

employing two labourers and a boy. A third class, from 120 to 300 acres, and these were generally men of substance, and employed four, five, or more labourers. A fourth class—farmers of still more extensive farms—also existed, but not in great numbers. Now if this latter system be compared with the present practice, the difference will be obvious and clear enough. In the first class we have found the labourer to be required, a lad by the year, and an occasional labourer. Take four of such farms at 100 acres, and we have not less than six permanent labourers provided for. Take four farms of the second class, or say 200 acres, and we have at least twelve of such labourers permanently employed; and take 700 acres from four other farms of the third class, and we shall have forty labourers permanently employed, or in round numbers, taking the whole together, fifty eight labourers to 1000 acres of land, thus parcelled out in small farms. Now, besides the maintenance of the fifty eight labourers on the twelve farms enumerated, we must assume, as equally certain, that the families of the farmers also derived their subsistence, and, taking them at the usual rate of five to a family, we consequently have sixty more individuals maintained by agricultural labour on 1000 acres of land. These appear to be well-founded facts, and well warrant the conclusion arising from them, as to produce and maintenance. What number of hands are now generally required or employed on a farm of 1000 acres? An able writer on agriculture says, fifteen. Now if we displace the labourer and farmer and their families from 1000 acres, say, to make way for one farm, the result would be simply this: the displacing of 103 persons from all connexion with the soil and its produce as to them; in other words, supplying the place of 118 by fifteen only, and driving the 103 consequently from their former home and subsistence, to find the latter elsewhere. Now this certainly is a sad change to them, but it is assumed to be advantageous to a better system of tillage, and to afford more produce with less cost. If the 103 labourers displaced were machines, and did not require food themselves, it might be so far true; but as they still require maintenance, whether employed or not, this makes it more than doubtful that even any real benefit is acquired. In modern proofs and evidence of daily occurrence, the more labour the more produce is found to be sounder. Sir James Stewart in his "Enquiry into the Principles of Political Economy," says, that "the truly political statesman must give proper encouragement to the advancement of agriculture, *that there may be a constant surplus of subsistence*; for without a surplus there can never be enough." Now, is there a surplus in every country in Europe, except in England, where the means are actually more abundant for creating it? We rely on this surplus elsewhere to supply our deficiency, and make a great outcry against the corn laws, as if their destruction would get at this surplus on easier terms. It does certainly appear to be an odd course or reasoning, to reduce the richest country in the world to depend on the poorer countries, and that the latter should have their surplus of subsistence to sell to their richer neighbours, who cannot even supply their own wants. The solution of the problem is not difficult nor doubtful, if not solved in a great measure already by what is written. There were said to be in 1821, from statistical surveys then published, not less than eleven millions of acres arable and tillage in this country, (11,350,500.) I shall assume them to be now at eleven millions and a half. If a fifth merely of this amount be also assumed as let in farms of 1000 acres or more each, then we have 2300 farms, where not less than 103 individual labourers and farmers are taken off from their labour of cultivation; that is, in other words, 29,900 persons are discharged from cultivating, that before found their subsistence in so doing, and from the produce that still afforded to the rest of the community their full share, for there was then no distress similar to what has been lately witnessed. It has been recently proved by evidence, in the allotment system, in a hundred thousand instances, and shewn in this Magazine, that doubling the labour on land doubled the produce. I refer to the pages thereof for the proofs. We come, then, to a triumphant solution of the problem above; but we must go a step further, and carry it cut a step further ere we attain to that surplus, without which, Sir James Stewart says, and says truly, we shall never have enough. If instead of 29,900 individuals displaced, we assume that 29,900 additional labourers would have doubled the produce of the 2,300 large farms alluded to, then we have the mighty difference of 59,800 hands so well applied, and so well fed, that the surplus produce for sale is doubled. If it were only the same, it makes an extraordinary difference in the state of the country, and would soon, very soon, dispose of the question of the corn laws; that is, the produce would be such as never to need or call for their application. Then it may be fairly assumed that this capability exists; but does the disposition, the will, to embrace and use them co-exist with those able to use them? It is clear beyond any doubt whatever, that labour produces all the capital in the world, and reproduces it again when expended. It is therefore clear, beyond all manner of doubt, that labour should never be lost, never be wasted—that there should be no idleness; for the idle man as well as the industrious one is a consumer, and must be fed. He will feed himself if employed, and take from no one. You must feed him whether you employ him or not, and thus take a little from every one *without any return whatever*. It may be a very clever thing apparently to clear a farm of 103 parties, all obtaining subsistence from it, and giving the surplus to the community; but what becomes of them? They must still now, as before, be fed, and their regular means destroyed whereby they benefitted others; at the same time, who is to feed them, and out of what store? Why,

out of that produced by others' labour, so that this will be unduly taxed to support the men who could and did so easily support themselves, and give a surplus to the community. I trust I cannot be mistaken in what it is my wish to impress on the mind of the reader. It is simply and truly to insure an increase, not a decrease, of agricultural labour, as the most certain and infallible means of increasing the stores of the country at the least cost, and with the very best advantage. Difficulties at first setting out in this advantageous course may arise, for it is always difficult to reform a bad habit; but it is only at first; for every step makes the course more easy, and the ultimate profit is so great that it is well worth attempting. But in giving more labour to the soil, another equally beneficial effect is, the certain consequence, viz., the maintenance of the poor will actually become nominal; they will in reality, thus maintain themselves, and increase their comforts, of which they ought never to be deprived. To the corn laws, and to the poor laws, with all their *amendments*, we may thus bid adieu, for that their operation will not be called for. Corn will be produced at home more than we can eat: the poor, when fully employed to do so, will need no other assistance than their reasonable wages.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE ALLOTMENT SYSTEM.

The plan for improving the condition of the labourer in agriculture, by allotting to him small portions of land, which we so strenuously advocate, has met with powerful support from the writer of the article No. 81, in the *Quarterly Review*; and we ardently wish that it were possible to prevail upon every landed proprietor to give it an attentive perusal: it demonstrates the folly, the inhumanity, and ruinous consequences of the course pursued in Sussex, Surrey, Essex, and other places towards the labourer in agriculture, whose wages being utterly insufficient for the support of his family, the deficiency is supplied by a vexatious tax upon all the inhabitants of the parish. The demoralising tendency of this system is really shocking; and although "an amended criminal code, a well organised police, and an improved prison discipline, may render the detection of guilt more certain, and the infliction of punishment more speedy; yet all these improvements will go but a very little way towards thinning the despairing, and consequently desperate host, whom want and woe impel with an irresistible force towards the doors of our workhouses, penitentiaries and gaols."

We feel persuaded that every farmer who employs a man with a family, would find it his interest to furnish his labourer with a small quantity of land, at a fair rent, putting him at the same time in the way of keeping it constantly manured. But as nothing makes so powerful an impression as facts and illustrations we have devoted the present little volume exclusively to that object, in order to prove to demonstration the eligibility of the plan by which the Society proposes to ameliorate the condition of the agricultural labourer; and we cannot, we conceive, commence our work more appropriately than by citing from the writer just alluded to, some interesting passages tending to exhibit in a concise form the principal causes that have led to the peasant's degraded condition. To commence with the inclosures, and the severance of the labourer from the land:—

"In the year 1762, (says the *Quarterly Review*,) the commons and wastes belonging to the parish of Snettisham, in Norfolk, were divided and inclosed; at that period, forty one cottagers were found entitled to common rights, and in lieu of each right, three acres of land were assigned in severalty; these allotments were gradually taken away from the cottages, and thrown into the adjoining farms. In 1804, only ten cottagers remained in the parish occupying land; each of these had from two to ten acres; on this they grew turnips, barley, and wheat, and kept cows, and from the period of the inclosure in 1762, down to 1804, no instance occurred in which any of those who thus occupied small allotments of land, had been relieved by the parish, while those who had lost their allotments had become regular pensioners.

"The parish of Abriugdon Pigots, in Cambridgeshire, was inclosed in 1770: before the inclosure, every poor man had a cow. On the inclosure, the owners of common rights had allotments assigned to them, but they were soon severed from the cottages, and thrown into the adjoining farms. Before the inclosure, no poor's rates had been levied; but ever since the allotments were taken away from the cottages, the poor's rates have been gradually increasing, and they now bear a very large proportion to the rental."

We here refer our readers to other cases, in proof of the injurious effects of inclosing waste lands, and depriving labourers of their hitherto available resources, as instanced in the case of the Shottebrook peasantry, as also to a similar case relative to the parish of North Creak, near Burnham, in Norfolk.

"In the parish of Liddington, in consequence of the same system of depriving cottagers of land, the poor's rates, which, in the year 1751, were only sixpence in the pound, became four shillings in the year 1801, and have been since annually increasing."

The baneful effects of the absorption of small farms into larger ones, are thus described:—

"The extent to which not only the occupation, but also the proprietorship of land was carried in ancient times, cannot be conceived by those who confine their attention to the present arrangements of society. In the parish of Clapham, in Sussex, there is a farm called Holt; it contains one hundred and sixty acres, and is now in the occupation of one tenant. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it seems to have been a hamlet in which there were at least twenty two proprietors of land; the documents rela-