	2 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 10	2 5	6 3
1 0	11 0	5 0	2 5	1 11	2 6	6 6

The following is the mode in which the subscriptions are to be received and enforced. “ Every Sunday, immediately after evening prayer, the church-wardens and overseers of the Poor, (who, in virtue of their office, shall be considered as treasurers of the said club,) shall, for the purpose of receiving all contributions that shall be due to, and paying all claims that shall be due from, the said club, attend with a folio parchment book, bought at the parish’s expence; every two opposite pages of which, beginning with the second and third, shall be perpendicularly divided into 53 columns. On the first column towards the left hand shall be entered the several names of the members on equidistant lines drawn across the opposite pages, so as to leave on the right hand of each name 52 squares, to answer the purpose of a like number of receipts from the person to whose name those squares are opposite: half-way on in the same book shall, in the same manner as before, be written, on two opposite pages, a second list of subscribers’ names, for the purpose of entering the weekly payments that shall be made to each subscriber; and upon a line drawn on the top of each of these opposite pages, and above the uppermost name, shall be written over every column of squares, beginning with

¹ Or any time before that a member shall be rendered incapable of labour.

“ that

" that immediately following the first name, the number 1, 2, 3, and
 " so on to 52. In the first instance, every marked square shall stand as
 " a valid receipt to that member to whose name it is opposite, for the
 " 1st, 2d, or 3d, or any other week's payment, to which the number at
 " the top shall answer. In the second instance, every square, besides
 " being numbered at the top, shall have *s. d.* to denote shillings and
 " pence, written over every column of squares, for the purpose of enter-
 " ing in figures, in the several squares beneath, the sums received by any
 " subscriber, and the particular weeks in which they were received.
 " By this provision a great many members may be accounted with, to
 " the number, I suppose, of 200 or more, in the space of an hour.
 " Possibly, where the parishes are large¹, and the inhabitants too num-
 " merous to be accounted with by one overseer or church-warden, singly,
 " it may be proper that there shall be provided, for every such parish,
 " one book, for the sole purpose of entering the payments made to the
 " several members, and two or three other books, if need require it,
 " with the names of the several members arranged alphabetically in two
 " or three portions, for the purpose of entering all receipts from the
 " said members: by these means, the two church-wardens and two
 " overseers might, without confusion, or interference with each other,
 " at one and the same time, be each of them transacting the business of
 " his proper department; as every member would know, according as
 " the alphabet directed him, to whose department he belonged. The
 " church-wardens and overseers, when called out of the parish upon any
 " necessary business of the club, shall be made moderate satisfaction for
 " the same: the satisfaction itself to be taken out of the Poor's Rate.
 " But as to the Sunday attendance, that shall be executed *gratis*, as
 " part of the burthen of their office; forasmuch as not only no time
 " will be hereby taken off from their worldly employments, but the
 " present proper business of their office, respecting the Poor, will at
 " length become almost evanescent. Besides, as persons of property,
 " they will be partakers of the general benefit resulting from hence to

" ¹ It would save a great deal of trouble, and in most parishes it would be sufficient, if their
 " attendance was given but once a month; and in the more numerous ones (where a more fre-
 " quent attendance might be necessary, the members being divided alphabetically into two or
 " four divisions) the business of each division might be transacted either weekly, or once in a
 " fortnight, as occasion should require."

“ the public ; and few men, probably, will be called upon more than
 “ once in their lives, in respect to any one estate ; and as to those who
 “ have many, as their benefit will be the greater, they must be contented
 “ either to do the office oftener, or to pay others for doing it for them.
 “ But as it is generally the case, that the under-tenant takes upon him-
 “ self the burden of all the parish-offices, at the same time that he may
 “ in every respect be unequal to the trust here allotted him ; that the
 “ public may receive no damage thereby, the parish, in vestry assembled,
 “ having first determined on the tenant’s incapacity, shall be empowered
 “ to provide another person, at a reasonable salary. And as all the
 “ duty on the club account is new and posterior to the covenant, it
 “ seems not unreasonable that the landlord should at least divide the
 “ expence with the under-tenant. And as it may sometimes happen,
 “ that a vestry may not pay a proper attention to the disqualifications of
 “ the tenant, the minister of the parish, who may commonly be sup-
 “ posed to be one of the most competent judges of such a matter, shall
 “ always be obliged, as a necessary corroboration to such a nomination,
 “ to give under his hand, in writing, his approbation or disapprobation
 “ thereof in these words : ‘ I do declare, that I sincerely believe that A. B.
 “ is (or is not) a person capable of discharging the said office.’ And in
 “ case of his disapprobation, it shall be matter to be inquired into, and de-
 “ termined by the Justices, at the time of their giving out their nomi-
 “ nation-warrants. Moreover, as some small compensation for the
 “ execution of a new and troublesome office, every person discharging
 “ the same (excepting such as shall do it for hire, and, in that case, the
 “ person so hiring) shall be entitled to an exemption from a certain por-
 “ tion of statute-labour, according to the number of subscribers that may
 “ fall to his particular department to attend.”

In a pamphlet published in 1788, intituled, “ The insufficiency of the
 causes to which the increase of our Poor and of the Poor’s Rates have
 been ascribed, &c.” Mr. Howlett reviewed Mr. Acland’s plan, which,
 he very justly remarks, goes upon the supposition that, upon an average,
 only one in 48 of the whole aggregate society is, (except from old age,)
 so incapacitated, without offering any evidence to shew that such a
 calculation is well founded.

His other principal objections are, “ that this promised future income,

“ instead

“ instead of sharpening the spur to industry, will only blunt it. The
 “ great incitements to active exertion and vigilant economy among the
 “ lower classes are,” (he says,) “ the dread of want on the one hand,
 “ and the hopes of a comfortable provision against sickness and old age
 “ on the other. The operation of both these the plan before us seems, in
 “ a great measure, likely to destroy : it tells the young labourer, whether
 “ in service or married, if he contributes two-pence a week to the legal
 “ public funds, he shall thereby purchase a security against all the con-
 “ tingencies of sickness, infirmity, and age. The assurance is pleasing ;
 “ his heart is at rest ; his utmost exertion, he thinks, can secure nothing
 “ further. By this, therefore, his views are bounded. The regular
 “ payment of the legal demand is all he minds. It is useless to lay up
 “ money while at service; he therefore squanders it away as fancy or in-
 “ clination dictates ; or if married, provided he can live from hand to
 “ mouth, as the phrase is, and pay what the law requires of him, it is
 “ fully sufficient. In the mean time, his wants and necessities increase,
 “ and the sum of two-pence a week, small as it is, he finds it more and
 “ more difficult to spare ; the regular payment is soon discontinued ; his
 “ hopes are consequently blasted, and he sinks into poverty much sooner
 “ than he would have done, had this flattering prospect never been held
 “ out to them.”

Mr. Howlett further remarks, “ that the plan proposes no measures
 “ to obviate the increased expences of living, from the possible increase
 “ of the price of provisions ; for the sudden and exorbitant advance of
 “ them upon particular emergencies ; for the incidental severity of
 “ the seasons, and the incidental scarcity of work ; and yet from these,
 “ and these alone, have almost all the hardships and distresses of the
 “ Poor originated ; and from these will they chiefly originate in time
 “ to come.”

These objections, I confess, appear to me to be ill-founded, when
 applied to a Friendly Society, which, in consideration of a small weekly
 or monthly payment from a man whilst in health, will allow him a
 moderate pension in sickness or old age. They might, perhaps, be ad-
 vanced with a considerable degree of truth against the Poor's Rate. The
 labourer, it might be said, sees in it “ a security against all the contin-
 “ gencies of sickness, infirmity, or age. The assurance is pleasing ; his
 “ heart

“heart is at rest; his utmost exertion, he thinks, can secure nothing further. By this, therefore, his views are bounded. It is useless to lay up money while at service; he therefore squanders it away as fancy or inclination dictates.” That a compulsory provision for the Poor sometimes produces these effects, there can be little doubt. A Gentleman who resides in a parish a few miles from London informs me, that a paper-maker, who worked last year in a mill near Dover for a guinea a week, in consequence of his master’s having refused to increase his wages, entered into a combination with his fellow workmen to “strike,” as it is called, or leave off working. The consequence was, that the master manufacturer has been greatly distressed for hands: the man, declining to work, has returned to his parish, and, although not incapacitated from labour, is content to avail himself, and his children, of what Sir William Young calls “a legalized system of prisons,” the parish work-house, into which he has gained a ready admittance, and lives at his ease, although he is maintained by a contractor—a being who, it is too generally supposed, is either unfeeling or improvident.

But, to return to Mr. Howlett’s objections:—they appear to me to be equally applicable to the modern Friendly Societies; institutions of which he elsewhere speaks in terms of approbation, and which, I am persuaded, far from relaxing, afford the strongest stimulus to the labourer’s industry. Flattered with the hope of securing a decent provision in sickness or old age, or perhaps only actuated by a wish to spend a convivial evening, once a month, with his neighbours at the ale-house, he is tempted to subscribe: when he has continued his payments for a few weeks, punctuality will become easy and habitual; and even if it should not, the apprehension of forfeiting every contingent advantage, which, as a member, he will be entitled to in the hour of adversity, will ever be a powerful check to deter him from declining to continue his subscription.

I admit, however, that Mr. Acland’s Scheme has many great defects. Some I have already pointed out; and will only add, that in many respects it operates as a Poor’s Rate; that it would always be unpalatable, because the members would not be governed by laws of their own making; and that, in many of the instances, the allowances bear too small a proportion to the payments ever to attract subscribers.

Mr. Howlett combats, with great force, the following supposed causes of the increase of the Poor :

1. Our injudicious system of Poor Laws, and their defective execution.
2. The great number of our ale-houses.
3. The growing wickedness and profligacy of the Poor.
4. The engrossing of farms.

The grand and leading cause of the increase of the number of the Poor has, he thinks, been the greater advance in the price of provisions than in the price of labour. He remarks, that, at the periods, in which Sir Matthew Hale, Sir Josiah Child, Mr. Firmin, Mr. Locke, Mr. Hay, and a long list of writers, in 1753, proposed plans for the relief of the Poor, the price of the most essential article of human subsistence was extremely high ; and, therefore, very satisfactorily accounted for their difficulties. Of the years 1783, 4, and 5, the assessments of which were laid before the House of Commons, he says, the winter of 1783 was rather severe ; but those of 1784, and 1785, were vastly more so¹. From this circumstance, and from an investigation of the medium annual expences of maintaining the Poor in forty-two parishes², of very considerable extent, in the counties of Kent, Essex, and Suffolk, he infers, that the expence of maintaining the Poor was actually decreasing ; and that, instead of having increased upwards of £474,000. in nine years, as stated by the Committee in the House of Commons, they had increased only about £250,000. in the course of eleven years, between the years 1776 and 1787 ; and, consequently, that those alarms on this subject, which have been so zealously spread amongst “ us, to “ our no small terror and affright, as if we were hurrying fast to ruin “ and destruction, are mere childish panics. For an increase of £250,000

¹ The net expence of maintaining the Poor in 1776, was	- -	£ 1,529,780 0 1
The medium annual expence of maintaining the Poor, on an average		
of three years, ending at Easter 1785, was	- - -	2,004,238 5 11

² In these 42 parishes, the medium annual expence of maintaining			
the Poor, for the years 1781 and 1782 was	- -	£ 18,588 7 10	
Ditto for 1783, 1784, and 1785	- -	20,264 10 5	
Ditto for 1786 and 1787	- -	18,050 14 5	

“ a year, in the course of eleven years, considering the events which
 “ have taken place in that compass of time, is a mere trifle to what
 “ has been expected. An expensive War brought an additional debt of
 “ more than a hundred millions. This occasioned a variety of taxes,
 “ some of which have fallen upon what the present state of things ren-
 “ ders, even to the lowest of our people, the immediate necessities of
 “ life, such as soap, leather, candles; &c. and increased their price one-
 “ fifth; wheat, mean time, in the disadvantageous manner in which it
 “ generally comes to the poor labourer, has been almost six shillings a
 “ bushel; malt, above four shillings and six-pence; butter and cheese
 “ have risen three-halfpence a pound, meat a penny. Twelve years ago,
 “ our labouring Poor were scarcely six millions; they are now six mil-
 “ lions and a quarter*. Suppose each individual of them consumes a
 “ quarter of wheat in a year, which is rather below the fact, and the
 “ sum expended in their bread-corn is annually upwards of fourteen
 “ millions sterling. Allow that leather, soap, candles, meat, beer, but-
 “ ter, cheese, after making every abatement for those who use but very
 “ little of these, cost but one-fourth part more: and admitting that
 “ all these articles, taken together, are advanced only one-fifth in their
 “ price; and we have an addition of £ 700,000. a year, for the main-
 “ tenance of our labouring poor, without noticing the increase in their
 “ numbers, which has taken place as just now stated. What advantage
 “ have they had to enable them to bear this augmented burden? What
 “ advance, within the last 10 or 12 years, has been made in their wages?
 “ Very little, indeed!—in their daily labour nothing at all, either in hus-
 “ bandry or manufactures. In some branches of the latter, by the iniqui-
 “ tous oppressive practices of those who have the direction of them, they
 “ are at this moment considerably lower. The only advantage they enjoy
 “ more than they did a few years ago, is in piece-work; a custom, to
 “ the mutual present benefit of master and labourer, more and more
 “ adopted. But it is to be observed, that this is chiefly confined to par-
 “ ticular kinds of work, to particular seasons of the year, and that the
 “ greatest emolument of it is to persons of peculiar dexterity and abi-
 “ lity; nor should it be forgotten, that, whilst it augments the wages of
 “ the workmen, it shortens the duration both of their lives, and of their

“ Including wives and children.”

“ capacity for labour. So that the final advantage of this expedient to
 “ the community at large, may, perhaps, may be doubted: but, at
 “ most, it can scarcely more than counterbalance the increase of three
 “ or four hundred thousand in the number of the Poor, which, we
 “ have just observed, has taken place within the period under our pre-
 “ sent consideration. After, therefore, every reasonable deduction is
 “ made, we may fairly conclude, that the additional expence of main-
 “ taining the labouring families of this kingdom, in only the same de-
 “ gree of comfort they were in ten or twelve years ago, cannot be less
 “ than £ 700,000. a year: £ 250,000. of those only we have seen are
 “ now paid by the middle and higher ranks; the rest is squeezed out of
 “ the flesh, and blood, and bones of the Poor.”

In the period of thirty years preceding the year 1776, Mr. Howlett thinks the inequality between the rise in the price of provisions, and of labour, was still more manifest. Wheat, he says, which, between the year 1746 and 1765, was only 32s. a quarter, was, almost from that time to the year 1776, above 45s.; “ which circumstance alone must
 “ have increased the annual expence of living to the Poor nearly four
 “ millions, whilst that caused by the advanced price of other provisions
 “ could scarcely be less than a million more.”

To counterbalance this, he says, “ the rise in the price of labour
 “ was very little, if any thing, more than two-pence in the shilling,
 “ except only the money earned by piece-work, which, ten or twelve
 “ years ago, was not nearly so general as at present.”

He exhibits the following statement of the moderate rise in the price of labour, in the South of England:

		In 1737.		In 1787.	
Agriculture.	{ Labourers out of doors in	d.	d.		
	{ the country - -	10	12	the day.	
	{ Threshers - -	9	12		
	{ Labourers out of doors near great towns - -	16	16		

* From the information which I have received from various parts of England, I have reason to think, that the price of labour, in most parts of England, except in the vicinity of great towns, has been nearly doubled within the last 60 years. I shall exhibit some instances of this rise in a subsequent part of this work.

		In 1737.	In 1787.	
		d.	d.	
Cloth manufacture.	Scribblers	- - 14	15	the day.
	Shearmen	- - 15	18	
	Weavers' wages raised			
	about 2d. per day in			
	the coarse trade, and			
	nothing at all in the			
	superfine	- - —	—	
	Women spinners	- 6	7	

Of the benefits to be derived from houses of industry, he has no very sanguine expectations. He produces some very strong instances of the mortality amongst parish children, which he supposes these houses occasion; but fairly admits, that the only way of arriving at perfect certainty on this subject, would be, from an accurate account of the condition of every child as to health or sickness upon its admission, the annual average number of every age respectively, and the average number of deaths at each of those ages.

On that part (and, in my opinion, the most useful part,) of Mr. Gilbert's Bill, which proposes to limit the Poor's Rates, in future, to the average of the years 1783, 4, and 5, he makes the following judicious (but, I think, not unanswerable) observations. "This," he says, "is
 "surely an absurdity of the first magnitude. He might just as rationally
 "have proposed a Bill, that no further taxes should ever be laid upon
 "this kingdom, than what at present exist. Both are equally depen-
 "dent on future contingencies. If we should eight or ten years longer
 "be blessed with the continuance of Peace, and if population should
 "be nearly stationary, a considerable reduction of the national debt
 "will be effected; a reduction of taxes will soon follow; this will
 "lower the price of provisions, and naturally occasion a diminution of
 "the Rates, even though our Poor Laws, and their execution, remain
 "in the present state. On the contrary, should we soon be again
 "plunged into the horrors of War, and add another million to our pre-
 "sent debt; and should there be a rapid increase of manufactures,
 "trade, and people; an augmentation of taxes, an increase of the
 "price of provisions, and of parish rates, would be the inevitable
 "consequence;

“ consequence; or, should the proposed legal limitation take place, it
 “ would only throw the burden entirely upon the humane and benevo-
 “ lent, which ought be equally shared by the cruel and penurious.”

Various other plans were offered to the consideration of the Legislature, about this period. Mr. Townsend, in a dissertation on the subject, published in 1787, argues very forcibly on the injustice, oppression, and impolicy of the Poor Laws. He thinks that the labouring Poor are greatly deficient both in industry and economy, and that, till the degree of pressure be increased, they will never acquire habits of diligent application, and of severe frugality. To effect this, the Poor's Rates might, he says, “ in the space of nine years; be reduced nine-tenths; “ and the remainder being reserved as a permanent supply, the Poor “ might safely be left to the free bounty of the Rich, without the inter- “ position of any other law. But if the whole system of compulsive “ charity were abolished, it would be still better for the State.”

To assist the industrious Poor, he proposes, that, in every parish, one or more work-shops should be established, in which they might be certain of employment, and of daily pay for the work performed. Friendly Societies, he thinks, have been productive of good effects, and in some places have reduced the Rates; of their defects, he remarks, that “ all “ their members contribute equally to the public fund, without respect “ to their ability, to the proportion of their gains, or to the number of “ their children. By this regulation, some pay too little; others pay “ too much. The sum which they deposit weekly, is insignificant and “ trifling, when compared with what it ought to be. But the greatest “ misfortune is, that they are altogether left to their own option to join “ these Societies or not; in consequence of which liberty, many of “ these associations for mutual assistance are going to decay. If this “ be indeed a good expedient, it should be pushed as far as it will go; “ it should be firmly established, made universal, and subjected to whol- “ some regulations. The unmarried man should pay one quarter of “ his wages weekly, and the father of four young children, not more “ than one thirtieth of his income, which is nearly the sum which all “ contribute to their present clubs. To drive them into these Societies, “ no man should be entitled to relief from the parochial fund, who did “ not belong to one of these.”

He also recommends the division of common-fields in severalty, leaving the inclosure of the lands to every owner's discretion; the laying a tax upon ale-houses, and upon horses used in husbandry, to be gradually increased till farmers have returned to the use of oxen. This change, he thinks, would enable England not only to maintain her present population, but greatly to increase it. "The land which now supports one working-horse, in proper working order, would bear two oxen for draft and for the shambles, if not also one cow for the pail, or any two of these, with a man, his wife, and his three children." I confess, I do not see what advantage would be gained by an increased population, till there is an increased demand for them; or, in other words, till the national capital is so far increased as to be sufficient to provide a new stock with full employment. That there are more hands than work, is the case in some, (though not many,) parts of England, and in a considerable part of Scotland. Such places, (it has been justly remarked by Arthur Young, who, I believe, is the first political writer who has exposed the erroneous ideas on the advantages of excessive population not actively employed,) are over peopled; for they afford neither food nor employment for the inhabitants. Siberia, I have no doubt, is much more overstocked with people than Holland or Tuscany; though, in the former country, the average number of inhabitants to a square mile is about one; and in the latter, about an hundred. Mr. Townsend, in the preceding part of his work, seems to admit, that an increased population is not required; for he says, "Speculation apart, it is a fact, that, in England, we have more than we can feed, and many more than we can profitably employ, under the present system of our laws."

The subject was again taken up by Mr. Gilbert, in 1787, on a very general and extensive plan, upon the principle of that which passed the House of Commons in 1765; but with this difference, that, instead of large districts, consisting either of whole hundreds, or of a great number of parishes, he proposed an union of parishes into smaller districts, as more to the situation and convenience of country parishes, and less likely to be attended with the great expence of large buildings, which would be required in extensive districts; whereas, in a district consisting of a few parishes, many of the work-houses already provided.

vided might serve the purpose, or old deserted mansions might be converted into receptacles for the Poor.

Mr. Gilbert proposed to carry his plan into execution by means of,

1. A board of commissioners.
2. A district committee.
3. A district agent.
4. Subordinate overseers.
5. A county committee.

The following are the outlines of his plan :

Justices, at Quarter Sessions, are to appoint a day for choosing commissioners, who are to take an oath prescribed, and choose a chairman, and appoint a clerk and two agents, and receive information on oath from high constables, church-wardens, overseers, &c. ; and shall unite the parishes into distinct districts, not exceeding 13 parishes in a district, nor less than three ; but their powers shall not extend into any district, whose Poor are provided for under any special Act of Parliament.

These commissioners shall appoint not more than 40, nor less than 20 committee-men, in each district ; shall limit their qualifications by estate ; and shall fix the salary to be paid to the district agent ; and the committee-men shall be chosen by such as are qualified in a manner required by the commissioners, who shall also make a report of what they have done, in this respect, to the Justices of the Peace of their respective counties ; and shall deliver such reports to the Clerk of the Peace, which shall be printed, and a copy be sent to every acting Justice of the Peace, and to every high constable ; and the magistrates, at their Quarter Sessions, shall pay, out of the county money, the commissioners their reasonable expences.

If two-thirds of the persons qualified to be district committee-men are of opinion to adopt the provisions of the Act for incorporating the district, that district shall then be declared incorporated, and shall proceed to ballot for a committee, and elect overseers.

The overseers are to return, on oath, the names of such as are qualified to be balloted for as committee-men ; the mode of balloting is de-

scribed, and subjected to certain regulations ; the committee-men, when elected, are to take an oath to execute the trust reposed in them impartially. When the major part of the districts have adopted the provisions of the Act, it shall be declared established throughout the whole county or riding.

The district committee-men are empowered to appoint a district agent ; they are to forfeit for non-attendance ; and each district is to be a corporation.

All the Clergy are qualified to be chosen committee-men for the district in which they do duty for the time being, although not possessed of the qualification by estate.

New committee-men to be elected every year. Parishes are to choose three overseers, in the manner prescribed by the Bill, from whom the committee are to fix on one, who is to be allowed a salary ; and, from the time of the appointment of new overseers, the duty of the old ones is to cease.

The duty of the new overseers is, to enquire into the condition of the work-houses, and of the Poor within their respective parishes ; and to make a report thereof to the district agent, and also of all alterations that may happen in any particular, and to obey the orders and commands of the district agent, or the district committee.

The district agent is to lay such reports before the district committee, and to inform himself of all particulars with respect to the condition of the Poor, as to their maintenance and employment, &c. which he shall also report to the district committee at every meeting.

The property of all work-houses shall be vested in the district committee, with all the furniture, stock, and other instruments of trade, which have been bought and supported by the Poor's Rates and assessments ; which work-houses, &c. they may sell and dispose of, and the money arising from the sale to be applied in aid of the Poor's Rates.

And the district committee are empowered to erect houses of industry, where they cannot purchase or hire convenient buildings for that purpose ; and also to purchase or hire land, and to contract for waste or common grounds, with the consent of the lord of the manor.

The district committee to become additional trustees of any sums of money left in trust, to be laid out in the purchase of lands for any infants,

phants, lunatics, idiots, &c. in case the same shall exceed the sum of £20. until such sums of money are laid out in the purchase of lands; and the money, in the mean time, shall be laid out in the public funds, in the name of two or more persons, one to be named by the persons interested, and the other by the district committee, or any of them; and the interest, in the mean time, to be applied to the use of the persons interested. As soon as the house of industry shall be fitted up, and furnished for the reception of the Poor, in the manner directed by the Act; no person is to receive any pay, pension, or relief, except in cases of violent sickness or sudden accidents.

Where, by the laws now in force, magistrates are empowered to proceed on the complaint of the overseers of the Poor, with respect to any bastard child; they are then to proceed on the complaint of the district committee.

The district committee is empowered to apply what sums of money they may occasionally think proper, towards paying the weekly contributions of such of the Poor as are engaged in clubs and friendly societies for establishing funds by weekly contributions to their relief and support, when disabled by sickness or accidents; and also for the purpose of paying teachers and providing books for the instruction of children at Sunday schools: the district committee is also required to provide a school for the education of poor children.

Every district agent shall, with the assistance of the clerk of the district, keep in a book, an exact account of all expences attending building, furnishing, and providing stores and utensils for the house of industry, and of the maintenance of the people residing therein, and of all other expences respecting the Poor; and shall lay a state of such expences every month before the committee; and shall, in order to fix a proper measure of distribution from the parishes within the district, procure an account of the medium expences of the Poor of every parish, within the years 1783, 1784, and 1785, for which returns have been made to Parliament, and lay the same before the committee, who are to inspect and examine such returns, and make them as perfect as possible; and to that purpose they shall be empowered to summon before them such persons as have been parish officers for those years, and all other persons who can give them information on the subject, on oath, under pain of commitment for non-attendance, and of indictment for perjury if they speak falsely.

After

After the provisions of the Act are adopted within any district, the sums to be annually raised for the relief and maintenance of the Poor shall not in any parish exceed the annual sum so raised therein upon the medium of the said three years. The district agent shall also, at the end of every quarter of a year, a week at least before the meeting of the next monthly committee, make an accurate account of the expenditure within the said quarter, and lay it before the said committee, that they may be enabled to make an order for the levying the Poor's Rates; and the district agent shall also settle the quota of each parish, and lay the same before the committee for their allowance, which shall be notified to the overseers of the parish, who are to assess and collect the same, and pay it to the district agent.

And to raise money for buildings, &c. the committee may borrow a sum not exceeding four years' Poor's Rates, and assign over the buildings, &c. and all, or any part, of the Poor's Rates, as security for the principal borrowed, and interest.

No fees or perquisites shall be received for any business done by virtue of this Act, by any agent, overseer, clerk, or others. The appeal to the Poor's Rates to be to the Quarter Sessions.

If any district agent or overseer, on requisition from the district committee to come to account, shall refuse so to do, he shall be committed to the common gaol for a space not exceeding six calendar months, or until he complies. All penalties inflicted by the Act shall be recoverable before one Justice of the Peace.

The success of Mr. Gilbert's plan was in a great measure dependent on the regular attendance of country gentlemen to form the county committee, in which the whole controuling power was intended to be vested. Mr. Bate Dudley, who in 1788 published some judicious observations to shew the impracticability of Mr. Gilbert's proposals, remarks on this part of the Bill, which imposes a "penalty of £10. for non-attendance, " unless in cases of sickness or some unavoidable accident," that its provisions would probably be frustrated, " from the extreme reluctance " with which country gentlemen attach themselves to public business. " To make their appearance at a Summer Assizes, or an occasional " Quarter Sessions, is, (he says,) generally the utmost extent of their " county exertions." As a proof of this, he instances the neglected commissions of turnpikes, sewers, &c. " Under the dread, therefore, of
" being

“being dragged into a dry detail of unintelligible accounts, and complex items of parochial statements, the chief canvass of gentlemen on this occasion would be, to *avoid* the honour of being elected to so troublesome an office, which must subject them to a heavy penalty for non-attendance upon it's tedious offices.”

Mr. Bate Dudley himself proposes a modification and strict enforcement of the Poor Laws already enacted, and advises, amongst other regulations, the appointment of a Comptroller for each hundred or division of a county, with an adequate salary, with power to summon vestry meetings of the respective parishes, in order to audite their quarterly accounts; to receive parochial presentments, and other complaints against parish officers, upon oath, for misconduct in the discharge of their duty; and to make returns thereof, with all other requisite matter, to the Petty Sessions, to be from thence returned to the General Quarter Sessions, there to be duly enquired into, and the offending parties prosecuted at the expence of the county. He says, he sees no objection to the *High Constable* of the division being employed in this manner, with an additional stipend, and thus raised, from an useless, to an active, civil officer between the Justice and Overseer.

He thus investigates the origin of the evils complained of:

“To the *discretionary power*, which overseers have too long been suffered to exercise, contrary to every principle of justice and policy, (he says,) “the alarming increase of Paupers, as well as of Poor's Rates, may fairly be ascribed. And all the grievances on this subject, now crying aloud for redress, will be found to arise from some one or other of the following causes, viz.

“From overseers permitting idle and disorderly persons to remain, after they find they have illegally obtruded themselves into their several parishes.

“From settled inhabitants being suffered to grow slothful, and live without the visible means of gaining their bread.

“From the neglect of overseers, in not seeing the children of Paupers early brought up to proper habits of industry.

“From the partial issuing of parish certificates.

“From wanton and capricious removals.

“From groundless appeals to the General Quarter Sessions.

“ From the wanton expenditure of parish money in searching after
 “ Paupers, &c. &c.

“ From unfair Rates of partial assessments, and annexing charges
 “ thereto, not connected with the accounts of the Poor.

“ In all the particulars above stated,” (he adds,) “ the overseer will be
 “ found almost invariably to exercise his own discretion, from the pre-
 “ sent difficulty of punishing him for any mal-conduct.”

Respecting appeals, he proposes several regulations : he says, appeals from orders of removal, form a very heavy part of the parochial burthens ; and that, upon a moderate calculation, two thirds of the appeals heard at the Quarter Sessions, are either totally groundless, or prove wanton litigations between neighbouring parishes. Indeed, no one, who has attended Quarter Sessions, can doubt a moment but that the Law of Settlements proves an endless source of contention. I am fully persuaded, that the medium expence of law proceedings relative to the Poor, much exceeded £53,757. 11s. the sum stated in the Returns to Parliament in the year 1786¹.

¹ Of the unsatisfactory state of these Returns, Mr. Howlett, (in his Examination of Mr. Pitt's Speech, lately published, p. 42.) gives the following strong instance : “ The parish of
 “ Dunmow, at the time the returns were made, contained about 1600 inhabitants ; the parish
 “ of Toppesfield, something more than 600. They have each of them a work-house, and
 “ the treatment of the Poor in both, in every respect, is as nearly the same as possible. The
 “ former containing about two-thirds of inhabitants more than the latter, their returns
 “ of expenditure, for the end in question, if made on the same principle, might be expected
 “ to have been nearly in the same proportion. But how was the fact ? For Dunmow, £60. ;
 “ for Toppesfield, 1s. 10d. Had the return for Toppesfield been made on the same principle
 “ as that for Dunmow, it would have been upwards of £22. ; had the return for Dunmow
 “ been made on the same principle as that for Toppesfield, it would have been only about
 “ 5s. What then is the conclusion ? Is it that Dunmow was laudably attentive to the em-
 “ ployment of it's Poor, and that Toppesfield was shamefully negligent ? By no means. The
 “ only just conclusion is, that their joint information, for the purpose desired, is good for
 “ nothing ; and that what is thus certainly true with regard to those two particular parishes,
 “ is applicable to the rest of the kingdom, as far as returns under this article were made.”
 The cause of these two parishes making returns so strangely different, arose from their having
 formed different ideas of the information required. “ The return of 1s. 10d. for Toppesfield
 “ was the weekly sum per head paid to the master or governor of the work-house for feeding
 “ the Paupers in it ; the £60. for Dunmow, as far as I have been able to learn or conjecture,
 “ was the estimated annual cost of the raw materials for the employment of the work-house
 “ Poor.”

About

About this period, Mr. Beaufoy, member for Yarmouth, presented a petition to the House of Commons, from Mr. Wilkinson, proprietor of a very extensive iron-foundry in the parish of Bradley in the county of Stafford, “praying that his manufacturers might be deemed extra-parochial, in order to avoid their removal to their respective settlements, or being liable to the Rates of the parish where they reside; and stating, at the same time, that he will raise the taxes necessary for the relief of his own Poor within themselves, and that he will be bound, in his whole fortune, as a security for the same.”

On this application, Mr. Bate Dudley observes: “that it seems impossible for Parliament to comply with the prayer of so extraordinary a petition; the Legislature would, at no rate, venture to declare them extra-parochial, till an adequate provision was made for the relief of their Poor, &c. And how can the security for this necessary fund be ascertained in so increasing a colony of manufacturers? Where is the fortune that would be deemed equal to such a security? Independent of all this, the whole doctrine of Settlements must be thus overturned, and a new code of Poor Laws framed for this particular occasion, before Mr. Wilkinson could possibly be gratified in so singular a requisition.”

A short time after the failure of Mr. Gilbert’s plan, Sir William Young brought forward a Bill, of which the following are the principal features.

No person shall be removed, till actually chargeable; provided, that, upon due summons, he attends the magistrates, and makes oath of his last legal settlement; which deposition shall be attested and admitted as evidence of his last legal settlement in all courts of justice.

Ten years residence in a parish shall give a Pauper and his children a settlement, provided he has not been chargeable to any parish during that period.

No person, after the passing of the Act, shall gain a settlement, by paying taxes, by service, or by apprenticeship, unless the consent of two parish-officers be indorsed on his indentures.

* Curfory Remarks on Mr. Gilbert’s last Bill, &c. p. 20.

Bastards shall follow the settlements of their mothers.

Parishes shall be reimbursed the expences of removing persons when they become actually chargeable.

The law permitting parishes to farm out their Poor to be repealed; except that poor children, above the age of seven years, may be farmed out, to be maintained by a contract till the age of seventeen years.

No publican shall be a church-warden, or parish-officer.

Overseers shall give an account, every six months, to two Justices, of the stock and tools provided by them for setting the Poor to work; and of materials manufactured¹: and Justices shall be empowered to direct them to purchase other materials and implements out of the Poor Rates; which order they must obey under a penalty not exceeding ten pounds.

The overseers shall register in a book the names, age, sex, if married, if having children, of all poor persons, and their children receiving relief, the occasion of receiving it, and the authority by which it was directed to be given; and shall produce this book, twice a year, to two Justices, under the like penalty².

¹ In the following form:

Returns of the ware, stuff, materials and implements for setting the Poor on work in the parish of A. October 1st, 17

Materials received or purchased.	Materials manufactured.	Sold or disposed of.	Tools and implements.
<p>Received wool, 3 tod } Purchased ditto, 4 tod } 3 12 0 Purchased coarse Irish, 60 yards - - 3 15 0 Worsted yarn, &c. Flax, &c. Hemp, &c. &c.</p>	<p>4 tod combed 30 yards, 9 sheets made</p>	<p>2 tod combed 2 1 0 For use of aged Poor</p>	<p>Received nine spinning wheels. Broke one ditto. Purchased one ditto, &c. &c.</p>

² The following is the form of Register proposed by Sir William Young:

Return of Register of Poor receiving Collection or Relief in the Parish of A.
October 1st, 17

Persons.	Condition.	Children.	Age.	Occasion of Relief.	What Relief.	By whom ordered.
A. B.	Widower.	{ Mary B. Jane B. Thos. B.	Years.		s. d.	
			50	3 young children.	per week 3 0	L. M. Esq. J. P.
			5			
			4			
M. N.	Spinster.		3			
J. O.	Single man.		20	Ague.	per week 2 6	Vestry.
P. R., &c.	Single man.		70	Old age.	— — 2 0	L. M. Esq. J. P.
			80	Blind.	In poor-house.	Vestry.

Two Justices may order overseers to bind out poor children to persons residing in the place of their legal settlement.

In order to relieve agricultural labourers, who are often, during the winter, out of employment, the vestry in every parish is empowered, by notice affixed to the church door, to settle a rate of wages to be paid to labourers out of employ, from the 30th of November to the 28th of February; and to distribute and send them round in rotation to the parishioners, proportionally as they pay to the Rates; to be paid by the person employing them two thirds of the wages so settled, and one third by the parish-officers out of the Rates; and if any parishioner refuses to pay his proportion, the Justices may levy treble the amount by distress and sale of his goods and chattels¹.

Power is given to the Justices to appoint a superintending overseer² in parishes and townships, (with a competent salary,) to direct and controul the overseers, and to remove or fine him for misbehaviour; and to inflict penalties, not exceeding ten pounds, on parish-officers who obstruct him in the execution of his office.

Many of Sir William Young's preliminary observations evince an intimate knowledge of the subject which he discusses. It is no slight proof of the excellence of several of the measures which he recommends, that they have since been adopted by the Legislature, and are likely to produce the most salutary consequences³.

¹ This clause seems borrowed from a practice, which is very general in Buckinghamshire, and many of the midland counties: during the winter, labourers, who are out of employ, go round from house to house, and are employed, or paid, by each parishioner, in proportion to his assessment to Poor's Rates. Labourers, who subsist in this manner, are called *Roundsmen*. See pp. 29 and 384 of the Second Volume of this Work.

² Of the utility of a Standing Overseer, the Reader will find some instances in the Second Volume of this Work.

³ "Not removing poor persons, till actually chargeable; settling bastard children, (in certain cases,) with their mothers; establishing friendly societies."

Sir William Young asserts, that prosecutions, arising from removals, are frequent, p. 32. Mr. Howlett, (Exam. of Mr. Pitt's Speech, 16. is of a very different opinion, and thinks that the Laws of Settlement have had no effect at all. I have made some enquiries on this subject, the result of which the Reader will find in various parts of the Second Volume of this Work. The objections to inclosures, more especially of commons and waste lands, which Sir W. Y. strongly insists upon, are, I think, ill founded. He thinks that they tend to increase the Poor's Rate.

The Rev. Mr. Haweis, in a pamphlet published this year, offers some judicious observations respecting the utility of Friendly Societies. The principal feature of his scheme is to oblige every man or woman, who labours for hire, and earns 3s. or more a week, to contribute, out of their earnings, weekly, from a twenty-fourth to a twenty-sixth part; and that every occupier of lands and tenements, instead of their present assessment, should pay one twentieth part of the rent of their lands and tenements towards the relief of the Poor, to be applied to the same fund. The collections to be made every Sunday evening, by a vestry held for the purpose. Mr. Haweis objects to the incorporation of counties for this purpose, or even of hundreds or districts. Employers to be responsible for the subscription of their labourers. Harvest-men, who have their board, and menial servants, to pay an eighteenth part of their wages.

There are some other inferior regulations, which it seems unnecessary to transcribe. The principal objections to Mr. Haweis's plan, and indeed to many other similar schemes, are, that their Friendly Societies are to rest upon the basis of a compulsory subscription, which is, in effect, a tax. It is a most inequitable one, to compel, as Mr. Haweis proposes, every labourer to contribute a thirty-sixth, or twenty-fourth, of their earnings, whatever they may be, to receive only 4s. a week in time of sickness or old age. He says, "In this case, every labourer and
 " artificer will contribute in proportion to his gain and his real ability;
 " and though, on being disabled, he may not receive a larger proportion of
 " relief than his fellows, yet, if a worthy member of society, and possessed of the least tincture of true charity, he can have no reason to
 " complain of the inequality of his contribution. Let him consider, supposing he earns twelve shillings a week, how much better he can afford
 " to contribute four-pence, than he who only earns six, to contribute
 " two-pence. The one will have still eleven shillings and eight-pence
 " to provide for himself and family; the other only five shillings and
 " ten-pence. Where then is the hardship of the superior contributor?" The hardship is, that a tax of this nature offers a benefit to the lazy, at a less price than to the industrious. Diverting the whole of the Poor's Rate at once, as the Author proposes, from its usual course of application, would be productive of great confusion and distress.

Several able publications on the subject of the Poor Laws have made their appearance since the year 1787; and various patriotic expedients have been suggested by philanthropic writers, for meliorating the condition of the industrious classes. It would, however, swell this Work beyond due bounds, were I to particularize the different plans which have been offered to the consideration of the Public: and to abstract an Author's proposal, or to give a partial view of his arguments, would, in most instances, be doing him a manifest injustice. I must, therefore, content myself with referring my Readers to the many able works, of which he will find the titles in the Appendix to this Volume¹; and with assuring them, that they will find much interesting information on this subject in Mr. Ruggles's History of the Poor; in Mr. Davis's Reports of the Circumstances of Labourers in Husbandry; and in Count Rumford's Experimental Essays, on topics of no less importance to the opulent, than to the indigent classes of the community².

Within the last ten years, a few, but very important, regulations, on subjects in which the Poor are intimately concerned, have received the sanction of the Legislature. Pawn-brokers, both in the metropolis and in the country,—a class of people, to whom the distressed are often unavoidably obliged to have recourse,—were regulated by several judicious Acts of Parliament; which, whilst they limited the rates for money lent on pledges, and, by various humane provisions, prevented the unfortunate from being obliged to part with their property without a fair consideration, at the same time imposed severe penalties on those, who availed themselves of the means which such shops are calculated to afford, to commit depredations on the property of others³. This is, however, an evil, which, it is to be feared, too often occurs. The Author of the excellent Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, lately published, remarks, that a class of sharpers obtain licences to become

¹ No. xviii.

² Mr. Voght's Account of several institutions in Hamburg from the year 1788, though a work professedly relating to a foreign establishment, contains much information highly deserving of attention by the administrators of our schools of industry.

³ See 27 Geo. 3. c. 37. 28 Geo. 3. c. 50. 29 Geo. 3. c. 57. 33 Geo. 3. c. 53. 36 Geo. 3. c. 87.

pawn-brokers. He observes, “ that any person, even the most notorious rogue or vagabond, who can raise ten pounds to pay for a licence, may, at present, set up the trade of a pawn-broker; and it is even said that some have got licences, who have actually been on board the hulks. This class of swindling pawn-brokers,” he says, “ are uniformly receivers of stolen goods, and, under the cover of their licence, do much mischief to the Public; which might be prevented, in a great measure, by placing the power of granting licences in the hands of the magistrates of the division upon the footing of public-houses, and rendering it necessary for all persons to obtain a certificate of character before they can obtain such licence, and also to enter into a recognizance for good behaviour.”

In 1790, Justices of the Peace were empowered to visit the work-houses within their jurisdiction, and to examine, and certify the state of the houses, of the Poor therein, and of their food, cloathing, and bedding, to the next Quarter Sessions; and to summon the masters of work-houses to appear at the Sessions, to answer complaints made against them; and Justices, at the Quarter Sessions, were authorized to make such orders and regulations, for the removing of any cause or complaint, as they should think proper.

The same Act also empowers Justices of the Peace, if, upon any such visitation, they find the Poor in the work-house afflicted with any contagious or infectious disease, to make such order as they think proper for immediately procuring medical or other assistance, or providing them with proper food, or for separating and removing such Poor as are

* A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, 2d ed. 1856.

	Persons.	Amount of Licences.
The number of pawn-brokers within the bills of mortality, } paying a licence of £10. a year, is stated at - -	213	£2130
And of pawn-brokers in the country paying £5. a year -	431	2155
Total	644	£4285

It is added, that the property of the poorest and most distressed part of the community, to the amount of more than half a million sterling, is constantly in the hands of pawn-brokers in the metropolis alone. This seems a very moderate statement. I was present, three or four years ago, at the trial of a pawn-broker at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for receiving stolen goods; when it appeared, that above 30,000 pawns went through his hands in a year.

afflicted with the infectious disease, until the next Quarter Sessions, when the Justices assembled there are to make such further order, and to direct the charges of relieving such Poor to be defrayed out of the parish Rate in such manner, as they may think proper ¹.

This Act, however, does not extend to work-houses in incorporated districts, which are regulated by a special Act of Parliament ².

The 32 Geo. 3. c. 45. makes some additions to the Vagrant Laws, which have been already noticed ³. The following clause respects a branch of police, which is still capable of many improvements;—the ordering of convicts discharged from prison, and persons acquitted at the Assizes or Sessions. It enacts, “ that any of his Majesty’s Justices
“ at the Assizes, and the Justices at the General or Quarter Sessions, or
“ any Justice of the Peace, shall be empowered to order, whenever he
“ or they shall think proper, any convict, upon his discharge from pri-
“ son, to be conveyed by pass, under hand and seal, (in the manner di-
“ rected by the 17 Geo. II. c. 5.) and to convey by pass any person who
“ shall be acquitted at the Assizes, or General or Quarter Sessions, or
“ discharged by proclamation or otherwise, who shall, of himself, or her-
“ self, or by any other person in his or her behalf, apply to the Court
“ whereat he or she has been acquitted or discharged, or to any Justice
“ of the Peace, to be conveyed as aforesaid; and the Judge, Justice, or
“ Justices aforesaid, shall certify, in such pass, that the person so conveyed
“ was discharged from prison; or a person acquitted, or otherwise dis-
“ charged, at the Assizes or Sessions, as the case may be; and such
“ convict, or person acquitted or discharged, shall pay no fee whatever
“ for such pass ³.”

I should imagine that a discharged convict would seldom think of applying for a pass to be conveyed to his parish, where he would probably be best known, and consequently avoided as a person not fit to be entrusted or employed. We do not ever hear of persons of this description applying to the overseers for work; parish money, however, could not be expended more advantageously to every party concerned, than in supplying the miserable outcasts of society, who are turned adrift upon the world from the prisons or the hulks, without friends, or the

¹ 30 Geo. 3. c. 49.

² See p. 306.

³ 32 Geo. 3. c. 45. § 4.

means of subsistence, with a temporary employment sufficient to maintain them. I should imagine that parish-officers would be equally justified in providing these unhappy mortals with the means of returning to the paths of honesty, as in assisting a day-labourer (which is often done in the midland counties in the case of roundsmen,) with occasional work during the severity of an inclement winter. The able magistrate, whose Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis I have before cited, takes notice of this prominent defect in the police of the metropolis and the country. No person, he remarks, will employ discharged convicts, “even if they were disposed to return to the paths of honesty, “unless they make use of fraud and deception, by concealing that they “have been the inhabitants of a prison or of the hulks. At large upon “the world, without food or raiment, and with the constant calls of “nature upon them for both; without a home, or any asylum to “shelter them from the inclemency of the weather; what is to become “of them? The police of the country has provided no place of industry, in which those who were disposed to reform might find subsistence in return for labour, which, in their present situation, becomes “useless to them, because no person will purchase it by employing “them; and hence it is to be feared that, through the medium of these “miserable outcasts of society, crimes are increased, and become a regular trade, because many of them can make no other election.”

The prevention of this, he thinks, “will ever remain an unquerable difficulty until some general house of industry can be established in the metropolis, where persons discharged for petty offences, “as well as strangers, and other persons out of work, may have an “opportunity of finding, at least, a temporary employment sufficient to “maintain them¹.”

The 32 Geo. 3. c. 57. provides several very humane and judicious regulations respecting the maintenance and discharge of parish apprentices. By the 33 Geo. 3. c. 35, some necessary additions were made to Mr. Gilbert's Act passed in 1782. I feel it unnecessary to detail, in this

¹ Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, 2d ed. 99. 4462 persons were discharged from the eight gaols in the metropolis in the year ending in October 1795. Treatise, &c. 350.

place, their various provisions; and must refer the Reader to the Appendix to this Volume¹, in which he will find these Acts at length, together with the very important Acts passed in the year 1793 and 1795, for the relief and encouragement of Friendly Societies²; the Acts for the relief of the families of militia-men, which alone have made a very considerable addition to parochial (or rather county) expenditure³; the Act passed in 1795, to prevent the removal of poor persons until they become actually chargeable⁴; the Act to enable the guardians of incorporated parishes to increase the assessments within their districts⁵; and the Act empowering Justices in parishes, where work-houses have been erected (under the 9 Geo. I. c. 7.) in which the Poor are maintained by a contractor, to direct the overseers, in certain circumstances, to relieve poor persons at their own houses⁶.

I HAVE thus briefly endeavoured to delineate the origin and progress of the Poor Laws; to point out the various modifications of them, which have, from time to time, been recommended to the attention of the Legislature; and to notice such circumstances, recorded by our historians, as more peculiarly refer to the condition and circumstances of the labouring classes of the community. Of the relative comforts resulting to the peasant, the artificer and the manufacturer, from the exertion of their industry in ancient and modern times, the Reader will, I trust, be enabled to form some estimate from the information which I have laid before him; more especially if he takes into consideration (what should always in enquiries of this nature be duly appreciated,) the degree of civil liberty enjoyed by the subject at the different periods of our history.

¹ See Appendix, No. viii. p. ccix. and p. ccxiv. ² See Appendix, No. viii. p. ccxx. and p. ccxxx.
³ See 33 Geo. 3. c. 8. and 34 Geo. 3. c. 47. ⁴ 35 Geo. 3. c. 101. See Appendix, p. ccxxx.
⁵ 36 Geo. 3. c. 10. See Appendix, p. ccxxx.

⁶ 36 Geo. 3. c. 23. See Appendix, p. ccxxx. Of the 3d section of this Act, Mr. Capel Loft remarks, that "it is difficult to account for the different authority by which a renewal of relief is to be made, compared with the original order, the former by one, the renewed by two Justices. This may greatly obstruct the efficacy of an otherwise excellent and most beneficial Act; as, by the paucity of acting magistrates in many districts, and occasional absences, there may, for a length of time, be only one Justice acting in a district. The power was in other respects so guarded against abuse, that it does not seem to have been in any need of this check." Ann. of Agric. xxvi. 314.

Admitting, as I readily do, that the Form of a Government, whether limited or despotic, is not an unerring criterion of the domestic prosperity of nations, because the defects of political institutions may be more than compensated by local advantages, I think it may be fairly contended, that, in a country which has gradually advanced from poverty to wealth, and from servitude to freedom, the individual comforts enjoyed by our forefathers may be inferred from the proportion of rights and liberties which they could call their own. If, to use the words of the Learned Commentator on the Laws of England, "the commons," (as was the case till the close of the Lancastrian Civil Wars, "were generally "in a state of great ignorance;" if "their personal wealth, before the "extension of trade, was comparatively small; and the nature of their "landed property was such as kept them in continual dependence upon "their feudal lord, being usually some powerful baron, some opulent "abbey, or sometimes the king himself," I should be inclined, (and I think with reason,) to infer, that, in those times, the sphere of social enjoyments was greatly circumscribed, and the reward of labour comparatively insignificant. In the same manner, from reviewing the æra of freedom which has practically existed since the Revolution, I should venture to assert, *à priori*, that the exercise of civil and religious liberty must, from the very nature of things, have been attended with a proportionate acquisition of social comforts; and that, not only the aggregate body of the nation must have advanced to wealth and independence, but that the portion of the community, which consists of those who are emphatically called the *labouring* classes, must have considerably bettered its condition in the course of the present century.

Although, however, the agriculture, commerce, and manufactures of the kingdom may have been considerably improved and extended, (notwithstanding the six expensive Wars which we have engaged in since the Revolution,) it may, perhaps, be contended by some, that the situation of the industrious day-labourer has not been meliorated; that the reward of labour has not risen in proportion, either with the expence of the necessaries of life, or the capital of the nation; and that the very heavy accumulating charge of maintaining the Poor, is a melancholy, but unerring, indication of their increasing numbers, and of growing

¹ Blackst. Comm. iv. 433.

poverty and distress among our peasantry and working manufacturers. Whether the indigent classes at this day are more numerous than they were at the Revolution, I cannot take upon me, peremptorily, to decide; but, viewing the comparative facility with which the exigencies of the State have in modern times been provided for, and connecting the ease of the labourer with the increased demand for labour, I feel no difficulty in persuading myself that the beneficial effects of national opulence have been diffused through every order of the State. Grateful indeed, I am, for the blessings which were conferred on this country by the Revolution; and fully sensible that we owe to the force of character and energetic resolution, which distinguished our forefathers at that interesting period, the commencement of a new æra, “in which the bounds of prerogative and liberty have been better defined, the principles of government more thoroughly examined and understood, and the rights of the subject more explicitly guarded by legal provisions, than in any other period of the English history¹ :” but I much doubt, whether the abilities of the “master workman,” (as Mr. Burke calls King William²,) or of those who strenuously co-operated with him in rescuing the nation from despotism, raised that class, whose manual labour is their only support, to an immediate unexampled pitch of ease and comfort. They, indeed, laid the foundations of future greatness; but could not confer, directly, on the humble occupations of the artisan or husbandman, those domestic gratifications, and social enjoyments, which can be expected only from slow and imperceptible improvement. That they, however, gave that tone and energy to the nation which are necessary to fit them for industrious exertion, is abundant praise. Admitting, what seems to be the fact, that this important epoch in our annals did not produce any alteration in the Constitution; yet, if (as it has been justly observed,) “it changed the maxims of administration, which have every where “so great an influence on the condition of the governed³ ;” if it inspired the great mass of the nation with that spirit of thinking and acting which have been conducive towards rendering them more happy and independent; the evils arising from the Funding System, which has,

¹ Blackst. Comm. i. 212.
the present Parliament, 1796.

² Mr. Burke's Two Letters, addressed to a Member of
7th ed. 88.

³ Chalmers's Estimate, 2d ed. 66.

(I think,

(I think, unjustly) been ascribed to the policy of our great deliverer and his adherents', have been more than fully compensated. It is not my intention to enter into a comparative estimate of the resources of the nation at the close of the last, and at different times in the present, century: but I cannot avoid observing, that, at no period since the death of King William, has this country ever exhibited those alarming symptoms which have ever been thought to indicate an enfeebled and declining industry, as it did in those years immediately subsequent to the Revolution. The great debility of England at that period is justly attributed to "the practice of hoarding in times of distrust, which prevented circulation;" to "the disorders of the coin, that only augmented the former evil, while the government issued tallies of wood for the supplying of taxes;" to "the inability of the people to pay taxes, while they could find no circulating value, either for their labour, or property; to the turbulence of the Lower orders, and the treachery of the Great²." All these evils are now happily, in a great measure, if not entirely, removed.

It is not, I may add, an unfair mode of judging of the earnings, and consequently of the thriving condition of the workman, to ascertain the quantity of work annually performed by him. The change which has taken place, in this respect, in England, since the Peace of Ryswick, in 1697, is astonishing. Not to perplex my Reader with long details from Custom-house Books, or Parliamentary Reports, I will briefly observe, from the latest writer on the subject, that, "as to our commerce, the imports and exports of the nation, now six-and-forty millions, did not then amount to ten. The inland trade, which is commonly passed by, in this sort of estimates, but which, in part growing out of the foreign, and connected with it, is more advantageous, and more substantially nutritive to the State, is not only grown in a proportion of near five to one, as to the foreign, but has been augmented, at least, in a ten-fold proportion³." More work, then, it may be inferred, is done now than was performed at the Revolution; and if we admit Dr. Price's supposition, that our population has declined since that period,

¹ See Swift's Hist. of the Four Last Years of Queen Anne.
2d. ed. 59.

² Chalmers's Estimate,
³ Mr. Burke's "Two Letters, &c." 7th ed. 79, &c. 1796.

it will follow, that, with fewer hands, we are more industrious, and, (if the comforts of labourers depend on the demand for labour,) more comfortable. And the same argument will hold, in a proportionable degree, if we suppose, what is probably the case, that the population of Great Britain, though greater than it was a century ago, has not kept pace with increasing commerce, and improving manufactures.

It is unreasonable to suppose, that the effects of good government, and the accumulations of industry, are confined to enriching the monied capitalist, and landed proprietor; to swelling the emoluments of office, and increasing the splendour of a devouring metropolis.

The humblest peasant, in the remotest province of the kingdom, is not uninterested in that improving state of society, which creates new wants and dependencies: the cultivation of the useful arts, (even of those which are not immediately connected with his occupation,) are ultimately beneficial to him. The invigorating rays of commerce and manufactures, however dazzling and resplendent in the capital, extend their genial influence to the hamlet:

“ The self-same sun that shines upon” the “ Court,
 “ Hides not his visage from” the “ Cottage, but
 “ Looks on alike ¹.”

Great and burthenfome as the Poor's Rate may appear, from the Returns which were made to Parliament in the year 1786, and from the more recent communications which the Reader will find detailed in the Second Volume, it will be evident, from the following statement of it's amount at different periods, that the rise in the Poor's Rates has not kept pace with other branches of national expenditure, or even with our increased ability to pay them, which may in some measure be ascertained from the value of cargoes exported at different periods since the Restoration ².

¹ Shakespeare: *Winter's Tale*, A. 4. S. 3.

² The fourth column of this Table is extracted from the *Chronological Account of Commerce*, in Mr. Chalmers's *Estimate*, 2d ed. 207. The value of cargoes exported is ascertained by the Custom-house Ledger. This valuation, however, falls considerably below the truth; and can only be used as a standard to determine the comparative prosperity of different periods.

Years.

Years.	Poor's Rate ¹ .	Years.	Revenue.	Years.	National Debt.	Years.	Value of Cargoes exported.
1673.	£840,000 ²	Average Rev. in Ch. Hld's reign. } 1689.	£1,800,000 ¹²			1663. }	Engl. 2,043,043
1677.	608,333 ³					1669. }	Do. 4,086,087
1677.	700,000 ⁴						
1685.	665,362 ⁵						
1698.	819,000 ⁶		2,001,855 ¹³	1689.	£664,263 ¹⁹	1697.	Do. 3,525,907
1700.	1,000,000 ⁷	1701.	3,895,285 ¹⁴	1701.	16,394,702 ²⁰	1700.	Do. 6,045,432
Q. A's reign	1,000,000 ⁸	1710.	5,691,803 ¹⁵	1714.	54,145,363 ²¹	1709.	Do. 5,913,357
1751.	3,000,000 ⁹	1759.	8,523,540 ¹⁶	1748.	78,293,313 ²²	1749-51.	Do. 12,599,112
1776.	1,720,316 ¹⁷	1776.	10,265,405 ¹⁷	1775.	135,943,051 ²¹	1776.	G. B. 14,555,699
1783-5.	2,107,749 ¹⁴	1786.	15,096,112 ¹⁸	1784.	257,213,043 ²⁴	1786.	G. B. 6,100,725

Of the comparative comforts enjoyed by the labourer in the last and present century, as far as they can be estimated from the amount of his earnings, I shall have occasion to speak in a subsequent part of this Work.

The detailed historical view which I have given of the various Laws, which have been enacted from time to time, concerning the Poor, has, I am sensible, already extended this Volume to too great a length. I feel, however, that I cannot properly conclude this enquiry, without entering into a short investigation of the principles on which the national provision for the indigent classes is founded; without noticing the extensive plan which has lately been brought forward by the Minister, for meliorating the condition of our labourers; and, without pointing out such circumstances, relative to their domestic situation, and social enjoyments, as appear to me to be worthy of parliamentary consideration.

Every man is, I conceive, bound to contribute his mite to the aggregate of general knowledge: more especially, when any matter is in contemplation, which is intended to soften the lot of the most necessitous of our fellow-creatures. A plan for the relief of the Poor is, indeed,

"A great design! if executed well,

"With patient care, and wisdom-temper'd zeal."²⁵

¹ I beg leave to apprise the Reader, that the sums under this column are to be considered as of no greater authority than the passages in the various authors from which they are extracted, and to which I refer.

- ² See p. 189. ³ See p. 196. ⁴ See p. 198. ⁵ See p. 230. ⁶ See p. 249.
⁷ See p. 264. ⁸ See p. 264. ⁹ See p. 314. ¹⁰ See p. 363. ¹¹ See p. 371.
¹² Sinclair's Hist. of the Revenue, 2d ed. i. 197. ¹³ Id. i. 202. ¹⁴ Id. ii. 12.
¹⁵ Id. ii. 20. ¹⁶ Id. ii. 29. ¹⁷ Id. ii. 30. ¹⁸ Id. ii. 30. ¹⁹ Id. i. 2d part, 46.
²⁰ Id. i. 63. ²¹ Id. i. 71. ²² Id. i. 85. ²³ Id. i. 90. ²⁴ Id. i. 93.
²⁵ Thompson.

The Legislators, who shall attempt the arduous task of reducing the contradictions of our Poor Laws, to one uniform system of national benevolence; who shall aim at administering relief to the indigent, in the way most congenial to the feelings of humanity; but, more especially, at superseding the necessity of parochial assistance, by rendering the accumulations of humble industry more secure and more productive; who shall endeavour to train the children of the labouring classes, by public instruction, to order and industry; and, in short, to introduce a reform, which shall itself contain the seeds of further improvement, and thus, efficiently, to promote the great ends of charity; will deserve well of their country. For, however unattainable the perfection, which they aim at, may be, the thorough revision of a complicated and corrupted code may, and probably will, have the good effect of stimulating active minds to investigate subjects of the highest importance, and of thus producing the most beneficial consequences to mankind. When the condition of the peasant and working manufacturer becomes a more general topic of enquiry, well ascertained facts will, whilst they level in the dust the plausible schemes of theoretical philanthropy, lead to innumerable discoveries, which, though unenforced by legal regulation, may prove acceptable, and useful to the great mass of the community.

From the collision of practical research, many valuable truths, and many profound axioms of State policy, will be struck out. The country will learn too, from the adoption of measures which are directed to advance the comforts of domestic life, and social happiness, among the most numerous order in the State, that all the wisdom of the Legislature is not derived from, nor directed to, the Custom-house, Excise-office, or Exchequer. Even if no new regulations should result from the plan which Mr. Pitt has already opened to Parliament, the nation will be benefited by the acquisition of that useful knowledge which forms the basis of political science. The dissemination of truth will at once facilitate the operations, and promote the great ends, of Government. "I persuade myself," (to use the words of an elegant writer¹),

¹ Dr. Middleton: See the Preface to his Works.

“ that the life and faculties of man, at the best but short and limited,
“ cannot be employed more rationally or laudably, than in the search of
“ knowledge; and especially of that sort, which relates to our duty,
“ and conduces to our happiness. I look upon the discovery of any
“ thing which is true, as a valuable acquisition to society; which can-
“ not possibly hurt, or obstruct, the good effect of any other truth what-
“ soever: for they all partake of one common essence, and necessarily
“ coincide with each other; and, like the drops of rain, which fall se-
“ parately into the river, mix themselves at once with the stream, and
“ strengthen the general current.”

B O O K II.

OF NATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE POOR : OF THE ENGLISH POOR SYSTEM : PROPOSED AMENDMENTS : OF THE DIET, DRESS, FUEL, AND HABITATION, OF THE LABOURING CLASSES IN GREAT BRITAIN : AND OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

CHAPTER I.

Of National Establishments for the Maintenance of the Poor : of the English Poor Laws : and of Mr. PITT's proposed Bill for the better Relief of the Poor.

THAT it is the duty of every man, according to his abilities and opportunities, to relieve his fellow-creatures in distress; and that, in so doing, he will not more attend to the dictates of Humanity, or the precepts of Christianity, than to those tacit, but powerful, obligations, which, by the reciprocal ties of intercourse, of wants, and of assistance, connect us together as members of the same civil society; will, no doubt, be readily and generally admitted. It is the never-failing theme of the Moralist, and the Divine, that a benevolent attention to the wants of the Poor, is a necessary part of a virtuous character. The Politician is no less persuaded, that the interest of the State is essentially concerned in the ample and efficient performance of this duty : that, in rescuing the *Infant Poor* from beggary and want, the sources of useful population are augmented : that, in a ready care and cure of the *Sick Poor*, (by the restoration of whose health, industry recovers her best means,) the productive

capital of the nation is increased; and that a bare subsistence for the *Aged Poor*, is no more than the fair right of those, who have spent their best days, and exhausted their strength, in the service of the Public.

It is, however, obvious, that persons of these descriptions are not the only indigent classes in the community. They, indeed, comprise all who cannot work; but, together with these, many industrious, and more idle, are usually found among the great body of the Poor: and as the infirm are avowedly proper objects of charity, it is generally contended, that the industrious are no less entitled to employment, and the idle not less loudly call for compulsion to force them to labour. Of the means, however, of attaining this very desirable end, speculative writers on government have formed very different opinions. In most countries, the prevailing idea, and practice, are, that, in the ordinary circumstances of society, there is no occasion for the interposition of the Legislature, to secure a maintenance, even for those, whose infirmities disqualify them from working; but that both the amount and the mode of administering relief, to those who stand in need of relief, may, safely, be left to the discriminating liberality of individuals. In none, however, which have attained to any tolerable degree of opulence or civilization, is this principle adopted in it's fullest latitude. The necessity of a permanent establishment for supporting the Poor, is, I conceive, admitted to a certain degree, in every country, in which there are public schools for the education of their children; dispensaries, from which medicines are gratuitously supplied; hospitals, for the reception and cure of the sick; or alms-houses, for lodging and maintaining the aged and necessitous.

In England, however, the claims of the indigent (whether infirm, industrious, or idle,) to a national provision, whatever the law may say upon the subject, are recognized, by the practice consequent upon that law, in their fullest extent; and, whilst the streams of individual charity flow, as copiously as in other countries, through the channels of private benevolence, and through many great public, but local, institutions, the poor man, whether his wants are of a permanent or temporary nature, is assured, that, if he should not be supplied from these sources, he can still have recourse to the never-failing reservoir of parochial contribution.

The

The arguments which may be advanced in favour of a national establishment for the maintenance of the Poor, I conceive, rest chiefly on the following positions :

That at no period of our history have the labouring classes been able to subsist, without a continual and unremitting exertion of labour ; that they are exposed to calamities, such as no human foresight can avert, which may reduce them to penury and want ; and that, whatever improvements may take place in civil society, there is no probability that “ the Poor will ever cease out of the land.”

That they, whose capital is their labour, when deprived of the means of exerting it, must rely, during such incapacity, on the assistance of others ; and must either be supported by voluntary contributions, or by a compulsory maintenance assigned them by the Legislature.

That this obligation on the Rich, to provide a competent subsistence for the Poor, is created by the very nature of civil society ; for that, (to use the words of a right reverend Author¹,) “ however flattering to “ the love of liberty the idea of an original compact may be, and how- “ ever useful to ascertain the rights and duties of magistrate and subject, “ yet, in reality, every man is adopted, by compulsion, into the society “ of which his parents were citizens, entitled only to that portion of “ the public wealth which accrues to him by inheritance, and pre- “ cluded from all right of occupancy over any other ; that, conse- “ quently, if his parents were so poor as to transmit no patrimony to him, “ he is born the inhabitant of a land, every spot of which is appropri- “ ated to some other person ;” that “ he cannot seize any animal or ve- “ getable, for his food, without invading *property*, and incurring the pe- “ nalty of the law ;” that, consequently, in order to acquire any of those articles, which are essential to his existence, and which are ultimately derived from land, he must, in return, devote the stock he possesses, his personal industry, to the service of the Rich, or, in other words, to the service of those who have capital to employ him ; and that they, in return, are bound, in justice, to allow him a share of his earnings, proportioned to the benefit which they derive from his labour, and fully adequate to supply him with the necessaries of life.

¹ Dr. Woodward, the late Bishop of Cloyne.—See his “ Address to the Public, on the “ Expediency of a regular Plan for the Maintenance and Government of the Poor in Ireland.”

The eminent Divine above quoted, on this point, asks the following very pertinent question: If the poor man's rich neighbours are not bound, in justice, to provide for him a competent maintenance, he demands, "by what right did they take upon them to enact certain laws, " (for the Rich compose the legislative body in every civilized country,) " which compelled that man to become a member of their society; " which precluded him from any share in the land where he was born, " any use of its spontaneous fruits, or any dominion over the beasts of the field, on pain of stripes, imprisonment, or death? How can they " justify their exclusive property in the *common heritage* of mankind, " unless they consent, in return, to provide for the subsistence of the " Poor, who were excluded from those common rights by the laws of " the Rich, to which they were never parties?"

If the Rich, therefore, are bound in justice to relieve their poorer neighbours, when they become incapable of bartering their labour for subsistence, (and that it is the interest of the Rich to assist them, in such circumstances, has been already shewn,) the only remaining question seems to be, whether this desirable end will be best effected by giving the Poor a legal right to a maintenance, or by leaving them to unconstrained charity? To adopt the latter measure, it has been often contended, is to load the considerate, the industrious, and the benevolent, not only with the support of the improvident, the idle, and the worthless, but with the whole of that burthen, which ought to be equally borne by the unfeeling and the covetous, in proportion to their ability. It must, indeed, be confessed, that there requires but little experience in charitable collections to enable a man to pronounce, that a subscription, which depends on voluntary contribution, although, perhaps, patronized, at first, even by the fordid, from motives of vanity and ostentation, and by the avaricious, with views of interest, would very soon be doomed to rely wholly on the liberal and humane for support.

It is also farther contended, that the arguments in favour of a national establishment for the support of the Poor, are not at all weakened by the possibility, that the certainty of relief, which such a system holds out to innocent persons, suffering under unmerited and unavoidable distress, will inevitably operate towards seducing less deserving objects into improvidence, idleness, and extravagance: qualities, which, however
they

they may be regarded by the mere Moralist, are classed by the Politician among the worst vices. But to this suggestion Dr. Woodward unanswerably replies, by putting the case of an idle prodigal man, who, in the extremity of age or sickness, cries out for food or medicine, and asks, "if any one can avow, that we should suppress every tender feeling, stop our hand, when, by the instinct of compassion, it is stretching forth relief to him, and, with a stoical indifference, suffer him to perish, from a deep and doubtful speculation, whether such relief may not encourage idleness, and become, in the end, a political evil?"

It may be further urged, that, where the Poor are not supported from a national fund, a country must be exposed to all the evils attendant on vagrancy, and mendicity; that a law prohibiting a Pauper, who had no other resource, from begging, would be neither wise, humane, nor practicable; and that, in all countries, where there is no regular establishment, to which the Poor, in cases of need, may resort, begging is either expressly permitted by the laws, or connived at by the magistrates; and, that such connivance will ever be the consequence of laws equally impolitic and unjust, for the same reason that juries are induced to acquit offenders, when the punishment affixed by the law to their crimes is extremely severe: that begging, thus sanctioned, will be followed by two descriptions of persons;—the really deserving object of relief, who begs from necessity; and the idle impostor, who makes begging a trade: that the importunate and undeserving will too often extort, from the wearied hand of charity, what had been denied to unfeigned, though perhaps suspected, distress: and that, even among real objects of charity, (who have an equal claim to assistance, but not to an equal share of assistance,) accidental circumstances will sometimes supply one person in want, with perhaps more than adequate support; whilst another, whose conduct has been more meritorious, and whose wants, if properly understood, would be found to be really more pressing, shall be passed by, unheeded, and unrelieved.

* The Jewish Law very humanely reasoned in the same manner: "*Si pauper accedat quem non cognoscunt, dicatque esurio, non inquirant de eo an fraudulentus sit; sed statim dabunt ei quo pascatur.*"—"Si pauper à te petat eleemosynam, et nihil sit in manu tuâ quod des ei, placabis eum bonis verbis; prohibitum enim est objurgare pauperem, vel vocem attollere contra ipsum, quoniam cor illius fractum est." Maimonides, de Jure Pauperis. Prideaux's Translation, 71. 101. See Barrington on the Anc. Stat. 4th ed. 540.

These

These are the principal arguments, which have been, or which, I think, may be, advanced in favour of a national provision for the Poor: and as they have been faithfully stated and urged, it seems to be but fair to contrast them with some on the opposite side of the question; which, to many, may perhaps appear to be equally conclusive and satisfactory.

With respect to the necessity of that unremitting labour, which almost every political writer, (whether friendly or adverse to the Poor System,) insists on, for the promotion of individual happiness and national prosperity, it may be questioned, whether it is not holding out a very discouraging prospect to the efforts of men in social life, to tell him, that, whatever improvements may take place in civilization, it must ever be the lot of a considerable portion of the community to consume their days, with the exception of the short intervals requisite for meal-times and rest, in continued and unceasing bodily labour. Can that state of society, in which a human being is made to perform the office only of a machine, or, in other words, where he can exercise no intellectual faculties, nor display a single virtue, besides that of patient submission, be considered as having nearly approached that degree of perfection of which human institutions are susceptible? What can be more deplorable than the condition of those, whom the thirst of gain has seduced, not only into toilsome, but also into unwholesome trades? The successful imitator of Lord Bolingbroke's style, in his 'Vindication of Natural Society,' supposes, "that there are, in Great Britain, upwards of an hundred thousand people employed in lead, tin, iron, copper, and coal mines: these unhappy wretches scarce ever see the light of the sun; they are buried in the bowels of the earth; there they work, at a severe and dismal task, without the least prospect of being delivered from it; they subsist upon the coarsest and worst sort of fare; they have their health miserably impaired, and their lives cut short, by being perpetually confined in the close vapour of these malignant minerals. An hundred thousand more at least are tortured, without remission, by the suffocating smoke, intense fires, and constant drudgery, necessary in refining and managing the products of those mines'."

* Although many of the processes on metals are found to be extremely detrimental to the health of the workmen, it is pleasing to reflect, that, in several of our manufactories, (particularly in the lead-works,) such improvements have, of late years, taken place, as have preserved the health of the people employed, without lessening the profits of the proprietor.

Although this representation of many of the calamities of social life is adduced as a specimen of Lord Bolingbroke's style of reasoning, yet it seems to be far from exaggerated. Indeed, Mr. Burke himself, in his "Reflections on the Revolution in France," expresses himself, (and in my opinion, very humanely, and justly,) in the same manner¹. In reprobating the confiscation of church property in France, he says, that regular ecclesiastics "are as usefully employed, as if they worked from dawn to dark, in the innumerable servile, degrading, unseemly, unmanly, and often most unwholesome and pestiferous occupations, to which, by the social oeconomy, so many wretches are inevitably doomed. If it were not," (he adds,) "generally pernicious to disturb the natural course of things, and to impede, in any degree, the great wheel of circulation, which is turned by the strangely directed labour of these unhappy people, I should be infinitely more inclined forcibly to rescue them from their miserable industry, than violently to disturb the tranquil repose of monastic quietude. Humanity, and, perhaps, policy, might better justify me in the one, than in the other. It is a subject, on which I have often reflected, and never reflected without feeling from it. I am sure, that no consideration, except the necessity of submitting to the yoke of luxury, and the despotism of fancy, who, in their own imperious way², will distribute the surplus produce of the soil, can justify

¹ Reflections, &c. 238.

² The working of mines seems to have been productive of more immediate hardships on the persons so employed, than almost any other occupation whatsoever: it was, therefore, in ancient times, the peculiar allotment of slaves: the Reader will perhaps will be surprised to be informed, that this state of servitude actually existed in this kingdom, not longer than twelve years ago. It appears from the language of the Legislature, that a miner, in the Northern parts of Great Britain, was as much transferable property as a *villain regardant*.

"Whereas, by the Statute Law of Scotland, as explained by the Judges of the Courts of Law there, many colliers and coal-bearers, and salters, are in a state of slavery or bondage, bound to the collieries and salt-works, where they work for life, transferable with the collieries and salt-works, when their original masters have no further use for them: and whereas persons are discouraged and prevented from learning the art or business of colliers or coal-bearers, and salters, by their becoming bound to the colliers and salt-works for life, where they shall work for the space of one year, by means of which, there are not a sufficient number of colliers, coal-bearers, and salters, in Scotland, for working the quantities of coal and salt

“ justify the toleration of such trades and employments in a well regulated State.”

Far be it, however, from me to insinuate, that, in general, the extension of any of the arts is injurious to society. The busy labours of the loom and the anvil, in many respects, no doubt, advance it's comforts and it's happiness : the discovery of any power in nature, the application of any production of the earth to the uses of man, are, unquestionably, acquisitions of useful knowledge. It is, however, a just subject of regret, that the pursuit of these desirable, and sometimes attainable, objects, should so often be carried on by contrivances of human ingenuity, such as, in their first operations at least, are avowedly subversive of the health and the morals of the persons, whom they employ. In all such cases, there should be strong evidence of the probability, that the sum of good which will ultimately be derived from the adoption of new measures, (either in the enlarged scale of general politics, or in the more limited sphere of manufacture and commerce,) will greatly overbalance the immediate ill effects, which are known to be unavoidable, before we eagerly grasp at new projects, by which certain evil must be inflicted, for the hope only of contingent advantages. No one can have perused Adam Smith's “ Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the “ Wealth of Nations,” without being sensible that the division of labour is the fruitful source of improvement ; and that, whilst it increases the

“ salt necessarily wanted ; and many new-discovered coals remain unwrought, nor are there
 “ a sufficient number of salters for the salt-works, to the great loss of the owners, and disadvantage to the public : and whereas the emancipating or setting free the colliers, coal-bearers, and salters, in Scotland, who are now in a state of servitude, gradually, and upon
 “ reasonable conditions, and preventing others from coming into such a state of servitude,
 “ would be the means of increasing the number of colliers, coal-bearers, and salters, to
 “ the great benefit of the public, without doing any injury to the present masters, and would
 “ remove the reproach of allowing such a state of servitude to exist in a free country.”
 Preamble to 15 Geo. 3. c. 28.—Before the passing of this Act, Mr. Pennant remarked, that, in Scotland, thousands of our fellow-subjects were the property of their landlords, appurtenances to their estates, and to be transferable with them to any purchaser. He adds :
 “ multitudes of colliers and salters are in this situation, who are bound to the spot for their
 “ lives : and even strangers, who come to settle there, are bound by the same cruel custom,
 “ unless they previously stipulate to the contrary. Should the poor people remove to another
 “ place, on a temporary cessation of the works, they are liable to be recalled at will, and constrained to return on severe penalties.” *Tour in Scotland*, ed. 1776. Part 2d, 203.

aggregate wealth of the country, it no less promotes the comforts of the individual, whenever it adds to his productive powers, without debilitating his frame, weakening his understanding, or debasing his morals. That this, however, is too frequently the effect of the division of labour, this great political writer seems to have been fully convinced. His remarks on this subject, (with a slight degree of qualification,) may be admitted as incontrovertible. He says: "In the progress of the division of labour, the employment of the far greater part of those who live by labour, that is, of the great body of the people, comes to be confined to a few very simple operations; frequently to one or two. But the understandings of the greater part of men are necessarily formed by their ordinary employments. The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations, of which the effects, too, are perhaps always the same, or very nearly the same, has no occasion to exert his understanding, or to exercise his invention, in finding out expedients for removing difficulties which never occur. He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion, and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become. The torpor of his mind renders him not only incapable of relishing, or bearing a part in, any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender sentiment; and, consequently, of forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life. Of the great and extensive interests of his country, he is altogether incapable of judging; and unless very particular pains have been taken to render him otherwise, he is equally incapable of defending his country in war. The uniformity of his stationary life naturally corrupts the courage of his mind, and makes him regard with abhorrence the irregular, uncertain, and adventurous life of a soldier. It corrupts even the activity of his body, and renders him incapable of exerting his strength with vigour and perseverance, in any other employment than that to which he has been bred. His dexterity at his own particular trade seems, in this manner, to be acquired at the expence of his intellectual, social, and martial virtues. But, in every improved and civilized society, this is the state into which the labouring Poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless Government take some pains to prevent it."

• *Wealth of Nations*, 5th ed. iii. 182.

This picture is, perhaps, somewhat too highly coloured : I believe the martial spirit of those regiments, which are composed entirely of manufacturers, is not less conspicuous, than that of a corps formed of agricultural labourers. A tailor's trade is extremely sedentary, and would, (it might be supposed,) disqualify a man for military exertion ; and yet, (as Mr. Pennant remarks,) General Elliot's regiment of Light Horse, which was formed out of the choice spirits of the trade, performed prodigies of valour, worthy of their predecessor in arms, the great Johannes Acutus¹. It is probable, however, that an experienced General, although he might value heroes of this description for a coup-de-main, would prefer the weather-beaten peasant in the more fatiguing operations of warfare.

Intense application to any kind of bodily labour is generally admitted to be peculiarly injurious to children : their bodies, whilst they are in a growing state, require much more air and exercise than are required by those who are more advanced in life. Habits of industry and perseverance are undoubtedly of so much importance, that they cannot be too early or too strongly inculcated. These, however, may be, (and, I am persuaded, are,) in general, acquired at home, by the children of the labouring classes, full as effectually, and at less cost and less risk, than in working schools, or in manufactories. The objections which have been repeatedly urged against parochial work-houses, and houses of industry ; that, by removing the young from their parents, they destroy all domestic connections ; that, under the lash of a task-master, the freedom of the British spirit is broken ; and that, reared in crowds, the rising generation lose the spring of health in contagion and restraint² ; seem to be no less applicable to those places, in which great numbers of boys and girls are thronged together, at the spinning wheels, the loom, or any other mechanical employment. It may, perhaps, be worthy the attention of the Public, to consider, whether any manufacture³, which, in
order

¹ Sir John Hawkwood :—Pennant's London, 1st ed. 403.

² See Howlett's "Insufficiency of the Causes, &c." and Sir William Young's "Considerations on the Subject of Poor-houses."

³ Mr. Gisborne remarks, that "of manufactures which injure the health of the workmen, not by any noxious quality in the article operated upon, but by external circumstances
usually

order to be carried on successfully, requires, that cottages and work-houses should be ransacked for poor children; that they should be employed,

“ usually attending the operation, an example may be produced in that of cotton. ‘ The ready communication of contagion to numbers crowded together, the accession of virulence from putrid effluvia, and the injury done to young persons through confinement and too long continued labour,’ are evils which we have lately heard ascribed to cotton-mills, by persons of the first medical authority assembled to investigate the subject. To these must be added an evil which still brands with disgrace the practice of some cotton-mills, the custom of obliging a part of the children employed there to work all night; a practice which must greatly contribute towards rendering them feeble, diseased, and unfit for other labour, when they are dismissed at a more advanced period of youth from the manufactory.”

“ Enquiry into the Duties of Men,” &c. ed. 1795. ii. 376.

In the cotton-mills (it would seem from Dr. Aikin’s Description of the Country round Manchester, 1795, 4to. p. 219.) “ children of very tender age are employed; many of them *collected from the work-houses* in London and Westminster, and transported in crowds, as apprentices to masters resident many hundred miles distant, where they serve, unknown, unprotected, and forgotten by those to whose care nature or the laws had consigned them. These children are usually too long confined to work, in close rooms, often during the whole night; the air they breathe, from the oil, &c. employed in the machinery, and other circumstances, is unwholesome; little regard is paid to their cleanliness; and frequent changes from a warm and dense, to a cold and thin* atmosphere, are predisposing causes to sickness and disability, and particularly to the epidemic fever which so generally is to be met with in these factories. It is also much to be questioned, if society does not receive detriment from the manner in which children are thus employed during their early years. They are not generally strong to labour, or capable of pursuing any other branch of business, when the term of their apprenticeship expires. The females are wholly uninstructed in sewing, knitting, and other domestic affairs, requisite to make them notable and frugal wives and mothers. This is a very great misfortune to them and the public; as is sadly proved by a comparison of the families of labourers in husbandry, and those of manufacturers in general. In the former, we meet with neatness, cleanliness, and comfort; in the latter, with filth, rags, and poverty, although their wages may be nearly double to those of the husbandman. It must be added, that the want of early religious instruction and example, and the numerous and indiscriminate association in these buildings, are very unfavourable to their future conduct in life.”

It is but fair to remark from the same Author, that “ remedies for these grievances have been adopted in many factories, with true benevolence, and much success.”

It is justly remarked by Mr. Gisborne, that the situation of parish children, transported, as is often the case, from work-houses in the metropolis, to factories in distant counties, demands the protecting interference of the Legislature. Government can never be better employed than in measures which tend to promote the comforts, the health, and the morals of the people. As magistrates have no power of entering the work-shops of manufacturers, for the pur-

* Warm and dense—cold and thin. Is this philosophical?

ployed, by turns, during the greater part of the night, and robbed of that rest which, though indispensable to all, is most required by the young; and that numbers of both sexes, of different ages and dispositions, should be collected together in such a manner, that the contagion of example cannot but lead to profligacy and debauchery; will add to the sum of individual, or national, felicity. I have not the means of laying before the Public particular instances of the bad effects (both with regard to health and morals,) of manufactures, which employ a large body either of grown people or of children. The advantages and disadvantages resulting from this branch of industry, have never, perhaps, been fully investigated. In the preceding part of the volume, the intimate connection which appears to subsist between manufactures and a national Poor¹ have been slightly touched on: but to pursue the subject through all its intricacies and windings would require a distinct Essay, and much exceed the limits of my plan. It is more consistent to the views of this work, to consider those two important questions; first, how far the Public has any right or authority to interfere in, and controul the education of the people; and, next, admitting the right, how far it is either their duty or their interest so to interfere. On both these points men of great name have differed exceedingly.

In 1765, the celebrated Dr. Brown published his "Thoughts on Civil Liberty, Licentiousness, and Faction:" in which he noticed, with great earnestness and force, the danger that threatened the State from the circumstance of every private man being left at liberty to

poses of enquiring into the treatment of the children employed there; and as the latter are generally kept in a sort of confinement, which, in a great measure, deprives them of the power of lodging complaints; Mr. Gisborne tells us, that he knows, from indisputable authority, that cruel punishments have been inflicted on such as have found means of complaining, in order to deter them and their companions from similar attempts. He suggests, that the London parish-officers should be obliged to keep accurate registers of apprentices sent out; (this they are obliged to do by 7 Geo. 3. c. 39. § 20.) that quarterly returns of the state of these apprentices should be transmitted from the several factories, and be authenticated by the signatures of the neighbouring magistrates; and that the latter should be authorised and required to visit the factories, and carefully to inspect the situation and treatment of the children. "Enquiry into the Duties of Men, &c." ii. 379.—Perhaps it might not be amiss to introduce some such regulations as these here suggested into such bill as it may be thought proper to bring forward for the amendment of the Poor Laws.

¹ See p. 61.

educate his children, not only without a reverence for the laws and religion of his country, but in an absolute contempt of them. The only remedy for this great defect, he conceived to be a general and prescribed form of education, to which all the members of the community should legally submit: and the right of the State to impose such authoritative code of education, he argued, was founded in reason, and sanctioned by the example of some of the freest States of antiquity.

Now, the aim and object of every institution, in which the Public is concerned, is to render mankind good, in order that they may be happy. Neither of these ends is it possible to attain, in any tolerable degree, otherwise than in society; for this, then, the social state is formed, and governments instituted: and for this, seminaries of learning, in like manner, are instituted, to direct the nascent passions, and mould the infant reason into such habits of thinking and acting, as may best promote, not only the weal of each individual, but the general welfare. In a certain sense, Government, (that is, Society in it's state of perfection,) is founded on opinion: inasmuch as no skill nor force can render any government efficient and durable, when the opinions of those who are to be governed are generally adverse to it. And opinions on principles are not innate. Men are not, all at once, but gradually, to be trained to political, as well as to moral, rectitude; the former being indeed only the completion and perfection of the latter; because no policy is wise or good, which is not founded on pure morality. Every Legislature, says Montesquieu, should make all it's other institutions correspond with it's government: that is to say, every individual in a nation, being one of the great family of the nation, should be brought up in a way suitable to the views of the great household; just as individual parents bring up and dispose of their children; not merely with views confined to the children alone, but with some reference to the general interests of the family. But this cannot be done unless Government gives the impulse. "As well may we fancy, that, of itself, the sea will swell, and that without winds the billows will insult the adverse shore, as that the gross mass of the people will be moved and elevated, and continue, by a steady and permanent direction, to bear upon one point, without the influence of superior authority or superior mind."

“mind’.” To impress the people with that energy of character which constitutes a great nation, cannot be effected by those (I may almost say, negative,) exertions of Government, which secure to individuals the free application of their industry, and protect them in the enjoyment of their property. It is the duty, I conceive, of those, who, from their superior wealth, virtue, or abilities, become the leading members of the community, to promote the advancement of moral endowments, no less than to administer to the physical necessities of their fellow-creatures. In offering instruction to the rising generation, both in the principles of our religion, and in the useful worldly sciences, in such a way as does not violate parental feelings and authority, (of which all popular Governments are tender ;) a Government supplies the Public with the best elements of political knowledge, and the firmest foundations of moral virtue. Far from being adverse to free discussion and popular enquiries, education, when fostered, encouraged, and extended by the ruling powers of the country, becomes it’s best preservative. It holds the mirror up to public men and public conduct; and, in proportion to the light which it receives, exhibits them to the world with less misrepresentation.

Public opinion, even whilst it is merely speculative, is by no means a thing of indifference to the Public; because it naturally and unavoidably has great influence on the public practice. If, therefore, every Society, or every Government (for, in this case at least the terms are synonymous,) has, as is certainly the case, a right to devise and pursue means to ensure the continuance of their own existence and welfare, they must also, for the reasons just stated, unavoidably have the right, by leading, though not by driving, to regulate the public opinion. And what else is the regulation of the public opinion, but education? Social man is for ever under pupillage; and even national laws are but so many rules of education. And, happily for the world, the public mind, capable as it is of being misled, may also, by due attention, both on the part of Government, and of individuals of ability, be led to what is right.

They are without excuse, when they do not exercise the right and

¹ Mr. Burke’s Two Letters, &c. 1796, p. 89.

ability which they possess to influence public opinion. They are as much concerned to inculcate right notions, and to restrain erroneous ones, as they are to promote right conduct. In one way or other, both leading men and public bodies become the fountain of all public principles. And governments, no less than individuals, have every encouragement to induce them to be careful to cultivate right principles in early life, when alone they can be cultivated to any good purpose. "Albeit good laws have always been reputed the nerves or ligaments of humane society, yet are they no way comparable in their effects to the rules of good nurture. For, it is in civil, as it is in natural, plantations, where young tender trees (though subject to the injuries of air, and in danger even of their own flexibility) would yet little want any under-proppings and shoarings, if at first they were well fastened in the root."

True and important as these positions may be, it must be confessed, that some ancient States, (the perfection of whose institutions have received a praise they do not deserve,) took a very singular method of enforcing them. Some regarded children not merely as belonging to those who, under Providence, were the instruments of bringing them into the world; but as the property of the public: and the magistrate, rather than the parent, took charge of their education. Along with a community of wives, Lycurgus also ordained a kind of community of children. Fathers had not the care of their own children. As soon as a child was born, it was delivered to the Officers of the State; "who initiated them early in the manners, the maxims, the exercises, the toils; in a word, in all the mental and bodily acquirements and habits which corresponded with the genius of the State. Family connexions had no place. The first and leading object of their affection was the general welfare. This tuition was carefully continued, till they were enrolled in the lists of men. To secure the manners thus acquired, they were prohibited from travelling into other countries, lest they should catch infection from ill example: and on the same ground

* See Sir Henry Wotton's Survey of Education: Reliquiæ Wottonianæ, 78.

“all visits from strangers were forbidden. Thus were they strongly
“and unalterably possessed with the love of their country”¹.

All these principles and reasonings have been roundly and vehemently objected to, and most of them refuted, by modern writers. Their objections, I apprehend, are faithfully and fully collected and stated by that political, as well as polemical, veteran, Dr. Priestley, in his *Essay on the First Principles of Government*.

There are sundry objections urged by the Doctor against the interference of Government, *in any manner or degree*, in the direction or controul of the education of the people: many of his arguments appear to me to be very objectionable; but as it is no part of the plan of this work either to write an answer to Dr. Priestley, or a treatise on national education, I decline a particular discussion of them.

Let it suffice to observe, that though, instructed in my philosophy, as I bless God I am, by the laws of the land, and the religion of my country, I wish not to see either parental authority, or parental duty, abridged in a single atom of what it now possesses; I am no less anxious to see the Legislature also continue to watch over the education of the people, with parental solicitude and tenderness. To me, I own, it seems not likely to answer any very good purpose to argue too curiously about abstract rights and duties of this nature. No government either has, or pretends to have, any such absolute right to controul a parent in the instruction of his child, as some captious writers are pleased to fancy: all that they aim at, or can have any motives inducing them to aim at, is to take some care and pains to prevent any parent's bringing up his children, if any should be found weak and wicked enough to do so, in principles and practices injurious to the general weal; and also to see,

¹ Dr. Brown's *Thoughts of Civil Liberty*, § vii. p. 46. Such too is the love of their country to be found among savage nations at present. The Esquimaux Indians, who were brought into England a few years ago, were miserable among the comforts of civilization; and returned with eagerness to their own barbarous tribes. The Spartan policy of education, to say the least of it, was adverse to every social propensity, and inimical to every social improvement. I have no idea of the *general welfare* of a State, but as composed of the *welfare of individuals*; nor can I conceive it possible that this should be promoted by a government, which is not (to use Mr. Burke's words,) “closely connected in it's most efficient part with *individual feeling* and individual interest.”

where a parent is either unwilling or unable to take proper care of his child, that the child be not lost for want of care ; or, what is perhaps still more to be dreaded, be suffered to become the curse, instead of the blessing, both of his Parents, and the State.

And thus much this Government, as well as most others, long has done, much to the comfort and benefit of the Nation ; and therefore, it is to be hoped, thus much it will long continue to do. The many seminaries of learning, so munificently endowed, and which, if not founded, have been patronized, by the Public, and regulated by statutes and laws, enacted, or sanctioned, by the Legislature, though they may not, perhaps, absolutely compel parents to submit to public regulations in this point, are such as, in many instances, afford them strong inducements to provide their children with wholesome education.

Wholly to neglect all culture, and all instruction, of even the poorest classes of the community, will, in all governments, produce a relaxation of principle, and a corruption of manners : and these must eventually terminate in the destruction of order, and the dissolution of government.

With respect to education in general, I believe it is now admitted, on all hands, that intellectual acquisitions are beneficial to every class of the community, and that the children of our labourers are not the less likely to become useful members of the State, in that sphere of life for which they are probably destined, from having been instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic ; accomplishments, which, the paradoxical Mandeville says, “ are very pernicious to those whose livelihood has “ no dependence on these arts,” and “ who are forced to get their daily “ bread by their daily labour’.” It is not to be supposed, (nor does experience warrant such conclusion,) that a man who has received such an education as enables him to read his Bible, to write a plain letter on business, and to keep an account of his receipts and expences, will be led, from a vain conviction of his superior qualifications, to neglect that manual labour which is the main prop of his family. Nor, if the illiterate are not the most prudent house-keepers, does it seem, as many

¹ Essay on Charity Schools, ed. 1795, 179.

would contend, that the keeping them so is the best way of securing the tranquillity of the State. Idleness, discontent, and a dislike to subordination and order, I am persuaded, more frequently arise, and are more easily diffused among the ignorant and uneducated, than among those who have passed some part of their early years in the acquisition of intellectual endowments.

It will be readily acknowledged, that the great misfortune of the Poor, as well as of the Rich, is not so much the being ignorant of what is proper for them to do, as the being indisposed to do even what they know, and allow to be proper: and that, as to the point now under consideration, the Poor frequently fail, from mere inability to pay for it, to provide for their children any competent degree of instruction, and not seldom through their own carelessness and mismanagement. I am happy, however, to have had it in my power to record some honourable exceptions to this general position. In the Second Volume of this Work, the Reader will find several instances of labourers affording no mean portion of their earnings towards procuring instruction for their children: and, it will be found also, that those who might be thought least able to spare any thing for this purpose, do in general spare the most. Humanity, as well as Policy, points out the propriety of the Public's seconding the meritorious exertions of such meritorious persons; and in what better way can they do this, than by establishing, as Adam Smith proposes, in every parish or district, a little school, where children may be taught at least reading, writing, and accounts, for a reward so moderate that even a common labourer may afford to pay it? He proposes to have it rendered thus moderate, by the Public's paying the master partly, but not wholly; and he puts it on this footing, because if such master were wholly, or even principally, paid by the Public, there is reason to fear he would soon learn to neglect his business.

Education in England is become, in all its departments, so extremely expensive, that, but for the endowments and foundations of many pious and patriotic persons "in the old times before us," the great body of the people, even those in the middle spheres of life, must often be but indifferently educated; and were it not for such seasonable aids, as have just been mentioned, from a benevolent and no less patriotic

Public, the Poor could not be taught at all. And yet, in the estimation of this great political writer, some competent share of instruction, in these essential points, is deemed so necessary to their usefulness, that, before any man should obtain his freedom in a corporation, or be allowed to set up any trade either in a village or town corporate, he would have him subjected to an examination, to be refused or admitted according as he is found deficient or qualified.

To be able to read, write, and cast accounts, are acquisitions worth paying something for. If they contribute at all, as no doubt they do in a very great degree, to encourage an artisan, or a labourer, either to exert more ingenuity, or to practise more integrity, the Public, heavily as they are already laden with such burthens, should not begrudge it. The quality of the work done, by such improved artists, is better, and the quantity greater. They are encouraged by seeing ingenuity thus cherished and honoured, and by experiencing that honesty is indeed the best policy. To call such a bounty a *tax*, is to give an ill name to a good thing, merely to bring it into dis-esteem: it should not even be called a *bounty*, in the sense in which exemptions and encouragements to particular branches of trade are called bounties. It is doing no more than every liberal-minded man delights to do; i. e. rewarding worth and abilities: and differs from the voluntary benevolence of a solitary individual, chiefly by it's being more efficient, from being combined with the like benevolent exertions of other benevolent men. That such endeavours to cultivate and bring forward obscure, but real, merit, which, but for such encouragement, might else, like some neglected wild flower, have wasted it's sweetness on the desert air; that such institutions are congenial to the public mind, and equally grateful to the giver and the receiver; seems to be proved by the great number of free schools, and charity schools, as well as by endowments for similar purposes of much larger scope and compass; which, in general, owe their existence, not to legislative interference, but to private benefactions. And I hope the instances are few, in which posterity have been so degenerate as to condemn or complain of such liberality in their ancestors. It is to degrade intellectual endowments, and to put learning on a footing with an article of manufacture, or of commerce, to say,

as has been said, that that learning which required a bounty to encourage it, would soon fall into disrepute, and become a losing trade. The only bounty that the case either admits of, or requires, is, that the means of acquiring learning be rendered accessible to all men : and there is not a man in the kingdom, possessed of learning, who does not, if his education was at all public, in some degree, owe it to such bounty.

If, however, the suspicious spirit of Modern Liberty views with a jealous eye the most distant idea of a Government's interfering to make the education of the Poor a public concern, one cannot but wonder it has so long and so patiently endured the interference of the Legislature, not only in this country, but in most parts of Europe, in another department of popular instruction ; I mean, the learning a trade under a master. The Reader will recollect, that, by the Statute of Apprenticeship¹, it was enacted, that no person should, for the future, exercise any trade, then followed in England, without having previously served an apprenticeship of seven years ; and that serving seven years as apprentice, to any trade, should give a person an exclusive right to exercise that trade in any part of England². “ This law, with regard to the exclusive part of it,” (the Learned Commentator on the Laws of England informs us,) “ has, by turns, been looked upon as a hard law, or as a “ beneficial one, according to the prevailing humour of the times “ which has occasioned a great variety of resolutions in the Courts of “ Law concerning it ; and attempts have been frequently made for its “ repeal, though hitherto without success. At common law every man “ might use what trade he pleased ; but this Statute restrains that liberty to such as have served as apprentices : the adversaries to which “ provision say, that all restrictions, (which tend to introduce monopolies,) are pernicious to trade ; the advocates for it allege, that unskilfulness in trades is equally detrimental to the Public, as monopolies. This reason, indeed, only extends to such trades, in the exercise whereof skill is required³ ; but another of their arguments goes “ much

¹ 5 Eliz. c. 4. See p. 126. and Appendix, No. viii. p. cliii.

² 5 Eliz. c. 4. § 31.

³ Lord Coke says, this Statute was not enacted only that workmen should be skilful, but also that youth should not be nourished in idleness, but brought up and educated in lawful sciences

“ much farther, viz. that apprenticeships are useful to the common-wealth, by employing of youth, and learning them to be early industrious ; but that no one would be induced to undergo a seven years’ servitude, if others, though equally skilful, were allowed the same advantages without having undergone the same discipline.” This argument, however, only shews, that whilst the Law of Apprenticeship exists, it would be unjust to narrow the sphere in which those, who have passed through the appointed course of service, are allowed to exercise their industry : and seems tacitly to admit, that a seven years’

sciences and trades. He likewise justly remarks, that, if he who takes upon him to work is unskilful, his ignorance is a sufficient punishment to him. 11 Rep. 53, 54.

Of the legal refinements produced by the 5 Eliz. c. 4. the following report is a sufficient specimen :

“ The King *versus* Plume.

“ He was indicted upon the Statute of the 5th of the Queen, for that he had set up, used, and exercised ARTEM, MYSTERIAM, SIVE MANUAL’ OCCUPATIONEM, POMARIJ, *Anglicè*, of a fruiterer, being a trade, mystery, or manual occupation used in this kingdom, the 12th day of January, anno Eliz. 5. ; in which trade the said Plume was not brought up by the space of seven years, &c. And to this the defendant demurred.

“ For that it hath been held, that the Statute extends not to every trade, but to such an one that requires art and skill, and therefore not to a hemp-dresser, as in the 1 Cro. ; so in 2 Bolltrode, 188. : nor to a pippin-monger, as in 1 Roll’s Rep. 10. And so a *gardiner* hath been resolved not to be within the Act, in the 14th of this king : the indictment was for the trade of a *barber*, but no judgment given ; (but others said, that in that case judgment was for the king.)

“ On the other side, it was said, that the question here is not of those which sell apples in stalls ; but the trade of a fruiterer is well known, and they are incorporated in London, and there requires much skill in sorting of fruit, and in judging the durableness thereof.

“ But the Court inclined for the defendant : but being informed by the Counsel for the king, that there were many presidents, it was adjourned ” Vent. i. 327.

Upon a second argument, “ Scraggs Chief Justice, and Dolben, inclined to the opinion, that it was a mystery within the Statute, there being great art in chusing the times to gather and preserve their fruit. And that the cause deserved the more consideration, for that the fruiterers were an ancient corporation in London, (viz.) from the time of Ed. IV. : also a barber, upholsterer, and, lately, a coach-maker. Ruled to be within the Act.”

Jones and Pemberton seemed to be of another opinion ; “ for it would be very inconvenient to make every one that sells fruit by the penny within the Act, and *maius et minus* would make no odds ; surely since the 5th Eliz. there would have been some prosecution by the Company of Fruiterers in this case, if it would have lain. Brewers and bakers require skill, and yet not within the Act. But the Court took time to deliver their positive opinions. *Et adjournatur.* ” Vent. i. 346.

servitude

servitude is a hardship which is submitted to with reluctance. The other arguments in favour of the general utility of apprenticeships appear to be not warranted by fact. Can it be asserted, that youth are more employed, or more industrious, in those places, to which the operation of the Statute of Apprenticeship is confined, than in those parts of the country where they are at liberty to set up a trade as soon as they conceive themselves sufficiently skilful to carry it on? Is a young manufacturer, at Birmingham or Manchester, less skilful in his business, or less industrious, than a journeyman cutler at Sheffield, or a journeyman hatter in London? It is true, indeed, that those who set up early for themselves, will, sometimes, at first, perform their work very slovenly; but the authority which is exercised over them by their customers, at the same time that it will prevent the trade from being overstocked, will soon oblige them to perform their work ably and substantially. Is not this the case in those trades, to which industry has a free and early access, and in which demand and competition regulate the number and the profits of the workmen? The body of a coach, which is put together by a coach-maker, who commences workman when he pleases, is never complained of, as less artfully constructed, or less likely to answer the purpose for which it is intended, than the wheels of the same carriage, which are made (*secundum artem*,) by a master wheel-wright, who has learned the mysteries of his craft by a long apprenticeship. It is justly remarked, that “the institution of long apprenticeships has no tendency to form young people to industry”. A journeyman, who
 “works

¹ In the case of Raynard and Chafe, (1 Burr. 2.) Lord Mansfield, in delivering the judgment of the Court, made the following remarks on the 5 Eliz. c. 4. “First, this is a penal law. Secondly, it is a restraint of natural right: and thirdly, it is contrary to the general right given by the common law of this kingdom: I will add, fourthly, the policy upon which the Act was made is from experience become doubtful. Bad and unskilful workmen are rarely prosecuted. This Act was made early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Afterwards, when the great number of manufacturers, who took refuge in England from the Duke of Alva’s prosecution, had brought trade and commerce with them, and enlarged our notions, the restraint introduced by this Law was thought so unfavourable, that in 33 Eliz. in the Exchequer, (4 Leon. 9. pl. 39.) it was construed away; for it was holden clearly by the Judges in that case, (which construction, however, I take not to be Law now,) that if one hath been an apprentice for seven years, at any one trade mentioned within the
 “said

“ works by the piece, is likely to be industrious, because he derives a
 “ benefit from every exertion of his industry. An apprentice is likely
 “ to be idle, and almost always is so, because he has no immediate in-
 “ terest to be otherwise. In the inferior employments, the sweets of
 “ labour consist altogether in the recompence of labour. They, who
 “ are soonest in a condition to enjoy the sweets of it, are likely soonest
 “ to conceive a relish for, and to acquire the early habit of, industry. A
 “ young man naturally conceives an aversion to labour, when, for a long
 “ time, he receives no benefit from it¹. The patrimony of a poor man
 “ lies in the strength and dexterity of his hands; and to hinder him from
 “ employing this strength and dexterity in what manner he thinks pro-
 “ per, without injury to his neighbour, is a plain violation of this most
 “ sacred property. It is a manifest encroachment, both upon the just
 “ liberty of the workman, and of those who might be disposed to employ
 “ him. As it hinders the one from working at what he thinks proper,
 “ so it hinders the others from employing whom they think proper. To
 “ judge whether he is fit to be employed, may, surely, be trusted to the
 “ discretion of the employers, whose interest it so much concerns².”

The Statute of Elizabeth, which appears to have required, in very unequivocal words, a seven years' apprenticeship, in trades then followed in England³, *wheresoever* they should be carried on⁴, has, however, by

“ said Statute, he may exercise any trade named in it, though he hath not been apprentice
 “ to it. All these observations only shew that this Act, as to what enforces the penalty of it,
 “ ought to be taken strictly. And, accordingly, the constructions made by former Judges
 “ have been favourable to the qualifications of the persons attacked for exercising the trade,
 “ even where they have not actually served apprenticeships: they have, by a liberal interpre-
 “ tation, extended the qualifications for exercising the trade much beyond the letter of the
 “ Act; and have confined the penalty and prohibition to cases precisely within the express
 “ letter.”

¹ Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. i. 189.

² Ibid. i. 188.

³ The strict limitation of the Statute to such trades as were established in England before the 5th of Elizabeth, however generally beneficial to the community, has given rise to several distinctions, which, considered as rules of police, are justly remarked to be extremely unwise. “ It has been adjudged, for example, that a coach-maker can neither himself make, nor employ journeymen to make, his coach-wheels; but must buy them of a master wheel-wright; this latter trade having been exercised in England before the 5th of Elizabeth. But a wheel-wright, though he has never served an apprenticeship to a coach-maker, may either himself make, or employ journeymen to make, coaches; the trade of a coach-maker not being within the Statute, because not exercised in England at the time when it was made. The manufactures of Manchester, Birmingham, and Wolverhampton, are, many of them, upon this account, not within the Statute, not having been exercised in England before the 5th of Elizabeth.” Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. i. 187.

⁴ See 5 Eliz. c. 4. § 30, 31.

the subtle refinements of courts of justice, (which, with views extremely laudable, have, in this instance, favoured the free exertion of industry,) been interpreted to extend only to cities and market-towns; and it is held, that a person may exercise as many trades as he pleases in a country village, although he has not served a seven years' apprenticeship¹ to each.

¹ The words of the 5th section of the Act are, that no person shall exercise any craft, &c. "*except he shall have been brought up therein seven years at the least as an apprentice, &c.*" and there can be no doubt but the Legislature intended that the tradesman should have served an actual apprenticeship; but the Judges have determined that he served *as an apprentice*, who for seven years has been working *as a master*. See 2. Will. Rep. 168. This case exhibits the impolicy of the Law of Apprenticeship, in so clear a light, that I shall not apologize for inserting it at length.

French, *qui tam*, v. Adams.

"This was an action of debt upon the Stat. 5 Eliz. c. 4. § 31. against the defendant, for exercising the trade of a carpenter, contrary to the Statute, he not having served an apprenticeship to that trade; issue was joined upon *nil debet*, and tried before the Lord Chief Justice Pratt at Westminster. It appeared in evidence at the trial, that the defendant had worked or served as a servant for seven years in the trade of a glazier, and for some time afterwards exercised that trade as a master; and afterwards he exercised the trade of a carpenter for the space of nine years, and it was proved that he well understood that trade.

"It was objected by Serjeant Nares for the plaintiff at the trial, that, the defendant being originally first bred up to the trade of a glazier, he could not now follow two trades, carpenter and glazier; and, whether he could or not? was the question reserved for the consideration of the Court.

"CURIA. All the Judges in England at a meeting lately resolved, That if any man, as a master, had exercised and followed any trade as a master, without interruption or impediment, for the term of seven years, he was not liable to be sued or prosecuted upon the Statute of the 5th of Eliz. Also, if a man hath followed two or more trades for the term of seven years, or more, he shall not be liable to be sued or prosecuted upon this Statute. There is no law against one man's following several trades at this day: there was an ancient Statute made the 37 Ed. 3. c. 6. that artificers or handicraftsmen should use but one mystery, and that none should use any mystery but that which he had before that time chosen and used; but this restraint of trade and traffic was immediately found prejudicial to the commonwealth, and therefore, at the next Parliament, it was enacted, that all people should be as free as they were at any time before the said ordinance. 11 Rep. 54. a. And Coke says, it is to be observed, that the Acts of Parliament, that are made against the freedom of trade, merchandizing, handicrafts, and mysteries, never live long. 4 Inst. 31. Without the least doubt in the Court, a man may follow twenty trades, if he has worked at, or followed, each trade seven years. Mr. Harrison, of Red Lion Square, served an apprenticeship to a carpenter; but, for 26 years, he has been a watch-maker; and, though he never served as an apprentice to the trade of a watch-maker, is the best maker of time-

pieces

each. Indeed, there seems to be the same reason for permitting a man, in a country village, to follow various trades, (those, for instance, of house-carpenter, joiner, mill-wright, and wheel-wright,) as for permitting him to open a miscellaneous chandler's shop for the sale of cheese, butter, tea, sugar, soap, candles, cloth, linen, and hardware.

I have the less reluctantly made these observations on the Statute of Apprenticeship, because I am persuaded, that, whenever a fair opportunity offers, the Legislature will do away the hardships and restraints which this Law imposes on industry. Of its bad effects many instances might be adduced, even from the language of Parliament: two citations, however, from the Statute-book may be sufficient: By the Act passed in 1777¹, for the regulation of the hat manufactory, it was expressly declared, that the Acts of Elizabeth² and James³, which prohibited a person from making hats, unless he had previously served a seven years' apprenticeship, and limited the number of apprentices to be taken by a master hat-maker to two, had created a scarcity of journeymen; and enacted, that such part of the 5th of Elizabeth, as extended to restrain any person from setting up the occupation of hat-maker, unless he had been brought up as an apprentice therein, should be repealed⁴: And by the 18th of the present King, (c. 47.) "the hardships brought on "parish-apprentices by the length of their apprenticeship," were fully admitted; and it was enacted, that their service should continue for no longer term than till they should have attained the age of twenty-one years.

Were Corporation Laws generally enforced with great rigour, they would be equally injurious to industry with the Statutes of Apprenticeship.

"pieces in the world, and the Parliament has given him £5000. towards finding out the longitude by his watches or time-measurers; and shall this man be hindered from making watches, and exercising the trade of a carpenter also, if he pleases? *Per totam curiam*, "There must be judgment for the defendant, and the *posse* must be delivered to him."

¹ 17 Geo. 3. c. 55.

² 8 Eliz. c. 11.

³ 1 Jac. c. 1.

⁴ 17 Geo. 3. c. 55. § 5. Some other parts of the Statute of Elizabeth, although unrepealed, may be considered as obsolete; particularly the clause which limits persons, being householders, and *twenty-four years old* at the least, &c. to take as apprentices, the children of any other artificer not occupying husbandry, nor being a labourer; the directions concerning the *parent's estate*, &c. See 5 Eliz. c. 4. § 26, 27, 28, 29.; and Burn's Justice, title Apprentices, § 1.

ship. In few places, however, except in London, (whose peculiarly great, natural, and commercial advantages counterbalance their ill effects,) and in the universities, (where no one, who is not matriculated, as it is called, is allowed to carry on a trade within the precincts of academical police, probably with a view rather to promote good morals than commerce,) are persons restricted from setting up their trades, merely because their so doing might be prejudicial to Corporations. Persons, likely to become chargeable, are perhaps as often removed from corporate towns, as from country parishes : but their removal is ascribable to the Settlement code, and not to Corporation spirit. I am persuaded that a shoemaker, who had not served an apprenticeship, might exercise his industry at Bristol or Liverpool, with as little hazard of being molested by the corporation of either place, as of being disturbed by the borough-reve of Manchester, or the head-constable at Birmingham. Adam Smith, indeed, asserts, " that, in many large incorporated towns, " no tolerable workmen are to be found, even in some of the most necessary trades. If you would have your work tolerably executed," he says, " it must be done in the suburbs, where the workmen, having " no exclusive privilege, have nothing but their character to depend " on, and you must then *smuggle it into the town* as well as you can '."

It is much to be regretted, that this great political writer did not produce any evidence of the truth of these asseverations. I confess I very much doubt whether there is a single corporation in England, the exercise of whose rights does, at present, operate in this manner. The truth seems to be, that corporations are themselves sensible that commerce no longer needs their protection ; and that the exercise of their privilege, in driving an industrious stranger from the sphere of their jurisdiction, would chiefly affect their own interests. In this instance, as in many others, the insensible progress of society has reduced chartered rights, (which were formerly, no doubt, beneficially exerted, both for the advancement of commerce, and the protection of freedom,) to a state of inactivity ; and both private and national interests have superseded the necessity of having recourse to antiquated customs. Were the conduct of corporations, in the exercise of their franchises, at all oppres-

¹ Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. i. 201.

five to the industry of individuals, facts would be brought forward, and we should probably hear more of them, both in political publications, and in courts of justice : corporations, however, now seldom enter into litigation, except upon occasions when their *elective* franchises are concerned.

Those who are of opinion that the Legislature are unnecessarily solicitous to provide, by means of apprenticeships, a due course of instruction for artificers and manufacturers, may, perhaps, be likewise inclined to think, that Laws, which point out particular lines of industry to those who have attained that age at which they are usually deemed to be competent to the management of their own concerns, are still more futile and injudicious. Such Laws, however, have, more or less, existed in all ages, and in all countries ; and few writers have entered into the extensive field of political speculation, without recommending new institutions, and suggesting various plausible expedients, for rendering the people industrious, orderly, and economical. It seems, moreover, very problematical, whether a Government ever attempted directly to regulate the course of industry, without producing considerable mischief. The excellence of legislation may, perhaps, be but estimated according as it leaves the individual exertion more or less unhackled. It is this exertion, (and not the superintending power of the State, which is so often, unthinkingly, extolled, as the immediate creator of social good, and as often unjustifiably condemned, as the immediate cause of social evil,) which, by its patient plodding labours, erects the edifice of national grandeur : it, however, works but by slow and imperceptible degrees ; and, like the genial dew from heaven, which, drop by drop, invigorates and matures all vegetable nature, exhibits, at length, that happy order of society, which is felt to be

“ — not the hasty product of a day,

“ But the well-ripen'd fruit of wise delay.”

Nor does it follow from this, that a Government is excluded from *active* duties. To prevent the strong from oppressing the weak ; to protect the acquisitions of industry, and to check the progress of vice and immorality, by pointing out and encouraging the instruction of the rising generation in the social and religious duties ; to maintain the relations,

relations, which commerce has created with foreign countries, are duties which require that delegated authority should be exerted by public force, and the vindicatory dispensations of pains and penalties.

Beyond this, all interference of the State in the conduct and pursuits of the Society seems of very doubtful advantage. The wants implanted in us by nature, and extended by civilization, are the presiding principles which direct all human efforts to useful purposes. Man, in a state of barbarism¹, feels little more than his original craving for food, and, perhaps, for raiment. His labour, therefore, whilst he remains in this condition, is proportioned to the difficulties which he encounters in satisfying his hunger, and in protecting his body from the inclemencies of the weather. But as soon as he acquires a taste for those conveniences, which are not immediately necessary to the preservation of the human frame, he is under the dominion of an imperious master, who will compel him to labour indefatigably for the attainment of new gratifications. It is not my business to enquire, whether the appetite for something beyond a mere subsistence is, or is not, inherent in mankind; but it seems clear, that, in proportion to the extent of these desires, we are more or less industrious. It is, however, very properly observed, by the ingenious author of “An Essay on the best means of providing employment for the People²,” (published in Ireland about three years ago,) that, in order that any advantage may be derived from the desire of enjoying the artificial necessities of life, and the imitative propensities of man, by making them the means of rendering him industrious, three circumstances are materially requisite. The example to be imitated must be pretty generally diffused among a people³. The object

¹ I do not say *in a state of nature*: for, I believe, no one knows what that is. That many nations are, however, in that state of barbarism in which agriculture is unknown, every one will readily admit.

² By Samuel Crumpe, M. D.

³ Thus, Dr. Crumpe remarks, that, “to persuade all the inhabitants of a wretchedly-built village to form more comfortable and commodious habitations, it is not sufficient that one, or a few of them, should in that respect better their situation. Each of the remaining majority sees that his neighbours contentedly inhabit their old huts. Why should he not bear the same inconveniences? They countenance his indolence; he feels no discredit from his situation; and the example, being partial, is nearly useless. To derive any advantage
“from

object it "propofes, muft be confiderably above thofe already enjoyed ;
 "and, to acquire it, although labour and induftry fhould be neceffary,
 "they fhould never be vain and ineffectual." I will venture to add,
 that, though labour is indifpenfible, it is, by no means, confonant to
 the phyfical, or moral, nature of man, that he fhould, like an afs in a
 mill, apply folety to bodily exertion, from week's end to week's end.
 Nor has the State any reafon to complain, if he, who can earn enough

"from the ambition and imitative propenfity of man, it is equally neceffary that the im-
 "provement and object of imitation propofed fhall not greatly exceed thofe he already en-
 "joys. Where the difference in this refpect is very confiderable, fo ftrong is the averfion of
 "the human race to any violent and fudden alteration in the modes of life, that any attempt
 "at introducing fuch, feems rather to produce an oppofite effect, and to confirm a people in
 "their original barbarity and mifery. The free favages of America do not appear to have
 "made the fmalleft progrefs in civilization fince the fettlement of the Europeans among
 "them. Their improvement, in this refpect, would have been much more confiderable, had
 "they been left to themfelves. Civilization and general affociation were commencing, as it
 "were, in two points, among them, in the kingdoms of Peru and Mexico. They would
 "probably have diverged from thefe centres in every direktion ; and as their improvements
 "and alterations muft neceffarily have been flight and gradual, they would have been more
 "eafily and univerfally adopted, and in the end tended more to have meliorated their condition
 "than the arts, manners, and civilization of Europe, which, being confiderably fuperior to any
 "they were acquainted with, have been generally viewed with neglect or averfion. From
 "fimilar principles, we may expect the fame effects in New Holland. The plantation of
 "our colonies in that country, inftead of civilizing its favage natives, may but confirm them
 "more ftrongly in their original barbarity."

I do not altogether agree with Dr. Crumpe in his reafons for the comparatively backward
 ftate of civilization in Peru and Mexico. The tardy progrefs of the South Americans in the
 focial arts is, I conceive, not owing to their averfion to improvement, but to their averfion to
 their conquerors and oppreffors. Befides this, they have nothing which they dare call their
 own, and confequently no motives to be induftrious. Till Cortez and Pizarro dropped the
 mafk, and treated them with every barbarity, the Mexicans and Peruvians fhewed themfelves
 difpofed to adopt any thing that was recommended by the ufage of perfons to whom they
 looked up with veneration. At prefent, they might answer Mr. Crumpe in the words of
 Archimedes, "Give us a footing on the earth, and we will render it fubfervient to our pur-
 pofes." The South Americans are, in general, (where they are near the Spanifh fettlements,
 and in the way of profiting by example,) forbidden the ufe of all tools and arms, but fuch as
 the Spaniards think proper to put into their hands ; and even thefe they dare not ufe, but in
 the fervice of their mafers. The high value which favages in every part of the world put
 upon a knife, nail, faw, ax, or any other article of convenience or ufe, or even of ornament,
 is a ftrong proof they are not only capable of inftruction in the moft ufeul arts of focial
 life, but alfo of adopting it's elegancies and refinements. This has been exemplified in the
 civilization of the inhabitants of Paraguay.

in four days to maintain him for seven, chooses to spend the remaining three in idleness and relaxation. The abuse of liberty is no solid reason that it should be annihilated. It may indeed be lamented, that a manufacturer, who receives high wages, should, instead of spending his leisure hours in social and rational intercourse with his family and friends, so often devote a large portion of his earnings to intoxication and debauchery, to the manifest injury of his health and his morals: but it may be questioned, whether the undeviating and unremitting application to a few mechanical processes, which an improved state of manufacture usually requires, is not the cause of the propensity, so commonly remarked in this class of people, to carry the indulgencies of necessary relaxation to a faulty excess? and, (if I might be allowed to hazard a conjecture on a very important point, which cannot be properly elucidated without a full investigation of facts, that I am not in possession of,) whether the minute division of labour is not, in some degree, subversive of domestic intercourse and comfort? If we compare an agricultural life with the condition of manufacturers, the superiority, in this respect, will, I am persuaded, be found to be on the side of the former. In domestic comfort, in the endearments of family union, in certainty of work, and consequent independence, the labourer, who is engaged in the varied operations of husbandry, has no reason to regret that fortune has not placed him at the loom, or the anvil. Viewed in a political light, the preeminence of the original destination of mankind over manufactures is still more apparent. It facilitates marriage, the happiest lot of human life: it is most favourable to health, to morals, and to religion*.

It

* That an agricultural life is also the most favourable to the expansion of the intellectual faculties of mankind, is the opinion of Adam Smith. He says: "Not only the art of the farmer, the general direction of husbandry, but many inferior branches of country labour, require much more skill and experience than the greater part of mechanic trades. The man who works upon brass and iron, works upon materials whose temper is always the same, or very nearly the same. But the man who ploughs the ground with a team of horses or oxen, works with instruments, of which the health, strength, and temper, are very different upon different occasions. The condition of the materials which he works upon, too, is as variable as that of the instruments with which he works; and both require to be managed with much judgment and discretion. The common ploughman, though generally regarded as the pattern of ignorance and stupidity, is seldom defective in judgment and discretion.

"He

It is, however, by no means intended to assert, that manufactures are either unnecessary, or prejudicial, to a country. I do not enter into the arduous discussion of the best mode of introducing or carrying them on; but there can be little reason to doubt, that the national prosperity of Great Britain is in a great measure owing to their unexampled extension and excellency¹. The principal improvements which have taken

“ He is less accustomed, indeed, to social intercourse, than the mechanic, who lives in a town.
 “ His voice and language are more uncouth, and more difficult to be understood by those
 “ who are not used to them. His understanding, however, being accustomed to consider a
 “ greater variety of objects, is generally much superior to that of the other, whose whole
 “ attention, from morning till night, is commonly occupied in performing one or two very
 “ simple operations. How much the lower class of people are really superior to those of the
 “ town, is well known to every man whom either business or curiosity has led to converse
 “ much with both.” (Wealth of Nations, 5th edit. 1. 197.)—These remarks appear to me to
 be well founded: but I have heard persons, of great observation, express their doubts, whether,
 although tillers of the ground may be more moral men, and more orderly subjects, than
 manufacturers, they in general have better understandings; and it must be confessed, that
 there are some facts on their side, which seem to warrant the conclusion, that the causes,
 as well of the diversities, as of the sameness of character, of the different classes, are to be
 sought for, not so much in the different natures of their respective employments, as in
 some adventitious circumstances.

¹ “ Objections of a moral nature are sometimes urged against the introduction of ma-
 “ chines, by which human labour is considerably shortened. Great numbers of men and
 “ women, it is said, are thus thrown out of employment: they are dismissed almost without
 “ any warning, or, at least, without a warning sufficient to afford such of them, as are qualified
 “ to undertake another occupation, an opportunity of providing one. But most of them, it is
 “ added, even if they had much longer notice, would be unable to avail themselves of that
 “ resource: from their sex, their age, or their habits of life, they are incapable of commen-
 “ cing a new line of business; and even if they are capable, other trades are full, and will not
 “ receive them. Thus, multitudes of honest and industrious Poor are deprived of the possi-
 “ bility of procuring a livelihood for themselves and their families; they pine in misery, in
 “ sickness, and in want; and, driven at length to repel famine and nakedness by violence
 “ and plunder, from being the supports, become the pests, of society. That these objec-
 “ tions, which compassion has suggested, on the sight of incidental distress, are to be dis-
 “ regarded, is by no means to be affirmed. But they are pushed to an unreasonable length,
 “ when they are urged as generally conclusive against the admission of new machines, by
 “ which labour is greatly diminished. How has mankind been enabled to emerge from a
 “ state of barbarism to civilization; to exchange dens and caves, for comfortable houses;
 “ coverings of raw skins, for clean and convenient cloaths; acorns and wild fruits, for salu-
 “ brious food; unlettered ignorance, for books and knowledge; but by the progressive intro-
 “ duction

VOL. I. 3 L

taken place in social enjoyment, in this country, seem ascribable to the introduction of machines for facilitating labour. With regard, however, to mechanical knowledge, it is probable that we are still in our infancy : and, when it is considered, that, fifty years ago, many inventions for abridging the operations of industry, which are now in common use, were utterly unknown ; it is not absurd to conjecture that, fifty years hence, some new contrivances may be thought of, in comparison with which, the steam-engine, and spinning-jennies, (however wonderful they appear to us, at present,) will be considered as slight and insignificant discoveries ¹.

“duction and the rapid improvements of machinery ? And are we prepared to say, that human life has attained to it's highest degree of refinement ? Or that the means which have brought it to it's present state, ought not to be permitted to carry it further ? Or that, while every nation around us is advancing in improvement, Great Britain alone is to stand still ? Those simple machines and implements, without which we now should be at a loss how to subsist, were new in their day : and, in many instances, the invention of them undoubtedly diminished, perhaps annihilated, the demand for that species of labour which was before in great request. The boat-maker of early times, who first undermined the tree, and then formed it into shape, by scraping it with oyster-shells, and hollowing it with fire, had probably to lament the loss of employment, when a competitor arrived from a distance, armed with the recently-discovered hatchet, and able to complete more canoes in a month, than the other could in a year. The makers of hand-barrows and scuttles would perceive the demand for their craft materially lessened, when a more commodious method of carriage took place on the introduction of carts. The fabricators of hand-mills found their work speedily fall into disuse, on the erection of machines for grinding corn by means of wind and water. In what situation would the world now be, had these inventions been successively proscribed, out of favour to the old workmen ?” Giffourne's Duties, 3d ed. ii. 367.

¹ The ingenious Author of the Pursuits of Literature, 3d part, p. 28, ridicules Mr. Godwin's idea, that “the most extensive operations may” hereafter, “be within the reach of *one man* ;” and “a plough be turned into a field, and perform it's office, without the need of superintendance.” Justice, 8vo. ed. ii. 494. And, I confess, it appears to me very improbable, though it is, perhaps, far from impossible, that such an event should take place. Agricultural machinery has, of all others, received the least improvement. It is, in many respects, the same that it was two thousand years ago ; and the plough, in many parts of England, differs but little from the description we have of the Roman plough. Within late years, however, many ingenious contrivances have been successfully applied, to expedite the labours of husbandry : winnowing and threshing-machines have been found to be of great utility, and are receiving continual improvements. Nor is there any reason why we should despair of the arts reaching such a degree of perfection, as to supply us with cloathing, without the manual aid of the comber, the spinner, or the weaver.

The

The Dutch, who erected a statue to the man who taught them to cure herrings, acted upon just principles: he who opens a new channel of commerce, and discovers a new means of subsistence, merits no less estimation than the philosophers, and defenders of their country. The inventor of a machine appears to me to rank equally among the benefactors of mankind: he supplies society with additional hands, (for machinery is nothing more,) and, consequently, provides additional means of raising subsistence. I have often thought, that a rude country, in which the operations of industry are carried on by mere manual labour, resembles the many-headed monster of the Heathen mythology. A society, thus circumstanced, although all may be obliged to work, yet, from the scantiness of the produce of their labour, may be said to be an *Hydra*, with more mouths than hands. In the modern improved state of manufactures and commerce¹, produced chiefly by machinery, society is a *Briareus*: it has more hands, than mouths. Under such circumstances, although the wants of the people are more numerous than they would be in a rude state of society, a less quantity of manual labour is requisite to supply them: a part only labours, to provide, both necessaries, and the long catalogue of social conveniences, for the whole; whereas, among the barbarous tribes of hunters, of shepherds, and even of husbandmen, (in that state of husbandry which precedes the

¹ I have, in various parts of this Work, slightly touched on the advantages which a country derives from manufactures. The benefits of commercial industry are well illustrated in the following picture, (by an author, whose powers of description, and pathos, are unrivalled,) of the (once) flourishing condition of Holland.

“ Il est inconcevable quel parti ils ont tiré d’une infinité de productions que nous laissons perdre, et de leur pays sablonneux, marécageux, et naturellement pauvre et ingrat. Je n’en ai point vu où il y ait une si grande abondance de toutes choses. Ils n’ont point de vignes, et il y a plus de vins dans leurs caves que dans celles de Bordeaux; ils n’ont point de forêts, et il y a plus de bois de construction dans leurs chantiers qu’il n’y en a aux sources de la Meuse et du Rhin, d’où ils tirent leurs chênes; ils ont fort peu de terres labourées, et il y a plus de bleds de la Pologne dans leurs greniers, que ce royaume n’en réserve pour la nourriture de ses habitants. Il en est de même des choses de luxe; car quoiqu’ils soient fort simplement vêtus et logés, il y a peut-être plus de marbre à vendre dans leurs magasins, qu’il n’y en a de taillé dans les carrières de l’Italie et de l’Archipel; plus de diamans et de perles dans leurs caissettes, que dans celles des bijoutiers du Portugal; et plus de bois de rose, d’Acajou, de Sandal, et de Cannes d’Inde, qu’il n’y en a dans tout le reste de l’Europe, quoique leur pays ne produit que des faules et des tilleuls.”

Etudes de la Nature, par Bernardin de St. Pierre ed. Lond. 1796. ii. 91.

improvement of manufactures, and the extension of foreign commerce,) the varied occupations, which every man must follow, oblige him to make a daily use both of his strength and ingenuity. He has not only his food to provide, (a task which alone is sometimes not to be achieved, without a contest with his neighbours,) but he is almost daily called upon to exercise the functions both of warrior and legislator¹. In such communities, the aged, who have not a sufficient use of their limbs to maintain themselves, are generally considered as useless lumber: nor is it uncommon for their vigorous descendants to accelerate their removal from a situation in which they can so little shift for themselves. Instances too might be mentioned, of barbarous tribes leaving their children to perish: this, however, is not so common. As every person, therefore, of mature age, thinks for himself, and acts for himself, in order to subsist, it seems clear, that more manual, though less productive, labour, is performed in savage, than in civilized, society; and that the sum of bodily exertion is less, but the acquisitions are greater, in the latter, than in the former; or, in other words, that the improvements of society afford more frequent opportunities for idleness and relaxation². Any system of employment, therefore, that dooms a man to perpetual labour, (for that may fairly be called perpetual, which admits only of the intervals requisite for sleep and meal-times,) subjects him to the evils of the savage state. When the desire, however, of the artificial conveniencies and enjoyments of life are once introduced into a society, then seems to be a greater danger of a man's overworking himself, than of his remaining idle, unless he has some other fund than his own industry to look to. It is justly remarked,

¹ Smith's Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. iii. 183.

² This is not intended as the panegyric of idleness: a person who does nothing cannot enjoy the gratifications of repose. To be tasted, it requires the exertion of a certain degree of previous labour, either mental or manual. Neither is relaxation necessarily an abstinence from work. Mr. Locke tells us, that "*Recreation is not being idle, but easing the wearied part, by change of business.*" Every man of business, I am persuaded, must have experienced the truth of this definition. The cottager, who, after finishing his day's work for his employer, allots his evening to the cultivation of his garden; the merchant, who, after calculating *tare* and *tret* at his counting-house, spends a leisure hour in the no less abstruse calculations which many amusements require; and even the Statesman, who steals from the Treasury to his Sabine farm, and engages with as much warmth in the cultivation of a turnip-field, as in the aggrandisement of an empire, will sensibly feel the true enjoyments of recreation.

that

that "masters have rather occasion to moderate, than to animate, the application of their workmen¹." Very different, however, has been the opinion of the Legislature in ancient times. The old laws for "the eschewing of idleness," and "setting the Poor on work," were framed upon this mistaken principle, that, with the incitements of civilization before them, the people must be compelled to follow their own interest. Whatever may have been the benevolent views of the Legislature in passing these Acts, it is astonishing that we find so few (if any) traces in the Statute-book, of an attention to another no less essential condition of human existence, repose and recreation. If to labour is the call of nature, it is not less so to be relieved from labour "by some indulgence, sometimes of ease only, but sometimes of diffipation and diversion²."

If these remarks are well founded, will it not follow, that the duty of the Legislature, while it leaves industry unconstrained, is at the same time to permit the labouring classes to spend those hours, (which both religion and policy have exempted from work, that is to say, Sabbaths and Festivals,) in such amusements as they think proper, provided they are not inconsistent with piety and morality? The gloomy enthusiasm and austere severity of the Independents and Puritans of the last century, which prohibited the innocent recreations of the people, as heathenish and unchristian, are now very generally reprobated. The rigid gravity of those very Puritans, it is well known, did not render them less vicious than their neighbours: they were equally subject to the infirmities of nature; but their vices bore a different complexion³. To use an expression of Mr. Burke's, "by hating vices too much, they came to love men too little." Cromwell's fanatical priesthood (as Mr. Pennant observes,) could endure, for its own ends, the vices of the Great; yet, at the same time, be outrageous against the innocent pleasures of the Multitude⁴. An addition to a tax has often been

¹ Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. i. 125.

² Ibid.

³ "Your friends, the Cavaliers," said a Parliamentary to a Royalist, "are very dissolute and debauched." "Yes," replied the Royalist, "they have the infirmities of men; but your friends, the Roundheads, have the vices of devils." Hume, 1st ed. vi. 117.

⁴ Pennant's Tour in Scotland, ed. 1776. ii. 33.

known to produce a defalcation in the revenue : and severe penances and mortifications are, in the same manner, it is probable, rather adverse, than favourable, to social order, morality, and religion. Our laws, against profaneness and immorality, have, no doubt, very properly prohibited many cruel, (if not otherwise improper,) diversions on the Sabbath-day ; but they have not pointed out any other means of relaxation during those hours, which, (whatever might be the wish of the friends of religion,) are not likely ever to be spent, altogether, either in public worship, or in private meditation. Out of mere spite to the Book of Sports, after factiously and foolishly stigmatising the relaxations it allowed, as Popish, only because they were also allowed, and still are, in most Popish countries, though, on the same grounds, they might also have reprobated eating and drinking ; an Act was passed in the beginning of Charles the First's reign, for putting down all sports and pastimes whatever on the Lord's-day¹. Whether, however, this Act has been conducive to a more religious observance of the Sabbath, may be much doubted. The only difference between the beginning of the last, and the conclusion of the present, century, in this respect, seems to be, that, in the former, the people attended bear-baitings, bull-baitings, and cock-matches : at present, they spend their Sunday evenings at skittle-grounds and ale-houses. Piety and morality seem to have gained little ; though, perhaps, the revenue may have gained considerably, by the change. It is worthy, too, of observation, that this day, of all others in the week, is, in London, the most productive of disorder and riot. On a Sunday night, the streets of the metropolis are infested with drunken men : on a Monday morning, the cages and watch-houses, in the circumjacent villages, are fully tenanted. To reason from the practice of other countries, not less religious, orderly, and industrious, than ourselves, I should imagine, that many recreations, whose end and aim are "to raise the genius, and to mend the heart," might, without offence to morality, or without derogating from the necessity of religious duty, after divine service had been duly attended, be tolerated on a Sunday. This is, however, a subject of deep and weighty consideration ; besitting more persuasive pens, and more

¹ See 1 Car. c. 1.

experienced heads : and when I now and then point out such and such a matter, as not unworthy of the public attention, it is with that diffidence becoming a young writer, who is hardly more desirous to be useful, than he is averse to any thing like being dictatorial.

It is one, and not the least, of the mistaken principles on which a national provision for the relief of the indigent classes of the community is supported, that every individual of the community has not only a claim, but a right, founded on the very essence and constitution of human society, to the active and direct interference of the Legislature, to supply him with employment while able to work, and with a maintenance when incapacitated from labour. It may, however, be doubted, whether any right, the gratification of which seems to be impracticable, can be said to exist. The Author of the *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, justly remarks, that men in civil society “ have a right “ to the fruits of their industry, and to the means of making their industry fruitful. They have a right to the acquisitions of their parents, “ to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring, to instruction in life, and to consolation in death. Whatever each man can “ separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for “ himself; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which society, “ with all its combinations, of skill and force, can do in his favour. “ In this partnership all men have equal rights; but not to equal things. “ He that has but five shillings in the partnership, has as good a right to “ it, as he that has five hundred pounds has to his larger proportion.” These rights, however, are perfectly congenial with the active principle, (the desire of bettering our condition,) which more or less animates mankind in every state of society. Far from damping or repressing it, they offer it the strongest encouragements. It needs no argument to prove, that the ground is more likely to be cultivated, than it would be, if considered as the property of the first occupant, provided the farmer is permitted to reap the corn, which he has sown, and to carry it to market. So, (to use the words of the Commentator on the Laws of England,) “ the transmission of one’s possessions to posterity, has an evident tendency to make a man a good citizen, and a useful member of

¹ *Reflections*, 11th ed. 87.

“ society : it sets the passions on the side of duty, and prompts a man to
 “ deserve well of the public, when he is sure that the reward of his
 “ services will not die with himself, but be transmitted to those with
 “ whom he is connected by the dearest and most tender affections’.”

But a legal provision for the Poor, on the contrary, (it seems to me,) checks that emulative spirit of exertion, which the want of the necessities, or the no less powerful demand for the superfluities, of life, gives birth to: for it assures a man, that, whether he may have been indolent, improvident, prodigal, or vicious, he shall never suffer want: it weakens the strongest tie of civil society; the desire of acquiring property; for it declares, that, whether a man is industrious or idle, his most pressing difficulties, the necessity of food, lodging, and cloathing, shall be provided for. It must be confessed, that many able writers, who have investigated this subject, are of a very different opinion. Mr. Howlett, more especially, in his “ Investigation of Mr. Pitt’s Speech,” published a few months ago, denies that the Poor Laws have any tendency to destroy the motives to economy and diligence among the labouring classes. “ Certainty of parochial assistance,” (he says,) “ whatever may
 “ happen, and whether a man be virtuous or vicious, industrious or lazy,
 “ it often has been said, removes all concern, and all anxiety, about his
 “ future subsistence; makes him careless of his conduct, indifferent whe-
 “ ther he work or play; agreeably to the famous old song, with which
 “ we are informed our Poor Laws were insulted, soon after their first
 “ institution :

“ Hang sorrow ! and cast away care !

“ The parish is bound to find us.”

He adds, “ however this may please the sot in his cups, no man in
 “ his sober senses ever adopts such reasoning. The promise of the Poor
 “ Laws, at most, can only remove the horror of perishing by famine,
 “ and somewhat to alleviate the sorrows of sickness, and the pangs of
 “ disease. To do this, is surely generous, humane, and benevolent.
 “ But how does it incite to idleness and vice? If I do not work, the
 “ parish will compel me. Is this more pleasing than to do it of my

’ Blackst. Comm. ii. 41.

“ own accord? Is it more agreeable to work under the scourge of the
 “ task-masters, than voluntarily to exert my utmost endeavours to provide
 “ for myself and family, and increase the joys and the pleasures of my
 “ nearest and dearest connection? Shall I be vicious and profligate, be-
 “ cause I know, that, after a long course of contempt and infamy, of
 “ rags and wretchedness, of infirmity, sickness, and disease, the parish
 “ will provide me a doctor to protract the wretched remains of life?
 “ Never did the profligate reason thus; never, generally speaking, is
 “ he governed by such distant views. Hurried on by the impulse of
 “ passion and the cravings of appetite, he hears not the suggestions of
 “ reason, but is plunged in the gulph of perdition, before he knows where
 “ he is, or whither he is going; before the provision of the Poor Laws,
 “ or any thing of the kind, enter his head¹.” These observations would
 be as correct and applicable, as they are pathetic and well expressed,
 were it the fact, that the Poor Laws did no more than (“ after a long
 course of contempt and infamy,” &c.) supply the profligate and aban-
 doned with “ a doctor to protract the wretched remains of life.” The
 real case, however, is, that, in every part of England, (I had almost said
 every parish,) instances may be found of persons preferring a pension
 from the parish, and a life of idleness, to hard work and good wages. I
 could even particularize instances of stout able-bodied men having been
 desirous of obtaining, and of their having actually obtained, admission into
 poor-houses, and resided there very contentedly; although, I believe,
 that the Poor in general are not yet so familiarized to this mode of relief
 as to prefer it to a more scanty parish allowance at home. They continue
 to reason as people did of old: “ better is the life of a poor man in a mean
 cottage, than delicate fare in another man’s house².” The terror, how-
 ever, which poor-houses and work-houses create, operates more in pre-
 venting grown persons from entering them themselves, than from con-
 signing the younger part of their family thither. Of the considerable
 proportion of children, (more especially of bastards,) with which parishes
 are burthened, the Reader will find many instances in the Second Volume
 of this Work. It is, perhaps, not an unnatural course for a mother to
 abandon her child to the parish-officers, who, she is assured, will provide

¹ Examination of Mr. Pitt’s Speech, 6.

² Ecclesiasticus, ch. xxix. ver. 22.

for it, (for some years at least,) better than she possibly could'; more particularly, when that child is the fruit of an illicit connexion, and when, by leaving it at the work-house, she can often screen her character from detection. Considered in this point of view, the Poor Laws may be said to offer an encouragement to debauchery.

That any permanent establishment for the relief of the Poor has a tendency to increase the number of those wanting relief, and that a premium never operates with greater effect than when it is given for the encouragement of idleness, might, I think, be most satisfactorily proved from the example of places where there are ample donations distributed annually in aid of the Poor's Rate. Lord Kames² gives two or three striking instances of the destructive effects of establishments of this nature. He says, "A London alderman, named Harper, who was co-temporary with James the First, or his son Charles, bequeathed ten or twelve acres of meadow ground in the parish of St. Andrews, Holborn, London, for the benefit of the Poor in the town of Bedford. This ground has long been covered with houses, which yield from £4000. to £5000. yearly³. That sum is laid out upon charity-schools, upon defraying the expence of apprenticeships, and upon stock to young persons when they marry; an encouragement that attracts to the town of Bedford great numbers of the lower classes. So far well: but mark the consequence. That encouragement relaxes the industry of many, and adds greatly to the number of the Poor. Hence it is, that, in few places of England, does the Poor's Rate amount so high as in the town of Bedford. An extensive common in the parish of Chailly, Suffex, is the chief cause of an extravagant assessment for the Poor, no less than nine shillings in the pound of rack-rent. Give a poor man access to a common for feeding two or three cows,

¹ Many of the parishes in Westminster allow 3s. or 3s. 6d. a week for the children which they send to be nursed in the country. Mary-le-bone parish, (I believe,) now allows 3s. 10d. a week for children under two years old; or £7. 19s. 4d. a year. What poor woman can expend such a sum in the maintenance of her child? It is probable, that every bastard supported at the charge of the parish by this heavy tax on industry, the Poor's Rate, costs double the sum which a labourer, who has a family of four or five children, can afford to expend, or, in fact, does expend, on any of his children.

² Sketches, ed. 1788. iii. 77.

³ This charity estate, I am informed, has doubled its value within the last twenty years, and now produces 10 or 12,000£. a year.

"you

“ you make him idle, by a dependence upon what he does not labour for. The town of Largo in Fife has a small hospital, erected, many years ago, by a gentleman of the name of Wood, and confined by him to the Poor of his name. That name being rare in the neighbourhood, access to the hospital is easy. One man in particular is entertained there, whose father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, enjoyed successively the same benefit; every one of whom probably would have been useful members of society, but for that temptation to idleness.”

With respect to the principal argument adduced in favour of a Poor's Rate, that it imposes a tax proportioned to the means of the individual who is to pay it, and obliges the sordid and selfish, as well as the liberal and benevolent, to contribute towards the relief of the indigent classes of the community according to their abilities, it is clear, that this end, however laudable, is very imperfectly answered. It is true that the tax in England for the maintenance of the Poor seems to have been originally intended to affect personal property in the same proportion as land: and accordingly, in several cases, the Courts of Justice have decided, that tithes, tolls, profits of a navigation, and many other species of property, arising within the parish where the Rate is made, are rateable, whenever their amount can be ascertained. The general question, however, whether *all* stock in trade be or be not rateable to the Poor, does not seem to be yet fully settled¹; but I apprehend, that, in all cases, in which it appeared that it had been *usual* to rate visible stock in trade to the Poor, the Courts would confirm such practice: and perhaps they would

¹ It is probable, the Legislature, when they passed the 10 Ann. c. 6. for erecting a work-house and employing the Poor in the city of Norwich, were of opinion, that the general law of Elizabeth meant to make the stock of tradesmen rateable to the Poor; and, to obviate any doubt respecting this matter, empowered the guardians not only to rate occupiers of lands, houses, tenements, tithes, &c. (as in the 43 Eliz.) but also *all persons having and using stocks and personal estates* within the precincts of the city. The King against Hardy, Easter, 17 Geo. 3. Cowp. 579. The practice respecting the rating of stock in trade and other personal property is very various. In London, stock in trade is rated: in Westminster, I believe, neither stock in trade nor personal property are rated. In Manchester, some kinds of personal property were assessed, till very lately; but stock in trade is not rated. The assessment, there, in 1794, on houses and land, produced £10,931. 0s. 9d.; and on personalty, £728. 17s. In a second Rate, however, levied that year, personalty was not attempted to be collected. See the Second Volume of this Work, p. 343.

now have no hesitation in determining the general question, that stock in trade, when it's value can be ascertained, was rateable to the Poor. It seems, however, that personal property is not to be rated at random, and the party rated to be left to get off as he can: the officer making the Rate must be able to support what he has done by evidence: and no personal property can be rated, but the clear liquidated surplus, after the payment of all outstanding debts. In a late case, there was a difference in opinion among the Judges of the Court of King's Bench, whether money could be rated¹. It was decided in the negative.

¹ See the case of the King against White and others, Trinity Term, 32 Geo. 3. 4 Term Rep. 771. In this case it appeared on the Rate appealed against, that it was a Rate of 1d. in the pound on all lands, and 3d. for every £100. of personalty. It was proved, that it was usual in the parish, (in which the Rate was made,) to rate the inhabitants towards the relief of the Poor, for their personal property within the parish, in the following proportion, viz. on a calculation that every £100. of which any inhabitant was possessed, did or might produce interest to the amount of £3. per annum, such interest of 3 per cent. per annum being considered as a test of the ability of such person; and such person was charged the sum of 1d. for each pound of such supposed interest. According to this proportion, a widow was assessed for her personal property within the parish, which consisted of £1000. of principal money. On this case Lord Kenyon delivered his opinion, that she was rateable for this £1000. in specie, because it was stated to be property within the parish, and might be productive, if the owner chose. Buller J. thought that the reason for which it was admitted that household furniture was not rateable, (namely, that it did not produce any profit,) was applicable to this money, which was stated to be in hard cash; and that it must be taken, upon this state of the case, that it did not produce profit. He also thought, that money was not rateable under the Act of Elizabeth; and that the Legislature could never intend that any enquiry should be made as to every guinea which a man might have in his pocket. Grose J. was of the same opinion. Lord Kenyon then said, that he thought there was great weight in the reasons urged by his brethren against rating money; that he had himself expressed great doubts of his own opinion; and that he was therefore glad that that part of the Rate would be quashed by the opinion of the Court. From the Report, however, of a subsequent case (the King against Mast, Hilary Term, 1795, 6 Term Rep. 156.) in which the chief point before the Court was, whether the occupier of an house, or of an estate, should be rated for it's full value, with all it's improvements by the present possessor, or only according to the price which he paid for it, without taking into the account the value of his improvements; it appears, that his Lordship thought, that if a person chose to keep his estate in money, and the fact of his possessing it was clearly proved, he was rateable for it. The other Judges delivered no opinion on this point; but, after the case before them was determined, it was suggested, that, as the Court had not expressed any opinion respecting the stock in trade of the inhabitants, the parish-officers in making, and the Justices at the Sessions in determining upon, another Rate, would not consider that species of property as rateable. Lord Kenyon, upon this, desired that it might not be understood that there was any doubt about that part of the case; for that unquestionably stock in trade, when it's value could be ascertained, was rateable to the Poor.

Ships, however, are rateable in the parish, which may be considered as their home under the Register Act¹.

It is certainly equitable that personal property, as well as land, should contribute towards the support of the Poor: but if all stock in trade, (which falls within this description,) should ever be attempted to be rated, I am persuaded, such a practice would be productive of great inconvenience and oppression. The only merit of the tax (and that of a very negative nature) is, that, like the land-tax, it is manifestly and unavoidably unequal. Indeed I do not conceive it possible to rate the visible stock of a tradesman or artificer. What is to be considered as visible stock? "Some artificers have a considerable stock in trade; some have only a little; others none at all. Shall the tools of a carpenter be called his stock in trade, and, as such, be rated? A tailor has no stock in trade; a butcher has none; a shoemaker has a great deal. Shall the tailor, whose profit is considerably greater than that of the shoemaker, be untaxed, and the shoemaker taxed²?"

When we investigate the operation of the Poor's Rate as a tax on landed property, it would seem to be no less inequitable and unequal. It is justly remarked, that although, in landed parishes, it is laid on the proprietor, and the tenant in proportion to the rent, yet it often happens that a great land-holder is but a very poor man. "Sometimes his property is mortgaged to the half, or nearly the whole, extent of its value; yet he must pay the Poor's Rate, to the whole amount of his possession. At the same time, the men of monied property, who are, perhaps, the richest in the nation, and best able to afford a tax, pay little or nothing in proportion to their wealth. Though they are the real proprietors, and draw the rent of a great part of the land in the country, yet they receive their full yearly interests, without any deduction, or hazard of loss³."

Mr.

¹ 26 Geo. 3. c. 60. ² See Lord Mansfield's Speech in the case of the King and Ringwood, Trinity Term, 15 Geo. 3. Cowp. 326.

³ McFarlan's Inquiries concerning the Poor, 195. Unjust, however, as it may seem to be, that the owners of personal property should, in a great measure, be exempted from the burthen of a Poor's Rate, the following remarks of Adam Smith sufficiently demonstrate, that a Rate can never affect them in an equal proportion with land-holders.

"The interest of money," he says, "seems at first sight a subject equally capable of being
"taxed"

Mr. M'Farlan adds, that, "in cities or boroughs, the tax is, perhaps, more equal. It is generally laid on in proportion to the rent of the house possessed. It is supposed that every man buys, or rents, a house adequate to his income. If he goes beyond what belongs to him, it may be said he ought to pay for his vanity. This rule of taxation is very specious; but it is still far from being equal. A gentleman of a certain station in life is obliged to live in a house suitable to that rank, which he is, in some measure, obliged to support in the world. He might be accused of meanness, if he inhabited one lower rented; yet his house may often exceed the proportion of his free income. Independent of his rank, a large family may oblige him to
"take

"taxed directly as the rent of land. Like the rent of land, it is a neat produce, which remains, after completely compensating the whole risk and trouble of employing the stock. As a tax upon the rent of land cannot raise rents; because the neat produce that remains after replacing the stock of the farmer, together with his reasonable profit, cannot be greater after the tax than before it: so, for the same reason, a tax upon the interest of money could not raise the rate of interest; the quantity of stock, or money, in the country, being, like the quantity of land, supposed to remain the same after the tax as before it. The ordinary rate of profit is every where regulated by the quantity of stock to be employed, in proportion to the quantity of the employment, or of the business which must be done by it. But the quantity of the employment, or of the business to be done by stock, could neither be increased nor diminished by any tax upon the interest of money. If the quantity of the stock to be employed, therefore, was neither increased nor diminished by it, the ordinary rate of profit would necessarily remain the same. But the portion of this profit necessary for compensating the risk and trouble of the employer, would likewise remain the same; that risk and trouble being in no respect altered. The residue, therefore, that portion which belongs to the owner of the stock, and which pays the interest of the money, would necessarily remain the same too. At first sight, therefore, the interest of money seems to be a subject as fit to be taxed directly, as the rent of land.

"There are, however, two different circumstances which render the interest of money a much less proper subject of direct taxation than the interest of land.

"First. The quantity and value of the land, which any man possesses, can never be a secret, and can always be ascertained with great exactness. But the whole amount of the capital stock, which he possesses, is almost always a secret, and can scarce ever be ascertained with tolerable exactness. It is liable, besides, to almost continual variations. A year seldom passes away, frequently not a month, sometimes scarce a single day, in which it does not rise or fall more or less. An inquisition into every man's private circumstances, and an inquisition which, in order to accommodate the tax to them, watched over all the fluctuations of his fortune, would be a source of such continual and endless vexation as no people could support.

"Secondly.

“ take a house above his fortune. It is hard when in this case a heavy
 “ tax is superadded to his other unavoidable expences. On the other
 “ hand, a man of much greater opulence, who has no rank to support,
 “ can live in a much more private manner ; and though his wealth be
 “ greatly superior, yet his tax is not a fifth, or a tenth, part of what the
 “ former pays. The difference is still greater between a gentleman of
 “ a liberal and a hospitable disposition, and a fordid miser who hires a bad
 “ house, which indeed bears some proportion to his little mind, but none
 “ to his wealth. The last ought to pay in proportion to his income, and
 “ does not ; the first is obliged to pay much beyond that proportion. In
 “ such cases, which are frequent in every large town, the mode of
 “ taxation, however speciously just, is very unequal. An old avaricious
 “ bachelor, possessed of thousands, often pays less for the rent of his lodg-
 “ ings, than a gentleman of middle station, struggling hard to maintain
 “ a large family, pays for his Poor Rate alone’.”

It is a common, but mistaken, idea, that the Poor’s Rate is not a Land-tax : and this idea has been supported by many weighty authorities. Lord Mansfield, in the case of *Rowls and Gells*, remarked, that the Poor’s Rate was not a tax on the land, but a personal charge in respect of the

“ Secondly. Land is a subject which cannot be removed, whereas stock easily may. The
 “ proprietor of land is necessarily a citizen of the particular country in which his estate lies.
 “ The proprietor of stock is properly a citizen of the world, and is not necessarily attached to
 “ any particular country. He would be apt to abandon a country in which he was exposed to
 “ a vexatious inquisition, in order to be assessed to a burdensome tax ; and would remove his
 “ stock to some other country, where he could either carry on his business, or enjoy his for-
 “ tune more at his ease. By removing his stock, he would put an end to all the industry which
 “ it had maintained in the country which he left. Stock cultivates land ; stock employs
 “ labour. A tax which tended to drive away stock from any particular country, would so far
 “ tend to dry up every source of revenue, both to the Sovereign, and to the Society. Not only
 “ the profits of stock, but the rent of land, and the wages of labour, would necessarily be more
 “ or less diminished by its removal. The nations, accordingly, who have endeavoured to tax
 “ the revenue arising from stock, instead of any severe inquisition of this kind, have been
 “ obliged to content themselves with some very loose, and, therefore, more or less arbitrary
 “ estimation. The extreme inequality and uncertainty of a tax assessed in this manner, can
 “ be compensated only by its extreme moderation, in consequence of which every man finds
 “ himself rated so very much below his real revenue, that he gives himself little disturbance
 “ though his neighbour should be rated somewhat lower.” *Smith’s Wealth of Nations*,
 5th ed. iii. 294.

* *McFarlan’s Inquiries concerning the Poor*, 198.

land¹. This appears to be a distinction, without a difference. It is true that the tax is assessed upon the occupier; and that he, and not his landlord, (as in the case of the land-tax) is personally liable: but whatever lessens the profit that the proprietor of an estate would otherwise receive may be fairly considered in the light of a tax on his land. If a proprietor occupies his land himself, the Poor's Rate in this case most clearly falls upon him: if he lets it to a tenant, there can be no doubt but the Poor's Rate will be considered as an out-going; and consequently operate in reducing the rent. The tenant must receive such a portion of the produce as will enable him to keep up the stock necessary for the cultivation of his farm, and afford him the ordinary rate of profit. An estate which will subject the occupier to a Poor's Rate of ten shillings in the pound, will not produce so good a rent as land, which, though similarly situated in other circumstances, would only subject the tenant to a Rate of two shillings in the pound. There can be little doubt, but that, in such cases, the former would reason in the same manner as he does in the case of tithe. When a certain portion of the produce is to be paid away for a tax, he will compute, as well as he can, what the value of this portion, one year with another, is likely to amount to, and will make a proportionate abatement in the rent which he is to pay to his landlord². A tax of this kind, imposed during the currency of a lease, may perhaps often distress, or ruin the farmer: but, upon the renewal of the lease, it must always fall on the landlord³.

In the essential requisite of a good tax, ease of payment, the Poor's Rate is manifestly deficient. Arthur Young remarks, that taxes on land, "so far as they are advanced by the tenant, and drawn back when he reckons with his landlord, are easy to the latter: but they are, exactly in the same proportion, burthensome to the tenant, who has to advance, out of his own pocket, another man's tax, which is palpably unjust. At the time also of demanding the tax from the landlord, who farms his own estate, his ease is never consulted: he has to pay the tax, not because he has sold his produce, for he must pay, though his land should not produce a single farthing; not because he buys, and thereby

¹ 16 Geo. 3. Cowp. 451.

² Smith's Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. iii. 274.

³ Id. 308.

" shews

“ shews that he can afford it, but merely because he possesses ; which by “ no means proves an ability to pay at all¹.

A tax on consumption, for maintaining the Poor, would be free from many of the objections to which a Poor's Rate is liable : such a tax is levied at the time, and in the manner, when it is most likely to be convenient to the contributor to pay it : it is collected from him in small sums ; and, in general, is proportioned to his ability to contribute. It must, however, be confessed, that, as a tax on consumption is advanced to the manufacturer, and is drawn back on the price of the commodity, it will, more especially when it passes through many hands, reach the consumer, burthened with a much heavier tax than what is paid into the Treasury. After all, it seems clear, that, although a tax might possibly be imposed, which should affect individuals in exact proportion to their ability to pay, still the burthen of supporting the Poor would not be equally shared. Let any one who is assessed to the Poor's Rate calculate what sum he distributes in private charity ; and, it is probable, few instances will be found, in which the amount of the latter does not much exceed that of the former. The sordid, perhaps, finding themselves compelled to contribute to a public tax, may be rendered more deaf to the cries of distress than they would otherwise be : but the liberal and humane will never confine their charities to the mere observance of the law which calls on them for their portion of Poor's Rate. To such persons, the modest and diffident Poor will willingly have recourse ; although they would prefer languishing, and perhaps perishing, in obscurity, to the humiliating alternative of being relieved by a weekly pension from the parish-officer, or of being immured in what Sir William Young calls “ a gaol without guilt,” the work-house ; in which, suffering innocence, though not excluded, is too often obliged to associate with idleness, riot, and debauchery. The industrious tradesman, who by unforeseen and unavoidable misfortune is reduced to bankruptcy, is a person, who, in the strict sense of the term, may be numbered among the Poor : it is seldom, however, that persons of this description are to be found in a parish poor-house, or on the overseer's list of weekly pensioners. The many unfortunate individuals, whom the fluctuating nature

¹ See Young's Travels in France, i. 524—531, in which the ruinous effects of land-taxes are very forcibly detailed.

of commerce, and manufactures, often precipitates, from a situation of ease and affluence, into the depth of extreme poverty, seldom think of the national provision which is held out to them. When they have no immediate connexions or friends to assist them, they, generally, prefer applying to those whose opulence has not rendered them insensible to the miseries of their fellow-creatures: and daily experience teaches us, that a well-attested case of distress seldom passes unrelieved. A Scotch philosopher, indeed, accuses the English nation of the groveling passion of selfishness; to the growth of which, he says, the tax for the Poor has greatly contributed¹. This charge, however, seems to be ill-founded. The numerous appeals, even from impostors, which are made to the feelings of the humane and charitable, are a sufficient proof that voluntary charity flows in too copious a stream. The liberal subscriptions which have been raised of late years, within the metropolis alone, sufficiently disprove his assertion. In no other country could there have been found, either the means, or the inclination, to contribute such sums as we have seen collected within the last four years, for the maintenance of many thousands of unhappy exiles, for rendering the situation of a soldier more comfortable during the inclemencies of a winter campaign, for supporting the widows and orphans of seamen who had perished in the service of their country, for relieving sufferers from fire, and for many other benevolent purposes. If there is a defect in British benevolence, it is, that it is too unbounded and indiscriminate.

Mr. Fox, in the course of the last sessions of Parliament, observed, that it was a melancholy consideration, that the greater part of the working classes in this country were lying at the mercy, and almost living on the charity, of the Rich². Admitting the fact to be true, it is a proof that the Rich are not more able, than willing, to assist the Indigent. The Reader will find several instances, in the Second Volume of this Work, of very liberal contributions for the Poor, during the two last Winters, in places where the Poor's Rate was very high. I have no sufficient data to form any calculation to be depended on; but various circumstances have convinced me, that, exclusive of regular standing charities, (such as

¹ Lord Kames: Sketches, &c. B. ii. Sk. 10.
grain, on the 3d Nov. 1795.

² In the debate on the high price of

hospitals,

hospitals, schools, alms-houses, distributions from charitable bequests, &c.) the money annually expended in voluntary, unconstrained, acts of charity, much exceeds the amount of the Poor's Rate.

Mr. Colquhoun offers the following estimate of the sums annually raised in the metropolis, by legal assessments; by voluntary contributions to various benevolent institutions and establishments for the comfort and convenience of the Poor; and by private charities¹:

1. For

¹ The following are the Institutions, in and near the Metropolis, for Objects of Charity and Humanity.

ASYLUMS for the INDIGENT and HELPLESS.

When
instituted.

- | | |
|---|------|
| 107 alms-houses, endowed at different periods, where 1352 old men and women are supported: the principal of these houses are, the Trinity alms-houses, for 28 decayed shipmasters, Mile End; Bancroft's alms-houses, Mile End, for 24 poor men; Fishmongers' alms-houses, Newington Butts; Haberdashers' alms-houses, in Hoxton; Jeffries' alms-houses, Kingland-road; and Sir John Morden's college, for decayed merchants, at Blackheath. | |
| 1 London Work-house, Bishopsgate-street, for decayed old men. | |
| 1 Bridewell Hospital, an asylum for apprentices to different trades, Bridge-street, Blackfriars. | |
| 1 Charter-house Hospital, an asylum for 80 indigent persons, in Charter-house Square. | 1611 |
| 1 Scottish Hospital, for decayed natives of Scotland, in Crane-court, Fleet-street. | |
| 1 Welch Hospital, for decayed natives of Wales, in Gray's-Inn-lane. | |
| 1 French Hospital, for decayed Frenchmen, in St. Luke's, Middlesex, founded | 1719 |
| 1 Foundling Hospital, for deserted infants, Lambs' Conduit-street, founded | 1739 |
| 1 Asylum for poor, friendless, deserted, girls, under 12 years of age, Vauxhall Road, idem | 1758 |
| 1 Magdalen Hospital, for the admission of seduced females, St. George's Fields | 1769 |
| 1 Orphan Working-school, being an asylum for poor necessitous children of Dissenters, City Road. | |
| 1 Philanthropic Society, St. George's Fields, for children of criminal parents, and young delinquents. | |
| 1 Free Masons' School, for educating female orphans, St. George's Fields, instituted | 1788 |
| 1 Chelsea Hospital, for worn-out and disabled soldiers | 1670 |
| 1 Greenwich Hospital, for worn-out and disabled seamen, instituted | 1694 |
| 1 Marine Society, for educating poor destitute boys to the sea, in Bishopsgate-street | 1756 |

1. For Poor's Rates.	{	London	-	-	-	£ 70,000	
		Westminster	-	-	-	64,000	
		Middlesex, adjoining London	-	-	-	86,000	
		Surry, adjoining London	-	-	-	25,000	
Total for the metropolis, about						245,000	
2.		Supporting Charity-schools, for educating the Poor	-	-	-	10,000	
3.		Asylums for the support of objects of charity and humanity, &c. arising from annual contributions, estimated at	-	-	-	25,000	
Carried over						£ 280,000	

ASYLUM for Sick, Lame, Diseased, and for Poor Pregnant Women.

	When instituted.
1 St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in West Smithfield, for the reception of afflicted and diseased persons	1539
2 St. Thomas's Hospital, Southwark, for the reception of sick and lame, especially sailors	1553
3 Guy's Hospital, Southwark, for the reception of sick and impotent persons, founded in	1721
4 London Hospital, Whitechapel Road, for all persons meeting with accidents	1760
5 St. George's Hospital, Hyde-Park Corner, for the sick and lame	1733
6 Westminster Infirmary, James'-street, Westminster, for sick and diseased persons	1719
7 Middlesex Hospital, Charles'-street, near Oxford'-street, for sick and lame, and pregnant women	1745
8 Lock Hospital, Hyde-Park Turnpike, for persons afflicted with the venereal disorder	1746
9 Small-pox Hospital, St. Pancras, for inoculation of poor persons	1746
10 London Lying-in Hospital, Aldersgate'-street, for poor married women	1750
11 City of London Lying-in Hospital, Old'-street, City Road, idem	1751
12 Lying-in Hospital, Brownlow'-street, Long Acre, idem	1749
13 Lying-in Hospital, Surry-Road, Westminster Bridge, for poor pregnant women.	
14 Lying-in Hospital, Bayswater-Hall, Oxford Road, idem.	
15 Lying-in Hospital, Store'-street, Tottenham-court Road, idem.	
16 Bethlehem Hospital, for lunatics, Moorfields	1553
17 St. Luke's Hospital, for lunatics, Old-Street Road	1751

	Brought over	-	£ 280,000
4. Asylums, hospitals, and dispensaries, for the sick, lame, diseased, and afflicted; estimated at	-	-	50,000
5. Institutions for benevolent, charitable, and humane purposes, 704 societies; estimated at ¹	-	-	120,000
6. Private charities; estimated at	-	-	150,000
7. Endowed establishments; estimated at	-	-	150,000
<hr/>			
	Total estimate per annum	-	£ 750,000 ²
<hr/>			

It

¹ Mr. C. appears to estimate the number of members in the Friendly Societies, in the metropolis, at 70,000; or 116, on an average, in each Society. This able magistrate, no doubt, has better information on this subject than I can possibly procure: but the number seems to me to be exaggerated. In those Clubs, which have come to my knowledge, the number of members was from 60 to 100. 80 seems to be, nearly, the average. These excellent institutions do not exactly answer our common idea of charities; which is, that the supporters, and objects, of a charity, are different persons. They, however, certainly answer every good purpose of a charitable establishment; and, considered in this light, Tontines and Equitable Assurance Offices might be included in Mr. C.'s estimate. The sum of £ 36,000. a year, I should imagine, was much below the total annual disbursements of 600 Friendly Societies, consisting, on an average, of 80 members each, or 48,000 in the whole. In those I have enquired into, the annual payments, on an average, exceed £1. each member.

² Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, 2d ed. 411. The Reader will be enabled, from the following estimate, (which was constructed, from the printed Returns of the Overseers in 1786,) to form a fair idea of the proportion of Poor's Rate paid by the metropolis:

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Alban's, St. Wood-street	-	428	14 2	Anne and Agnes, St. within Aldersgate	-	281	19 2
Allhallows, Barking	-	810	6 8	Ann, St. Blackfryars	-	678	17 10
Allhallows, in Bread-street	-	203	14 5	Anthony, St.	-	256	16 9
Allhallows the Great	-	329	9 11	Augustin, St.	-	58	13 8
Allhallows, Honey Lane	-	114	2 11	Bartholomew, St. by the Royal Exchange	-	694	7 1
Allhallows the Less	-	176	14 6	Bennet, St. Fink	-	256	5 8
Allhallows, Lombard-street	-	510	17 10	Bennet, St. Gracechurch-street	295	5 5	
Allhallows, Staining	-	431	7 8	Bennet, St. Paul's Wharf	-	261	5 4
Allhallows, London Wall	-	613	9 6	Bennet, St. Sherehog	-	91	11 2
Alphage, St.	-	210	0 6	Botolph, St. by Billingsgate	-	113	17 2
Andrew, St. Hubbard	-	371	12 4	Christ-church	-	711	5 4
Andrew, St. Undershaft	-	837	2 5	Christopher			
Andrew, St. by the Wardrobe	291	8 2					

It appears from this very moderate estimate, that London does not pay above a tenth part of the Poor's Rate. The medium of the three years

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.		
Christopher le Stock, St.	-	272	17	10	Mary, St. le Bow	-	407	1	6
Clement, St. near East Cheap	135	17	3		Mary, St. Bothaw Dowgate	-	180	5	1
Dionis, St. Back Church	-	514	9	6	Mary, St. Colechurch	-	298	14	10
Dunstan's, St. in the East	-	1123	6	4	Mary, St. at Hill	-	631	10	4
Edmund, St. the King	-	480	7	0	Mary, St. Magdalen, Old Fish-				
Ethelburga, St.	-	250	19	9	street	-	173	7	8
Faith, St. the Virgin, under					Mary, St. Mounthaw	-	53	18	7
St. Paul's	-	636	13	4	Mary, St. Somerfet	-	234	3	6
Gabriel, St. Fenchurch-street	498	16	11		Mary, St. Staining	-	149	1	10
George, St. Botolph Lane	-	100	14	8	Mary, St. Wool Church Haw	312	4	9	
Gregory, St.	-	818	9	0	Mary, St. Woolnoth	-	426	7	4
Helen, St. near Bishopsgate	-	492	2	6	Matthew, St. Friday street	-	161	10	6
James, St. in Duke's Place	-	292	17	2	Michael, St. Bassishaw	-	534	7	4
James, St. Garlick Hithe	-	332	1	4	Michael, St. Cornhill	-	578	4	7
John, St. Baptist	-	136	7	8	Michael, St. Crooked Lane	-	251	3	9
John, St. Evangelist	-	129	13	10	Michael, St. Queen Hith	-	347	6	2
John, St. Zachary	-	283	11	9	Michael, St. le Quern	-	288	2	0
Katherine, St. Coleman	-	442	11	10	Michael, St. Paternoster Royal	205	12	6	
Katherine, St. Cree Church	887	10	8		Michael, St. Wood-street	-	172	14	3
Lawrence, Jewry, St. & Mary					Mildred, St. Bread-street	-	662	11	9
Magdalen, St. Milk-street	646	11	8		Mildred, St. the Virgin, in the				
Lawrence, St. Pountney	-	368	14	7	Poultry	-	316	5	4
Leonards, St. East Cheap	-	184	11	4	Nicholas, St. Acons	-	327	9	6
Leonards, St. Foster Lane	-	241	0	5	Nicholas, St. Cole Abbey	-	168	18	6
Magnus, St. the Martyr	-	317	9	1	Nicholas, St. Olave	-	169	14	5
Margaret, St. Lothbury	-	614	3	4	Olave, St. Hart-street	-	838	10	3
Margaret, St. Moses	-	88	10	1	Olave, St. Old Jewry	-	237	1	11
Margaret, St. New Fish-street	225	11	10		Olave, St. Silver-street	-	226	14	2
Margaret, St. Pattens	-	161	5	8	Pancras, St.	-	148	11	6
Martin, St. Ironmonger Lane	207	19	6		Peter, St. West Cheap	-	212	15	0
Martin, St. Ludgate	-	355	5	7	Peter, St. Cornhill	-	552	10	3
Martin, St. Orgars	-	244	5	5	Peter, St. near Paul's Wharf	208	15	2	
Martin, St. Outwich	-	250	6	4	Peter, St. le Poor, in Broad-				
Martin, St. Vintry	-	295	15	8	street	-	730	4	10
Mary, St. Abchurch	-	345	4	3	Stephen, St. Coleman-street	1340	13	7	
Mary, St. Aldermanbury	-	379	12	8	Stephen, St. Walbrook	-	109	12	11
Mary, St. Aldermary	-	253	7	3	Swithin, St. London Stone	-	153	18	0

Thomas,

medium Poor's Rate paid by England and Wales, £2,167,749. 13s. 8d.
So that, notwithstanding the extreme misery and wretchedness which
are

Medium Poor's Rate in the	97 parishes within the walls	-	£ 35,099	18	7
Ditto	in 17 parishes without the walls	-	32,223	19	5
Ditto	in 8 parishes in Westminster	-	52,359	10	7
Ditto	in 37 parishes in Surrey and Middlesex	-	81,079	0	0
Total Poor's Rate in the Metropolis		-	£ 200,762	8	7

DISPENSARIES for Sick, Lame, and Diseased.

1. Eastern Dispensary, Whitechapel.
2. Middlesex Dispensary, Great Ailiff-street.
3. London Dispensary, Primrose-street, Bishopsgate-street.
4. New Finsbury Dispensary, Featherstone Buildings, St. John's Square.
5. Finsbury Dispensary, Rosamond Row, Clerkenwell.
6. General Dispensary, Aldersgate-street.
7. Public Dispensary, Carey-street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.
8. Infant Poor Dispensary, Soho Square.
9. St. James's Dispensary, Berwick-street, Soho Square.
10. Westminster Dispensary, Gerrard-street, Soho Square.
11. Mary-le-Bone Dispensary, Wells-street, Oxford-street.
12. Offulton Dispensary, Bow-street, Bloomsbury.
13. Surrey Dispensary, Union-street, Borough.

INSTITUTIONS for Charitable and Humane Purposes.

- 1 Society for delivering married women in their own habitations, by which 30 midwives are employed; instituted in 1757.
- 1 Humane Society, for the recovery of drowned and suffocated persons; Spital Square.
- 1 Society for the relief of clergymen's widows, Paper Buildings, Temple.
- 1 Society for the relief of widows and orphans of medical men.
- 1 Laudable Society, for the benefit of widows, Crane-court, Fleet-street.
- 1 Society for the support of widows, Surrey-street, Strand.
- 1 Society for the support of poor artists and their widows, Strand.
- 1 Society for the support of widows of poor musicians.
- 1 Society for annuities to widows, Old Fish-street, St. Paul's.
- 1 Society for the relief of sick and maimed seamen in the merchants' service.
- 1 Society for the relief of poor widows and children of clergymen; instituted 1792.
- 1 Free Masons' Charity.
- 1 Society for the relief of persons confined for small debts, Craven-street, Strand; 1792.
- 91 Public Companies, in the city of London, who give, in charity, above £ 75,000. a year.
- 600 Friendly Societies in the metropolis and the vicinity, composed of mechanics and labouring people, who distribute, to sick members, and for funerals, from their funds, raised by monthly payments, about £ 36,000. a year.

are said to prevail, more peculiarly, in this great city, the proportion of persons receiving parochial relief, (if estimated from the assessments,) is much greater in the country than in the metropolis: and if we suppose the Poor to receive as much assistance from private charity in one place as in the other, it would seem, that (setting aside the payments from Friendly Societies,) the annual disbursements of the Rich, in the various objects of permanent and occasional charity, exceed six millions sterling. This, it must be confessed, is a very rough estimate: it is, however, probably, much below the truth. The charity of the benevolent, who “do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame,” must amount to a very considerable sum annually; and, I have no doubt, is proportionably as great in the country as in the metropolis. Every calculation, however, which can be made, respecting the number of Poor, who subsist by private charity, and the amount of charitable contributions from this source, seems fully to warrant this conclusion;—that a legal provision for the Poor, although professedly intended to relieve every object in want, very imperfectly answers the end of its institution; that, although it appears to be calculated to supersede the necessity of our exercising the first of Christian virtues, and may, consequently, often relax the emotions of benevolence, private relief will still frequently be both required and exerted; and that more is expended annually on those objects, who are selected by the discretionary charity of individuals, than on the national Poor.

It seems even doubtful, whether a legal establishment for the Poor, fenced as it is with severe penalties against beggars and vagabonds, will ever considerably lessen the practice, though it may, in some degree, exclude the necessity, of vagrancy and mendicity. It does not appear

Besides these establishments, there are several institutions, which are intended to promote the education and morals of the Poor. Of 5000 young persons, at 62 public schools or seminaries, the greatest number are maintained and educated gratuitously: there are 237 schools belonging to the different parishes; in which, about 9000 male and female children are instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. There are Societies for advancing Christian Knowledge, by distributing books among the Poor; for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts; for promoting charity schools in Ireland; and for relieving the orphans, of clergymen, &c.; most of which expend several thousands a year. See *Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*, 2d ed. 4c6.

from the Statistical Account of Scotland, (a country in which there is no general establishment for the relief of the Poor,) that mendicants there, are more numerous, more dissolute, or more disorderly, than in England. It is, indeed, remarked, by an able writer on this subject, that, owing to the want of a compulsory maintenance, the nuisance of vagrancy had arrived at an alarming height in Ireland; and that the number of beggars in Dublin alone, about thirty years ago, amounted to 2000. The extreme number of beggars, however, which was to be met with in Ireland, (at the time that Dr. Woodward's pamphlet^{*} in favour of a legal establishment was published,) was probably owing to the languid state of industry in that country, and the total want of a regular police in the capital. The certainty of a regular maintenance will not prevent beggars from being very numerous, even in an industrious and opulent country. The Author of the Sketches of the History of Man, asserts, that England, in particular, abounds with beggars: but does not particularize their number. Some idea of it, however, may be formed from Mr. Colquhoun's estimate of the numbers in those classes in London, which may be fairly comprehended under the term of beggars, viz.

Strangers out of work, who have wandered up to London in search of employment, and without recommendation generally in consequence of some misdemeanor committed in the country, at all times above	-	-	-	1000
Strolling minstrels, ballad-singers, show-men, trumpeters, and gypsies	-	-	-	1500
Grubbers, gin-drinking women, and destitute boys and girls, wandering and prowling about the streets and bye-places after chips, nails, old metals, &c.	-	-	-	2000
Common beggars, and vagrants, asking alms, supposing one to every two streets	-	-	-	3000
				<hr/>
			Total	- 7500
				<hr/>

^{*} An Address to the Public, on the expediency of a regular plan for the maintenance and government of the Poor, &c. By Richard Woodward, LL. D. &c. (late Bishop of Cloyne.)

Upon the whole, therefore, there seem to be just grounds for concluding, that the sum of good to be expected from the establishment of a compulsory maintenance for the Poor, will be far outbalanced by the sum of evil which it will inevitably create; that the certainty of a legal provision weakens the principles of natural affection, and destroys one of the strongest ties of society, by rendering the exercise of domestic and social duties less necessary; that a Poor's Tax will unavoidably be burthensome and unequal; and that the distribution of a large public fund, confided, as it must be, to officers, who cannot but be invested with discretionary powers, will ever be the pregnant source of partiality and speculation.

The preceding observations chiefly regard a national provision, which is designed for the relief of those, who, either from infancy, old age, or sickness, are incapacitated from acquiring the necessaries of life. It is seldom, however, that public charity is confined to this object. It generally professes to act upon the wide-extended view of supplying the able with employment, as well as of furnishing the impotent with subsistence. The two leading principles of the 43d of Elizabeth were, that those who were incapable of working should be supported by their parish, and that those who were capable of working should be employed. With respect to the practicability or utility of the last-mentioned provision of the Statute, I shall content myself with referring the Reader to a subsequent part of this Work¹; and with remarking, that it is impossible to provide a national fund for setting the Poor to work in any species of employment, without in some degree injuring those who are engaged in similar undertakings. If, for instance, a parish work-house undertakes the manufacture of mops, ropes, and sacking; those who before subsisted by means of these trades are sure to be the sufferers. Whether the mops are made by the private manufacturer, or by the parish children, no more will be sold than the Public have occasion for. The managers of the work-house, however, without being able to increase the demand, can generally obtain a preference and

¹ See the accounts of Gressingham House of Industry, in the Second Volume, p. 458; of Heckingham, p. 471; of Bulcamp, p. 679; of Melton, p. 685; of Newport, p. 242; of Shrewsbury, p. 636, &c. &c.

a certain sale for their goods, by selling them rather below the market price. The concern, though a losing one, is carried on by the contributions of the parishioners; and a poor industrious manufacturer will, perhaps, often have the mortification to reflect, that, in contributing his portion of Poor's Rate, he is helping the parish to undo him. To invest a public body with a part of that stock, which, for the sake of profit, sets the greater part of useful labour in motion, seems indeed repugnant to the sound principles of political economy. The capital stock of every society, if left to its free course, will be divided among different employments, in the proportion that is most agreeable to the public interest, by the private views of individuals. When it is thus employed, it will accumulate: and it is its accumulation only, which can afford regular and progressive employment to industry. Projects, which, without increasing the demand for any article of consumption, interfere with established manufactures, and oblige the fair trader, (whose capital is limited,) to enter into competition with the parish, (whose capital can, upon any emergency, be recruited by an order of Justices,) are, it may well be supposed, as injurious to the general interests of the community, as the monopolizing speculations of Governments in foreign commerce. They operate in the same manner, "by repelling from a particular trade that stock which would otherwise go to it, or by attracting towards a particular trade that which would not otherwise come to it".

To these observations may be added, the following judicious remarks by Dr. McFarlan. He says: "In general it hath been found, that no work carried on by any collective body of men has ever succeeded so well as that carried on by individuals, who, knowing that they must reap all the profit, or suffer all the loss, are interested to bestow a faithful attention to every part of the business. All public works are known to be done at the highest expence, unless when finished by

¹ Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, 5th ed. i. 396. ii. 466. 470. I do not enter more largely into this subject, as Daniel de Foe, in his ingenious treatise, intituled, "Giving Alms no Charity," from which I have given very copious citations, in a preceding Chapter, (see p. 258.) has very fully illustrated the impolicy of parochial or county manufactures.

"contract,

“ contract, where the contractor acts as a private person, and employs
 “ his own workmen. It seems not to be the business of the Legislature
 “ to interfere in what concerns the regulation of any particular branch
 “ of trade, of commerce, or of country improvement, where it is impos-
 “ sible that any body of men, however wise, can be competent judges
 “ of what is most expedient, in so many different cases, with which
 “ they cannot be acquainted. It seems rather to be their department
 “ to take off such restraints, laid on by former improvident laws, as may
 “ be complained of, and to grant such general encouragement to indus-
 “ try, as may be conducive, on the whole, to the public good.” The
 exertion, both of industry, and of charity, may be safely left to the dis-
 cretion of individuals. The natural inclination of social man, to better
 his condition, will point out to him the most suitable employments :
 the benevolence, which is the result of natural wants, and of the habits
 and relations of social life, will best instruct him to relieve his fellow-
 creatures with justice and discrimination. Charity, a no less tender feel-
 ing of the human heart than Love,

———— at sight of human ties,
 Spreads it's thin wings, and in a moment flies.

What Mr. Burke observes of the Church, may, with strict propriety,
 be applied to the Rich in general. Their revenue “ is not always em-
 “ ployed, and to every shilling, in charity ; nor perhaps ought it ; but
 “ something is generally so employed. It is better to cherish virtue and
 “ humanity, by leaving much to free-will, even with some loss to the
 “ object, than to attempt to make men mere machines and instruments
 “ of a political benevolence. The world, on the whole, will gain by a
 “ liberty, without which virtue cannot exist.”

It must be obvious, that most of the preceding observations chiefly
 regard only the general question ; i. e. whether a national provision
 for the Poor is an adviseable measure to be adopted in a country, in
 which no such establishment exists ? It is a very different question, what

¹ Inquiries on the Poor, 425.

² Reflections, &c. 11th ed. 154.

steps are to be pursued with respect to a tried establishment, which, (whatever it's merits or demerits may be,) has, by long and uninterrupted practice, assimilated itself to our habits and modes of life. I most cordially agree with the great Orator, whom I have just quoted, that, "to a man who acts under the influence of no passion, who has "nothing in view in his projects but the public good, a great difference "will immediately strike him, between what policy would dictate, on "the original introduction of such institutions, and on a question of their "total abolition, where they have cast their roots wide and deep, and "where, by long habit, things more valuable than themselves are so "adapted to them, and in a manner interwoven with them, that the "one cannot be destroyed without notably impairing the other." In such a case, if imperfections should be found to exist, "there is something else" to be thought of, "than the mere alternative of absolute "destruction or unreformed existence". Faulty and defective as our Poor System may be in it's original construction, and in it's modern ramifications, he must be a bold and rash political projector, who should propose to level it to the ground². It is hardly possible to conceive that a wide-extended system should have existed for nearly two centuries, without acquiring, in some parts at least, an useful direction. No temperate political speculatist of the present day, therefore, has ventured to recommend the wholly lopping off this vast member of our system of jurisprudence. Among the various opinions, as to the mode of relieving the wants of the distressed classes of the community, and of correcting the abuses which have insensibly crept into the administration of the Poor Laws, it seems to be very generally agreed, that a modification only of those laws, and not a total repeal of them, can be attempted. Something appears necessary to be done, for the benefit of the Poor themselves; not by extending the operation of a system, which is adverse, in many points of view, to the exertion of honest industry,

¹ Reflections, &c. 11th ed. 232.

² The Marquis de Mirabeau truly says: "L'invention de supprimer et de détruire est le contraire absolu de l'art de gouverner; c'est la magnanimité du suicide. Un chirurgien ignare savait couper la jambe; Esculape l'eut traitée et guérie. Quatre traitemens comme celui du premier, il ne reste plus que le tronc."—*L'Ami des Hommes*, ed. 1758. i. 43.

but

but by checking the too ready encouragement which it offers to idleness, improvidence, and immorality. At the same time, however, that the baleful influence which the certainty of parochial relief has spread through the land may be done away, it is but equitable that the labourer should be put in full possession of his right to exercise his industry in the situation and in the manner most agreeable to himself, whenever, and in whatever cases, it shall appear to the Legislature that he has been abridged of his most invaluable privileges. An ingenious writer, indeed, suggests, that that poverty which is not the result of physical incapacity, but which is occasioned by accident, ill health, or a temporary want of employment, has been created by a surrender of the surplus property of the employed, beyond what is necessary to provide for their immediate wants, to their employers. He says, a “ proportion
 “ of the daily earnings of the employed, though, perhaps, not formally,
 “ was virtually surrendered to their employers, if not before, yet certainly
 “ at that period when power was first given to the Justices to lay
 “ a general assessment. The precise terms of the compact, to which
 “ at that epoch both parties consented, are not preserved ; nor can they,
 “ at this distance of time, be discovered : the concession, however, must
 “ be presumed to have been made, on condition that the latter should
 “ solemnly engage to maintain and support the former in all cases of
 “ accidental or natural incapacity, want of employment, or general
 “ scarcity. To this property, so surrendered, it is the *duty* of the employed
 “ immediately to resort, when under any such circumstances of
 “ inability or distress. The historic page of ancient times may not
 “ countenance this presumption, though it will, by the common sense of
 “ the present age, be readily admitted. If a Law pass, obliging A. to
 “ support B. when incapable of labour, whom before he only paid for
 “ labouring, little doubt can reasonably be entertained, that the power
 “ which A. holds will soon obtain from B. a reduction in wages, or
 “ further services, (the same thing,) as an indemnification for the future
 “ expence which the Law eventually may have imposed upon him A.”
 He adds : “ The contract, as it at present exists, between the two so-
 “ cieties, appears virtually to stand thus : A. agrees to work ten hours
 “ each day for B. at 20d. per day ; B. consents to employ A. on condi-
 “ tion

"tion that A. will be content to receive 18d. per day for his subsistence,
 "and to allow the other 2d. to remain in B.'s hands, as an indemnifi-
 "cation to him B. for his taking upon himself the support of A. and
 "his family, in the event of A. being rendered incapable of labour,
 "either by accident when young, or by infirmity when old. Now it is
 "plain, if no accident or interruption to labour happen to A. whilst
 "young, and that himself and family either die before they become
 "incapable by age or infirmity; or that, living to be infirm, yet having
 "been lucky enough, by great industry, and great care, to save a suffi-
 "ciency that prevents his application to B. for relief, that B. must be a
 "great gainer by A.'s services; inasmuch as A. in this case will have
 "made no demand upon B. for any part of the money in B.'s hands,
 "arising from the 2d. per day, originally stipulated to be so reserved by B.
 "But, admit that accident happen, and that A. be under the neces-
 "sity of requiring succour from B.; whatever be the surplus property,
 "with which the industry and care of A. may have provided him, it will
 "all be expended before he will apply to B. for assistance. As such, it
 "is evident that the savings, or surplus property of A. is his no longer
 "than he can do without the application of it to his necessities. The
 "very moment he becomes incapable of work, he hath a right to resort
 "to B. for his subsistence, and to reserve his own surplus property en-
 "tire; but as the natural disposition, and the education that A. hath
 "received, teaches him to disdain asking relief, whilst he hath any of
 "his own property left, so long as this may last is B. exonerated, and,
 "be it's amount what it may, that sum is a saving to B'."

It

* An Enquiry into the Causes and Production of Poverty, &c. By John Vancouver, pp. 45. 63. In lieu of the present system of maintaining the Poor, by assessments on their employers, Mr. Vancouver offers the following considerations to the attention of the Legislature: they are evidently framed on the principles of the Friendly Societies; but with this material difference, that, in the latter, the subscriptions are voluntary; but, in the new plan, compulsory.

"1. A completely equitable subscription, by the employers, paid to and for the relief of
 "the employed.

"2. An obligation on the employed, to repay such subscription to the common joint stock
 "or fund.

"3. And a superintendency and controul over the whole ordering and management of the
 "Society's

It may, I think, be doubted, whether any such contract exists, or ever existed. Both the numbers of the employers and employed are too great

“Society’s affairs, by the parties interested in the joint capital stock so subscribed and funded.”

The following is a short outline of the principal features of the measures proposed to carry these ideas into execution. I insert it, as it appears to me (though I confess I am no friend to compulsory friendly societies,) to be more deserving of attention than most of the plausible schemes of modern projectors.

“Into the hands of a person duly appointed to receive the same, there should be paid, weekly, five per cent. or one shilling in the pound, (being for every 10d. $\frac{1}{2}$ d.) on the amount of every member’s daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly produce of labour; i. e. earnings; whether obtained by wages, by salary, by commission, by *per centage*, by working day-work, tide-work, by the great, by the piece, or by any kind of task-work, or other mode whatever, in the following manner: that is to say, one single man, or single woman’s daily labour; the same. On single, or married men, living and residing in the families of their employers, whether they be in the service of government, noblemen, gentlemen, ladies, manufacturers, merchants, professional persons, artists, tradesmen, mechanics, inland navigators, farmers, graziers, or of persons of any other stationary occupation whatever. The boarding and lodging of each may be estimated at £15. 3s. 4d.; boys, under 14 years of age, at £9. 15s. each, *per annum*; their wages taken at the sum actually paid, and their perquisites at a fair valuation.

“On single or married men, living and residing in the families of their masters and mistresses, as servants in or out of livery; their boarding, lodging, and cloaths, may be estimated at £26.; boys, under 14 years of age, at £17. 6s. 8d. each *per annum*; their wages taken at the sum actually paid, and their perquisites at a fair valuation.

“On single or married women, living and residing as servants in the families of noblemen, gentlemen, manufacturers, merchants, professional persons, artists, tradesmen, mechanics, mariners, farmers, graziers, or of persons of any other occupation whatever; their board and lodging may be estimated at £13.; girls, under 14 years of age, at £8. 13s. 4d. each, *per annum*; their wages taken at the sum usually paid, and their perquisites at a fair valuation.

“The amount of these subscriptions, with regard to future assistance, as also the balance of each member’s account with the association, should be considered (so far as it relates to the extent of each individual’s power over it,) as immediately belonging to the respective subscribers; - but, on their marrying, the balance of each party’s subscription should be added together, and be deemed the joint stock of the new family, incapable of being removed without the mutual consent of both husband and wife.”

There are various regulations respecting the allowances to be given to widows, orphans, &c. which are not material for the general understanding of the plan. The mode of collecting the subscriptions is as follows: “To ascertain the wages paid by employers, printed tickets, with blanks, readily filled up, should be in possession of the other Society; these

great to admit of the possibility, that, in the ordinary cases of hiring and service, either body should combine against the other. No doubt, in those

“ should be made complete, by the addition of the sum received by the employers, and given
 “ to them as a discharge for wages. Tables would easily be constructed, by which the five
 “ per cent. or any sum earned, would at once be found ; so that, hence, little difficulty would
 “ arise. The parish clerk, every Sunday morning, on being duly authorized, might collect
 “ these tickets of the employers, and give them to the minister, who, being empowered to
 “ receive the same, would, from similar tables, calculate the subscription due on each ticket ;
 “ and in case the parties did not attend to pay, or cause to be paid, such subscription, it should
 “ be increased week after week, as before proposed : after four such omissions, a note should
 “ be sent round to all the employers in the parish, or district, intimating what was due on
 “ this score ; and the person, in whose employ such defaulter then might be, should be obliged
 “ to retain, out of the earnings of such labourer, for that week, and become answerable for
 “ the same himself, the whole sum stated at the time to be due to the association, from the
 “ person guilty of such omissions. The effect of thus making public a transaction, that each
 “ individual would gladly endeavour to hide, would operate powerfully to prevent a repeti-
 “ tion in the same member, and be an excellent admonitory lesson for his surrounding neigh-
 “ bours.

“ In all matters relating to the joint concern, or association, a certain number of members
 “ should make a committee to determine upon them.

“ A certain number of members should constitute a visiting committee, who should deter-
 “ mine in what proportion any member may require assistance, on being rendered incapable
 “ of labour. Over this committee the magistrates should preside, and to whom, as at pre-
 “ sent, all appeals should be made in case of disagreement. Other committees would proba-
 “ bly be found necessary, should the maturation of the system be ever in contemplation.
 “ These should be composed of not less than three members, two of which, and in that pro-
 “ portion, should be of the employed society ; every one of whom should be equally eligible,
 “ after attaining 21 years of age.

“ All the present legal distinctions of parties, belonging to this or that place, would cease ;
 “ that of being an English subject would alone be the distinction required.

“ A regular account should be opened and kept with each individual member, wherein
 “ credit should be given for every subscription paid to the fund, and the parties debited with
 “ all sums drawn out for assistance. The remaining balance alone the members should have
 “ the power of transferring to the stock of the association only, in the place to which he or she
 “ may meditate a removal. A balance amounting to a certain sum of this funded property,
 “ proportionate to the age and state of health of any member, should be indispensibly neces-
 “ sary to gain admittance into a new association. Without gaining such admission, no one
 “ should be permitted to become a new resident in any parish or district.

“ Whether the fund so collected in each parish or district should there remain for the ser-
 “ vice of the subscribing members therein, the surplus once a quarter being remitted to one
 “ grand treasury, or general fund ; or, the subscription being inadequate to the demands, a
 “ sum

those particular trades and situations, in which the injudicious regulations of governments have fortified the employers with the exclusive privileges of monopoly, those, who enter into their service, must, in some degree, submit to the harsh conditions which they may think proper to impose : but this, I conceive, is far from being the case with the general mass of employers and employed in England. It is true that the man, who possesses any portion of accumulated stock, is not obliged, while it lasts, to the severe terms which may be imposed on him by an employer, in order to supply himself with the immediate necessities of life. The man who has only the unsubstantial property
of

“ sum once a quarter be applied for to answer such deficiency ; or, whether it should be
“ added to all the like subscriptions within each hundred, each county, or shire, is for future
“ consideration. Difficulties will be attendant on the first arrangements in any way ; but, so
“ far as any determination can be formed without the help of experience, the first method
“ hath the preference.

“ The smaller the associations, the better their internal business will be managed ; and the
“ only inconveniency will be, that of the parties removing from one parish or district to ano-
“ ther, which may be provided against with little trouble.

“ It perhaps may be important, that the general treasure of this funded property be divid-
“ ed ; one established in London for the South, and the other in York or Newcastle for the
“ North of England ; though each should be under the same regulations, and both equally
“ amenable to the necessities of the subscribers.

“ A per centage should be allowed the clergyman in every parish or district for receiving
“ the subscriptions, out of which he should satisfy the clerk for the trouble he may have in
“ collecting the tickets from employers. Security should be given by the clergyman,
“ according to the surplus sum likely at any time to be in his possession, between one quarter
“ day and another. As no one ought to be benefited by the use of the Society’s money, each
“ respective treasury should have power to order the remittances from such parishes or dis-
“ tricts more frequently than once a quarter, where the accruing balance should be so confi-
“ derable as to become an object to the funded property. These two grand capitals, when
“ united together, should, at stated times, be placed out at interest, under proper direction,
“ in the public funds, or on other permanent security. After the accumulation of a certain
“ sum, which should be considered as a sacred fund, not to be broken in upon ; but, with it’s
“ interest, left to increase, and to remain as a provision in times of scarcity like the present ;
“ whatever might hereafter be the residue in favour of the Society, after satisfying the claims
“ of the incapacitated, and the annuities awarded to soldiers, sailors, and persons of ad-
“ vanced ages, should yearly, or as often as might be thought proper, be applied to the bind-
“ ing of children out as apprentices, or to any other purposes which from time to time
“ might generally be recommended by the Association, and consented to by Parliament.

of labour to offer in exchange for the real visible produce of landed property, and whose daily wants require daily exertion, must, it may be said, from the very nature of his situation, be almost entirely at the mercy of his employer. This would actually be the case, if, notwithstanding an unequal distribution of accumulated property, those who possessed it, and those who had only their manual labour to depend on, were influenced by the same wants, and satisfied with the same gratifications. The ardent thirst, however, for the elegancies and superfluities of life, (which is often the cause, but oftener the consequence, of the accumulation of property,) operates with no less imperious force in obliging the employers to call in the assistance of the employed, than the pressing want of indispensable necessities does, in obliging the labouring classes of the community to solicit employment from the capitalist. Their respective wants, though of a very different nature, produce a reciprocity of interest. One class wants work; the other, workmen. The employer endeavours to lower, and the workman to raise, the rate of wages. In small associations, either of masters, or of workmen, this may sometimes be effected through the means of a legal monopoly; but, considering the community as divided into two great bodies, of employers and employed, it seems impossible that the former should ever be able to enter into any effectual combination in order to reduce the reward of labour below its proper standard. It may, too, be remarked,

“As it would be impossible that a plan of this sort, involving many difficulties, and creating much labour, should be carried into execution without a certain expence being incurred in receiving the subscriptions—keeping the accounts—transacting the various business of each association, and corresponding with all the others, a provision is proposed to be made for such expence, not out of the Society’s funds, which are intended to be kept free of all deduction; but by charging five per cent. on all allowances granted for assistance, and on the transferring or removal of any member’s individual property from one association to that of another. The former will amount to but a few pence weekly, which will not inconvenience those who are relieved; and the latter, which may be of more considerable amount, will have the desirable effect of preventing that restless spirit in some individuals, which, by experience, hath been proved to be so greatly subversive of good order and the peace of society. The whole of this proposed measure, it may be necessary to observe, hath relation alone to the Society of the employed, who may be liable to become members of the Society of the Poor; and hath no reference whatever to those who are now permanent members of that Society.”

that no such division exists in any Society. In every civilized country, the poorest inhabitant is an *employer*, in the strictest sense of the word. Every ploughman, who wears a pair of yarn hose and clouted shoon, contributes to the support and subsistence of the class which is engaged in the manufacture of these articles; yet he never dreams of associating with his neighbours, in order to compel an hosier to sell his hose, or a shoemaker to sell his shoes, at a reduced price. The insensible progress of society has excited in him a desire, and afforded him the means, of obtaining this comfortable species of cloathing. He consults only his own convenience in purchasing it: others do the same, without calling in the advice of their neighbours; and it is thus that the aggregate demand is formed, which regulates the quantity that will be manufactured. The market price of the commodity, it is justly remarked, depends on the proportion between the quantity which is actually brought to market, and the demand of those who are willing to pay the natural price of the commodity, or the whole value of the rent, labour, and profit, which must be paid in order to bring it thither¹. It is the same with every other employer, and every other commodity, (whether it be labour, or its substantial produce,) the price, which it will fetch, will not depend on the avarice, whim, or caprice, of the individual purchaser, but on the general demand and supply, neither of which can be affected by him in any very sensible degree. That these circumstances, and not the combined influence of the employers, regulate the reward of labour, seems sufficiently apparent from the fluctuations which take place, from time to time, in the rate of wages. Thus, as Adam Smith observes, the demand for country labour is greater at hay-time and harvest than during the rest of the year, and the wages of agricultural labourers rise accordingly. Upon the same principle it is, that, in time of war, when forty or fifty thousand sailors are forced from the merchants' service into his Majesty's navy, the demand for sailors to merchant ships necessarily rises with their scarcity; and the consequence is, that those who are employed in that service are better paid during war, than peace². The combination of the ship-owners could no more prevent a rise in seamen's wages in time of war, than a combination of the sea-

¹ Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, 5th ed. i. 84.

² *Ibid.* 177.

men could prevent a fall in them, when nine tenths of the crews employed in the navy were paid off.

Were this supposed combination among the employers exerted in consequence of the establishment of a Poor's Rate, we might naturally expect to find the rate of wages much higher in those countries in which no such institution existed. This, however, is not the case: notwithstanding the check which the Poor System gives to industry, (and in this way only does it, indirectly, affect the labouring classes,) the reward of labour is more liberal in England, than in either of the neighbouring countries, Ireland or Scotland. I will venture to add, that, at no period whatever before the passing of the 43d of Elizabeth, (which is commonly, though erroneously, considered as the first Statute that provided a compulsory maintenance for the Poor,) could the labouring classes acquire such a portion of the necessaries and conveniencies of life by a day's work, as they could before the late unparalleled advance in the price of the necessaries of life. Mr. Vancouver, indeed, says, that it is most certain that there was a time when labour protected against that description of poverty, which hath been considered of moral production¹; by which, I conceive, he means poverty occasioned by accident, temporary want of health, or suspension of employment. It is, however, to be regretted, that this ingenious Author has not been able to point out to us that era of our history, in which the labouring classes found, in their daily earnings, an adequate resource against the unforeseen calamities of occasional incapacity.

I purposely abstain from entering into a minute investigation of the merits of the Bill respecting the Poor, which has been prepared according to the plan opened by Mr. Pitt, to the House of Commons, in the last Session of Parliament; because, as the Bill has received considerable alterations since it was first printed, and may still go through "great varieties of untried being," before it is submitted to the consideration of the Legislature, any observations which might be made on it, in its present form, might not be applicable to it when submitted to legis-

¹ Enquiry into the Causes and Production of Poverty, &c. p. 55.

lative discussion. I confess, however, that, from a general view only of the last printed draught, with which I have been favoured, and of which the Reader will find the principal heads in the Appendix to this Volume, it does not appear to me, that the plan, as it now stands, will either be very alluring to the Poor themselves, or very encouraging to those who are to maintain them. The Poor, who want relief, are to educate their children in such manner as shall be prescribed; not by any particular Act, or clause or clauses in any Act framed for that especial purpose, but by the parish-officers; or else to send them to some Schools of Industry, as they are to be called, which are to be established in incorporated parishes, and are to be managed by Wardens, (with salaries,) under the superintendence of Visitors, and the controul of Justices of the Peace. The functions of the various officers to be created and put into employment by this Bill, and more especially of the Justices, are extremely multifarious. They are (by this plan,) empowered to purchase, build¹, hire warehouses, within their district, for the safe deposit of the materials, which may be wanted for the schools, and which may be manufactured in them; and to purchase, build, or hire work-houses, for employing the Poor in manufacturing these materials; to hire skilful workmen to weave these articles, (which have been worked up by the Poor according to their respective abilities,) into wearing apparel; to appoint warehouse-men, with salaries; to fix the price of manufactured goods; to enter into contracts with persons for supplying the Poor with materials; to settle the rate of wages to be allowed in the schools of industry, and to be paid by the inhabitants to the Poor who are out of employ. A parochial fund is to be established, to which the labouring classes may subscribe, and from which allowances are to be made to sick and superannuated mem-

¹ May it not be expected that this part of the plan will be the pregnant source of jobs? The expence of all public buildings, is, I believe, in general, greatly disproportionate to their utility; and when it is considered, (what I am told is the fact,) that *Builders* have gained some influence in *Vestries*, we may be assured that schools of industry will be erected on extensive and expensive plans; and, perhaps, like the new gaols, exhibit all the new-fangled varieties of architecture: an art, which, it is to be lamented, is at a very low ebb in England; and has done little to render our cottages commodious, or our palaces magnificent.

bers. If the allowances are proportioned to the subscriptions, and, as I apprehend is the case, it is left to the option of people to subscribe to a general Parochial Society, or to one of their own framing and managing, it is easy to see which they will prefer. If, on the contrary, the allowances exceed the subscriptions, the deficiency must become a charge on the Poor's Rate. This is provided for by the Act: but it is to be hoped, that some estimate of the probable annual expence of parochial funds will be laid before Parliament, as well as an estimate of the probable expence of erecting or purchasing schools of industry, work-houses, and warehouses; together with an estimate of the probable amount of salaries to wardens, warehouse-keepers, and guardians. There is good reason to apprehend, that, in many instances, the produce of goods manufactured by the Poor will not pay for the raw materials, and the salaries of the teachers and hired workmen'. The provisions in this Bill are too numerous, too various, and too complex; and the whole machinery much too complicated for Justices of the Peace, saddled as they already are with other business, to attempt to manage it. Exclusive of all the trouble thrown on the magistrates, the intricate system of guardians of the Poor, visitors, wardens, treasurers, warehouse-men, teachers, hired workmen, and the duties of overseers with offices, and overseers without offices, will, it is to be presumed, prevent the Bill, as it now stands, from ever passing into a law. Before the Legislature accedes to this specious proposal of establishing schools, (such as the French would call *ecoles normales*,) for the undefined education of the children of the Poor, they will do well to inform themselves, with some care and exactness, on two previous topics of enquiry; namely: what has been the result of similar institutions, which have already been tried on a small scale? and what ideas the Public in general are likely to entertain of the project? I have been informed, that the spinning schools in Lincolnshire, whether with or without reason, have, however, in general, excited much dissatisfaction.

How others may regard this scheme, it is not for me to conjecture:

* See the 2d vol. p. 424.

but,

but, for myself, I am free to own, (and I both think and speak of it without prejudice,) that at present, I see in it, if adopted, only the certainty of a prodigious increase of expence, merely to try an experiment. The Public were certainly taught to expect something more than this: it was generally supposed we were now to have our whole System of Poor Laws revised and amended; not because the Poor were neglected or ill treated, of which there are not even any suspicions, but in order that the heavy and overpowering burthen laid on the shoulders of persons of landed property, might, if possible, be a little mitigated; or, at least, prevented from daily and rapidly growing more and more intolerable. Nothing of this kind, however, yet appears in the Bill: not a single movement does it make in favour of agriculture.

I will only add, that, if it should appear, upon further investigation, or suspicions only be excited, that the appointment of guardians has a tendency to increase and extend the influence of Government throughout the country; and that the persons entrusted with the relief of the Poor are to be invested with a compulsory power of forcing their children to be educated according to their own, possibly crude, and certainly discordant, notions of propriety; or even if the course of education is to be prescribed, not by law, nor by any long established and tried system, but by the vague opinions of men totally without experience in such subjects; may it not, and will it not too, probably be said, that it is assuming and exercising such a stretch of power, as, to say the least of it, will hardly be thought to accord well with the genius of our constitution; and thus a clamour be raised against this well-intended measure, which cannot but be unpropitious to it's favourable reception?

What then, (it may be asked, and no doubt will be asked,) is to be done in a case which avowedly calls for the attention of the Legislature? Are we to acquiesce in the unreformed continuance of a system, which is very generally admitted to be the parent of idleness and improvidence; and to be the fruitful source of endlessly accumulating expence? By no means. But before the mighty machine of reform is set in motion, I conceive, some such preliminary enquiries as these should be instituted. What are the actual evils which our Poor Laws have unquestionably created? What is their extent? What has been

the effect of various local modifications of the general law in different parts of the kingdom? Are the Poor either taken better care of, or maintained at a less expence, in incorporated districts, than they are in small parishes? Are their children more healthy, more orderly, or more industrious, from being educated in schools of industry? What are the comparative advantages, or disadvantages, of farming the Poor, of relieving them in a work-house, or maintaining them at their own houses; of furnishing them with the necessaries of life, or granting them a pecuniary allowance, to be expended at their own discretion?

It would be illiberal and wrong to suspect, that propositions, which, we are assured, have arisen from a careful examination of the subject¹, are not founded on full and accurate information. But the Public have a right to ask, and therefore do ask, that such information may be laid before the House of Commons. Without it, how can they judge of propositions, which, as now presented to the Public, are mere abstract propositions; how can they hope to reach the root of the evil, whatever that evil may be? Mr. Pitt's Bill, indeed, at the same time that it makes a compleat alteration in the Poor Laws, proposes the appointment of proper officers to report the state of each parish. These reports, when obtained, (as Mr. Howlett justly observes,) may possibly suggest many new ideas to Parliament, and enable them to frame regulations, which may so influence the course of events, as gradually to produce the much-talked-of level between wants and wages, without legislative interference².

It appears to me, however, that such enquiry, and such reports, should rather form the basis of future regulation, than constitute a subordinate part of a new and intricate system, offered for immediate adoption.

Before

¹ See Mr. Pitt's Speech in Debrett's Parl. Reg. xliv. 22.

² Examination of Mr. Pitt's Speech, 50. I question, however, whether the Reports from the Guardians to the Privy Council will answer the expectations, which seem to be entertained, that this measure will produce an annual Poor Budget. The Privy Council, engaged as they are upon subjects of the greatest importance, will hardly find time to investigate and arrange the voluminous mass of complex accounts which will be transmitted to them, to detect the errors of misrepresentation, (which will most assuredly frequently occur,) and to form

Before we chalk out a new and adventurous road, it would surely be wise to examine the heights and levels of the country we mean to improve. To the advocates for any attempts to produce, by legislative controul, what I conceive would be more easily effected by the unconstrained efforts of unshackled industry, I cannot better reply than by repeating the very judicious remarks, which Mr. Pitt himself introduced, on Mr. Whitbread's motion for the second reading of his Bill for regulating the wages of labourers. And it is with all due deference submitted to the consideration of others, how far those remarks are, or are not, equally applicable to the new system in contemplation. He says: "it is admitted, that if the price of labour can find it's own level, "it would be impolitic to interfere. If Mr. Whitbread's remedy succeeded, according to the most sanguine expectations, it only established what would have been better effected by principle; and if it failed, on the one hand, it might produce the severest oppression, and "on the other, encourage the most profligate idleness and extravagance. "Is it not better for the House, then, to consider the operation of general principles, and rely upon the effects of their unconfined exercise? "Is it not wiser to reflect what remedy may be adopted, at once more "general in it's principles, and more comprehensive in it's object; less "exceptionable in it's example, and less dangerous in it's application? "The House should look to the instances where interference had "shackled industry, and where the best intentions had often produced "the most pernicious effects'."

Without, however, making any immediate or violent alteration in the general out-line of the existing Poor Laws, there are, I conceive, many sound and safe principles, upon which the Legislature may proceed,
in

form the whole into such well abstracted and perspicuous report or reports, as may excite the attention both of the Legislature and the Public. To perform this arduous task, to any good end, will require minds wholly devoted to the business; and I much doubt, whether the establishment of a Board (the existence of which, like that of the Board of Agriculture, should depend on their continuing to be useful,) would not, both in point of economy and intelligence, be the best link of communication between parish or district officers, and the Legislature.

¹ The Reader will find the whole of this able speech in the Appendix, No. xi. I readily assent to most, but not to every one, of the positions which it lays down. What evidence,

in correcting the evils of a system, which, it cannot be denied, has created supineness and negligence in its administrators, and laziness and improvidence in its objects. To the reformer of our Poor Laws, however, I would suggest many of the sage reflections, and much of the constitutional advice, offered by Mr. Burke, in his speech in 1780, on a reform in the Civil List. "In a plan of reformation," he says, "it would be one of my maxims, that, when I know of an establishment, which may be subservient to useful purposes, and which, at the same time, from its discretionary nature, is liable to a very great perversion from these purposes, I would *limit the quantity of the power, that might be so abused.*" Upon the same principle, it would seem adviseable to limit the assessments for the maintenance of the Poor, to the average of the last seven, or last three years, or whatever other average might be found to be more proper¹.

In order, likewise, to facilitate any further, but gradual, reduction of this most burthenfome tax, (from which the commercial and manufacturing interests are almost wholly exempted,) it might be expedient to direct a new average to be taken at the end of some stated period,—every seven years, for instance; and the subsequent Rate to be regulated by the average of the preceding seven years¹. There would thus be room for future economy, though not for future extravagance.

That improvident overseers may be precluded from expending, in a few months, that sum which is intended for the current expence of the year, it might be adviseable to divide the whole annual collection into such

for instance, has there been laid before the Public, that the labourer is unable to supply, by his wages, the necessities of himself, and those of his children, when his family is numerous? or even that Friendly Societies, (of which I confess I entertain very high opinions,) are likely to contribute to alleviate the immense charge, with which the Public is loaded, for the support of the Poor? Whether this may, or may not, be the case, it is surely extremely essential that the Legislature should be furnished with ample documents, the result of full and accurate investigation, before they proceed to offer even further aid to these useful institutions: they are sensitive plants, which shrink from the touch of parliamentary interference: and I much mistake, if the late well-intended Acts, (which were passed, no doubt, with a view of removing the difficulties the Clubs laboured under,) have not reduced their number.

¹ It might, perhaps, be adviseable, if ever a new valuation should take place preparatory to an additional land-tax, that the Poor's Rate should be levied according to such new valuation; and only upon the net rental, after deducting the sum paid to the land-tax. At present,

such monthly, or even weekly, portions, as, upon a fair investigation of the relative wants of the Poor, at different seasons of the year, might be deemed most equitable. Restricted to a specific sum, the administrators of parochial charity would apply it (it is fair to suppose,) with more frugality and discrimination, than where they feel their fund has no other bounds than what they may set to their benevolence.

I propose a limited assessment¹ with the greater confidence, because it has been often recommended in many excellent political works, and by men of great practical experience. Arthur Young, who has in most of his valuable publications urged the necessity of recurring to this cor-

a person who is under-rated is doubly favoured; and in no place is the net rental made the criterion of the ability of the person rated to the Poor's Rate. A man who pays £100. a year for his house, in an unimproved part of the kingdom, where the land-tax is 4s. in the pound, and the Poor's Rate the same, in fact pays to the Poor 5s. in the pound on his net rental £80. In a London parish, where the land-tax is only 1s. (for instance) in the pound, a 4s. Poor's Rate on £100. a year, gross rental, is 4s. 9d. in the pound on the net rental.

Another grievance, which merits the attention of the Legislature, is, the very heavy and unequal burthen now borne by parishes on the sea coast, and more particularly by the large commercial towns, (in consequence of the War,) in maintaining the families of seamen who have been pressed into his Majesty's service. This burthen does not fall only on merchants, and others connected with commerce, who may be supposed, in some degree, to be repaid for this extraordinary expence, by the protection which our maritime force is more peculiarly calculated to afford this class of the community; but on occupiers, of various other descriptions. Surely this article of expence concerns the Public at large, and should be borne by them: rather than by the parish, or even by the county, as is the case with the families of militiamen. The hardship of the Law, as it now stands, is very seriously complained of in many of our sea-ports. See 2d Volume, p. 563.

¹ Limiting the Poor's Rate is not unprecedented. The principle, that the public fund for the relief of the Poor may be confined within certain bounds, has been frequently recognized by the Legislature. I believe all the Acts for incorporating particular districts direct that the future Rate shall not exceed the average of some certain number of preceding years*: and in Mr. Pitt's intended Bill there is a clause, which directs, that, in certain cases, a limitation of the Poor's Rate shall take place. See § 23. I have heard the following reform in our Poor's System suggested, as a means of destroying litigation and vagrancy; but it appears to me to be open to still greater objections than the limitation I propose. Let an average of the Poor's Rates in every parish be taken for the last seven years, and formed into a general fund for the relief of the Poor. If there should be any surplus, let it be applied towards the reduction of the national debt: if a deficiency, let it be made up by public grants.

* Owing, however, to the pressure of the times, enlarged powers have been given to the guardians of incorporated districts by 36 Geo. 3. c. 10.

rective of the Poor Laws, justly remarks, that, “ had such an Act been
 “ passed ten years before he wrote, limiting the assessments to the average
 “ of the preceding seven years,” (a measure which he had frequently
 urged in print,) “ it would have saved half a million a year in expen-
 “ diture, and four times that amount in the prevention of poverty and
 “ distress.”

It does not occur to me, that any very solid objections can be made to the adoption of this measure. I conceive they chiefly amount to this:—that if, from the severity of an inclement winter, from the carelessness of parish-officers, or from other circumstances, the limited assessment were found inadequate to supply the impotent Poor with the necessaries of life, many persons must inevitably perish for want. To this it may be replied, that those who really want, and cannot get relief from the parish, may yet have recourse to the discriminating liberality of individuals: a fund which never yet has failed; and it is probable never will fail, till the nation is overwhelmed in greater calamities than it experiences at present. Many cases might be enumerated, in which it is not practicable to apply to a parish-officer for relief; “ there are many requisites to a comfortable subsistence, which parish relief does not always supply; and there are some, who would suffer almost as much from receiving parish relief, as by the want of it;” and it may further be added, that there are many modes of charity, to which parochial interference is not applicable. Are not the indigent, in such instances, liberally provided for by the succour of the humane and benevolent?

It is, in my humble opinion, a mistaken idea, that the nation is indispensably called upon, in it's collective capacity, to educate the orphan, feed the aged and impotent, and provide employment for the industrious. These are duties, on the individual, of high and powerful obligation. Our legal establishment, vast and extensive as it may be in it's object, and unbounded in it's means, leaves many deficiencies, which must be supplied by voluntary charity. The compulsion of the Law is merely confined to the removal of extreme wants, in cases of the most urgent

¹ Travels in France, i. 440.

² Paley's Moral Philosophy, B. iii. C. 5.

necessity. Content with this narrow, but necessary limit, it here “ends
 “ its office as guardian of the Poor, leaving the rest to the faithful
 “ trusts of the sentiments of our minds, the feelings of our hearts, the
 “ compunctions of our consciences, as their friends; but this great
 “ charge of the overplus of charity, is not thus left without a practical
 “ security for the provision against the infirmities of one part of man-
 “ kind in the generosity of the other. So far is the Legislature from
 “ having reason to repent the sacred deposit of the wants of some, in
 “ the abundance of others, that as many instances might be found of the
 “ surplus of charity, as of its deficiency.”

It seems likewise to be but justice, both to the payers and receivers of Poor's Rate, that other parochial charges should not be blended with the Poor account. On this subject, the able report which I have just cited makes the following judicious observations. “ While they” (the Poor's Rates,) “ are certainly, even in their proper use, much increas-
 “ ed, and still increasing, yet it is also observable, that improper abuses
 “ have crept into them, by which they become more and more encum-
 “ bered with what does not properly belong to them; therefore, the
 “ Poor appear to have more than they really have contributed to them,
 “ while, of course, the contributors are in the same proportion burdened.
 “ In fact, the general Poor Rate consists commonly of the proper Poor
 “ Rate, the County Rate, and often the Church Rate. In an average
 “ of (three) years, ending in 1785, it appears, by the parliamentary
 “ documents, that, of the whole collected nominally for the Poor, one-
 “ seventh part was not really so; and the lately growing practice, of
 “ throwing the great expences under the several Acts, as in the Land
 “ Quota Bill¹, into the Poor Rate, tends still more to enlarge it; be-
 “ sides which legal use, a great illegal abuse prevails in many parishes,
 “ of introducing into it matters relative to the highways, and other to-
 “ tally extraneous articles². These practices, so injurious to the payers

¹ A second seaman and landsman's Bill has just passed, which will saddle the Rate of this year with an immense additional increase: probably more than £300,000.; as 15,000 men are to be thus provided. See 37 Geo. 3. c. 4.

² Of these practices the Reader will meet with several instances in the Second Volume of this Work.

“ and receivers of the Poor Rate, will continue until the more intelligent and honourable Parishioners interfere, as they ought, to check these and similar abuses; in short, until Vestries become, what they were always meant to be, general assemblies of parishioners, instead of what they too often are, partial confederacies of parish-officers. It is, therefore, justice to the Poor, who have the repute of greater contributions than they have the benefit of, to state this grievance, and, as far as may be, to remedy it, by introducing as little as possible into the Poor Rate, that does not properly belong to it, and especially by avoiding and disallowing all unnecessary expences of entertainments or other extravagancies, which are as unfeeling and unsuitable to the occasion, as the barbarous custom, not otherwise unlike them, in some countries, of festivals at funerals ¹. ”

At the same time that the Legislature limited the assessments in each parish, and restricted their application to their ancient and proper use, the relief of the Poor; it would materially assist future enquiries on this subject, if parish-officers were obliged to keep their accounts in a more uniform and regular manner than is done at present. The Legislature has, to a certain extent, adopted this measure with regard to the Infant Poor, in the metropolis, by the 7 Geo. 3. c. 39. The officers entrusted with the management of the Poor in the different parishes within the bills of mortality, are directed to register the age of children admitted into work-houses, together with births, deaths, and many other circumstances, which the political enquirer must necessarily advert to, before he decides on the merits or defects of parochial institutions. I have inserted the forms required by the Act of Parliament, in Appendix, No. xvi. The Reader will likewise find, in the Second Volume of this Work, a few specimens of printed accounts ², which, in some parishes, are published every year, for the satisfaction of the inhabitants. I am sorry to say that this very useful measure is adopted in few parts of the kingdom. Nor are any of the annual statements,

¹ Ann. of Agric. xxv. 389.

² See likewise a specimen of Books for Accounts of Parish Poor, in a Collection of Pamphlets concerning the Poor, in 4to. published in 1787.

which

which have fallen within my observation, sufficiently clear or circumstantial. Not only the number, age, sex, and infirmities, of the persons receiving parochial aid, should be specified ; but the weekly allowances to each description of Paupers, the weekly expenditure in work-houses, and the quantity and price of provisions and other articles purchased for the Poor, should be detailed in such a manner as to afford the payers of the Poor's Rate an opportunity of judging whether the fund to which they contribute is administered with frugality and judgment. It is true, that, at present, every parishioner has a right to inspect the parish-officers' accounts: but this is a right which is seldom exercised ; and, indeed, in most instances, it would be labour thrown away. The receipts and disbursements from the day-book of an overseer, or the master of a work-house, would afford little information, till they were methodized and arranged in a Ledger. A man, however, who is on the point of quitting his short-lived office, seldom thinks of undertaking this trouble. It is sufficient if he make such a statement as will satisfy the Justices, who are to pass his accounts. Indeed, as it often happens that the person who is chosen overseer is utterly unacquainted with arithmetic, and that no set form of book-keeping is pointed out by the Legislature, or by individuals, who are conversant with accounts ; and as no severe penalty attaches on an overseer for destroying the books of his predecessors ; it is no wonder that the entries should be seldom clear and satisfactory, and that the preservation of parochial records should be so little attended to.

It is, therefore, much to be wished, that the Legislature would oblige parish-officers to provide themselves with account-books, constructed on the most approved models, for registering receipts and expenditures, number of Poor, mortality, and such other circumstances as the Public are interested in knowing ; and would, likewise, direct, that a printed statement, abstracted from the parish-books, (in such manner as may be judged proper, and pointed out in the schedules of the next Poor Act,) should be annually delivered to such of the inhabitants as are assessed to the Poor's Rate, and laid before the General Quarter Sessions of the county, in which the parish it relates to is situated. I think too, that parochial records should be accessible to a stranger, upon his paying a reasonable fee for inspection. Every member of the commu-

nity is more or less interested in the correction, and, consequently, in the previous investigation, of those abuses, which, though immediately confined to a small parish, often spread the contagion of idleness and improvidence through the surrounding country.

It would be extremely serviceable to the labouring classes, if the Justices were empowered to enforce the payment of wages, not exceeding £ 10., to servants of every description, in the same manner in which they are now authorized by statute to order the payment of wages for agricultural labour¹. A poor girl, who has 40 or 50s. due to her for wages, from a master, who has not employed her in husbandry, cannot, without considerable expence and difficulty, commence any legal process for obtaining payment of this inconsiderable sum.

Perhaps it might likewise be adviseable to introduce Courts of Conscience, (or some other summary mode of recovering small debts,) into every part of the kingdom.

Mr. Gilbert gives the following instance of the hardships to which poor persons are exposed, by the methods now taken for the recovery of small debts, in the county, and other inferior courts.

“ A poor labourer, owing 1s. 6d. for shop-goods, was served with a summons, to appear at the Hundred Court; and in the margin of the summons was printed as under:

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
“ Warrant to sue - - -	1	0
“ Entering action, summons, service, and fee	3	4
“ Withdrawing and fee - - -	2	6
	<hr/>	
Costs -	6	10
	<hr/>	

“ By which proceeding, this poor man was charged with a sum above four times the amount of the debt, at the instant he had notice of any action being commenced against him; which he must either submit to, however unjust the demand might be, or suffer his goods to be distrained, &c. &c. and hazard a much greater expence by the least delay².”

¹ See p. 292-5.

² Heads of a Bill, &c. 1787.—p. 29.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Diet, Dress, Fuel, and Habitation, of the Labouring Classes.

CONCERNING the relative advantages enjoyed by the labouring classes in different parts of this kingdom, in the important articles of diet, dress, fuel, and habitation, the Reader, I fear, will find but little information in the Second Volume of this Work. It was, indeed, part of my original plan to have investigated these subjects in such a manner as to have enabled me to offer some clear and certain conclusions on the practicability of meliorating the condition of those of our fellow-subjects, who are the worst supplied with these essential necessaries of life ; either in consequence of some local disadvantages, which prevent them from obtaining equal enjoyments, from equal industry, with their neighbours ; or, (as is more frequently the case,) in consequence of injudicious and wasteful systems of domestic economy. I most sincerely agree with those who regret that the labourer does not get more for his shilling than is usually the case : the misfortune, however, which he experiences in expending it, does not arise from (what is so often most unjustly reprobated) his being obliged to purchase the few articles he has occasion for, from petty retail shops, and consequently to pay a larger price for them than his more opulent master : but if he does not reap the full reward of his labour, or, in other words, if he does not enjoy those gratifications which his labour can afford him, it is because, either through ignorance, custom, or prejudice, he adheres to ancient improvident systems in dress, in diet, and in other branches of private expenditure. If, for instance, it could be demonstrated to the inhabitant of any country, that the sum which he appropriates to the purchase of cloaths, would procure handsomer, warmer, and in every respect better apparel, than that which he usually provides ; or that the vegetable or animal productions, which constitute his ordinary diet,

instead of being prepared in the way he has been accustomed to have them prepared, might, with equal ease, be so combined as to reduce the expence of his food one half, without rendering it less palatable, less nutritious, or less wholesome;—it might, with the greatest propriety, be urged, that, in this man's case, his shilling did not produce his shilling's worth. To instruct him how to obtain this desirable end; or if, from his situation and circumstances, or from his inveterate habits and predilections, he is ill disposed to listen to, and still less to follow, any advice, which may be given him on the subject¹; to point out to his employer, those improvements, which his interest will prompt him, and his influence will enable him, by well-timed interference, gradually to introduce among those whom he employs: these, I conceive, are the most obvious methods of attempting to benefit the labouring classes with any probability of success. Instead of the ill-grounded complaints, which have been so often reiterated by writers on the Poor, that the wages of industry are in general too inadequate to provide the labourer with those comforts and conveniences which are befitting his station in the community², they would better serve the cause of the industrious peasant and manufacturer, by pointing out to them the best means of reducing their expences, without diminishing their comforts; by suggesting and explaining the mode of preparing cheap and agreeable substitutes for those articles of diet, which, in times of scarcity and distress, exhaust so much of the daily earnings of a working man, as to leave him little or nothing for many highly requisite conveniences;

¹ The public and private distribution of cheap pamphlets, on various topics connected with domestic economy, might answer many useful purposes. In many parts of England, the establishment of a parochial library by subscription, for the purchase of books on agriculture and the other useful arts, would not only be extremely convenient to the country gentleman of moderate fortune, who cannot afford to purchase expensive books; but often no less so to the practical farmer, and even to the working manufacturer and day-labourer.

² From the information which the Reader will find detailed in the following Reports, it would seem that by far the greater part of inmates in work-houses consist of persons who have followed those occupations in which the highest wages are given. The poor-houses in the vicinity of the metropolis are full of Paupers of this description; and would furnish many of Falstaff's recruits—"discarded unjust serving men, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fallen:"—in the more remote parts of the kingdom, agricultural labourers are much seldomer thrown on the parish than manufacturers.

by noticing such mechanical contrivances, as may, with little expence, be applied towards rendering the cottager's habitation more comfortable; and such improvements in the useful arts, as will enable him to lessen his expenditure in the article of dress; and, in short, by communicating to the inhabitants of those parts of the kingdom, which have made the least progress in social improvements, the superior skill and ingenuity of other districts, or of other countries, in the various branches of knowledge, which, even in the humblest occupations, are wanted for the purposes of domestic economy¹.

It

¹ Commerce has done much towards furnishing us with the raw materials and manufactured produce of the most distant parts of the habitable globe: the humblest peasant in this country, it is probable, is indebted both to the eastern and western hemispheres, (to the West Indies, which are, at least, 3000 miles, and to the East Indies and China, which are more than 10,000 miles, distant from this country,) for some of the few articles which constitute a part of his morning repast. The progress, however, of the mechanical arts is much slower than that of commerce. We had long known and reaped the benefit of the silk-manufactures of Italy, before the machines for fabricating them were made, or even known in England. It must, however, be confessed, that, with regard to manufactures, there are powerful causes, (but more particularly the secrecy in which manufacturers envelope all new discoveries, and the want of capital,) that prevent many important inventions from being extended from one country to another. The monopolizing spirit of commercial nations, moreover, often successfully interferes to prevent the free participation of the fruits of human ingenuity; but it may be doubted whether such an attempt, by a Government, is a sound, wise policy: and it may, I think, be questioned, whether that is an enlightened, or even a beneficial law, which prohibits the emigration of artisans or manufacturers.

With respect, however, to the mechanical contrivances, and ingenious expedients, which are applied to various purposes of domestic economy, and are, more or less, peculiar to different countries, it requires little more than a spirit of inquisitive research in the traveller, in order to investigate, and record them, for the benefit of his countrymen. An useful application of a power in nature may, often, be learned by stepping into a cottage, or by observing the unconcealed operations of agricultural labour. And yet, notwithstanding myriads of Englishmen are for ever wandering through Europe, it is astonishing how little information of this nature is brought back. With the exception of Arthur Young's interesting agricultural travels through France, there are very few tours which have been undertaken with the express view of investigating the progress of the useful arts. It has often struck me as not a little extraordinary, that so little notice has been taken, by modern writers, of the manners and customs of the inhabitants of that part of Asia which constitutes, perhaps, the fairest portion of the British empire. The East was formerly considered as the mother of the arts; and among the various tribes which compose the rich, populous, and (I will hope) civilized dominions which we possess in that quarter of the globe, there are, doubtless, many happy inventions,

It is not probable, that the arguments of philanthropists ever will have much weight in persuading the great mass of employers to increase the wages of the employed; for it is by imperious circumstances alone, which neither master nor workman can controul, that the demands of the one, and the concessions of the other, are regulated: but, if the labourer can be persuaded to adopt those economical systems of his neighbours, which, whilst they are cheaper, are, demonstrably, no less productive of comfort, than his own unimproved routine of ancient predilections and prejudices, he will cultivate a field from which he is certain of being repaid for his exertions. To convince his employer that his wages ought to be raised, may require more eloquence than he is possessed of: but to make the wages which he receives more productive, depends on a few little frugal arrangements at home. If his earnings are really insufficient to afford him the necessaries and comforts of life, he must be miserably dependent on the good-will of another: but if, on the contrary, by judicious contrivances, (suggested to him by necessity, or recommended to him by the experience of others,) he can be induced so to alter his course of life, as to effect a considerable saving in any one article of expence, but more especially in that of diet, he will thereby secure himself a fund for future independence, and increasing gratifications¹. In such an attempt he will have the best encouragement

ventions, many ingenious contrivances of mechanism in common use, many excellent expedients adopted in household economics, which are no less worthy of being recorded and transmitted to Europe, than the Ordinances of Menu, or the Institutes of Acbar. The shiploads of rice, which, during the late scarcity, arrived from the East Indies, would have been more valuable, and more acceptable, if, along with this article of food, the various modes of preparing it, which probably every oriental Apicius is acquainted with, had been communicated to the Public.

¹ Let it not, however, be imagined, that I mean to contend that a general decrease in the use of consumable commodities would be at all beneficial to the nation; the thirst even for superfluities is productive of important national advantages, and of many individual comforts: all I mean to insist on is, that the labourer's income may be spent in a far more advantageous way to himself than it usually is, and with equal profit to those who subsist by the demand for consumable commodities. He has, no doubt, a right to dispose of his earnings in any way not injurious to his health or moral faculties: and I entirely agree with the Author of the following passage, (which has been quoted by Arthur Young in his "Political Arithmetic:") "A clean shirt and a laced hat are not inconsistent with piety and virtue, nor Ortolans

agement to proceed, because the success will depend upon himself: and, indeed, I believe it is in general the case, both in the elevated, and in the humble, spheres of life, that the comforts, which we so anxiously thirst after, depend more on a due attention to domestic concerns, than on those extraneous, (though apparently more important,) circumstances, which result from the pursuits of the profession we are engaged in, or the nature of the Government we live under. There seems to be just reason to conclude, that the miseries of the labouring Poor arise, less from the scantiness of their income, (however much the philanthropist might wish it to be increased,) than from their own improvidence and unthriftiness; since it is the fact, and, I trust, will be demonstrated in a subsequent part of this Work, that, in many parts of the kingdom, where the earnings of industry are moderate, the condition of the labourer is more comfortable, than in other districts, where wages are exorbitant¹. To ascertain, with precision, how far the increasing

“and Burgundy with temperance, nor a feather-bed with fortitude, nor a pinch of snuff with sobriety, nor a handsome woman with chastity. A man may enjoy them all, and yet act up to the dignity of his nature, and conformably to the precepts of religion and morality. Neither, on the other hand, does a man’s confining himself to the use of fat bacon, Lacedemonian broth, muddy beer, coarse woollens, a leather doublet, a canvas shirt, and a thatched hovel upon a common, render him the more pious, temperate, sober, chaste, religious and virtuous; for he may confine himself to the use of all those, and yet be a most slovenly sinner, and beastly profligate. And it seems that the refined debauchee is the most eligible character of the two.” *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, 1758, p. 51.

¹ How then (it may be asked,) if there is so much improvidence in the great mass of the community, have those frugal accumulations of capital been effected, by which this nation has risen to opulence and prosperity? To this I would reply, that additions are made to capital (by those who possess it,) by individual parsimony, much oftener than by any general systems, or habits of frugality; and that, even admitting it to be the case, that hard-working people will often accumulate a very considerable stock-purse, it by no means follows, that they make what they actually expend, go as far as they might do. Daniel De-Foe, in noticing the industry of his countrymen, calls them the most *lazy diligent* people in the world: and with the same propriety, I think, (considering their increasing opulence and increasing distress,) they may be deemed the most *saving improvident* nation in the universe. There are, however, exceptions to most general rules. Mr. Marshall remarks, that, in one of the midland counties, where (exclusive of an allowance in beer,) the yearly wages of a labourer did not exceed £10., a rustic, (who died in 1789, aged 73,) had from the earnings of manual labour reared five children to maturity, and died worth an hundred pounds. *Midland Counties*,

creasing numbers, and increasing distresses of our Poor, have been occasioned by domestic improvidence and misconduct, and to detail the many economical expedients by which the condition of the labouring classes might be bettered, would require much practical knowledge, which I do not possess, and more comprehensive details than can fall within the grasp of a single individual. The success which has attended my very limited enquiries on these points, has been too inconsiderable to enable me to offer much new information on the subject, in addition to the very valuable suggestions with which Count Rumford has favoured the Public, for the promotion of improvements in the domestic economy of the labouring Poor. The little which I have to advance on these topics, will, I trust, be considered as merely supplementary to his more interesting and original communications; and I am sorry to have to add, that, though not entirely, it has, in general, perhaps, been derived more from historical, than from personal and local, enquiries.

It must strike every one, who has at all investigated the subject of diet, (and indeed it will appear from several of the Reports in this Work, in which the earnings and expenditure of labourers are particularized,) that there is not only a remarkable difference in the proportion of earnings appropriated to the purchase of subsistence by labourers in the North and South of England; but that their mode of preparing their food is no less dissimilar. In the South of England, the poorest labourers are habituated to the unvarying meal of dry bread and cheese from week's end to week's end: and in those families, whose finances do not allow them the indulgence of malt liquor, the deleterious produce of China

i. 131. ii. 287. I myself know of more singular instances of economy. A common shoemaker in a village in Gloucestershire has accumulated £300. which he has at length consented to place in the funds: and in a small town in the same county, a barber, besides educating two children, has saved a fortune of £800. If Mr. Pitt's parochial fund can persuade working men to place the sums out at interest, which they have hid in holes and corners, it will assuredly be a great benefit to them, by making their earnings more productive; and no less a benefit to the nation, by increasing the circulating medium. Perhaps a county bank, somewhat on the plan of that contained in the Appendix, No. xix. and perfectly unconnected with a *parochial tax*, might answer the end of drawing an immense mass of hoarded cash into circulation; and of thus preventing many iniquitous practices, too often successfully attempted, to defraud a working man of the savings of a life of parsimonious industry.

¹ See Appendix, No. xii. and the Reports in the Second Volume of this Work.

constitutes

constitutes their most usual and general beverage. If a labourer is rich enough to afford himself meat once a week, he commonly adopts the simplest of all culinary preparations; that of roasting it; or, if he lives near a baker's, of baking it; and if he boils his meat, he never thinks of forming it into a soup, that would be not only as wholesome, and as nourishing, but, certainly, more palatable than a plain boiled joint.

In the North of England, and in Scotland and Wales, on the contrary, the poorest labourers can, and actually do, regale themselves with a variety of dishes, that are wholly unknown to the Southern inhabitant of this island. With regard to some of these, I shall venture to particularize the culinary processes, which are necessary for preparing them; being fully persuaded, that there is more than one class of Readers, to whom such minute and circumstantial details will be acceptable; and, I will add, that, as nine tenths of the community are chiefly impelled to the exertion of their manual and intellectual abilities, in order to procure their daily meals, any savings or improvements in that branch of domestic economy which relates to the preparing of food, which can be pointed out, are the most substantial benefactions which can be conferred on the labourer.

To begin with one of the simplest articles of diet, "the wholesome porritch, chief of Scotia's food," *hasty-pudding*. It is made of oat-meal, water, and salt, in the following manner: To a quart of water, whilst it is boiling in an open pot, a small quantity of salt is added; and 13 ounces of oat-meal are dropped into it, by little and little, whilst boiling, and stirred about with a stick² or a spoon. It is boiled in this manner for two or three minutes, when it becomes pretty thick; and is then taken out of the pot, or pan, for use. Over-boiling makes it tough and clammy. The quantity of oat-meal, put into a quart of water, is varied, according to the consistency which is required. The above, however, is the most usual proportion: and is sufficient for a meal for two labourers. Hasty-pudding is eaten with a little milk or beer poured upon it; or with a little cold butter put into the middle; or with a little treacle. This dish is extremely nutritious, and is much liked by

¹ Burns' "Cotter's Saturday Night."

² Called a *spurtle*.

those who have been accustomed to it¹. A good meal for one person, supposing the price of oats to be 20s. the quarter, will not exceed 1d.

Crowdie is not so generally used as hafty-pudding: it is, however, a very common dish in the North, among labourers of all descriptions, but particularly miners, as it is soon made ready, and without much trouble. The process is extremely simple; and consists in pouring boiling water over oat-meal, and stirring it a little. The respective quantities of each are much the same as what are used in making hafty-pudding. It is eaten with milk or butter. There is another sort of *crowdie* made, by pouring boiling broth on oatmeal: after the dish is stirred about, a piece of fat is taken from the broth, and put on the *crowdie*, instead of butter or milk.

This dish is very common in Scotland, and is accounted a very great luxury by labourers. It is a never-failing dinner² with all ranks of people on Shrove Tuesday, (as pancakes are in England;) and was probably first introduced on that day, while the Roman Catholic religion prevailed, to strengthen them against the Lenten Fast; it being accounted the most substantial dish known in that country³. On this day there is always
put

¹ I have no doubt but that the mode of preparing hafty-pudding from Indian corn in America, (of which Count Rumford gives a description extremely similar to the above account,) was copied from the North Country fashion of preparing hafty-pudding. The American colonies were chiefly settled by emigrants from Scotland, and the Northern counties of England; which circumstance sufficiently explains the great similarity which prevails in culinary processes in these parts of the new and old world.

² I believe Burns, the Ayrshire poet, somewhere calls breakfast *crowdie-time*.

³ This wholesome and nutritive dish is in Scotland called *brose*, and is often mentioned in the Statistical Account of that country, lately published. (See vol. ii. 539. vol. ix. 326. vol. xv. 239, &c.; and Scots Songs, ii. 160. 207.) Some fanciful etymologists would have the word to be derived from the Greek word βρῆσαι, *to feed*; which derivation, however far-fetched, is a just and emphatical encomium on this kind of food. It however seems to be rather derived from the Saxon brīf, which Somner translates, “jus, jusculum, liquamen,” forbitio: to which Lye adds, “ossulæ adipatæ,” and also brōð, “jus, jusculum.” The Germans, in the like manner, use *brey* for pulse, i. e. gruel, panada, or pottage; and *bruke* or *brue* for that kind of soup which we call *broth*: a word which, according to Casaubon and Junius, is derived from the German term *brot*, bread, and is thus descriptive of sops, or pieces of bread which are commonly put into broth. In Shaw’s Gaelic Dictionary we find *brathas* for what the Lowlanders call *bruis*; and I am informed that the Highlanders also use the Gaelic word *bruaisd*,

put into the bafon or porringer, out of which the unmarried folks are to eat, a ring, the finding of which, by fair means, is fupposed to be ominous of the finder's being firft married.

This latter kind of crowdie is that which is moft in ufe in the North of England; where the greateft advantage, and richeft treat expected from a fmall piece of corned beef, (which there are few fo low or poor as not to indulge themfelves with for a Sunday's dinner,) is it's fupplying fufficient ftokes of favoury fkimnings for crowdies.

Frumenty, or *barley-milk*, as made in the North, is barley, (with the hulks taken off, (which was formerly done in a kind of large ftone mortar, called a *knocking-ftane*, but is now performed in a mill constructed for the purpofe,) boiled in water near two hours, and afterwards mixed with skimmed milk; fometimes a little fugar is added: it is generally eaten in Cumberland with barley bread. Barley is alfo drefsed by the peafants in Scotland, and in the North of England, for broth¹, or barley-milk, by being moiftened with water, and then beaten with a long wooden mallet, rounded at the end, in a ftone mortar.

bruaisd, or *bruais*, for the fame article: or, in their own ftyle of cookery, for a mixture of the liquor in which meat has been boiled, and oaten meal, (moft commonly *gradden*, if it can be had,) made by fimplly pouring the liquor, in a boiling ftate, over the raw meal, and mixing it. For *broth*, Shaw gives not only *bracan*, but *ean-bhrith*: whilft, according to O'Brien, the Irish have our *broth*, which he derives from *bruith*, flefh. The Welch have *brefych*. *Brouet*, (which, I believe, is now pretty generally adopted into the French language, to denote any thin foup,) according to Bullet, and Gebelin, is originally a *Bas-Breton* word, fignifying *bouillon*, or *sauce-claire*. *Bre*, in Auvergne, and *breu* or *bra* in *Franche-Compté*, are foup, pottage, or fauce. In the Patois of Befançon, *bru d'andouille* is literally what the Scotch call *pudding-bree*, or *broo*, i. e. the water in which black-puddings are boiled. It would feem, that, in general, fome diftinction has obtained in the manner of ufing thefe different terms: the one fignifying fimplly the gravy or liquid in which meat has been boiled; and the other, pieces of bread, meat, or legumes, mixed with it. This, Somner fays, is the import of *brewis*, as Mr. Pegge (*Forme of Cury*, 127.) thinks it alfo is both of our old Englifh *brevet*, and the French *brouet*. In one of the receipts in the little book intituled, "The Court and Kitchen of Joan Cromwell," (p. 76.) boiled meat is directed to be ferved "on *brewis*, "with roots, or cabbage, boiled in milk, &c." Here it probably means fops of bread in broth; and it is certain that, to this day, *brewis* bears the fame fenfe in moft of the Northern counties of England.

¹ The Author of the Court and Kitchen of Joan Cromwell, (p. 116.) informs us, that barley broth was a mefs frequently prepared for *Oliver*.

This is called *knocked-bear*, to distinguish it from the pearl barley, which is dressed in the mill. In the Northern counties, *oat-meal* is made in the following manner: the oats are first dried in a kiln; after which the husks are taken off by an operation of the mill, called *skilling*, (or *shelling*;) the oats are then cleansed from the dust by another machine, and afterwards ground in the barley-mill, and the meal sifted through a sieve. The farmers usually make from 15 to 40 bushels of oats into meal at a time, according to the number of their family; but enough to serve them from three to six months. The refuse, which remains after the meal has been sifted, and is similar to the bran of wheat, consists chiefly of husks, and is called *feeds*: it is used for *sowens*¹ or *flummery*, which is made in the following manner: the feeds are put into water, where they remain from one to three days: they are then wrung, or strained, out again; and this process is repeated a second and third time, in different vessels of water. By this contrivance all the mealy particles of the feeds are extracted. The water is then mixed together; and when it has stood about six hours, the clear water is poured off, and fresh water is added; sometimes this is done a second time. When the sediment which is thus obtained is to be used, it must be stirred up, and water put to it till it will just tinge a wooden dish with a whitish colour: it is then put into a pot, and boiled, seldom less than half an hour, and often a whole hour: care must be taken to stir it all the time that it remains over the fire: and it is added, from long tradition, that the mess must always be stirred one way. It is afterwards put into basons, where it acquires a considerable degree of

¹ Robert Burns, the Ayrshire ploughman, mentions *sowens* as part of the rural feast which concludes the merriment of his countrymen on Hallow-e'en:

“Till *butter'd sowens*, wi' fragrant lunt *,

“Set a' their gabs † a-steerin;

“Syne, wi' a social glass o' strunt ‡,

“They parted aff careerin

“Fu' blythe that night.”

Sowens, with butter instead of milk, is not only the Hallow-e'en supper, but the Christmas and New-year's-day's breakfast, in many parts of Scotland.

* Smoke.

† Mouths.

‡ Spirituous liquors.

solidity, and becomes perfectly smooth, and very like what in England is called bla-mange. It is eaten with milk; and is an extremely cheap, wholesome, and even delicious food for supper; but, perhaps, is not quite so strong and nutritive a diet as hafty-pudding. This article of subsistence is only used occasionally in the North of England; but in many parts of Scotland, particularly on the North-east coast, it constitutes the invariable dinner of the labourer.

Pease-kail is made by boiling pease till they are soft; the water is then poured from them, and milk is added. Sometimes pease are put into broth, and boiled down into a sort of soup. Neither of these dishes, however, are very generally used, nor much to be commended.

Potatoes are not only particularly good in the North of England, but used in various ways. They are sometimes roasted, or boiled, and eaten with butter, as in the South; but are more commonly boiled, (sometimes with the skin on, and sometimes with it taken off,) chopped into small pieces, and eaten with butter, (either cold or melted,) or bacon fried. Potatoes are likewise generally used in the North, with roast or boiled meat, in the same manner as in the South of England: but when eaten with roast meat, they are commonly first put into the dripping-pan; but the principal way in which this useful root is dressed in the North by labourers' families, is, by being peeled, or rather scraped, raw; chopped, and boiled together with a small quantity of meat cut into very small pieces. The whole of this mixture is then formed into a hash, with pepper, salt, onions, &c. and forms a cheap and nutritive dish; which being common also in ships, is by sailors called *lobscouse*. No vegetable is, or ever was, applied to such a variety of uses in the North of England as the potatoe: it is a constant standing dish, at every meal, breakfast excepted, at the tables of the Rich, as well as the Poor: and it is generally supposed that they are produced in much greater perfection in Lancashire, and districts near Lancashire, than in other parts of England. This, however, I conceive, is a mistake. I have indeed eat potatoes there, which, when brought to the table, and touched with a fork, fell into powder, like some of the fungus tribe. Potatoes, however, from the very same field or garden, when sent up to London, appear to be quite a different production: the outside is generally too
much

much done, and is either foddren or watery ; whilst the centre of the potatoe remains as hard as it was when taken out of the ground. The directions of the Board of Agriculture, (which Count Rumford has inserted in his Essays,) are highly worthy the attention of those who wish to taste this excellent root in perfection. I shall therefore transcribe them without apology.

On the Boiling of Potatoes, so as to be eat as bread.

“ There is nothing that would tend more to promote the consumption of potatoes, than to have the proper mode of preparing them as food generally known. In London this is very little attended to ; whereas in Lancashire and Ireland the boiling of potatoes is brought to very great perfection indeed. When prepared in the following manner, if the quality of the root is good, they may be eat as bread, a practice not unusual in Ireland. The potatoes should be as much as possible of the same size, and the large and small ones boiled separately. They must be washed clean, and, without paring or scraping, put in a pot, with cold water, not sufficient to cover them, as they will produce, themselves, before they boil, a considerable quantity of fluid. They do not admit being put into a vessel of boiling water, like greens. If the potatoes are tolerably large, it will be necessary, as soon as they begin to boil, to throw in some cold water, and occasionally to repeat it till the potatoes are boiled to the heart, (which will take from half an hour to an hour and a quarter, according to their size ;) they will otherwise crack and burst to pieces on the outside, whilst the inside will be nearly in a crude state, and consequently very unpalatable and unwholesome. During the boiling, throwing in a little salt occasionally is found a great improvement ; and it is certain, that the slower they are cooked, the better. When boiled, pour off the water, and evaporate the moisture, by replacing the vessel in which the potatoes were boiled once more over the fire. This makes them remarkably dry and mealy. They should be brought to the table with the skins on, and eat with a little salt, as bread. Nothing but experience can satisfy any one how superior the potatoe is, thus prepared, if the sort is good and mealy. Some prefer
“ roasting

“roasting potatoes; but the mode above detailed, extracted partly
 “from the interesting paper of Samuel Hayes, Esq. of Avondale, in
 “Ireland, (Report on the Culture of Potatoes, p. 71 and 103.) and
 “partly from the Lancashire re-printed Report, (p. 63.) and other
 “communications to the Board, is at least equal, if not superior. Some
 “have tried potatoes in steam, thinking by that process they must
 “imbibe less water. But immersion in water causes the discharge of a
 “certain substance which the steam alone is incapable of doing, and
 “by retaining which, the flavour of the root is injured, and they after-
 “wards become dry, by being put over the water a second time without
 “water. With a little butter, or milk, or fish, they make an excel-
 “lent mess’.”

The Report observes, that “it is also a fact, and one of great im-
 “portance, that potatoes and water alone, with common salt, can nourish
 “men completely; but other mealy substances, although the principal
 “food of millions of the human race, who never taste animal substances,
 “are always mixed with some other kind of alimentary matter; such
 “as, with oil, fruits, whey, milk, sour milk, &c’.”

This contrast, however, is not quite exact and just; for many poor
 people, particularly in Scotland, live, and that very comfortably, for
 months together, upon oat-meal, and barley-meal, mixed with only
 water and salt, with no other variety than the different degrees of thick-
 ness and thinness, of bread, pottage, flummery, and gruel. If they can
 afford now and then to convert a peck of malt, (which is likewise a mealy
 substance,) into beer, they think themselves most luxuriously provided.
 This is the case with day-labourers, who rent a cottage, without any
 croft or garden, for growing vegetables, annexed to it. These generally
 lay in their stock of meal about Martinmas, when it is cheapest;
 and, if carefully packed, it is accounted much more substantial from
 being kept. As few of them have the art of preserving potatoes in
 small quantities, after the growing season comes in, their store of that
 article is generally exhausted by the month of March, when they become
 too dear to be purchased by labourers for food. A contrivance, for

¹ Count Rumford's Essays, 277.

² Report of the Board of Agriculture, concerning the Culture and Use of Potatoes, 84.

preserving potatoes in small quantities, is much wanted. Adam Smith observes, that “it is difficult to preserve potatoes through the year, and “impossible to store them, like corn, for two or three years together. “The fear of not being able to sell them before they rot, discourages “their cultivation, and is, perhaps, the chief obstacle to their ever becoming, in any great country, like bread, the principal vegetable food “of all the different ranks of the people¹.”

A more simple, or safer, system for preserving potatoes dry and good throughout the *Winter* and *Spring*, (but perhaps not through the *Summer*,) needs hardly to be wished for, than that which is in common practice in most of the districts of Cumberland. A light and sandy soil is as necessary for preserving potatoes, as it is for producing them. In such a soil, on the sunny side of an hill, if such be at hand, an hole is dug of sufficient capacity to contain, not enough for the consumption of the year, but as many as may conveniently be taken out at one time : into this, when lined with *brackens*, or fern, on a dry day, when the potatoes have first been duly dried, they are put ; and the hole is then carefully covered with the sand and soil dug out of it. From hence they are taken, when wanted, with much more ease than ice is from an ice-house : and it is very rare to hear of their being hurt by the frost. Some, for still greater security, have such holes dug in their cart-houses, byres², or other out-houses : in the cabin, or quarter, of a negro in Virginia and Maryland, a potatoe-hole in the floor of his hovel, near the fire, and boarded over, is full as common as a fire-place is.

The very general use which is now made of potatoes in these kingdoms, as food for man, is a convincing proof that the prejudices of a nation, with regard to diet, however deeply rooted, are by no means unconquerable. Within the present century, this useful vegetable production seems to have been considered as food only fit for the poorest class in the community. In speaking of the wretched diet, to which beggars, from their miserable appearance, might naturally be supposed to have habituated themselves, Sir Andrew Freeport, (one of the Spectator's club,) is made to remark, that “one would think *potatoes* should “be all their bread, and their drink the pure element³.” The natu-

¹ Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. i. 251.

² A North-Country word signifying “cow-houses.”

³ Spectator, No. 232.

ralists of Queen Anne's times would, probably, have been astonished to hear, what the Report of the Board of Agriculture mentions as a fact of the greatest importance, "that potatoes and water alone, with common salt, can nourish men completely".

The following extracts from the communications which have been made to the Board of Agriculture on this subject, are worthy the attention of those political economists, who tell us, that the condition of the labourer, in former times, was more comfortable than it is at present, because the price of wheat, in comparison with the money price of labour, has, of late years, very considerably augmented; and that, consequently, the labouring classes cannot now afford themselves such an ample share of the necessaries of life, as was the lot of their forefathers. Such reasoners would do well to take into their consideration, many articles of food, of cloathing, and of convenience, which, though unenjoyed even by the most opulent proprietors in ancient times, can now be easily acquired by the poorest cottager in the kingdom. Potatoes are perhaps as strong an instance of the extension of human enjoyment as can be mentioned; and it seems probable, from the following instances of the progress which various districts have made in the cultivation of this valuable root, which may be aptly denominated "the poor man's wants, the rich man's luxury", that, in the course of a very few years, the consumption of potatoes in this kingdom will be almost as general and universal as that of corn.

"In the central Highlands of Scotland, potatoes are become the principal food of the people, and are considered as the greatest blessing that modern times have bestowed on the country: they have probably more than once saved it from the miseries of famine. Before the introduction of this inestimable root, famines were frequent in the Highlands.

"In the county of Forfar, the importance of this root is considered as great, from the circumstance of its affording a supply of food for

¹ Report of the Committee of the Board of Agriculture, concerning the Culture and Use of Potatoes, 84.

² Somerville: Fable of the Two Springs.

“ the Poor in July, before the corn harvest comes on ; in which view
 “ early planting in the Spring is an object.

“ It would be difficult to calculate how much the introduction of potatoes into the Hebrides has improved the arable land, and bettered
 “ the condition of the poorer inhabitants.

“ In East Lothian, this vegetable constitutes nearly one third of the
 “ food of the labouring people, from the first of August, to the end of
 “ May.

“ It is of all others the most valuable root in Perthshire : the Author
 “ of the Agricultural Report of that county says ; ‘ it has done more to
 “ ‘ prevent emigration than any device whatsoever.’

“ In Banff, the introduction of potatoes is the most important improvement that ever found its way into the country ; had it not
 “ been of general use, in 1783, it is probable that many of the inhabitants would have perished for want of food.

“ The benefit derived from the cultivation of potatoes is no less apparent in Ayrshire.

“ It is a common practice in Devonshire to make bread of potatoes, mixed with flour, which is done by simply mashing them after they
 “ have been boiled, and then mixing them with the flour or leaven.

“ In Cardiganshire, potatoes, with barley-bread, form the chief sustenance of the Poor.

“ It is no uncommon thing, in Somersetshire, for a family, consisting
 “ of a father, mother, and five or six children, to consume twenty sacks
 “ per year, 240 lbs. the sack, or 20lbs. per head per week, allowing
 “ twelve weeks’ cessation from this food. Indeed the children nearly
 “ subsist on it, and the deprivation thereof would bring the whole family to the parish’.”

Of

¹ Report on Potatoes, 70. The Report farther mentions the following remarkable instance of the consumption of potatoes and oat-meal in Ireland, from Arthur Young’s Irish Tour.—
 “ At Leslie-hill, a man, his wife, and four children, will eat four bushels per week. If they
 “ live upon oat-meal, they will eat 40lbs. or two bushels of oats. In another part of the same
 “ district, a barrel lasts a family, of six, eight days. At Westport, a man, his wife, and four
 “ children, will eat a bushel of 3 cwt. a week, in 39 weeks 5 ton 17 cwt. which is just half an
 “ acre

Of the discovery and introduction of this useful vegetable into England, historians have afforded us very little information. The following particulars concerning it are mostly noticed by the Report of the Board of Agriculture. "The potatoe," it is said, "is a native of America, and was well known to the Indians long before the conquest of Mexico and Peru. Gomara, in his General History of the Indies, and Josephus Acosta, are amongst the early Spanish writers who have mentioned the potatoe by the Indian names *openauk*', *pape*, and *papas*. Clusius, and after him Gerarde, gave figures of the potatoe plant. Gerarde was the first author who gave it the name of *solanum tuberosum*, which Linnæus and his followers adopted.

"In 1584, Sir Walter Raleigh, so celebrated for his worth, his valour, and his misfortunes, discovered that part of America called Norembega, and by him² named Virginia. Whether the Admiral

"acre Irish. Of oat-meal, the common allowance is a quart a day for a labourer. At Shaen's Castle, Queen's County, in Ireland, a barrel of potatoes will last a man, his wife, and four children, a week. One barrel of oats will yield 1 cwt. of oat-meal, which sells at 8s. 6d. to 10s." (twenty years ago) "and will in *stir-about** last them a week; the same time as a barrel of potatoes. At Shaen's Castle, in Antrim, a man, his wife, and four children, will eat three bushels of potatoes and 20 lbs. of oat-meal a week. At Castle Caldwell, a man, his wife, and four children, eat eighteen stone of potatoes a week, or 252 lbs.; but 40 lbs. of oat-meal will serve them. In King's County, a barrel of potatoes will last a family of five persons a week. At Derry, in the same county, a family of five persons will eat and waste forty-two stone in a week." Report, 71.—That potatoes are uncommonly nutritious, and even prolific, is proved by the peasantry of Ireland, who subsist almost entirely on potatoes; and where have we more numerous hordes of ruddy, healthy, and strong children, than may be seen daily issuing from the cabins of the Irish Poor? whom, however, I must not call *labourers*. What a pity it is they cannot be persuaded to work, as well as to fight!

¹ In an account of the new-found land of Virginia, written about the year 1588, by Thomas Heriot, one of Sir Walter Raleigh's servants, *openauk* is thus described: "Openauk are a kinde of root of round forme, some of the bignesse of walnuts, some farre greater, which are found in moist and marish grounds, growing many together, one by another in ropes, as though they were fastened with a string. Being boiled, or sodden, they are very good meat." He mentions several other roots, of which bread might be made; of the *okeopenauk*, in particular, he says, the inhabitants make bread, which does "as well as the householde bread made of rie in England." Hakluyt, iii. 272.

Potato roots are mentioned among the productions of St. Jago, (one of the Cape de Verd islands,) which Sir Francis Drake touched at, in the year 1585. Hakluyt, iii. 537.

² Or rather by his Captains, Mr. Philip Amadas, and Mr. Arthur Barlow. See Hakluyt's Voyages, iii. 246.

* Hasty-pudding.

3 T 2

" was

“ was acquainted with the potatoe in his first voyage, or whether it
 “ was sent to him by Sir Thomas Grenville, or Mr. Lane, the first Go-
 “ vernor of Virginia, is uncertain. It is probable he was possessed of
 “ this root about the year 1586. He is said to have given it to his gar-
 “ dener, in Ireland, as a fine fruit from America, and which he desired
 “ him to plant in his kitchen-garden in the Spring. In August this plant
 “ flowered, and, in September, produced a fruit; but so different to the
 “ gardener’s expectation, that in an ill humour he carried the potatoe-
 “ apple to his master. ‘Is this,’ (said he,) ‘the fine fruit from America
 “ ‘you prized so highly?’ Sir Walter either was, or pretended to be,
 “ ignorant of the matter; and told the gardener, since that was the case,
 “ to dig up the weed, and throw it away. The gardener soon returned
 “ with a good parcel of potatoes.

“ Gerarde, an old English botanist, received seedlings of the pota-
 “ toe, about the year 1590; and tells us, that it grew as kindly in his
 “ garden, as in it’s native soil, Virginia. The plant was cultivated, in
 “ the gardens of the Nobility and Gentry, early in the last century, as a
 “ a curious exotic; and towards the end of it, (1684,) was planted out
 “ in the fields, in small patches, in Lancashire. From thence it was
 “ gradually propagated all over the kingdom, as well as in France.”

In 1683, Sutherland noticed “the *Solanum Tuberosum*, in his *Hor-
 “ tus Medicus Edinburgensis*; and it is probable that many others in
 “ Scotland cultivated the potatoe, in their gardens, about that time.
 “ It was not, however, cultivated in open fields in Scotland till the
 “ year 1728, when Thomas Prentice, a day-labourer, first cultivated
 “ potatoes at Kilsyth. The success was such, that every farmer and cot-
 “ tager followed his example; and, for many years past, it has become
 “ a staple article. Thomas Prentice, by his industry, had saved £ 200.
 “ sterling, which he sunk for double interest. Upon this he subsisted
 “ for many years, and died at Edinburgh, in 1792, aged 86 years’.”

I doubt much, whether the account of Gerarde, above noticed, refers
 to the potatoe, which is now in common use. His description is as
 follows: “This plant,” he says, “which is called of some *Sifarum Peru-
 “ vianum*, or *Skyrrets of Peru*, is generally of us called *Potatus*, or *Po-
 “ tatos*. It hath long, rough, flexible branches, trailing upon the ground,

“ like unto those of pompions, whereupon are set the greene three-
 “ cornered leaves, very like those of the wilde cucumber. Of these
 “ roots may be made conserves. These roots may serve as a ground
 “ or foundation, whereon the cunning confectioner, or sugar-baker, may
 “ worke and frame many comfortable conserves, and restorative sweet-
 “ meats. They are used to be eaten roasted in the ashes. Some, when
 “ they be so roasted, infuse and sop them in wine: and others, to give
 “ them the greater grace in eating, do boile them with prunes, and so
 “ eat them: likewise, others dresse them, (being first roasted,) with oile,
 “ vinegar, and salt, every man according to his owne taste and liking¹. ”
 This last-mentioned dish is extremely similar to one, which, Count
 Rumford says, is in high repute in some parts of Germany, and, pre-
 pared in the following manner, forms an excellent sallad: the potatoes
 being properly boiled and skinned, are cut into thin slices; and the same
 sauce, which is used for sallads of lettuce, is poured over them. Some
 mix anchovies with this sauce, which renders the potatoes remarkably
 palatable². I refer the Reader, who is desirous of investigating the
 singular qualities which were ascribed to this root in Queen Eliza-
 beth’s days, to what the Author of the “ Pursuits of Literature ” calls
 “ the potatoe note ” of Mr. Collins, at the end of Shakspeare’s Troi-
 lus and Cressida³. The learned Commentator, (to use Dr. Farmer’s
 remark on a note on stewed prunes,) “ has so fully discussed the subject

¹ Gerarde’s Herbal, 926.

² Essays, 283.

³ The potatoes mentioned by Shakspeare, and other dramatic writers, seem to have been of the Spanish sort. Their sweetness rendered them peculiarly fit for conserves. The common sort, it is probable, was used in the following receipt, which is extracted from a curious little cookery book, intituled, “ the Court and Kitchin of Elizabeth, commonly called Joan Cromwell, the wife of the late Usurper,” &c. published in 1664.

“ *Olines of beef, stewed and rost.*—Take a buttock of beef, and cut some of it into thin
 “ slices, as broad as your hand; then hack them with the back of a knife, lard them with
 “ small lard, and season them with pepper, salt, and nutmeg; then make a farling with
 “ some sweet herbs, time, onions, the yolks of hard eggs, beef-suet, or lard, all minced,
 “ some salt, barberries, grapes, or gooseberries; season it with the former spices lightly,
 “ and work it up together; then lay it on the slices, and roul them up round, with some
 “ caul of veal, beef, or mutton; bake them in a dish in the oven, or roste them; then put
 “ them in a pipkin, with some butter, and saffron, or none, blow off the fat from the
 “ gravy, and put it to them, with some artichocks, *potato*, or skirrets blanched, being first
 “ boiled, a little claret wine, and serve them on sippets, with some slic’t orange, lemon, bar-
 “ berries, grapes, or gooseberries,” p. 79. In another receipt, (p. 89.) “ *potatoes* boiled and
 “ blanched,” occur among the ingredients for stuffing of a boiled fowl.

“ of.”

“ of” *potatoes*, “ that one can add nothing but *the price*.” In a MS. account of the household expences of Queen Anne, wife of James the First, the price of potatoes is stated at 1s. the pound¹: Q. Anne died in 1618. It appears from Dr. Campbell’s “ Political Survey of Great Britain,” that potatoes were brought into Ireland about the year 1610, and that they came first from Ireland into Lancashire. It was not, however, till about the year 1650, that they were much cultivated, even about London: but their great utility was very publicly recognized a few years after, at one of the earliest meetings of the Royal Society².

There are many different sorts of bread used in the North of England. In Cumberland, it is generally made of barley, which is ground in a mill for the purpose; after which, the meal is sifted from the husks, and the usual process of making it into dough, with salt, &c. is then followed. It is sometimes baked in unleavened cakes, of about half an inch thick, and twelve inches in diameter; but is more commonly leavened, and made into loaves of about twelve pounds each. These loaves are usually baked in ovens, which are heated with heath, furze, or brush-wood, the expence of which is inconsiderable; where, as is often the case in Cumberland, the ovens are formed upon a good construction. A common oven will bake about three Winchester bushels of barley, made into bread, at once. This bread will keep good four or five weeks in Winter; and two or three in Summer. Such leavened bread is almost the only bread used by the peasantry of that county; and, there are few families, (either of substantial farmers, or even day-labourers,) who do not manufacture their own bread from the meal. Barley-bread, leavened, last May, sold in Carlisle for 1s. the 11lb.: at that time barley, was 5s. the bushel, Winchester measure. By those who are accustomed to it, this kind of bread, though somewhat sour, and of a darkish hue, is considered as extremely nutritious: and some persons have assured me, that, upon coming into the South, and giving it

¹ See Harleian MSS. in the British Museum, No. 157. This account is said to have been drawn up in 1613.

² At a meeting of the Royal Society, held on the 18th March 1762-3, a letter was read from Mr. Buckland, a Somersetshire gentleman, to recommend the planting of potatoes in all parts of the kingdom, as a preventative against famine. This letter was referred to a committee. Such of the members as had lands, were requested to plant potatoes: Mr. Buckland was thanked for his proposal; and Mr. Evelyn was desired to publish it at the end of his *Sylva*.

up for wheaten-bread, they have found the latter astringent, and very unwholesome¹.

Of the various sorts of oaten-bread used in the counties on the Borders, Mr. Ray, in his Collection of North Country Words, has given a very circumstantial detail, which is perfectly explanatory of the different modes still in use, in the Northern parts of England, for preparing this (apparently simple) article of diet². He mentions five different sorts of oaten bread, viz. 1st. "*Thar-cakes*, which," he says, "are the same "as bannocks." These are what Moryson more properly calls *hearth-cakes*, no doubt from their being baked on the hearth; but which in Cumberland are called *hard-cakes*³; which, unless they may be supposed to have got their name from their crispness, must be a corruption of *hearth-cakes*. 2. "*Clap-bread*, thin hard oat-cakes;" but, in Cumberland, it is frequently made of the meal of barley; and differs from barley-bread only by being unleavened, made in the form of cakes, and not baked in an oven. It has it's name of *clap-bread* from it's being *clapped*, or beaten out with the hand, while it is dough, into the form of large round cakes: there is a particular board for this purpose, which is called a *clap-board*. Of the clap-bread eaten in Westmoreland, the Author of the Agricultural Report of that county gives the following account:

¹ Barley-bread was last year introduced into many parts of Gloucestershire; and in some parishes in that county, though labourers could not be persuaded to abandon their usual practice of purchasing the finest wheaten-bread, they lessened their consumption of this expensive article, and bought little other but barley flour. This they bake, in pans or kettles, placed on the fire, into cakes; or boil it into dumplings, which are used instead of bread. They do not as yet seem to have any idea, that the use of this grain would be more profitable in soups.

It is much to be lamented, that a very pernicious custom takes place in this county, as well as in many others, of allowing labourers an enormous quantity of liquor. That the more they receive in liquor, the less they receive in wages, there can be no doubt: in many parts of the county the labourer receives almost as much liquor as is equal to his day's pay; and is thus encouraged in a practice which is not more ruinous to his health, than prejudicial to his family.

² See Ray, under *Bannock*, p. 16.

³ "Behind the door a bag of meal,

"And in the kist was plenty

"Of good *hard-cakes* his mither bakes;

"And *bannocks* were nae scanty." The Miller; Scots Songs, ii. 116.

“The bread generally eaten in the county,” (he says,) “is made from oat-meal. Water and oat-meal are kneaded together into a paste without any leaven; this paste is rolled into a circular cake of about twenty inches in diameter, and is placed upon a thin flat plate of iron called a *gingle*¹, under which a fire is put; and the cake, thus baked, goes by the name of *clap-bread*, which is to be seen at almost every table in the county. The meal is mostly ground to such a degree of fineness that a measure of sixteen quarts will weigh sixteen pounds. Farmers, labourers, and manufacturers, usually have fifteen cakes made from sixteen pounds of meal, and as many baked in a day as will serve their families for a month. Such of the Gentry as eat this sort of bread (most of them now eating bread made from wheat) have it baked much more frequently, and also much thinner. A labouring man will eat sixteen pounds of meal, made into bread, in a fortnight; the price of sixteen pounds of meal is variable, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d.; the medium is 2s. which gives 1s. a week for each labourer for bread. His cottage and his fuel cost, at least, as much more.” This kind of bread appears to be also in general use in Norway. Mr. Coxe says; “the common food of the peasant is milk, cheese, dried or salted fish, and sometimes, but rarely, flesh or dried meat, oat-bread called *flad-brod*, baked in small cakes about the size and thickness of a pan-cake; it is usually made twice a year. I observed a woman employed in preparing it: having placed over the fire a round iron plate, she took a handful of dough, and rolled it out with a rolling-pin to the size of the iron plate: she then placed it on the plate, and baked it on one side; then turned it on the other with a small stick,” (which in the North of England, and in Scotland, is called a *spurtle*;) “in this manner she baked an astonishing number in less than a quarter of an hour; and I was informed that one woman, in one day, can bake sufficient for the family during a whole year².” Oat-meal cakes, of exactly the same kind, and made in exactly the same manner, this pleasing writer may still see in the houses of all the peasantry in the

¹ This I take to be a typographical error, for *girdle*. In South Wales, and in the west of England, such a plate of iron is called a *plank*, and the bread baked on it, *plank-bread*.

² It should here be remarked, that oat-bread, when kept any length of time, turns bitter and unfavoury. In Scotland, they bake at least once a week; commonly twice, or oftener.

most northern counties of England. He adds, that the peasants of Norway, “in times of scarcity, mix the bark of trees, usually of the fir-tree, with their oatmeal; then dry this bark before the fire, grind it to powder, mix it with some oat-meal, then bake it, and eat it like bread: it is bitterish, and affords but little nourishment¹.”

The third kind of oaten-bread, noticed by Ray, is “*kitchenefs bread*,” which is described to be “thin oat-cakes, made of thin batter.”

4. “*Riddle-cakes*,” said to be “thick four cakes;” the same, I apprehend,

in

¹ Coxe’s Travels into Poland, &c. 4th ed. v. 11.

² In Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, a sort of *oat-bread* is still called *riddle-bread*. It is mostly eaten with tea; and, for this purpose, is preferred to wheaten bread. A native of Cumberland, with whom I conversed on this subject, told me that the *oat-bread* which he ate in Lancashire, (and which I presume was this four *riddle-bread*,) was extremely disagreeable to his taste; he was astonished that any person could like it; and added, that though he had been in different parts of the kingdom, he had never eat any bread he liked so well as the Cumberland barley-bread. On the other hand, the Lancashire people, being accustomed to oat-bread, are equally averse to that made from barley. Such are the powerful effects of custom! The Lancashire oat-bread is made both leavened and unleavened. See Ann. of Agric. xxvi. 226. The very healthy appearance of those inhabitants of Lancashire who subsist principally on oaten-bread, invalidates the following observations of Adam Smith respecting this article of diet. He says, “In some parts of Lancashire, it is pretended, that bread of oatmeal is a heartier food for labouring people than wheaten bread,” and says he has frequently heard “the same doctrine held in Scotland.” He adds, “I am, however, somewhat doubtful of it. The common people of Scotland, who are fed with oatmeal, are in general neither so strong nor so handsome as the same rank of people in England, who are fed with wheaten bread. They neither work so well, nor look so well; and as there is not the same difference between the people of fashion in the two countries, experience would seem to show, that the food of the common people in Scotland is not so suitable to the human constitution as that of their neighbours of the same rank in England.” (Wealth of Nations, 5th ed. i. 250.) These remarks do not appear to me to be warranted by fact: handsomer and more muscular men are not reared in any part of the British dominions, than in those countries where the oat-meal diet is predominant. The 33d regiment, which goes by the name of the *Haver-cake Lads*, and which is usually recruited in those parts of the West Riding of Yorkshire, where oat-bread is in common use, has been often remarked, as well as the Lancashire regiments, to be composed of some of the finest looking soldiers in his Majesty’s service. It likewise deserves notice, that oat-bread, as well as potatoes, constitutes a very considerable portion of the diet of the labouring classes in Ireland, from whom we draw those whom Adam Smith considers as perhaps the strongest men in the British dominions;—the chairmen, porters, and coal-heavers in the metropolis. I should rather ascribe the good looks of the labouring classes in England, to superior cleanliness, and a difference of climate. The filth and smoke in which a cotter’s family in Scotland are enveloped when at

in name at least, as the bread, which, in Wales, is called *bara-greiddell*; no doubt, from it's being baked on a *girdle*, or thin iron plate. Bread of this kind appears to be in general use in Sweden. "The common people, as in all other parts of Sweden, make their bread but once, or, at most, but twice, in the year; it consists of rye mixed with oats, and is called *knikke broë* or *kake broë*: this they form into cakes of the figure and breadth of a common plate, and of the thickness of a little finger; they then make a hole in the middle, and the peasants string them together by hundreds, and suspend them from the ceilings of their houses. The bread of this sort, although immoderately hard, is not ill-tasted; and it often appears at the tables of persons of the first distinction, accompanied with wheaten bread of very excellent colour and flavour. In times of scarcity, and especially in the north of Dalecarlia, they add to the meal of rye and oats the bark of the birch-tree, well broken and pounded; and this bread becomes then so hard, that nothing but the tooth of a Dalecarlian seems able to penetrate it¹." 5. "*Hand-hoven-bread*," now more commonly called *Hoven-bread*², is leavened bread, of barley, made not into loaves, but into cakes. 6. "*Jannock oaten-bread* made up in loaves." Neither this kind of bread, nor it's name, appear to be common at present: but a kind of thin cakes, made of the meal of maize, or Indian corn, and baked before the fire, like the Scotch *bannocks*, are, in Virginia and Maryland, the most common bread of planters; and are called *Johnny-cakes*. A cake which is made in South Carolina, and is called a *journey-cake*, is, I apprehend, made in the same manner, and of the same ingredients. *Bannocks*³, which are the com-

home, and the parching winds to which they are exposed when abroad, contribute, no doubt, to render the appearance of the Highland peasantry, (though they are, perhaps, as stout and as muscular as their Southern neighbours,) less ruddy and blooming than that exhibited by the natives of more favoured regions. Uncleanliness in dress is likewise no less unfavourable to good looks.

¹ See the Journey of a Dutch officer through Sweden, translated by Mr. Radcliffe, p. 6.

² *Hoven* is a Saxon word, that well expresses the effect of fermentation, viz. *beaving*, or swelling, and is equivalent to *leaven*; which, as well as the French word *levain*, is probably formed from the Latin *levare*, to raise. *Hoven*, in Scotland, signifies *puffed up*, and is applied to bread baked with *yeast*, in contradistinction to the flat *unfermented* cake.

³ *Bonn*, in the Gaelic, signifies a round flat piece of money: *ach* is a termination by which nouns are turned into adjectives of similitude.

mon bread in Scotland, are thick cakes of unleavened bread, made only of meal and water. They are most generally made of oatmeal, and kneaded with water only; but, sometimes, of barley-meal¹; and sometimes of pease-meal²: and sometimes of oatmeal with milk, butter, (or cream,) eggs and carraway seeds, and are then made rather thicker than usual, and dressed, (or, as the Scotch term it, *fired*,) upon a *brander*³, or grid-iron, or toasted by being set up against a stone⁴, or wooden frame made for that purpose, before a clear fire: and sometimes they are baked on a *girdle*⁵, or flat plate of iron⁶: they are also sometimes baked on the heated hearth swept clean; but rarely in the ashes: which is a very dirty way of dressing them, and occasions a great deal of waste in brushing off the ashes. That the people of Scotland have been long distinguished for their use of this bread, appears from various passages in ancient historians. Moryson, who wrote in the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, says; "they" (the Scotch) "vulgarly eate harth-cakes of oates; but "in cities have also wheaten bread", which for the most part was "bought by Courtiers, Gentlemen, and the best sort of citizens⁸."—"They (Scotchmen going to war,) carye with them none other pur-
"veiaunce, but on their horse betwene the saddell and the pannell, they
"trusse a broade plate of metall, and behynde the saddell they wyll have
"a lytell facke full of otemel, to the entent, that when they have eaten

¹ "With bair blew bonattis, and hobbeld schone,

"And *beir-bonnokis* with thame thay tak!" Lord Hailes's Bannatyne, p. 171.

See also the Song called "*Bannocks of Barley-meal*." Scots Songs, ed. 1791. ii. 241.

² See Heron's Journey through Scotland, ii. 316.

³ From the Saxon *brennan*, to burn.

⁴ See Pennant's Voyage to the Hebrides, ed. 1774, vol. ii. 281.

⁵ "Wi' butter'd *bannocks* now the *girdle* reeks." Fergusson's Farmer's Ingle.

⁶ A *girdle* is usually a simple plate of iron, which is laid on the fire to be heated: in some places, however, it has a handle fixed to it, by which it is hung from the iron *crook*, which is either suspended from the chimney, or, where there is no chimney, from a stick projecting from the wall, under the orifice through which the smoke is let out.

⁷ That wheaten bread, however, was in common use in the more fertile parts of Scotland at a very early period, may be gathered from the appellation of *Cruithnick*, or *Fir-an-cruineac*, (i. e. *the wheaten-bread men*), by which the Caledonian mountaineers (who were hunters and shepherds) distinguished their agricultural neighbours, the Picts. See Dr. M'Pherson's Ancient Caledonians, ed. i. p. 344.

⁸ Moryson's Itinerary, part iii. b. 3. c. 4. p. 155.—Before his time, Patten, in his Account of an Expedition into Scotland, under the Duke of Somerset, in 1547, in giving an account of the provisions found in Douglas Castle, remarks, that "the spoile was not ryche fure, but "of white bread, oten cakes, and Scottishe ale." The Expedition into Scotland, &c. by W. Patten, printed in 1548, fol. b. 5.

“ of the foddren fleshe, than they ley thys plate on the fyre, and tempre
 “ a lytell of the otemell, and whan the plate is hote, they cast of the thyn
 “ paste thereon, and so make a lytle cake in maner of a crakenell or
 “ bysket, and that they eate to comfort withall their stomaks : wherfore
 “ it is no gret merveile though they make greater journeis than other
 “ people do¹.” Even respecting the ancient Britons, Giraldus Cambrensis
 observes, that their bread was “ thin and broad cakes, which were baked
 “ from day to day².”

The learned traveller, Pococke, also mentions it as a custom still existing among the Arabians, to “ make bread wherever they eat ; which
 “ they bake on iron hearths heated, or on embers³.” These iron hearths seem to answer exactly to the *girdles*⁴ now in use in the North. Niebuhr, in his description of Arabia, says, “ the Arabians use a plate
 “ of iron⁵ to bake their bread or cakes on. Sometimes they put
 “ a ball or lump of dough on the embers of wood ; or on a fire made of
 “ the dried dung⁶ of camels : with this fire they cover it carefully, that
 “ it may be thoroughly penetrated by it : they then take the ashes from
 “ it, and eat it quite hot⁷.” People in mills in Scotland often make such a ball as this of dry oat-meal in the hand, dip it in the mill-dam to make it keep together, and *fire* it by covering it over with the hot embers of the oat-hulls, which are always in winter burning in mills. This article, thus prepared, is called a *Fitchack*.

The mode of baking bread on girdles is said to be still used in the East. “ So long ago as Queen Elizabeth’s time, Rauwolff observed,
 “ that travellers frequently baked bread in the Deserts of Arabia, on the
 “ ground, heated for that purpose by fire, covering their cakes of bread
 “ with ashes and coals, and turning them several times until they were
 “ enough.” He adds, “ that some of the Arabians had, in their tents,
 “ *stones*, or *copper-plates*, made on purpose for baking⁸.” Stones of this kind, and used for this purpose, are very common in Derbyshire ; and,

¹ Froyfart’s Chronycle, f. viii. col. 3. ² See the Translation of his Account, in Henry’s History of England, 8vo. iv. 390, 4to. ii. 592. ³ Descrip. of the East, ii. 96.

⁴ Iron-plates, which are used for the same purpose in the west of England, and in Wales, are there called *planks*.

⁵ This Mr. Pinkerton (not aware, as it would seem, of the difference between the two terms,) renders a *grid-iron*, instead of a *girdle*.

⁶ Dung is still used as fuel in many parts of Great Britain. (See the 2d Vol. of this Work, p. 394.)

⁷ Vol. iii. 46.

⁸ See Harmer’s Observations, i. 232.

I believe,

I believe, they are still in very general use in most of the Northern counties, as well as in Scotland¹.

It is singular, that although bread is (apparently) the most simple article of diet, and is the principal article on which the human race has subsisted; yet, excepted that, in general, it has been composed of the flour of some kind of grain, but little is known of it's history. The little, however, which is known, shews that there has been very little improvement made in preparing this essential article of food. The *Graddaned*² corn, which is still in use in the Highlands of Scotland, is probably

¹ In Scotland there are various kinds of bread, which vary in a slight degree from the sorts which I have enumerated. Similar kinds of bread to what are used in England, are often known by a very different appellation in that country. Thus, in Aberdeenshire, and some of the Southern parts of Scotland, a round, small, thin, crimp, biscuit, is called a *bunn*. In Morayshire, a large round loaf, made of wheaten-flour, goes by the same name, which it derives from it's form, not from it's size or quality; *bonn*, in the Gaelic language, signifying a round piece of any kind; e. g. *bonn-fia*, an English halfpenny, i. e. six Scotch pennies, or round pieces. Is it not probable, that the Latin *panis*, the French *pain*, the American *parun*, (see p. 523.) the *bunn*, and the Scotch *bannock*, (pronounced by the Highlanders *bonnach*,) have some etymological relationship? The *bunn* answers to Minshew's definition of a *cob-loaf*, which he says is "a *bunne*. It is a little loaf, made with a round head, such as cob-irons, which support the fire. G. *bignet*, a *bigne*, a knob, or lump, risen after a knock or blow." Cotgrave, in his Dictionary, published in 1611, renders *bignets*,—"little round loaves or lumps, made of fine meale, oyle, or butter, and reasons: *bunnes*, Lenten loaves." Such are the South country buns. See the notes on A. 2. S. 1. of Shakspeare's *Troilus and Cressida*; in which Ajax calls Thessites "a *cob-loaf*." On which Mr. Steevens remarks, that "a crusty, uneven, gibbous loaf is, in some counties, called by this name."

² *Graddaned* corn, in Scotland, signifies corn "burnt out of the ear, instead of being threshed: this is performed two ways: first by cutting off the ears, and drying them in a kiln; then setting fire to them on a floor, and picking out the grains, by this operation rendered as black as coal. The other method is more expeditious; for the whole sheaf is burnt, without the trouble of cutting off the ears: a most ruinous practice, as it destroys both thatch and manure." Pennant's Tour in Scotland, ed. 1774, i. 280. Mr. Pennant derives the word *graddan* from *grad*, quick; as the process is very expeditious. This is not a very natural derivation: the method of getting at the ears of corn was probably originally adopted rather from it's simplicity than for it's expedition. I have no etymological dictionary at hand; but should rather derive the term from some word signifying a coarse operation. Oats, beat out of the straw by a mallet, and barley, burnt out, are both, when ground, called *gradden*. *Grits*, or grain coarsely ground, is not a very dissimilar word. But be this as it may, it must be confessed, that corn can be much sooner *graddaned* than *threshed*: of which a

Gentleman

bly the same as the *parched corn*, which Boaz presented to Ruth; and an ephah of which Jesse sent, by David, to his sons who were in the camp

Gentleman mentioned to me a very practical instance. Calling at a highland cottage in Lochaber, he found an old woman there, who had just put her *kail-pot* on the fire. She had then nothing but kail in the house: but tripped out to her croft, cut down a little barley, graduated it in the straw, winnowed it by throwing it up against the wind, ground it in her quern, and applied it, after the kail was boiled, to thicken the liquor. She also made some meal into *bannocks*; and baked them, by laying them upright against a stone placed near the fire. All these processes were performed in less than half an hour. It must, however, be confessed, that the mode used in Scotland, of grinding corn in the *quern*, is very tedious: Mr. Pennant says, it employs two pair of hands four hours to grind only a single bushel of corn. The following description of a *hand-mill*, used in India, and noticed by a member of Parliament last year, will convey an exact idea of the *Scotch quern*:

“It is constituted of two circular horizontal stones, rough on the inside, and the under one the most weighty, in order to preserve them steady in circulation; their density and diameter being rendered commensurate to the size and strength of the person, whether man, woman, or child, who is to work them; the upper stone moves vertically loose on the axis, to yield a cavity sufficiently capacious for the reception of different quantities and qualities of grain; the holes on each side the pivot are for admission of the seed, taken from a measure placed within reach of either hand; through those apertures, the grain falls between the stones; the handle is placed distant as possible from the centre, to facilitate, as well as to accelerate, the rotatory motion.” See Debrett’s Parl. Reg. xlv. 217. The account of Mr. Francis’s Speech, adds: “In various economical tracts and legislative discussions relative to provisions, recently given to the Public, frequent representations are exhibited of frauds perpetrated in mills, to the exceeding detriment of the Poor; a distribution, therefore, of this little machine, or one of similar construction, on any previous design, amongst the indigent and laborious classes of the community, the needy tenantry of landed property, or within the house of industry, might conduce, probably, to their immediate benefit in point of subsistence, and to their eventual relief and comfort.

“The fabrication of them may be rendered cheap, by using the old worn-down stones of wind, water, or other large mills.

“Such a mill might be introduced in all villages, at an expence of fourteen or fifteen shillings. It could be managed with the greatest ease by the children, who had nothing else to do, who might thus grind a sufficient quantity of grain for the consumption of the family.”

This is an exact description of the common *quern*. The introduction of this machine among the Poor could be of no advantage. Grinding at the quern is hard work; (See Vaillant’s New Travels, ii. 90. and Shaw, 231.) much above the strength of children; and, to grown-up persons, would occasion a loss of time, and waste of grain, which would more than counterbalance the saving in mill-dues. By the peasantry in the Lowlands of Scotland, it is now entirely appropriated to the grinding of malt, which they grind in such small quantities (perhaps half a peck at a time)

camp of Saul'. The *barley-bread*, which is now generally eaten by the peasantry in Cumberland, differs but little, it is probable, from those twenty loaves of *barley* which the man of Baal-Shalisha brought to Elisha in Gilgal; or from those *five barley-loaves*, of which our blessed Lord himself partook, with no other addition than a piece of broiled fish. And in what does the *cake baked on the coals*, which Elijah found under the juniper-tree in the wilderness, appear to differ from the cakes of Scotland, or bannocks, excepting that it was miraculously provided?

Busbequius mentions the baking of bread under the coals, by the women of Bulgaria, in Turkey, as an usual practice in his time².

Dr. Shaw says, "The Eastern nations, in general, are great eaters of bread; it being computed, that three persons in four live entirely upon it; or else upon such compositions as are made of barley, or wheat-flour. Frequent mention is made of this simple diet, in the Holy Scriptures;

time) as are not worth carrying to a common mill. Many of the Poor in the Highlands, (for the same reason,) use it for grinding oats and barley into *gradden*; but it makes a great deal of waste, and the meal is such as no peasant in the richer parts of England would eat.

It is to be hoped that the philanthropic, but visionary, schemes of erecting mills and ovens at the public expence, which I understand are in contemplation in some parts of the kingdom, will be desisted from. To say the least of their ill effects; they will certainly be a waste of money; produce jobs; and probably end in monopoly. A respectable clergyman of my acquaintance, with the most charitable intentions, lately joined with his neighbours in raising a considerable subscription to erect a mill for grinding corn, (more especially oat-meal, if it could be introduced,) for the labourers in his parish. The scheme, however, has been obliged to be new-modelled: as it would have made the subscribers a company of traders; and subjected them to the bankrupt laws: besides which, it was suggested, (what perhaps may not have occurred to others no less benevolent pastors, whose aim is to benefit their parishioners,) that a clergyman could not trade, nor sell any merchandize, under forfeiture of the treble value.

¹ Parched corn may have been pulse, steeped in water, and then fried. *Pease*, or *beans*, dressed in this manner, are called *carlings* in Scotland, and are a stated dish on the Sunday next before Easter. They are sometimes fried with milk or butter. This is looked upon as a kind of seed-time feast, as it is just about the time of sowing those kinds of pulse: it is not improbable, that, about this period of the year, in Pagan times, propitiatory sacrifices may have been offered to *Ceres*, or some other rural deity; and have given rise to this, still very prevalent, custom.

² De Legat. Turc. Epist. i. p. 42. That this bread was also in use among the Greeks, appears from a dialogue of Lucian's, in which he says, Empedocles, who was burned to death in Mount Etna, was *σποδου πλέως, ὥσπερ ἐγκρυφίας ἄρτος*, i. e. *full of ashes, like bread baked under the coals*. Lucian. ed. Bened. i. 305.

“ where the flesh of animals, (though, sometimes, indeed, it may be included in the *eating bread*, or making a meal,) is not often recorded.

“ In cities and villages, where there are public ovens, the bread is usually leavened; but among the *Bedoweens*, and *Kabyles*, as soon as the dough is kneaded, it is made into thin cakes, either to be baked immediately upon the coals, or else in a *Ta-jen*,” (i. e. a shallow earthen vessel, like a frying-pan.) “ Such were the *unleavened cakes*, which we so often read of in Scripture: such likewise were the cakes which *‘ Sarah made quickly upon the hearth’*. ”

Captain Forrest gives the following curious account of Sago-bread, which is much used in the Moluccas. The Papua oven might, I think, be applied to many culinary purposes in England.

“ The Sago or Libley tree,” he says, “ has, like the Coco-nut tree, no distinct bark that peels off, and may be defined a long tube of hard wood, about two inches thick, containing a pulp, or pith, mixed with many longitudinal fibres. The tree being felled, it is cut into lengths of about 5 or 6 feet. A part of the hard wood is then sliced off; and the work-man, coming to the pith, cuts across, (generally with an adze, made of hard wood, called *Aneebong*,) the longitudinal fibres and the pith together, leaving a part at each end uncut; so that, when it is excavated, there remains a trough, into which the pulp is again put, mixed with water, and beat with a piece of wood; then the fibres, separated from the pulp, float a-top, and the flour subsides. After being cleared in this manner, by several waters, the pulp is put into cylindrical baskets, made of the leaves of the tree, and, if it is to be kept some time, those baskets are generally sunk in fresh water, to keep it moist.

“ One tree will produce from two to four hundred weight of flour. I have often found large pieces of the sago-tree on the sea-shore, drifts from other countries. The sago, thus steeped in the salt water, had always a sour disagreeable smell; and, in this state, I dare say, the wild hogs would not taste it. The leaf of the sago tree makes the best covering for houses, of all the palm kind: it will last

¹ Shaw's Travels, 230.

“ seven years. Coverings of the Nipa, or common Attop, such as they
 “ use on the south-west coast of Sumatra, will not last half the time.
 “ When sago trees are cut down, fresh ones sprout up from the roots.

“ We seldom or never see sago in Europe, but in a granulated state.
 “ To bring it into this state from the flour, it must be first moistened,
 “ and passed through a sieve into an iron pot, (very shallow,) held over
 “ a fire, which enables it to assume a globular form.

“ Thus all our grained sago is half-baked, and will keep long. The
 “ pulp, or powder, of which this is made, will also keep long, if pre-
 “ served from the air; but, if exposed, it presently turns sour.

“ The Papua oven, for this flour, is made of earthen-ware. It is
 “ generally 9 inches square, and about 4 deep: it is divided into two
 “ equal parts, by a partition parallel to it's sides. Each of those parts
 “ is subdivided into 8 or 9, about an inch broad; so the whole contains
 “ two rows of cells, about 8 or 9 in a row. When the cell is broad,
 “ the sago cake is not likely to be well baked. I think the best sized
 “ cell is such as would contain an ordinary octavo volume upon it's
 “ edge. When they are of such a size, the cakes will be properly
 “ baked, in the following manner:

“ The oven is supposed to have at it's bottom a round handle, by
 “ which the baker turns the cells downward upon the fire. When suffi-
 “ ciently heated, it is turned with the mouths of the cells up; and then
 “ rests upon the handle, (which is now become the bottom,) as on a
 “ stand.

“ Whilst the oven is heating, the baker is supposed to have prepared
 “ his flour, by breaking the lumps small; moistening it with water, if
 “ too dry; and passing it once or twice through a sieve; at the same
 “ time rejecting any parts that look black, or smell sour. This done,
 “ he fills the cells with the flour, lays a bit of clean leaf over, and with
 “ his finger presses the flour down into the cell; then covers all up with
 “ leaves, and puts a stone, or piece of wood, a-top, to keep in the heat.
 “ In about 10 or 12 minutes, the cakes will be sufficiently baked, ac-
 “ cording to their thickness; and bread, thus baked, will keep, I am
 “ told, several years. I have kept it twelve months, nor did vermin

“affect it in that time. It may not be amiss to mix a little salt with the flour.

“The fago bread, fresh from the oven, eats just like hot rolls. I grew very fond of it, as did both my officers. If the baker hits his time, the cakes will be nicely browned on each side. If the heat be too great, the corners of the cakes will melt into a jelly, which, when kept, becomes hard and horny; and, if eat fresh, proves insipid. When properly baked, it is in a kind of middle state, between raw and jellied.

“A fago cake, when hard, requires to be soaked in water before it be eaten; it then softens, and swells into a curd, like biscuit soaked; but, if eat without soaking, (unless fresh from the oven,) it feels disagreeable, like sand, in the mouth.

“No wonder, then, if agriculture be neglected in a country where the labour of five men, in felling fago trees, beating the flour, and instantly baking the bread, will maintain a hundred. I must own my crew would have preferred rice; and when my small stock of rice, which I carried from Balambangan, was near expended, I have heard them grumble, and say, *nanti makan roti Papua*: ‘we must soon eat Papua bread.’ But, as I took all opportunities of baking it fresh, being almost continually in port, they were very well contented.

“The fago bread, intended for immediate use, need not be kept so long in the oven as what is intended for sea use, which may be said to resemble biscuit¹.”

That men may live, and be strong to labour, with little or no animal food, is evinced by the field negroes in the Middle States of North America, who are an healthy and hardy race of people; and whose labour is constant, and sometimes severe, although they are fed almost entirely on vegetables. The annual allowance, to a working slave, is three barrels of India corn, (or maize,) equal to 15 Winchester bushels, and a peck of salt. If to this, a few salt herrings, or now and then a

¹ Forrest's Voyage to the Moluccas, ed. 2. p. 39.

piece of rusty bacon is added, such additions are regarded as indulgences. Most negroes, it is true, have, annexed to their quarter or cabin, a small patch of ground, on which, at the few leisure hours allowed to them, but particularly on Sundays, they work and raise potatoes, pumpkins, onions, melons, coleworts, &c: they also very generally raise chickens, and an house-pig, called a Jocky. But the chickens and the pig are almost always sold, to procure them a few extra articles of dress, as they are particularly fond of any thing that looks like finery. The fact is indisputable, that two-thirds of the slaves in Virginia, who there compose entirely the labouring classes of the community, and consist of, perhaps, not less than 300,000 souls, are fed solely on dry bread, called *Parwn*, which is made and baked much in the form of a Scotch bannock, but generally eat hot, and dipped only in a little salt. Their beverage is simple water: and among all the topics of complaint heard among the opposers of the Slave Trade, it is remarkable, that neither the scantiness nor the coarseness of their food are generally insisted on. Nor could they be insisted on, without doing violence to truth: for, though the dwelling, the cloathing, and other accommodations of a slave, are, to the full, as simple and mean as his diet; inasmuch as the whole maintenance of a working man, in Virginia, for a year, used to be estimated at less than forty shillings sterling:—there are no complainings among them, nor, in general, any cause for complaint. If they are made to work hard, and with few or no intermissions of labour, they know and feel, that they are, what they deem, well housed, well clad, and well fed, with no thought or care of their own: in general too, they are strong and well made, (instances of deformity being extremely rare among them;) go forth cheerfully to their labour; and, if less informed, (which, however, is not always the case,) are certainly neither less healthy, and, perhaps, not less happy, than the labouring classes are in England. Their miseries do not arise from want of good food.

This annual allowance of corn, to negro slaves, is, out of respect to their convenience, doled out to them, when wanted, in small portions; but always in whole corn, which they themselves grind into meal, at an hand-mill, with which every *quarter*, (so the cottages of negroes are called,) is supplied. Sometimes, instead of *parwn*, or *poan*, they regale

themselves with another mess, also made of Indian corn, called *homony*. The whole grain, moistened with a little water, is put into a wooden mortar, and there, (like the *knocked bear* of Scotland, or *knocked bigg* of Cumberland,) beaten with a wooden pestle, till the husk or skin, which is particularly thin, comes off: then, like *flummery*, or *sowens*, it is simmered over a slow fire, till, with the assistance of a few French beans, it becomes a pulpy and nutritious soup: and, though seasoned only with salt, and a kind of bastard pimento, which their own woods supply, and a few grains of capsicum, raised by themselves, it is so savoury and palatable a food, that it is hardly less common to see *homony* at the tables of rich, than it is to see it among labourers. Among many more objectionable things, which might be mentioned, in the management of negroes, it certainly is as little to the credit of their owners, as it is to their own comfort, that they so rarely eat their morsel, seated with their family, at a table. Here, where the practice is so common, that not only the lowest peasant eats his meal at a table, but also has his table covered with a table-cloth; it may not, perhaps, be so readily perceived, as it is by those who have been witnesses to a contrary practice, that the sitting together at a table, is, perhaps, one of the strongest characteristics of civilization and refinement¹.

If it be true, as we are confidently told it is, that Maize will thrive and succeed, as well in England, as it does in the United States of America, and in many of the circles of Germany, it is not easy to assign a good reason for it's not being more generally cultivated. On land equally good, with but equal skill and labour, the increase is said to be greater than of wheat: and the saving of labour in the in-gathering, during the busy season of harvest, is of very serious moment. It is said, moreover, to be a grain particularly nutritious: negroes have a notion, that they never would have strength sufficient to undergo their daily toils, if fed only on wheaten-bread.

The principal advantage which the labourers in the North of Eng-

¹ Hence, it has always struck me, that there is a particular force in the phrase *à mensû et thoro*, which occurs in articles of separation between man and wife. Neither of the terms are, in any sense, applicable to negroes, or savages; who, literally speaking, have neither bed nor board.

land possess over their countrymen in the South, consists in the great variety of cheap and savory soups, which the use of barley and barley-bread affords them an opportunity of making. The cheapness of fuel is, perhaps, another reason why the culinary preparations of the Northern peasant are so much diversified, and his table so often supplied with hot dishes. The following is one of the usual soups made by labourers' families, in the counties of Northumberland and Cumberland. It consists of meat, oat-meal, barley, (with the husks taken off, in the manner above-mentioned,) and pot-herbs, such as onions, chives, parsley, thyme, &c. in the following proportions:

A pound of good beef, or mutton, 6 quarts of water, and 3 ounces of barley, are boiled till the liquor is reduced to about three quarts: one ounce of oat-meal, which has been previously mixed up with a little cold water, and a handful, or more, of herbs, are added, after the broth has boiled some time. Some put in a greater, and others a less, quantity of water: the above, however, is the most usual proportion: a pint, or a pint and a half, of the broth, with 8 ounces of barley-bread, makes a very good supper. The day the broth is made, the dinner usually is broth, with part of the meat, bread, and potatoes, chopped and boiled; and the supper is broth and bread: the next day, the dinner is cold meat from the broth, warm potatoes, broth and bread; and the supper, bread and broth warmed up, but not boiled again. The broth will keep good three days, if kept cool; and may be heated when wanted. Veal, pork, bacon, lean beef, or mutton, will not make such good broth, with this proportion of water: it will, however, still be very palatable; and not a drop of the liquor is lost, or wasted, whatever meat is boiled in it. To roast meat, is considered, by the country people in the North, as the most prodigal method of cooking it; because that culinary process does not afford them the opportunity of converting a considerable quantity of water into a nutritious and wholesome soup.

Boiled milk, another very common dish in the North, is milk boiled with oat-meal, in the proportion of one handful of meal to three pints of milk. The meal is put into the pot whilst the milk is boiling, and is soon after taken off the fire, and eaten with barley-bread for breakfast or supper.

Could the use of barley, oat-meal, soups, &c. be introduced into the

¹ See p. 499.

South of England, the situation of the labouring classes would, at once, be greatly improved: so strong, however, are the prejudices entertained by them, against these sorts of food, that their introduction would be attended with considerable difficulty. It is generally supposed by the people in the South, and even asserted by some of the Faculty, that these kinds of (apparently coarse) food are neither so wholesome, nor so nutritious, as the wheaten-bread, which constitutes the chief diet of labourers in the counties adjoining the metropolis¹. It is not a very uncommon opinion in Kent and Sussex, that even brown wheaten-bread is purgative and relaxing.

The prejudice against rye-bread is equally strong in the South of England. In several parts of the kingdom, however, rye and wheat are considered an excellent species of bread. "In Nottinghamshire, opulent farmers consume one-third wheat, one-third rye, and one-third barley; but their labourers do not relish it, and have lost their *rye-teeth*, as they express it²." The following mode of composing rye-bread is said to have answered extremely well, on a long trial; and is recommended by the Board of Agriculture. "Supposing a bushel of rye to weigh sixty pounds, to that add one-fourth part, or fifteen pounds, of rice. This is all ground down together, and, taking out the broad bran only, which seldom exceeds four and a half, or five pounds, for that quantity, it is thus prepared for household use. Fourteen pounds of this flour, when baked into bread, and well soaked in the oven, will produce twenty-two pounds weight of bread, which is a surplus of three pounds and a half in fourteen pounds, over and above what is usually produced in the common process of converting household wheat-flour into bread. The astringent quality of the rice, thus mixed with rye, corrects the laxative quality of the latter, and makes it equally strong and nourishing, with the same weight of common wheaten bread³."

It must, however, be confessed, that bread, into which rye enters in any considerable proportion, can seldom be made as pleasant and palatable as admixtures of other sorts of grain. Its unpleasant taste is

¹ If wheat is more nutritious than our other kinds of grain, I conceive it is so from containing a considerable quantity of *animal matter*: this striking peculiarity occurs also in Indian corn. See the Report of the Board of Agriculture on Potatoes.

² Ann. of Agric. xxv. 580.

³ Ibid.

perhaps owing to it's being badly prepared, or not well baked'; but, upon the whole, there seems to be sufficient foundation for the remarks on this subject, addressed by Dr. Pearson, of Birmingham, to the Board of Agriculture. He observes, with regard to the means of lessening the consumption of wheat, by the substitution of other grain, that, next to Indian corn, none are likely to answer so well as oats. "For making bread, with other admixtures," he says, "I prefer oats to either barley or rye; for barley-meal gives a heavy, viscid, and flatulent bread, and bread that contains a large portion of rye-flour readily becomes acedcent, and consequently very unfit for children, and frequently disagrees even with grown-up persons; whereas the wholesome qualities of oat-meal, and it's fitness as an aliment for man, are proved in the most satisfactory manner, by the healthiness and vigour of the inhabitants of the Northern parts of Great Britain, to whom it is the principal food, both in the infant and adult state. In addition to the objections already thrown out against barley and rye, it may be mentioned, that they are considerably dearer than oats, which, at the time that a cheap provision for the Poor is required, is a matter of no small moment. Under every point of view, therefore, oats seem to be preferable to the other species of grain, as a general substitute for wheat¹."

The principal consumption of barley in the South of England land is in malt liquor: it may, however, be doubted, whether a given quantity of barley and water, reduced by the culinary art into a thick soup, does not contain more nourishment than the same quantity of barley and water, converted by the process of fermentation into beer. Certain it is that a person might subsist entirely on *barley-broth*: but it is not probable, that *porter alone* would long support a person in good health. The true use of this valuable grain is well understood in the North: and the frequent recurrence which is, there, made to it, for composing palatable mixtures, is a practical instance of the justice of Count Rumford's remarks on it's extraordinary nutritive power. The appo-

¹ The Reader will find a detailed account of the process of making rye-bread, in Count Rumford's Essays, i. 438.

² Appendix to Experiments on the Composition of Various Kinds of Bread; by the Board of Agriculture. See Ann. of Agric. xxv. 585.

fiteness of the following passage in his Essays on Food, will be a sufficient apology for it's insertion in this place. He says: "It is not in bread, but in soups, that barley can be employed to the greatest advantage. It is astonishing how much water a small quantity of barley-meal will thicken, and change to the consistency of a jelly; and if my suspicions with regard to the part which water acts in nutrition are founded, this will enable us to account, not only for the nutritive quality of barley, but also for the same quality, in a still higher degree, which sago and sampoo are known to possess. Sago and sampoo thicken, and change to the consistency of a jelly, and, as I suppose, prepare for decomposition, a greater quantity of water than barley; and both sago ¹ and sampoo ² are known to be nutritious in a very extraordinary degree. Barley will thicken and change to a jelly, much more water, than any other grain, with which we are acquainted, rice even not excepted; and I have found reason to conclude, from

¹ *Sago* is a farinaceous substance, prepared from the pith of a palm-tree, which grows in the East Indies, and to which Botanists have given the name of *Cycas circinalis*. An inferior sort, from a different tree, is produced in the West Indies. *Tapioca* is another of the many mucilaginous and mealy substances, which may be obtained from the palm-tree. It is extracted from the roots of a species of the *Jatropha* or *Cassava*; and is brought from the West Indies and South America. Both *tapioca* and *sago* are highly nutritious, and require no other preparation than to be moistened with hot water, or to be boiled in water. A little sugar and spice, or wine, are palatable, and wholesome, additions to them. They may be made with milk into thick pottage. *Tapioca* is often used in puddings, in the same manner as rice. See an useful little pamphlet, intituled, "An Enumeration of the Principal Vegetables, &c. that may be substituted in place of Wheat, and other Bread-corn." Printed for Baldwin, Paternoster-row, 1796. *Sago*, made in England from wheaten-flour, is one of the few articles of diet that are excised. It falls under the denomination of starch.

² *Salep* is the root of a species of *orchis*, which is much cultivated in the East, but grows in England spontaneously. That which we receive from Turkey, is in oval pieces, of a yellowish white colour, very hard, and almost pellucid. The English *orchis* may be made into salep, without difficulty. It is said to have a superior quality of thickening water, above flour, in the proportion of two and a half to one. (See Phil. Trans. lix. 1.) It is also thought to contain the greatest quantity of vegetable nourishment in the smallest bulk, which renders it extremely convenient as a portable soup. It appears, from Dr. Percival, that *salep* may be prepared, in that part of England where labour is high, at about 8d. or 10d. the pound; or even cheaper; and that a sufficient quantity of it for a day's subsistence, might be sold for 2½d. Dr. Percival enumerates many other excellencies of this vegetable, and recommends it as a very useful addition to bread. Essays Med. and Exp. vol. ii.

" the

“ the result of innumerable experiments, which, in the course of several
 “ years, have been made, under my direction, in the public kitchen of
 “ the House of Industry at Munich, that, for making soup, barley is by
 “ far the best grain that can be employed. Were I called upon to give
 “ an opinion in regard to the comparative nutritiousness of barley-meal
 “ and wheat-flour, *when used in soups*, I should not hesitate to say, that
 “ I think the former at least three or four times as nutritious as the
 “ latter. Scotch broth is known to be one of the most nourishing dishes
 “ in common use ; and there is no doubt but it owes its extraordinary
 “ quality to the Scotch, (or pearl,) barley, which is always used in
 “ preparing it. If the barley be omitted, the broth will be found to
 “ be poor and watery, and will afford little nourishment ; but any of
 “ the other ingredients may be retrenched ; even the meat ; without
 “ impairing very sensibly the nutritive quality of the food. Its flavour
 “ and palatableness may be impaired by such retrenchments ; but if the
 “ water be well thickened with the barley, the food will still be very
 “ nourishing.

“ In preparing the soup used in feeding the Poor in the House of
 “ Industry at Munich, pearl barley has hitherto been used ; but I have
 “ found, by some experiments I have lately made in London, that pearl
 “ barley is by no means necessary, as common barley-meal will answer
 “ to all intents and purposes just as well. In one respect it answers
 “ better ; for it does not require half so much boiling¹.”

The Count adds the following general directions for preparing a cheap
 soup from barley : “ First, each portion of soup should consist of *one pint*
 “ and *a quarter*, which, if the soup be rich, will afford a good meal to
 “ a grown person.” This, I am persuaded, is a very fair allowance ; and
 is as much as a North-country labourer, in general, allows himself.
 “ Such a portion will,” he says, “ in general, weigh about *one pound*
 “ and *a quarter*, or *twenty ounces* averdupois. Secondly, the basis of
 “ each portion of soup should consist of one ounce and a quarter of bar-
 “ ley meal, boiled with one pint and a quarter of water, till the whole
 “ be reduced to the uniform consistency of a thick jelly. All other ad-

¹ Essays, 284.

“ditions to the soup do little else than help to make it more palatable ;
 “or, by rendering a long mastication necessary, to increase and prolong
 “the pleasure of eating : both these objects are, however, of very great
 “importance, and too much attention cannot be paid to them ; but both
 “of them may, with proper management, be attained without much
 “expence.”

The following receipt for the cheapest food, which the Count thinks it would be possible to provide in this country, is highly deserving the attention of the masters and governors of work-houses :

Receipt for a very cheap Soup.

“Take of water eight gallons, and mixing with it 5lb. of barley meal,
 “boil it to the consistency of a thick jelly. Season it with salt, pepper,
 “vinegar, sweet herbs, and four red herrings, pounded in a mortar.
 “Instead of bread, add to it 5lb. of Indian corn, made into *Samph* ; and
 “stirring it together with a ladle, serve it up immediately in portions of
 “20 ounces.

“*Samph*, which is here recommended, is a dish said to have been in-
 “vented by the savages of North America, who have no corn-mills. It
 “is Indian corn deprived of it's external coat, by soaking it ten or twelve
 “hours in a lixivium of water and wood-ashes. This coat, or husk,
 “being separated from the kernel, rises to the surface of the water ;
 “while the grain, which is specifically heavier than water, remains at
 “the bottom of the vessel ; which grain, thus deprived of it's hard coat
 “of armour, is boiled, or rather simmered for a great length of time,
 “two days for instance, in a kettle of water placed near the fire. When
 “sufficiently cooked, the kernels will be found to be swelled to a great
 “size, and burst open ; and this food, which is uncommonly sweet and
 “nourishing, may be used in a great variety of ways ; but the best way
 “of using it is to mix it with milk, and with soups, and broths, as a
 “substitute for bread. It is even better than bread for these purposes ;
 “for, besides being quite as palatable as the very best bread, as it is less
 “liable than bread to grow too soft when mixed with these liquids,
 “without being disagreeably hard, it requires more mastication, and
 “consequently tends more to increase and prolong the pleasure of eating.

“ The soup which may be prepared with the quantities of ingredients mentioned in the foregoing receipt, will be sufficient for 64 persons ; and the cost of these ingredients will be as follows :

“ For 5lb. of barley-meal at $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. the barley being reckoned				
“ at the present very high price of it in this country, viz.				
“ 5s. 6d. per bushel	-	-	-	$7\frac{1}{2}$ d.
“ 5lb. of Indian corn, at $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. the pound	-	-	-	$6\frac{1}{4}$
“ 4 red herrings	-	-	-	3
“ Vinegar	-	-	-	1
“ Salt	-	-	-	1
“ Pepper and sweet herbs	-	-	-	2
				<hr/>
				$20\frac{3}{4}$ d.

“ This sum, ($20\frac{3}{4}$ d.) divided by 64, the number of portions of soup, gives something less than *one-third of a penny* for the cost of each portion. But, at the medium price of barley in Great Britain, and of Indian corn, as it may be afforded here, I am persuaded that this soup may be provided at *one farthing* the portion of 20 ounces’.”

It is not to be expected that milk should ever form a considerable part of the diet of labourers in the South of England, until the practice of keeping cows becomes more general among cottagers than it is at present. In many parts of the island, however, considerable difficulties will occur, in attempting to introduce this custom. In the vicinity of large towns, the value of grass land is much too high to enable labourers to rent it to advantage : and in other districts, where there is hardly any thing but arable land, and the maintenance of a cow depends on straw, turnips, cabbages, or purchased hay, the system of cow-keeping is much too operose for a labourer to engage in. A garden, however, will prove of infinite benefit to a labourer in almost every situation, but more especially in arable countries, where he would find it difficult to procure sufficient pasture to maintain a cow both in Summer and Winter ; and where, although he might be able to cultivate a few acres of arable land

* Essays, i. 286.

for Winter food for his cow, he would not always be able to procure hay, for Summer food, from the farmers.

I am, however, persuaded, that, even in London, where milk is extremely dear, (now $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. the quart,) poor householders might occasionally use it to considerable advantage. A small quantity of it, judiciously applied, would render many dishes tender and delicate, which, from their toughness, and the drought which they occasion, are not only unpalatable, but expensive. A labouring man, in the metropolis, who thinks he cannot afford milk, and therefore obliges his family to drink their tea in a very crude state, by way of economy, buys himself half a pound of fat bacon, (at 10d. or 1s. the pound,) for dinner. This creates such a thirst, that he is fain to allay it with no inconsiderable quantity of porter. As for salt fish, (an article of diet which seems to be peculiarly suited to the poorer inhabitant of a great commercial city,) it seems now going very generally into disuse; and is little eaten, except on particular occasions. This is not to be wondered at; for, in the common way that it is cooked, salt fish is hard, dry, and unfavoury. A sauce is absolutely essential to render it palatable: but eggs and butter, which are the usual appendages to this dish, are much too expensive for the greater part of the labouring classes. I remember eating, a few years ago, at Rome, a most exquisite dish, which I have often regretted was not more generally known in England. It consisted of salt fish, milk, and sliced potatoes, with a very few herbs. The harshness and dryness, which are so predominant in all salted meat in England, were entirely annihilated. I cannot, indeed, conceive a more nutritious mixture of ingredients from the animal and vegetable kingdom, than cod, or salmon, (which is often cheaper in London than butcher's meat,) with milk and potatoes. This dish of salt or fresh fish, milk, and potatoes, seasoned with onions, or chives, and parsley, &c. is very common in France and Scotland. *Salmon* will not answer so well with milk; only *white* fish,—such as haddock, cod, turbot, plaice, sole, flounder, whiting, &c. will make good soup. In Scotland, they likewise make a very excellent pudding of oat-meal mixed with butter, (or the livers of haddocks,) seasoned with pepper, salt, onions, &c. crammed into the heads of fresh haddocks. It is sometimes made into dumplings, and boiled along with the fish.

With regard to broths and soups, composed of barley-meal, or oat-meal, and potatoes, the aversion to them in many parts of the South is almost insuperable. I have known instances during the last winter, when the Poor were extremely distressed by the high price of provisions, of their rejecting soup which was served at a Gentleman's table. Their common outcry was : " this is wafhy stuff, that affords no nourishment : we will " not be fed on meal, and chopped potatoes, like hogs !" Even in their employers, ancient prejudices are, in general, so deeply rooted, that they are persuaded, that a diet, which chiefly consists of liquids, will not enable their labourers to perform their work ; or, (to use an homely phrase,) that it will not stick to their ribs, like plain dry wheaten bread.

I readily

* The following judicious experiments and observations on flour and bread were delivered, by Dr. Irving, to the Committee of the House of Commons appointed (in 1774) to consider of the methods practised in making flour from wheat, &c. See Report (which was ordered to be reprinted 9th Nov. 1795,) p. 72.

" *EXPERIMENTS and OBSERVATIONS on Flour and Bread, delivered to the Committee by DR. IRVING.*

" To grind wheat into flour with the greatest advantage, the mill-stone should make about sixty revolutions in a minute : if faster, the stones acquire too much heat, and give a burnt taste to the meal : if slower, a part of it adheres firmly to the bran or husk, and cannot be separated in the bolting.

" Flour, when kept some time, evaporates a part of it's moisture, becomes less adhesive and clammy, loses somewhat of it's agreeable taste, and imbibes a greater portion of water in the making of it into dough : the bread of it appears smoother in the cutting, whiter in the grain, dries sooner, and becomes more crumbly, than the bread of new flour. These reasons induce the baker to prefer old flour to new in the making of bread.

" The yeast of porter does not raise bread so perfectly as that produced from small beer ; besides, it is very bitter to the taste : the baker, therefore, in London, instead of using a sufficient quantity of yeast for the leavening of his bread, mixes only a small portion of it with flour and water, made to the consistence of a syrup, called *sponge* : which, when fermented, is added to the flour ; and being worked up together into dough, the whole mass is suffered to ferment.

" This method, however, of leavening the dough, is by no means so good as that in which yeast only is used ; as it gives the bread a sour taste, frequently perceptible in that of London. I find, by experiment, three pounds and a half of flour, kept a year in a dry place, requires two pounds of water to make it into dough, and loses in the baking into bread ten ounces ; but, from the variable age, dryness, and quality of the flour, with the indeterminate degrees of kneading and baking, it is impossible to ascertain the exact proportion of water in all cases ; nor is any uniform proportion ever observed by the bakers.

" Flour

I readily admit, that a diet, consisting entirely of liquids, would neither gratify the palate, nor enable the body to support any violent fatigue. There is, however, a medium between food entirely liquid and entirely solid. And, after all, I am persuaded, that the South-country labourer, notwithstanding his conviction of the necessity of substan-

"Flour made from heated or damaged corn does not thoroughly mix with water, so as to form a perfect dough, unless a small portion of alum be added. In this case, the baker is induced to use it; as he may be likewise when the water with which he makes the dough is very muddy; alum having the property of purifying it. I find, however, by the experiment of dissolving the salt from bread by water, and adding to the solution an alcali, (which would discover the earth of alum by precipitation,) that the bakers in London very seldom use alum; but substitute hard pump-water, with an extraordinary quantity of common salt; which, in some measure, answer their purpose, in the working of damaged flour.

"Flour, or bread, freed of it's salt, being burnt in a crucible, leaves behind only a very small portion of earth; but if chalk, lime, whiting, bone ash, or any calcareous substance, be mixed with either, these foreign ingredients will remain unconsumed in the crucible, and the quantity may be perfectly ascertained.

"The mixture of these ingredients with flour or bread may also be discovered, by adding spirit of salt well diluted with water; and their quantity known by precipitation with a fixt alcali. The following Experiments were made with a view of ascertaining these facts:

"EXPERIMENT 1st.

"One pound of fine flour burnt in a crucible, left behind twenty-eight grains of earth; of which nineteen were sandy matter; the remainder soluble in an acid.

"EXPERIMENT 2d.

"One pound of bread of a quartern loaf, freed of its salt by water, and treated in the same manner, gave forty-three grains; of which twenty-nine were sandy matter; the rest soluble by an acid.

"EXPERIMENT 3d.

"One pound of bread added to spirit of salt, sufficiently diluted with distilled water, gave scarce any precipitation of earth, by adding a fixt alcali.

"From these and other chemical trials, several times repeated, with flour and bread procured in many parts of London and Westminster, the result was nearly the same; except that coarse flour and bread contained a few grains more of earthy matter. It evidently appears, therefore, that no frauds were practised in the above samples.

"The defects of the London bread seem to be owing to the following causes:

"1st. The use of old flour, in preference to new; which gives the bread a less flavoury taste.

"2d. The employing *sponge*, instead of yeast; which generally gives a sour, unpalatable, taste to the bread.

"3d. Not kneading it sufficiently, but, in place of that labour, using too great a quantity of water; which makes the bread heavy and unpleasant.

"CHARLES IRVING."

tial diet, takes more liquids into his stomach, than the Cumberland or the Yorkshire-man¹. Exclusive of beer, (when he can afford it,) and spirits, the quantity of water, (which, with tea, forms a deleterious beverage, that is seldom qualified with milk or sugar,) poured down the throats of a labourer's family, is astonishing. Any person who will give himself the trouble of stepping into the cottages of Middlesex and Surrey at meal-times, will find, that, in poor families, tea is not only the usual beverage in the morning and evening, but is generally drank in large quantities even at dinner. Whether this exotic is more palatable or more nutritious than home-raised barley converted into broth, I leave to Medical Gentlemen to determine.

There is a material difference in the habits of labourers in the different parts of the kingdom, in the article of drinking, both with regard to the quantity and the quality of the liquors they consume. The Reader will find some details in the Second Volume of this Work, on the subject, which, I fear, will justify the conclusion, that temperance does not appear to be an English virtue. We are still much addicted to the propensity, which has been so often ascribed to Northern nations; and Shakspeare, were he alive, might, with great truth, delineate us, as he did two hundred years ago, as "most potent in potting²." It might indeed be supposed, from Davenant's account of the malt liquor drank in the metropolis in his days, and the present consumption, as far as it can be collected from the tax on beer, that either the population of this great city had declined, or that, in becoming more opulent, we had also become more abstemious. Neither of these facts, however, it is probable, is the case: I confess myself unable to detect the fallacy of Dr. Price's supposition of a declining population, as far as it is founded

¹ Though the South-country labourer takes as much *barley* into his stomach as the North countryman, who eats *barley-bread* and *barley-broth*, there is this material difference between them; the one seldom gets it in the South till it has been loaded with the malt and beer, or spirit, duties. Those who use their barley for soup and bread, have at least the satisfaction of tasting it *unexcised*.

² Othello, A. 2. S. 3.

on the superior produce of the hereditary and temporary excise for three years, ending in 1689, beyond what it was when he wrote. The additional duties which have been imposed on beer since the Revolution, do not sufficiently account for the decreased consumption of malt liquor, which he supposes has taken place.

I have made several unsuccessful attempts, in various parts of the kingdom, to obtain information of the quantity of malt and spirituous liquors drank in parishes, where I had reason to think the consumption was very considerable, notwithstanding the apparent inability of the inhabitants to indulge themselves in the purchase of these superfluities; but, for obvious reasons, I have scarcely ever been able to learn any thing on this head, so completely satisfactory as was hoped for, either from excise-men, masters of ale-houses, or others. From various circumstances, however, (some of which I shall take notice of, in a subsequent part of this Chapter,) I am persuaded, that the consumption of labourers, in purchased liquor, (whatever exceptions particular districts may furnish,) is in general prodigious. A tolerably accurate estimate might probably be formed, (from various documents relative to the revenue,) of the whole amount of wine, beer, and spirituous liquors annually consumed in England. I have not the means of entering into these details, any further than by a short statement of the produce of the taxes on the principal liquors consumed in England in the year ending on the 10th October 1795.

Account of the Net Produce of the Excise and Customs, on Spirituous and Vinous Liquors, for one Year, ending the 10th October 1795.

EXCISE, <i>England.</i>				CUSTOMS, <i>Great Britain.</i>			
BEER	-	-	£ 1,958,135	Spirits—Brandy	-	-	£ 13,858
Cyder, perry, and verjuice	-	-	19,456	Geneva	-	-	14,278
Malt perpetual	-	-	629,072	Rum	-	-	31,612
Annual malt, mum, cyder and				Wine—Canary	-	-	1,326
perry	-	-	574,799	French	-	-	11,107
Wine	-	-	318,536	Madeira	-	-	10,208
Ditto, additional duty, 24th				Portugal	-	-	429,936
Feb. 1795	-	-	591,876	Rhenish	-	-	1,259
British spirits	-	-	711,838	Spanish	-	-	87,539
Ditto foreign	-	-	532,133				
Ditto British additional duty				Total customs	-	-	601,123
5th Jan. 1791	-	-	119,043	Total excise	-	-	6,051,461
Ditto foreign ditto	-	-	107,151				
Ditto British additional duty				Total customs and excise	-	-	£ 6,652,584
24th Feb. 1794	-	-	120,209				
Ditto foreign ditto	-	-	106,733				
Ditto British additional duty							
24th Feb. 1795	-	-	63,777				
Ditto foreign ditto	-	-	28,076				
Metheglin, including vinegar			20,628				
EXCISE, <i>Scotland.</i>							
Malt perpetual	-	-	23,959				
Spirits, British	-	-	42,000				
Ditto, quarterly remittance	-	-	36,000				
Ditto foreign	-	-	13,000				
Ditto foreign, 1794	-	-	5000				
Wine	-	-	18,000				
Annual malt, mum, cyder and							
perry	-	-	12,040				
			<u>£ 6,051,461</u>				

The Reader may be enabled to ascertain the annual consumption of wine with tolerable exactness, and to form some guess at the quantity of spirits, (annually drank,) which have paid duty, from the produce of the additional (excise) duties imposed last year on these articles.

Additional duties in 1795.

For every ton of French wine imported	£30	0	0	
ditto other foreign wine -	20	0	0	by 35 G. 3. c. 10.
barrel sweets made in England	0	11	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	
gallon of spirits made in England	0	0	1	
ditto wash - - -	0	0	1	by 35 G. 3. c. 11.
ditto brandy single, imported	0	0	10	
ditto — above proof -	0	1	8	
ditto rum, from British W. I. sing.	0	0	8	
ditto — above proof -	0	1	4	
ditto — from other parts, sing.	0	0	10	
ditto — above proof -	0	1	8	by 35 G. 3. c. 12.

This additional duty on wine produced, for the year ending on 5th July 1796,

Wines imported - - £711,264 (Little or none, it is probable, was French.)

Sweets, or home-made wines 10,503 From accounts laid before the House of Commons.

From this it appears that of foreign wines were imported about - - 35,500 $\frac{1}{2}$ tons.

The above duty on home-made wines (11s. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. the barrel,) gives - 18,102 barrels.

¹ It will appear from the following statement, that the measure of excising wine, which was adopted in 1786, have increased the legal consumption, and, consequently, the revenue, very considerably.

Quantity imported in	—	1790	—	Tons.	—	Duty after deducting Drawbacks.
		1791	—	29,189	—	£ 804,167
		1792	—	33,092	—	910,920
				35,525	—	1,031,704
				<u>97,806</u>	—	<u>2,746,791</u>
Average of 1790, 1791, and 1792	—	—	—	32,602	—	915,597
Average of 1784, 1785, and 1786	—	—	—	15,953	—	625,454
Average increase	—	—	—	Tons 16,649	Duties	£ 290,143

See "Brief Examination into the Increase of the Revenue," &c. printed by Stockdale, p. 25.

It is not so easy to form an estimate of the quantity of foreign and home-made spirits consumed in Great Britain; as the account of duties arising from them relates to various ports, on which very different duties are imposed. It is, however, probable, that, with the exception of the last year, during which the distilleries were stopped, the consumption has not, of late years, been less than it was thirty years ago. Dr. Price, in his observations on the Population of England and Wales, gives the following account of the consumption of spirits in England. It shews the progress of gin-drinking, which seems to have been most prevalent about the years 1750 and 1751.

The annual average of spirits drawn from malted corn, cyder, me-lasses, and brewers wash,

				Gallons.
In the years	1692	and	1693	was 2,329,487
	1730	and	1731	— 6,658,788
	1750	and	1751	— 11,326,976
	1752	and	1753	— 7,500,000
	1767	and	1768	— 3,663,568

Mr. Colquhoun estimates the annual consumption of gin and compounds in the metropolis at 3,000,000 of gallons¹.

Dr. Price adds, that the annual average of exciseable brandy imported in 1688 and 1689 was 1,713,974 gallons.

1767 and 1768 — 1,612,631

A very considerable addition may be made to this amount, for the quantity of brandy annually smuggled into this kingdom in times of Peace.

Owing to the stoppage of the distilleries, the duties on spirits have considerably decreased since last year. Some idea of the progressive increase of this branch of revenue, in the preceding years, may be formed from the following information, which is contained in various accounts laid before the House of Commons, in the last and preceding month, (Oct. 1796.)

¹ Treatise on the Police, 2d ed. p. 40.

Old Duty on British Spirits for		England.	Scotland.
Years ending the 10th October	{ 1792	£644,104	£36,000
	{ 1793	603,402	36,000
	{ 1794	655,658	36,000
	{ 1795	711,836	36,000
	{ 1796	98,207	18,000

Produce of additional Duties imposed in 1793, 1794, and 1795.

British spirits }	additional duty imposed in 1793,	} produced for the year ending 5th July 1796,	{	£42,259
Foreign ditto }				107,130
British spirits }	additional duty imposed in 1794,			43,687
Foreign ditto }				103,221
British spirits }	additional duty imposed in 1795,			46,718
Foreign ditto }				104,011

Of beer, it is hardly possible to form a guess at the amount annually consumed in Great Britain, as a very considerable quantity is brewed at home, which is exempted from duty, and of course neither it's quality, nor quantity, can be ascertained with any tolerable degree of precision. Dr. Price¹ would infer, from the superior produce of the hereditary and temporary excise for the three years ending in 1689, over any subsequent period that has occurred since, that the population of the country has decreased since the Revolution. The unfairness, however, of selecting this particular period for the purpose of his argument, has been sufficiently exposed²: and it appears, that a considerable increase has taken place, if the produce of this excise, in modern times, be compared with it's produce in the years immediately subsequent to, and in other periods since, the Revolution.

The following Table³ exemplifies this increase:

Three years, ending at - 1689 - - - £700,147⁴

¹ Observations on the Population of England and Wales, printed in 1780, p. 20. and App. p. 46.

² See Mr. Eden, now Lord Auckland's, Letters, 3d ed. App. xxxii.

³ See Dr. Price's Observations, &c. App. 46.

⁴ The great decrease in the produce of the hereditary and temporary excise after the Revolution, is owing to the duties on low wines and spirits (about £70,000. a year,) having been taken from it in 1736, and carried to the aggregate fund, to the coffee duty which was taken from the excise in 1690, and more especially to the alteration of measure, and the large allowance given to brewers soon after the Revolution.

Two years, ending at	-	1695	-	-	£ 438,573
		1699	-	-	381,886
		1703	-	-	473,799
		1710	-	-	449,666
		1719	-	-	509,370
		1736	-	-	515,400
		1746	-	-	495,749
		1753	-	-	527,091
		1761	-	-	575,280
		1768	-	-	527,991
		1774	-	-	520,613
		1778	-	-	554,460

Dr. Price informs us, that the annual average of three years, ending in 1689, was

	Barrels.		Gallons, reckoning 35 to the Barrel.
Of strong beer brewed for sale	5,055,870	=	176,955,450
small ditto - -	2,582,248	=	90,378,680

And that the average of three years, ending in 1768, was

	Barrels.		Gallons.
Of strong beer -	3,925,131	=	137,379,585
small - -	1,886,760	=	66,036,600

It appears from a pamphlet, published in 1794, intituled, "Observations and Facts relative to Public Houses," that the number of barrels of porter, ale, and amber, brewed in London,

in 1794, was 1,397,355 barrels, or 48,907,425 gallons.

The duty for which amounted to £2,058,246. 6s. 10d.

Of this quantity, 65,208 barrels are supposed to be exported ;
and 200,000 barrels to be sent coastways, and by land, for country consumption. ———

265,208: which being deducted, there will remain

for the consumption
of London and it's

environs - 1,132,147 barrels, of 35 gallons each; or 39,625,145 gallons; for which the consumers pay at the rate of 14½d. per gallon average, making in all £2,352,742. 19s. 8¼d. paid for malt liquor in London and it's environs in the course of one year.

Purchased.

Purchased liquor is an article of expenditure particularly prevalent in the South; which, though apparently of but little moment, is certainly not beneath our notice, in the comparative estimate of the difference of expence manifest in the families of the peasantry in the Northern and Southern counties. In the latter, there is hardly a labouring man, of any account whatever, who does not think it necessary to indulge himself, every day, in a certain quantity of malt liquor: and if taxed, at any time, with drinking too much, he thinks it a sufficient, and by no means an unbecoming, apology for himself, to allege, that, excepting on a Saturday evening, or occasions of festivity, he rarely allows himself more than a pint, or, at most, a pot of beer a day. In cyder countries, the peasantry are equally liberal to themselves in the use of that beverage. This is not the case in the North; where, besides the pure limpid stream, the general drink of the labouring classes is either whey or milk, or rather milk and water; or, at best, very meagre small beer. And though drinking to excess is said to be a Northern vice, as being indeed most natural to the cold regions of the North¹; and it is by no means pretended that a Northern peasant is not as prone to brutalize himself by drunkenness as any other; they have not yet become habituated to consider any strong drink as a necessary of life. It is reserved as an indulgence for extraordinary festivals; for a horse-race; a merry-making; or a market-day; and resorted to, not merely for *shallow draughts*, but with the avowed purpose of *drinking*

¹ Mr. Brydone imagines a fondness for drinking to be the propensity of *mountaineers*. Speaking of Agrigentum, in Sicily, he says: "The very elevated situation of this city, where the air is exceedingly thin and cold, has probably been one great reason that its inhabitants have become greater drunkards than their neighbours in the vallies." *Tour to Sicily and Malta*, Lett. xix. The remark should, perhaps, be confined to *civilized nations*; for *barbarians*, both in hot and cold countries, on hills or in vallies, seem equally fond of liquor; and when that cannot be had, of getting intoxicated by other means. The Malays are often rendered perfectly mad, by an immoderate use of the beetle-nut. See Cook's *Voyages*. Vaillant, in his *Travels*, lately published, mentions a singular instance of brandy-drinking among the Hottentots. Eight men and six women had a *set-to* for three days, without intermission; and emptied a cask of brandy, containing 20 gallons: this is nearly a gallon and a half a piece. See Vaillant's *New Travels*, Lond. ed. 1796. ii. 94. This equals the story of the Gloucestershire hoghead of cyder, which the Reader will meet with a few pages on.

deep.

deep. And as these occasions are not of very frequent recurrence, the expence of them is consequently very inferior to that which is incurred by those, who, besides such occasions as these, allow themselves a daily portion of beer. A comparative Table of the consumption of malt and hops in two or three different districts in the North and South, circumstanced, as nearly as may be, alike, in the great leading features of population, market-towns, manufactures, &c. with the respective numbers of their inhabitants, would prove this point beyond all possibility of doubt: meanwhile, it is submitted to the judgment of the Reader to determine for himself, how far it is sufficiently proved by the striking fact brought forward in several of the ensuing Reports, that, in parishes of pretty equal population in the North and the South, for one ale-house in the former, there are often not less than three or four in the latter.

In an age of finance, and in times when the consideration of the means of finance is become the indispensable duty of every man, the touching, even incidentally, and in the most guarded manner, on so prolific a source of national revenue, as the consumption of malt liquor, is certainly tender ground: and far be it from the writer of these sheets to hazard even an expression, which he can foresee may, by even a distorted implication, do harm. He cannot but flatter himself, however, that it is impossible it should do any harm, whilst he is willing to hope it may do much good, thus fairly to appeal to the Public, and more especially to those, who are most capable of forming a true judgment as to the question, how far either the Public, or individuals, are really benefited by the prodigious use of strong drinks, which is now so general in these kingdoms. The benefit to the Public, arising from the revenue, is not here to be taken into the account; because it is to be presumed no Government ever did, or ever will, promote dissipation and vice among its people, merely for the sake of revenue. I would beg leave to ask, in what sense, or by what means, any strong drink whatever, (whether it be wine, gin, cyder, or beer,) really invigorates the constitution, or does good, beyond, or better than, any other wholesome beverage? Without presuming to enter into the physical discussion of a question confessedly deep and difficult, and without

out any wish to arraign the established customs of a large portion of an enlightened people, and also without having recourse to that not uncommon, but very reprehensible, expedient, of controversialists, of arguing, from the abuse, against the use ; I may be permitted to observe, that there always have been, and still are, many large communities, where their general habits of life, as to the point now immediately under consideration, differed, and do differ, totally from ours : and yet they are as large and muscular in their make, possess as much bodily strength, are as healthy, live as long, and in all other respects are as useful and as happy as those, “that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, till wine inflame them¹.” Scanty as is the information contained in the following sheets, which I have been enabled to collect, there is abundant reason to conclude, that, in every parish, the consumption of liquor is far beyond any thing of which ordinary observers are aware : of which the ascertained amount of the duties arising from this single article of taxation is a direct and sufficient evidence. Still it is matter of regret, that no clear and certain evidence is to be obtained, how much is consumed in each parish, and by whom. In one parish in the county of Surrey, consisting of 1671 men, women, and children, of which there is a detailed account in the following Reports², the friend to whom the Author was indebted for that account, was fortunately enabled to learn, that the draught, as it is called, of one ale-house only, out of sixteen, amounted to £ 20. per month. The house is considered as having neither the best nor the worst custom ; so that £ 20. a month may be considered as the fair averaged receipts of every ale-house in the place. This sum, multiplied by 16, gives £ 320. as the total consumption of a month ; and that again multiplied by 12, gives £ 3840. as the whole amount of what is annually expended for strong drink among 1600 persons ; two thirds of whom, consisting of women and children, and gentry, may fairly be supposed to have little or no share in such expenditures. This sum must be allowed to be immense ; and as there is no reason to believe, either that this calculation, formed, as it confessedly

¹ Isaiah, ch. 5. v. 11.

² See 2d Vol. p. 709.

is, on no other data than such as are here stated, is exaggerated and erroneous, or that this parish is unique in it's addiction to drinking, it is a circumstance that surely merits a fuller investigation. The parish in question consists but of one pretty considerable village, or town, with an hamlet or two; and no considerable manufactures are carried on in it; and the people in general, besides a few farmers, are gentlemen, shopkeepers and tradesmen. It is indeed a thoroughfare, and lying on one of the roads that leads to Portsmouth; yet it can not be said to be much frequented by travellers. It is therefore fair to infer, that much the largest part of the above-stated prodigious expenditure in ale-houses comes from the pockets of some of the inhabitants. It is not the fashion for gentlemen, and people of rank, to frequent ale-houses: the only classes, therefore, here left to be charged with this lavish expenditure of their money, are shopkeepers, artificers, journeymen, gentlemen's servants, and labourers. For Government to offer encouragement to ale-houses, any farther than they are wanted for the many useful purposes which they serve among the labouring classes, is to act the part of a *felo de se*: nor ought the Public ever to be lulled into an acquiescence, by the flattering bait of an immediate gain, which ere long they would be obliged to pay back to Paupers, in relief, with an heavy interest¹.

Of

¹ It is but fair, after mentioning the evils which are produced by ale-houses, to enumerate some of their advantages. Independently of the conveniences which they offer to the traveller, (the providing of which is, as the Statute of King James the First justly observes, one of "the ancient, true, and principal use of ale-houses,") they afford many incalculable advantages to the labouring classes, which are not easily estimated by those who see little more in the publican, than the retailer of beer and spirits, and the willing receiver of riotous company. Whether in gratitude for the money spent there, or with interested views of future gain, I will not determine; but the fact is, that most of the servants, day-labourers, and working people of all descriptions, who are out of employ, are accustomed to "sojourn, lodge, or victual in inns and ale-houses²." The facility of thus procuring an abode in times of distress, I am persuaded, often prevents those enormities, which those who are turned adrift on the world would otherwise be induced to commit. In this speculating and commercial country, there are sudden stagnations in trade, and unforeseen interruptions to employment. The workman, who has been receiving high wages for several months, (the greatest part of which he may, perhaps, have spent at the ale-house,) is suddenly discharged: he naturally applies to the ale-house for a little temporary assistance; and the publican, (who has gene-

² 2 Jac. c. 9. § 2.

Of the drinking propensities of labourers in a cyder county, Mr. Marshall, in his account of the rural economy of Gloucestershire, gives the following remarkable instances:—"Drinking a gallon-bottle full at a draught is said to be no uncommon feat: a mere boyish trick, which will not bear to be bragged of. But to drain a two-gallon bottle, without taking it from the lips, as a labourer of the vale (of Evesham,) is said to have done, by way of being even with master, who had paid him short in money, is spoken of as an exploit, which carried the art of draining a wooden bottle to its full pitch. Two gallons of cyder, however, are not a stomach-full. Another man of the vale undertook, for a trifling wager, to drink twenty pints, one immediately after another. He got down nineteen, (as the story is gravely told,) but these filling the cask to the bung, the twentieth could not, of course, get admittance: so that a Severn-man's stomach holds exactly two gallons three pints. But the quantity drank in this extempore way, by the men, is trifling compared with that which their masters will swallow at a sitting. Four well-seasoned yeomen, having raised their courage with the juice of the apple, resolved to have a fresh hog'shead tapped: and, setting foot to foot, emptied it at one sitting¹." Hardyknute's horn would be a mere thimble-full to such fellows as these.

rally a very good calculating head,) will seldom refuse him that little which is requisite till he can find a new master. There is commonly a strong bond of union between the discharged labourer and the ale-house keeper: the former has usually a long score with the latter; who will not act like a prudent man, in compelling him to fly the parish. The fact is, he generally reasons like Bassanio:

"When I had lost one shaft

"I shot his fellow, of the self-same flight,

"The self-same way, with more advised watch,

"To find the other forth; and, by advent'ring both,

"I oft found both."

Viewed in this light, ale-houses will appear to form a strong intermediate link between the employer and employed. That they are often, like other good institutions, perverted to bad purposes, more especially in the metropolis, I have little doubt: but it is likewise well known to those, who are well acquainted with the mystery of thief-taking, that public-houses are useful instruments of police: and that they not only facilitate the means of detecting those whom they perhaps have corrupted, (which, it must be confessed, is a sad consequence of the progress of society,) but even offenders of very different descriptions.

¹ Marshall's Gloucestershire, i. 53.

In the midland counties¹, the improvident consumption of malt liquor is no less remarkable. “Beer and ale are not only brewed unreasonably strong, but the quantity allowed to workmen is unnecessarily great. That which is termed *beer*, or *small beer*, is nearly equal in strength to the harvest *mild ale* of many counties. In hay and corn harvest the customary allowance is a gallon of beer a man, (in hot weather they drink more,) and besides this, mowers expect two quarts of ale, and never have less than one. Reapers have no regular allowance of ale; but, nevertheless, expect a little *drink*.” Mr. Marshall adds, that with some difficulty, he “got turnip-hoers to accept of two quarts of beer, and one of ale: they wanted two of beer and two of ale. During the Winter months, the quantity of small beer drank is not much less than in Harvest. Mr. William Moor, of Thorp, allows his labourers a gallon a day all the year round. Each man has his gallon bottle filled in the morning; and what he does not drink, he takes home to his family.” His motive for establishing this custom was, that when beer was given them from the cask by careless wasteful servants, they were apt to get so muddled and stupid as to be unfit for duty.

“It is usual in farm-houses to draw beer in a two-quart copper can; and there are men, who will see the bottom single handed. Two men seldom fail of emptying one of them at a draught².” From this account it would seem, that although the *quantity* of liquor wasted in the midland counties is less than in Gloucestershire, in *quality* and *cost*, the beverage of farm labourers in the former district far exceeds the other³.

It must be confessed, that the difficulty of introducing any species of food, which requires much culinary preparation, into the South of England, arises, in a great measure, from the scarcity and high price of fuel. It is owing to this cause that even the labourer’s dinner, of

¹ The midland district consists of Leicestershire, Rutland, Warwickshire, North part of Northamptonshire, East part of Staffordshire, and Southern extremities of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

² Marshall’s Midland Counties, ii. 49.

³ Id. i. 132.

hot meat on a Sunday, is generally dressed at the baker's; and that his meals during the rest of the week consist almost wholly of bread purchased from the same quarter. It may, however, be doubted, whether the same quantity of fuel, which is required to boil a tea-kettle twice a day, is not more than sufficient, with proper management, to dress a potatoe soup, or an hodge-podge: but it is much to be regretted, that most of the habitations of the labouring classes are but ill adapted to culinary processes. Count Rumford truly observes, that "their fire-places are, in general, constructed upon the most wretched principles:" and that "the fuel they consume in them, instead of heating their rooms, not unfrequently renders them really colder, and more uncomfortable, by causing strong currents of cold air to flow from all the doors and windows to the chimney." He thinks "this imperfection of their fire-places may be effectually remedied; these currents of cold air prevented; above half their fuel saved; and their dwellings made infinitely more comfortable, merely by diminishing their fire-places and the throats of their chimnies, just above the mantle-piece; which may be done at a very trifling expence, with a few bricks, or stones, and a little mortar, by the most ordinary bricklayer. And with regard to the expence of fuel for cooking," he says, "so simple a contrivance as an earthen-pot, broad at top, for receiving a stew-pan, or kettle, and narrow at bottom, with holes through its sides near the bottom, for letting in air under a small circular and iron grate, and other small holes near the top for letting out the smoke, may be introduced with great advantage. By making use of this portable furnace, which is equally well adapted to burn wood or coals, one-eighth part of the fuel will be sufficient for cooking, which would be required were the kettle to be boiled over an open fire. To strengthen this portable furnace, it may be hooped with iron hoops,

¹ Baking meat appears to me to be the worst of all modes of cookery: the nourishing parts are dried up, and exhaled, and the bones turned to no account: whereas in a soup, or a stew, marrow, gristle, skin, and even bones themselves, if broken into small pieces, may be made to supply many savoury and nutritious ingredients. This, however, it is obvious, can only be effected through the means of *water* as well as *fire*. They are certainly the best cooks, who can most apply the liquid element to the purposes of nutrition.

“ or bound round with strong iron wire ’. No present, that could be
 “ made to a poor family, could be of more essential service to them
 “ than a thin, light stew-pan, with it’s cover, made of wrought, or
 “ cast, iron, and fitted to a portable furnace, or close fire-place, con-
 “ structed to save fuel ; with two or three approved receipts for making
 “ nourishing and savoury soups and broths at a small expence.” There
 is also a good account and plate of a steam-dish, for making a potatoe
 pasty, in the Repertory of Arts and Manufactures, iv. 384. The au-
 thor of this account, which was written in March 1796, says, this dish
 would cook an excellent meal for a family at less than 3d. a head.

Fire-balls, of which Count Rumford takes notice, were, I am per-
 suaded, formerly more used in England than they are at present. I
 accidentally met with the two following receipts to make them, in the
 British Museum, and flatter myself the insertion of them will not be
 unacceptable to the Reader.

“ *Artificial Fire or Coale for Rich and Poore.*

“ This being the offer of an excellent new invention by Mr. Richard
 “ Gosling, engineer, (late deceased,) but now thought fit to be put in
 “ practise——

“ Read—Practice—Judge.

“ First, provide a peece of ground where the sun lies upon it, and for
 “ the better ordering, take a brick-maker or a labourer to doe it : doe
 “ thus.

“ Take three load of red mortar, such as you make your bricks with
 “ double loads, half a chaldron of good sea-coales of the smallest and
 “ best, three sack-fulls of the best smal coale, foure bushels of saw-dust,
 “ foure trusses of straw chopped ; worke all these together with water
 “ stiffe as bricks ; then when it worked all together very well, take
 “ foure sacks of the dust of smal coale, and with that used as they do the

* Essays, 174. The Public may expect further elucidation of the important subjects of
 fuel and chimney fire-places, from this interesting author, as he has promised an essay on cot-
 tage fire-places ; in which he expects to be able to shew, that *three quarters* at least of the fuel,
 which cottagers now consume in cooking their victuals, and in warming their dwellings,
 may, with great ease, and without any expensive apparatus, be saved. Essays, 366.

“ sand

“ sand for casting of brick; then cast the ingredients as you cast
 “ bricks, but halfe so thick, and dry it as brick is dried; or you may
 “ make it up in round balls not too big, with charcoale, or smalcoale
 “ dust, on the outside, and so laid to dry; when they be thorow dry,
 “ burn them with a little Scotch coale or wood, or any combustible
 “ matter to fire it, or with two or three wooden chips to kindle your fire
 “ withall, and to keepe in the life of the fire, and these cast a most ex-
 “ cellent heat, and keepe fire for any use, to rost, boile, or bake, for the
 “ richer sort; but be sure you lay them not too close on the fire, but as
 “ you see pattern upon this paper, mingled with a Scotch coale or two.

“ For the poorer sort, cow-dung mingled with saw-dust and smal-
 “ coale, made up into balls, or in a square like a tile, not too thick, and
 “ dried, make a very good fewell, but something noisome. Also that
 “ which comes out of the paunches of beasts killed, it being dried, is
 “ excellent fire.

“ Horse-dung in balls, with saw-dust, or the dust of smal coale, or
 “ charcoale dust, dried, is good fewell, but the smell is offensive.

“ Greenwich Heath, or Hounslow Heath, turf, well dried, is very
 “ good fewell, with a little Scotch coale burnt with it.

“ Peate, if well dried, but well fatted with seggy or flagge roots
 “ from fenny places, is a very good firing, mingled with coale when it is
 “ burnt.

“ Some make an oven with kennell durt, with a hole at the top for
 “ the heat and smoke to ascend up in the chimney, and with six or seven
 “ bricks raise the bottome and make up the shed, and then daube up the
 “ oven, leaving the hole at top, and before put in a few Scotch coale,
 “ and after it is kindled well, keepe fire a weeke, every two dayes
 “ putting addition of the kennell durt to keep it whole, and putting sea
 “ coal, or Scoth¹ coale as the fire declines; this is a fire which casts a
 “ good heat at the mouth and top, but not commendable nor fit to rost². ”

Good

¹ Scotch.

² Printed in 1644. See Miscellaneous Printed Papers in the British Museum, marked 4 * 21. The other piece, intituled, *Good News for the Poor*, &c. it is probable, was printed about the same time. See another receipt of the same kind in the British Museum; Harl. MSS. No. 6210. The scarcity and high price of provisions during the Civil Wars, turned the attention of the Public to many very important subjects of domestic economy. We have not,

Good News for the Poor ; or, An Expedient humbly offered for supplying the Want, and bringing down the Price of Coles.

“ ’Tis certain necessity is most times the parent of ingenuity. To pay forty or fifty shillings for a chaldron of coals went deep in a poor tradesman’s pocket ; especially those that were forced to use great quantities. Whereupon some plodding industrious heads, that had seen fires of turfe, or peat, in the country, or been in Holland, where (as one saith pleasantly,) they fetch fire out of water, burning a kind of mud taken out of their ditches, and dried ; began to think of mixing clay with their coals, which they found succeed so well, that several eminent victuallers, and coffee-houses, (particularly near the Royal Exchange,) make it now their common fuel, to their great advantage. The manner of doing it is thus :

“ Take two load, that is to say, a chaldron of coals, and cause them to be sifted in a wide-hole seive ; that so all the dust and small coals may go through, and the great round coals remain behind. Then take a load of clay, (for the siftings of a chaldron of coals are generally enough for so much,) and cause it to be mixed well together with the said dust or small coals ; for which purpose, if your clay be not moist enough to work up well, you may wet it a little ; then make them up, either in round balls, or like bricks, but let them not be above half so big every way ; or in what other fashion soever you think most convenient for your grates or fire-irons ; and then letting them lie for some time to dry well, they will be fit for use : for, having laid a small thin bottom of coals, you must then lay on these pieces, intermixing now and then one of your great round coals among them : this shall produce you a most rare fire, burning more clear, and casting a greater heat than all coals : it shall continue fresh and in good order, with very little trouble, a whole day, and is not offensive in smoak, smell, or otherwise.

“ Nor let any think this to be a trouble of too much trouble or charge : for, first, you may have a load of clay brought home to any

not, however, the consolation to know, that these disastrous times have effected, (what has often been the result of that activity, which a calamitous period excites,) any very important discovery in the useful arts.

“ place

“ place in London for four shillings and sixpence. And any common
 “ labouring man will sift your coales, and make it all up in balls as
 “ aforefaid, in three days at furthest; which, at one shilling sixpence
 “ per day, is but four shillings sixpence; so that the whole charge
 “ will amount to nine shillings. And this being done, it shall do you
 “ more service, burn better, and last longer, than any three chaldron of
 “ coals you can buy. You may easily work them in a cellar or shed;
 “ and when they are made up, they will lie conveniently in small room,
 “ provided it be but dry.

“ Some have thought it convenient to put in a matter of two sacks
 “ of saw-dust, (which may easily be procured,) to the aforefaid quantity
 “ of clay and coals, and upon experience find it does very well, drying
 “ the clay, and making it the sooner fit for present use. By the said
 “ proportion of a load of clay to two loads of coals, you may easily guess
 “ how to mix them in any greater or lesser quantity.”

The *kindling balls* ¹, which Count Rumford recommends, I should imagine might be used with great advantage for lighting fires, particularly in London, where the expence of billet-wood, which is used for this purpose, is very great.

Balls of small coal, mixed with clay, are very much used all over South Wales, particularly in the counties of Pembroke and Carmarthen. They are formed about the bigness of a man's fist; great in the middle, and verging smaller towards the ends. They are generally made up and put upon the fire quite wet, in the form of a pyramid; and when thoroughly lighted, make a most brilliant appearance. One of these fires, if made up with skill, will last ten or twelve hours. Those who live near the sea, instead of clay, use mud taken from under flood-mark at low-water; which, from the quantity of salts it contains, makes the ashes a valuable article in agriculture to the husbandman, and in horti-

¹ He says: *Kindling-balls* should “ be composed of equal parts of coal, charcoal, and clay; the two former reduced to a fine powder, well mixed and kneaded together with the clay, moistened with water, and then formed into balls of the size of hens' eggs, and thoroughly dried.” They “ may be made so inflammable as to take fire in an instant, and with the smallest spark, by dipping them in a strong solution of nitre, and then drying them again; and they would neither be expensive, nor liable to be spoiled by long keeping.” *Essays*, 364.

culture to the cottager ; for every cottager in South-Wales has a little garden, in which he grows his own leeks for pottage, and his potatoes, cabbages, cole-worts, pease, &c. for hodge-podge, &c. The balls mixed with mud emit no disagreeable smell in burning.

The providing suitable and comfortable dwellings for the labouring classes, is a subject highly worthy the consideration and investigation both of those who, in the capacity of employers, are called on to promote the comforts of the employed, and of those, whose practical experience in subjects of this nature renders them better qualified than I can possibly be supposed to be, to offer useful suggestions to the Public, on the means of meliorating the condition of the people, as far as it depends on their being lodged in warm, wholesome, and commodious habitations. It would answer many beneficial purposes to ascertain the comparative advantages of the different sorts of houses, which we see are inhabited by labourers in different parts of the kingdom. Houses of clay¹, of brick, and of stone, have, no doubt, their respective advantages and disadvantages : the cottage of wattle and dab, as it is called, is perhaps the warmest ; that of brick, the driest ; and that of stone, the strongest dwelling. There are, however, no doubt, peculiar excellen-

¹ Of the mode of building mud-houses in the county of Dumfries, the Author of the Statistical Account of the parish of Dornock, in that county, gives the following account : “ The farm-houses in general, and all the cottages, are built of mud or clay ; yet, these houses, when plastered and properly finished within, (as many of them are,) are exceeding warm and comfortable. The manner of erecting them is singular. In the first place, they dig out the foundation of the house, and lay a row or two of stones ; then, they procure, from a pit contiguous, as much clay or brick-earth as is sufficient to form the walls : and, having provided a quantity of straw, or other litter, to mix with the clay, upon a day appointed, the whole neighbourhood, male and female, to the number of 20 or 30, assemble, each with a dung-fork, a spade, or some such instrument. Some fall to the working the clay or mud, by mixing it with straw ; others carry the materials ; and four or six, of the most experienced hands, build, and take care of, the walls. In this manner, the walls of the house are finished in a few hours ; after which, they retire to a good dinner, and plenty of drink, which is provided for them, where they have music and a dance, with which, and other marks of festivity, they conclude the evening. This is called a *daubing*, and in this manner they make a frolic of what would otherwise be a very dirty and disagreeable job.” Statist. Acc. of Scotland, ii. 22.

cies, not only in the materials, but in the mode of building, and in the internal structure and accommodations of cottages in various parts of the kingdom, highly deserving of being remarked. There are, likewise, peculiar defects, not only in some¹, but in all dwellings of this sort, which might easily be corrected. Such, for instance, is the injudicious construction of fire-places, which is justly remarked by Count Rumford, in a passage I have before noticed, to be productive of great waste in fuel, and many other inconveniencies. It seems likewise deserving of consideration, whether the improvements which have of late years taken place in the useful arts, offer any means of supplying the labourer with a cheaper, though not less comfortable, dwelling, than that which he at present inhabits. It cannot be denied, that the article of expenditure of a poor working family, which, though not the heaviest in amount, is in effect their heaviest disbursement, is their rent. It is an article of expence that has all the inconveniencies of a direct tax; and is often called for at the moment when it is most inconvenient to pay it.

The diversity is not greater between the labourers in the North and South of England, with respect to the manner in which their food is prepared, than with regard to the modes they adopt of supplying themselves with cloathing. In the midland and southern counties, the labourer, in general, purchases a very considerable portion, if not the whole, of his cloaths, from the shop-keeper. In the vicinity of the metropolis, working-people seldom buy new cloaths: they content themselves with a cast-off coat, which may be usually purchased for about 5s. and second-hand waistcoats and breeches. Their wives seldom make up any article of dress, except making and mending cloaths for the children. In the North, on the contrary, almost every article

¹ Thatched cottages are liable to many objections, some of which have already been noticed. A reed roof, where it can be obtained, seems to be in many respects an eligible covering for cottages. Mr. Marshall remarks, in his Account of Norfolk, that a reed roof, properly laid, will lie fifty years without touching; and thirty or forty more, with only adjusting it, and levelling the hollows with a little fresh reed. At an hundred years old, it may be re-laid; and will then, if laid upon the upper parts of the roof, last through a considerable part of another century. Norfolk, i. 19.

of dress worn by farmers, mechanics, and labourers, is manufactured at home, shoes and hats excepted: that is, the linen thread is spun from the lint, and the yarn from the wool, and sent to the weaver's and dyer's: so that almost every family has it's web of linen cloth annually, and often one of woollen also, which is either dyed for coats, or made into flannel, &c. Sometimes black and white wool are mixed; and the cloth which is made from them receives no dye: it is provincially called *kelt*. Although broad cloth¹, purchased in the shops, begins now to be worn by opulent farmers, and others, on Sundays; yet there are many respectable persons, at this day, who never wore a bought pair of stockings, coat, nor waistcoat, in their lives: and, within these twenty years, a coat bought at a shop was considered as a mark of extravagance and pride², if the buyer was not possessed of an independent fortune. There are, however, many labourers so poor, that they cannot even afford to purchase the raw material necessary to spin thread or yarn at home; as it is some time before a home manufacture can be rendered fit for use. It is generally acknowledged, that articles of cloathing can be purchased in the shops at a much lower price, than those who make them at home can afford to sell them for; but that, in the wearing, those manufactured by private families³ are very superior both in warmth and durability.

Some years ago clogs were introduced into the county of Dumfries from Cumberland, and are now very generally used over all that part of the country, in place of coarse and strong shoes. The person who makes them is called a *clogger*. "All the upper part of the clog,

¹ Of the great increase in the quantity of broad and narrow cloths manufactured in the West Riding of Yorkshire, the Reader will find an account in the Appendix, No. xvii. As the paper, from which this account was taken, contains some curious particulars relative to county expenditure, I have inserted the whole of it.

² A *seap'd fark*, (i. e. a shirt washed with soap instead of chamber-lie, which is generally used in the most Northern, as it was two centuries ago in the Southern, counties,) a *shop coat*, (i. e. a suit not manufactured at home, but purchased at the shop,) and *money buckles*, (i. e. silver buckles,) is an old Cumberland proverb, which is often applied to a village beau, and strongly marks the usual customs respecting dress in that county.

³ Many of the ancient Statutes notice the home-made woollens of the North of England, or hufwives cloth, as it was called. See 5 Eliz. c. 4. § 32, &c.

“comprehending what is called the upper leather and heel quarters, is
 “of leather, and made after the same manner as those parts of the shoe
 “which go by the same name. The sole is of wood. It is first neatly
 “dressed into a proper form; then, with a knife made for the purpose,
 “the inside is dressed off, and hollowed so as easily to receive the foot.
 “Next, with a different kind of instrument, a hollow, or guttin, is run
 “round the outside of the upper part of the sole, for the reception of
 “the upper leather, which is then nailed with small tacks to the sole,
 “and the clog is completed. After this they are generally shod, or
 “plated, with iron, by a blacksmith. The price of a pair of men’s clogs,
 “(in Dumfries-shire,) is about 3s. including plating; and, with the size,
 “the price diminishes in proportion. A pair of clogs, thus plated, will
 “serve a labouring man one year; or, if good care is taken of them,
 “an year and a half; and at the end of that period, by renewing the sole
 “and plating, they may be repaired so as to serve an year longer. Whe-
 “ther considered with respect to the price or utility, they are certainly”
 (as the Author of this account justly observes,) “preferable to shoes.
 “They keep the feet remarkably warm and comfortable, and entirely
 “exclude all damp, and thence are thought to contribute highly to the
 “healthiness of the labouring part of the community’.”

The following short account of the prices of a few home-made articles in Cumberland, will, I trust, prove not unacceptable to the Reader.

The usual price of a hat worn by labourers is about 2s. 6d.: a coat purchased, (4 yards,) costs about 2s. 6d. a yard: a waistcoat takes a yard and a half: a pair of leather breeches costs 3s. 6d.: labourers sometimes wear breeches of flannel or coloured cloth. A tailor charges 5s. for making a whole suit. A linen shirt takes $3\frac{1}{4}$ yards, at 17d. a yard: this is strong, and wears well. About 11 oz. of wool, at 8d. the pound, will make a pair of stockings. They are almost invariably spun and knit at home.

Women’s dress generally consists of a black stuff hat, of the price of 1s. 8d.: a linen bed-gown, (stamped with blue,) mostly of the home ma-

’ Statist. Acc. of Scotland, xiii. 262.

manufacture; this usually costs in the shops about 5s. 6d.: a cotton or linen neck-cloth, price about 1s. 6d.: two petticoats of flannel¹, the upper one dyed blue; value of the two about 11s. 6d.: coarse woollen stockings, home manufacture, value about 1s. 8d.: linen shift, home manufacture, $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards, at 1s. 5d. the yard. Women generally wear stays, or rather boddice, of various prices. Their gowns are sometimes made of woollen stuff; 6 yards, at 1s. 6d. the yard. The women, however, generally wear black silk hats, and cotton gowns, on Sundays and holidays.

The following are the prices of cloaths, as sold in a shop in the neighbourhood of London:

Men.—	A good foul-weather coat, (will last very well	s.	d.
	two years,) - - - -	13	0
	A common waistcoat - - -	6	6
	A pair of stout breeches, (one year,) -	3	9
	Stockings, the pair - - -	1	10
	A dowlas shirt - - - -	4	6
	A pair of strong shoes - - -	7	0
	A hat, (will last three years,) - - -	2	6
Women.—	A common stuff gown - - -	6	6
	Linsey-woolsey petticoat - - -	4	6

¹ In Cumberland, several sorts of woollen are called cotton; the etymology of which word is thus, in some parts rather fancifully, given by a correspondent of the British Critic:

“The original word, which has been thus transformed, was *coating*, which, when hastily pronounced, has a strong resemblance, in respect to sound, to *cotton*; and that this is really so, admits of the clearest proof, seeing that at this hour a very coarse kind of woollen cloth, that is the staple manufacture of Kendal, in Lancashire, is known by no other name but that of *Kendal cotton*, instead of *Kendal coating*. That these Kendal cottons are made of sheep’s wool only, without the smallest admixture of cotton wool, properly so called, you may easily satisfy yourself by going into one of the numerous warehouses in this metropolis, where this kind of cloth is sold, and which you will frequently see advertised in the newspapers. That such are the *Manchester cottons*, mentioned by Camden, is clear from the very words you quote, (p. 46:) ‘*tum laneorum pannorum honore Manchester cottons*’ ‘*vocant:*’ for these he specifies to be expressly *woollen cloths*, in contradistinction to cloths made of any other materials.” British Critic, viii. 575.

A shift

	s.	d.
Women.—A shift	3	8
A pair of shoes ¹	3	9
Coarse apron	1	0
Check apron	2	0
A pair of stockings	1	6
A hat, the cheapest sort ; (will last two years,)	1	8
Coloured neck-handkerchief	1	0
A common cap	0	10
Cheapest kind of cloak, (will last two years,)	4	6
Pair of stays, (will last six years,)	6	0

In the Highlands of Scotland, every peasant makes his own shoes, of leather of his own tanning. They are sewed with thongs of calf-skin, instead of hemp ; both because there grows very little hemp in the country, and because the leather is more durable than the thread of hemp, not being so liable to rot from being frequently wet. They are in general made with a strength, elegance, and lightness, which one who has never seen them will not be easily persuaded to believe. It is to be lamented, that, after two or three Highland cottagers have joined together in purchasing and dressing a hide, one of them should be often obliged to lose one or two days' work, besides tear and wear of cloaths, in going 20 or 30 miles to inform an excise-officer of it, and to pay him the stated duty ; or to run the risk of being thrown in gaol, and severely fined, besides forfeiting the hide. No clogs are used in the North of Scotland. In a country where there is so much walking up and down hill, they would not answer. Few regular mechanics, of any kind, are employed by the labouring classes in the Highlands. Every man there is Jack of all trades ; and yet, where the *good-man* of the house is but tolerably dexterous, so convenient, in general, and so well adapted to all *really useful* purposes, are their cloaths, furniture, and implements, that the want of regular tradesmen and mechanics seems to be

¹ Shoes are a very heavy article of expence in the South : in Appendix, No. xii. in the account of labourers in Hertfordshire, the Reader will see, they sometimes amount to £ 3. annually for one family.

but

but little felt. Many a shepherd and *cotter*, with his wife and children, appear at *kirk and market*, neat, tidy, and even fine, in cloaths which have been touched by no hand but their own, since they were shorn from the sheep, and sown in the flax-fields; except that the man has given 1s. 6d. (once in about three years) for his bonnet, and about a shilling to a tailor for making his *coat*. Nor has there, perhaps, been a single bought article used in preparing them, except the awl, needle, thimble, cauldron¹, and a very few parts of iron-work in the weaving-loom. The women extract the *dyes* from trees, shrubs, and herbs, of their own culling or rearing. The buds and tender twigs of the alder, heath, in different states of verdure, and woad, are very much used. They have no occasion for the assistance of fullers, shoemakers, masons, carpenters, turners, coopers, dyers, and very little for that of tailors and blacksmiths: weavers are more employed, because the women do not, in general, now work at the loom, as they formerly did. The only model which now remains in the Highlands, of the ancient *beart*, or loom, is that used for the weaving of broad garters and belts. It is much the same with the simplest kind of those we meet with on Grecian and Roman marbles, and not much adapted to expedition, though it did very well in a state of society in which women had little else to do, while the men were abroad at war or at the chase; and where it was reckoned a degradation to a man to pursue any such effeminate occupation. A few of the females still weave: but the loom now in use is of such a construction as in a great measure to preclude the sex from that useful, elegant, and venerable branch of female employment; as it obliges them to lean very much forward over a large beam, to which they must sit quite close. Spinning upon the *cuigil*, *rock*, or distaff, is still pretty much in use in the Highlands. It is slow, but makes an excellent thread, and is so easy an employment, that it seems peculiarly fit for children and feeble old women. Any old woman that has the use of her hands, and can sit in an elbow chair, or on a low stool, may spin at the distaff; and accordingly we rarely meet with an old woman in the North of Scotland, that is not otherwise employed, but who has got a distaff stuck in her girdle, and a spindle in her hand.

¹ For dyeing.

" Still thrift, industrious, bides her latest days,
 " Tho' age her fair dow'd¹ front wi' wrinkles wave,
 " Still frae the russet lap the spindle plays,
 " Her e'ning stent² reels she as weel's the lave³.
 " On some feast day, the wee-things buskit⁴ braw⁵
 " Shall heeze⁶ her heart up wi' a silent joy,
 " Fu' cadgie⁷ that her head was up, and saw
 " Her ain spun cleething on a darling oy⁸,
 " Careless tho' death should mak' the feast her foy⁹."

FERGUSSON's *Farmer's Ingle*.

In consequence of the very great price of bread-corn during the whole of the last year, the distresses of the Poor were unusually great, and the sums expended for their relief far beyond all former example. If we, however, except the late period of scarcity, (which was such as had not occurred for near a century before,) I believe no period during the present reign can be adduced, in which the condition of day-labourers was not much more comfortable than that of the same class of people in what are often called the "good old times" of former reigns.

It has, indeed, been very confidently asserted, by some political writers, that the industrious labourer is less able to support himself by his industry than formerly; and that, instead of being able to provide for his family by the hard-earned wages of labour, he is more or less supported by the occasional charity of the opulent classes of the community. This is, however, a position which I am by no means prepared to assent to: nor can I think that the instances, which have been adduced, of the superior advance in the price of provisions within the last fifty years, in comparison with that of labour, are either sufficiently numerous or authentic to justify general conclusions on the subject. The common argument made use of to demonstrate that labourers cannot support themselves now, as well as they could in some remote period of our history, is, that the price of wheat has risen in a greater degree than the price of labour. The price of wheat, I conceive, is no criterion of the ability of a man to subsist by his labour, unless it can be shewn that this grain is wholly and

¹ Decayed; worn with care.

² Day's task; from the Saxon *Stintan*, to stop; to limit one as to quantity.

³ The rest.

⁴ Dressed out.

⁵ Brave; fine.

⁶ Raise; make big.

⁷ Blythe; cheerful.

⁸ Grandchild; from the Gaelic *agha*.

⁹ A foy, is the feast a person who is about to leave a place, in order to go and seek his fortune, gives to his friends before his departure. The metaphorical application of the word in the above passage is eminently beautiful and happy.

entirely his ordinary food. But at no period of our history has this been the case. To argue from such *data* would warrant us in supposing that a labourer must have been under an absolute impossibility of subsisting in 1595, when wheat was above £2. the quarter, and the wages of ordinary agricultural labourers not more than 4d. or 5d. the day, without diet¹; and that 8d. the day was a miserable pittance in 1682, when wheat was nearly at the same price. But the truth is, that at neither of these periods did wheat constitute a part of the diet of either the peasant or artificer in many parts of England. From the household book of Sir Edward Coke, from which the Reader will find a few extracts in the Appendix to this Volume, it appears, that, in 1596, rye-bread and oat-meal formed a considerable portion of the diet of servants even in great families. In 1626, barley-bread is stated, in a grant of a monopoly from King Charles, to have been the usual food of the ordinary sort of people². Of the relative proportion of wheat consumed in this kingdom, about the Revolution, we may form a tolerable idea from an estimate of the produce of the arable land, by Gregory King, whose schemes, Dr. Davenant says, are all of them so accurately done as not to be controverted³.

	Busshels.		Per Bushel.	Value.
Wheat ⁴	14,000,000	at	3s. 6d.	£ 2,450,000
Rye	10,000,000	—	2 6	1,250,000
Barley	27,000,000	—	2 0	2,700,000
Oats	16,000,000	—	1 6	1,200,000
Pease	7,000,000	—	2 6	875,000
Beans	4,000,000	—	2 6	500,000
Vetches	1,000,000	—	2 0	100,000
In all	79,000,000	Medium 2	3 $\frac{4}{79}$	£ 9,075,000

¹ See Appendix, No. i. p. lxiii. and Appendix, No. iii. p. xci.

² See p. 163.

³ Essay upon the Probable Methods of making a People Gainers in the Balance of Trade
Whitworth's edit. ii. 217.

⁴ The yearly produce of wheat, a few years ago, was said to be 4,000,000 quarters.

YOUNG's Northern Tour, iv. 349.

Since the commencement of the present century, wheaten-bread has been gradually introduced among the labouring classes. It appears from the "Account of several Work-houses," published in 1725, that, at that period, bread made from this grain was used in many work-houses in the Southern parts of the kingdom. It was still, however, far from being a very general article of diet; and, even as late as the beginning of the present reign, it appears, from the Supplement to Three Tracts on the Corn Trade, that above one-third of the nation eat bread made of oats, rye, or barley. The statement of this well-informed Author forms so proper an addition to Gregory King's Estimate, that I shall make no apology for inserting it. He says: "it is certain that bread made of wheat is become much more generally the food of the common people since 1689, than it was before that time; but it is still very far from being the food of the people in general; and some who have considered this matter with great attention, and are better informed in regard thereto than most enquirers generally be, were inclined to think, that, in the year 1764, one half of the people could not be supposed to feed on such bread."

"In order, therefore, to get at all possible certainty in this matter," he says, "no pains have been spared, and from a consideration of the several sorts of grain with which the London market is supplied from, and sends to, the distant parts of the kingdom, after many enquiries made of, and many conversations had with, many who travel into, and have lived, or live, in, several of the distant counties; particularly the labouring people who are best acquainted with the bread they eat, and calculating the number of mouths from the number of houses, there is reason to think that more than half the people do live on such bread."

"This work," (he says,) "would be too tedious to insert, but an abstract follows; in which, though there may be some small difference as to the numbers of houses, as a full copy was not permitted, but only the total number, and some extracts, yet the whole number agrees with the account of 1758, and, if any thing, the number, who eat wheat, is set rather too low."

"The

“ The kingdom, with Wales, is divided into six parts, taking those
“ counties which lie most contiguous, as may be seen in the map.

“ Part the First contains

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 London, with Middlesex and | 8 Buckingham |
| Southwark | 9 Hertford |
| 2 Essex | 10 Bedford |
| 3 Kent | 11 Cambridge |
| 4 Surrey | 12 Huntingdon |
| 5 Suffex | 13 Suffolk |
| 6 Hants | 14 Norfolk. |
| 7 Berkshire | |

“ Part the Second contains

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 15 Wilts | 18 Devon |
| 16 Somersfet | 19 Cornwall. |
| 17 Dorset | |

“ Part the Third contains

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 20 Monmouth | 26 Northampton |
| 21 Gloucester | 27 Salop |
| 22 Oxford | 28 Stafford |
| 23 Hereford | 29 Leicefter |
| 24 Worcester | 30 Rutland. |
| 25 Warwick | |

“ Part the Fourth contains

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 31 Chefter | 34 Lincoln |
| 32 Derby | 35 Lancafter. |
| 33 Nottingham | |

“ Part the Fifth contains

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 36 York | 39 Cumberland |
| 37 Westmoreland | 40 Northumberland. |
| 38 Durham | |

“ Part the Sixth contains

“ Six counties in South, and six counties in North, Wales¹. The accounts of each part stand as follows :

Parts.	Number of Houses.	Number of Souls, six to each.	Wheat.	What Number in the whole eat Barley.	Rye.	Oats.
1	348,187	2,089,122	1,866,405	36,741	185,976	
2	150,680	904,134	682,815	221,319		
3	170,746	1,024,476	691,258	159,136	156,237	17,845
4	123,025	738,150	200,339	128,621	118,795	290,395
5	148,760	892,560	283,996	37,196	285,382	285,986
6	45,075	270,450	29,344	127,585	113,521	
	986,482	5,918,862	3,754,157	710,598	859,911	594,226

“ Say the whole number (of people) is, 6,000,000, and that of those

“ who eat Wheat is - 3,750,000

“ Barley - 739,000

“ Rye - 888,000

“ Oats - 623,000

“ Total - 6,000,000

About 50 years ago, so little was the quantity of wheat used in the county of Cumberland, that it was only a rich family that used a peck of wheat in the course of the year, and that was used at Christmas. The crust of the goose-pye, a dish with which almost every table in the county at that season is supplied, was made of barley-meal: one of wheaten-flour was considered as a great delicacy; but is now getting into very general use: the barley-pye, however, is not yet entirely excluded from the Christmas fare of some families. The usual treat for a stranger, 50 years ago, in Cumberland, was a thick oat-cake, (called *haver bannock*,) and butter. Puddings and dumplings, made of oat-meal and suet, were a common dish at rural entertainments. An old labourer of 85 remarks, that, when he was a boy, he was at Carlisle market with his father; and wishing to indulge himself with a penny loaf made of wheat-flour, he searched for it for some time, but could not procure a piece of wheaten-bread at any shop in the town.

¹ Three Tracts on the Corn Trade.

In 1661¹, the daily pay of labourers in Essex, as rated by

the Justices, were—In summer, with diet	-	-	£	0	0	8
without	-	-	0	1	2	
In winter, with diet	-	-	0	0	6	
without	-	-	0	1	0	

About 1668², the yearly wages of a maid servant, em-

ployed to look after a rabbit warren, were	-	-	2	10	0	
Of the warrener	-	-	10	0	0	

In 1682³, the yearly pay of labourers in Suffolk, as

rated by the Justices, were—In summer, with diet	-	0	0	6	
In winter, with diet	-	0	0	5	
In summer, without diet	0	1	0		
In winter, without diet	0	0	10		

1688⁴. The ordinary income of labourers and servants was estimated by Gregory King, for each family, which he supposed to consist, one with another, of $3\frac{1}{2}$ persons,

at	-	-	-	-	15	0	0
----	---	---	---	---	----	---	---

1698⁵. Full weekly wages of a labourer in Devonshire,

were	-	-	-	-	0	2	8
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

1725⁶. Daily pay of the best husbandry labourer in Lan-

cashire, as rated by the Justices—In summer, with diet	0	0	6	
Ditto, without diet	-	0	1	0
Ditto In winter, with diet	0	0	5	
Ditto, without diet	-	0	10	

Daily pay of ordinary labourers—In summer, with diet

In summer, with diet	0	0	5	
Ditto, without diet	-	0	0	10
Ditto In winter, with diet	0	0	4	
Ditto, without diet	-	0	0	9

The following minutes, which are the result of enquiries made about the month of January last, will afford some additional information on this subject. The prices, (unless it is otherwise specified,) relate to that

¹ See Appendix, p. cii. ² England's Improvement, p. 168. ³ See Appendix, p. ciii.

⁴ See p. 253. Sir M. Hale's calculation is, in effect, the same as Gregory King's. See

p. 252-3. ⁵ See p. 252. ⁶ See Appendix, p. cvii.

period, and will enable us to form some idea of the circumstances of labourers during the last winter :

BEDFORDSHIRE.

N. W. Extremity.—In the neighbourhood of Harrold, day-labourers receive 1s. 2d. the day, besides a liberal allowance of small beer. Two guineas were given for the last harvest. The women, who are mostly lace-makers, can, if expert in this business, maintain themselves, even in the present dear times. Ordinary lace-makers earn 6s. a-week : and boys and girls, from 3 to 4s. Bacon is 10d. the lb. ; candles, 9d. the lb. ; cheese, 6d. the lb. ; wheat 12s., and barley about 4s. 9d. the bushel. The rent of cottages is from £1. to £1. 10s. per annum. Parish allowances in this country are liberal. To a man, his wife, and 4 children, 11s. a-week are sometimes allowed.

CUMBERLAND.

Dalston Parish.—Constant wages in harvest are 1s. 6d. the day : occasional wages 2s. : high wages are supposed to be owing to a cotton manufactory. Two Friendly Societies.

Neighbourhood of Cockermouth.—Common wages 1s. 8d. the day. In harvest 2s. No Friendly Society. Regular employment not always to be had in winter.

In the neighbourhood of Carlisle, 50 years ago, reapers received 4d. a-day and diet ; or 6d. a day and dinner. Common labourers in husbandry, 60 years ago, were paid 1s. 6d. and 2s. a week, and board ; they now receive 10d. and 1s. a day, and diet. A farmer's maid-servant, 60 years ago, was paid from 40 to 50s. a year, with diet ; a man-servant from £4. to £6. a year, with diet : he was usually hired by the half-year. At present, maid-servants, with farmers, receive from £6. to £8. a-year, with diet ; and men-servants from £15. to £20. a year, with diet. Masons, 50 years ago, had, in winter, 6d. a day, and board ; and 1s. without board ; in summer, 8d. a-day, and board ; and 1s. 2d. without board. At present they receive 1s. 4d. a-day with board, and from 2s. to 2s. 6d. a-day without board. Wages of carpenters, 50 years ago, were 1d. a-day less than those of masons : they are now 2d. a-day less.

Spinners

Spinners of lint for the manufacturers have hardly experienced any fluctuation in their wages, during the last thirty years: their price for spinning a hank, has continued from 4d. to 5d.

An old man, of great credibility, and good memory, in a village a few miles to the East of Carlisle, says, that, 60 years ago, the common daily wages of labourers in husbandry, from Martinmas to Christmas, were 3d. and victuals; and 4d. with victuals in the summer: that reaping was 6d. the day, and a dinner; or 4d. and the day's diet. Women, about 70 years ago, he says, earned 2d. a day and board, for weeding, spinning wool, spreading peats, scaling¹ manure, &c.: and it was rare that a woman, hired by the half-year, had more than 20s. for that period. 70 or 80 years ago, he says, butter was 2d. the lb., (or at that rate: for neither butter nor butcher's meat were weighed, nor milk measured;) barley, 3s. 6d. and 4s. the Carlisle bushel, (3 Winchester bushels;) oats, 2s. ditto; rye, 5s. ditto; wheat, from 7s. to 8s. ditto; mutton was then usually sold at Carlisle, by the quarter; and a quarter, which would now cost 3s. sold then for 1s.; and a fat calf, three weeks or a month old, from 4s. 6d. to 5s. Agricultural wages have risen very slowly, till of late years; men's work, in reaping, threshing, &c. did not exceed 6d. a day and board, till within the last thirty years, when they rose to 8d. and continued at that rate till about 4 years ago; when 10d. were given by some farmers; and, last year, 1s. was very generally allowed.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

In the neighbourhood of Gloucester.—Labour by the piece, 1s. 6d. the day: common day-labour, 1s. and liquor; and generally two meals a-week. Bread and water almost the only diet of labourers' wives and children. Butter, from 10d. to 16d. the lb.; little milk to be had, owing to the great demand for veal. Bacon, (alive,) 10s. the score. Wheat, which, in 1789, was, on an average, about 6s. 6d. the bushel, is now 12s. Cheese, 40s. the cwt.; labourers' shoes, 7s. 6d. the pair. In the neighbourhood of Bristol, common wages, 30 years ago, were 6s. the week: they are now 9s.

HERTFORDSHIRE.

At Cheshunt.—40 years ago, day-labourers received 6s. a-week, and

¹ Scattering or spreading.

some instances, but not universally, beer was allowed them. House-servants, in gentlemen's families, received from £ 4. to £ 6. a-year. At that period, wheaten-bread was usually 6½d. the quartern-loaf; butter, 6½d.; meat, 3½d. or 4d. the lb.; cheese, 3½d.; candles, 6½d. the lb.; soap, £ 2. 12s. the cwt. At that period, harvest wages were £ 2. for the month, and diet; now £ 3. 15s. are given for the harvest month, with ale and beer; but labourers find themselves in meat.

I extract the following particulars, from a farmer's book, relative to wages at Sheep-hall:

1783.	A day-labourer received by the week	-	£	0	8	0
	By the day, from 1s. 2d. to	-	-	0	1	4
	A thresher, by the day	-	-	0	1	6
	A mower, by the day	-	-	0	1	6
	Washing and shearing 8 sheep	-	-	0	1	8
	A woman raking clover one day	-	-	0	0	10½
1784.	Day-labourers the same as last year.					
	Threshing barley the quarter	-	-	0	1	3 and beer 2d.
	A woman for picking stones the day	-	-	0	0	6
	Labourers, by the week	-	-	0	8	0 and beer 8d.
	Thatcher, the day	-	-	0	1	6
	Hoeing turnips, the acre	-	-	0	4	0
	Labourer, one month in harvest	-	-	1	19	0
	Girls, hay-makers, the day	-	-	0	0	4
1785.	Plough-boy, half-a-year	-	-	1	10	0
	Threshing barley, the quarter, (Jan.)	-	-	0	1	3 and beer 2d.
	Binding a load of hay	-	-	0	1	6
	A pair of hedging gloves	-	-	0	0	8
	Mowing, the acre	-	-	0	1	9
	Ditto	-	-	0	2	0
	Boy, watching birds, the day	-	-	0	0	4
	Barley, the quarter, threshing, (Dec.)	-	-	0	1	4
1786.	Barley, the quarter, threshing	-	-	0	1	2 and beer 2d.
1787.	} Much the same as the preceding years.					
1788.						

1789. Threshing wheat the load, (5 bushels,) £	0	1	3	and beer 2d.
Woman weeding, the day	-	-	0	0 6
Labourer in harvest, one day	-	-	0	2 6
Labourer, one month in harvest	-	3	10	0
Labourer by the week	-	-	0	8 0
1796. Day-labourers have now, the day	-	0	1	6

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

Buckden.—Shepherds, on an average, receive 6s. a week, for ordinary wages: on an average throughout the year, their wages amount to more than 7s. a-week; other labourers receive, for ordinary work, more than 7s. a-week; and full 8s. 6d. on the average of the whole year. Harvest wages are from £2. to £2. 12s. 6d. with perquisites, which amount to 5s. or 10s. more. In the present winter, labourers have easily obtained work: last winter it was seldom to be procured. Wheat is 12s., barley 5s., potatoes 2s., the bushel. The price is nearly doubled since 1792; for, in that year, the price of these articles was, respectively, 6s. 8d.—3s. 6d.—1s. the bushel. Bacon, which was then 7½d. is now 9½d. the lb.; meat, which was 4d. is 5½d. and 6d.: coal is from 1s. to 1s. 6d. the bushel.

LEICESTERSHIRE.

Neighbourhood of Mount Sorrel.—Common wages are 10s. 6d.—9s.—and 8s. a-week, without diet: some labourers are allowed 6s. a-week, and maintenance. In harvest, wages, without diet, are from 14s. to £1. 1s. a-week, and with diet, 8s. a-week: constant work in winter. Friendly Societies are numerous. Most of the Poor have little gardens, in which they chiefly cultivate potatoes. Gardens are found to be great incitements to industry; and accordingly, in some parishes, the Poor have 4 or 5 acres each assigned them for a garden, at a very moderate rent. This supplies them with cheese, butter, and milk, at an easy rate.

Kegworth.—Common wages, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. the day: harvest wages, about 2s. 6d. the day. In the stocking-weaving line, a good workman may earn from 14s. to £1. a-week. Labourers, in general, seem comfortable. There are two Friendly Societies here for males, and one for females.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

Eastern part of Lindsey.—Common wages, 2s. a-day, at a medium throughout the year: in harvest, 3s. 6d. the day. Work can generally be had in winter, if the weather is tolerably mild. In hard frosts, labourers are generally obliged to apply to their parishes. In summer, they frequently work by the piece; when they can earn, by mowing, 2s. 9d.—3s.—and 3s. 6d. the acre; by reaping, 9s.—10s.—and even 12s. an acre. It is not uncommon for an industrious man to earn, in this way, from 5s. to 7s. 6d. the day; and even now in the winter, when ditchers work by the measure, they can frequently earn from 1s. 6d. to 2s. the day. The wages of labourers near Spilsby, Alford, and upon the Wolds, are, throughout the year, considerably lower than those given in the Marsh. Many labourers have their rents paid by the parish: others have a cow, or pig, kept for them: and some are supplied with coals by the parish. In many parts of this district, fods, or turf, which cost 5s. the 1000, are the usual fuel consumed by labourers. 5000 or 6000 are supposed to be equal to a chaldron of coals. Wheat cost, in 1792, (taking the average of January, June, August, and November,) 5s. 1d.; in 1793, 6s. 2d.; in 1794, 6s. 3d.; and in 1795, 8s. 10½d. the bushel. In the same periods respectively, barley cost 2s. 11½d.—4s. 1d.—4s. 1d.—and 5s. the bushel: rye, 3s. 10½d.—5s. 2d.—5s. 0½d.—and 6s. 5½d.:—coals, £1. 6s.—£1. 10s. 6d.—£1. 9s. 6d.—and £1. 12s. 6d. the chaldron, (including carriage, 3s. 6d. the chaldron.) Since 1792, pork, for salting, has risen from 5s. to 6s. 6d. the stone, of 14lb.; potatoes, from 1s. to 2s. the bushel; and meat, from 3d. to 5½d. the lb.

Isle of Axholme.—Common wages, 1s. 6d. the day: harvest wages, 2s. 6d. Poor's Rate in some parishes has nearly doubled since 1790, with reckoning the rate for raising men for the navy last year, which in some places was 8d. in the pound. Whether labourers can obtain employment in the winter, depends on the quantity and quality of hemp and flax; of which there is a great deal cultivated in this part of the county. Wheat, in 1792, cost 5s. 6d. the bushel; in 1793, 6s.;—in 1794, 6s.;—in 1795, 10s.:—Barley, in those periods, 3s. 6d.—

4s.—4s. 6d.—5s.:—Potatoes, 1s.—1s.—1s.—1s. 4d.:—Bacon, the lb. 8d.—9d.—9d.—9d.:—Meat, the lb. $3\frac{1}{2}$ d.— $3\frac{1}{2}$ d.—4d.— $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. The only fuel used by labourers is turf: it may be termed cheap.

NORFOLK.

Difs.—Common labour, from 14d. to 18d. the day: wages, during the harvest month, from £ 4. to £ 4. 4s. One Friendly Society; not in a flourishing state. Wheat, in 1792, was 5s. $0\frac{3}{4}$ d. the bushel; in 1795, 10s. $4\frac{1}{2}$ d.:—Rye, in 1792, 3s. 1d.; in 1795, 3s. $11\frac{1}{4}$ d.:—Bacon, in 1792, 6d. the lb.; in 1795, 8d.:—Meat, in 1792, $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. the lb.; in 1795, 5d.:—Coals, in 1792, £ 2. the chaldron; in 1795, £ 2. 5s. 6d. Usual size of farms, from £ 50. to £ 100. per annum.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Between Wellingborough and Northampton.—Common wages, 7s. the week, small-beer, and one meal, each working-day: harvest-wages, from £ 2. 2s. to £ 2. 10s. and board. Farms, from £ 120. to £ 250. per annum. Constant work in winter.

A few miles to the North of Northampton, common wages, in 1792, and 1793, were 1s. 2d.; in 1794, 1s. 4d.; and are now 1s. 6d. the day, besides a meal, and small-beer. In 1792, harvest-wages were £ 2. 2s.: they are now £ 3. 3s., besides board, during the harvest-month. Roundsmen very common: the old and infirm, who subsist in this way, in some parishes, receive 4d. the day from the parish, and 6d. from the employer. Farms in the neighbourhood of Northampton are, in general, large: £ 200. a very common size.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

About 60 years ago, reapers, in this county, received 4d. a-day and victuals; 40 years ago, they received 6d. a-day, and diet: these wages continued for several years much the same. A. Young, in his Northern Tour, states agricultural wages to have been, 30 years ago, from 5s. 2d. to 8s. 9d. (Lett. xxxi.) Wages kept advancing, irregularly, till last year, when they were generally 2s. a-day, without victuals. An old tailor, in the neighbourhood of Morpeth, who is now upwards of 90, says, that when he was between 20 and 30

years of age, 4d. per day were the common wages for men in his line of business, with diet: that, a few years afterwards, they rose to 6d., which were the highest day-wages he ever took for sewing: common tailors, in Morpeth, now receive 1s. a-day, and their victuals. He adds, that although the usual day's pay for a reaper, when he was young, was 4d.; he and a partner, being remarkably good reapers, demanded 6d. the day; which their employer at last agreed to give, although his wife grumbled at what she thought was extravagance: however, to reconcile matters, the tailor proposed that he and his partner should do as much work in a day as three of the farmer's best reapers usually performed; which was assented to. Common labourers, 60 years ago, barely received 4d. a day, and victuals: they have now 10s. a-week, with a house and fuel, but no board. Spinners of wool, 30 years ago, had 2d. a-day, and board: they have now 4d. a-day, and victuals. About 50 years ago, they only received 9d. a-week, and diet. Women, working in the fields, as weeders, &c. 30 years ago, had 4d. a-day, without diet: they have now double that sum. Masons, in Newcastle, 40 years ago, were paid 1s. 4d. and 1s. 6d. a-day: they now receive 2s. 6d. and 2s. 9d. A mason's labourer, 40 years ago, had 1s.: he has now 1s. 6d. a-day.

OXFORDSHIRE.

Nuneham.—The ordinary wages of labourers are: for men, 8s. the week; and 12s. the week in harvest, together with three pints of beer: women, in common, have 3s. the week; and 6s. in harvest: children, above 9 years of age, can earn from 1s. to 3s. the week. Men, by ordinary work, can earn from 10s. to 12s. the week; and from 16s. to 18s. in harvest. Each cottage has a small garden, which supplies the family with potatoes. A considerable quantity is also distributed among the Poor, every winter, by Lord Harcourt. He likewise allows such families as behave well, a guinea a year, for every fourth child, till the child is ten years old; and when it goes to service, some cloaths are usually given. Poor families are also enabled to send their children to school, without any expence: and various other charities are bestowed by Lord and Lady Harcourt on the parish. Every parishioner is allowed to purchase flour, one-third
of

of barley, and two-thirds of wheat, at 7d. the quartern-loaf; and to buy at this price as many half-peck loaves, every week, as there are persons in the family. Such flour, as the above, is sold them at 2s. 4d. the peck: potatoes cost 2s. the bushel; bacon, 9d. the lb.; and meat, 5d. the lb.

Elsfield, near Oxford.—Common wages, 8s. the week, in winter; 9s. in summer: threshing, mowing, &c. are commonly done by the great, by which 11s. or 12s. a-week may be earned. A man and his wife, by reaping, may earn £1. 7s. a-week: for pitching, and making up ricks, 9s. a-week, with meat and beer, are the usual wages. Work may be had during the winter. Cottages are mostly rent-free: there are several potatoe-gardens. Firing is given to most poor families; and they are, in other respects, assisted by charitable farmers and landlords. Women earn, by spinning, from 2s. to 2s. 6d. the week. There are no Friendly Societies in the parish. There is a great appearance of poverty. The Rates, in 1792, were 1s. 9d. in the pound; in 1794, 2s.; in 1795, 2s. 3d.; and in the year ending at Easter 1796, (including the quota for the Navy,) 4s. The largest farm is 300 acres; the smallest 70.

SUFFOLK.

Hundred of Colneis and Carlford.—In various parts within this district, wages, within the last 12 months, have risen from 1s. 2d. the day and beer, to 1s. 4d. and beer: besides which, most farmers allow their labourers all sorts of grain, at reduced prices: permitting them to buy, at this price, half-a-stone, or peck, per head in family. Those who do not grow corn, pay their labourers 1s. 6d. the day; and allow them two bushels of malt, every three months, for three quarters of the year; and three bushels, for the harvest quarter. The Rates have increased, since 1787, three-fourths of the original assessments, which was then assessed on the incorporated parishes within this district¹.

¹ For prices in this district, see Appendix, No. xiii.

YORKSHIRE.

East Riding. Neighbourhood of Hornsey.—Common wages, with diet, from Martinmas to Lady-day, 5s. the week; ditto, from Lady-day to Midsummer, 6s.; ditto, from Midsummer to Michaelmas, 9s.; ditto, from Michaelmas to Martinmas, 6s. Common wages, without diet, 9s. the week, in winter; and 12s. in summer. In harvest, men receive 12s. and 14s. the week, and victuals; and women, 6s. and 7s. the week, with beer, but no meat. There is very constant employment in the winter. The labourers are, in general, supplied by their employers with corn, &c. much below the market price. The rents of cottages vary according to the quantity of land annexed; and are from £1. to £1. 10s. Many of the cottages on this coast are miserable hovels; built of mud and straw. Such habitations are sometimes granted by the parish to poor families; and sometimes the parishes supply their poor inhabitants with fuel. Many cottagers cultivate potatoes in their garths or gardens: some have a pig; and a few keep cows.

From the preceding statements, the Reader will, I trust, be enabled to form some general idea of the present condition and circumstances of the labouring classes of the community. That they have, during the last two years, been subjected to great distress, from a rise, unexampled within the present century, in the price of the necessaries of life, every one will readily acknowledge. It is not, however, from a view of their situation, in a period of scarcity, that we are to estimate the comparative ability of a man to support himself by his labour, in modern, and in ancient times. Still less is a period of War to be selected, as the moment of ascertaining the ordinary comforts and gratifications of the peasant or working manufacturer. It does not fall within my plan to enter into minute comparative estimates relative to the progress of society in England; but there can be little doubt, that the ten years ending in January 1793, exhibit the most flattering appearances, in every circumstance that has been considered, by political economists, as demonstrative of national prosperity. The demand for employment,
and

and a consequent advance in income, have risen in a progressive ratio : and to those who investigate the state of the nation, without a disposition to blame the present, and admire the past, which too often influences even “ persons endued with the profoundest judgment, and “ most extensive learning’,” both these and other symptoms of increasing industry and wealth must have been perfectly satisfactory. It may, indeed, be contended, that the rapid advance in the Poor’s Rate is an unequivocal proof of the inability of labourers to maintain themselves, on the ordinary wages of labour. But before this can be admitted, it should be proved, that more persons are maintained by the present Poor’s Rate, which probably exceeds three millions sterling, than were by half that sum twenty years ago. Even allowing this to be the fact, it by no means proves, that the able-bodied labourer, whom it has been the fashion of late years, upon benevolent, though mistaken, principles of policy, to quarter on the parish, would, if unassisted by the overseer, have been unable to benefit himself, whilst his employer was getting riches by his labour.

The fact seems to have been, that, instead of an advance in wages, proportioned to the increased demand for labour, the labourer has received a considerable part of that portion of his employer’s capital, which was destined for his maintenance, in the form of Poor’s Rate, (the very worst that it could assume,) instead of being paid it as the fair, well earned, recompence of equivalent labour. This is a deplorable evil, which has fallen heavier on the Poor than on the Rich ; and it has been considerably aggravated by the very injudicious steps which have been adopted for administering relief to those whom the pressure of the late scarcity had incapacitated from supporting themselves and families, in the way to which they had been accustomed. Many instances might be adduced, of the ill effects of the indiscriminating charity of individuals, and of the no less ill effects of the discriminating interference of magistrates and parish-officers ; but, that I may not swell this work to too great a length, I shall content myself with offering a short statement, (which was obligingly communicated to me by a gentleman, who himself served the office of overseer in his own parish,)

of the proceedings which took place in a single county for the relief of the Poor last year.

The very great price of the necessaries of life, but more particularly of bread-corn, during the whole of last year, produced numberless extraordinary demands for parochial assistance. In many parishes in the county of Berks, relief from the Poor's Rates was granted, not only to the infirm and impotent, but to the able-bodied and industrious, who had, very few of them, ever applied to the parish for relief; and then only during temporary illness or disability. There was no doubt, but that the circumstances of the times required an increase in the income of the labourers in husbandry, who, in this county at least, compose the most numerous body of those liable to want assistance from the parish. But there existed a difference of opinion, respecting the mode of making such increase. In order to apply some adequate remedy to the evil, a meeting of the magistrates for the county was held about Easter 1795, when the following plans were submitted to their consideration:— 1st, that the magistrates should fix the lowest price to be given for labour, as they were empowered to do by the 5th Eliz. c. 4. and, 2dly, that they should act with uniformity, in the relief of the *impotent* and *infirm* Poor, by a Table of universal practice, corresponding with the supposed necessities of each family. The first plan was rejected, by a considerable majority; but the second was adopted, and the following Table was published as the rule for the information of magistrates and overseers.

FIRST CALCULATION.

This shews, at one view, what should be the weekly Income of the Industrious Poor, as settled by the Magistrates for the county of Berks, at a meeting held at Speenhamland, May the 6th, 1795.

When the gal- lon loaf is	s. d.	Income should be for a Man.		For a single Woman.		For a Man and his Wife.		With one Child.		With two Children.		With three Children.		With four Children.		With five Children.		With six Children.		With seven Children.	
		s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
When the gal- lon loaf is	1 0	3	0	2	0	4	6	6	0	7	6	9	0	10	6	12	0	13	6	15	0
when -	1 1	3	3	2	1	4	10	6	5	8	0	9	7	11	2	12	9	14	4	15	11
when -	1 2	3	6	2	2	5	2	6	10	8	6	10	2	11	10	13	6	15	2	16	10
when -	1 3	3	9	2	3	5	6	7	3	9	0	10	9	12	6	14	3	16	0	17	9
when -	1 4	4	0	2	4	5	10	7	8	9	6	11	4	13	2	15	0	16	10	18	8
when -	1 5	4	3	2	5	6	2	8	1	10	0	11	11	13	10	15	9	17	8	19	7
when -	1 6	4	6	2	6	6	6	8	6	10	6	12	6	14	6	16	6	18	6	20	6
when -	1 7	4	9	2	7	6	10	8	11	11	0	13	1	15	2	17	3	19	4	21	5
when -	1 8	5	0	2	8	7	2	9	4	11	6	13	8	15	10	18	0	20	2	22	4
when -	1 9	5	3	2	9	7	6	9	9	12	0	14	3	16	6	18	9	21	0	23	3
when -	1 10	5	6	2	10	7	10	10	2	1	6	14	10	17	2	19	6	21	10	24	2
when -	1 11	5	9	2	11	8	2	10	7	13	0	15	5	17	10	20	3	22	8	25	1
when -	2 0	6	0	3	0	8	6	11	0	13	6	16	0	18	6	21	0	23	6	26	0

SECOND CALCULATION, which was adopted.

This shews, at one view, what should be the weekly Income of the Industrious Poor, as settled by the Magistrates for the county of Berks, at a meeting held at Speenhamland, May the 6th, 1795.

When the gal- lon loaf is	s. d.	Income should be for a Man.		For a single Woman.		For a Man and his Wife.		With one Child.		With two Children.		With three Children.		With four Children.		With five Children.		With six Children.		With seven Children.	
		s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
When the gal- lon loaf is	1 0	3	0	2	0	4	6	6	0	7	6	9	0	10	6	12	0	13	6	15	0
when -	1 1	3	3	2	1	4	10	6	5	8	0	9	7	11	2	12	9	14	4	15	11
when -	1 2	3	6	2	2	5	2	6	10	8	6	10	2	11	10	13	6	15	2	16	10
when -	1 3	3	9	2	3	5	6	7	3	9	0	10	9	12	6	14	3	16	0	17	9
when -	1 4	4	0	2	4	5	10	7	8	9	6	11	4	13	2	15	0	16	10	18	8
when -	1 5	4	0	2	5	5	11	7	10	9	9	11	8	13	7	15	6	17	5	19	4
when -	1 6	4	3	2	6	6	3	8	3	10	3	12	3	14	3	16	3	18	3	20	3
when -	1 7	4	3	2	7	6	4	8	5	11	6	12	7	14	8	16	9	18	10	20	11
when -	1 8	4	6	2	8	6	8	8	10	11	0	13	2	15	4	17	6	19	8	21	10
when -	1 9	4	6	2	9	6	9	9	0	11	3	13	6	15	9	18	0	20	3	22	6
when -	1 10	4	9	2	10	7	1	9	5	11	9	14	1	16	5	18	9	21	1	23	5
when -	1 11	4	9	2	11	7	2	9	7	12	0	14	5	16	10	19	3	21	8	24	1
when -	2 0	5	0	3	0	7	6	10	0	12	6	15	0	17	6	20	0	22	6	25	0

The arguments in favour of adopting the regulations prescribed by the Statute 5 Eliz. c. 4. went no farther than this: that, by enforcing a payment for labour, from the employers, in proportion to the price of bread, some encouragement would have been held out to the labourer, as what he would have received, would have been payment for labour. He would have considered it as his right, and not as charity; and the spirit of independence, now almost extinct, would have been preserved and cherished. But the adoption of the regulations of this Statute was rejected, and the second part of the plan only was carried into execution.

“What had been, is unknown: what is, appears.” Although the principles on which the Poor Laws have been administered, have been, (of late years, at least,) always similar to those which directed the publication of the Table; yet, perhaps, no person, entrusted with the administration of them, had ever considered the enormous tendency of those principles, till the period in which the Table was published, and, (unfortunately for the country, in many instances,) made the rule to direct the conduct of the magistrates and the overseers. This Table is evidently founded on the same principles which regulated the mode of relief, previous to the present high price of provisions.

The *system* of the administration of the Poor Laws has supposed, that a man can only maintain himself, his wife, and two children, by the wages of labour, when the price of labour is 1s. 4d. per day, and bread 1s. 1d. per gallon, (or a half-peck¹;) and that every addition to the number of his children, or to the price of bread, being beyond what his income would support, he must rely on charity to afford him a subsistence. The fallacy of this system is evident, because the facts, on which it relies, are contrary to experience; there being, to the honour of the labouring poor, frequent instances of numerous families educated and maintained, without the least relief from the parish, when wages were at a lower rate than the sum above stated². Such, however, was the theory:—let us now consider the practice.

¹ Weighing 8 lb. 11 oz.

² Above 60 premiums have been given by the Berkshire Agricultural Society, to labourers who brought up large families on 8s. a week. That persons in humble life often maintain their independence upon still smaller pittance, the following village anecdote, which was communicated to me by a friend, is an additional proof:

“Anne

In a family of eight, (viz. a man, his wife, and six children,) if bread is at 1s. per gallon, 13s. 6d.¹, including the man's wages, appear no very disproportionate allowance; but when the price of bread is, (as it frequently was during the last winter,) at 2s. £1. 3s. 6d., (of which, even if you deduct the man's earnings, 9s., there remain 12s. 6d.)

"Anne Hurst was born at Witley in Surrey: there she lived the whole period of a long life; and there she died. As soon as she was thought able to work, she went to service: there, before she was twenty, she married James Strudwick; who, like her own father, was a day-labourer. With this husband she lived a prolific, hard-working, contented wife, somewhat more than fifty years. He worked more than threescore years on one farm; and his wages, summer and winter, were regularly a shilling a day. He never asked more; nor was ever offered less. They had between them seven children; and lived to see six daughters married, and three of them the mothers of sixteen children; all of whom were brought up, or are bringing up, to be day-labourers. Strudwick continued to work till within seven weeks of the day of his death: and at the age of fourscore, in 1787, he closed, in peace, a not inglorious life; for, to the day of his death, he never received a farthing in the way of parochial aid. His wife survived him about seven years; and though bent with age and infirmities, and little able to work, excepting as a weeder in a gentleman's garden, she also was too proud either to ask or receive any relief from her parish. For six or seven of the last years of her life, she received twenty shillings a year from the person who favoured me with this account, which he drew up from her own mouth. With all her virtue, and all her merit, she yet was not much liked in her neighbourhood: people in affluence thought her haughty; and the paupers of the parish, seeing, as they could not help seeing, that her life was a reproach to theirs, aggravated all her little failings. Yet, the worst thing they had to say of her was, that she was proud; which, they said, was manifested by the manner in which she buried her husband. Resolute, as she owned she was, to have the funeral, and every thing that related to it, what she called decent, nothing could dissuade her from having handles to his coffin, and a plate on it, mentioning his age. She was also charged with having behaved herself crossly and peevishly towards one of her sons-in-law, who was a mason; and went regularly, every Saturday evening, to the ale-house, as he said, *just to drink a pot of beer*. James Strudwick, in all his life, as she often told this ungracious son-in-law, never spent five shillings in any idleness; luckily, (as she was sure to add,) he had it not to spend. A more serious charge against her was, that, living to a great age, and but little able to work, she grew to be seriously afraid, that, at last, she might become chargeable to the parish, (the heaviest, in her estimation, of all human calamities;) and that thus alarmed, she did suffer herself more than once, during the exacerbations of a fit of distempered despondency, peevishly, (and, perhaps, petulantly,) to exclaim, that God Almighty, by suffering her to remain so long upon earth, seemed actually to have forgotten her."—Such are the simple annals of Dame Strudwick; and her historian, partial to his subject, closes it with lamenting, that such village memoirs have not oftener been sought for, and recorded!

¹ See the Table.

was a sum much exceeding the necessities of any individual. The price of labour does not depend on the price of bread-corn. The natural effect which the price of any article of provisions has upon it's consumption, is to diminish it. The consumer substitutes other food in lieu of it; and this will always be the case with those who are dependent solely on their own industry and prudence. This diminution would, in a short time, reduce the price; and the evil would gradually remedy itself. But this natural operation was counteracted by the system, which directed the formation of the Berkshire Table; because bread was kept at the same price to the consumer, by the extraordinary relief granted to him by the parish; and he had no inducement to substitute other articles in lieu of wheaten bread; though the substitutes for it were cheap, obvious, and plentiful; and no less nutritious, palatable, and wholesome, than his ordinary food. It is evident, from the inequality in the consumption of bread-corn, by families containing an equal number of persons of equal ages, (the consumption of the profligate family always exceeding that of the prudent,) that the price of bread-corn is not commensurate with the price of labour.

Another circumstance, of great importance, is the relative local situation of every country or district, with respect to the export or import of bread-corn: this circumstance will always tend to diminish or enlarge the supposed ratio between the price of labour and of bread-corn.

These are general facts, drawn from common observation, which, in my humble opinion, ought to have prevented the publication, or the enforcement, of that paper, *à priori*. Many particular facts may be adduced, to confirm the fatal tendency of the system, *à posteriori*. First, the relief held out, was beyond the wants of the Poor. When the Table was published, and of great notoriety, in general, though not in particular, the Poor began grievously to complain, and to fly for redress to the magistrates. The Gentleman, who communicated this account, was then acting as overseer in his parish; and, knowing that the ratio of relief was too great, he called several individuals together, and requested them, (this was during the highest price of bread,) to state their actual wants, according to their utmost desires: he said he would allow them accordingly: the result was as follows:

	Actual Allowance, as demanded by the Poor.	Justices' Allowance, according to the size of their Families.	Difference.
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1. W. E.	6 4 2	7 6 1	1 1 11
2. G. S.	7 10 0	13 13 3	6 3 3
3. T. H.	2 17 0	6 8 9	3 11 9
4. T. W.	2 2 0	3 7 9	1 5 9
5. J. B.	3 3 0	6 8 5	3 5 5
			<hr/>
			£ 15 8 1

In these five instances, therefore, had the Justices' regulations taken place, according to the directions laid down in the Table, the parish at large would have paid to it's labourers £15. 8s. 1d. not only beyond their necessities, but even beyond their desires. This, then, would have been a tax on the capital of the employers, in favour of the employed, which, carried universally, as it was too generally, into execution, might have been, and indeed was, pregnant with dreadful mischief.

2d, It's operation was unequal and partial with respect to the employers; for instance:—R. F. had employed W. E. as a labourer, for some years, at the rate of 8s. per week, while bread continued at the price of 1s. or 13d. per gallon. W. E., the labourer, received no relief from the parish, and never applied for any; the fair conclusion, therefore, is, that 8s. per week were adequate to the support of himself, his wife, and two children. In the hard winter of 1795, a subscription was entered into, in the parish of P. to reduce the price of bread to the Poor: when the winter was over, and the money raised by the subscription was expended, it was thought adviseable to continue the same mode of relieving the Poor, from the Rates, as had been adopted by subscription, viz. paying the difference in the price of bread above 14d., according to the consumption of the families.

W. E. received from this mode of relief - - £1 10 0

After harvest, when the Justices' Table was universally adopted, W. E. received, according to that allowance - - - - - 6 14 10

Total - - £8 4 10

R. F., the constant employer of W. E., pays $\frac{17}{115}$ of the Rates, i. e. if the money to be collected is £115. 1s. R. F. pays £17. 6s. 6d. As 115 is to 17, so is £8. 4s. to £1. 4s.—From

From	-	-	8	4	0
Deduct	-	-	1	4	0

The saving to R. F. from his labourer being paid by the parish, is

£	7	0	0
---	---	---	---

But W. E. was the only labourer in P. parish, who was relieved strictly according to the Table. G. S. was relieved according to his own desires only, which, as I have above stated, were much below the Justices' paper.

G. S. has received, in bread allowance	-	-	£	2	16	4
Relieved according to his own wants	-	-		7	10	0
				10	6	4

R. F. paying as before $\frac{17}{115}$ has advanced towards the maintenance of this man, his constant labourer

1	10	0
---	----	---

Saving to R. F.	-		8	16	4
-----------------	---	--	---	----	---

T. H. has received, in bread allowance	-	-	2	0	0
Actual allowance	-	-	2	17	0

4	17	0
---	----	---

R. F.'s proportion of the Poor's Rate	-	-	0	14	0
---------------------------------------	---	---	---	----	---

Saving to R. F.	-	-	4	3	0
-----------------	---	---	---	---	---

Saving to R. F. from W. E.	-	-	7	0	0
from G. S.	-	-	8	16	4
from T. H.	-	-	4	3	0

So that, from three labourers only, the saving to R. F.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																								</
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	----

Here, then, from a statement of facts, is a glaring proof of the inequality of this mode of administration, which acts adverse to the natural operation of causes and effects. Had political regulations not interfered, the demand for labour would have raised its price, not only in a ratio merely

merely adequate to the wants of the labourer, but even beyond it; and that price would have been advanced by the individual who employed him; instead of being a general tax on those who are liable to be rated, and who are not all employers of labourers. The capital which employs labour has increased; the demand for labour would consequently increase: it did increase, for the situation of the labouring Poor in Berkshire was never better than during the last hard winter; but they received these advanced wages in the way most prejudicial to their moral interests: they received it as charity; as the extorted charity of others; and not as the result of their own well exerted industry; and it was paid them, not by their immediate employers, but by those who were in many instances not the employers of any labourer. If capital and labour are exactly balanced, the wages of labour will be exactly equal to the real wants of the labourer: if capital exceeds labour, the labourer will receive more than adequate to his real wants: if labour exceeds capital, in spite of all political regulations, the labourer must starve.

3d. The publication of this Table diminished the quantity of work done; and, in that light, was productive of a national loss. A. a labourer was settled and resided in the parish of P. and maintained a wife and three children by working at a farmer's in the parish of U. at 1s. 4d. per day. The price of bread rises from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per gallon:—he applies to the farmer, for whom he works, for an increase in the price of day labour: the farmer offers him task-work, by which he may earn 12s. per week. As, however, the printed Table is of public notoriety, and as the idle and profligate of his own parish, of the same number in family, are allowed 14s. 6d. per week, he applies to the overseer of his own parish to allow him 2s. 6d. per week to make the sum of his earnings 14s. 6d. The overseer, (a farmer also in want of hands,) exercising a sort of perverted law, says, If you will work in your own parish for me at day-work, I will give you 9s. per week, and the remaining 5s. 6d. shall be paid by the parish, i. e. by people who reap no advantage from your labour: the consequence is, the man working only at day-work, the work done is diminished 1-4th in the proportion of 12 to 9; the employers pay $\frac{1}{29}$, or nearly one-third more than he earns; and, what is of more consequence, the man's spirit of independence is lost for ever. Had the paper never been published, or, more strictly speaking, had the system

system which gave rise to the publication never been adopted, the labourer, finding 12s. equal to his wants, would have continued to work for his old master, and the existence of those wants would have stimulated his exertions. I am confident that 12s. would have been equal to his wants; for the Gentleman from whom I received this account, employs many labourers; and, although they were pressed to return and work in their parishes, yet they never did, because, in times of plenty, his service had advantages beyond the wages of common labour. He never gave any, even artists, more than 12s. in kind and money together. Further to explain this third grievance, I will state the evil done to the community by the deduction of grain from the market. The very high price of grain tempted every farmer to send as much grain as possible to market: it could not be made fit for the market without the assistance of the labourer; and the high demand for labour would have increased, to the industrious labourer, the price of task-work, (threshing is generally task-work;) but as by this system the wants of the labourer were supplied without exertion, I believe a calculation might be made of the quantity of grain withheld from the market by the want of threshers.

I have thus stated a few observations on the effects of this paper, or rather of the principles which directed its publication. If the effects of those principles had been beneficial to the labourer and just to the employer, I should have regarded them as the result of natural equity, and not have considered whether they were agreeable to that written system of provision for the Poor as contained in the 43 Eliz. c. 2. but when they are found ruinous and destructive, I have recourse to the statutes to see if the evils complained of could be remedied by their abrogation. From the language of the various Statutes concerning the Poor, which passed during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and which, being *in pari materia*, explain each other, either in matter of law, or illustrate each other in matter of fact, it may fairly be implied to prove that the relief of the *able-bodied Poor*, with or without families, was no part of the original system of the Poor Laws.

The 3 W. & M. c. 11. § 11. corroborates this idea: which is put out of doubt by the preamble to Stat. 8 and 9 Will. 3. c. 30. § 2.

¹ To the end that the money raised be *only for the relief of such as are as well impotent as poor*, &c.

Had relief of the able-bodied Poor been in the contemplation of the framers of the 43d Eliz. or had it been expected that the Rates would have been that enormous tax on the landed property which they now are, the clause, which directs the assessment to be made by the overseers, would not have been so loosely worded as to leave it a matter of doubt whether personal property should or should not be rated.

The Poor Laws, as delivered by the Statute 43 Eliz. c. 2. and the preceding Statutes, appear to have had two objects in view, 1. the relief of the impotent Poor; and, 2. the employment of the able-bodied and idle. In considering the first division of the system, we enter on an investigation connected with the nicest principles of jurisprudence. Whether compulsive charity can be justified; or whether the refinements of morality can be enforced by the sanction of positive law, are questions which admit of considerable doubt. A distinction is justly made by Montesquieu, between the duties of religion, the infringements of which are punishable only in a future world, and the moral duties, which are (if I may use the expression,) more tangible in this, or more amenable to human laws. But, whatever may have been the intention of the Legislature with respect to the enforcement of that moral, and (as described in the New Testament) that divine charity, the overt act, which consists in the giving alms, was the only part of it that could be enforced. The impracticability of compelling this charity according to every man's ability, is the only reason why personal property is not assessed: the presumption of the Law is, that it should be assessed. This impracticability is a material argument against the whole of the system; but the wealth and the humanity of this nation would never have suffered this question to have been agitated, if the execution of this part of the Poor Laws had been as confined as it's design. It is not precisely known how soon after the promulgation of the Poor Laws the two parts of the system were blended; but it may be suspected that the evil had grown to some enormity when it became necessary that the settlement of Paupers should be ascertained with accuracy and precision. But if the first part was objectionable on grounds of more recondite law, the second part proceeded upon the supposed existence of facts in political economy, which was doubtful at the time, but which experience has since proved to be mistaken. The framers of the Poor Laws conceived that the

capital of individuals was inadequate to the employment of the labouring Poor of the kingdom, and that it was necessary to provide a public stock for their employment. This mistake was then more excusable, because, since that time, and even to the present, most of the theoretic systems for the employment and maintenance of the Poor have proceeded on the same, or similar, principles. It is a most satisfactory circumstance, however irreconcilable with the deductions of visionary speculatists, to have the proofs of this mistake in our possession ; to shew that the capital stock of the Public cannot enter into competition with the capital, and well-exerted industry, of individuals ; and that the Poor, even when working in public establishments for little or no wages, cannot earn sufficient for their own support. In gaols, every thing is in favour of public capital with respect to health and strength, in comparison with the infirm Poor of a work-house : but, (as it is justly observed by Sir George Paul, in his Address to the Magistrates of the county of Gloucester,) “ the working by machine in almost every branch of hard labour, that requires no skill, has so completely undervalued such work by hand,” (and the same remark will apply to various kinds of work which require considerable skill,) “ that the public expectation should not be raised too high, relative to the *productive* consequences of *forced* labour.”

By the blending these two systems in practice, a kind of glare, which obscures the truth, has been thrown upon work-houses and houses of industry, where, I am induced to believe, from experience and actual observation, the saving arises from the decreased expence, in accommodations, which takes place in consequence of a number of Poor being collected together. The advantages, therefore, are only negative ; and so far, and no farther, have they merit. This is the merit of the public kitchen of Munich, and of the much-vaunted work-house of Shrewsbury.

If a system of national maintenance of the infirm and impotent has failed, or been perverted, we have surely some reason to hesitate on the adoption of a system of national education, which is founded on one of the principles of the Poor Law. Mr. Pitt is too good a political economist, not to know that the waste of capital is a national, as well as an individual, loss ; and he must look forward to this national loss, when
national

national education is made a part of the law of the land. The maxim “pas trop gouverner,” was never more fully illustrated than in the review of the system of the Poor Laws. A small attention to the practice of ministerial powers will convince us of the caution with which they should be delegated ; and of the difficulty, (I had almost said the impracticability,) of laying down any regulations of positive law, for the relief and instruction of the Poor, which shall not degenerate into abuse.

The Poor should not be deceived : the best relief they can receive must come from themselves. Were the Rates once limited, the price of labour would necessarily advance. To expend what labour actually produces, in the most beneficial manner for the labourer, depends entirely on good management and economy.

“ This economy in all cases is the more to be urged, because the difference in comforts of the same families, at the same expence, well or ill conducted, is greater often than that of different families at different expences. There is more difference, comparatively, in the mode of living from economy, than from income ; the deficiency in income may possibly be made up by increase of work or wages ; but the want of economy is irremediable, and the least income in question *with it*, will do more than the greatest *without it*. No master can in the first place afford wages ; next, no overseer can make allowance ; lastly, no magistrate can order relief, enough, on any calculation but that of their being severally well managed. If the Poor do not prudently serve themselves, none can effectually assist them ; if they are not their own friends, none can sufficiently befriend them : the idle in procuring, or the wasteful in using, the means of subsistence, have neither merit in themselves to deserve, nor have others power to grant them, that supply, which is alone due, and can be alone afforded, to the honest, industrious, and prudent. It highly then interests all conversant with the Poor, who ought to be literally all, and it is hoped are most, to consult and co-operate with them in the practice of economy ; it is far more useful to teach them to spend less, or to save a little, than to give them much more.”

¹ Annals of Agric. xxv. 359. 361.

The singular economy and good management which are to be found among Quakers, are highly deserving of general imitation: it may, however, be doubted, whether the accounts which are usually given respecting the Poor, that are to be found among this respectable order, are altogether correct. Dr. Lettsom, in his Memoirs of Dr. Fothergill¹, observes, that “ what is familiar and near us excites little scrutiny or “ investigation; but the time may come, when a wise Legislator may “ descend to enquire, by what medium a whole society, in both the old “ and new world, is made to think and act with uniformity for upwards “ of a century;—by what polity, without emolument from Govern- “ ment, they have become the only people on earth free from poverty;— “ by what economy they have thus prevented beggary and want among “ any of their members, whilst the nation groans under taxes for the “ Poor.”

The above is certainly a very striking passage, and well deserves that attention and consideration which it seems to solicit. It is to be regretted, that this pleasing writer did not see fit to give his Readers some detail of that polity which he appears so justly to admire, and which it is so much the interest of all orders and classes to emulate. Much as it falls within the scope of this Work to go into the discussion, *data* seem to be wanting for it to all but the immediate members of the society in question. Quakers only can know, or inform others with accuracy, how far it is, or is not, true, that there neither are, nor have been, any Quaker beggars; nor, what is neither less extraordinary nor less commendable, any Parochial Poor, of their sect. They, however, will forgive one, who, far from entertaining any ill-will towards their society, has a very sincere respect for it; yet doubts, whether there may not be something like a fallacy in the foregoing extract. There is reason to believe that the people of this society advert, with great care and strictness, to the moral conduct, as well as to the religious faith, of their members: and considering, with great propriety, the want of industry, frugality, and economy, (those instances of misconduct which most generally lead to poverty,) as the least pardonable moral delinquencies, they rarely fail to check their weaker brethren in their first deviations

¹ P. 100.

into idleness and extravagance, by admonitions of singular earnestness and weight. If, after such warning, the delinquents are incorrigible, and, continuing to be profligate, become also poor, they are then looked upon as irreclaimable offenders, unworthy of being any longer regarded as *Friends*; and so, in the phraseology of the Society, are *read out*, i. e. are expelled. Hence, there is reason to believe, that, though it may be true, that there *are* no Quaker beggars, nor any Quakers who receive parochial aid, there may be, and no doubt are, many under both these descriptions, who *have been* Quakers. As, however, neither the members of the National Church, nor the people of the nation at large, have any such coercive authority over disorderly persons, to check them in their progress to ruin, they are forced, in ten thousand instances, to see them first become spendthrifts, and then Paupers. And, having no power of rejection, any more than they have of restraint, like the net thrown into the sea, they must needs receive all who offer; and, among others, no doubt, sometimes reprobate Quakers.

Still, however, the case does not cease to be extraordinary; and, as such, it still merits consideration. For, admitting the fact to be as it is here suggested, that the Quakers really have not, strictly speaking, any Poor among them, the means they take to prevent it, shew very clearly, that they consider the want of industry, and the want of frugality, not only as the natural fore-runners, but as the general causes, of poverty. The instruction, therefore, conveyed to us by this striking fact, is, that, instead of exerting ourselves, as hitherto has been the case, only to relieve indigence and distress, however produced, it might not be beneath legislative wisdom to emulate the better policy of this prudent sect, and, if possible, fall on ways and means to prevent them.

CHAPTER III.

Of Friendly Societies.

IF the merit of political institutions is to be appreciated from ancient precedent, and long practice, there are, perhaps, few social contrivances, which have a better claim, on this account, to approbation and support, than those simple establishments called Benefit Clubs, or Friendly Societies, whose object is to exemplify one of the wisest political maxims, “that, by an association of the *many*, the *few* may be assisted;” and to promote the most laudable of charities,—that of securing to the industrious, from the surplus, or a part of the surplus, of their earnings, an equivalent resource during their incapacity to labour. These useful associations, if their vanity could be flattered, (as is too commonly the case with nations themselves,) by marks of antiquity, might easily trace their origin to the earliest periods of the English history: for that those writers are mistaken, who suppose that the introduction of gilds, or fraternities, (which, possessing a stronger tincture of religion, were in many other respects similar to the modern clubs,) was subsequent to the Conquest¹, is evident from several curious Saxon deeds, (now preserved in the Museum,) which Dr. Hickes has transcribed and inserted in his learned work on Northern Literature.

There is such an extraordinary coincidence between the rude simplicity which pervades the ordinances of two of the Saxon Gilds, and some of the modern Friendly Societies, that, I persuade myself, a translation from the Saxon copies, in Dr. Hickes’s *Thesaurus*, will not be unacceptable to the Reader.

¹ See Anderson’s *History of Commerce*, i. 132; and Madox’s *Firma Burgi*, c. i. § 9.

“ In this writing is contained an account of an institution established by the members of the Society (Gilde) of Noblemen in Cambridge¹.

“ 1. It is ordained, that all the members shall swear by the Holy Reliques², that they will be faithful to each of their fellow members, as well in religious as in worldly matters; and that,” (in all disputes,) they will always take part with him that has justice on his side.

“ When any member shall die, he shall be carried by the whole society to whatever place of interment he shall have chosen: and whoever shall not come to assist in bearing him, shall forfeit a sextarium of honey; the society making up the rest of the expence, and furnishing each his quota towards the funeral entertainment; as also two-pence for charitable purposes; out of which, as much as is meet and convenient, is to be bestowed upon the church of St. Etheldred.

“ When any member shall stand in need of assistance from his fellow members, notice thereof shall be given to the reeve or warden³ who dwells the nearest to that member, unless that member be his immediate neighbour⁴: and the warden, if he neglect giving him relief, shall forfeit one pound. In like manner, if the President of the society shall neglect coming to his assistance, he shall forfeit one pound⁵, unless he be detained either by the business of his lord, or by sickness.

“ If any one shall take away the life of a member, his reparatory fine shall not exceed eight pounds: but if he obstinately refuse to make reparation, then he shall be prosecuted⁶ by, and at the expence of, the whole society; and if any individual undertake the prosecution, then each of the rest shall bear an equal share of the expences. If, however, a member, who is poor, kill any one, and compensation must.

¹ See Hicke's Thesaurus, 1st vol. Dissert. Epist. 20; and Bibl. Cott. Tib. E. 5: fol. 75.

² Probably of their tutelary Saint. Every Gild was denominated from some favourite Saint or Festival: as St. George's Gild; Trinity Gild; Holy Cross Gild, &c. See Dugd. Warw. 1 ed. 122. and 522.

³ Officers (I suppose,) of the Society, subordinate to the President.

⁴ Because in this case the warden might be presumed to be acquainted, (without notice,) that violence was offered to his next-door neighbour.

⁵ An Anglo-Saxon pound contained as much silver as is now coined into £2. 16s. 3d. sterl. See Folkes's Tables of Ancient Coins, and Clarke on Coins, 199.

⁶ These prosecutions, it is probable, were literally carried on by *force and arms*.

“ be made, then, if the deceased was worth 1200 shillings, each member of the society shall contribute half a mark¹; but if the deceased was a hind, each member shall contribute two *ora*²; if a Welshman, only one. If any member shall take away the life of another member, he shall make reparation to the relations of the deceased; and, besides, make atonement for his fellow member by a fine of eight pounds, or lose his right of fellowship in the society. And if any member, excepting only in the presence of the king, or of a bishop or ealderman, shall eat or drink with him that hath taken away the life of his fellow member, he shall forfeit one pound, unless he can prove by the evidence of two witnesses-upon-oath, that he did not know the person.

“ If any member shall treat another member in an abusive manner, or *call him names*³, he shall forfeit a quart of honey; and if he shall be abusive to any other person that is not a member, he shall likewise forfeit a quart of honey⁴, unless he can clear himself upon the evidence of two witnesses-upon-oath.

“ If any knight (i. e. servant at arms,) shall draw his sword, his lord shall forfeit one pound, which he may by every possible means recover from the offender, and which the whole society shall assist him in the recovery of. And if one knight shall wound another, the wounded person's lord, in concert with the whole society, shall avenge the wrong, and ——— prosecute the offender to death.

¹ A mark was two-thirds of a Saxon pound; and equal, in weight of silver, to about £1. 17s. 9d. of our present money. See Henry's Hist. of Gr. Br. 8vo. iv. 259.

² An ora was one-eighth part of a mark; and nearly equal in weight to 4s. 8½d. of our present money. Id. 265.

³ So, in the Weaver's Company at Newcastle, a member was fined 6s. 8d. for calling a brother “Scot,” or “manforn.” See Brand's Hist. of Newc. ii. 339.

⁴ Honey was an article that would keep, and therefore very proper for a fine: it was probably used for metheglin; or in some other way, for the feasts of the society. In one of the fraternities at Newcastle, it was ordered that the corpse of every brother, who during his life-time had paid his month-pence, should be preceded to church, at his burial, by the common lights of the society: funeral honours were in like manner paid to members' wives. The wax and oil, which were given by new members, on their admission, were, no doubt, for the use of the society, in these, and other, processions. Brand's Hist. of Newc. ii. 226.

“ A knight, for way-laying any man, shall forfeit a sextarium of honey ;
 “ and if he set any trap or snare for him, the penalty shall be the same.

“ If any member, being at a distance from home, shall die, or fall sick,
 “ his fellow members shall send to fetch him, and convey him, either
 “ alive or dead, to whatever place he may have wished, or be liable to
 “ the stated penalty : but if any member shall die at home, every mem-
 “ ber who shall not go to fetch his corpse, and every member who
 “ shall absent himself from his obsequies, shall forfeit a sextarium of
 “ honey.”

The rules of the other Society, noticed by Hickes, are as follows :

“ This meeting is held, in the city of Exeter, for the sake of God and
 “ our own souls, that we may make such ordinances as tend to our wel-
 “ fare and security, as well in this life, as in that future state which
 “ we wish to enjoy in the presence of God, our Judge. Being, therefore,
 “ here assembled together, we have decreed,

“ That three stated meetings shall be held every year : the first on the
 “ festival of St. Michael the Archangel ; the second on the festival of
 “ St. Mary, next following the Winter Solstice ; and the third on the
 “ festival of All Saints, which is celebrated after Easter.

“ That, at each meeting, every member shall contribute two sextaria
 “ of barley-meal ¹, and every knight one, together with his quota of
 “ honey.

“ That, at each of these meetings, a priest shall sing two masses ; the
 “ one for living, and the other for departed members. Every lay brother
 “ shall likewise sing two psalms ; the one for living, and the other for
 “ departed members. Every one shall, moreover, in his turn, procure
 “ six masses and six psalms to be sung at his own proper expence.

“ That when any member is about to go abroad, each of his fellow
 “ members shall contribute five-pence ; and, if any member's house shall
 “ have been burnt, one penny ².

“ That if any one shall neglect the stated times of meeting ; for the
 “ first neglect, he shall be at the expence of three masses ; for the se-

¹ Mealster (i. e. of meal,) Hickes translates by the Latin word *polenta*.

² The Saxon penny was the twentieth part of an ora. See Henry's Hist. of G. B. iv. 269.

“ cond, of five ; and if, after being warned of the consequence, he shall
 “ absent himself a third time, he shall not be excused, unless he has been
 “ hindered either by sickness, or by the business of his lord.

“ That if any one should by chance neglect the stated time of meet-
 “ ing, his quota of regular contribution shall be doubled.

“ That if any member shall treat another member in an abusive
 “ manner, his reparatory fine shall be thirty pence.

“ And finally, we beseech every member, for God’s sake, to observe
 “ those things which are ordained in this Society, in every thing, as we
 “ have ordained them. And may God help us to observe them¹ !”

From these curious deeds, it would appear, that Gilds were originally instituted by the mutual agreement of friends and neighbours, and had no further object than the relief of the brethren in times of distress, and perhaps the protection of the associated members against the lawless attacks of powerful neighbours. Some pious offices, however, were the never-failing concomitants of these institutions. After the Conquest, Gilds were established for the express promotion of religion, charity, or trade² : and it is from these fraternities, simple as they may originally have been, that the various companies and city corporations in this kingdom are derived³. They were usually founded by licence from the king, and supported either by specific contributions from the members in money or goods, or by lands assigned to them by the founder⁴. The rules of several of these institutions are preserved; and some of them might, I think, be adopted, with advantage, in Friendly Societies. Among others, the following ordinances of St. Catherine’s Gild at Coventry, (founded in the reign of Edward the Third,) are well deserving the attention of village legislators. They are cited at length by Dugdale, who speaks of them as very memorable, and “ manifesting
 “ the decent government, ceremony, devotion, charity, and amity of
 “ those times⁵.”

¹ Hickes’s Thesaurus, i. Diss. Epist. 22. and Bibl. Cott. Tib. E. 5. fol. 76. See likewise Bibl. Cott. Titus, D.

² Blomefield’s Norf. iii. 494.

³ Dugd. Warw. 125.

⁴ Blomesf. Norf. iii. 494. See, likewise, Dale’s Dover Court ; and Newton’s Maidstone.

⁵ Warwickshire, 122.

If a member suffer from fire, water, robbery, or other calamity, the Gild is to lend him a sum of money without interest.

If sick or infirm through old age, he is to be supported by his Gild according to his condition.

No one notorious for felony, homicide, lechery, gaming, forcery, or heresy; is to be admitted.

If a member falls into bad courses, he is first to be admonished; and if found to be incorrigible, he is to be expelled.

Those who die poor, and cannot afford themselves burial, are to be buried at the charge of the Gild.

The chaplain is not to frequent common taverns.

The master of the Gild was usually the person who had been mayor of Coventry the year before. He seems to have been the treasurer; as he swore to pay arrears on quitting office, and to inspect the tenements of the Society.

Mass was said every day; and there were four solemnities, (or feasts,) every year.

The Gilds seem to have been encouraged by persons of rank. The Earl and Countess of Northumberland, and their eldest son, were members of St. Christopher's Gild at York; and paid annually, each, 6s. 8d. They each received yearly from the Gild two yards of cloth¹: but whether this was an article usually allowed to the members of such Societies, or whether it was merely a compliment to a person of high distinction, I cannot pretend to determine.

The ancient associations, whether distinguished by the name of Gild, Fraternity, Mystery, Company, or Brotherhood, seem to have been no less addicted to feasting and conviviality than the modern village clubs. They generally assembled once a year for the purpose of acting some interlude or pageant. There is a curious account, in the *Liber Niger*², of the anniversary feast of the Gild of the Holy Cross at Abingdon; from which Blomefield probably took the following account, which he has given us, of that festival. He says, the "Fraternity held their feast

¹ North. Housh. Book, 347. They also paid 3s. 4d. each yearly to a brotherhood at Knaresborough. Ibid.

² Edit. by Hearne, p. 598.

“yearly, on the third of May, the Invention of the Holy Crofs; and
 “then they used to have 12 priests to sing a *dirige*, for which they had
 “given them four-pence a-piece; they had also 12 *minstrels*, who had
 “2s. 3d. besides their dyet and horse-meat. At one of these feasts, 23^d
 “of Hen. 6th. they had 6 calves, valued at 2s. 2d. a piece; 16 lambs,
 “12d. a piece; 80 capons, 3d. a piece; 80 geese, 2d. *ob.* a piece; 800
 “eggs, which cost 5d. the hundred; and many marrow-bones, cream,
 “and floure, besides what theyre servants and others brought in; and
 “pageants, plays, and may-games, to captivate the senses of the zealous
 “beholders, and to allure the people to the greater liberality; (for they
 “did not make their feasts without profit; for those that *sat* at dyner paid
 “one rate, and those that *stood* pay’d another.) These plays were
 “histories of the Old and New Testament; the persons therein men-
 “tioned being brought upon the stage, whom the poet, according to
 “his fancy, brings in, talking to one another. A specimen of one of
 “these plays, called *Corpus Christi*, may be seen in Stephen’s Additions
 “to the Monasticon. These Gilds also gave annual charity; stipends
 “to poor persons; found beds, and entertainments, for poor people that
 “were strangers; and had people to keep and tend the said beds; and
 “did other works of charity.”

As the Gilds were more or less connected with ecclesiastical establishments, and were usually enabled, by licence from the Crown, to purchase and receive gifts of lands, they insensibly acquired such extensive possessions, as to be thought worthy of being included in the plunder which the avarice of Henry the Eighth attempted to justify under the specious name of reformation; and accordingly, by an Act passed in 1545², all gilds, hospitals, patentees, or brotherhoods, were dissolved, and their lands vested in the king.

Notwithstanding this unjustifiable confiscation of property, which in many instances was exclusively, and in all, (in which Gilds were concerned,) was more or less, appropriated to the purposes of charity, it would seem, that the convenience of individuals would not permit the entire extinction of institutions so much calculated for mutual benefit; and though, perhaps, some of those fraternities, which were not endowed

¹ Blomef. Norf. iii. 494.

² By 37 H. 8. c. 4. See likewise 1 E. 6. c. 14.

with lands, but were supported merely by the subscriptions of the members, were seized on for the little personal property which they possessed, there is every reason to suppose, that private associations', on a more contracted scale than the ancient Gilds, which were patronized by Noblemen, and continued to exist in various parts of the kingdom. Mr. Blomefield, in his History of Norfolk, notices a Gild which was erected in 1628, at Atleburgh in that county, and at which, on Midsummer-day 1630, above 2000 of the country folks were hospitably entertained². That many of these Societies, even after the confiscation of their lands at the dissolution, continued their stated meetings in the common room, or hall, for the purposes either of charity, or of conviviality, is extremely probable. The above-mentioned Author informs us, that the furniture of a Gild, (in a village in Norfolk,) whose lands had been seized by Henry the Eighth, remained in their hall till 1650, when it was ruined, and the utensils belonging to it were sold: they consisted of 30lb. of pewter vessels, 92lb. of lead; four spits, that weighed 169lb.; a metal pot, that weighed 44lb; two pots of brass, of 89lb.; and a brass pan, of 9lb. "A plain proof," Mr. Blomefield adds, "of the jolly doings at these Gilds. But as the Poor of the parish always were partakers with them, I much question, whether their revenues were not better spent then, than they have been since they were rapaciously seized from the parishes to which they of right belonged³."

² Of the many private associations, in country places, which assembled merely for conviviality and mutual assistance, without thinking it necessary to solicit the King for a licence of incorporation, the Reader will find an account in many parts of Blomefield's History of Norfolk. In corporate towns, however, the ancient Gilds, having in the course of time obtained exclusive privileges, were jealous of all new, however harmless, institutions. Dugdale, in his Account of Coventry, observes, that, in the reign of Henry the Fifth, "the young people, viz. journeymen of several trades, observing what merry-meetings and feasts their masters had, by being of those fraternities, and that they themselves wanted the like pleasure, did, of their own accord, assemble together in several places of the city, which occasioned the Mayor and his Brethren to complain thereof to the King; alledging, that the said journeymen, in these their unlawful meetings, called themselves St. George his Gild, to the intent that they might maintain and abet one another in quarrels, &c. had made choyce of a Master, &c. to the prejudice of the other Gilds, &c." Warw. 125.

² Blomef. Norf. i. 362.

³ Blomef. Norf. iii. 185.

It is observed, that “ the little Parochial Gilds were sometimes
 “ so poor, that they could not afford to have a room of their own,
 “ but met at the members’ houses. In general, however, they
 “ were in a better condition, and possessed or hired a house near the
 “ the church, which was called the Guild-hall, or Church-house. This
 “ situation,” Sir John Cullum adds, “ was convenient for them, as
 “ their business was to pray, as well as eat¹.” They seem to have been
 very convenient instruments for the distribution of charity before the
 establishment of a Poor’s Rate ; and usually employed no inconsiderable
 portion of their revenues (which were in some instances extremely
 scanty,) in relieving indigent parishioners, and treating poor strangers
 with hospitality. Their feasts, however, it is justly observed, “ ended
 “ frequently in a manner not very consistent with their beginning².”

Nor were the Gild-halls, of which vestiges may be found in many of
 our most insignificant villages, exclusively appropriated to those festivities
 which were solemnized there, at the expence, and under the patronage,
 of the Gilds. As most of these common halls were well provided with
 all kinds of household utensils, and more especially with those requisite
 for culinary purposes, it was not uncommon for the inhabitants of a
 village, upon weddings and christenings, which they considered as public
 occasions that at least justified, if they did not call for, festivity and
 merriment, to hold their feast at the Gild-hall : and I have very little
 doubt but that these public meetings often promoted many laudable
 acts of charity. The custom of a general feasting at weddings and
 christenings is still continued in many villages, in Scotland, in Wales,
 and in Cumberland ; districts, which, as the refinements of legislation
 and manners are slow in reaching them, are most likely to exhibit
 vestiges of customs deduced from remote antiquity, or founded on the
 simple dictates of nature : and indeed it is not singular, that marriages,
 births, christenings, house-warmings, &c. should be occasions in which
 people of all classes and all descriptions think it right to rejoice and
 make merry. In many parts of these districts of Great Britain, as well
 as in Sweden and Denmark, all such institutions, now rendered vene-
 rable by long use, are religiously observed. It would be deemed ominous,

¹ Cullum’s *Hawsted*, p. 20.

² Cullum’s *Hawsted*, p. 21.

if not impious, to be married, have a child born, &c. without something of a feast. And long may the custom last: for it neither leads to drunkenness and riot, nor is it costly; as, alas! is so commonly the case in convivial meetings in more favoured regions. On all these occasions, the greatest part of the provisions is contributed by the neighbourhood; some furnishing the wheaten flour for the pastry; others, barley or oats for bread and cakes; some, poultry for pies; some, milk for the frumenty; some, eggs; some, bacon; and some, butter; and, in short, every article necessary for a plentiful repast. Every neighbour, how high or low soever, makes it a point to contribute something. At a *daubing*, (which is the erection of an house of clay,) or at a *bride-wain*, (which is the carrying of a bride home,) in Cumberland, many hundreds of persons are thus brought together; and as it is the custom also, in the latter instance, to make presents of money, one, or even two, hundred pounds are said to have, sometimes, been collected. A deserving young couple are thus, by a public and unequivocal testimony of the good-will of those who best know them, encouraged to persevere in the paths of propriety; and are also enabled to begin the world with some advantage. The birth of a child also, instead of being thought or spoken of as bringing on the parents new and heavy burthens, is thus rendered, as no doubt it always ought to be, a comfort and a blessing; and, in every sense, an occasion of rejoicing. I own I cannot figure to myself a more pleasing, or a more rational, way of rendering sociableness and mirth subservient to prudence and virtue. In doing a deed of charity, motives of benevolence, as well as delicacy, suggest the propriety of its being done, not by directly furnishing the money that may be wanted on the occasion, but by leading and enabling the object, who wants relief, to relieve himself. And the true principle of national interference with respect to the Poor, and, (as it might, perhaps, be added,) the only one that is justifiable in the eye either of reason or religion, is, by no means to think of maintaining the Poor as a nation, or a public, or even to contribute largely, as is now the case, towards their maintenance; but to enable them to maintain themselves. This principle is clearly recognized and proved to be not only perfectly practicable, but popular also, in the institution of Friendly Societies; and in its degree it is also manifested by the simple, but significant, custom above noticed, and of which

which the Reader will find an instance in my account of the parish of Cumwhitton¹.

Since the commencement of the present century, Friendly Societies have been gradually extended to most parts of Great Britain². In the North of England, instances may be found, of Clubs of this kind, which have existed above an hundred years. Their utility has, at length, been so fully recognized, that various benevolent writers, within the last fifty years, have suggested schemes for extending their operation to every village in the kingdom. Mr. Alcock, in his *Observations on the Poor Laws*, published in 1752, mentions several confraternities of this kind, consisting of tradesmen and manufacturers, particularly in the West of England³. In 1786, Mr. Acland published a plan for rendering the Poor independent by contributions founded on the basis of Friendly Societies; but, as hath already been observed⁴, his schemes appear to be ill calculated to effect this laudable purpose. It was part of Mr. Gilbert's original plan, to encourage Friendly Societies by occasional relief from the parish fund. For this purpose, he proposed to enact, that, in all cases where Friendly Clubs or Societies had been established, under such rules, orders, and regulations, as should be approved by the county committee; after they have been transmitted to them by the president, master, steward, or other person who should then be at the head of such club or society, the county committee (to be appointed by his Act,) should have power to order such sum as they should think proper, not exceeding one shilling a week, to be paid to every poor person who should

¹ See the Second Volume, p. 74.

² The Reader will find much (though perhaps not sufficiently detailed,) information in the Statistical Account of Scotland, relative to Friendly Societies. It is pleasing to think, that these beneficial establishments are increasing in number very fast in North Britain. They are said to be of great service in preventing labourers and working manufacturers from becoming a burthen to the Public; which the indigent in Scotland certainly are, though, in general, they are not supported by a regular Poor's Rate. Some of the Scotch Clubs are very different from ours. At Galfon, in the county of Ayr, there is a Society for the relief of the Poor, which is constituted upon a very simple principle. It consists of about 50 members: and is called the Penny or Halfpenny Society. It has no funds, which can be embezzled; but when a brother is confined to bed by sickness, every member pays him a penny weekly; and if he is able to go about, but not to work, an halfpenny. Statist. Acc. of Scotland, ii. 82. ³ P. 37. ⁴ See p. 382.

have contributed to the fund belonging to the Society whereof he had been a member, for years or more, so long as such poor person should, from sickness, lameness, or other infirmities, by the rules of the said Society, be entitled to a weekly allowance out of the fund of such Society, over and above the allowance which he should receive from the Society; and should direct the same to be paid by their treasurer, out of the casual or contingent fund, arising from a tax on dogs, Sunday tolls, and fines, amercements, and recognizances taken and laid by Justices of the Peace, or in courts of assize, gaol delivery, or quarter sessions, in each county.

He likewise proposed, as a further encouragement to Friendly Societies, that, as soon as any new Club or Society should be established, consisting of one hundred members or more, and the rules and orders made for the government of them should be transmitted to, and approved by, the county committee; they might direct their treasurer to pay to the steward of every such Society, any sum they should think fit, not exceeding , on having security given for the due application thereof, in aid of the benevolent purposes of such Society.

And in order to render the rules of Friendly Societies effective and compulsory on the members, he proposed, that, after the rules were confirmed by one of his Majesty's Judges of Assize, power should be given by his Act, for the relief of the Poor, to the President, or other person at the head of a Friendly Society, to enforce the payment of fines and penalties incurred by members for a breach of the rules; and to recover from the treasurer, or other person authorized to receive money for the use of the Society, all sums due from them to the Society, by distress or sale of the goods and chattels of the persons so indebted, by virtue of a warrant from a Justice of the Peace, after the party had been summoned, and the debt duly proved; which summons and warrant the Justice should be authorized to grant.

The benevolent views of Mr. Gilbert have been mostly provided for, in the Act which passed in 1793¹, for the encouragement of Friendly Societies.

¹ 33 Geo. 3. c. 54. This Act effectually removed many difficulties which Friendly Societies were subject to, whenever they have chosen to avail themselves of the benefits held
VOL. I. 4 H out

Societies. With regard, however, to promoting the establishment of these useful institutions by premiums, the Legislature has hitherto, (and in my humble opinion, very wisely,) abstained from creating a new branch of public expenditure, the extent of which could not possibly be foreseen, and the necessity of which does not as yet seem to have been satisfactorily demonstrated. Some Agricultural Societies, however, (and particularly that established at Bath,) have given premiums to Clubs.

out to them by the Legislature. Before this Act passed, it frequently happened, that the minority of a Club, (which by the rules was often competent to make laws,) expelled all the absent members on slight pretences, in order to favour the views of some interested ale-house-keeper. Persons thus injured were left without the means of redress. The inability to sue and be sued, (which numerous bodies of men having one common interest often feel, but which I believe was not much felt by Friendly Societies,) is also effectually removed; and the Clubs can now, if it should be necessary, easily enforce payment from the officers to whom they have entrusted their funds. Another great and essential advantage conferred on such of these institutions as had their rules confirmed by the Justices, was the privilege of carrying on their occupations and trades in the most convenient place, without being subject to be removed to their legal settlements. This encouragement, however, is in a great measure done away by the Act passed last year, (35 Geo. 3. c. 101.) for preventing the removal of poor persons till they become actually chargeable. This Act, however, in order to relieve the parish, in which the party is allowed to reside, from incidental burthens, provides, (as the Friendly Society Act had done in the case of members of Societies who had taken the benefit of the Act,) that no person shall gain a settlement by notice, or by payment of Parish Rates for a tenement *not being of the yearly value of ten pounds*. These twelve last words are not in the Friendly Society Act.

I will here take the opportunity of remarking, that, as a long residence under the 35 Geo. 3. may preclude the possibility of ascertaining the settlement when a person becomes chargeable, the ease of parishes would have been greatly promoted by the introduction of clauses similar to the 19th, 20th, and 21st sections in the Friendly Society Act; concerning which, the Gentleman, who framed the Bill, makes the following judicious observations, in a little pamphlet well worthy the attention of every Benefit Club. He says:

“ Various regulations and provisions are introduced into the Act for the purpose of relieving the parish, in which the party shall be allowed to reside, from any incidental burthens; such as, enabling the parish to ascertain and fix the place of settlement to which the party may be removed, when he shall become actually chargeable. It appears to have been the intention of the Legislature to have done this formerly in the case of soldiers and mariners: examinations were allowed to be taken of the settlement of the party, which became evidence in favour of the parish wherein he should reside, against the parish charged; but the latter had no means of contesting the truth of that examination, until the party

“ should

Clubs, which have been formed in conformity with the conditions they prescribe¹. If a premium were wanting, for any purpose connected with Friendly Societies, it would seem, that it might be judiciously applied, in forming a fund for the relief of members, during the interval between their entrance into the Society, and admission as a free member, which, in some Clubs, is three; in others two, years; (periods of prospective advantage, much too remote to interest the general class of people, who are likely to become subscribers;) and in none, that I am acquainted with, less than one.

There are great objections to all compulsory schemes for erecting Friendly Societies: whatever benefit is intended the Poor, obliging them to subscribe, is, in effect, taxing them; nor can I imagine a severer tax, in the present confined state of financial resource, than a twenty-fourth, or thirty-sixth, of a man's daily earnings, imposed as a direct tax. It may be said, perhaps, that this cannot, with propriety, be considered as a tax; it is only forcing him to do, what, in many instances, he willingly does;—to secure himself a comfortable maintenance through life. This is, however, an argument, which in some measure shews that coercion is unnecessary. Why use force, when mutual convenience will probably make that palatable, which legislative direction

“ should be actually removed, when perhaps all other testimony might be lost. This inconvenience is remedied by the present Act, as it requires that the parish charged with the settlement of the party shall have immediate notice of the examination, so that the point may be put in a train of inquiry, if it shall be necessary, whilst complete evidence respecting it may be obtained on both sides; and it seems that the only material alteration made by this Act, from the general law respecting the settlement of Paupers, is, that this inquiry may take place without the actual removal of the individual whose settlement is in contest, and consequently at less expence and inconvenience; but, in all other respects, with equal advantages to the litigating parties.”

¹ One of these conditions is so judicious, that it is to be wished a rule, of the same tenor, were adopted in every Benefit Club, and more especially in those established in the metropolis: “ that no Society shall be entitled to this premium, unless there be a clause inserted in their articles, that no part of their stock shall ever be laid out in the purchase of LOTTERY TICKETS, or in any other way which may risque any part of their property in games of chance.” Bath Papers, iii. 353. To this, I think, the following addition might be made with great propriety—“ and that every member shall be excluded, who shall be proved to have laid out any money in the purchase of Lottery tickets, or in any other way connected with the Lottery, or any other game of chance, since his admittance into the Society.”

may render nauseous? Few of us will be driven, but most of us may be led. He must know little of human nature, who is surpris'd, that the Czar Peter's order to his subjects, to cut their beards, was received with dissatisfaction; although it was nothing more than obliging them to be clean and comfortable; or that, notwithstanding a law against long-pointed shoes, they should remain in fashion above three centuries. I most heartily concur in opinion with those writers, who think that Clubs would be more beneficial, if the subscribers contributed the whole of what they could spare from their weekly earnings to form a fund, from which they might receive a proportionable benefit, instead of paying perhaps 1s. a month to the box, and 2d. or 3d. more to be expended in ale. The question, however, seems to be, whether, if they were prohibited, (provided it were possible,) from tippling in the ale-house on their club nights, they could be prevailed on to subscribe at all? I do not think the practice of our ancestors, the Germans, worthy of imitation; who selected the moments of conviviality as those best fitted for important discussions: but I believe that the relaxation which a village meeting, or a city feast, is productive of, although not the parent of virtue in general, is not unfavourable to the exertion of the first of Christian duties, charity. Such at least, in general, seems to be the opinion of Gentlemen, who conduct subscriptions for charitable purposes in this great metropolis. A collection at St. Paul's, or Bow Church, in the morning, generally falls short of the sum received after dinner at Merchant Tailors' Hall, or the London Tavern.

There are other great objections to the compulsory system. Suppose every labourer is to pay a thirty-sixth part of his earnings, how are they to be ascertained? In most parts of England, work is now done by the piece; a circumstance which renders it extremely difficult to obtain any probable account of his earnings.

Let any person go to Bradford, to Frome, to Sheffield, or Manchester, and ask a journeyman-manufacturer what his labour produces, he will answer,—the usual wages of weavers, &c. are so much per week; and so much by the piece-work; but that the annual or weekly earnings by piece-work are extremely irregular and uncertain. He will not be
so

so explicit to the collector of his forced weekly contribution to a box-club. As to penalties for neglect, expulsion from the Society may be what he will wish for : pecuniary fines cannot operate on a man who has nothing ; and, as to sending him to the house of correction, this will still more lessen the stock of the Society. As to compelling the employer to be answerable, this seems to be equally visionary. A man will often work with six different persons in a week ; sometimes with several even in a day.

If the plan is confined to parishes ; suppose a labourer goes from Middlesex into Northumberland ; is the capital stock which employs him there to contribute towards the parochial fund in Middlesex ? Such a transfer would not be effected without much difficulty and expence.

Notwithstanding these and other objections which might be pointed out against compulsory measures for providing relief for the Poor, the Legislature seems to have recognized the expediency of institutions founded on such principles in an Act (passed in 1757,) for the “ relief of the coal-heavers working upon the Thames ; and for enabling them to make a provision for such of themselves as shall be sick, lame, or past their labour ; and for their widows and orphans ¹.” The 4th section of this Act, (which in many other respects seems to have been repugnant to the sound principles of commercial policy,) is as follows :

“ Whereas many of the labourers now exercising the business of unloading coal ships and vessels, have voluntarily agreed to set apart two shillings in the pound out of all their future earnings, to erect and keep a perpetual fund, sufficient to answer the extraordinary expences that will necessarily attend the regulation hereby established ; and also for enabling them to provide a competent subsistence for labourers that shall fall sick or lame, and for such as shall be grown old and past their labour, or be disabled from working by any other unavoidable accident ; and also for the support of the widows and orphans of deceased labourers ; and a provision for the burial of their dead ; which expences now generally fall heavy upon the parishes to which they respectively belong : be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid,

¹ See 31. Geo. 2. c. 76.

“ That

“ That the person or persons to be appointed for stationing the labour-
 “ ers registered as aforesaid, and paying them their wages as aforesaid,
 “ or such other person or persons as the said Alderman shall think pro-
 “ per to appoint for that purpose, shall, at all times hereafter, retain
 “ at the rate of two shillings in the pound out of the earnings of all
 “ and every such labourer and labourers, who shall be registered as
 “ aforesaid, to constitute the fund above-mentioned; out of which,
 “ after payment of the necessary expences incurred in and about the
 “ obtaining and passing this Act of Parliament, all salaries to the feve-
 “ ral persons to be employed by the said Alderman as aforesaid, and all
 “ other necessary expences attending the regulation hereby established,
 “ shall be paid and discharged; and the remainder thereof shall, from
 “ time to time, be applied to the charitable uses aforesaid, in the propor-
 “ tions herein after mentioned, if such fund shall prove sufficient to
 “ answer the same; that is to say, to every labourer who shall be sick
 “ or lame, or rendered incapable of working by any other unavoidable
 “ accident, the sum of seven shillings per week during the time he shall
 “ remain under such incapacity; to every labourer who shall be ren-
 “ dered totally incapable of working through old age, the sum of six-
 “ pence per day during the remainder of his natural life; for the burial
 “ of every labourer, not leaving sufficient effects to defray the expences
 “ of his funeral, over and above the goods or furniture of his house or
 “ lodging, the sum of forty shillings; to the widow of every labourer,
 “ the sum of five pounds; and towards making some provision for every
 “ child of a deceased labourer, being under the age of ten years at the
 “ time of his death, the sum of forty shillings: and in case the said fund
 “ shall at any time hereafter prove insufficient to answer the full sums
 “ herein above appointed for each of the charitable donations aforesaid,
 “ then, and in such case, an abatement shall be made in proportion out of
 “ each of the said several sums above specified. Provided always, that the
 “ several payments last above-mentioned, shall not take place and be
 “ made (the burial of the dead only excepted,) till the expiration of
 “ one whole year.”

The 5th section enacts, “ That the person or persons who shall be

¹ One of the Aldermen of the city of London.

“ intrusted,

“ intrusted as aforefaid, with the receipt of the faid monies, and making
 “ the payments thereout, fhall keep a true and juft account, in writing,
 “ of the receipt and expenditure of fuch monies ; which accounts all
 “ perfons fhall have liberty to infpect at feafonable times, paying for
 “ each infpection the fum of fixpence ; and all fuch perfons fo intrusted
 “ fhall give fuch fecurity for the due execution of their offices, as the
 “ faid Alderman fhall direct ; and fhall deliver true copies of fuch ac-
 “ counts, under their hands, to the faid Alderman, once in every year,
 “ on the twenty-ninth day of September, or within ten days thereafter,
 “ and at fuch other times as he fhall require.”

This Aft was repealed in the year 1770¹.

If it fhould ever appear advifable to the Legiflature, (what, I truft, will never be the cafe,) to require a fubfcription to Friendly Societies from labourers of every defcription, by means of compulfory regulations, no better model, perhaps, could be devised for rendering fuch an obligation palatable to thofe for whose benefit it would moft affuredly be framed, than the plan which has been carried into execution under an Aft, (paffed in the year 1792,) intituled, “ An Aft for eftablifhing a permanent fund for the relief and fupport of fkippers and keelmen employed in the coal trade on the river Wear, in the county of Durham, who, by ficknefs, or other accidental misfortunes, or by old age, fhall not be able to maintain themfelves and their families ; and alfo for the relief of the widows and children of fuch fkippers and keelmen.”

The Aft recites, that “ the fkippers and keelmen employed in navigating keels in the coal trade upon the river Wear, are very numerous, and, from the nature of their employment, are obliged to refide
 “ moftly in the fame parifh or townfhip ; fo that when they or their families become objects of parochial relief, either the parifh or townfhip in which they are fettled is grievoufly burthened, or fufficient
 “ provision is not made for their fupport ; and whereas great benefit
 “ will result to the faid fkippers and keelmen, and their families, and a
 “ reduction of the Poor Rates in the parifhes or townfhips where they
 “ are fettled will be effected, by forming fuch fkippers and keelmen

¹ By 10 Geo. 3. c. 53.

“ into

“ into a Society, and establishing a permanent fund, by the allowance of
 “ a small sum out of their respective wages, which they are willing to
 “ make, to be applied for the relief and support of themselves and fami-
 “ lies, in case of sickness, old age, or infirmity, and of their widows
 “ and children :” and enacts, that the skippers and keelmen navigating
 keels in the coal-trade upon the river Wear, shall be formed into a
 Society.

The 2d § appoints 41 guardians of the Society, who are to continue
 in office one year, and till a new election takes place in the manner
 prescribed by the Act.

By the 3d §, the guardians are constituted a body politic and corporate:
 and are likewise empowered, (without licence in mort-main,) to pur-
 chase or receive such lands or tenements as may be wanted for the esta-
 blishment of an hospital, with it's necessary offices and appurtenances.

The 4th § enacts, “ that the said guardians, and their successors, to be
 “ elected as herein-after directed, shall and may, and they are hereby
 “ authorized and empowered to, provide an hospital for the reception
 “ and maintenance of such skippers and keelmen, employed, or to be
 “ employed, in the coal trade, on the river Wear, as shall, by sickness,
 “ or other accidental misfortunes, or by becoming decrepit, or worn out
 “ with age, be rendered incapable of maintaining themselves or their
 “ families ; or shall provide for such skippers or keelmen, by allowing
 “ them certain pensions, or otherwise, as to the said guardians and their
 “ successors shall seem meet, and most for the advantage of the intended
 “ charity ; and also to relieve the widows and children of such skippers
 “ and keelmen, provided such children be not of the age of 12 years ;
 “ or if of that age, or upwards, not capable of getting a livelihood, by
 “ reason of lameness, blindness, or other infirmities, so far forth as the
 “ income and revenues, which shall or may be vested in the said
 “ guardians, and their successors, will extend, for the purposes aforesaid.”

§ 5. “ Provided always, that no skipper or keelman shall be entitled
 “ to any of the benefits of this Act, unless he shall produce, or cause to
 “ be produced, to the said guardians, or their successors, a certificate
 “ from the stewards of the said Society of keelmen, herein-after men-
 “ tioned, and their successors, to be elected as herein-after directed, or
 “ any

“ any five or more of them, in writing under their hands, declaring
 “ such skipper or keelman to be a fit object of the charity, and entitled
 “ to the benefit thereof; and that no widow, child, or children, of any
 “ skipper or keelman, shall be relieved, or entitled to any allowance
 “ under this Act, unless he, she, or they, or some person on his, her, or
 “ their behalf, shall produce a certificate to the said guardians, or their
 “ successors, from the said stewards, or their successors, or any five or
 “ more of them, in writing under their hands, signifying that such widow
 “ was the lawful wife, and is the widow, and that such child or children
 “ was or were the lawful child or children of such skipper or keelman,
 “ and is or are under the age of 12 years; or if of that age or up-
 “ wards, incapable of getting a livelihood, by reason of lameness,
 “ blindness, or other infirmity, and that such widow, or child or chil-
 “ dren, respectively, is or are proper objects of the said charity.”

§ 6. “ Provided also, that no skipper or keelman, nor any widow or
 “ children of any skipper or keelman, shall have, receive, or enjoy,
 “ any benefit or provision under this Act, unless such skipper or keel-
 “ man shall have contributed his quota towards the fund hereby directed
 “ to be raised, for the space of one entire year, without wilful or in-
 “ tentional interruption. And provided also, that no skipper or keel-
 “ man, nor the widow or children of any skipper or keelman, who
 “ shall have contributed his quota towards the fund aforesaid for the
 “ space of one entire year, but shall afterwards cease to be employed as
 “ a skipper or keelman on the said river Wear, shall be entitled to
 “ any relief whatsoever from the said fund, unless such skipper or
 “ keelman, respectively, shall, from the time of his ceasing to be so
 “ employed, pay or contribute, towards the said fund, such sum or sums
 “ of money as the said guardians, or their successors, or the major part
 “ of them, shall direct or appoint, not exceeding, in the whole, four-
 “ pence per week, weekly and every week, during the time he shall
 “ continue unemployed, except where the cessation of employment
 “ shall be occasioned by his being impressed into his Majesty’s service, or
 “ by old age, sickness, or other infirmity.”

The 7th § enacts, “ That any three or more of the said guardians
 “ for the time being shall be a committee, and shall meet from time
 “ to time, upon the first Tuesday in every month, in the vestry-room of

“ the parish church in the town of Sunderland aforesaid, or at such
 “ other place or places within the parishes of Sunderland or Bishop
 “ Wearmouth, and at such other time or times, as they shall think fit to
 “ appoint ; and such committee shall have power, when assembled as
 “ aforesaid, in the name of the said corporation, and on their account,
 “ to apply the monies arising and to be received by virtue of this Act,
 “ and vested in the said corporation, for the relief and support of such
 “ skippers and keelmen, and their widows and children, as are before
 “ described ; and to elect and appoint, and at their pleasure to remove,
 “ displace, and supply, any officers, servants, or other person or persons
 “ to be employed in the business of the said corporation, (other than
 “ and except the stewards of the said Society herein-after appointed, and
 “ such officers and persons as shall have been appointed by a majority
 “ of the guardians of the said Society ;) and to direct and appoint such
 “ salaries and perquisites, or other rewards, for their labour or service
 “ therein, as the said committee shall approve or think proper ; and to
 “ do, manage, transact, and determine all such other matters and things
 “ as to them shall appear necessary and convenient for effecting the
 “ purposes of this Act.”

§ 8. “ Provided always, That the management, transactions, and
 “ accounts, of such committee, shall be from time to time, and at all
 “ times hereafter, subject and liable to such audit and inspection, al-
 “ lowance, disallowance, and controul of all or such of the guardians
 “ of the said hereby erected corporation, as by any bye-laws or ordi-
 “ nances of the same corporation shall be for that purpose directed and
 “ appointed.”

The 9th § enacts, “ That each respective coal-fitter or fitters, or
 “ copartnership of fitters, upon the river Wear, shall, on the twenty-
 “ first day of December, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two,
 “ or within ten days next before the said twenty-first day of December,
 “ appoint a place and time, and duly give notice thereof to the several
 “ skippers and keelmen then bound or belonging to him or them, or
 “ employed on his or their work, for a general meeting of all his or
 “ their skippers and keelmen ; who shall, at the time and place so to
 “ be appointed, meet and, assemble together ; and after having chosen a
 “ chairman of such meeting, they, or the greater number of them so
 “ assembled

“ assembled, shall proceed to name or elect one skipper belonging to
 “ such work, who shall be and become a steward of the said Society of
 “ keelmen, until the twenty-first day of December then next follow-
 “ ing: and on the twenty-first day of December in every year for
 “ ever thereafter, or within ten days next before such twenty-first day
 “ of December, a new choice or election of stewards, for each work,
 “ shall, in like manner, be had and taken by the said skippers and keel-
 “ men, of each respective work, or the greater part of them present at
 “ such meeting to be appointed as aforesaid, for the year then next fol-
 “ lowing; each of which stewards shall continue and remain a stew-
 “ ard, for the work for which he shall be so elected, until the next an-
 “ nual election of stewards shall take place, in manner aforesaid; and, in
 “ case of an equality of votes for such chairman, shall have and exer-
 “ cise a double, or casting, vote.”

The 10th § enacts, “ That the said stewards so to be elected and
 “ appointed as last mentioned, shall, on the first day of January, in the
 “ year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three, and
 “ on the first day of January in every year for ever thereafter, (except
 “ in any year when the first day of January shall fall on a Sunday, and
 “ then, the Monday next following,) meet and assemble together, at
 “ some convenient place in the town of Sunderland aforesaid, at ten of
 “ the clock in the forenoon, and, after having appointed a chairman
 “ of such meeting, they, or the greater number of them then assem-
 “ bled, shall proceed to name and elect forty-one persons to be the
 “ guardians of the said Society for the year ensuing, of which number
 “ the several Representatives in Parliament for the county of Durham,
 “ and for the city of Durham aforesaid, for the time being, and two
 “ of his Majesty’s Justices of the Peace of and for the said county of
 “ Durham, being acting magistrates at the town of Sunderland aforesaid,
 “ shall be six, and the remaining thirty-five of which number shall be
 “ coal-fitters trading upon the river Wear aforesaid; which said forty-
 “ one persons, so to be elected, shall be and continue guardians of the
 “ said Society until the next annual election shall take place in manner
 “ aforesaid; and in case of an equality of votes, such chairman shall
 “ have and exercise a double, or casting, vote; and in case of the death
 “ of any of the guardians so to be elected, the vacancy or vacancies,

“ thereby occasioned, shall not be supplied until the next annual day of election ; yet the corporation hereby established shall be deemed full and complete, notwithstanding such vacancy or vacancies.”

The 11th § enacts, “ That it shall and may be lawful for the said guardians for the time being, or any twenty-one or more of them, to make, ordain, and constitute such and so many bye-laws, orders, ordinances, and constitutions, as to them, or any twenty-one or more of them, shall seem necessary and convenient for the establishing of the said hereby-erected corporation, and carrying on the affairs thereof, and for appointing a collector, officers, servants, and others to be employed therein, and for the better applying of the money hereby directed to be raised and received, and providing for the persons entitled to the benefits of this Act, and for auditing the accounts, and controlling, allowing, or disallowing the transactions of the said committee, and the same bye-laws, orders, ordinances, and constitutions so made, to put in use accordingly; and at their will and pleasure to revoke, change, and alter the same; so always as such bye-laws, orders, ordinances, and constitutions, be reasonable, and not repugnant to the laws, customs, and statutes of this realm, nor any of the express provisions or regulations of this Act.

§ 12. “ And for raising a fund for the good intents and purposes aforesaid, be it enacted, That each and every person who shall be employed as a skipper or keelman, for the purpose of navigating and conducting a keel, by any fitter, or copartnership of fitters, upon the said river Wear, shall, during such his employment, pay, contribute, or allow such sum or sums of money as the said guardians, or their successors, or the major part of them, shall from time to time direct or appoint, not exceeding in the whole the sum of one halfpenny for each and every chaldron of coals which shall be carried in each such keel; which said sum or sums of money such fitter, or copartnership of fitters, or other person or persons employing each such skipper or keelman, shall be at liberty, and is hereby authorized and required, to deduct and retain out of the wages due to such skipper or keelman respectively, and pay over the same to such officer or officers as shall be appointed under this Act for collecting and receiving the same.”

The 13th § orders, “ That all the stoppages, allowances, or payments,

“ments, which shall become due by virtue, or in pursuance of, this Act, shall be paid to, and collected by, the person or persons to be appointed to receive the same, as aforesaid, on the first Thursday in the month of January, and the first Thursday in the month of July, in each and every year; the first payment thereof to be made on Thursday the fourth day of January 1793, for the six months then immediately preceding, according to a written muster-roll or particular to be kept by each fitter, or copartnership of fitters, or other person or persons by whom such skippers and keelmen are respectively employed, containing the number of keels employed by each of them respectively, and also the number of skippers and keelmen belonging thereto, and what number of tides have been gone or performed by such keels respectively, and such other particulars as shall be sufficient to ascertain, with accuracy, what stoppages or allowances ought to be kept or retained by such fitter, or copartnership of fitters, or other person or persons respectively, and paid over according to the directions of this Act; and that the person or persons so employed to collect such stoppages or allowances, as aforesaid, shall be furnished or supplied with a duplicate of such muster-roll or particular, properly authenticated, under their hands, by such fitters or other persons respectively, or their respective clerks or agents.”

The 14th § empowers any “two or more of his Majesty’s Justices of the Peace in and for the said county of Durham, and they are” thereby “required, at the request of the guardians of the said Society for the time being, or any five or more of them, by warrant under their hands, to summon such fitters and collectors respectively before them, and to examine them upon oath respectively as to the truth of the copy or duplicate of the said muster-roll or particular, and as to the sums of money paid and received for, or on account of, the stoppages or allowances so to be made as aforesaid; and in case of any embezzlement or misapplication of the money so received by them, by warrant under their hands, to levy such sum or sums of money as shall appear to have been so embezzled or misapplied, by distress and sale of the goods and chattels of the person or persons offending, together with the charges or expences necessarily incident thereto; and to pay the money so to be levied, after deducting thereout such

3

“necessary

“ necessary charges and expences as aforesaid, to the guardians of the
 “ said Society for the time being, or any five of them, to be by them
 “ applied to the purposes of this Act; and if such fitters or collectors,
 “ or any of them, shall refuse or neglect, when so summoned, to ap-
 “ pear before the said Justices, according to such summons; or if
 “ they shall appear, and refuse to make a full and true discovery of the
 “ matters aforesaid, upon their several oaths; or if such fitters shall
 “ refuse to pay the several sum and sums of money to accrue and be-
 “ come due from the skippers employed in their respective works, then,
 “ and in every such case, all and every such offender or offenders, for
 “ every such refusal, shall forfeit and pay any sum of money not ex-
 “ ceeding one hundred pounds, nor less than £10. at the discretion of
 “ such Justices, according to the nature, quality, and extent of the
 “ offence.”

This institution, in many particulars, appears to be consonant to those popular feelings in which wise Governments will always find their best resources. It does not indeed conform to the first principle of Friendly Societies, which is, that they shall be governed by rules of their own formation, to which the members have individually consented: but it gives them a certain degree of influence over their legislature (if I may so call it,) by the power which every member may, once a year, individually exercise in the appointment of stewards, by whom the guardians are to be chosen. This mode of creating a legislative body may, perhaps, recal to the Reader the French Constitution of 1789; which prescribed the intervention of an elective body between the People and the National Assembly; to which there was the same objection as to the medium introduced into the Society of keelmen: “ the first constituent voter has
 “ no connection with the representative legislator.” Nor are regular meetings of the members required, except for the purposes of election. This is an omission, which, though perhaps not felt by keelmen, who, from the nature of their business, must often necessarily meet together, would discourage associations in a country village, where labourers form Friendly Societies, not only in order to secure themselves a competent support in old age or sickness, but likewise in order to spend a convivial

hour with their neighbours, and to hear what is often (as Goldsmith says,) “much older than their ale,” and generally as harmless;—the news which has been collected by rustic politicians.

Whether Friendly Societies will or will not eventually contribute to reduce the Poor's Rate, the limited extent of my enquiries does not allow me peremptorily to decide. That, however, these institutions increase the comforts of the labouring classes who belong to them, will be evident from comparing the condition of those who are members of them, and of those who, in the same village, are contented to rely on the parish for relief. The former are, in general, comparatively cleanly, orderly, and sober, and consequently happy and good members of society; whilst the latter are living in filth and wretchedness, and are often, from the pressure of a casual sickness, or accident, which incapacitates them from working, tempted to the commission of improper acts, (not to say crimes,) against which the sure resource of a Benefit Club would have been the best preservative.

Although, however, I cannot speak confidently on the probability of a great reduction in the Poor's Rate being the consequence of an extension of Friendly Societies, (whilst that national tax has no bounds assigned to it but what depend on the caprice, humanity, or discrimination of Overseers, and Justices of the Peace,) I flatter myself the Reader will, in the course of the following pages, meet with some not unimportant information relative to the state and progress of these useful institutions*. I have been induced to detail the rules of Clubs in different parts of England, with a view of enabling those, whose practical experience in matters of this nature authorize them to legislate for Friendly Societies, to construct such approved regulations, as might,

* In addition to the various Societies reported in the Second Volume of this Work, I will here notice a Club in the parish of Nuneham, Oxfordshire, to which such of Lord Harcourt's labourers, as are approved of by his Lordship, pay 1d. each per week; to which Lord Harcourt adds the like sum. This forms a fund to which they may have recourse upon any exigency: should they misconduct themselves, or attempt to draw out their subscription upon pretences, which, in the eye of their employer, were deemed frivolous, they could only take their own part without touching Lord Harcourt's. In case of death, their funeral expences are defrayed, and the remainder (which includes both the labourer's and Lord Harcourt's subscription,) goes to the deceased's family. It is not uncommon for hard-working men to possess £5. or £6. in this fund.

with great propriety, be adopted by almost every Society, with such alterations as their particular circumstances and local situation might require.

In the following Tables, (which I believe are the first of the kind that have ever been laid before the Public,) the annual receipts, payments, mortality, &c. in several Clubs, since their institution, are minutely and accurately particularized. I regret that they are not more numerous; and do not embrace a period of years sufficiently long to enable us to determine, with tolerable precision, whether the allowances are, in general, too liberal, or too scanty, in proportion to the subscriptions. Few, however, as they may be, they were not collected and constructed without considerable expence and trouble. The persons who are entrusted with the management of the funds of a Box Club are even more reluctant than parish-officers to gratify that curiosity which solicits information concerning receipts and disbursements. Nor are the books of a Friendly Society always intelligible to those who can procure access to them. The statements, however, which I have obtained, will, I am persuaded, as far as they go, be of use to those who are more inclined, and better qualified, than myself, to enter into the intricacies of annuitant calculation; and may prove not unserviceable appendages to Dr. Price's Tables¹, which have been formed upon *data* which the Public are unacquainted with.

Statement

² The following scheme of a Friendly Society is suggested by Dr. Price himself. He says: " Let the Society, at its first establishment, consist of 100 persons, all between 30 and 40; " and whose mean age may therefore be reckoned 36; and let it be supposed to be always " kept up to this number, by the admission of new members, between the ages of 30 and 40, " as old members die off. Let the contribution of each member be four-pence per week, " making, from the whole body, an annual contribution of £85. 17s. Let it be further sup- " posed, that seven of them will fall every year into disorders, that shall incapacitate them for " seven weeks. £30. 12s. of the annual contribution will be just sufficient to enable the " Society to grant 12s. per week, during their illnesses: and the remaining £55. per annum, " laid up and carefully improved at 3½ per cent, will increase to a capital that shall be sufficient, " according to the chances of life, in Tables V, VI, and VII. in the next Volume, to enable " the Society to pay to every member, *after* 67 years of age, or *upon* entering their 68th " year, an annuity, beginning with £5. and increasing at the rate of £1. every year for seven " years, till, at the age of 75, it came to be a standing annuity of £12. for the remainder of " life.

" Were

Statement of a Friendly Society of Shoemakers (at Newcastle upon Tyne,) instituted in 1719.

Subscriptions, 1s. every six weeks; and 6d. extra, each, for the funeral of a deceased member.

Allowances, 6s. a week, for one year; afterwards, 3s. 6d. till well: this is the allowance to superannuated members.

No person is allowed to work, whilst he is on the box. No printed rules.

Years ending in	No. of Members.			Deaths.			State of Fund.		
Oct. 1776	—	99	—	2	—	—	£108	4	8
1777	—	104	—	3	—	—	103	4	8
1778	—	108	—	2	—	—	112	19	7
1779	—	111	—	4	—	—	118	6	7
1780	—	118	—	10	—	—	118	3	2
1781	—	116	—	4	—	—	147	15	5
1782	—	120	—	4	—	—	151	7	2
1783	—	120	—	6	—	—	140	11	3
1784	—	115	—	4	—	—	122	11	10
1785	—	123	—	5	—	—	137	9	10
1786	—	133	—	3					
1787	—	131	—	3					
1788	—	135	—	2					
1789	—	141	—	3					
1790	—	150	—	3					
1791	—	152	—	6					
1792	—	153	—	3					
1793	—	153	—	4					
1794	—	151	—	7					
1795	—	161	—	8					
1796	—	160	—	4	—	—	350	0	0

“ Were such a Society to make it's contribution seven-pence per week, an allowance of 15s. might be made, on the same suppositions, to every member during sickness; besides the payment of an annuity beginning with £5. when a member entereth his 64th year, and increasing for 15 years, till, at 79, it became fixed, for the remainder of life, at £20.

“ If the probabilities of life are lower among the labouring Poór, than among the generality of mankind, this plan will be so much the more sure of succeeding.” Obf. on Rev. Paym. i. 140.

Another Club, consisting of persons of every description, was instituted at Newcastle in the year 1731. The regular payments (exclusive of fines,) amount annually to 8s. each member. The allowance to a sick member is 5s. a week for four weeks; then 2s. 6d. a week for four weeks more: then 5s. a week for four weeks more; and then 2s. 6d. a week for four weeks more: after which, no member can receive any more within that year; nor can any member receive more than £12. in 15 years. To superannuated members, the allowance is 1s. 6d. a-week. At the death of a member, his widow, or nominee, receives £7.; a member receives £2. 10s. (for his wife's funeral expences,) towards which each member contributes 6d.

Years.	Payments to Sick Members, &c.
1792	£ 56
1793	41
1794	31
1795	52

The fund, at present, amounts to £344. 16s. The number of members is 120. The average number of deaths, (of members' wives and widows,) during the last 10 years, has been 10 annually.

A Club of mechanics, labourers, and small farmers, which was instituted at Corby, in the county of Cumberland, in the year 1766, has now £175. in hand. Each member pays 6d. into the box every six weeks. During the first 10 years, the average number of members was 40; during the second 10 years, about 70; and the last 10 years, about 75. No regular accounts are kept: the annual receipts and payments, however, may be averaged from the above statement. Allowing the average number of members, since the commencement, to have been 62, the annual payments to the box must have been about £13. 8s. 8d. which, in 30 years, would amount to £403.: consequently £228. must have

been paid to sick members, &c. besides the interest of money lent out of the box, which might, perhaps, amount to £100. more. Ten deaths have happened since the institution of the Club; and two of these happened before the parties had been members long enough to entitle their friends to receive any thing from the box. It appears that the average number of deaths is one in three years, or one in 186 members annually. It is thought that not more than one in 70 is the proportion of sick members in this Club. A Society, however, of only 30 years standing, can only be considered as a middle-aged Club. As the Clubs at first consist entirely of young persons, between twenty and thirty years of age, and consequently, during the first ten or twenty years, the funds have increased very fast, Societies have been led to require subscriptions much too moderate for the allowances they make for sickness and funerals; and many Clubs in the Northern counties, which have been established 50 or 60 years, are now found to be declining very rapidly.

A Club at Carlisle, established 24 years ago, and which now consists of 220, or 230 members, has now about £400. in hand; but as the Club has advanced in age, the number of sick is found to have increased so much, that the fund has been almost stationary for some time, and, it is expected, will soon decline.

At Wetheral, a neighbouring village, a Club was instituted in 1780, in which the average number of members since its commencement has been 22. There are now 25 members. The payment to the box is 6d. every six weeks. The fund amounts to £63.: about £14. have been paid in allowances to sick, principally in consequence of a fever raging at Wetheral, about three years ago; and for one funeral.

State of a Friendly Society of Petty Shopkeepers, (in a Parish in the Suburbs of the Metropolis,) instituted in the year 1789.

To consist of 61 members.

TERMS OF ADMISSION.

	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
The first month - -	10	6	The fourth month - -	0	16	0
The second month -	12	0	The fifth month - -	0	18	0
The third month -	14	0	Ever afterwards to continue	1	1	0

The subscription to be 5s. *per* quarter ; each person to receive, when sick, 10s. 6d. *per* week, if able to assist themselves ; if a nurse is required, 16s. *per* week : if superannuated, £10. *per annum* ; if there be two, £10. each ; if three, £7. each ; if four, or more, on the superannuated list, the sum of £21. to be divided equally among them.

If any free member, not on the superannuated list, shall die, the sum of £10. to be allowed for his funeral ; and the sum of £5. at the decease of his lawful wife. If a superannuated member dies, the sum of £3. to be allowed for his funeral. No member can be free unless he has belonged to the Club 12 months.

Year..	No. of Mem- bers.	Greatest No. of Sick.	Fewest No. of Sick.	Deaths.	Allowances to Sick.	Subscriptions, Fines, Interest, &c.	State of the Fund.
1789	No Allowance made the first year.						£ 89 14 0
1790	60 & 61	4	3	3	£24 4 7	£ 60 5 0	112 8 7
1791	61	2	1	1	15 5 0	64 12 6	161 15 7
1792	60 & 61	4	2	3	31 8 2	64 3 0	170 14 5
1793	61	6	1	2	38 17 8	66 14 6	196 11 3
1794	60 & 61	3	1	3	27 1 8	68 1 0	221 10 7
1795	60 & 61	4	1	4	28 10 6	69 16 0	239 18 1

State

*State of a Benefit Society of Journeymen Shoemakers, Tailors, &c.
(in a Parish near the Tower,) instituted in the year 1780.*

To consist of 80 members, under the following regulations:

Subscriptions.—Entrance, 2s. 6d.; monthly payment, 1s. 3d.: when the stock is under £20. the box to be declared shut; and 1d. per week extra to be paid to support the sick; and 1s. by each member on the half-yearly night.

Benefits.—Sick.—To the sick, when the stock is above £20., 7s. per week; when under £20., 4s. per week.

Superannuated.—A member, after being six months on the box, to be declared superannuated; and to receive 4s. per week for six months more: after that, if unable to work, to receive 2s. 6d. per week for life, or till recovered.

Death.—A member's funeral £7. and his wife or nominee £5. If the member is superannuated, only £3. for his funeral.

Years.	Number of Members.	Greatest No. of Sick.	Fewest No. of Sick.	Deaths.	Payments to Sick, Funerals, &c.	Subscriptions, Fines Interest, &c.	State of Fund.
1780	35.42	No Allowance to be paid the first Year.					£ 29 0 0
1781	42.51	4	1	2	£ 27 17 9	£ 39 12 7 ¹ / ₂	40 14 10 ¹ / ₂
1782	54.56	6	2	3	54 16 6	53 7 8	39 6 0
1783	53.57	6	3	5	70 14 8 ¹ / ₂	58 9 5 ¹ / ₂	27 0 7
1784	57.59	7	2	4	58 12 4	63 4 6	31 12 9
1785	58.60	5	1	5	60 7 3	66 12 4 ¹ / ₂	37 17 10 ¹ / ₂
1786	61.58	6	3	6	58 18 8	65 9 0 ¹ / ₂	42 8 2
1787	60.56	7	1	2	60 18 8 ¹ / ₂	62 19 7 ¹ / ₂	45 9 0 ¹ / ₂
1788	55.59	7	1	5	59 16 8	56 0 9	52 13 1 ¹ / ₂
1789	56.58	5	0	1	26 13 11 ¹ / ₂	60 7 11 ¹ / ₂	86 7 1 ¹ / ₂
1790	60.62	7	2	3	43 16 10	61 9 6	103 19 9 ¹ / ₂
1791	63.61	6	1	4	55 19 3	67 14 10	115 15 4 ¹ / ₂
1792	63.64	6	3	3	76 19 10	62 5 7	101 1 1 ¹ / ₂
1793	61.64	7	1	3	51 17 3 ¹ / ₂	62 17 9	112 1 7 ¹ / ₂
1794	64.62	6	2	6	72 19 6	70 8 5	109 10 6 ¹ / ₂
1795	61.58	6	3	6	81 16 10	55 14 6	83 8 2 ¹ / ₂

State of a Benefit Society of Journeymen, Day-Labourers, &c. (in a Parish in Westminster,) instituted 1769.

To consist of 101 members.

Terms of Admission.—To pay, the first 12 months, 5s.; afterwards, 10s. 6d.

Subscriptions.—1s. 6d. per month: fine 1s. if not cleared on the quarter-day; and if not paid on the half-yearly night, the offending member to be excluded.

Allowances.—12s. per week to a sick member for one year, if so long ill; afterwards to be considered as superannuated, and allowed 10s. per week for life, or till recovered.

Deaths.—£12. for the funeral of a free member; and to his wife, or nominee, £5. For the funeral of a superannuated member, £6. No member is free, or entitled to benefits, till he has subscribed to the box for 12 calendar months.

Years.	Number of Members.	Greatest No. of Sick.	Fewest No. of Sick.	Deaths.	Payments to Sick, Funerals, &c.	Subscriptions, Fines, Interest, &c.	State of the Fund.
1769	26. 48	No	Allowance	the	first Year.	£ 38 6 0	£ 38 6 0
1770	48. 64	2	0	2	£ 52 9 6	62 11 0	51 15 6
1771	64. 78	3	1	2	57 12 0	77 18 6	72 2 0
1772	77. 85	3	1	4	63 15 0	85 17 0	94 4 6
1773	83. 94	4	1	4	79 18 6	87 12 6	101 18 0
1774	92. 90	3	1	3	71 5 6	96 7 0	128 11 0
1775	96. 101	3	0	5	85 10 0	103 0 6	146 2 0
1776	99. 101	2	0	4	83 17 0	105 10 0	167 15 0
1777	98. 100	5	1	5	94 14 6	104 3 6	177 4 0
1778	100. 101	3	0	4	82 6 0	106 5 0	201 3 0
1779	97. 101	4	1	5	90 8 6	104 7 0	215 1 0
1780	100. 101	2	0	2	58 4 0	108 1 0	265 13 0
1781	99. 101	4	2	4	91 7 0	109 2 0	283 8 0
1782	101. 99	3	1	3	78 14 6	110 15 0	315 9 6
1783	98. 100	4	1	5	92 3 0	113 1 0	336 7 6
1784	101. 98	2	0	3	70 8 6	115 10 0	381 9 6
1785	99. 100	3	1	4	90 12 0	114 18 0	405 15 6
1786	100. 98	4	1	4	89 17 6	118 6 0	434 4 0
1787	101. 97	6	2	5	113 16 0	116 12 6	437 0 6
1788	97. 100	3	1	3	83 9 6	119 5 6	472 16 6
1789	101. 99	5	1	5	108 12 0	117 4 0	481 8 6
1790	98. 101	3	0	4	95 18 6	120 2 6	505 12 6
1791	100. 101	4	2	5	111 13 6	119 14 0	513 13 0
1792	101. 98	3	1	4	98 6 6	123 10 6	538 17 0
1793	99. 101	5	1	4	104 15 0	122 15 0	556 17 0
1794	101. 97	6	2	3	107 8 6	124 6 6	574 3 6
1795	98. 100	4	1	5	102 16 0	126 12 0	597 19 6

It is much to be wished, that the Friendly Societies in different parts of the kingdom were furnished with approved models of printed forms, for admissions of new members; certificates of sickness; entries of subscriptions; fines, allowances, &c. I believe there are few Clubs in which the accounts are kept so methodically as to enable a man, who has been a member five or six years, to ascertain from them the total amount of his payments and allowances. I will not, here, particularize the many important benefits which a Club would derive from a regular, though simple, mode of book-keeping¹: but I cannot help observing, that, unless the receipts, payments, number of sick members, of funerals, &c. are recorded for a long series of years, it will be impossible hereafter to make either additions to, or deductions from, the allowances for penalties, old age, or funerals, upon just and equitable principles. The fund may have decreased; and yet the allowances in sickness may have been too moderate, and those for funerals too high, or *vice versa*. If a Club kept regular accounts, they might, likewise, adopt a rule, which appears to me to be very generally wanted. An artificer has subscribed to a Friendly Society, five or six years: the manufacture he is engaged in falls into decay; and he can no longer get employment in his parish. If he removes to another, where there is a great want of workmen in his line, he must abandon all future benefit from his six years' subscription, and commence subscriber to another Society, in which he will be entitled to no advantage whatever till he has been a member a twelvemonth. It may, perhaps, be contended, that, in checking the restless spirit of wandering from parish to parish in search of employment, these institutions only act in conformity with the Laws of Settlement². As, however, the Legislature have lately re-

¹ A collection of useful regulations; proper forms for the admission of members; certificates of illness; tables of allowances, &c. might be compressed into a sixpenny pamphlet; and would prove essentially serviceable to many Friendly Societies, who have not, always, the learning of Goldsmith's village schoolmaster: who "could write and cipher too."

² After all which can be said in favour of Laws of Settlement, there seems to be little danger, in an opulent Society, that the love of change, or the desire of bettering their condition, should often influence the labouring classes to wander from their usual place of residence. Even in those countries, in which the Law of Settlement does not prevail, we find abundant proof of the truth of Adam Smith's observation, that "a man is of all sorts of luggage the most difficult to be transported."

cognized the propriety of permitting a man to carry his labour to the best market, by prohibiting the removal of such persons as are not actually chargeable¹, it would seem, that there are no reasons of State policy, why Friendly Societies should not adopt some regulation for permitting their members, under certain circumstances, to transfer such portion of the aggregate fund of the Society, as, upon a review of the books, they might be thought entitled to, to any other Society into which they could gain admission, that would entitle them to an immediate allowance in case of sickness or accident². Another regulation much wanted in Friendly Societies, for making some allowance to sick members before they are entitled to relief from the box. The shortest period in which a member becomes free is a twelvemonth; but it may often happen, that in this interval he may be incapacitated from working; and it is hard, not only to deny him assistance, but to require the continuance of his monthly payments at a time when he perhaps cannot earn them. The prospect of receiving a benefit from an institution after one year's subscription, I am persuaded, is often thought too remote an interest by those who live from day to day; or, as the phrase is, from *hand to mouth*. Various modes of remedying this defect might, I think, be suggested, without opening a door to frauds that might injure the funds of the Society.

In a Work like the present, I can only offer short sketches (and first sketches, though useful, will often, necessarily, be very imperfect,) on many important subjects, intimately connected with the proper management of the Poor. Various points, of no small moment, must be slightly touched on, or wholly passed over. Few writers on this branch of political economy have adverted to the circumstances and situation of a class of our people, who form, perhaps, the most essential link in social order and domestic happiness: I mean the *wives* of labourers. Mr. Pitt has, indeed, in his celebrated speech above alluded to, argued very forcibly on the propriety of turning the industry of children to profit: but it is to be regretted, that this great Statesman has not favoured the

¹ By 35 Geo. 3. c. 101.

² I, however, doubt, whether Friendly Societies have any authority, under the 33 Geo. 3. c. 54. to make such transfer.

Public with his sentiments on the actual state and condition of *married women* in the labouring classes of the community. The subject is new and important; and highly merits the attention both of the politician and philanthropist. If the right, which every labourer possesses, of disposing of the produce of his labour, is the great incentive to industry; is it either unfair or unreasonable to presume, that the incapacity which married women labour under, of acquiring property¹, is one of the principal causes why they contribute so little to the fund which is to maintain a family?

In the greatest part of England, the acquisition of the necessaries of life, required by a labourer's family, rests entirely on the husband. If he falls sick, and is not a member of a Friendly Society, his wife and children must inevitably be supported by the parish. There is no other resource; for, to whatever cause it is to be ascribed, the wife, even in such an exigency, can do nothing. I do not mean to contend, that, either with a view to national profit, or individual independence, it is

¹ There are, however, a few cases, in which a married woman is presumed to be capable of acquiring property: when her husband has abjured the realm, or is banished, she may be sued as a *feme sole*, (Blackst. Comm. i. 443.) and it has been lately decided, that a married woman, who is separated from her husband, and is allowed a separate maintenance by deed, may, if she contracts debts, be sued as a *feme sole*. (1 Term Rep. 5.) By the feudal law, the lands of an heiress did not become the property of her husband; but, on her death, descended to her child, or next heir. It is by a custom, almost peculiar to England, and therefore called *the courtesy of England*, that a man, who marries a woman seised of an estate of inheritance, if she has issue born alive, is, on the death of his wife, entitled to hold her lands for his life. (Co. Litt. § 35. Blackst. Comm. ii. 126.)

As a married woman has seldom an immediate interest in acquiring property, it is not often that she adds much, by her personal exertions, to the common stock of the family; except she may be said to do so in the sense of the old proverb, (a penny saved is a penny got:—) by an economical management of the acquisitions of her husband. A married man, on the contrary, is absolute master of all he gets: this is the great spur to industry; for whilst his earnings supply him with the means of subsistence, they invest him with patriarchal power and authority.

I cannot avoid here observing, that the very inconsiderable number of female convicts, in proportion to males, who have been convicted of depredations on private property, appears to me to be principally ascribable to the different rights, and consequently the different propensities, with which our civil institutions have invested the two sexes, with regard to the acquisition and enjoyment of property. In the commission of crimes, which are produced by the vindictive passions of the human breast, the balance of criminality is more equal.

desirable that the female part of a labourer's family should perform the toilsome duties of porters and ploughmen, as is the case in Liege and Switzerland, and even in some parts of Scotland; or that they should employ those hours, which they can spare from the management of domestic concerns, in a sedentary and unwholesome manufacture, as is the case with the lace-makers in Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. The labours of the field, it is said, are adverse to child-bearing; and this is one of the reasons which I have heard assigned for the infecundity of the negroes in the West-Indies. I am not physiologist enough to say, how far this opinion is, or is not, well founded: but, I own, I suspect it to have been advanced on but slight grounds. There are, however, various occupations, which the wife of a peasant or artificer would, it is probable, be often inclined to pursue¹, were she only allowed

¹ That females are not disqualified from shining in the most active and laborious spheres of life, the following interesting biographical sketch, which was obligingly communicated to me by a friend, seems to afford very satisfactory evidence:

"Mrs. Sarah Spencer was the daughter of a gentleman in Sussex; her brother having once been high sheriff of the county. But, her family possessing only a competent landed estate, and being neither engaged, nor in circumstances to engage, in any lucrative profession, like too many others in this age of universal commerce, insensibly dwindled to nothing; and though she had been well, and genteelly, educated, and with such views as are common to people in her sphere of life, yet, on the demise of her father, she found her whole fortune did not amount to quite £300. Her sister Mary, a woman of perhaps not inferior goodness of heart, though certainly of very inferior abilities, was left in a similar predicament.

"Their persons, though not uncomely, were not so attractive as to flatter them that, without fortunes, they could marry advantageously; and a mere clown was not much more likely to be happy with them, than they could have been with him. They either had no relations, on whom they would have been permitted to quarter themselves; or they thought such a state of dependence but a more specious kind of beggary. Yet, living in an age and country, in which well-educated women not born to fortunes are peculiarly forlorn; with no habits of exertion, nor even of a rigid frugality; they soon found, that, being thus unable to work, and ashamed to beg, they had no prospect but that of pining to death in helpless and hopeless penury.

"It may be questioned, perhaps, whether even the most resolute spirits have virtue enough to embrace a life of labour, till driven to it by necessity: but it is no ordinary effort of virtue to submit to such a necessity with a becoming dignity. This virtue these sisters possessed: at a loss what else to do, they took a farm; and, without ceasing to be gentlewomen, commenced farmers. This farm they carried on for many years, much to their credit and advantage;

allowed to have a voice as to the disposal of her earnings¹. As the Law now stands, the moment she acquires them, they become the absolute property of her husband; so that it is not to be wondered at, that she conceives she has fulfilled her duty in attending to the children; and that he, conscious that the support of the family depends on his exertions, should so often become imperious and tyrannical². The instances are not few, where a stupid, drunken, and idle man, has an intelligent and industrious wife, with perhaps both the opportunity and the ability to earn enough to feed her children; but who yet is deterred

vantage; and, as far as example goes, in an instance where example is certainly of most effect, not less to the advantage of their neighbourhood. To this day the marks of their good husbandry are to be seen in the village of Rottington.

“How it is to be accounted for, without reflecting on both the good sense and the virtue of those persons in the community, whom a real patriot is the most disposed to respect, I mean the yeomanry and the peasantry of our villages, it might not be easy to say; but the fact is indisputable, that those who have been most distinguished for their endeavours to promote improvements in agriculture, have but rarely been popular characters. This was the hard fate of the Spencers; who, instead of gratitude, long experienced little else than discourtesies and opposition in their neighbourhood. The more active of them was called *Captain Sally*; and her sister, her *Man Mary*. With the Gentry around them, this was not the case: by these they were visited and respected as they deserved to be; and, not seldom, in one and the same day, have they divided their hours in helping to fill the dung-cart, and receiving company of the highest rank and distinction. And, it was hard to say, which of these offices they performed with most intelligence and grace; for, as has been observed of Virgil, they even handled the dung-fork with an air of elegance.

“To many of their poorer relations they were not only kind, but useful. Towards the close of their lives, which happened 14 or 15 years ago, even the most perverse of their neighbours saw their error; and though they continued not to court popularity, they at length became popular; and when they died, they were very sincerely regretted.”

¹ The absolute power, which a husband acquires over the property of his wife, is not only a check upon her industry, but often extremely detrimental to *her* children; as in the case of second marriages. A widow, with children, who marries again, seldom continues to preserve a parental affection for the offspring by her first husband, more especially if she has children by the second. And the misfortune is, that the second marriage not only often destroys all maternal feelings, but annuls the obligation to provide for her first issue. The second husband considers her children as intruders, and ill-treats or neglects them in such a manner that they are at last thrown on the parish.

² It is not a very uncommon article of information in the news-paper, that a labourer has exchanged wives with his neighbour, or carried his bedfellow to market with a halter about her neck, and sold her for the moderate price of five shillings.

from working, from a thorough conviction that her mate would, too probably, strip her of every farthing which she had not the ingenuity to conceal. There is, perhaps, no better mode of ascertaining what degree of comfort is enjoyed by a labourer's family, than by learning what portion of his weekly earnings he commits to his wife's disposal. It makes a very material difference whether he or she holds the purse-strings. That he can earn the most, is granted; but she can make those earnings go the farthest. I have often observed, that when the circumstances of a labouring family have enabled them to purchase a cow, the good management of the wife has preserved them from the parish as long as the cow lasted; and this even in cases where the husband was improvident and dissolute¹.

It

¹ Mr. Pitt's Bill * authorizes the persons intrusted with the management of the Poor, to supply an industrious poor family with a cow: but when this cow dies, and they apply for another, it will be extremely difficult for the parish officers to determine whether the animal has perished by neglect. If the cow should turn out a bad one, the poor people will endeavour to get rid of her, in such a manner as shall not preclude their claim on the parish for another. So that it appears to me, that this scheme of furnishing the Poor with cows will create improvidence and unthriftiness; and too probably, also, artifice and fraud. Neither do I see, who is to prevent the cow being sold. An insurance for cows is less liable to objection: every subscriber would be so much interested in the prevention of fraud, that every suspicious case would be fully investigated; besides which, there is little doubt but that many persons, who would scruple to cheat a neighbour of a farthing, would not hesitate to impose on a parish-officer. Public money is too often considered as lawful plunder. It may indeed be objected, that few labourers could raise a sufficient sum to purchase a cow: but the following very judicious observations of a Noble Lord, who has turned his attention to this subject, shew the weakness of any such objection. "When the labourer has the offer of a cow-gait, and land for winter provision, and has not money enough to purchase a cow, he generally applies to his employer, who will in all probability advance him some money; and the inhabitants of the parish, if the man has a good character, frequently subscribe to set him up, from charitable motives, and from a persuasion that by this means his family will never want relief from the parish; and this is so much the case, that, when a labourer dies, and his son takes his land and stock, he, in some cases, maintains the widow." His Lordship adds: "I know of several instances of labourers' widows, past work, who are maintained by their sons, who could not otherwise have lived without parish relief. In a village near me, where there are a great number of labourers who keep cows, the Poor's Rate is not at this time, (Jan. 1796,) above 6d. in the pound: the number of inhabitants 335.

* See App. No. xxi. § 3.

"When

It may indeed be urged, that, although the *lords of the creation* have, almost exclusively, appropriated to themselves the direction of public concerns, and the administration of property, yet, in the conduct of private life, (which, after all, is the chief business of mankind,) the female sex have borne, and ever will bear, superior sway. Their power, however, as it in a great measure depends on opinion, is liable to be overthrown by the caprices and misconduct of those under whose protection the Law has placed them. An amiable married woman, although disposed to practise the softer virtues, which are most congenial to her, and (as Milton expresses it,) “to study household good;”—which constitutes

“Woman’s domestic honour and chief praise;”

cannot render her family thriving and happy, unless she is, in some measure, countenanced and assisted by her husband. If we might form a general estimate from what occurs in the higher stations of life, it would seem, that children would not so often have to lament the prodigality of their parents, if more of the common stock were vested in the wife, and less in the husband, than is usually the case. For one extravagant mother, I am persuaded, there are at least twenty improvident fathers. In the humbler spheres of society, it still seldomer happens, that the welfare of a family is affected by the misconduct of a mother. That they, too often, want industry, must be acknowledged; but it also ought to be remembered, that they want those motives which stimulate to industry.

“When a poor man’s cow dies, it is certainly a great distress; and sometimes the owner is obliged to ask assistance to replace her, and somehow or other, they always contrive to get one; as I scarcely ever knew a cow-gait given up for want of ability to maintain a cow, except in the case of old and infirm women, who are left without children; they, (unless they have some assistance from the parish,) cannot live upon the profits of a cow, nor can they manage it properly. Should a case of this sort occur, the parish-officers would act very unwisely in refusing assistance, as a very trifling allowance, together with the cow, would enable a woman to live; whereas, by refusing any assistance, they oblige the woman to part with her cow, and then she must have her whole subsistence from the parish.”
Remarks on the Advantages of Cottagers renting Land, by the Earl of Winchelsea. Ann. of Agric. xxvi. 232.

I have

I have been led to these reflections, by investigating the situation of some Female Benefit Clubs, which seem to be exposed to peculiar disadvantages, in consequence of the legal disability which married women labour under, of retaining the earnings of their labour in their own hands. Most of these Clubs are chiefly composed of married women: as the principal inducement to enter into them, is, to insure a decent subsistence during the lying-in month; a period, in which, of all others, a labourer's wife is in most need of extrinsic assistance. The laudable objects, however, of these excellent institutions, may be entirely frustrated by the exercise of that legal authority with which a husband is invested. As he is entitled to receive his wife's earnings, he can not only prevent her from paying her regular subscription to the Club; but if she falls sick, he is, I conceive, no less authorized by law to demand the allowance which is granted by the Society, and to appropriate it to his own use.

This hardship, to which females are exposed, has been so often stated, and so strongly represented to me, in the course of my enquiries, that I am confident I could, if it were necessary, procure sufficient evidence, that it has actually been experienced by not a few members of Female Friendly Societies. It requires, however, no great knowledge of human nature, to determine, even without such evidence, that, where man is invested with arbitrary power, he will frequently abuse it. But whether this evil admits of correction, and what that correction should be, I leave to the consideration of those superior understandings, who can, almost intuitively, comprehend the various bearings, nice relations, and apt dependencies, of political institutions; and can determine, from practical experience, whether the subordination of the female sex is a necessary consequence of the moral constitution of the world, or merely a defect of positive law.

Many other imperfections in Friendly Societies might be pointed out, which, it might seem, would admit of a cure from legislative interference. I am, however, thoroughly convinced, that if Parliament attempts any farther regulation of these useful establishments, the incli-

nation of the labouring classes to enter into them will be greatly damped, if not entirely repressed. The Acts already passed, although they are known, and generally understood, to have been framed with the most benevolent notions, and do really confer substantial benefits on these institutions, have created much alarm. Nay, they have certainly annihilated many Societies. At the same time it is but fair to confess, that they *may* have raised others. This, however, is more difficult to ascertain. Any farther favours from Parliament would irretrievably lessen the confidence which is still entertained by the members of most Benefit Clubs, that the Legislature will not interfere in controuling associations, which do not appear, from any evidence which has as yet been laid before the Public, to be adverse to economy, good morals, or public tranquillity¹. I have indeed more than once heard it insinuated, that Friendly Societies are apt to degenerate into Debating Clubs, and that convivial meetings on a Saturday night become the aptest vehicles for disseminating principles subversive of subordination and submission to the laws of our country. I have also heard it asserted, that the members of Friendly Societies, from being accustomed to assemble at ale-houses, are not only stimulated by interested landlords, but encouraged by the contagion of ill examples, in habits of drunkenness; that the money which is spent on a club-night, is entirely lost to a labourer's family; and that there are various ways in which the earnings of industry might be applied more advantageously to the morals of the labourer, and the comfort of his family. Friendly Societies, it is true, like all other human contrivances, have their defects. It is, however, though a short, a sufficient answer to such objections as I have noticed, and to some others which it is unnecessary to enumerate, that these institutions do not aim at *perfection*, but *improvement*. They are not intended to be that "faultless monster which the world ne'er saw;" but it is a sufficient proof of their ex-

¹ Any attempt to combine these *voluntary* associations with parochial *taxes*, will, I am persuaded, do much harm; and lessen that sense of independence, which a member of a Benefit Club, totally unconnected with a Poor's Rate, now enjoys.

cellence,

cellence, that they are congenial to the social habitudes and prejudices of the labourer ; and that, if they cannot correct the inclination, (which is too often caused by hard labour,) for conviviality and dissipation, they at least convert a vicious propensity into an useful instrument of economy and industry, and secure to their members, (what can seldom be purchased at too dear a rate,) subsistence during sickness, and independence in old age.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.