WILLIAM COBBETT

RURAL RIDES

INTRODUCTION BY PROF. ASA BRIGG, M.A., B.SC.

IN TWO VOLS. VOLUME ONE

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VOLUME ONE

'There is no better way of rediscovering a lost but still not forgotten England than to turn to the colourful pages of William Cobbett's *Rural Rides*,' writes Asa Briggs in the Introduction to this volume. 'Already when Cobbett began to write the accounts of his journeys in 1821, the England which he had known as a boy was beginning to look and to feel different. The landscape was changing as a result of the double impact of agricultural enclosure and the growth of towns: society too was changing as a result of the combined influences of industry, finance and war. To many of Cobbett's contemporaries the changes were good, visible signs of the "march of improvement"; to Cobbett and his followers they were bad, but it still seemed that there was time enough to reverse them. "Events are working together", Cobbett wrote in 1825, "to make the country worth living in which, for the great body of the people, is at present hardly the case."

'It was for the sake of discovering the true state of affairs and appealing to others to help promote the proper remedies that Cobbett began to travel round England.'

The illustration depicts the birth-place at Farnham, Surrey, of William Cobbett.

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EVERYMAN, I will go with thee,

and be thy guide,

In thy most need to go by thy side

WILLIAM COBBETT

Born in 1762, the self-taught son of a labourer from Farnham, Surrey. Served as a soldier, but withdrew to Philadelphia to avoid persecution. Prosecuted for libel, 1797, and returned to London, 1800, where he edited a Radical paper. Imprisoned, and went to America again, 1817–19. M.P. for Oldham, 1832. Died in 1835.

WILLIAM COBBETT

Rural Rides

IN TWO VOLUMES · VOLUME ONE

INTRODUCTION BY
ASA BRIGGS, M.A., B.SC.

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INTRODUCTION

THERE is no better way of rediscovering a lost but still not forgotten England than to turn to the colourful pages of William Cobbett's *Rural Rides*. Already when Cobbett began to write the accounts of his journeys in 1821, the England which he had known as a boy was beginning to look and to feel different. The landscape was changing as a result of the double impact of agricultural enclosure and the growth of towns: society too was changing as a result of the combined influences of industry, finance, and war. To many of Cobbett's contemporaries the changes were good, visible signs of the 'march of improvement': to Cobbett and his followers they were bad, but it still seemed that there was time enough to reverse them. 'Events are working together,' Cobbett wrote in 1825, 'to make the country worth living in which, for the great body of people, is at present hardly the case.' In order to restore the best in the past it was necessary to root out the causes of decay, causes which were all interrelated in what Cobbett came to believe was one great 'system,' 'the Thing.' In the name of true conservatism, therefore, he appealed for a radical reform of the House of Commons.

It was for the sake of discovering the true state of affairs and appealing to others to help promote the proper remedies that Cobbett began to travel round England. He rode on relentlessly, even after Whig parliamentary reform in 1832 seemed merely to parody his expectations. The account of the last ride printed in these two volumes was penned on the eve of the first elections for the reformed Parliament. Although Cobbett himself was elected a member, the new 'collective wisdom,' as he always called the House of Commons, proved no wiser than the old. The system went on, and the Thing continued to grow. What has happened between 1832 and the present day gives a certain sturdy pathos to the main themes of *Rural Rides*.

The sturdiness, however, is stronger than the pathos. There are few books in the English language which are as robust as this. When in 1830 Cobbett first assembled in book form the

descriptions of his journeys which had already appeared at regular intervals in his *Political Register*, he was presenting his readers with a portrait as well as a landscape. He had put the whole of himself into *Rural Rides*, not merely his impressions or his opinions, and the modern reader learns from his book as much about the personality and development of England's greatest radical as about towns and fields or politics and economics. On an August evening in 1826, in a Wiltshire inn, as the sun was setting, and the rooks were 'skimming and curving over the tops of the trees' and a flock of sheep were 'nibbling their way in from the down and going to their fold,' he mused about the shape of his 'life of adventure, of toil, of peril, of pleasure, of ardent friendship and not less ardent enmity.' 'After filling me with wonder,' he went on, 'that a heart and mind so wrapped up in everything belonging to the gardens, the fields, and the woods should have been condemned to waste themselves away amidst the stench, the noise, and the strife of cities, it brought me to the present moment.' 'Nothing is *so swift as thought*: it runs over a life-time in a moment.' The form of *Rural Rides* was just as suited for such long-term contemplation as it was for the statement of grievances, and the author was free to trace connections or to digress into asides according to his mood. Cobbett's digressions—about the formation of clouds, the pretty faces of the local girls, the history of parish churches—are often both vivid and charming: the connections, however, were what interested him most. Just as he came to discern one great 'system' in all the separate signs of national corruption—paper money, the national debt, patronage and sinecures, the 'wen' of London, the economic power of the Jews and the religious appeal of the Methodists, Malthus and Pitt, machinery and utilitarian education—so he came to see one great unifying purpose in his life. Even his enforced flight from England to the United States in 1817 to escape from the 'Gagging Bills' of Lord Sidmouth seemed in retrospect to have been part of one grand design. 'The trip which Old Sidmouth and crew gave me to America,' he wrote in August 1823, 'was attended with some interesting consequences; amongst which were the introducing of the Sussex pigs into the American farm yards; the introduction of the Swedish turnip into the American fields; the introduction of American apple-trees into England; and the introduction of the making, in England, of the straw plat, to supplant the Italian. One thing more, and that is of more

importance than all the rest, Peel's Bill arose out of the "puff-out" Registers; these arose out of the trip to Long Island; and out of Peel's Bill has arisen the best bothering that the wigs of the boroughmongers ever received, which bothering will end in the destruction of the boroughmongering. It is curious, and very *useful*, thus to trace events to their causes.'

Curious and useful though Cobbett's discovering of connections in his own and in national experience proved to be, it presents certain difficulties for the modern reader of *Rural Rides*. Cobbett's direct style, his devastating power of denunciation, his careful and detailed observation of nature, his unrestrained prejudices, his neat descriptions of places, speak for themselves and need no introduction. His quest for connections, however, will not be intelligible to a reader who is ignorant of the outlines of two basic chronologies—first, Cobbett's own biography, and second, the social and political biography of England from 1797 to 1832. Acquaintance with the two chronologies makes passages about Sidmouth, turnips, Long Island, and Peel's Bill meaningful and even exciting instead of elusive and unrewarding.

Cobbett was born at Farnham in Surrey in 1762 of farming stock. He was restless enough to read Swift's *Tale of a Tub* under a haystack at the age of 11, to try to run away to sea, and in 1782 to enlist as a private soldier. He served in Nova Scotia from 1784 to 1791, and soon became a sergeant. This was the summit of his military career, however, for he found himself in difficulties after denouncing the conditions of soldiers' pay. He withdrew to France in 1792 and later to the United States, where he remained until 1800. Within six months of arriving in America he had begun his career as a writer and a politician: eventually choosing the pen-name Peter Porcupine, he spent his time defending the old order and the English system of government and bitterly attacking the French revolution and republicanism. When he returned to England in 1800, he was the idol of the authorities, a protégé of the politician William Windham, and even on one occasion the dinner-companion of William Pitt himself.

Between 1800 and 1805 Cobbett moved in the middle of a world of ministerial writers, although he steadfastly refused to sell his independence. It was a sign of his traditionalist inclinations when he bought a farm at Botley in Hampshire in 1805, where he was to live for twelve years. His life was not 'designed' to peter out, however, in rural domesticity.

He began to feel increasingly dissatisfied with the stock-jobbing, money-making society which seemed to be taking the place of the old social order, and such dissatisfaction always goaded him to action. When in 1806 the new government, the 'Ministry of All the Talents,' of which his old patron Windham was a member, failed to attack what he regarded as political corruption, he turned—with some misgivings—from Toryism to Radicalism. In 1809 he made an indignant protest against the flogging of English militiamen by German mercenaries, which earned him two years in Newgate jail. He emerged an unflinching radical, and after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, he became the natural leader of a national movement for parliamentary reform. His *Political Register*, which had first appeared in 1802 as a Tory periodical, became the most influential radical newspaper in the country, particularly after its publication in 1816 in a special twopenny edition designed to appeal to journeymen and labourers.

The repressive measures of the post-war government, of which Lord Liverpool was prime minister and Lord Sidmouth home secretary, forced Cobbett to flee to the United States in 1817. On this occasion the New World seemed very different to him from what it had been in 1792. It was transformed into a paradise—a country without a standing army, with no 'tithe-eating tribe of parson-justices' and no national debt. When he returned to England in 1819, he held up the American example to his English audiences just as he had held up the English example to his American audiences during the 1790's. His English audiences were growing rapidly, however, and the severe agricultural distress of the early 1820's gave him an opportunity for the first time to appeal to countrymen as well as to journeymen and labourers. The country tours, 'rustic harangues,' county meetings, and local dinners, which all played a part in his 'agitation,' were to make up the contents of *Rural Rides*. If the final book seems to lack a plan, it must be remembered that behind it was the bigger plan of Cobbett's own political campaigning during the 1820's.

The first ride was from London to Newbury on a foggy day in October 1821. The fog prevented Cobbett from seeing much of the fields, but it did not make him lose his way or confuse his thoughts and feelings. No fog ever could do. However easily his contemporaries got lost in the foggy England of the 1820's, he was always sure of his direction, although it was frequently his prejudices rather than his experience which served as a

beacon light. The journeys of his fellow radicals gave him little sense of a common pilgrimage, and by 1830, when long-awaited parliamentary reform was round the corner, he was as bitter in denouncing rival leaders as he was the supporters of the old 'system.' When he died in 1835, his personal independence was still intact, but he was as disillusioned with the 'reformed' world as he had been with the Ministry of All the Talents. He had expected changes in the political system to reverse changes in the social and economic system: instead they consolidated them. A new generation of radicals was even prepared to take for granted forces which he had always resisted to the limits of his power. The high hopes of certain passages of *Rural Rides* were dashed.

It is clear from this brief outline how Cobbett's own biography is inextricably bound up with the social and political biography of his country, but certain details of the national chronology are important. The key dates for Cobbett were not 1793—the year when war with France broke out—or 1815—the year when the Napoleonic Wars came to an end, but 1797 and 1819. It was in 1797 that Pitt, driven by the needs of war finance, resorted to the issue of paper money. It was in 1819 that Peel's Act, violently opposed by Cobbett, authorized the return to gold and the resumption of cash payments. Cobbett was all in favour of gold and loathed 'rag money,' but he objected to the terms on which the return had been made. There had been no reduction in the national debt, no fall in taxation, and no sharing of burdens. The fundholders continued to profit from the peace just as they had profited from the war, and their parasitic hold on the community—expressed as much in the growth of the size of London as in the size of their own private fortunes—was actually increased. Cobbett believed that the grievances of farmers, who were heavily hit by the fall in prices and the greater burden of debt, and the distress of labourers, who were driven to starvation, could only be remedied by measures which a reformed parliament would pass. He did not object to the 'rotten boroughs' on grounds of abstract principles so much as on practical and moral grounds, and he disliked the political economists and 'beastly Scotch feelosophers,' who defended the financial system, as much as the boroughmongers and placemen who upheld the political system. He was not looking for Utopia but for Old England, for a land 'with room for us all, and plenty for us to eat and to drink,' a land fit for bees and not for

drones. It needs no introductory gloss to explain the last sentence of this edition of *Rural Rides*—'be the consequences to individuals what they may, the greatness, the freedom, and the happiness of England must be restored.'

ASA BRIGGS.

1956.

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RURAL RIDES

IN THE COUNTIES OF

SURREY, KENT, SUSSEX, HANTS, BERKS, OXFORD, BUCKS, WILTS, SOMERSET, GLOUCESTER, HEREFORD, SALOP, WORCESTER, STAFFORD, LEICESTER, HERTFORD, ESSEX, SUFFOLK, NORFOLK, CAMBRIDGE, HUNTINGDON, NOTTINGHAM, LINCOLN, YORK, LANCASTER, DURHAM, AND NORTHUMBERLAND, IN THE YEARS 1821, 1822, 1823, 1825, 1826, 1829, 1830, AND 1832:

WITH

ECONOMICAL AND POLITICAL OBSERVATIONS RELATIVE TO MATTERS APPLICABLE TO, AND ILLUSTRATED BY, THE STATE OF THOSE COUNTIES RESPECTIVELY.

BY

WILLIAM COBBETT

A New Edition, with Notes,
BY JAMES PAUL COBBETT, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

LONDON
PUBLISHED BY A. COBBETT, 137, STRAND.
1853.

PREFACE

THE reader will perceive that there are, in the course of these Rides, some instances in which the Author has gone over the same part of the country on more than one occasion: and it may, also, be considered that there are certain repetitions in the writing, of statements of fact, or of remarks, which might with propriety have been omitted.

That omission, however, it was not easy to effect, without such alterations as would perhaps seem objectionable; and it has therefore been thought best to reprint the several passages in their original form.

MANCHESTER, *June* 1853.

JOURNAL

FROM LONDON, THROUGH NEWBURY, TO BURGHCLERE, HURSTBOURN TARRANT, MARLBOROUGH, AND CIRENCESTER, TO GLOUCESTER

BURGHCLERE, NEAR NEWBURY, HANTS,
October 30, 1821, *Tuesday* (*Evening*).

FOG that you might cut with a knife all the way from London to Newbury. This fog does not *wet* things. It is rather a *smoke* than a fog. There are no two things in *this world ;* and, were it not for fear of *Six-Acts* (the " wholesome restraint " of which I continually feel) I might be tempted to carry my comparison further; but, certainly, there are no two things in *this world* so dissimilar as an English and a Long Island autumn. —These fogs are certainly the *white clouds* that we sometimes see aloft. I was once upon the Hampshire Hills, going from Soberton Down to Petersfield, where the hills are high and steep, not very wide at their base, very irregular in their form and direction, and have, of course, deep and narrow valleys winding about between them. In one place that I had to pass, two of these valleys were cut asunder by a piece of hill that went across them and formed a sort of bridge from one long hill to another. A little before I came to this sort of bridge I saw a smoke flying across it; and, not knowing the way by experience, I said to the person who was with me, " there is the turnpike road (which we were expecting to come to); for, don't you see the dust? " The day was very fine, the sun clear, and the weather dry. When we came to the pass, however, we found ourselves, not in dust, but in a fog. After getting over the pass, we looked down into the valleys, and there we saw the fog going along the valleys to the north, in detached parcels, that is to say, in clouds, and, as they came to the pass, they rose,

went over it, then descended again, keeping constantly along just above the ground. And, to-day, the fog came by *spells*. It was sometimes thinner than at other times; and these changes were very sudden too. So that I am convinced that these fogs are *dry clouds*, such as those that I saw on the Hampshire-Downs. Those did not *wet* me at all; nor do these fogs wet anything; and I do not think that they are by any means injurious to health.—It is the fogs that rise out of swamps, and other places, full of putrid vegetable matter, that kill people. These are the fogs that sweep off the new settlers in the American Woods. I remember a valley in Pennsylvania, in a part called *Wysihicken*. In looking from a hill, over this valley, early in the morning, in November, it presented one of the most beautiful sights that my eyes ever beheld. It was a sea bordered with beautifully formed trees of endless variety of colours. As the hills formed the outsides of the sea, some of the trees showed only their tops; and, every now-and-then, a lofty tree growing in the sea itself, raised its head above the apparent waters. Except the setting-sun sending his horizontal beams through all the variety of reds and yellows of the branches of the trees in Long Island, and giving, at the same time, a sort of silver cast to the verdure beneath them, I have never seen anything so beautiful as the foggy valley of the Wysihicken. But, I was told, that it was very fatal to the people; and that whole families were frequently swept off by the "*fall-fever*."—Thus the *smell* has a great deal to do with health. There can be no doubt that butchers and their wives fatten upon the smell of meat. And this accounts for the precept of my grandmother, who used to tell me to *bite my bread and smell to my cheese;* talk much more wise than that of certain *old grannies*, who go about England crying up "the *blessings*" of paper-money, taxes, and national debts.

The fog prevented me from seeing much of the fields as I came along yesterday; but the fields of swedish turnips that I did see were good; pretty good; though not clean and neat like those in Norfolk. The farmers here, as everywhere else, complain most bitterly; but they hang on, like sailors to the masts or hull of a wreck. They read, you will observe, nothing but the country newspapers; they, of course, know nothing of the *cause* of their "bad times." They hope "the times will mend." If they quit business, they must sell their stock; and, having thought this worth so much money, they cannot endure the thought of selling for a third of the sum. Thus they hang

on; thus the landlords will first turn the farmers' pockets inside out; and then their turn comes. To finish the present farmers will not take long. There has been stout fight going on all this morning (it is now 9 o'clock) between the *sun* and the *fog*. I have backed the former, and he appears to have gained the day; for he is now shining most delightfully.

Came through a place called "a park" belonging to a Mr. Montague, who is now *abroad;* for the purpose, I suppose, of generously assisting to compensate the French people for what they lost by the entrance of the Holy Alliance Armies into their country. Of all the ridiculous things I ever saw in my life this place is the most ridiculous. The house looks like a sort of church, in somewhat of a gothic style of building, with *crosses* on the tops of different parts of the pile. There is a sort of swamp, at the foot of a wood, at no great distance from the front of the house. This swamp has been dug out in the middle to show the water to the eye; so that there is a sort of river, or chain of diminutive lakes, going down a little valley, about 500 yards long, the water proceeding from the *soak* of the higher ground on both sides. By the sides of these lakes there are little flower gardens, laid out in the Dutch manner; that is to say, cut out into all manner of superficial geometrical figures. Here is the *grand en petit*, or mock magnificence, more complete than I ever beheld it before. Here is a *fountain*, the basin of which is not four feet over, and the water spout not exceeding the pour from a tea-pot. Here is a *bridge* over a *river* of which a child four years old would clear the banks at a jump. I could not have trusted myself on the bridge for fear of the consequences to Mr. Montague; but I very conveniently stepped over the river, in imitation of the *Colossus*. In another part there was a *lion's mouth* spouting out water into the lake, which was so much like the vomiting of a dog, that I could almost have pitied the poor Lion. In short, such fooleries I never before beheld; but what I disliked most was the apparent impiety of a part of these works of refined taste. I did not like the crosses on the dwelling house; but, in one of the gravel walks, we had to pass under a gothic arch, with a cross on the top of it, and in the point of the arch a niche for a saint or a virgin, the figure being gone through the lapse of centuries, and the pedestal only remaining as we so frequently see on the outsides of Cathedrals and of old churches and chapels. But the good of it was, this gothic arch, disfigured by the hand of old Father Time, was composed of Scotch fir wood, as rotten as a

pear; nailed together in such a way as to make the thing appear, from a distance, like the remnant of a ruin! I wonder how long this sickly, this childish, taste is to remain? I do not know who this gentleman is. I suppose he is some honest person from the 'Change or its neighbourhood; and that these *gothic arches* are to denote the *antiquity of his origin!* Not a bad plan; and, indeed, it is one that I once took the liberty to recommend to those Fundlords who retire to be country-'squires. But I never recommended the *Crucifixes!* To be sure the Roman Catholic religion may, in England, be considered as a *gentleman's religion*, it being the most *ancient* in the country; and, therefore, it is fortunate for a Fundlord when he happens (if he ever do happen) to be of that faith.

This gentleman may, for anything that I know, be a *Catholic;* in which case I applaud his piety and pity his taste. At the end of this scene of mock grandeur and mock antiquity I found something more rational; namely, some hare hounds, and, in half-an-hour after, we found, and I had the first hare-hunt that I had had since I wore a smock-frock! We killed our hare after good sport, and got to Burghclere in the evening to a nice farm-house in a dell, sheltered from every wind, and with plenty of good living; though with no gothic arches made of Scotch-fir!

October 31. *Wednesday.*

A fine day. Too many hares here; but, our hunting was not bad; or, at least, it was a great treat to me, who used, when a boy, to have my legs and thighs so often filled with thorns in running after the hounds, anticipating with pretty great certainty, a "*waling*" of the back at night. We had grey-hounds a part of the day; but the ground on the hills is so *flinty*, that I do not like the country for coursing. The dogs' legs are presently cut to pieces.

Nov. 1. *Thursday.*

Mr. Budd has swedish turnips, mangel-wurzel, and cabbages of various kinds, transplanted. All are very fine indeed. It is impossible to make more satisfactory experiments in *transplanting* than have been made here. But this is not a proper place to give a particular account of them. I went to see the best cultivated parts round Newbury; but I saw no spot with half the "feed" that I see here, upon a spot of similar extent.

HURSTBOURN TARRANT, HANTS,
Nov. 2. Friday.

This place is commonly called *Uphusband*, which is, I think, as decent a corruption of names as one would wish to meet with. However, Uphusband the people will have it, and Uphusband it shall be for me. I came from Berghclere this morning, and through the park of Lord Caernarvon, at Highclere. It is a fine season to look at woods. The oaks are still covered, the beeches in their best dress, the elms yet pretty green, and the beautiful ashes only beginning to turn off. This is, according to my fancy, the prettiest park that I have ever seen. A great variety of hill and dell. A good deal of water, and this, in one part, only wants the *colours* of American trees to make it look like a "*creek;*" for the water runs along at the foot of a steepish hill, thickly covered with trees, and the branches of the lowermost trees hang down into the water and hide the bank completely. I like this place better than *Fonthill, Blenheim, Stowe,* or any other gentleman's grounds that I have seen. The *house* I did not care about, though it appears to be large enough to hold half a village. The trees are very good, and the woods would be handsomer if the larches and firs were *burnt*, for which only they are fit. The great beauty of the place is, the *lofty downs*, as steep, in some places, as the roof of a house, which form a sort of boundary, in the form of a part of a crescent, to about a third part of the park, and then slope off and get more distant, for about half another third part. A part of these downs is covered with trees, chiefly beech, the colour of which, at this season, forms a most beautiful contrast with that of the down itself, which is so green and so smooth! From the vale in the park, along which we rode, we looked apparently almost perpendicularly up at the downs, where the trees have extended themselves by seed more in some places than others, and thereby formed numerous salient parts of various forms, and, of course, as many and as variously formed glades. These, which are always so beautiful in forests and parks, are peculiarly beautiful in this lofty situation and with verdure so smooth as that of these chalky downs. Our horses beat up a score or two of hares as we crossed the park; and, though we met with no *gothic arches* made of Scotch-fir, we saw something a great deal better; namely, about forty cows, the most beautiful that I ever saw, as to colour at least. They appear to be of the Galway-breed. They are called, in this country, *Lord Caernarvon's breed.* They

have no horns, and their colour is a ground of white with black or red spots, these spots being from the size of a plate to that of a crown-piece; and some of them have no small spots. These cattle were lying down together in the space of about an acre of ground: they were in excellent condition, and so fine a sight of the kind I never saw. Upon leaving the park, and coming over the hills to this pretty vale of Uphusband, I could not help calculating how long it might be before some Jew would begin to fix his eye upon Highclere, and talk of putting out the present owner, who, though a *Whig*, is one of the best of that set of politicians, and who acted a manly part in the case of our deeply injured and deeply lamented queen. Perhaps his lordship thinks that there is no fear of the Jews as to *him*. But does he think that his tenants can sell fat hogs at *7s. 6d.* a score, and pay him more than a third of the rent that they have paid him while the debt was contracting? I know that such a man does not lose his estate at once; but, without rents, what is the estate? And that the Jews will receive the far greater part of his rents is certain, unless the interest of the debt be reduced. Lord Caernarvon told a man, in 1820, that *he did not like my politics*. But what did he mean by my *politics?* I have no politics but such as he *ought* to like. I want to do away with that infernal *system*, which, after having beggared and pauperised the labouring classes, has now, according to the report, made by the ministers themselves to the House of Commons, plunged the owners of the land themselves into a state of distress, for which those ministers themselves can hold out no remedy! To be sure I labour most assiduously to destroy a system of distress and misery; but is that any reason why a *lord* should dislike my politics? However, dislike, or like them, to them, to those very politics, the lords themselves *must come at last*. And that I should exult in this thought, and take little pains to disguise my exultation, can surprise nobody who reflects on what has passed within these last twelve years. If the landlords be well; if things be going right with them; if they have fair prospects of happy days; then what need they care about me and *my politics;* but if they find themselves in "*distress,*" and do not know how to get out of it; and if they have been plunged into this distress by those who "dislike my politics;" is there not *some reason* for men of sense to hesitate a little before they *condemn* those politics? If no great change be wanted; if things could remain even; then men may, with some show of reason, say that I am disturbing that which ought to be let

alone. But if things cannot remain as they are; if there must be a *great change;* is it not folly, and, indeed, is it not a species of idiotic perverseness, for men to set their faces, without rhyme or reason, against what is said as to this change by *me,* who have, for nearly twenty years, been warning the country of its danger, and foretelling that which has now come to pass and is coming to pass? However, I make no complaint on this score. People disliking my politics "neither picks my pocket, nor breaks my leg," as Jefferson said by the writings of the Atheists. If they be pleased in disliking my politics, I am pleased in liking them; and so we are both enjoying ourselves. If the country want no assistance from me, I am quite sure that I want none from it.

Nov. 3. Saturday.

Fat hogs have lately sold, in this village, at 7*s.* 6*d.* a score (but would hardly bring that now), that is to say, at 4½*d.* a pound. The hog is weighed whole, when killed and dressed. The head and feet are included; but, so is the lard. Hogs fatted on peas or barley-meal may be called the very best meat that England contains. At Salisbury (only about 20 miles off) fat hogs sell for 5*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a score. But, then, observe, these are *dairy hogs,* which are not nearly so good in quality as the corn-fed hogs. But I shall probably hear more about these prices as I get further towards the West. Some wheat has been sold at Newbury-market for £6 a load (40 bushels); that is at 3*s.* a bushel. A considerable part of the crop is wholly unfit for bread flour, and is not equal in value to good barley. In not a few instances the wheat has been carried into the gate, or yard, and thrown down to be made dung of. So that, if we were to take the average, it would not exceed, I am convinced, 5*s.* a bushel in this part of the country; and the average of all England would not, perhaps, exceed 4*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* a bushel. However, Lord Liverpool has got a *bad harvest* at last! That *remedy* has been applied! Somebody sent me some time ago, that stupid newspaper, called the *Morning Herald,* in which its readers were reminded of my "*false prophecies,*" I having (as this paper said) foretold that wheat would be at *two shillings a bushel before Christmas.* These gentlemen of the "*respectable* part of the press" do not mind lying a little upon a pinch. [See Walter's *Times* of Tuesday last, for the following: "*Mr. Cobbett has thrown open the front of his house at Kensington, where he proposes to sell meat at a reduced price.*"] What I said was this:

that, if the crop were good and the harvest fine, and gold continued to be paid at the Bank, we should see wheat at four, not two, shillings a bushel before Christmas. Now, the crop was, in many parts, very much blighted, and the harvest was very bad indeed; and yet the average of England, including that which is destroyed, or not brought to market at all, will not exceed 4*s*. a bushel. A farmer told me, the other day, that he got *so little* offered for some of his wheat, that he was resolved not to take any more of it to market; but to give it to hogs. Therefore, in speaking of the price of wheat, you are to take in the unsold as well as the sold; that which fetches nothing as well as that which is sold at high price.—I see, in the Irish papers, which have overtaken me on my way, that the system is working the Agriculturasses in "the sister-kingdom" too! The following paragraph will show that the *remedy* of a *bad harvest* has not done our dear sister much good. "A very numerous meeting of the Kildare Farming Society met at Naas on the 24th inst., the Duke of Leinster in the chair; Robert de la Touche, Esq., M.P., vice-president. Nothing can more strongly prove the BADNESS OF THE TIMES, and very *unfortunate state of the country*, than the necessity in which the Society finds itself of *discontinuing its premiums, from its present want of funds*. The best members of the farming classes have got so much in arrear in their subscriptions that they have declined to appear or to dine with their neighbours, and general depression damps the spirit of the most industrious and *hitherto prosperous* cultivators." You are mistaken, Pat; it is not the *times* any more than it is the *stars*. Bobadil, you know, imputed his beating to the *planets:* "planet-stricken, by the foot of Pharaoh!"—"No, Captain," says Welldon, "indeed it was a *stick*." It is not the *times*, dear Patrick: it is *the government*, who having first contracted a great debt in depreciated money, are now compelling you to pay the interest at the rate of three for one. Whether this be *right*, or *wrong*, the Agriculturasses best know: it is much more their affair than it is mine; but be you well assured that they are only at the beginning of their sorrows. Ah! Patrick, whoever shall live only a few years will see a *grand change* in your state! Something a *little more rational* than "Catholic Emancipation" will take place, or I am the most deceived of all mankind. This *debt* is your best, and, indeed, your *only friend*. It must, at last, give the THING a *shake*, such as it never had before.—The accounts which my country newspapers give of the failure of farmers are

perfectly dismal. In many, many instances they have put an end to their existence, as the poor deluded creatures did who had been ruined by the South Sea Bubble! I cannot help feeling for these people, for whom my birth, education, taste, and habits give me so strong a partiality. Who can help feeling for their wives and children, hurled down headlong from affluence to misery in the space of a few months! Become all of a sudden the mockery of those whom they compelled, perhaps, to cringe before them! If the labourers exult, one cannot say that it is unnatural. If *Reason* have her fair sway, I am exempted from all pain upon this occasion. I have done my best to prevent these calamities. Those farmers who have attended to me are safe while the storm rages. My endeavours to stop the evil in time cost me the earnings of twenty long years! I did not sink, no, nor *bend*, beneath the heavy and reiterated blows of the accursed system, which I have dealt back blow for blow; and, blessed be God, I now see it *reel!* It is staggering about like a sheep with water in the head: turning its pate up on one side: seeming to listen, but has no hearing: seeming to look, but has no sight: one day it capers and dances: the next it mopes and seems ready to die.

Nov. 4. *Sunday.*

This, to my fancy, is a very nice country. It is continual hill and dell. Now and then a *chain* of hills higher than the rest, and these are downs or woods. To stand upon any of the hills and look around you, you almost think you see the ups and downs of sea in a *heavy swell* (as the sailors call it) after what they call a gale of wind. The undulations are endless, and the great variety in the height, breadth, length, and form of the little hills, has a very delightful effect.—The soil, which, to look *on* it, appears to be more than half flint stones, is very good in quality, and, in general, better on the tops of the lesser hills than in the valleys. It has great tenacity; does not *wash away* like sand, or light loam. It is a stiff, tenacious loam, mixed with flint stones. Bears saint-foin well, and all sorts of grass, which make the fields on the hills as green as meadows, even at this season; and the grass does not burn up in summer.—In a country so full of hills one would expect endless runs of water and springs. There are none: absolutely none. No water-furrow is ever made in the land. No ditches round the fields. And, even in the *deep valleys*, such as that in which this village is situated, though it winds round for ten or fifteen miles, there

is no run of water even now. There is the *bed* of a brook, which will run before spring, and it continues running with more or less water for about half the year, though, some years, it never runs at all. It rained all Friday night; pretty nearly all day yesterday; and to-day the ground is as dry as a bone, except just along the street of the village, which has been kept in a sort of stabble by the flocks of sheep passing along to and from Appleshaw fair. In the deep and long and narrows valleys, such as this, there are meadows with very fine herbage and very productive. The grass very fine and excellent in its quality. It is very curious, that the soil is much *shallower* in the vales than on the hills. In the vales it is a sort of hazle-mould on a bed of something approaching to gravel; but, on the hills, it is stiff loam, with apparently half flints, on a bed of something like clay first (reddish, not yellow) and then comes the chalk, which they often take up by digging a sort of wells; and then they spread it on the surface, as they do the clay in some countries, where they sometimes fetch it many miles and at an immense expense. It was very common, near Botley, to chalk land at an expense of sixteen pounds an acre.—The land here is excellent in quality generally, unless you get upon the highest chains of hills. They have frequently 40 bushels of wheat to the acre. Their barley is very fine; and their saint-foin abundant. The turnips are, in general, very good at this time; and the land appears as capable of carrying fine crops of them as any land that I have seen. A fine country for sheep: always dry: they never injure the land when feeding off turnips in wet weather; and they can lie down on the dry; for the ground is, in fact, never wet except while the rain is actually falling. Sometimes, in spring-thaws and thunder-showers, the rain runs down the hills in torrents; but is gone directly. The flocks of sheep, some in fold and some at large, feeding on the sides of the hills, give great additional beauty to the scenery.—The woods, which consist chiefly of oak thinly intermixed with ash, and well set with underwood of ash and hazel, but mostly the latter, are very beautiful. They sometimes stretch along the top and sides of hills for miles together; and, as their edges, or outsides, joining the fields and the downs, go winding and twisting about, and as the fields and downs are naked of trees, the sight altogether is very pretty.—The trees in the deep and long valleys, especially the elm and the ash, are very fine and very lofty; and, from distance to distance, the rooks have made them their habitation.—This sort of country, which, in irregular

shape, is of great extent, has many and great advantages. Dry under foot. Good roads, winter as well as summer, and little, very little expense. Saint-foin flourishes. Fences cost little. Wood, hurdles, and hedging-stuff cheap. No shade in wet harvests. The water in the wells excellent. Good sporting country, except for coursing, and too many flints for that.—What becomes of all the *water?* There is a spring, in one of the cross valleys that runs into this, having a basin about thirty feet over, and about eight feet deep, which they say sends up water once in about 30 or 40 years; and boils up so as to make a large current of water.—Not far from Uphusband the *Wansdike* (I think it is called) crosses the country. Sir Richard Colt Hoare has written a great deal about this ancient boundary, which is, indeed, something very curious. In the ploughed fields the traces of it are quite gone; but they remain in the *woods* as well as on the downs.

Nov. 5. *Monday.*

A *white frost* this morning. The hills round about beautiful at sun-rise, the rooks making that noise which they always make in winter mornings. The starlings are come in large flocks; and, which is deemed a sign of a hard winter, the fieldfares are come at an early season. The haws are very abundant; which, they say, is another sign of a hard winter. The wheat is high enough here, in some fields, "to hide a hare," which is, indeed, not saying much for it, as a hare knows how to hide herself upon the bare ground. But it is, in some fields, four inches high, and is green and gay, the colour being finer than that of any grass.—The fuel here is wood. Little coal is brought from Andover. A load of faggots does not cost above 10*s.* So that, in this respect, the labourers are pretty well off. The wages here and in Berkshire, about 8*s.* a week; but the farmers talk of lowering them.—The poor-rates heavy, and heavy they must be, till taxes and rents come down greatly.—Saturday and to-day Appleshaw sheep-fair. The sheep, which had taken a rise at Weyhill-fair, have fallen again even below the Norfolk and Sussex mark. Some South-Down lambs were sold at Appleshaw so low as 8*s.* and some even lower. Some Dorsetshire ewes brought no more than a pound; and, perhaps, the average did not exceed 28*s.* I have seen a farmer here who can get (or could a few days ago) 28*s.* round for a lot of fat South-Down wethers, which cost him just that money, when they were lambs, *two years ago!* It is impossible that they can have

cost him less than 24*s.* each during the two years, having to be fed on turnips or hay in winter, and to be fatted on good grass. Here (upon one hundred sheep) is a loss of £120 and £14 in addition at five per cent. interest on the sum expended in the purchase; even suppose not a sheep has been lost by death or otherwise.—I mentioned before, I believe, that fat hogs are sold at Salisbury at from 5*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* the *score* pounds, dead weight.—Cheese has come down in the same proportion. A correspondent informs me that one hundred and fifty Welsh sheep were, on the 18th of October, offered for 4*s.* 6*d.* a head, and that they went away unsold! The skin was worth a shilling of the money! The following I take from the *Tyne Mercury* of the 30th of October. "Last week, at Northawton fair, Mr. Thomas Cooper, of Bow, purchased three milch cows and forty sheep, for £18 16*s.* 6*d.*!" The skins, four years ago, would have sold for more than the money. The *Hampshire Journal* says, that, on 1 November (Thursday) at Newbury Market, wheat sold from 88*s.* to 24*s.* the quarter. This would make an average of 56*s.* But very little indeed was sold at 88*s.*, only the prime of the old wheat. The best of the new for about 48*s.* and, then, if we take into view the great proportion that cannot go to market at all, we shall not find the average, even in this rather dear part of England, to exceed 32*s.*, or 4*s.* a bushel. And, if we take all England through, it does not come up to that, nor anything like it. A farmer very sensibly observed to me yesterday, that, "if we had had such a crop and such a harvest a few years ago, good wheat would have been £50 a load;" that is to say, 25*s.* a bushel! Nothing can be truer than this. And nothing can be clearer than that the present race of farmers, generally speaking, must be swept away by bankruptcy, if they do not, in time, make their bow, and retire. There are two descriptions of farmers, very distinct as to the effects which this change must naturally have on them. The word *farmer* comes from the French, *fermier*, and signifies *renter*. Those only who rent, therefore, are, properly speaking, *farmers*. Those who till their own land are *yeomen;* and, when I was a boy, it was the common practice to call the former *farmers* and the latter *yeoman-farmers*. These yeomen have, for the greater part, been swallowed up by the paper-system which has drawn such masses of money together. They have, by degrees, been *bought out*. Still there are some few left; and these, if not in debt, will stand their ground. But all the present race of mere renters must give way, in one manner or another. They must

break, or drop their style greatly; even in the latter case, their rent must, very shortly, be diminished more than two-thirds. Then comes the *landlord's turn;* and the sooner the better.—In the *Maidstone Gazette* I find the following: "Prime beef was sold in Salisbury market, on Tuesday last, at 4*d.* per lb., and good joints of mutton at 3½*d.*; butter, 11*d.* and 12*d.* per lb.—In the west of Cornwall, during the summer, pork has often been sold at 2½*d.* per lb."—This is very true; and what can be better? How can Peel's Bill work in a more delightful manner? What nice "*general working of events!*" The country rag-merchants have now very little to do. They have *no discounts.* What they have out they *owe:* it is so much *debt:* and, of course, they become poorer and poorer, because they must, like a mortgager, have more and more to pay as prices fall. This is very good; for it will make them disgorge a part, at least, of what they have swallowed, during the years of high prices and depreciation. They are worked in this sort of way: the tax-collectors, the excise-fellows, for instance, hold their sittings every six weeks, in certain towns about the country. They will receive the country rags, if the rag man can find, and will give, security for the due payment of his rags, when they arrive in London. For want of such security, or of some formality of the kind, there was a great bustle in a town in this county not many days ago. The excise-fellow demanded sovereigns, or Bank of England notes. Precisely how the matter was finally settled I know not; but the reader will see that the exciseman was only taking a proper precaution; for, if the rags were not paid in London, the loss was his!

MARLBOROUGH,
Tuesday noon, Nov. 6.

I left Uphusband this morning at 9, and came across to this place (20 miles) in a post-chaise. Came up the valley of Uphusband, which ends at about 6 miles from the village, and puts one out upon the Wiltshire downs, which stretch away towards the west and south-west, towards Devizes and towards Salisbury. After about half a mile of down we came down into a level country; the flints cease, and the chalk comes nearer the top of the ground. The labourers along here seem very poor indeed. Farm houses with twenty ricks round each, besides those standing in the fields; pieces of wheat, 50, 60, or 100 acres in a piece; but a group of women labourers, who were attending

the measurers to measure their reaping work, presented such an assemblage of rags as I never before saw even amongst the hoppers at Farnham, many of whom are common beggars. I never before saw *country* people, and reapers too, observe, so miserable in appearance as these. There were some very pretty girls, but ragged as colts and as pale as ashes. The day was cold too, and frost hardly off the ground; and their blue arms and lips would have made any heart ache but that of a seat-seller or a loan-jobber. A little after passing by these poor things, whom I left, cursing, as I went, those who had brought them to this state, I came to a group of shabby houses upon a hill. While a boy was watering his horses, I asked the ostler the *name* of the place; and, as the old women say, "you might have knocked me down with a feather," when he said, "*Great Bedwin.*" The whole of the houses are not intrinsically worth a thousand pounds. There stood a thing out in the middle of the place, about 25 feet long and 15 wide, being a room stuck up on unhewed stone pillars about 10 feet high. It was the Town Hall, where the ceremony of choosing the *two members* is performed. "This place sends members to parliament, don't it?" said I to the ostler. "Yes, sir." "Who are members *now?*" "I *don't know,* indeed, sir."—I have not read the *Henriade* of Voltaire for these 30 years; but in ruminating upon the ostler's answer; and in thinking how the world, yes, *the whole world,* has been deceived as to this matter, two lines of that poem came across my memory.

Représentans du peuple, les Grands et le Roi:
Spectacle magnifique! Source sacrée des lois![1]

The Frenchman, for want of understanding the THING as well as I do, left the eulogium incomplete. I therefore here add four lines, which I request those who publish future editions of the *Henriade* to insert in continuation of the above eulogium of Voltaire.

Représentans du peuple, que celui-ci gnore,
Sont fait à miracle pour garder son Or!
Peuple trop heureux, que le bonheur inonde!
L'envie de vos voisins, admiré du monde![2]

[1] I will not swear to the very *words;* but this is the meaning of Voltaire: "Representatives of the people, the Lords and the King: "*Magnificent* spectacle! *Sacred* source of the Laws!"

[2] "Representatives of the people, of whom the people know nothing, must be miraculously well calculated to have the care of their money! Oh! people too happy! overwhelmed with blessings! The *envy* of *your neighbours,* and *admired* by the *whole world!*"

The first line was suggested by the ostler; the last by the words which we so very often hear from the bar, the bench, the *seats*, the pulpit, and the throne. Doubtless my poetry is not equal to that of Voltaire; but my rhyme is as good as his, and my *reason* is a great deal better.—In quitting this villainous place we see the extensive and uncommonly ugly park and domain of Lord Aylesbury, who seems to have tacked park on to park, like so many outworks of a fortified city. I suppose here are 50 or 100 farms of former days swallowed up. They have been bought, I dare say, from time to time; and it would be a labour very well worthy of reward by the public, to trace to its source, the money by which these immense domains, in different parts of the country, have been formed! — Marlborough, which is an ill-looking place enough, is succeeded, on my road to Swindon, by an extensive and very beautiful down about 4 miles over. Here nature has flung the earth about in a great variety of shapes. The fine short smooth grass has about 9 inches of mould under it, and then comes the chalk. The water that runs down the narrow side-hill valleys is caught, in different parts of the down, in basins made on purpose, and lined with clay apparently. This is for watering the sheep in summer; sure sign of a really dry soil; and yet the grass never *parches* upon these downs. The chalk holds the moisture, and the grass is fed by the dews in hot and dry weather.—At the end of this down the high-country ends. The hill is high and steep, and from it you look immediately down into a level farming country; a little further on into the dairy-country, whence the North-Wilts cheese comes; and, beyond that, into the vale of Berkshire, and even to Oxford, which lies away to the north-east from this hill.—The land continues good, flat and rather wet to Swindon, which is a plain country town, built of the stone which is found at about 6 feet under ground about here.—I come on now towards Cirencester, through the dairy country of North Wilts.

CIRENCESTER,
Wednesday (noon), 7 Nov.

I slept at a dairy-farm house at Hannington, about eight miles from Swindon, and five on one side of my road. I passed through that villainous hole, Cricklade, about two hours ago; and, certainly, a more rascally looking place I never set my eyes on. I wished to avoid it, but could get along no other way. All along here the land is a whitish stiff loam upon a bed of soft

stone, which is found at various distances from the surface, sometimes two feet and sometimes ten. Here and there a field is fenced with this stone, laid together in walls without mortar or earth. All the houses and out-houses are made of it, and even covered with the thinnest of it formed into tiles. The stiles in the fields are made of large flags of this stone, and the gaps in the hedges are stopped with them.—There is very little wood all along here. The labourers seems miserably poor. Their dwellings are little better than pig-beds, and their looks indicate that their food is not nearly equal to that of a pig. Their wretched hovels are stuck upon little bits of ground *on the road side*, where the space has been wider than the road demanded. In many places they have not two rods to a hovel, It seems as if they had been swept off the fields by a hurricane, and had dropped and found shelter under the banks on the road side! Yesterday morning was a sharp frost; and this had set the poor creatures to digging up their little plats of potatoes. In my whole life I never saw human wretchedness equal to this: no, not even amongst the free negroes in America, who, on an average, do not work one day out of four. And this is "*prosperity*," is it? These, O Pitt! are the fruits of thy hellish system! However, this *Wiltshire* is a horrible county. This is the county that the *Gallon-loaf* man belongs to. The land all along here is good. Fine fields and pastures all around; and yet the cultivators of those fields so miserable! This is particularly the case on both sides of Cricklade, and in it too, where everything had the air of the most deplorable want.—They are sowing wheat all the way from the Wiltshire downs to Cirencester; though there is some wheat up. Winter vetches are up in some places, and look very well.—The turnips of both kinds are good all along here.—I met a farmer going with porkers to Highworth market. They would weigh, he said, four score and a half, and he expected to get 7*s*. 6*d*. a score. I expect he will not. He said they had been fed on barley-meal; but I did not believe him. I put it to his honour, whether whey and beans had not been their food. He looked surly, and pushed on.—On this stiff ground, they grow a good many beans, and give them to the pigs with whey; which makes excellent pork for the *Londoners;* but which must meet with a pretty hungry stomach to swallow it in Hampshire. The hogs, all the way that I have come, from Buckinghamshire, are without a single exception that I have seen, the old-fashioned black-spotted hogs. Mr. Blount at Uphusband has one, which now weighs

about thirty score, and will possibly weigh forty, for she moves about very easily yet. This is the weight of a good ox; and yet, what a little thing it is compared to an ox! Between Cricklade and this place (Cirencester) I met, in separate droves, about two thousand Welsh cattle, on their way from Pembrokeshire to the fairs in Sussex. The greater part of them were heifers in calf. They were purchased in Wales at from £3 to £4 10*s.* each! None of them, the drovers told me reached £5. These heifers used to fetch, at home, from £6 to £8, and sometimes more. Many of the things that I saw in these droves did not fetch, in Wales, 25*s.* And they go to no *rising* market! Now, is there a man in his senses who believes that this THING can go on in the present way? However, a fine thing, indeed, is this fall of prices! My "cottager" will easily get his cow, and a young cow too, for less than the £5 that I talked of. These Welsh heifers will calve about May; and they are just the very thing for a cottager.

GLOUCESTER,
Thursday (morning), Nov. 8.

In leaving Cirencester, which is a pretty large town, a pretty nice town, and which the people call *Cititer*, I came up hill into a country, apparently formerly a down or common, but now divided into large fields by stone walls. Anything so ugly I have never seen before. The stone, which, on the other side of Cirencester, lay a good way under ground, here lies very near to the surface. The plough is continually bringing it up, and thus, in general, come the means of making the walls that serve as fences. Anything quite so cheerless as this I do not recollect to have seen; for the Bagshot country, and the commons between Farnham and Haselemere, have *heath* at any rate; but these stones are quite abominable. The turnips are not a *fiftieth* of a crop like those of Mr. Clarke at Bergh-Apton in Norfolk, or Mr. Pym at Reygate in Surrey, or of Mr. Brazier at Worth in Sussex. I see thirty acres here that have less *food* upon them than I saw the other day, upon half an acre at Mr. Budd's at Berghclere. *Can* it be good farming to plough and sow and hoe thirty acres to get what *may* be got upon half an acre? Can that half acre cost more than a tenth part as much as the thirty acres? But, if I were to go to this thirty-acre farmer, and tell him what to do to the half acre, would he not exclaim with the farmer at Botley: "What! *drow* away all that 'ere ground between the *lains!* Jod's blood!"—With

the exception of a little dell about eight miles from Cititer, this miserable country continued to the distance of ten miles, when, all of a sudden, I looked down from the top of a high hill into *the vale of Gloucester!* Never was there, surely, such a contrast in this world! This hill is called *Burlip Hill;* it is much about a mile down it, and the descent so steep as to require the wheel of the chaise to be locked; and, even with that precaution, I did not think it over and above safe to sit in the chaise; so, upon Sir Robert Wilson's principle of taking care of *Number One,* I got out and walked down. From this hill you see the Morvan Hills in Wales. You look down into a sort of *dish* with a flat bottom, the Hills are the sides of the dish, and the City of Gloucester, which you plainly see, at seven miles distance from Burlip Hill, appears to be not far from the centre of the dish. All here is fine; fine farms; fine pastures; all inclosed fields; all divided by hedges; orchards a plenty; and I had scarcely seen one apple since I left Berkshire.—Gloucester is a fine, clean, beautiful place; and, which is of a vast deal more importance, the labourer's dwellings, as I came along, looked good, and the labourers themselves pretty well as to dress and healthiness. The girls at work in the fields (always my standard) are not in rags, with bits of shoes tied on their feet and rags tied round their ankles, as they had in Wiltshire.

JOURNAL

FROM GLOUCESTER, TO BOLLITREE IN HEREFORDSHIRE, ROSS, HEREFORD, ABINGDON, OXFORD, CHELTENHAM, BURGHCLERE, WHITCHURCH, UPHURSTBOURN, AND THENCE TO KENSINGTON

BOLLITREE CASTLE, HEREFORDSHIRE,
Friday, 9 *Nov.* 1821.

I GOT to this beautiful place (Mr. William Palmer's) yesterday, from Gloucester. This is in the parish of *Weston*, two miles on the Gloucester side of Ross, and, if not the first, nearly the first, parish in Herefordshire upon leaving Gloucester to go on through Ross to Hereford.—On quitting Gloucester I crossed the Severne, which had overflowed its banks and covered the meadows with water.—The soil good but stiff. The coppices and woods very much like those upon the clays in the south of Hampshire and in Sussex; but the land better for corn and grass. The goodness of the land is shown by the apple-trees, and by the sort of sheep and cattle fed here. The sheep are a cross between the Ryland and Leicester, and the cattle of the Herefordshire kind. These would starve in the pastures of any part of Hampshire or Sussex that I have ever seen.—At about seven miles from Gloucester I came to hills, and the land changed from the whitish soil, which I had hitherto seen, to a red brown, with layers of flat stone of a reddish cast under it. Thus it continued to Bollitree. The trees of all kinds are very fine on the hills as well as in the bottoms.—The spot where I now am is peculiarly well situated in all respects. The land very rich, the pastures the finest I ever saw, the trees of all kinds surpassing upon an average any that I have before seen in England. From the house, you see, in front and winding round to the left, a lofty hill, called *Penyard Hill*, at about a mile and a half distance, covered with oaks of the finest growth; along at the foot of this wood are fields and orchards continuing the slope of the hill down for a considerable distance, and, as the ground lies in a sort of *ridges* from the wood to the foot of the slope, the hill-and-dell is very beautiful. One of these dells with the two adjoining sides of hills is an orchard belonging to Mr. Palmer, and the trees, the ground, and everything belonging to it, put me in mind

of the most beautiful of the spots in the North of Long Island. Sheltered by a lofty wood; the grass fine beneath the fruit trees; the soil dry under foot though the rain had scarcely ceased to fall; no moss on the trees; the leaves of many of them yet green; everything brought my mind to the beautiful orchards near Bayside, Little Neck, Mosquito Cove, and Oyster Bay, in Long Island. No wonder that this is a country of *cider* and *perry;* but what a shame it is, that here, at any rate, the owners and cultivators of the soil, not content with these, should, for mere fashion's sake, waste their substance on *wine* and *spirits!* They really deserve the contempt of mankind and the curses of their children.—The woody hill mentioned before, winds away to the left, and carries the eye on to the *Forest of Dean,* from which it is divided by a narrow and very deep valley. Away to the right of Penyard Hill lies, in the bottom, at two miles distance, and on the bank of the river Wye, the town of Ross, over which we look down the vale to Monmouth and see the Welsh hills beyond it. Beneath Penyard Hill, and on one of the *ridges* before mentioned, is the parish church of Weston, with some pretty white cottages near it, peeping through the orchard and other trees; and coming to the paddock before the house, are some of the largest and loftiest trees in the country, standing singly here and there, amongst which is the very largest and loftiest walnut-tree that I believe I ever saw, either in America or in England. In short, there wants nothing but the autumnal *colours* of the American trees to make this the most beautiful spot I ever beheld.—I was much amused for an hour after daylight this morning in looking at the *clouds,* rising, at intervals, from the dells on the side of Penyard Hill, and flying to the top, and then over the hill. Some of the clouds went up in a roundish and compact form. Others rose in a sort of string or stream, the tops of them going over the hill before the bottoms were clear of the place whence they had arisen. Sometimes the clouds gathered themselves together along the top of the hill, and seemed to connect the topmost trees with the sky.—I have been to-day to look at Mr. Palmer's fine crops of *swedish turnips,* which are, in general, called "*swedes.*" These crops having been raised according to *my plan,* I feel, of course, great interest in the matter. The swedes occupy two fields: one of thirteen, and one of seventeen acres. The main part of the seventeen acre field was *drilled,* on ridges, four feet apart, a single row on a ridge, at different times, between 16th April and 29th May. An acre and a half of this piece was *transplanted* on

four-feet ridges 30th July. About half an acre across the middle of the field was sown *broad-cast* 14th April.—In the thirteen-acre field there is about half an acre sown *broad-cast* on the 1st of June; the rest of the field was *transplanted;* part in the first week of June, part in the last week of June, part from the 12th to 18th of July, and the rest (about three acres) from 21st to 23rd July. The drilled swedes in the seventeen-acre field, contain full 23 tons to the acre; the transplanted ones in *that* field, 15 tons, and the broad-cast not exceeding 10 tons. Those in the thirteen-acre field which were transplanted before the 21st July, contain 27 if not 30 tons; and the rest of *that* field about 17 tons to the acre. The broad-cast piece here (half an acre) may contain 7 tons. The shortness of my time will prevent us from ascertaining the weight by actual weighings; but, such is the crop, according to the best of my judgment, after a very minute survey of it in every part of each field.—Now, here is a little short of 800 tons of food, about the fifth part of which consists of *tops;* and, of course, there is about 640 tons of *bulb.* As to the *value* and *uses* of this prodigious crop I need say nothing; and as to the time and manner of sowing and raising the plants for transplanting, the act of transplanting, and the after cultivation, Mr. Palmer has followed the directions contained in my *Year's Residence in America;* and, indeed, he is forward to acknowledge, that he had never thought of this mode of culture, which he has followed now for three years, and which he has found so advantageous, until he read that work, a work which the *Farmer's Journal* thought proper to treat as a *romance.*—Mr. Palmer has had some *cabbages* of the large, drum-head, kind. He had about three acres, in rows at four feet apart, and at little less than three feet apart in the rows, making *ten thousand* cabbages on the three acres. He kept ninety-five wethers and ninety-six ewes (large fatting sheep) upon them for *five weeks* all but two days, ending in the first week of November. The sheep, which are now feeding off yellow turnips in an adjoining part of the same field, come back over the cabbage-ground and *scoop out the stumps* almost to the ground in many cases. This ground is going to be ploughed for wheat immediately. Cabbages are a very fine *autumn crop;* but it is the *swedes* on which you must rely for the spring, and on *housed* or *stacked* swedes too; for they will *rot* in many of our winters, if left in the ground. I have had them rot myself, and I saw, in March 1820, hundreds of acres rotten in Warwickshire and Northamptonshire. Mr. Palmer greatly prefers the

transplanting to the drilling. It has numerous advantages over the drilling; greater regularity of crop, greater certainty, the only *sure* way of avoiding the *fly*, greater crop, admitting of two months later preparation of land, can come *after vetches* cut up for horses (as, indeed, a part of Mr. Palmer's transplanted swedes did), and requiring less labour and expense. I asserted this in my *Year's Residence;* and Mr. Palmer, who has been very particular in ascertaining the fact, states positively, that the expense of transplanting is not so great as the hoeing and setting out of the drilled crops, and not so great as the common hoeings of broad-cast. This, I think, settles the question. But the advantages of the wide-row culture by no means confine themselves to the green and root crop; for Mr. Palmer drills his wheat upon the same ridges, without ploughing, after he has taken off the swedes. He drills it at *eight inches*, and puts in from eight to ten gallons to the acre. His crop of 1820, drilled in this way, averaged 40 bushels to the acre; part drilled in November, and part so late as February. It was the common Lammas wheat. His last crop of wheat is not yet ascertained; but it was better after the swedes than in any other of his land. His manner of taking off the crop is excellent. He first cuts off and carries away the *tops*. Then he has an implement, drawn by two oxen, walking on each side of the ridge, with which he cuts off the *tap root* of the swedes without disturbing the land of the ridge. Any child can then pull up the bulb. Thus the ground, clean as a garden, and in that compact state which the wheat is well known to like, is ready, at once, for drilling with wheat. As to the *uses* to which he applies the crop, tops as well as bulbs, I must speak of these hereafter, and in a work of a description different from this. I have been thus particular here, because the *Farmer's Journal* treated my book as a pack of lies. I know that my (for it is *mine*) system of cattle-food husbandry will finally be that of *all England*, as it already is that of America; but what I am doing here is merely in self-defence against the slanders, the malignant slanders, of the *Farmer's Journal*. Where is a *Whig lord*, who, some years ago, wrote to a gentleman, that "*he* would have *nothing to do* with any *reform* that *Cobbett* was engaged in?" But, in spite of the brutal *Journal*, farmers are not such fools as this lord was: they will not reject a good crop, because they can have it only by acting upon my plan; and this lord will, I imagine, yet see the day when he will be less averse from having to do with a reform in which "Cobbett" shall be engaged.

OLD HALL,
Saturday night, Nov. 10.

Went to Hereford this morning. It was market-day. My arrival became known, and, I am sure, I cannot tell how. A sort of *buz* got about. I could perceive here, as I always have elsewhere, very ardent friends and very bitter enemies; but all full of curiosity. One thing could not fail to please me exceedingly; my friends were *gay* and my enemies *gloomy:* the former smiled, and the latter, in endeavouring to screw their features into a sneer, could get them no further than the half sour and half sad: the former seemed, in their looks to say, "Here he is," and the latter to respond, "Yes, G— d—— him!"—I went into the market-place, amongst the farmers, with whom, in general, I was very much pleased. If I were to live in the county two months, I should be acquainted with every man of them. The country is very fine all the way from Ross to Hereford. The soil is always a red loam upon a bed of stone. The trees are very fine, and certainly winter comes later here than in Middlesex. Some of the oak trees are still perfectly green, and many of the ashes as green as in September.—In coming from Hereford to this place, which is the residence of Mrs. Palmer and that of her two younger sons, Messrs. Philip and Walter Palmer, who, with their brother, had accompanied me to Hereford; in coming to this place, which lies at about two miles distance from the great road, and at about an equal distance from Hereford and from Ross, we met with something, the sight of which pleased me exceedingly: it was that of a very pretty pleasant-looking lady (and *young* too) with two beautiful children, riding in a little sort of chaise-cart, drawn by *an ass*, which she was driving in reins. She appeared to be well known to my friends, who drew up and spoke to her, calling her Mrs. *Lock*, or *Locky* (I hope it was not *Lockart*) or some such name. Her husband, who is, I suppose, some young farmer of the neighbourhood, may well call himself Mr. *Lucky;* for to have such a wife, and for such a wife to have the good sense to put up with an ass-cart, in order to avoid, as much as possible, feeding those cormorants who gorge on the taxes, is a blessing that falls, I am afraid, to the lot of very few rich farmers. Mrs. *Lock* (if that be her name) is a real *practical radical.* Others of us resort to radical coffee and radical tea; and she has a radical carriage. This is a very effectual way of assailing the THING, and peculiarly well suited for the practice of the female sex.

But the self-denial ought not to be imposed on the wife only: the husband ought to set the example: and, let me hope, that *Mr. Lock* does not indulge in the use of wine and spirits, while Mrs. Lock and her children ride in a jack-ass gig; for, if he do, he wastes, in this way, the means of keeping her a chariot and pair. If there be to be any expense not absolutely necessary; if there be to be anything bordering on extravagance, surely it ought to be for the pleasure of that part of the family, who have the least number of objects of enjoyment; and for a husband to indulge himself in the guzzling of expensive, unnecessary, and really injurious drink, to the tune, perhaps, of 50 or 100 pounds a year, while he preaches economy to his wife, and, with a face as long as my arm, talks of the low price of corn, and wheedles her out of a curricle into a jack-ass cart, is not only unjust but *unmanly*.

OLD HALL,
Sunday night, 11 *November*.

We have ridden to-day, though in the rain for a great part of the time, over the fine farm of Mr. Philip Palmer, at this place, and that of Mr. Walter Palmer, in the adjoining parish of Pencoyd. Everything here is good, arable land, pastures, orchards, coppices, and timber trees, especially the elms, many scores of which approach nearly to a hundred feet in height. Mr. Philip Palmer has four acres of swedes on four-feet ridges, drilled on the 11th and 14th of May. The plants were very much injured by the *fly;* so much, that it was a question, whether the whole piece ought not to be ploughed up. However, the gaps in the rows were filled up by transplanting; and the ground was twice ploughed between the ridges. The crop here is very fine; and I should think that its weight could not be less than 17 tons to the acre.—Of Mr. Walter Palmer's swedes, five acres were drilled, on ridges nearly four feet apart, on the 3rd of June; four acres on the 15th of June; and an acre and a half transplanted (after vetches) on the fifteenth of August. The weight of the first is about twenty tons to the acre; that of the second not much less; and that of the last even, five or six tons. The first two pieces were mauled to pieces by the *fly:* but the gaps were filled up by transplanting, the ground being digged on the tops of the ridges to receive the plants. So that, perhaps, a third part, or more of the crop is due to the *transplanting*. As to the last piece, that transplanted on the 15th of August, after vetches, it is clear, that there could have been

no crop without transplanting; and, after all, the crop is by no means a bad one.—It is clear enough to me, that this system will finally prevail all over England. The "loyal," indeed, may be afraid to adopt it, lest it should contain something of "radicalism." Sap-headed fools! They will find something to do, I believe, soon, besides railing against *radicals*. We will din "*radical*" and "*national faith*" in their ears, till they shall dread the din as much as a dog does the sound of the bell that is tied to the whip.

BOLLITREE,
Monday, 12 *Nov.*

Returned this morning and rode about the farm, and also about that of Mr. Winnal, where I saw, for the first time, a plough going *without being held*. The man drove the three horses that drew the plough, and carried the plough round at the ends; but left it to itself the rest of the time. There was a skim coulter that turned the sward in under the furrow; and the work was done very neatly. This gentleman has six acres of *cabbages*, on ridges four feet apart, with a distance of thirty inches between the plants on the ridge. He has weighed one of what he deemed an average weight, and found it to weigh fifteen pounds without the stump. Now, as there are 4320 upon an acre, the weight of the acres is *thirty tons* all but 400 pounds! This is a prodigious crop, and it is peculiarly well suited for food for sheep at this season of the year. Indeed it is good for any farm-stock, oxen, cows, pigs: all like these loaved cabbages. For hogs in yard, after the stubbles are gone; and before the tops of the swedes come in. What masses of manure may be created by this means! But, above all things, for *sheep* to feed off upon the ground. Common turnips have not half the substance in them weight for weight. Then they are in the ground; they are *dirty*, and, in wet weather, the sheep must starve, or eat a great deal of dirt. This very day, for instance, what a sorry sight is a flock of fatting sheep upon turnips; what a mess of dirt and stubble! The cabbage stands boldly up above the ground, and the sheep eats it all up without treading a morsel in the dirt. Mr. Winnal has a large flock of sheep feeding on his cabbages, which they will have finished, perhaps, by January. This gentleman also has some "*radical swedes*," as they call them in Norfolk. A part of his crop is on ridges *five* feet apart with *two rows* on the ridge, a part on *four* feet ridges with *one* row on the ridge. I cannot see that

anything is gained in weight by the double rows. I think that there may be nearly twenty tons to the acre. Another piece Mr. Winnal transplanted after vetches. They are very fine; and, altogether, he has a crop that any one but a "*loyal*" farmer might envy him.—This is really the *radical* system of husbandry. *Radical* means, *belonging to the root; going to the root.* And the main principle of this system (first taught by *Tull*) is, that the *root* of the plant is to be fed by *deep tillage*, while it is growing; and to do this we must have our *wide distances.* Our system of husbandry is happily illustrative of our system of politics. Our lines of movement are fair and straightforward. We destroy all weeds, which, like tax-eaters, do nothing but devour the sustenance that ought to feed the valuable plants. Our plants are all *well fed;* and our nations of swedes and of cabbages present a happy uniformity of enjoyments and of bulk, and not, as in the broad-cast system of Corruption, here and there one of enormous size, surrounded by thousands of poor little starveling things, scarcely distinguishable by the keenest eye, or, if seen, seen only to inspire a contempt of the husbandman. The Norfolk boys are, therefore, right in calling their swedes *Radical Swedes.*

BOLLITREE,
Tuesday, 13 *Nov.*

Rode to-day to see a *grove* belonging to Mrs. Westphalin, which contains the very finest trees, *oaks*, *chestnuts*, and *ashes*, that I ever saw in England. This grove is worth going from London to Weston to see. The lady, who is very much beloved in her neighbourhood, is, apparently, of the *old school;* and her house and gardens, situated in a beautiful dell, form, I think, the most comfortable looking thing of the kind that I ever saw. If she had known that I was in her grove, I dare say she would have expected it to blaze up in flames; or, at least, that I was come to view the premises previous to confiscation! I can forgive persons like her; but I cannot forgive the parsons and others who have misled them! Mrs. Westphalin, if she live many years, will find, that the best friends of the owners of the land are those who have endeavoured to produce such *a reform of the Parliament* as would have prevented the ruin of tenants. —This parish of Weston is remarkable for having a rector, *who has constantly resided for twenty years!* I do not believe that there is an instance to match this in the whole kingdom. However, the "*reverend*" gentlemen may be assured, that,

before many years have passed over their heads, they will be very glad to reside in their parsonage houses.

BOLLITREE,
Wednesday, 14 *Nov.*

Rode to the Forest of Dean, up a very steep hill. The lanes here are between high banks, and, on the sides of the hills, the road is a rock, the water having, long ago, washed all the earth away. Pretty works are, I find, carried on here, as is the case in all the other *public forests!* Are these things *always* to be carried on in this way? Here is a domain of thirty thousand acres of the finest timber-land in the world, and with coal-mines endless! Is this *worth nothing?* Cannot each acre yield ten trees a year? Are not these trees worth a pound a piece? Is not the estate worth three or four hundred thousand pounds a year? And does it yield *anything to the public*, to whom it belongs? But it is useless to waste one's breath in this way. We must have a *reform of the Parliament:* without it the whole thing will fall to pieces.—The only good purpose that these forests answer is that of furnishing a place of being to labourers' families on their skirts; and here their cottages are very neat, and the people look hearty and well, just as they do round the forests in Hampshire. Every cottage has a pig, or two. These graze in the forest, and, in the fall, eat acorns and beech-nuts and the seed of the ash; for, these last, as well as the others, are very full of oil, and a pig that is put to his shifts will pick the seed very nicely out from the husks. Some of these foresters keep cows, and all of them have bits of ground, cribbed, of course, at different times, from the forest: and to what better use can the ground be put? I saw several wheat stubbles from 40 rods to 10 rods. I asked one man how much wheat he had from about 10 rods. He said more than two bushels. Here is bread for three weeks, or more, perhaps; and a winter's straw for the pig besides. Are these things nothing? The dead limbs and old roots of the forest give *fuel;* and how happy are these people, compared with the poor creatures about Great Bedwin and Cricklade, where they have neither land nor shelter, and where I saw the girls carrying home bean and wheat stubble for fuel! Those countries, always but badly furnished with fuel, the desolating and damnable system of paper-money, by sweeping away small homesteads, and laying ten farms into one, has literally *stripped* of all shelter for the labourer. A farmer,

in such cases, has a whole domain in his hands, and this, not only to the manifest injury of the public at large, but in *open violation of positive law*. The poor forger is hanged; but where is the prosecutor of the monopolising farmer, though the *law* is as clear in the one case as in the other? But it required this infernal system to render every wholesome regulation nugatory; and to reduce to such abject misery a people famed in all ages for the goodness of their food and their dress. There is one farmer, in the North of Hampshire, who has nearly eight thousand acres of land in his hands; who grows fourteen hundred acres of wheat and two thousand acres of barley! He occupies what was formerly 40 farms! Is it any wonder that *paupers increase?* And is there not here cause enough for the increase of *poor*, without resorting to the doctrine of the barbarous and impious Malthus and his assistants, the *feelosofers* of the *Edinburgh Review*, those eulogists and understrappers of the Whig-Oligarchy? "This farmer has done nothing *unlawful*," some one will say. I say he has; for there is a law to forbid him thus to monopolise land. But no matter; the laws, the management of the affairs of a nation, *ought to be such as to prevent the existence of the temptation to such monopoly*. And, even now, the evil ought to be remedied, and could be remedied, in the space of half a dozen years. The disappearance of the paper-money would do the thing in time; but this might be assisted by legislative measures.—In returning from the forest we were overtaken by my son, whom I had begged to come from London to see this beautiful country. On the road-side we saw two lazy-looking fellows, in long great coats and bundles in their hands, going into a cottage. "What do you deal in?" said I, to one of them, who had not yet entered the house. "In the *medical way*," said he. And, I find, that vagabonds of this description are seen all over the country with *tea-licences* in their pockets. They vend *tea, drugs*, and *religious tracts*. The first to bring the body into a debilitated state; the second to finish the corporeal part of the business; and the third to prepare the spirit for its separation from the clay! Never was a system so well calculated as the present to degrade, debase, and enslave a people! Law, and, as if that were not sufficient, enormous subscriptions are made; everything that can be done is done to favour these perambulatory impostors in their depredations on the ignorant. While everything that can be done is done, to prevent them from reading, or from hearing of, anything that has a tendency to give them rational notions, or to better their

lot. However, all is not buried in ignorance. Down the deep and beautiful valley between Penyard Hill and the hills on the side of the Forest of Dean, there runs a stream of water. On that stream of water there is a *paper-mill*. In that paper-mill there is a set of workmen. That set of workmen do, I am told, *take the Register*, and have taken it for years! It was to these good and sensible men, it is supposed, that the *ringing of the bells* of Weston church, upon my arrival, was to be ascribed; for nobody that I visited had any knowledge of the cause. What a subject for lamentation with corrupt hypocrites! That even on this secluded spot there should be a leaven of common sense! No: *all* is not enveloped in brute ignorance yet, in spite of every artifice that hellish Corruption has been able to employ; in spite of all her menaces and all her brutalities and cruelties.

OLD HALL,
Thursday, 15 *Nov.*

We came this morning from Bollitree to *Ross-Market*, and, thence, to this place. Ross is an old-fashioned town; but it is very beautifully situated, and if there is little of *finery* in the appearance of the inhabitants, there is also little of *misery*. It is a good, plain country town, or settlement of tradesmen, whose business is that of supplying the wants of the cultivators of the soil. It presents to us nothing of rascality and roguishness of look, which you see on almost every visage in the *borough-towns*, not excepting the visages of the women. I can tell a borough-town from another upon my entrance into it by the nasty, cunning, leering, designing look of the people; a look between that of a bad (for *some* are good) Methodist parson and that of a pickpocket. I remember, and I never shall forget, the horrid looks of the villains in Devonshire and Cornwall. Some people say, "O, *poor fellows!* It is not *their* fault." No? Whose fault is it, then? The miscreants who bribe them? True, that these deserve the halter (and some of them may have it yet); but are not the takers of the bribes *equally* guilty? If we be so very lenient here, pray let us ascribe to the *Devil* all the acts of thieves and robbers: so we do; but we *hang* the thieves and robbers, nevertheless. It is no very unprovoking reflection, that from these sinks of atrocious villainy come a very considerable part of the men to fill places of emolument and trust. What a clog upon a minister to have people, bred in such scenes, forced upon him! And why does this curse

continue? However, its natural consequences are before us; and are coming on pretty fast upon each other's heels. There are the landlords and farmers in a state of absolute ruin: there is the debt, pulling the nation down like as a stone pulls a dog under water. The system seems to have fairly wound itself up; to have tied itself hand and foot with cords of its own spinning! —This is the town to which Pope has given an interest in our minds by his eulogium on the "*Man of Ross*" a portrait of whom is hanging up in the house in which I now am.—The market at Ross was very *dull*. No wheat in demand. No buyers. It must *come down*. Lord Liverpool's *remedy*, a bad harvest, has assuredly failed. Fowls *2s*. a couple; a goose from *2s*. *6d*. to *3s*.; a turkey from *3s*. to *3s*. *6d*. Let a turkey come down to *a shilling*, as in France, and then we shall soon be to rights.

Friday, 16 *Nov*.

A whole day most delightfully passed a hare-hunting, with a pretty pack of hounds kept here by Messrs. Palmer. They put me upon a horse that seemed to have been made on purpose for me, strong, tall, gentle and bold; and that carried me either over or through everything. I, who am just the weight of a four-bushel sack of good wheat, actually sat on his back from daylight in the morning to dusk (about nine hours), without once setting my foot on the ground. Our ground was at Orcop, a place about four miles distance from this place. We found a hare in a few minutes after throwing off; and in the course of the day, we had to find four, and were never more than ten minutes in finding. A steep and naked ridge, lying between two flat valleys, having a mixture of pretty large fields and small woods, formed our ground. The hares crossed the ridge forward and backward, and gave us numerous views and very fine sport. —I never rode on such steep ground before; and, really, in going up and down some of the craggy places, where the rains had washed the earth from the rocks, I did think, once or twice, of my neck, and how Sidmouth would like to see me.—As to the *cruelty*, as some pretend, of this sport, that point I have, I think, settled, in one of the chapters of my *Year's Residence in America*. As to the expense, a pack, even a full pack of harriers, like this, costs less than two bottles of wine a day with their inseparable concomitants. And as to the *time* thus spent, hunting is inseparable from *early rising;* and with habits of early rising, who ever wanted time for any business?

OXFORD,
Saturday, 17 *Nov.*

We left Old Hall (where we always breakfasted by candle-light) this morning after breakfast; returned to Bollitree; took the Hereford coach as it passed about noon; and came in it through Gloucester, Cheltenham, Northleach, Burford, Whitney, and on to this city, where we arrived about ten o'clock. I could not leave *Herefordshire* without bringing with me the most pleasing impressions. It is not for one to descend to particulars in characterising one's personal friends; and, therefore, I will content myself with saying, that the treatment I met with in this beautiful county, where I saw not one single face that I had, to my knowledge, ever seen before, was much more than sufficient to compensate to me, personally, for all the atrocious calumnies, which, for twenty years, I have had to endure; but where is my country, a great part of the present hideous sufferings of which, will, by every reflecting mind, be easily traced to these calumnies, which have been made the ground, or pretext, for rejecting that counsel by listening to which those sufferings would have been prevented; where is my country to find a compensation!—At *Gloucester* (as there were no meals on the road) we furnished ourselves with nuts and apples, which, first a handful of nuts and then an apple, are, I can assure the reader, excellent and most wholesome fare. They say that nuts of all sorts are unwholesome; if they had been, I should never have written Registers, and if they were now, I should have ceased to write ere this; for, upon an average, I have eaten a pint a day since I left home. In short, I could be very well content to live on nuts, milk, and home-baked bread.—From *Gloucester* to *Cheltenham* the country is level, and the land rich and good. The fields along here are ploughed in ridges about 20 feet wide, and the angle of this species of *roof* is pretty nearly as sharp as that of some slated roofs of houses. There is no wet under; it is the top wet only that they aim at keeping from doing mischief.—*Cheltenham* is a nasty, ill-looking place, half clown and half cockney. The town is one street about a mile long; but then, at some distance from this street, there are rows of white tenements, with green balconies, like those inhabited by the tax-eaters round London. Indeed, this place appears to be the residence of an assemblage of tax-eaters. These vermin shift about between London, Cheltenham, Bath, Bognor, Brighton, Tunbridge, Ramsgate,

Margate, Worthing, and other spots in England, while some of them get over to France and Italy: just like those body-vermin of different sorts, that are found in different parts of the tormented carcasses at different hours of the day and night, and in different degrees of heat and cold.

Cheltenham is at the foot of a part of that chain of hills, which form the sides of that *dish* which I described as resembling the vale of Gloucester. Soon after quitting this resort of the lame and the lazy, the gormandising and guzzling, the bilious and the nervous, we proceeded on, between stone walls, over a country little better than that from Cirencester to Burlip-hill.—A very poor, dull, and uninteresting country all the way to Oxford.

BURGHCLERE (HANTS),
Sunday, 18 *Nov.*

We left Oxford early, and went on, through *Abingdon* (Berks) to *Market-Ilsley*. It is a saying, hereabouts, that, at Oxford, they make the living pay for the dead, which is precisely according to the Pitt-System. Having smarted on this account, we were afraid to eat again at an inn; so we pushed on through Ilsley towards Newbury, breakfasting upon the residue of the nuts, aided by a new supply of apples bought from a poor man, who exhibited them in his window. Inspired, like Don Quixote, by the *sight of the nuts*, and recollecting the last night's bill, I exclaimed: "Happy! thrice happy and blessed, that golden age, when men lived on the simple fruits of the earth and slaked their thirst at the pure and limpid brook! when the trees shed their leaves to form a couch for their repose, and cast their bark to furnish them with a canopy! Happy age; when no Oxford landlord charged two men, who had dropped into a common coach-passenger room, and who had swallowed three pennyworths of food, 'four shillings for *teas*,' and 'eighteen pence for *cold meat*,' 'two shillings for *moulds and fire*' in this common coach-room, and 'five shillings for *beds!*'" This was a sort of grace before meat to the nuts and apples; and it had much more merit than the harangue of Don Quixote; for he, before he began upon the nuts, had stuffed himself well with goat's flesh and wine, whereas we had absolutely *fled* from the breakfast-table and blazing fire at Oxford.—Upon beholding the masses of buildings, at Oxford, devoted to what they call "*learning*," I could not help reflecting on the drones that they contain and the wasps they send forth! However, malignant as some are,

tne great and prevalent characteristic is *folly:* emptiness of head; want of talent; and one half of the fellows who are what they call *educated* here, are unfit to be clerks in a grocer's or mercer's shop.—As I looked up at what they call *University Hall,* I could not help reflecting that what I had written, even since I left Kensington on the 29th of October, would produce more effect, and do more good in the world, than all that had, for a hundred years, been written by all the members of this University, who devour, perhaps, not less than *a million pounds a year,* arising from property, completely at the disposal of the "Great Council of the Nation;" and I could not help exclaiming to myself: "Stand forth, ye big-wigged, ye gloriously feeding Doctors! Stand forth, ye *rich* of that church whose *poor* have had given them *a hundred thousand pounds a year,* not out of your riches, but out of the *taxes,* raised, in part, from the *salt* of the labouring man! Stand forth and face me, who have, from the pen of my leisure hours, sent, amongst your flocks, a hundred thousand sermons in ten months! More than you have all done for the last half century!" I exclaimed in vain. I dare say (for it was at peep of day) that not a man of them had yet endeavoured to unclose his eyes.—In coming through Abingdon (Berks) I could not help thinking of that great financier, Mr. John Maberly, by whom this place has, I believe, the honour to be represented in the Collective Wisdom of the Nation.—In the way to Ilsley we came across a part of that fine tract of land, called the *Vale of Berkshire,* where they grow *wheat* and *beans,* one after another, for many years together. About three miles before we reached Ilsley we came to *downs,* with, as is always the case, chalk under. Between Ilsley and Newbury the country is enclosed; the land middling, a stony loam; the woods and coppices frequent, and neither very good till we came within a short distance of Newbury. In going along we saw a piece of wheat with cabbage-leaves laid all over it at the distance, perhaps, of eight or ten feet from each other. It was to catch the *slugs.* The slugs, which commit their depredations in the *night,* creep under the leaves in the morning, and by turning up the leaves you come at the slugs, and crush them, or carry them away. But besides the immense daily labour attending this, the slug, in a field sowed with wheat, has a *clod* to creep under at every foot, and will not go five feet to get under a cabbage-leaf. Then again, if the day be *wet,* the slug works by day as well as by night. It is the sun and drought that he shuns, and not the light. Therefore the only effectual way

to destroy slugs is, to sow lime, in dust, and *not slaked*. The slug is wet, he has hardly any skin, his *slime* is his covering; the smallest dust of hot lime kills him; and a few bushels to the acre are sufficient. You must sow the lime at *dusk;* for then the slugs are sure to be out. Slugs come after a crop that has long afforded a great deal of shelter from the sun; such as peas and vetches. In gardens they are nursed up by strawberry beds, and by weeds; by asparagus beds; or by any thing that remains for a long time to keep the summer-sun from the earth. We got about three o'clock to this nice, snug little farm-house, and found our host, Mr. Budd, at home.

BURGHCLERE,
Monday, 19 *Nov.*

A thorough wet day, the only day the greater part of which I have not spent out of doors, since I left home.

BURGHCLERE,
Tuesday, 20 *Nov.*

With Mr. Budd, we rode to-day to see the *Farm of Tull*, at *Shalborne*, in Berkshire. Mr. Budd did the same thing with Arthur Young twenty-seven years ago. It was a sort of *pilgrimage:* but, as the distance was ten miles, we thought it best to perform it on horseback.—We passed through the parish of *Highclere*, where they have *enclosed commons*, worth, as tillage land, not one single farthing an acre, and never will and never can be. As a common it afforded a little picking for geese and asses, and, in the moory parts of it, a little fuel for the labourers. But now it really can afford nothing. It will all fall to common again by degrees. This madness, this blind eagerness to gain, is now, I hope, pretty nearly over. At *East Woody*, we passed the house of a Mr. Goddard, which is uninhabited, he residing at Bath.—At *West Woody* (Berks) is the estate of Mr. Sloper, a very pretty place. A beautiful sporting country. Large fields, small woods, dry soil. What has taken place here is an instance of the workings of the system. Here is a large gentleman's house. But the proprietor *lets it* (it is, just now, empty), and resides in a *farm house* and farms his own estate. Happy is the landlord, who has the good sense to do this in time. This is a fine farm, and here appears to be very judicious farming. Large tracts of turnips; clean land; stubbles ploughed up early; ploughing with oxen; and a very

large and singularly fine flock of sheep. Everything that you see, land, stock, implements, fences, buildings; all do credit to the owner; bespeak his sound judgment, his industry and care. All that is wanted here is, the *radical husbandry;* because that would enable the owner to keep three times the quantity of stock. However, since I left home, I have seen but very few farms that I should prefer to that of Mr. Sloper, whom I have not the pleasure to know, and whom, indeed, I never heard of till I saw his farm. At a village (certainly named by some *author*) called *Inkpen,* we passed a neat little house and paddock, the residence of a Mr. Butler, a nephew of Dr. Butler, who died Bishop of Oxford, and whom I can remember hearing preach at Farnham in Surrey, when I was a very, very little boy. I have his features and his wig as clearly in my recollection as if I had seen them but yesterday; and, I dare say, I have not thought of Doctor Butler for forty years before to-day. The "loyal" (oh, the pious gang!) will say, that my memory is good as to the face and wig, but bad as to the doctor's *sermons.* Why I must confess that I have no recollection of them; but, then, do I not *make sermons myself?*—At about two miles from Inkpen we came to the end of our pilgrimage. The farm, which was Mr. *Tull's;* where he used the first drill that ever was used; where he practised his husbandry; where he wrote that book, which does so much honour to his memory, and to which the cultivators of England owe so much; this farm is on an open and somewhat bleak spot, in Berkshire, on the borders of Wiltshire, and within a very short distance of a part of Hampshire. The ground is a loam, mixed with flints, and has the chalk at no great distance beneath it. It is, therefore, free from *wet;* needs no water furrows; and is pretty good in its nature. The house, which has been improved by Mr. Blandy the present proprietor, is still but a plain farm-house. Mr. Blandy has lived here thirty years, and has brought up ten children to man's and woman's estate. Mr. Blandy was from home, but Mrs. Blandy received and entertained us in a very hospitable manner.—We returned, not along the low land, but along the top of the downs, and through Lord Caernarvon's park, and got home after a very pleasant day.

BURGHCLERE,
Wednesday, 21 Nov.

We intended to have a hunt; but the fox-hounds came across and rendered it impracticable. As an instance of the change

which rural customs have undergone since the hellish paper-system has been so furiously at work, I need only mention the fact, that, forty years ago, there were *five* packs of *fox-hounds* and *ten* packs of *harriers* kept within *ten miles* of Newbury; and that now there is *one* of the former (kept, too, by *subscription*) and *none* of the latter, except the few couple of dogs kept by Mr. Budd! "So much the better," says the shallow fool, who cannot duly estimate the difference between a resident *native* gentry, attached to the soil, known to every farmer and labourer from their childhood, frequently mixing with them in those pursuits where all artificial distinctions are lost, practising hospitality without ceremony, from habit and not on calculation; and a gentry, only now-and-then residing at all, having no relish for country-delights, foreign in their manners, distant and haughty in their behaviour, looking to the soil only for its rents, viewing it as a mere object of speculation, unacquainted with its cultivators, despising them and their pursuits, and relying, for influence, not upon the good will of the vicinage, but upon the dread of their power. The war and paper-system has brought in nabobs, negro-drivers, generals, admirals, governors, commissaries, contractors, pensioners, sinecurists, commissioners, loan-jobbers, lottery-dealers, bankers, stock-jobbers; not to mention the long and *black list* in gowns and three-tailed wigs. You can see but few good houses not in possession of one or the other of these. These, with the parsons, are now the magistrates. Some of the *consequences* are before us; but they have not all yet arrived. A taxation that sucks up fifty millions a year *must* produce a new set of proprietors every twenty years or less; and the proprietors, while they last, can be little better than tax-collectors to the government, and scourgers of the people.—I must not quit *Burghclere* without noticing Mr. Budd's *radical* swedes and other things. His is but miniature farming; but it is very good, and very interesting. Some time in May, he drilled a piece of swedes on four feet ridges. The fly took them off. He had cabbage and mangel-wurzel plants to put in their stead. Unwilling to turn back the ridges, and thereby bring the dung to the top, he planted the cabbages and mangel-wurzel on the ridges where the swedes had been drilled. This was done in June. Late in July, his neighbour, a farmer Hulbert, had a field of swedes that he was hoeing. Mr. Budd now put some manure in the furrows between the ridges, and ploughed a furrow over it from each ridge. On this he planted swedes, taken from farmer Hulbert's field. Thus his plantation

consisted of rows of plants *two feet apart*. The result is a prodigious crop. Of the mangel-wurzel (greens and all) he has not less than twenty tons to the acre. He can scarcely have less of the cabbages, some of which are *green savoys* as fine as I ever saw. And of the swedes, many of which weigh from five to nine pounds, he certainly has more than twenty tons to the acre. So that here is a crop of, at the very least, *forty tons to the acre*. This piece is not much more than half an acre; but, he will, perhaps, not find so much cattle food upon any four acres in the county. He is, and long has been, feeding four milch cows, large, fine, and in fine condition, upon cabbages sometimes, and sometimes on mangel-wurzel leaves. The butter is excellent. Not the smallest degree of bitterness or bad taste of any sort. Fine colour and fine taste. And here, upon not three-quarters of an acre of ground, he has, if he manage the thing well, enough food for these four cows to the month of May! Can any system of husbandry equal this? What would he do with these cows, if he had not this crop? He could not keep one of them, except on hay. And he owes all this crop to transplanting. He thinks that the transplanting, fetching the swede plants and all, might cost him ten or twelve shillings. It was done by women, who had never done such a thing before. —However, he must get in his crop before the hard weather comes; or my Lord Caernarvon's hares will help him. They have begun already; and, it is curious, that they have begun on the mangel-wurzel roots. So that hares, at any rate, have set the seal of merit upon this root.

WHITCHURCH,
Thursday (night), 22 Nov.

We have come round here, instead of going by Newbury, in consequence of a promise to Mr. Blount at Uphusband, that I would call on him on my return. We left Uphusband by lamplight, and, of course, we could see little on our way.

KENSINGTON,
Friday, 23 Nov.

Got home by the coach. At leaving Whitchurch we soon passed the mill where the Mother-Bank paper is made! Thank God, this mill is likely soon to want employment! Hard by is a pretty park and house, belonging to "*'Squire*" Portal, the *paper-maker*. The country people, who seldom want for sarcastic shrewdness, call it "*Rag Hall*"!—I perceive that they

are planting oaks on the "*wastes*," as the *Agriculturasses* call them, about *Hartley Row;* which is very good; because the herbage, after the first year, is rather increased than diminished by the operation; while, in time, the oaks arrive at a timber state, and add to the beauty and to the *real wealth* of the country, and to the real and solid wealth of the descendants of the planter, who, in every such case, merits unequivocal praise, because he plants for his children's children. The planter here is Lady Mildmay, who is, it seems, Lady of the Manors about here. It is impossible to praise this act of hers too much, especially when one considers her *age*. I beg a thousand pardons! I do not mean to say that her ladyship is *old;* but she has long had grandchildren. If her ladyship had been a reader of old dread-death and dread-devil Johnson, that teacher of moping and melancholy, she never would have planted an oak tree. If the writings of this time-serving, mean, dastardly old pensioner had got a firm hold of the minds of the people at large, the people would have been bereft of their very souls. These writings, aided by the charm of pompous sound, were fast making their way, till light, reason, and the French revolution came to drive them into oblivion; or, at least, to confine them to the shelves of repentant, married old rakes, and those of old stock-jobbers with young wives standing in need of something to keep down the unruly ebullitions which are apt to take place while the "dearies" are gone hobbling to 'Change. — "After *pleasure* comes *pain*," says Solomon; and after the sight of Lady Mildmay's truly noble plantations, came that of the clouts of the "gentlemen cadets" of the "*Royal Military College of Sandhurst!*" Here, close by the road side, is the *drying-ground*. Sheets, shirts, and all sorts of things were here spread upon lines, covering, perhaps, an acre of ground! We soon afterwards came to "*York* Place" on "*Osnaburg* Hill." And is there never to be an *end* of these things? Away to the left, we see that immense building, which contains children *breeding up to be military commanders!* Has this plan cost so little as two millions of pounds? I never see this place (and I have seen it forty times during the last twenty years) without asking myself this question: Will this thing be suffered to go on; will this thing, created by money *raised by loan;* will this thing be upheld by means of taxes, *while the interest of the debt is reduced*, on the ground that the nation is *unable to pay the interest in full?*— Answer that question, Castlereagh, Sidmouth, Brougham, or Scarlett.

KENTISH JOURNAL

FROM KENSINGTON TO DARTFORD, ROCHESTER, CHATHAM, AND FAVERSHAM

Tuesday, 4 *December*, 1821.

ELVERTON FARM, NEAR FAVERSHAM, KENT.

THIS is the first time, since I went to France, in 1792, that I have been on this side of *Shooters' Hill*. The land, generally speaking, from Deptford to Dartford is poor, and the surface ugly by nature, to which ugliness there has been made, just before we came to the latter place, a considerable addition by the inclosure of a common, and by the sticking up of some shabby-genteel houses, surrounded with dead fences and things called gardens, in all manner of ridiculous forms, making, all together, the bricks, hurdle-rods and earth say, as plainly as they can speak, "Here dwell *vanity* and *poverty*." This is a little excrescence that has grown out of the immense sums, which have been drawn from other parts of the kingdom to be expended on barracks, magazines, martello-towers, catamarans, and all the excuses for lavish expenditure, which the war for the Bourbons gave rise to. All things will return; these rubbishy flimsy things, on this common, will first be deserted, then crumble down, then be swept away, and the cattle, sheep, pigs and geese will once more graze upon the common, which will again furnish heath, furze and turf for the labourers on the neighbouring lands.—After you leave Dartford the land becomes excellent. You come to a bottom of chalk, many feet from the surface, and when that is the case the land is sure to be good; no *wet* at bottom, no deep ditches, no water furrows, necessary; sufficiently moist in dry weather, and no water lying about upon it in wet weather for any length of time. The chalk acts as a filtering-stone, not as a sieve, like gravel, and not as a dish, like clay. The chalk acts as the soft stone in Herefordshire does; but it is not so congenial to trees that have tap-roots.—Along through Gravesend towards Rochester the country presents a sort of gardening scene. Rochester (the bishop of which is, or lately was, *tax collector for London and Middlesex*), is a small but crowded place, lying on the south bank of the beautiful Medway, with a rising ground on the other side of the city.

Stroud, which you pass through before you come to the bridge, over which you go to enter Rochester; *Rochester* itself, and *Chatham*, form, in fact, one main street of about two miles and a half in length.—Here I was got into the scenes of my cap-and-feather days! Here, at between sixteen and seventeen, I enlisted for a soldier. Upon looking up towards the fortifications and the barracks, how many recollections crowded into my mind! The girls in these towns do not seem to be *so pretty* as they were thirty-eight years ago; or am I not so quick in discovering beauties as I was then? Have thirty-eight years corrected my taste, or made me a hypercritic in these matters? Is it that I now look at them with the solemnness of a "professional man," and not with the enthusiasm and eagerness of an "amateur?" I leave these questions for philosophers to solve. One thing I will say for the young women of these towns, and that is, that I always found those of them that I had the great happiness to be acquainted with, evince a sincere desire to do their best to smooth the inequalities of life, and to give us, "brave fellows," as often as they could, strong beer, when their churlish masters or fathers or husbands would have drenched us to death with small. This, at the out-set of life, gave me a high opinion of the judgment and justice of the female sex; an opinion which has been confirmed by the observations of my whole life.—This Chatham has had some monstrous *wens* stuck on to it by the lavish expenditure of the war. These will moulder away. It is curious enough that I should meet with a gentleman in an inn at Chatham to give me a picture of the house-distress in that enormous wen, which, during the war, was stuck on to Portsmouth. Not less than fifty thousand people had been drawn together there! These are now dispersing. The coagulated blood is diluting and flowing back through the veins. Whole streets are deserted, and the eyes of the houses knocked out by the boys that remain. The jack-daws, as much as to say, "Our turn to be inspired and to teach is come," are beginning to take possession of the Methodist chapels. The gentleman told me, that he had been down to Portsea to sell half a street of houses, left him by a relation; and that nobody would give him anything for them further than as very cheap fuel and rubbish! Good God! And is this "prosperity?" Is this the "prosperity of the war?" Have I not, for twenty long years, been regretting the existence of these unnatural embossments; these white-swellings, these odious wens, produced by *corruption* and engendering crime and misery and slavery?

We shall see the whole of these wens abandoned by the inhabitants, and, at last, the cannons on the fortifications may be of some use in battering down the buildings.—But what is to be the fate of the great wen of all? The monster, called, by the silly coxcombs of the press, "the metropolis of the empire?" What is to become of that multitude of towns that has been stuck up around it? The village of Kingston was smothered in the town of Portsea; and why? Because taxes, drained from other parts of the kingdom, were brought thither.

The dispersion of the wen is the only real difficulty that I see in settling the affairs of the nation and restoring it to a happy state. But dispersed it *must* be; and if there be half a million, or more, of people to suffer, the consolation is, that the suffering will be divided into half a million of parts. As if the swelling out of London, naturally produced by the funding system, were not sufficient; as if the evil were not sufficiently great from the inevitable tendency of the system of loans and funds, our pretty gentlemen must resort to positive institutions to augment the population of the Wen. They found that the increase of the Wen produced an increase of thieves and prostitutes, an increase of all sorts of diseases, an increase of miseries of all sorts; they saw that taxes drawn up to one point produced these effects; they must have a "*penitentiary*," for instance, to check the evil, and that they must needs have in the Wen! So that here were a million of pounds, drawn up in taxes, employed not only to keep the thieves and prostitutes still in the *Wen*, but to bring up to the Wen workmen to build the penitentiary, who and whose families, amounting, perhaps to thousands, make an addition to the cause of that crime and misery, to check which is the object of the penitentiary! People would follow, they must follow, the million of money. However, this is of a piece with all the rest of their goings on. They and their predecessors, ministers and *House*, have been collecting together all the materials for a dreadful explosion; and if the explosion be not dreadful, other heads must point out the means of prevention.

Wednesday, 5 *Dec.*

The land on quitting Chatham is chalk at bottom; but, before you reach Sittingbourne, there is a vein of gravel and sand under, but a great depth of loam above. Above Sittingbourne the chalk bottom comes again, and continues on to this place, where the land appears to me to be as good as it can possibly be.

Mr. William Waller, at whose house I am, has grown, this year, mangel-wurzel, the roots of which weigh, I think, on an average, twelve pounds, and in rows, too, at only about thirty inches distant from each other. In short, as far as *soil* goes, it is impossible to see a finer country than this. You frequently see a field of fifty acres, level as a die, clean as a garden and as rich. Mr. *Birkbeck* need not have crossed the Atlantic, and Alleghany into the bargain, to look for land *too rich to bear wheat;* for here is a plenty of it. In short, this is a country of hop-gardens, cherry, apple, pear and filbert orchards, and quickset hedges. But, alas! what, in point of *beauty*, is a country without woods and lofty trees! And here there are very few indeed. I am now sitting in a room, from the window of which I look, *first*, over a large and level field of rich land, in which the drilled wheat is finely come up, and which is surrounded by clipped quickset hedges with a row of apple trees running by the sides of them; *next*, over a long succession of rich meadows, which are here called marshes, the shortest grass upon which will fatten sheep or oxen; *next*, over a little branch of the salt water which runs up to Faversham; *beyond that*, on the Isle of Shepry (or Shepway), which rises a little into a sort of ridge that runs along it; rich fields, pastures and orchards lie all around me; and yet, I declare, that I a million times to one prefer, as a spot to *live on*, the heaths, the miry coppices, the wild woods and the forests of Sussex and Hampshire.

Thursday, 6 *Dec.*

"Agricultural distress" is the great topic of general conversation. The *Webb Hallites* seem to prevail here. The fact is, farmers in general read nothing but the newspapers; these, in the Wen, are under the control of the corruption of one or the other of the factions; and in the country, nine times out of ten, under the control of the parsons and landlords, who are the magistrates, as they are pompously called, that is to say, Justices of the Peace. From such vehicles what are farmers to learn? They are, in general, thoughtful and sensible men; but their natural good sense is perverted by these publications, had it not been for which we never should have seen "*a sudden transition from war to peace*" lasting seven years, and more *sudden* in its destructive effects at last than at first. *Sir Edward Knatchbull* and *Mr. Honeywood* are the members of the "Collective Wisdom" for this county. The former was, till of late, a *tax-collector*. I hear that he is a great advocate for *corn-bills!* I

suppose he does not wish to let people who have *leases* see the bottom of the evil. He may get his rents for this year; but it will be his last year, if the interest of the debt be not very greatly reduced. Some people here think, that corn is *smuggled in* even now! Perhaps it is, *upon the whole*, best that the delusion should continue for a year longer; as that would tend to make the destruction of the system more sure, or, at least, make the cure more radical.

Friday, 7 *Dec.*

I went through *Faversham.* A very pretty little town, and just ten minutes' walk from the market-place up to the Dover turnpike-road. Here are the *powder-affairs* that Mr. Hume so well exposed. An immensity of buildings and expensive things. Why are not these premises let or sold? However, this will never be done, until there be a *reformed parliament.* Pretty little *Van*, that beauty of all beauties; that orator of all orators; that saint of all saints; that financier of all financiers, said that, if Mr. Hume were to pare down the expenses of government to *his* wish, there would be others, "the Hunts, Cobbetts, and Carliles, who would still want the expense to be less." I do not know *how low* Mr. Hume would wish to go; but for myself I say, that if I ever have the power to do it, I will reduce the expenditure, and that in quick time too, down to what it was in the reign of Queen Anne; that is to say, to less than is now paid to tax-gatherers for their labour in collecting the taxes; and, monstrous as Van may think the idea, I do not regard it as impossible that I may have such power; which I would certainly not employ to do an act of *injustice* to any human being, and would, at the same time, maintain the throne in more real splendour than that in which it is now maintained. But I would have nothing to do with any Vans, except as door-keepers or porters.

Saturday, 8 *Dec.*

Came home very much pleased with my visit to Mr. Walker, in whose house I saw no drinking of wine, spirits, or even beer; where all, even to the little children, were up by candle-light in the morning, and where the most perfect sobriety was accompanied by constant cheerfulness. *Kent* is in a deplorable way. The farmers are skilful and intelligent, generally speaking. But there is infinite *corruption* in Kent, owing partly to the swarms of West Indians, nabobs, commissioners, and others of

nearly the same description, that have selected it for the place of their residence; but owing still more to the immense sums of public money that have, during the last thirty years, been expended in it. And when one thinks of these, the conduct of the people of Dover, Canterbury, and other places, in the case of the ever-lamented queen, does them everlasting honour. The *fruit* in Kent is more *select* than in Herefordshire, where it is raised for *cyder*, while, in Kent, it is raised for sale in its fruit state, a great deal being sent to the *Wen*, and a great deal sent to the North of England and to Scotland. The orchards are beautiful indeed. Kept in the neatest order, and indeed, all belonging to them excels anything of the kind to be seen in Normandy; and, as to apples, I never saw any so good in France as those of Kent. This county, so blessed by Providence, has been cursed by the system in a peculiar degree. It has been the *receiver* of immense sums, raised on the other counties. This has puffed its *rents* to an unnatural height; and now that the drain of other counties is stopped, it feels like a pampered pony, turned out in winter to live upon a common. It is in an extremely "unsatisfactory state," and has certainly a greater mass of suffering to endure than any other part of the kingdom, the *Wens* only excepted. Sir Edward Knatchbull, who is a child of the system, does appear to see no more of the cause of these sufferings than if he were a baby. How should he? Not very bright by nature; never listening but to one side of the question; being a man who wants high rents to be paid him; not gifted with much light, and that little having to strive against prejudice, false shame, and self interest, what wonder is there that he should not see things in their true light?

NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK JOURNAL

BERGH APTON, NEAR NORWICH,
Monday, 10 *Dec.* 1821.

FROM the *Wen* to Norwich, from which I am now distant seven miles, there is nothing in Essex, Suffolk, or this county, that can be called a *hill*. Essex, when you get beyond the immediate influence of the gorgings and disgorgings of the Wen; that is to say, beyond the demand for crude vegetables and repayment in manure, is by no means a fertile county. There appears generally to be a bottom of *clay;* not *soft chalk*, which they persist in calling clay in Norfolk. I wish I had one of these Norfolk men in a coppice in Hampshire or Sussex, and I would show him what *clay* is. Clay is what pots and pans and jugs and tiles are made of; and not soft, whitish stuff that crumbles to pieces in the sun, instead of baking as hard as a stone, and which, in dry weather, is to be broken to pieces by nothing short of a sledge-hammer. The narrow ridges on which the wheat is sown; the water furrows; the water standing in the dips of the pastures; the rusty iron-like colour of the water coming out of some of the banks; the deep ditches; the rusty look of the pastures; all show that here is a bottom of clay. Yet there is gravel too; for the oaks do not grow well. It was not till I got nearly to Sudbury that I saw much change for the better. Here the bottom of chalk, the soft dirty-looking chalk that the Norfolk people call clay, begins to be the bottom, and this, with very little exception (as far as I have been), is the bottom of all the lands of these two fine counties of Suffolk and Norfolk.—Sudbury has some fine meadows near it on the sides of the river Stour. The land all along to Bury Saint Edmund's is very fine; but no trees worth looking at. *Bury*, formerly the seat of an abbot, the last of whom was, I think, hanged, or somehow put to death, by that matchless tyrant, Henry VIII., is a very pretty place; extremely clean and neat; no ragged or dirty people to be seen, and women (*young* ones I mean) very pretty and very neatly dressed.—On this side of Bury, a considerable distance lower, I saw a field of *rape*, transplanted very thick, for, I suppose, sheep feed in the spring. The farming all along to

Norwich is very good. The land clean, and everything done in a masterly manner.

Tuesday, 11 *Dec.*

Mr. Samuel Clarke, my host, has about 30 acres of *swedes* in rows. Some at 4 feet distances, some at 30 inches; and about 4 acres of the 4-feet swedes were transplanted. I have seen thousands of acres of swedes in these counties, and here are the largest crops that I have seen. The widest rows are decidedly the largest crops here. And the *transplanted*, though under disadvantageous circumstances, amongst the best of the best. The wide rows amount to at least 20 tons to the acre, exclusive of the greens taken off two months ago, which weighed 5 tons to the acre. Then there is the inter tillage, so beneficial to the land, and the small quantity of manure required in the broad rows, compared to what is required when the seed is drilled or sown upon the level. Mr. Nicholls, a neighbour of Mr. Clarke, has a part of a field transplanted on *seven turn ridges*, put in when in the other part of the field, drilled, the plants were a fortnight old. He has a much larger crop in the transplanted than in the drilled part. But if it had been a *fly-year*, he might have had *none* in the drilled part, while, in all probability, the crop in the transplanted part would have been better than it now is, seeing that a *wet* summer, though favourable to the hitting of the swedes, is by no means favourable to their attaining a great size of bulb. This is the case this year with all turnips. A great deal of leaf and neck, but not bulbs in proportion. The advantages of transplanting are, *first*, you make sure of a crop in spite of fly, and, *second*, you have six weeks or two months longer to prepare your ground. And the advantages of wide rows are, *first*, that you want only about half the quantity of manure; and, *second*, that you *plough* the ground two or three times during the summer.

GROVE, NEAR HOLT,

Thursday, 13 *Dec.*

Came to the Grove (Mr. Wither's), near Holt, along with Mr. Clarke. Through *Norwich* to *Aylsham* and then to *Holt*. On our road we passed the house of the late *Lord Suffield*, who married Castlereagh's wife's sister, who is a daughter of the late Earl of Buckinghamshire, who had for so many years that thumping sinecure of eleven thousand a year in Ireland, and who was the son of a man that, under the name of Mr. Hobart,

cut such a figure in supporting Lord North and afterwards Pitt, and was made a peer under the auspices of the latter of these two heaven-born ministers. This house, which is a very ancient one, was, they say, the birthplace of Ann de Boleyne, the mother of Queen Elizabeth. Not much matter; for she married the king while his real wife was alive. I could have excused her, if there had been no marrying in the case; but, hypocrisy, always bad, becomes detestable when it resorts to religious ceremony as its mask. She, no more than Cranmer, seems, to her last moments, to have remembered her sins against her lawful queen. Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, that ought to be called the *Book of Liars*, says that Cranmer, the recanter and re-recanter, held out his offending hand in the flames, and cried out "that hand, that hand!" If he had cried out *Catherine! Catherine!* I should have thought better of him; but, it is clear, that the whole story is a lie, invented by the protestants, and particularly by the sectarians, to white-wash the character of this perfidious hypocrite and double apostate, who, if bigotry had something to do in bringing him to the stake, certainly deserved his fate, if any offences committed by man can deserve so horrible a punishment.—The present Lord Suffield is that Mr. Edward Harbord, whose father-in-law left him £500 to buy a seat in parliament, and who refused to carry an address to the late beloved and lamented queen, because Major Cartwright and myself were chosen to accompany him! Never mind, my lord; you will grow less fastidious! They say, however, that he is really good to his tenants, and has told them that he will take anything that they can give. There is some sense in this! He is a great Bible man; and it is strange that he cannot see that things are out of order, when *his* interference in this way can be at all *necessary*, while there is a Church that receives a tenth part of the produce of the earth.—There are some oak woods here, but very poor. Not like those, not near like the worst of those, in Hampshire and Herefordshire. All this eastern coast seems very unpropitious to trees of all sorts.—We passed through the estate of a Mr. Marsin, whose house is near the road, a very poor spot, and the first really poor ground I have seen in Norfolk. A nasty spewy black gravel on the top of a sour clay. It is worse than the heaths between Godalming and Liphook; for, while it is too poor to grow anything but heath, it is too cold to give you the chirping of the grasshopper in summer. However, Mr. Marsin has been too wise to enclose this wretched land, which is just like that which Lord Caernarvon

has enclosed in the parishes of Highclere, and Burghclere, and which, for tillage, really is not worth a single farthing an acre.—Holt is a little, old-fashioned, substantially-built market-town. The land just about it, or, at least, towards the east, is poor, and has been lately enclosed.

Friday, 14 *Dec.*

Went to see the estate of Mr. Hardy at Leveringsett, a hamlet about two miles from Holt. This is the first time that I have seen a *valley* in this part of England. From Holt you look, to the distance of seven or eight miles, over a very fine valley, leaving a great deal of inferior hill and dell within its boundaries. At the bottom of this general valley, Mr. Hardy has a very beautiful estate of about four hundred acres. His house is at one end of it near the high road, where he has a malt-house and a brewery, the neat and ingenious manner of managing which I would detail if my total unacquaintance with machinery did not disqualify me for the task. His estate forms a valley of itself, somewhat longer than broad. The tops, and the sides of the tops of the hills round it, and also several little hillocks in the valley itself, are judiciously planted with trees of various sorts, leaving good wide roads, so that it is easy to ride round them in a carriage. The fields, the fences, the yards, the stacks, the buildings, the cattle, all showed the greatest judgment and industry. There was really nothing that the most critical observer could say was *out of order*. However, the forest trees do not grow well here. The oaks are mere scrubs, as they are about Brentwood in Essex, and in some parts of Cornwall; and, for some unaccountable reason, people seldom plant the *ash*, which no wind will *shave*, as it does the oak.

Saturday, 15 *Dec.*

Spent the evening amongst the farmers, at their market room at Holt; and very much pleased at them I was. We talked over the *cause of the low prices*, and I, as I have done everywhere, endeavoured to convince them that prices must fall a great deal lower yet; and that no man, who wishes not to be ruined, ought to keep or take a farm, unless on a calculation of best wheat at 4*s*. a bushel and a best South Down ewe at 15*s*. or even 12*s*. They heard me patiently, and, I believe, were well convinced of the truth of what I said. I told them of the correctness of the predictions of their great countrymen, Mr. Paine, and observed, how much better it would have been to take his advice, than to burn him in effigy. I endeavoured

(but in such a care all human powers must fail!) to describe to them the sort and size of the talents of the Stern-path-of-duty man, of the great hole-digger, of the jester, of the Oxford-scholar, of the loan-jobber (who had just made an enormous grasp), of the Oracle, and so on. Here, as everywhere else, I hear every creature speak loudly in praise of *Mr. Coke*. It is well known to my readers, that I think nothing of him as a *public* man; that I think even his good qualities an injury to his country, because they serve the knaves whom he is duped by to dupe the people more effectually; but it would be base in me not to say, that I hear, from men of all parties, and sensible men too, expressions made use of towards him that affectionate children use towards the best of parents. I have not met with a single exception.

BERGH APTON,
Sunday, 16 *Dec.*

Came from Holt through Saxthorpe and Cawston. At the former village were on one end of a decent white house, these words, "*Queen Caroline; for her Britons mourn*," and a crown over all in black. I need not have looked to see: I might have been sure, that the owner of the house was a *shoe-maker*, a trade which numbers more men of sense and of public spirit than any other in the kingdom.—At Cawston we stopped at a public house, the keeper of which had taken and read the Register for years. I shall not attempt to describe the pleasure I felt at the hearty welcome given us by Mr. Pern and his wife and by a young miller of the village, who, having learnt at Holt that we were to return that way, had come to meet us, the house being on the side of the great road, from which the village is at some distance. This is the birthplace of the famous *Botley Parson*, all the history of whom we now learned, and if we could have gone to the village, they were prepared to *ring the bells*, and show us the old woman who nursed the *Botley Parson!* These Norfolk *baws* never do things by halves. We came away, very much pleased with our reception at Cawston, and with a promise, on my part, that, if I visited the county again, I would write a Register there; a promise which I shall certainly keep.

GREAT YARMOUTH,
Friday (morning), 21 *Dec.*

The day before yesterday I set out for Bergh Apton with Mr. Clarke, to come hither by the way of *Beccles* in Suffolk.

We stopped at Mr. Charles Clarke's at Beccles, where we saw some good and sensible men, who see clearly into all the parts of the works of the 'Thunderers," and whose anticipations, as to the "general working of events," are such as they ought to be. They gave us a humorous account of the "rabble" having recently crowned a Jack-ass, and of a struggle between them and the "Yeomanry Gavaltry." This *was* a place of most ardent and blazing *loyalty*, as the pretenders to it call it; but, it seems, it now blazes less furiously; it is milder, more measured in its effusions; and, with the help of low prices, will become bearable in time. This Beccles is a very pretty place, has watered meadows near it, and is situated amidst fine lands. What a *system* it must be to make people wretched in a country like this! Could he be *heaven-born* that invented such a system? Gaffer Gooch's father, a very old man, lives not far from here. We had a good deal of fun about the Gaffer, who will certainly never lose the name, unless he should be made a lord.—We slept at the house of a friend of Mr. Clarke on our way, and got to this very fine town of Great Yarmouth yesterday about noon. A party of friends met us and conducted us about the town, which is a very beautiful one indeed. What I liked best, however, was the hearty welcome that I met with, because it showed that the reign of calumny and delusion was passed. A company of gentlemen gave me a dinner in the evening, and in all my life I never saw a set of men more worthy of my respect and gratitude. Sensible, modest, understanding the whole of our case, and clearly foreseeing what is about to happen. One gentleman proposed, that, as it would be impossible for all to go to London, there should be a *Provincial Feast of the Gridiron*, a plan, which, I hope, will be adopted.—I leave Great Yarmouth with sentiments of the sincerest regard for all those whom I there saw and conversed with, and with my best wishes for the happiness of all its inhabitants; nay, even the *parsons* not excepted; for, if they did not come to welcome me, they collected in a group to *see* me, and that was one step towards doing justice to him whom their order have so much, so foully, and, if they knew their own interest, so foolishly slandered.

Bergh Apton,
22 Dec. (*night*).

After returning from Yarmouth yesterday, went to dine at Stoke-Holy-Cross, about six miles off; got home at midnight,

and came to Norwich this morning, this being market-day, and also the day fixed on for a Radical Reform Dinner at the Swan Inn, to which I was invited. Norwich is a very fine city, and the castle, which stands in the middle of it, on a hill, is truly majestic. The meat and poultry and vegetable market is beautiful. It is kept in a large open square in the middle, or nearly so, of the city. The ground is a pretty sharp slope, so that you see all at once. It resembles one of the French markets, only *there* the vendors are all standing and gabbling like parrots, and the meat is lean and bloody and nasty, and the people snuffy and grimy in hands and face, the contrary, precisely the contrary of all which is the case in this beautiful market at Norwich, where the women have a sort of uniform brown great coats, with white aprons and *bibs* (I think they call them) going from the apron up to the bosom. They equal in neatness (for nothing can surpass) the market women in Philadelphia.—The cattle-market is held on the hill by the castle, and many *fairs* are smaller in bulk of stock. The corn-market is held in a very magnificent place, called Saint Andrew's Hall, which will contain two or three thousand persons. They tell me that this used to be a most delightful scene; a most joyous one; and I think it was this scene that Mr. Curwen described in such glowing colours when he was talking of the Norfolk farmers, each worth so many thousands of pounds. Bear me witness, reader, that *I never was dazzled* by such sights; that the false glare never put my eyes out; and that, even then, twelve years ago, I warned Mr. Curwen of the *result!* Bear witness to this, my Disciples, and justify the doctrines of him, for whose sakes you have endured persecution. How different would Mr. Curwen find the scene *now!* What took place at the dinner has been already recorded in the Register; and I have only to add with regard to it, that my reception at Norfolk was such, that I have only to regret the total want of power to make those hearty Norfolk and Norwich friends any suitable return, whether by act or word.

KENSINGTON,
Monday, 24 *Dec.*

Went from Bergh Apton to Norwich in the morning, and from Norwich to London during the day, carrying with me great admiration of and respect for this county of *excellent farmers*, and hearty, open and spirited men. The Norfolk people are quick and smart in their motions and in their speaking. Very

neat and *trim* in all their farming concerns, and very skilful. Their land is good, their roads are level, and the bottom of their soil is dry, to be sure; and these are great advantages; but they are diligent, and make the most of everything. Their management of all sorts of stock is most judicious; they are careful about manure; their teams move quickly; and, in short, it is a county of most excellent cultivators.—The churches in Norfolk are generally large and the towers lofty. They have all been well built at first. Many of them are of the Saxon architecture. They are, almost all (I do not remember an exception), placed on the *highest* spots to be found near where they stand; and, it is curious enough, that the contrary practice should have prevailed in *hilly* countries, where they are generally found in valleys and in low, sheltered dells, even in those valleys! These churches prove that the people of Norfolk and Suffolk were always a superior people in point of wealth, while the size of them proves that the country parts were, at one time, a great deal more populous than they now are. The great drawbacks on the beauty of these counties are, their flatness and their want of fine woods; but to those who can dispense with these, Norfolk, under a wise and just government, can have nothing to ask more than Providence and the industry of man have given.

Landlord Distress Meetings

For, in fact, it is not the *farmer*, but the *landlord* and *parson*, who wants relief from the "*collective*." The tenant's remedy is, quitting his farm or bringing down his rent to what he can afford to give, wheat being 3 or 4 shillings a bushel. This is his remedy. What should *he* want high prices for? They can do *him* no good; and this I proved to the farmers last year. The fact is, the landlords and parsons are urging the farmers on to get *something done* to give them high rents and high tithes.

At *Hertford* there has been a meeting at which *some* sense was discovered, at any rate. The parties talked about the *fundholder*, the *debt*, the *taxes*, and so on, and seemed to be in a very warm temper. Pray, keep yourselves *cool*, gentlemen; for you have a great deal to endure yet. I deeply regret that I have not room to insert the resolutions of this meeting.

There is to be a meeting at *Battle* (East Sussex) on the 3rd instant, at which *I mean to be*. I want to *see* my friends on the *South-Downs*. To see how they *look* now.

[At a public dinner given to Mr. Cobbett at Norwich, on the market-day above mentioned, the company drank the toast of *Mr. Cobbett and his "Trash,"* the name "two-penny trash," having been at one time applied by Lord Castlereagh to the *Register*. In acknowledging this toast Mr. Cobbett addressed the company in a speech, of which the following is a passage:]

My thanks to you for having drunk my health are great and sincere; but much greater pleasure do I feel at the approbation bestowed on that *trash*, which has, for so many years, been a mark for the finger of scorn to be pointed at by ignorant selfishness and arrogant and insolent power. To enumerate, barely to name, all, or a hundredth part of, the endeavours that have been made to stifle this *trash*, would require a much longer space of time than that which we have now before us. But, gentlemen, those endeavours must have *cost money;* money must have been expended in the circulation of Anti-Cobbett, and the endless bale of papers and pamphlets put forth to check the progress of the *trash;* and when we take into view the immense sums expended in keeping down the spirit excited by the *trash*, who of us is to tell, whether these endeavours, taken altogether, may not have added *many millions* to that debt, of which (without any hint at a *concomitant measure*) some men have now the audacity, the unprincipled, the profligate assurance to talk of reducing the interest. The trash, gentlemen, is now triumphant; its triumph we are now met to celebrate; proofs of its triumph I myself witnessed not many hours ago, in that scene where the best possible evidence was to be found. In walking through St. Andrew's Hall, my mind was not so much engaged on the grandeur of the place, or on the gratifying reception I met with; those hearty shakes by the hand which I so much like, those smiles of approbation, which not to see with pride would argue an insensibility to honest fame: even these, I do sincerely assure you, engaged my mind much less than the melancholy reflection that, of the two thousand or fifteen hundred farmers then in my view, there were probably *three-fourths* who came to the hall with aching hearts, and who would leave it in a state of mental agony. What a thing to contemplate, gentlemen! What a scene is here! A set of men, occupiers of the land; producers of all that we eat, drink, wear, and of all that forms the buildings that shelter us; a set of men industrious and careful by habit; cool, thoughtful, and sensible from the instructions of nature; a set of men provident above all others, and engaged in pursuits in their nature stable as the very earth they till: to see a set of

men like this plunged into anxiety, embarrassment, jeopardy, not to be described; and when the particular individuals before me were famed for their superior skill in this great and solid pursuit, and were blessed with soil and other circumstances to make them prosperous and happy: to behold this sight would have been more than sufficient to sink my heart within me, had I not been upheld by the reflection, that I had done all in my power to prevent these calamities, and that I still had in reserve that which, with the assistance of the sufferers themselves, would restore them and the nation to happiness.

SUSSEX JOURNAL

TO BATTLE, THROUGH BROMLEY, SEVENOAKS, AND TUNBRIDGE

BATTLE,
Wednesday, 2 Jan. 1822.

CAME here to-day from Kensington, in order to see what goes on at the meeting to be held here to-morrow, of the "gentry, clergy, freeholders, and occupiers of land in the Rape of Hastings, to take into consideration the distressed state of the agricultural interest." I shall, of course, give an account of this meeting after it has taken place.—You come through part of *Kent* to get to *Battle* from the Great *Wen* on the Surrey side of the Thames, The first town is Bromley, the next Seven-Oaks, the next Tunbridge, and between Tunbridge and this place you cross the boundaries of the two counties.—From the Surrey Wen to Bromley the land is generally a deep loam on a gravel, and you see few trees except elm. A very ugly country. On quitting Bromley the land gets poorer; clay at bottom; the wheat sown on five, or seven, turn lands; the furrows shining with wet; rushes on the wastes on the sides of the road. Here there is a common, part of which has been inclosed and thrown out again, or, rather, the fences carried away.—There is a frost this morning, some, ice and the women look rosy-cheeked.—There is a very great variety of soil along this road; bottom of yellow clay; then of sand; then of sand-stone; then of solider stone; then (for about five miles) of chalk; then of red clay; then chalk again; here (before you come to Seven-Oaks) is a most beautiful and rich valley, extending from east to west, with rich cornfields and fine trees; then comes sand-stone again; and the hop-gardens near Seven-Oaks, which is a pretty little town with beautiful environs, part of which consists of the park of *Knowle*, the seat of the Duchess of Dorset. It is a very fine place. And there is another park, on the other side of the town. So that this is a delightful place, and the land appears to be very good. The gardens and houses all look neat and nice. On quitting Seven-Oaks you come to a bottom of gravel for a short distance, and to a clay for many miles. When I say that I saw teams *carting* gravel from this spot to a distance of nearly *ten miles*

along the road, the reader will be at no loss to know what sort of bottom the land has all along here. The bottom then becomes sand-stone again. This vein of land runs all along through the county of Sussex, and the clay runs into Hampshire, across the forests of Bere and Waltham, then across the parishes of Ouslebury, Stoke, and passing between the sand hills of Southampton and chalk hills of Winchester, goes westward till stopped by the chalky downs between Romsey and Salisbury.—Tunbridge is a small but very nice town, and has some fine meadows and a navigable river.—The rest of the way to Battle presents, alternately, clay and sand-stone. Of course the coppices and oak woods are very frequent. There is now and then a hop-garden spot, and now and then an orchard of apples or cherries; but these are poor indeed compared with what you see about Canterbury and Maidstone. The agricultural state of the country or, rather, the quality of the land, from Bromley to Battle, may be judged of from the fact, that I did not see, as I came along, more than thirty acres of swedes during the fifty-six miles! In Norfolk I should, in the same distance, have seen five hundred acres! However, man was not the maker of the land; and, as to human happiness, I am of opinion that as much, and even more, falls to the lot of the leather-legged chaps that live in and rove about amongst those clays and woods as to the more regularly disciplined labourers of the rich and prime parts of England. As "God has made the back to the burthen," so the clay and coppice people make the dress to the stubs and bushes. Under the sole of the shoe is *iron;* from the sole six inches upwards is a high-low; then comes a leather bam to the knee; then comes a pair of leather breeches; then comes a stout doublet; over this comes a smock-frock; and the wearer sets brush and stubs and thorns and mire at defiance. I have always observed that woodland and forest labourers are best off in the main. The coppices give them pleasant and profitable work in winter. If they have not so great a corn-harvest, they have a three weeks' harvest in April or May; that is to say, in the season of barking, which in Hampshire is called *stripping*, and in Sussex *flaying*, which employs women and children as well as men. And then in the great article of *fuel!* They *buy* none. It is miserable work where this is to be bought, and where, as at Salisbury, the poor take by turns the making of fires at their houses to boil four or five tea-kettles. What a winter-life must those lead, whose turn it is not to make the fire! At Launceston in Cornwall a man, a tradesman too, told me, that the people

in general could not afford to have fire in ordinary, and that he himself paid *3d.* for boiling a leg of mutton at another man's fire! The leather-legged-race know none of these miseries, at any rate. They literally get their fuel "by *hook* or by *crook*," whence, doubtless, comes that old and very expressive saying, which is applied to those cases where people *will have a thing* by one means or another.

BATTLE,
Thursday (*night*), 3 *Jan.* 1822.

To-day there has been a *meeting* here of the landlords and farmers in this part of Sussex, which is called the *Rape of Hastings*. The object was to agree on a petition to parliament praying for *relief!* Good God! Where is this to *end?* We now see the effects of those *rags* which I have been railing against for the last twenty years. Here were collected together not less than 300 persons, principally landlords and farmers, brought from their homes by their distresses and by their alarms for the future! Never were such things heard in any country before; and it is useless to hope, for terrific must be the consequences, if an effectual remedy be not speedily applied. The town, which is small, was in a great bustle before noon; and the meeting (in a large room in the principal inn) took place about one o'clock. Lord Ashburnham was called to the chair, and there were present Mr. Curteis, one of the county members, Mr. Fuller, who formerly used to cut *such a figure* in the House of Commons, Mr. Lambe, and many other gentlemen of landed property within the rape, or district, for which the meeting was held. Mr. Curteis, after Lord Ashburnham had opened the business, addressed the meeting.

Mr. Fuller then tendered some resolutions, describing the fallen state of the landed interest, and proposing to pray, *generally*, for relief. Mr. Britton complained that it was not proposed to pray for some *specific measure*, and insisted, that the cause of the evil was the rise in the value of money without a corresponding r duction in the taxes.—A committee was appointed to draw up a petition, which was next produced. It merely described the distress, and prayed generally for relief. Mr. Holloway proposed an addition, containing an imputation of the distress to restricted currency and unabated taxation, and praying for a reduction of taxes. A discussion now arose upon two points: first, whether the addition were admissible at all! and, second, whether Mr. Holloway was qualified to offer

it to the meeting. Both the points having been, at last, decided in the affirmative, the addition, or amendment, was put, and *lost;* and then the original petition was adopted.

After the business of the day was ended, there was a dinner in the inn, in the same room where the meeting had been held. I was at this dinner; and Mr. Britton having proposed my health, and Mr. Curteis, who was in the chair, having given it, I thought it would have looked like mock-modesty, which is, in fact, only another term for hypocrisy, to refrain from expressing my opinions upon a point or two connected with the business of the day. I shall now insert a substantially correct sketch of what the company was indulgent enough to hear from me at the dinner; which I take from the report, contained in the *Morning Chronicle* of Saturday last. The report in the *Chronicle* has all the *pith* of what I advanced relative to *the inutility of Corn Bills*, and relative to *the cause of further declining prices;* two points of the greatest importance in themselves, and which I was, and am, uncommonly anxious to press upon the attention of the public.

The following is a part of the speech so reported:—

I am decidedly of opinion, gentlemen, that a Corn Bill of no description, no matter what its principles or provisions, can do either tenant or landlord any good; and I am not less decidedly of opinion, that though prices are now low, they must, all the present train of public measures continuing, be yet lower, and continue lower upon an average of years and of seasons.—As to a Corn Bill; a law to prohibit or check the importation of human food is a perfect novelty in our history, and ought, therefore, independent of the reason, and the recent experience of the case, to be received and entertained with great suspicion. Heretofore, *premiums* have been given for the exportation, and at other times for the importation, of corn; but of laws to prevent the importation of human food our ancestors knew nothing. And what says recent experience? When the present Corn Bill was passed, I, then a farmer, unable to get my brother farmers to join me, *petitioned singly* against this Bill; and I stated to my brother farmers, that such a Bill could do us no good, while it would not fail to excite against us the ill-will of the other classes of the community; a thought by no means pleasant. Thus has it been. The distress of agriculture was considerable in magnitude then; but what is it now? And yet the Bill was passed; that Bill which was to remunerate and protect is still in force; the farmers got what they prayed to

have granted them; and their distress, with a short interval of tardy pace, has proceeded rapidly increasing from that day to this. What, in the way of Corn Bill, can you have, gentlemen, beyond absolute prohibition? And have you not, since about April, 1819, had absolute prohibition? Since that time no corn has been imported, and then only thirty millions of bushels, which, supposing it all to have been wheat, was a quantity much too insignificant to produce any sensible depression in the price of the immense quantity of corn raised in this kingdom since the last bushel was imported. If your produce had fallen in this manner, if your prices had come down very low, immediately after the importation had taken place, there might have been some colour of reason to impute the fall to the importation; but it so happens, and as if for the express purpose of contradicting the crude notions of Mr. Webb Hall, that your produce has fallen in price at a greater rate, in proportion as time has removed you from the point of importation; and as to the circumstance, so ostentatiously put forward by Mr. Hall and others, that there is still some of the imported corn *unsold*, what does it prove but the converse of what those gentlemen aim at, that is to say, that the holders *cannot afford* to sell it at present prices; for, if they could gain but ever so little by the sale, would they keep it wasting and costing money in warehouses? There appears with some persons to be a notion, that the importation of corn is a *new thing*. They seem to forget, that, during the last war, when agriculture was so *prosperous*, the *ports were always open;* that prodigious quantities of corn were imported during the war; that, so far from importation being prohibited, high *premiums* were given, paid out of the taxes, partly raised upon English farmers, to induce men to import corn. All this seems to be forgotten as much as if it had never taken place; and now the distress of the English farmer is imputed to a cause which was never before an object of his attention, and a desire is expressed to put an end to a branch of commerce which the nation has always freely carried on. I think, gentlemen, that here are reasons quite sufficient to make any man but Mr. Webb Hall slow to impute the present distress to the importation of corn; but, at any rate, what can you have beyond absolute efficient prohibition? No law, no duty, however high; nothing that the parliament can do can go beyond this; and this you now have, in effect, as completely as if this were the only country beneath the sky. For these reasons, gentlemen (and to state more would be a waste of your time and

an affront to your understandings), I am convinced, that, in the way of Corn Bill, it is impossible for the parliament to afford you any, even the smallest, portion of relief. As to the other point, gentlemen, the tendency which the present measures and course of things have to carry prices *lower*, and considerably lower than they now are, and to keep them for a permanency at that low rate, this is a matter worthy of the serious attention of all connected with the land, and particularly of that of the renting farmer. During the *war* no importations distressed the farmer. It was not till peace came that the cry of distress was heard. But, during the war, there was a boundless issue of paper money. Those issues were instantly narrowed by the peace, the law being that the bank should pay in cash six months after the peace should take place. This was the cause of that distress which led to the present Corn Bill. The disease occasioned by the preparations for cash-payments has been brought to a crisis by Mr. Peel's Bill, which has, in effect, doubled, if not tripled, the real amount of the taxes, and violated all contracts for time; given triple gains to every lender, and placed every borrower in jeopardy.

KENSINGTON,
Friday, 4 *Jan.* 1822.

Got home from *Battle*. I had no time to see the town, having entered the inn on Wednesday in the dusk of the evening, having been engaged all day yesterday in the inn, and having come out of it only to get into the coach this morning. I had not time to go even to see *Battle Abbey*, the seat of the Webster family, now occupied by a man of the name of *Alexander!* Thus they *replace them!* It will take a much shorter time than most people imagine to put out all the ancient families. I should think, that six years will turn out all those who receive nothing out of taxes. The greatness of the estate is no protection to the owner; for, great or little, it will soon yield him *no* rents; and when the produce is nothing in either case, the small estate is as good as the large one. Mr. Curteis said, that the *land* was *immovable;* yes; but the *rents are not.* And if freeholds cannot be seized for common contract debts, the carcass of the owner may. But, in fact, there will be no rents; and, without these, the ownership is an empty sound. Thus, at last, the burthen will, as I always said it would, fall upon the *landowner;* and, as the fault of supporting the system has been wholly his, the burthen will fall upon the *right back.*

Whether he will now call in the people to help him to shake it off is more than I can say; but, if he do not, I am sure that he must sink under it. And then, will *revolution No. I.* have been accomplished; but far, and very far indeed, will that be from being the *close* of the drama!—I cannot quit Battle without observing that the country is very pretty all about it. All hill or valley. A great deal of woodland, in which the underwood is generally very fine, though the oaks are not very fine, and a good deal covered with *moss*. This shows that the clay ends before the *tap*-root of the oak gets as deep as it would go; for when the clay goes the full depth the oaks are always fine.—The woods are too large and too near each other for hare-hunting; and as to coursing it is out of the question here. But it is a fine country for shooting and for harbouring game of all sorts.—It was rainy as I came home; but the woodmen were at work. A great many *hop-poles* are cut here, which makes the coppices more valuable than in many other parts. The women work in the coppices, shaving the bark of the hop-poles, and, indeed, at various other parts of the business. These poles are shaved to prevent *maggots* from breeding in the bark and accelerating the destruction of the pole. It is curious that the bark of trees should generate maggots; but it has, as well as the wood, a *sugary* matter in it. The hickory wood in America sends out from the ends of the logs when these are burning great quantities of the finest syrup that can be imagined. Accordingly, that wood breeds maggots, or worms as they are usually called, surprisingly. Our *ash* breeds worms very much. When the tree or pole is cut, the moist matter between the outer bark and the wood, putrifies. Thence come the maggots, which soon begin to eat their way into the wood. For this reason the bark is shaved off the hop-poles, as it ought to be off all our timber trees, as soon as cut, especially the ash.—Little boys and girls shave hop-poles and assist in other coppice work very nicely. And it is pleasant work when the weather is dry over head. The woods, bedded with leaves as they are, are clean and dry underfoot. They are warm too, even in the coldest weather. When the ground is frozen several inches deep in the open fields, it is scarcely frozen at all in a coppice where the underwood is a good plant, and where it is nearly high enough to cut. So that the woodman's is really a pleasant life. We are apt to think that the birds have a hard time of it in winter. But we forget the warmth of the woods, which far exceeds anything to be found in farmyards. When Sidmouth started me

from my farm, in 1817, I had just planted my farmyard round with a pretty coppice. But, never mind, Sidmouth, and I shall, I dare say, have plenty of time and occasion to talk about that coppice, and many other things, before we die. And, can I, when I think of these things now, *pity* those to whom Sidmouth *owed his power* of starting me!—But let me forget the subject for this time at any rate.—Woodland countries are interesting on many accounts. Not so much on account of their masses of green leaves, as on account of the variety of sights and sounds and incidents that they afford. Even in winter the coppices are beautiful to the eye, while they comfort the mind with the idea of shelter and warmth. In spring they change their hue from day to day during two whole months, which is about the time from the first appearance of the delicate leaves of the birch to the full expansion of those of the ash; and even before the leaves come at all to intercept the view, what in the vegetable creation is so delightful to behold as the bed of a coppice bespangled with primroses and bluebells? The opening of the birch leaves is the signal for the pheasant to begin to crow, for the blackbird to whistle, and the thrush to sing; and just when the oak-buds begin to look reddish, and not a day before, the whole tribe of finches burst forth in songs from every bough, while the lark, imitating them all, carries the joyous sounds to the sky. These are amongst the means which Providence has benignantly appointed to sweeten the toils by which food and raiment are produced; these the English Ploughman could once hear without the sorrowful reflection that he himself was *a pauper*, and that the bounties of nature had, for him, been scattered in vain! And shall he never see an end to this state of things! Shall he never have the due reward of his labour! Shall unsparing taxation never cease to make him a miserable dejected being, a creature famishing in the midst of abundance, fainting, expiring with hunger's feeble moans, surrounded by a carolling creation! O! accursed paper-money! Has hell a torment surpassing the wickedness of thy inventor!

SUSSEX JOURNAL

THROUGH CROYDON, GODSTONE, EAST-GRINSTEAD, AND UCKFIELD, TO LEWES, AND BRIGHTON; RETURNING BY CUCKFIELD, WORTH, AND RED-HILL

LEWES,
Tuesday, 8 *Jan.* 1822.

CAME here to-day, from home, to see what passes to-morrow at a meeting to be held here of the owners and occupiers of land in the rapes of Lewes and Pevensey.—In quitting the great Wen we go through Surrey more than half the way to Lewes. From *Saint George's Fields*, which now are covered with houses, we go, towards Croydon, between rows of houses, nearly half the way, and the whole way is nine miles. There are, erected within these four years, two entire miles of stock-jobbers' houses on this one road, and the work goes on with accelerated force! To be sure; for the taxes being, in fact, tripled by Peel's Bill, the fundlords increase in riches; and their accommodations increase of course. What an at once horrible and ridiculous thing this country would become, if this thing could go on only for a few years! And these rows of new houses, added to the Wen, are proofs of growing prosperity, are they? These make part of the increased capital of the country, do they? But how is this Wen to be *dispersed?* I know not whether it be to be done by knife or by caustic; but dispersed it must be! And this is the only difficulty, which I do not see the *easy* means of getting over.—Aye! these are dreadful thoughts! I know they are; but they ought not to be banished from the mind; for they will *return*, and, at every return, they will be more frightful. The man who cannot coolly look at this matter is unfit for the times that are approaching. Let the interest of the debt be once well reduced (and that must be sooner or later) and then what is to become of *half a million* at least of the people congregated in this Wen? Oh! precious "Great Man now no more!" Oh! "Pilot that weathered the Storm!" Oh! "Heaven-born" pupil of Prettyman! Who but him who can number the sands of the sea, shall number the execrations with which thy memory will be loaded!—From London to

Croydon is as ugly a bit of country as any in England. A poor spewy gravel with some clay. Few trees but elms, and those generally stripped up and villainously ugly.—Croydon is a good market-town; but is, by the funds, swelled out into a *Wen*.—Upon quitting Croydon for Godstone, you come to the chalk hills, the juniper shrubs and the yew trees. This is an extension westward of the vein of chalk which I have before noticed (see page 57) between Bromley and Seven-Oaks. To the westward here lies Epsom Downs, which lead on to Merrow Downs and St. Margaret's Hill, then, skipping over Guildford, you come to the Hog's Back, which is still of chalk, and at the west end of which lies Farnham. With the Hog's Back this vein of chalk seems to end; for then the valleys become rich loam, and the hills sand and gravel till you approach the Winchester Downs by the way of Arlesford.—Godstone, which is in Surrey also, is a beautiful village, chiefly of one street with a fine large green before it and with a pond in the green. A little way to the right (going from London) lies the vile rotten Borough of *Blechingley;* but, happily for Godstone, out of sight. At and near Godstone the gardens are all very neat; and, at the inn, there is a nice garden well stocked with beautiful flowers in the season. I here saw, last summer, some double violets as large as small pinks, and the lady of the house was kind enough to give me some of the roots.—From Godstone you go up a long hill of clay and sand, and then descend into a level country of stiff loam at top, clay at bottom, corn-fields, pastures, broad hedge-rows, coppices, and oak woods, which country continues till you quit Surrey about two miles before you reach East-Grinstead. The woods and coppices are very fine here. It is the genuine *oak-soil;* a bottom of yellow clay to any depth, I dare say, that man can go. No moss on the oaks. No dead tops. Straight as larches. The bark of the young trees with dark spots in it; sure sign of free growth and great depth of clay beneath. The wheat is here sown on five-turn ridges, and the ploughing is amongst the best that I ever saw.—At East-Grinstead, which is a rotten borough and a very shabby place, you come to stiff loam at top with sand-stone beneath. To the south of the place the land is fine, and the vale on both sides a very beautiful intermixture of woodland and corn-fields and pastures.—At about three miles from Grinstead you come to a pretty village, called Forest-Row, and then, on the road to Uckfield, you cross Ashurst Forest, which is a heath, with here and there a few birch scrubs upon it, verily the most villainously ugly spot I

ever saw in England. This lasts you for five miles, getting, if possible, uglier and uglier all the way, till, at last, as if barren soil, nasty spewy gravel, heath and even that stunted, were not enough, you see some rising spots, which instead of trees, present you with black, ragged, hideous rocks. There may be Englishmen who wish to see the coast of *Nova Scotia*. They need not go to sea; for here it is to the life. If I had been in a long trance (as our nobility seem to have been), and had been waked up here, I should have begun to look about for the Indians and the squaws, and to have heaved a sigh at the thought of being so far from England.—From the end of this forest without trees you come into a country of but poorish wettish land. Passing through the village of Uckfield, you find an enclosed country, with a soil of a clay cast all the way to within about three miles of Lewes, when you get to a chalk bottom, and rich land. I was at Lewes at the beginning of last harvest, and saw the fine farms of the Ellmans, very justly renowned for their improvement of the breed of *South-Down sheep*, and the younger Mr. John Ellman not less justly blamed for the part he had taken in propagating the errors of Webb Hall, and thereby, however unintentionally, assisting to lead thousands to cherish those false hopes that have been the cause of their ruin. Mr. Ellman may say, that he *thought* he was right; but if he had read my *New Year's Gift* to the farmers, published in the preceding January, he could not think that he was right. If he had not read it, he ought to have read it, before he appeared in print. At any rate, if no other person had a right to censure his publications, I *had* that right. I will here notice a calumny, to which the above visit to Lewes gave rise; namely, that I went into the neighbourhood of the Ellmans, to find out whether they ill-treated their labourers! No man that knows me will believe this. The facts are these: the Ellmans, celebrated farmers, had made a great figure in the evidence taken before the committee. I was at Worth, about twenty miles from Lewes. The harvest was begun. Worth is a woodland country. I wished to know the state of the crops; for, I was, at that very time, as will be seen by referring to the date, beginning to write my First Letter to the Landlords. Without knowing anything of the matter myself, I asked my host, Mr. Brazier, what good corn country was nearest to us. He said Lewes. Off I went, and he with me, in a post-chaise. We had 20 miles to go and 20 back in the same chaise. A bad road, and rain all the day. We put up at the White Hart, took another chaise, went round

and saw the farms, through the window of the chaise, having stopped at a little public-house to ask which were they, and having stopped now and then to get a sample out of the sheaves of wheat, came back to the White Hart, after being absent only about an hour and a half, got our dinner, and got back to Worth before it was dark; and never asked, and never intended to ask, one single question of any human being as to the conduct or character of the Ellmans. Indeed the evidence of the elder Mr. Ellman was so fair, so honest, and so useful, particularly as relating *to the labourers*, that I could not possibly suspect him of being a cruel or hard master. He told the committee that when he began business, forty-five years ago, every man in the parish brewed his own beer, and that now, not one man did it, unless he gave him the malt! Why, here was by far the most valuable part of the whole volume of evidence. Then, Mr. Ellman did not present a parcel of *estimates* and God knows what; but a plain and honest statement of facts, the rate of day wages, of job wages, for a long series of years, by which it clearly appeared how the labourer had been robbed and reduced to misery, and how the poor-rates had been increased. He did not, like Mr. George and other Bull-frogs, sink these interesting facts; but honestly told the truth. Therefore, whatever I might think of his endeavours to uphold the mischievous errors of Webb Hall, I could have no suspicion that he was a hard master.

LEWES,
Wednesday, 9 *Jan.* 1822.

The meeting and the dinner are now over. Mr. Davies Giddy was in the chair: the place the County Hall. A Mr. Partington, a pretty little oldish smart truss nice cockney-looking gentleman, with a yellow and red handkerchief round his neck, moved the petition, which was seconded by Lord Chichester, who lives in the neighbourhood. Much as I had read of that great doctor of *virtual representation* and *Royal Commissioner of Inimitable Bank Notes*, Mr. Davies Giddy, I had never seen him before. He called to my mind one of those venerable persons who administer spiritual comfort to the sinners of the "sister-kingdom;" and, whether I looked at the dress or the person, I could almost have sworn that it was the identical *Father Luke* that I saw about twenty-three years ago, at Philadelphia, in the farce of the Poor Soldier. Mr. Blackman (of Lewes I believe) disapproved of the petition, and in a speech of considerable

length, and also of considerable ability, stated to the meeting that the evils complained of arose from the *currency*, and not from the *importation of foreign corn*. A Mr. Donavon, an Irish gentleman, who, it seems, is a magistrate in this "disturbed county," disapproved of discussing anything at such a meeting, and thought that the meeting should merely state its distresses, and leave it to the wisdom of parliament to discover the remedy. Upon which Mr. Chatfield observed; "So, sir, we are in a trap. We cannot get ourselves out though we know the way. There are others, who have got us in, and are able to get us out, but they do not know how. And we are to tell them, it seems, that we are in the trap; but are not to tell them the way to get us out. I don't like long speeches, sir; but I like common sense." This was neat and pithy. Fifty professed orators could not, in a whole day, have thrown so much ridicule on the speech of Mr. Donavon.—A Mr. Mabbott proposed an amendment to include all classes of the community, and took a hit at Mr. Curteis for his speech at Battle. Mr. Curteis defended himself, and I thought very fairly. A Mr. Woodward, who said he was a farmer, carried us back to the necessity of the war against France; and told us of the horrors of plunder and murder and rape that the war had prevented. This gentleman put an end to my patience, which Donavon had put to an extremely severe test; and so I withdrew.—After I went away Mr. Blackman proposed some resolutions, which were carried by a great majority by show of hands. But pieces of paper were then handed about, for the voters to write their names on for and against the petition. The greater part of the people were gone away by this time; but, at any rate, there were more *signatures* for the petition than for the resolutions. A farmer in Pennsylvania having a visitor, to whom he was willing to show how well he treated his negroes as to food, bid the fellows (who were at dinner) *to ask for a second or third cut of pork if they had not enough*. Quite surprised at the novelty, but emboldened by a repetition of the injunction, one of them did say, "Massa, I wants another cut." He had it; but as soon as the visitor was gone away, "D—n you," says the master, while he belaboured him with the "cowskin." "I'll make you know *how to understand me* another time!"—The signers of this petition were in the dark while the show of hands was going on; but when it came to *signing* they knew well *what Massa meant!* This is a petition to be sure; but, it is no more the petition of the farmers in the rapes of Lewes and Pevensey than it is the petition of the

mermaids of Lapland.—There was a *dinner* after the meeting at the *Star Inn*, at which there occurred something rather curious regarding myself. When at Battle, I had no intention of going to Lewes, till on the evening of my arrival at Battle, a gentleman, who had heard of the before-mentioned calumny, observed to me that I would do well not to go to Lewes. That very observation made me resolve to go. I went, as a spectator, to the meeting; and I left no one ignorant of the place where I was to be found. I did not covet the noise of a dinner of from 200 to 300 persons; and I did not intend to go to it; but, being pressed to go, I finally went. After some previous commonplace occurrences, Mr. Kemp, formerly a member for Lewes, was called to the chair; and he having given as a toast, "*the speedy discovery of a remedy for our distresses*," Mr. Ebenezer Johnstone, a gentleman of Lewes, whom I had never seen or heard of until that day, but who, I understand, is a very opulent and most respectable man, proposed *my health*, as that of a person likely to be able to point out the wished-for remedy.—This was the signal for the onset. Immediately upon the toast being given, a Mr. Hitchins, a farmer of Seaford, duly prepared for the purpose, got upon the table, and, with candle in one hand and *Register* in the other, read the following garbled passage from my *Letter to Lord Egremont*.—"But let us hear what the younger Ellman said: 'He had seen them employed in drawing beach gravel, as had been already described. One of them, the leader, worked with a bell about his neck.' Oh! the envy of surrounding nations and admiration of the world! Oh! what a 'glorious constitution!' Oh! what a happy country! Impudent Radicals, to want to reform a parliament, under which men enjoy such blessings! On such a subject it is impossible (under Six-Acts) to trust one's pen! However, this I will say; that here is much more than enough to make me rejoice in the ruin of the farmers; and I do, with all my heart, thank God for it; *seeing, that it appears absolutely necessary, that* the present race of them should be totally broken up, in Sussex at any rate, *in order to put an end to this cruelty and insolence towards the labourers, who are by far the greater number; and who are men, and a little better men too, than such employers as these, who are, in fact, monsters in human shape!*"

I had not the *Register* by me, and could not detect the garbling. All the words that I have put in italics, this Hitchins left out in the reading. What sort of man he must be the public will easily judge.—No sooner had Hitchins done, than up started

Mr. Ingram, a farmer of Rottendean, who was the second person in the drama (for all had been duly prepared), and moved that I should be *put out of the room!* Some few of the Webb Hallites, joined by about six or eight of the dark, dirty-faced, half-whiskered, tax-eaters from Brighton (which is only eight miles off) joined in this cry. I rose, that they might see the man that they had to put out. Fortunately *for themselves*, not one of them attempted to approach me. They were like the mice that resolved that a bell should be put round the cat's neck!—However, a considerable hubbub took place. At last, however, the chairman, Mr. Kemp, whose conduct was fair and manly, having given my health, I proceeded to address the company in substance as stated here below; and, it is curious enough, that even those who, upon my health being given, had taken their hats and gone out of the room (and amongst whom Mr. Ellman the younger was one) came back, formed a crowd, and were just as silent and attentive as the rest of the company!

[Note, written at *Kensington*, 13 *Jan.*—I must here, before I insert the speech, which has appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, the Brighton papers, and in most of the London papers, except the base sinking *Old Times* and the brimstone-smelling *Tramper*, or *Traveller*, which is, I well know, a mere tool in the hands of two snap-dragon Whig-lawyers, whose greediness and folly I have so often had to expose, and which paper is maintained by a contrivance which I will amply expose in my next; I must, before I insert this speech, remark, that Mr. Ellman the younger has, to a gentleman whom I know to be incapable of falsehood, disavowed the proceeding of Hitchins; on which I have to observe, that the disavowal, to have any weight, must be public, or be made to me.

As to the provocation that I have given the Ellmans, I am, upon reflection, ready to confess that I may have laid on the lash without a due regard to mercy. The fact is, that I have so long had the misfortune to be compelled to keep a parcel of badger-hided fellows, like Scarlett, in order, that I am, like a drummer that has been used to flog old offenders, become *heavy handed.* I ought to have considered the Ellmans as *recruits* and to have suited my tickler to the tenderness of their backs.—I hear that Mr. Ingram of Rottendean, who moved for my being turned out of the room, and who looked so foolish when he had to turn himself out, is an officer of Yeomanry "*Gavaltry.*" A ploughman spoiled! This man would, I dare say, have been

a very good husbandman; but the unnatural working of the paper-system has sublimated him out of his senses. That greater doctor, Mr. Peel, will bring him down again.—Mr. Hitchins, I am told, after going away, came back, stood on the landing-place (the door being open), and, while I was speaking, exclaimed, "Oh! the fools! How they open their mouths! How they suck it all in."—Suck *what* in, Mr. Hitchins? Was it honey that dropped from my lips? Was it flattery? Amongst other things, I said that I liked the plain names of *farmer* and *husbandman* better than that of *agriculturist;* and the prospect I held out to them, was that of a description to catch their applause?—But this Hitchins seems to be a very silly person indeed.]

The following is a portion of the speech:—

The toast having been *opposed,* and that, too, in the extraordinary manner we have witnessed, I will, at any rate, with your permission, make a remark or two on that manner. If the person who has made the opposition had been actuated by a spirit of fairness and justice, he would not have confined himself to a detached sentence of the paper from which he has read; but would have taken the whole together; for, by taking a particular sentence, and leaving out all the rest, what writing is there that will not admit of a wicked interpretation? As to the particular part which has been read, I should not, perhaps, if I had seen it *in print,* and had had time to cool a little [it was in a *Register* sent from Norfolk], have sent it forth in terms so very general as to embrace all the farmers of this county; but as to those of them who put *the bell round the labourer's neck,* I beg leave to be now repeating, in its severest sense, every word of the passage that has been read.—Born in a farm-house, bred up at the plough tail, with a smock-frock on my back, taking great delight in all the pursuits of farmers, liking their society, and having amongst them my most esteemed friends, it is natural that I should feel, and I do feel, uncommonly anxious to prevent, as far as I am able, that total ruin which now menaces them. But the labourer, was I to have no feeling for him? Was not he my *countryman* too? And was I not to feel indignation against those farmers, who had had the hard-heartedness to put the bell round his neck, and thus wantonly insult and degrade the class to whose toils they owed their own ease? The statement of the fact was not mine; I read it in the newspaper as having come from Mr. Ellman the younger; he, in a

very laudable manner, expressed his *horror* at it; and was not I to express *indignation* at what Mr. Ellman felt horror? That gentleman and Mr. Webb Hall may monopolise all the wisdom in matters of political economy; but are they, or rather is Mr. Ellman alone, to engross all the feeling too? [It was here denied that Mr. Ellman had said the bell had been put on by *farmers.*] Very well, then, the complained of passage has been productive of benefit to the farmers of this county; for, as the thing stood in the newspapers, the natural and unavoidable inference was, that that atrocious, that inhuman act, was an act of Sussex farmers.

BRIGHTON,
Thursday, 10 *Jan.* 1822.

Lewes is in a valley of the *South Downs*, this town is at eight miles distance, to the south-south-west or thereabouts. There is a great extent of rich meadows above and below Lewes. The town itself is a model of solidity and neatness. The buildings all substantial to the very outskirts; the pavements good and complete; the shops nice and clean; the people well-dressed; and, though last not least, the girls remarkably pretty, as, indeed, they are in most parts of Sussex; round faces, features small, little hands and wrists, plump arms, and bright eyes. The Sussex men, too, are remarkable for their good looks. A Mr. Baxter, a stationer at Lewes, showed me a *farmer's account book*, which is a very complete thing of the kind. The inns are good at Lewes, the people civil and not servile, and the charges really (considering the taxes) far below what one could reasonably expect.—From Lewes to Brighton the road winds along between the hills of the South Downs, which, in this mild weather, are mostly beautifully green even at this season, with flocks of sheep feeding on them.—Brighton itself lies in a valley cut across at one end by the sea, and its extension, or *Wen*, has swelled up the sides of the hills and has run some distance up the valley.—The first thing you see in approaching Brighton from Lewes, is a splendid *horse-barrack* on one side of the road, and a heap of low, shabby, nasty houses, irregularly built, on the other side. This is always the case where there is a barrack. How soon a reformed parliament would make both disappear! Brighton is a very pleasant place. For a *wen* remarkably so. The *Kremlin*, the very name of which has so long been a subject of laughter all over the country, lies in the gorge of the valley, and amongst the old houses

of the town. The grounds, which cannot, I think, exceed a couple or three acres, are surrounded by a wall neither lofty nor good-looking. Above this rise some trees, bad in sorts, stunted in growth, and dirty with smoke. As to the "palace" as the Brighton newspapers call it, the apartments appear to be all upon the ground floor; and, when you see the thing from a distance, you think you see a parcel of *cradle-spits*, of various dimensions, sticking up out of the mouths of so many enormous squat decanters. Take a square box, the sides of which are three feet and a half, and the height a foot and a half. Take a large Norfolk-turnip, cut off the green of the leaves, leave the stalks 9 inches long, tie these round with a string three inches from the top, and put the turnip on the middle of the top of the box. Then take four turnips of half the size, treat them in the same way, and put them on the corners of the box. Then take a considerable number of bulbs of the crown-imperial, the narcissus, the hyacinth, the tulip, the crocus, and others; let the leaves of each have sprouted to about an inch, more or less according to the size of the bulb; put all these, pretty promiscuously, but pretty thickly, on the top of the box. Then stand off and look at your architecture. There! That's "*a Kremlin!*" Only you must cut some church-looking windows in the sides of the box. As to what you ought to put *into* the box, that is a subject far above my cut.—Brighton is naturally a place of resort for *expectants*, and a shifty ugly-looking swarm is, of course, assembled here. Some of the fellows, who had endeavoured to disturb our harmony at the dinner at Lewes, were parading, amongst this swarm, on the cliff. You may always know them by their lank jaws, the stiffeners round their necks, their hidden or *no* shirts, their stays, their false shoulders, hips and haunches, their half-whiskers, and by their skins, colour of veal kidney-suet, warmed a little, and then powdered with dirty dust.—These vermin excepted, the people at Brighton make a very fine figure. The trades-people are very nice in all their concerns. The houses are excellent, built chiefly with a blue or purple brick; and bow-windows appear to be the general taste. I can easily believe this to be a very healthy place: the open downs on the one side and the open sea on the other. No inlet, cove, or river; and, of course, no swamps.—I have spent this evening very pleasantly in a company of reformers, who, though plain tradesmen and mechanics, know I am quite satisfied more about the questions that agitate the country than any equal number of lords.

KENSINGTON,

Friday, 11 *January*, 1822.

Came home by the way of Cuckfield, Worth, and Red-Hill, instead of by Uckfield, Grinstead and Godstone, and got into the same road again at Croydon. The roads being nearly parallel lines and at no great distance from each other, the soil is nearly the same, with the exception of the fine oak country between Godstone and Grinstead, which does not go so far westward as my homeward bound road, where the land, opposite the spot just spoken of, becomes more of a moor than a clay, and though there are oaks, they are not nearly so fine as those on the other road. The tops are flatter; the side *shoots* are sometimes higher than the middle shoot; a certain proof that the *tap-root* has met with something that it does not like.—I see (Jan. 15) that Mr. Curteis has thought it necessary to state in the public papers, that *he* had *nothing to do* with my being at the dinner at Battle! Who the Devil thought he had? Why, was it not an ordinary; and had I not as much right there as he? He has said, too, that *he did not know* that I was to be at the dinner. How should he? Why was it necessary to apprise him of it any more than the porter of the inn? He has said, that he did not hear of any deputation to invite me to the dinner, and, "*upon inquiry*," cannot find that there was any. Have I said that there was any invitation at all? There was; but I have not said so. I went to the dinner for my half-crown like another man, without knowing, or caring, who would be at it. But, if Mr. Curteis thought it necessary to say so much, he might have said a little more. He might have said, that he twice addressed himself to me in a very peculiar manner, and that I never addressed myself to him except in answer; and, if he had thought "*inquiry*" necessary upon this subject also, he might have found that, though always the first to speak or hold out the hand to a hard-fisted artisan or labourer, I never did the same to a man of rank or riches in the whole course of my life. Mr. Curteis might have said, too, that unless I had gone to the dinner, the party would, according to appearances, have been very *select;* that I found him at the head of one of the tables, with less than thirty persons in the room; that the number swelled up to about one hundred and thirty; that no person was at the other

table; that I took my seat at it; and that that table became almost immediately crowded from one end to the other. To these Mr. Curteis, when his hand was in, might have added, that he turned himself in his chair and listened to my speech with the greatest attention; that he bade me, by name, good-night, when he retired; that he took not a man away with him; and that the gentlemen who was called on to replace him in the chair (whose name I have forgotten) had got from his seat during the evening to come and shake me by the hand. All these things Mr. Curteis might have said; but the fact is, he has been bullied by the base newspapers, and he has not been able to muster up courage to act the manly part, and which, too, he would have found to be the *wise* part in the end. When he gave the toast "*more money and less taxes*," he turned himself towards me, and said, "That is a toast, that I am sure, *you approve* of, Mr. Cobbett." To which I answered, "It would be made good, sir, if *members of parliament would do their duty*."—I appeal to all the gentlemen present for the truth of what I say.—Perhaps Mr. Curteis, in his heart, did not like to give my health. If that was the case, he ought to have left the chair, and retired. *Straight forward* is the best course; and see what difficulties Mr. Curteis has involved himself in by not pursuing it! I have no doubt that he was agreeably surprised when he saw and heard me. Why not *say* then: "After all that has been said about Cobbett, he is a devilish pleasant, frank, and clever fellow, at any rate."—How much better this would have been, than to act the part that Mr. Curteis has acted.—The editors of the *Brighton Chronicle and Lewes Express* have, out of mere modesty, I dare say, fallen a little into Mr. Curteis's strain. In closing their account (in their paper of the 15th) of the Lewes meeting, they say, that I addressed the company at some length, as reported in their supplement published on Thursday the 10th. And then they think it necessary to add: "For ourselves, we can say, that we never saw Mr. Cobbett until the meeting at Battle." Now, had it not been for pure maiden-like bashfulness, they would, doubtless, have added, that when they did see me, they were profuse in expressions of their gratitude to me for having merely *named their paper* in my *Register*, a thing, which, as I told them, I myself had forgotten. When, too, they were speaking, in reference to a speech made in the hall, of "one of the finest specimens of oratory that has ever been given in any assembly," it was, without doubt,

out of pure compassion for the perverted taste of their Lewes readers, that they suppressed the fact, that the agent of the paper at Lewes sent them word, that it was useless for them to send any account of the meeting, unless that account contained Mr. Cobbett's speech; that he, the agent, could have sold a hundred papers that morning, if they had contained Mr. Cobbett's speech; but could not sell one without it. I myself, by mere accident, heard this message delivered to a third person by their agent at Lewes. And, as I said before, it must have been pure tenderness towards their readers that made the editors suppress a fact so injurious to the reputation of those readers in point of *taste!* However, at last, these editors seem to have triumphed over all feelings of this sort; for, having printed off a placard, advertising their supplement, in which placard no menion was made of *me*, they, grown bold all of a sudden, took a *painting brush*, and in large letters, put into their placard, "*Mr. Cobbett's Speech at Lewes;*" so that, at a little distance, the placard seemed to relate to nothing else; and there was "the finest specimen of oratory" left to find its way into the world under the auspices of my rustic harangue. Good God! What will this world come to! We shall, by and by, have to laugh at the workings of envy in the very worms that we breed in our bodies! — The fast-sinking *Old Times* newspaper, its cat-and-dog opponent the *New Times*, the *Courier*, and the Whig-lawyer *Tramper*, called the *Traveller;* the fellows who conduct these vehicles; these wretched fellows, their very livers burning with envy, have hasted to inform their readers, that "they have authority to state that Lord Ashburnham and Mr. Fuller were not present at the dinner at Battle where Cobbett's health was drunk." These fellows have now "authority" to state, that there were no two men who dined at Battle, that I should not prefer as companions to Lord Ashburnham and Mr. Fuller, commonly called "Jack Fuller," seeing that I am no admirer of *lofty reserve*, and that, of all things on earth, I abhor a head like a drum, all noise and emptiness. These scribes have also "authority" to state, that they amuse me and the public too by declining rapidly in their sale from their exclusion of my country lectures, which have only begun. In addition to this the *Tramper* editor has "authority" to state, that one of his papers of 5th Jan. has been sent to the *Register* office by post, with these words written on it: "This scoundrel paper has taken no notice of Mr. Cobbett's speech."

All these papers have "authority" to state beforehand, that they will insert no account of what shall take place, within these three or four weeks, at *Huntingdon*, at *Lynn*, at *Chichester*, and other places where I intend to be. And, lastly, the editors have full "authority" to state, that they may employ, without let or molestation of any sort, either private or public, the price of the last number that they shall sell in the purchase of hemp or ratsbane, as the sure means of a happy deliverance from their present state of torment.

HUNTINGDON JOURNAL

THROUGH WARE AND ROYSTON, TO HUNTINGDON

ROYSTON,
Monday morning, 21st Jan. 1822.

CAME from London, yesterday noon, to this town on my way to Huntingdon. My road was through Ware. Royston is just within the line (on the Cambridgeshire side), which divides Hertfordshire from Cambridgeshire. On this road, as on almost all the others going from it, the enormous *Wen* has swelled out to the distance of about six or seven miles.—The land till you come nearly to Ware which is in Hertfordshire, and which is twenty-three miles from the *Wen*, is chiefly a strong and deep loam, with the gravel a good distance from the surface. The land is good wheat-land; but I observed only three fields of swedish turnips in the 23 miles, and no wheat drilled. The wheat is sown on ridges of great width here and there; sometimes on ridges of ten, at others on ridges of seven, on those of five, four, three, and even two, feet wide. Yet the bottom is manifestly not very wet generally; and that there is not a bottom of clay is clear from the poor growth of the oak trees. All the trees are shabby in this country; and the eye is incessantly offended by the sight of *pollards*, which are seldom suffered to disgrace even the meanest lands in Hampshire or Sussex. As you approach Ware the bottom becomes chalk of a dirtyish colour, and, in some parts, far below the surface. After you quit Ware, which is a mere market town, the land grows by degrees poorer; the chalk lies nearer and nearer to the surface, till you come to the open common-fields within a few miles of Royston. Along here the land is poor enough. It is not the stiff red loam mixed with large blue-grey flints, lying upon the chalk, such as you see in the north of Hampshire; but a whitish sort of clay, with little yellow flattish stones amongst it; sure signs of a hungry soil. Yet this land bears wheat sometimes. —Royston is at the foot of this high poor land; or rather in a dell, the open side of which looks towards the North. It is a common market town. Not mean, but having nothing of beauty about it; and having on it, on three of the sides out of

the four, those very ugly things, common-fields, which have all the nakedness, without any of the smoothness, of Downs.

HUNTINGDON,
Tuesday morning, 22 Jan. 1822.

Immediately upon quitting Royston, you come along, for a considerable distance, with enclosed fields on the left and open common-fields on the right. Here the land is excellent. A dark, rich loam, free from stones, on chalk beneath at a great distance. The land appears, for a mile or two, to resemble that at and near Faversham in Kent, which I have before noticed. The fields on the left seem to have been enclosed by act of parliament; and they certainly are the most beautiful tract of *fields* that I ever saw. Their extent may be from ten to thirty acres each. Divided by quick-set hedges, exceedingly well planted and raised. The whole tract is nearly a perfect level. The cultivation neat, and the stubble heaps, such as remain out, giving proof of great crops of straw, while, on land with a chalk bottom, there is seldom any want of a proportionate quantity of grain. Even here, however, I saw but few swedish turnips, and those not good. Nor did I see any wheat drilled; and observed, that, in many parts, the broad-cast sowing had been performed in a most careless manner, especially at about three miles from Royston, where some parts of the broad lands seemed to have had the seed flung along them with a shovel, while other parts contained only here and there a blade; or, at least, were so thinly supplied as to make it almost doubtful whether they had not been wholly missed. In some parts, the middles only of the ridges were sown thickly. This is shocking husbandry. A Norfolk or a Kentish farmer would have sowed a bushel and a half of seed to the acre here, and would have had a far better plant of wheat.—About four miles, I think it is, from Royston you come to the estate of Lord Hardwicke. You see the house at the end of an avenue about two miles long, which, however, wants the main thing, namely, fine and lofty trees. The soil here begins to be a very stiff loam at top; clay beneath for a considerable distance; and, in some places, beds of yellow gravel with very large stones mixed in it. The land is generally cold; a great deal of draining is wanted; and yet, the bottom is such as not to be favourable to the growth of the *oak*, of which sort I have not seen one *handsome* tree since I left London. A grove, such as I saw at Weston in Herefordshire,

would, here, be a thing to attract the attention of all ranks and all ages. What, then, would they say, on beholding a wood of oaks, hickories, chestnuts, walnuts, locusts, gum-trees, and maples in America!—Lord Hardwicke's avenue appears to be lined with elms chiefly. They are shabby. He might have had *ash;* for the ash will grow *anywhere;* on sand, on gravel, on clay, on chalk, or in swamps. It is surprising that those who planted these rows of trees did not observe how well the ash grows here! In the hedge-rows, in the plantations, everywhere the ash is fine. The ash is the *hardiest* of all our large trees. Look at trees on any part of the sea coast. You will see them all, even the firs, lean from the sea breeze, except the ash. You will see the oak *shaved up* on the side of the breeze. But the ash stands upright, as if in a warm woody dell. We have no tree that attains a greater height than the ash; and certainly none that equals it in beauty of leaf. It bears pruning better than any other tree. Its timber is one of the most useful; and as underwood and fire-wood it far exceeds all others of English growth. From the trees of an avenue like that of Lord Hardwicke a hundred pounds' worth of fuel might, if the trees were ash, be cut every year in prunings necessary to preserve the health and beauty of the trees. Yet, on this same land, has his lordship planted many acres of larches and firs. These appear to have been planted about twelve years. If instead of these he had planted ash, four years from the seed bed and once removed; had cut them down within an inch of the ground the second year after planting; and had planted them at four feet apart, he would now have had about six thousand ash-poles, on an average twelve feet long, on each acre of land in his plantation; which, at three-halfpence each, would have been worth somewhere nearly forty pounds an acre. He might now have cut the poles, leaving about 600 to stand upon an acre to come to trees; and, while these were growing to timber, the underwood would, for poles, hoops, broomsticks, spars, rods, and faggots, have been worth twenty-five or thirty pounds an acre every ten years. Can beggarly stuff, like larches and firs, ever be profitable to this extent? Ash is timber, fit for the wheelwright, at the age of twenty years, or less. What can you do with a rotten fir thing at that age?—This estate of Lord Hardwicke appears to be very large. There is a part which is, apparently, in his own hands, as, indeed, the whole must soon be, unless he give up all idea of rent, or unless he can *choack off* the fundholder or get again afloat on the sea of paper-money.

In this part of his land there is a fine piece of *Lucerne* in rows at about eighteen inches distant from each other. They are now manuring it with *burnt-earth* mixed with some dung; and I see several heaps of burnt-earth hereabouts. The directions for doing this are contained in my *Year's Residence*, as taught me by Mr. William Gauntlet, of Winchester.—The land is, all along here, laid up in those wide and high ridges, which I saw in Gloucestershire, going from Gloucester to Oxford, as I have already mentioned. These ridges are ploughed *back* or *down;* but they are ploughed up again for every sowing.—At an inn near Lord Hardwicke's I saw the finest parcel of dove-house pigeons I ever saw in my life.—Between this place and Huntingdon is the village of Caxton, which very much resembles almost a village of the same size in *Picardy*, where I saw the women dragging harrows to harrow in the corn. Certainly this village resembles nothing English, except some of the rascally rotten boroughs in Cornwall and Devonshire, on which a just Providence seems to have entailed its curse. The land just about here does seem to be really bad. The face of the country is naked. The few scrubbed trees that now and then meet the eye, and even the quick-sets, are covered with a yellow moss. All is bleak and comfortless; and, just on the most dreary part of this most dreary scene, stands almost opportunely, "*Caxton Gibbet,*" tendering its friendly one arm to the passers-by. It has recently been fresh-painted, and written on in conspicuous characters, for the benefit, I suppose, of those who cannot exist under the thought of wheat at four shillings a bushel.—Not far from this is a new house, which, the coachman says, belongs to a Mr. Cheer, who, if report speaks truly, is not, however, notwithstanding his name, guilty of the sin of making people either drunkards or gluttons. Certainly the spot, on which he has built his house, is one of the most ugly that I ever saw. Few spots have everything that you could wish to find; but this, according to my judgment, has everything that every man of ordinary taste would wish to avoid.—The country changes but little till you get quite to Huntingdon. The land is generally quite open, or in large fields. Strong wheat-land, that wants a good deal of draining. Very few turnips of any sort are raised; and, of course, few sheep and cattle kept. Few trees, and those scrubbed. Few woods, and those small. Few hills, and those hardly worthy of the name. All which, when we see them, make us cease to wonder, that this country is so famous for *fox-hunting*. Such it has doubtless been, in all times, and

to this circumstance Huntingdon, that is to say, Huntingdun, or Huntingdown, unquestionably owes its name; because *down* does not mean *unploughed* land, but open and *unsheltered* land, and the Saxon word is *dun*.—When you come down near to the town itself, the scene suddenly, totally, and most agreeably, changes. The *River Ouse* separates Godmanchester from Huntingdon, and there is, I think, no very great difference in the population of the two. Both together do not make up a population of more than about five thousand souls. Huntingdon is a slightly built town, compared with Lewes, for instance. The houses are not in general so high, nor made of such solid and costly materials. The shops are not so large and their contents not so costly. There is not a show of so much business and so much opulence. But Huntingdon is a very clean and nice place, contains many elegant houses, and the environs are beautiful. Above and below the bridge, under which the Ouse passes, are the most beautiful, and by far the most beautiful, meadows that I ever saw in my life. The meadows at Lewes, at Guildford, at Farnham, at Winchester, at Salisbury, at Exeter, at Gloucester, at Hereford, and even at Canterbury, are nothing, compared with those of Huntingdon in point of beauty. Here are no reeds, here is no sedge, no unevennesses of any sort. Here are *bowling-greens* of hundreds of acres in extent, with a river winding through them, full to the brink. *One* of these meadows is the *race-course;* and so pretty a spot, so level, so smooth, so green, and of such an extent I never saw, and never expected to see. From the bridge you look across the valleys, first to the west and then to the east; the valleys terminate at the foot of rising ground, well set with trees, from amongst which church spires raise their heads here and there. I think it would be very difficult to find a more delightful spot than this in the world. To my fancy (and every one to his taste) the prospect from this bridge far surpasses that from Richmond Hill.—All that I have yet seen of Huntingdon I like exceedingly. It is one of those pretty, clean, unstenched, unconfined places that tend to lengthen life and make it happy.

JOURNAL

HERTFORDSHIRE, AND BUCKINGHAMSHIRE: TO ST. ALBANS, THROUGH EDGWARE, STANMORE, AND WATFORD, RETURNING BY REDBOURN, HEMPSTEAD, AND CHESHAM

SAINT ALBANS,

19 *June*, 1822.

FROM Kensington to this place, through Edgware, Stanmore, and Watford, the crop is almost entirely hay, from fields of permanent grass, manured by dung and other matter brought from the *Wen*. Near the Wen, where they have had the *first haul* of the Irish and other perambulating labourers, the hay is all in rick. Some miles further down it is nearly all in. Towards Stanmore and Watford, a third, perhaps, of the grass remains to be cut. It is curious to see how the thing regulates itself. We saw, all the way down, squads of labourers, of different departments, migrating from tract to tract; leaving the cleared fields behind them and proceeding on towards the work to be yet performed; and then, as to the classes of labourers, the *mowers*, with their scythes on their shoulders, were in front, going on towards the standing crops, while the *hay-makers* were coming on behind towards the grass already cut or cutting. The weather is fair and warm; so that the public-houses on the road are pouring out their beer pretty fast, and are getting a good share of the wages of these thirsty souls. It is an exchange of beer for sweat; but the tax-eaters get, after all, the far greater part of the sweat; for, if it were not for the tax, the beer would sell for three-halfpence a pot, instead of fivepence. Of this threepence-halfpenny the Jews and jobbers get about twopence-halfpenny. It is curious to observe how the different labours are divided as to the *nations*. The mowers are all *English;* the haymakers all *Irish*. Scotchmen toil hard enough in Scotland; but when they go from home it is not to *work*, if you please. They are found in gardens, and especially in gentlemen's gardens. Tying up flowers, picking dead leaves off exotics, peeping into melon-frames, publishing the banns of marriage between the "*male*" and "*female*" blossoms, tap-tap-tapping against a wall with a

hammer that weighs half an ounce. They have backs as straight and shoulders as square as heroes of Waterloo; and who can blame them? The digging, the mowing, the carrying of loads; all the break-back and sweat-extracting work they leave to be performed by those who have less *prudence* than they have. The great purpose of human art, the great end of human study, is to obtain *ease*, to throw the burden of labour from our own shoulders, and fix it on those of others. The crop of hay is very large, and that part which is in, is in very good order. We shall have hardly any hay that is not fine and sweet; and we shall have it, carried to London, at less, I dare say, than £3 a load, that is 18 cwt. So that here the *evil* of "*over-production*" will be great indeed! Whether we shall have any projects for taking hay into *pawn* is more than any of us can say; for, after what we have seen, need we be surprised, if we were to hear it proposed to take butter and even milk into pawn? In after times, the mad projects of these days will become proverbial. The oracle and the over-production men will totally supplant the *March-hare*.—This is, all along here, and especially as far as Stanmore, a very dull and ugly country: flat, and all grass-fields and elms. Few *birds* of any kind, and few *constant* labourers being wanted; scarcely any cottages and gardens, which form one of the great beauties of a country. Stanmore is on a hill; but it looks over a country of little variety, though rich. What a difference between the view here and those which carry the eye over the coppices, the corn-fields, the hop-gardens and the orchards of Kent! It is miserable land from Stanmore to Watford, where we get into Hertfordshire. Hence to Saint Albans there is generally chalk at bottom with a red tenacious loam at top, with flints, grey on the outside and dark blue within. Wherever this is the soil, the wheat grows well. The crops, and especially that of the barley, are very fine and very forward. The wheat, in general, does not appear to be a heavy crop; but the ears seem as if they would be full from bottom to top; and we have had so much heat, that the grain is pretty sure to be plump, let the weather, for the rest of the summer, be what it may. The produce depends more on the weather, previous to the coming out of the ear, than on the subsequent weather. In the northern parts of America, where they have, some years, not heat enough to bring the Indian corn to perfection, I have observed, that, if they have about fifteen days with the thermometer at *ninety*, before the ear makes its appearance, the crop never fails, though the weather may be ever

so unfavourable afterwards. This allies with the old remark of the country people in England, that "*May* makes or mars the wheat;" for it is in May that the ear and the grains are *formed*."

KENSINGTON,
24 *June*, 1822.

Set out at four this morning for Redbourn, and then turned off to the westward to go to High Wycombe, through Hempstead and Chesham. The *wheat* is good all the way. The barley and oats good enough till I came to Hempstead. But the land along here is very fine: a red tenacious flinty loam upon a bed of chalk at a yard or two beneath, which, in my opinion, is the very best *corn land* that we have in England. The fields here, like those in the rich parts of Devonshire, will bear perpetual grass. Any of them will become upland meadows. The land is, in short, excellent, and it is a real corn-country. The *trees* from Redbourn to Hempstead are very fine; oaks, ashes, and beeches. Some of the finest of each sort, and the very finest ashes I ever saw in my life. They are in great numbers, and make the fields look most beautiful. No villainous things of the *fir-tribe* offend the eye here. The custom is in this part of Hertfordshire (and I am told it continues into Bedfordshire) to leave a *border* round the ploughed part of the fields to bear grass and to make hay from, so that, the grass being now made into hay, every corn field has a closely mowed grass walk about ten feet wide all round it, between the corn and the hedge. This is most beautiful! The hedges are now full of the shepherd's rose, honeysuckles, and all sorts of wild flowers; so that you are upon a grass walk, with this most beautiful of all flower gardens and shrubberies on your one hand, and with the corn on the other. And thus you go from field to field (on foot or on horseback), the sort of corn, the sort of underwood and timber, the shape and size of the fields, the height of the hedge-rows, the height of the trees, all continually varying. Talk of *pleasure-grounds* indeed! What that man ever invented, under the name of pleasure-grounds, can equal these fields in Hertfordshire?—This is a profitable system too; for the ground under hedges bears little corn, and it bears very good grass. Something, however, depends on the nature of the soil: for it is not all land that will bear grass, fit for hay, perpetually; and, when the land will not do that, these headlands would only be a harbour for weeds and couch-grass, the seeds of which would fill the fields with their mis-

chievous race.—Mr. Tull has observed upon the great use of headlands.—It is curious enough, that these headlands cease soon after you get into Buckinghamshire. At first you see now and then a field *without* a grass headland; then it comes to now and then a field *with* one; and, at the end of five or six miles, they wholly cease. Hempstead is a very pretty town, with beautiful environs, and there is a canal that comes near it, and that goes on to London. It lies at the foot of a hill. It is clean, substantially built, and a very pretty place altogether. Between Hempstead and Chesham the land is not so good. I came into Buckinghamshire before I got into the latter place. Passed over two commons. But still the land is not bad. It is drier; nearer the chalk, and not so red. The wheat continues good, though not heavy; but the barley, on the land that is not very good, is light, begins to look *blue*, and the backward oats are very short. On the still thinner lands the barley and oats must be a very short crop.—People do not sow *turnips*, the ground is so dry, and I should think that the *swede-crop* will be very short; for *swedes* ought to be *up* at least, by this time. If I had swedes to sow, I would sow them now, and upon ground very deeply and finely broken. I would sow directly after the plough, not being half an hour behind it, and would roll the ground as hard as possible. I am sure the plants would come up, even without rain. And the moment the rain came, they would grow famously.—Chesham is a nice little town, lying in a deep and narrow valley, with a stream of water running through it. All along the country that I have come, the labourers' dwellings are good. They are made of what they call *brick-nog ;* that is to say, a frame of wood, and a single brick thick, filling up the vacancies between the timber. They are generally covered with tile. Not *pretty* by any means; but they are good; and you see here, as in Kent, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire, and, indeed, in almost every part of England, that most interesting of all objects, that which is such an honour to England, and that which distinguishes it from all the rest of the world, namely, those *neatly kept and productive little gardens round the labourers' houses*, which are seldom unornamented with more or less of flowers. We have only to look at these to know what sort of people English labourers are: these gardens are the answer to the *Malthuses* and the *Scarletts*. Shut your mouths, you Scotch economists; cease bawling, Mr. Brougham, and you Edinburgh Reviewers, till *you* can show us something, not *like*, but approaching towards a likeness of *this !*

The orchards all along this country are by no means bad. Not like those of Herefordshire and the north of Kent; but a great deal better than in many other parts of the kingdom. The cherry-trees are pretty abundant and particularly good. There are not many of the *merries*, as they call them in Kent and Hampshire; that is to say, the little black cherry, the name of which is a corruption from the French *merise*, in the singular, and *merises* in the plural. I saw the little boys, in many places, set to keep the birds off the cherries, which reminded me of the time when I followed the same occupation, and also of the toll that I used to take in payment. The children are all along here, I mean the little children, locked out of the doors, while the fathers and mothers are at work in the fields. I saw many little groups of this sort; and this is one advantage of having plenty of room on the outside of a house. I never saw the country children better clad, or look cleaner and fatter than they look here, and I have the very great pleasure to add, that I do not think I saw three acres of *potatoes* in this whole tract of fine country, from St. Albans to Redbourn, from Redbourn to Hempstead, and from Hempstead to Chesham. In all the houses where I have been, they use the roasted rye instead of coffee or tea, and I saw one gentleman who had sown a piece of rye (a grain not common in this part of the country) for the express purpose. It costs about three farthings a pound, roasted and ground into powder.—The pay of the labourers varies from eight to twelve shillings a week. Grass mowers get two shillings-day, two quarts of what they call strong beer, and as much small beer as they can drink. After quitting Chesham, I passed through a wood, resembling, as nearly as possible, the woods in the more cultivated parts of Long Island, with these exceptions, that there the woods consist of a great variety of trees, and of more beautiful foliage. Here there are only two sorts of trees, beech and oak: but the wood at bottom was precisely like an American wood: none of that stuff which we generally call underwood: the trees standing very thick in some places: the shade so complete as never to permit herbage below: no bushes of any sort; and nothing to impede your steps but little spindling trees here and there grown up from the seed. The trees here are as lofty, too, as they generally are in the Long Island woods, and as straight, except in cases where you find clumps of the tulip-tree, which sometimes go much above a hundred feet high as straight as a line. The oaks seem here to vie with the beeches in size as well as in loftiness and straightness.

I saw several oaks which I think were more than eighty feet high, and several with a clear stem of more than forty feet, being pretty nearly as far through at that distance from the ground as at bottom; and I think I saw more than one, with a clear stem of fifty feet, a foot and a half through at that distance from the ground. This is by far the finest *plank oak* that I ever saw in England. The road through the wood is winding and brings you out at the corner of a field, lying sloping to the south, three sides of it bordered by wood and the field planted as an orchard. This is precisely what you see in so many thousands of places in America. I had passed through Hempstead a little while before, which certainly gave its name to the township in which I lived in Long Island, and which I used to write *Hampstead*, contrary to the orthography of the place, never having heard of such a place as *Hempstead* in England. Passing through Hempstead I gave my mind a toss back to Long Island, and this beautiful wood and orchard really made me almost conceit that I was there, and gave rise to a thousand interesting and pleasant reflections. On quitting the wood I crossed the great road from London to Wendover, went across the park of Mr. Drake, and up a steep hill towards the great road leading to Wycombe. Mr. Drake's is a very beautiful place, and has a great deal of very fine timber upon it. I think I counted pretty nearly 200 oak trees, worth, on an average, five pounds apiece, growing within twenty yards of the road that I was going along. Mr. Drake has some thousands of these, I dare say, besides his beech; and, therefore, *he* will be able to stand a tug with the fundholders for some time. When I got to High Wycombe, I found everything a week earlier than in the rich part of Hertfordshire. High Wycombe, as if the name was ironical, lies along the bottom of a narrow and deep valley, the hills on each side being very steep indeed. The valley runs somewhere about from east to west, and the wheat on the hills facing the south will, if this weather continue, be fit to reap in ten days. I saw one field of oats that a bold farmer would cut next Monday. Wycombe is a very fine and very clean market town; the people all looking extremely well; the girls somewhat larger featured and larger boned than those in Sussex, and not so fresh-coloured and bright-eyed. More like the girls of America, and that is saying quite as much as any reasonable woman can expect or wish for. The hills on the south side of Wycombe form a park and estate now the property of Smith, who was a banker or stocking-maker at Nottingham, who was made a lord in the time of Pitt, and who purchased this

estate of the late Marquis of Landsdowne, one of whose titles is Baron Wycombe. Wycombe is one of those famous things called boroughs, and 34 votes in this borough send Sir John Dashwood and Sir Thomas Baring to the "collective wisdom." The landlord where I put up "*remembered*" the name of Dashwood, but had "*forgotten*" who the "*other*" was! There would be no forgettings of this sort, if these thirty-four, together with *their* representatives, were called upon to pay the share of the national debt due from High Wycombe. Between High Wycombe and Beaconsfield, where the soil is much about that last described, the wheat continued to be equally early with that about Wycombe. As I approached Uxbridge I got off the chalk upon a gravelly bottom, and then from Uxbridge to Shepherd's Bush on a bottom of clay. Grass-fields and elm-trees, with here and there a wheat or a bean-field, form the features of this most ugly country, which would have been perfectly unbearable after quitting the neighbourhoods of Hempstead, Chesham and High Wycombe, had it not been for the diversion I derived from meeting, in all the various modes of conveyance, the cockneys going to *Ealing Fair*, which is one of those things which nature herself would almost seem to have provided for drawing off the matter and giving occasional relief to the overcharged *Wen*. I have traversed to-day what I think may be called an average of England as to corn-crops. Some of the best, certainly; and pretty nearly some of the worst. My observation as to the wheat is, that it will be a fair and average crop, and extremely early; because, though it is not a heavy crop, though the ears are not long they will be full; and the earliness seems to preclude the possibility of blight, and to ensure plump grain. The barley and oats must, upon an average, be a light crop. The peas a light crop; and as to beans, unless there have been rains where beans are mostly grown, they cannot be half a crop; for they will not endure heat. I tried masagan beans in Long Island, and could not get them to bear more than a pod or two upon a stem. Beans love cold land and shade. The earliness of the harvest (for early it must be) is always a clear advantage. This fine summer, though it may not lead to a good crop of turnips, has already put safe into store such a crop of hay as I believe England never saw before. Looking out of the window, I see the harness of the Wiltshire wagon-horses (at this moment going by) covered with the chalk-dust of that county; so that the fine weather continues in the west. The saintfoin hay has all been got in,

in the chalk countries, without a drop of wet; and when that is the case, the farmers stand in no need of oats. The grass crops have been large everywhere, as well as got in in good order. The fallows must be in excellent order. It must be a sloven indeed that will sow his wheat in foul ground next autumn; and the sun, where the fallows have been well stirred, will have done more to enrich the land than all the dung-carts and all the other means employed by the hand of man. Such a summer is a great blessing; and the only drawback is, the dismal apprehension of not seeing such another for many years to come. It is favourable for poultry, for colts, for calves, for lambs, for young animals of all descriptions, not excepting the game. The partridges will be very early. They are now getting into the roads with their young ones, to roll in the dust. The first broods of partridges in England are very frequently killed by the wet and cold; and this is one reason why the game is not so plenty here as it is in countries more blest with sun. This will not be the case this year; and, in short, this is one of the finest years that I ever knew.

WM. COBBETT.

FROM KENSINGTON TO UPHUSBAND

INCLUDING A RUSTIC HARANGUE AT WINCHESTER, AT A DINNER WITH THE FARMERS, ON THE 28TH SEPTEMBER—104 MILES

CHILWORTH, NEAR GUILDFORD, SURREY,
Wednesday, 25th Sept. 1822.

THIS morning I set off, in rather a drizzling rain, from Kensington, on horseback, accompanied by my son, with an intention of going to Uphusband, near Andover, which is situated in the north-west corner of Hampshire. It is very true that I could have gone to Uphusband by travelling only about 66 miles, and in the space of about eight hours. But my object was, not to see inns and turnpike-roads, but to see the *country;* to see the farmers at home, and to see the labourers in the fields; and to do this you must go either on foot or on horseback. With a gig you cannot get about amongst bye-lanes and across fields, through bridle-ways and hunting-gates; and to *tramp it* is too slow, leaving the labour out of the question, and that is not a trifle.

We went through the turnpike-gate at Kensington, and immediately turned down the lane to our left, proceeded on to Fulham, crossed Putney-bridge into Surrey, went over Barnes Common, and then, going on the upper side of Richmond, got again into Middlesex, by crossing Richmond-bridge. All Middlesex is *ugly*, notwithstanding the millions upon millions which it is continually sucking up from the rest of the kingdom; and, though the Thames and its meadows now and then are seen from the road, the country is not less ugly from Richmond to Chertsey-bridge, through Twickenham, Hampton, Sunbury and Sheperton, than it is elsewhere. The soil is a gravel at bottom with a black loam at top near the Thames; further back it is a sort of spewy gravel; and the buildings consist generally of tax-eaters' showy, tea-garden-like boxes, and of shabby dwellings of labouring people who, in this part of the country, look to be about half *Saint Giles's:* dirty, and have every appearance of drinking gin.

At Chertsey, where we came into Surrey again, there was

a fair for horses, cattle and pigs. I did not see any sheep. Everything was exceedingly *dull*. Cart colts, two and three years old, were selling for *less than a third* of what they sold for in 1813. The cattle were of an inferior description to be sure; but the price was low almost beyond belief. Cows, which would have sold for £15 in 1813, did not get buyers at £3. I had no time to inquire much about the pigs, but a man told me that they were dirt-cheap. Near Chertsey is *Saint Anne's Hill* and some other pretty spots. Upon being shown this hill I was put in mind of Mr. Fox; and that brought into my head a grant that he obtained of *Crown lands* in this neighbourhood, in, I think, 1806. The Duke of York obtained, by Act of Parliament, a much larger grant of these lands, at Oatlands, in 1804, I think it was. But this was natural enough; this is what would surprise nobody. Mr. Fox's was another affair; and especially when taken into view with what I am now going to relate. In 1804 or 1805, Fordyce, the late Duchess of Gordon's brother, was collector-general (or had been) of taxes in Scotland, and owed a large arrear to the public. He was also surveyor of Crown lands. The then Opposition were for hauling him up. Pitt was again in power. Mr. Creevey was to bring forward the motion in the House of Commons, and Mr. Fox was to support it, and had actually spoken once or twice, in a preliminary way, on the subject. Notice of the motion was regularly given; it was put off from time to time, and, at last, *dropped*, Mr. Fox *declining* to support it. I have no books at hand; but the affair will be found recorded in the *Register*. It was not owing to Mr. Creevey that the thing did not come on. I remember well that it was owing to Mr. Fox. Other motives were stated; and those others might be the real motives; but, at any rate, the next year, or the year after, Mr. Fox got transferred to him a part of that estate which belongs to the *public*, and which was once so great, called the *Crown lands;* and of these lands Fordyce long had been, and then was the surveyor. Such are the facts: let the reader reason upon them and draw the conclusion.

This county of Surrey presents to the eye of the traveller a greater contrast than any other county in England. It has some of the very best and some of the worst lands, not only in England, but in the world. We were here upon those of the latter description. For five miles on the road towards Guildford the land is a rascally common covered with poor heath, except where the gravel is so near the top as not to suffer even

the heath to grow. Here we entered the enclosed lands, which have the gravel at bottom, but a nice light, black mould at top; in which the trees grow very well. Through bye-lanes and bridle-ways we came out into the London road, between Ripley and Guildford, and immediately crossing that road, came on towards a village called Merrow. We came out into the road just mentioned, at the lodge-gates of a Mr. Weston, whose mansion and estate have just passed (as to occupancy) into the hands of some new man. At Merrow, where we came into the Epsom road, we found that Mr. Webb Weston, whose mansion and park are a little further on towards London, had just walked out, and left it in possession of another new man. This gentleman told us, last year, at the *Epsom meeting*, that he was *losing his income;* and I told him *how it was* that he was losing it! He is said to be a very worthy man; very much respected; a very good landlord; but, I dare say, he is one of those who approved of yeomanry cavalry to keep down the "Jacobins and Levellers;" but who, in fact, as I always told men of this description, have *put down* themselves and their landlords; for without them this thing never could have been done. To ascribe the whole to *contrivance* would be to give to Pitt and his followers too much credit for profundity; but, if the knaves who assembled at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand, in 1793, to put down, by the means of prosecutions and spies, those whom they called "Republicans and Levellers;" if these knaves had said, "Let us go to work to induce the owners and occupiers of the land to convey their estates and their capital into our hands," and if the Government had corresponded with them in views, the effect could not have been more complete than it has, thus far, been. The yeomanry actually, as to the effect, drew their swords to keep the reformers at bay, while the tax-eaters were taking away the estates and the capital. It was the sheep surrendering up the dogs into the hands of the wolves.

Lord Onslow lives near Merrow. This is the man that was, for many years, so famous as a driver of four-in-hand. He used to be called *Tommy Onslow*. He has the character of being a very good landlord. I know he called me "a d——d *Jacobin*" several years ago, only, I presume, because I was labouring to preserve to him the means of still driving four-in-hand, while he, and others like him, and their yeomanry cavalry, were working as hard to defeat my wishes and endeavours. They say here, that, some little time back, his lordship, who

has, at any rate, had the courage to retrench in all sorts of ways, was at Guildford in a gig with one horse, at the very moment when Spicer, the stockbroker, who was a chairman of the committee for prosecuting Lord Cochrane, and who lives at Esher, came rattling in with four horses and a couple of outriders! They relate an observation made by his lordship, which may, or may not, be true, and which, therefore, I shall not repeat. But, my lord, there is another sort of courage; courage other than that of retrenching, that would become you in the present emergency: I mean *political* courage, and especially the courage of *acknowledging your errors;* confessing that you were wrong, when you called the reformers jacobins and levellers; the courage of now joining them in their efforts to save their country, to regain their freedom, and to preserve to you your estate, which is to be preserved, you will observe, by no other means than that of a reform of the Parliament. It is now manifest, even to fools, that it has been by the instrumentality of a base and fraudulent paper-money, that loan-jobbers, stock-jobbers, and Jews have got the estates into their hands. With what eagerness, in 1797, did the nobility, gentry and clergy rush forward to give their sanction and their support to the system which then began, and which has finally produced what we now behold! They assembled in all the counties, and put forth declarations, that they would take the paper of the bank, and that they would support the system. Upon this occasion the county of Surrey was the very first county; and, on the list of signatures, the very *first* name was *Onslow!* There may be sales and conveyances; there may be recoveries, deeds, and other parchments; but this was the real transfer; this was the real signing away of the estates.

To come to Chilworth, which lies on the south side of St. Martha's Hill, most people would have gone along the level road to Guildford, and come round through Shawford under the hills; but we, having seen enough of streets and turnpikes, took across over Merrow Down, where the Guildford race-course is, and then mounted the "Surrey Hills," so famous for the prospects they afford. Here we looked back over Middlesex, and into Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, away towards the north-west, into Essex and Kent towards the east, over part of Sussex to the south, and over part of Hampshire to the west and south-west. We are here upon a bed of chalk, where the downs always afford good sheep food. We steered for St. Martha's Chapel, and went round at the foot of the lofty hill

on which it stands. This brought us down the side of a steep hill, and along a bridle-way, into the narrow and exquisitely beautiful vale of Chilworth, where we were to stop for the night. This vale is skirted partly by woodlands and partly by sides of hills tilled as corn fields. The land is excellent, particularly towards the bottom. Even the arable fields are in some places, towards their tops, nearly as steep as the roof of a tiled house; and where the ground is covered with woods the ground is still more steep. Down the middle of the vale there is a series of ponds, or small *lakes*, which meet your eye, here and there, through the trees. Here are some very fine farms, a little strip of meadows, some hop-gardens, and the lakes have given rise to the establishment of powder-mills and paper-mills. The trees of all sorts grow well here; and coppices yield poles for the hop-gardens and wood to make charcoal for the powder-mills.

They are sowing wheat here, and the land, owing to the fine summer that we have had, is in a very fine state. The rain, too, which, yesterday, fell here in great abundance, has been just in time to make a really good wheat-sowing season. The turnips all the way that we have come, are good. Rather backward in some places; but in sufficient quantity upon the ground, and there is yet a good while for them to grow. All the fall fruit is excellent, and in great abundance. The grapes are as good as those raised under glass. The apples are much richer than in ordinary years. The crop of hops has been very fine here, as well as everywhere else. The crop not only large, but good in quality. They expect to get *six* pounds a hundred for them at Weyhill Fair. That is *one* more than I think they will get. The best Sussex hops were selling in the borough of Southwark at three pounds a hundred a few days before I left London. The Farnham hops *may* bring double that price; but that, I think, is as much as they will; and this is ruin to the hop-planter. The *tax*, with its attendant inconveniences, amount to a pound a hundred; the picking, drying, and bagging to 50*s*. The carrying to market not less than 5*s*. Here is the sum of £3 10*s*. of the money. Supposing the crop to be half a ton to the acre, the bare tillage will be 10*s*. The poles for an acre cannot cost less than £2 a year; that is another 4*s*. to each hundred of hops. This brings the outgoings to 82*s*. Then comes the manure, then come the poor-rates, and road-rates, and county-rates; and if these leave one single farthing for *rent* I think it is strange.

I hear that Mr. Birkbeck is expected home from America! It is said that he is coming to receive a large legacy; a thing not to be overlooked by a person who lives in a country where he can have *land for nothing!* The truth is, I believe, that there has lately died a gentleman, who has bequeathed a part of his property to pay the creditors of a relation of his who some years ago became a bankrupt, and one of whose creditors Mr. Birkbeck was. What the amount may be I know not; but I have heard that the bankrupt had a *partner* at the time of the bankruptcy; so that there must be a good deal of difficulty in settling the matter in an equitable manner. The *Chancery* would drawl it out (supposing the present system to continue) till, in all human probability, there would not be as much left for Mr. Birkbeck as would be required to pay his way back again to the Land of Promise. I hope he is coming here to remain here. He is a very clever man, though he has been very abusive and very unjust with regard to me.

LEA, NEAR GODALMING, SURREY,
Thursday, 26 Sept.

We started from Chilworth this morning, came down the vale, left the village of Shawford to our right, and that of Wonersh to our left, and crossing the river Wey, got into the turnpike-road between Guildford and Godalming, went on through Godalming, and got to Lea, which lies to the north-east snugly under Hind-Head, about 11 o'clock. This was coming only about eight miles, a sort of rest after the 32 miles of the day before. Coming along the road, a farmer overtook us, and as he had known me from seeing me at the meeting at Epsom last year, I had a part of my main business to perform, namely, to talk politics. He was going to *Haslemere* Fair. Upon the mention of that sink-hole of a borough, which sends, "*as clearly as the sun at noonday*," the celebrated Charles Long, and the scarcely less celebrated Robert Ward, to the celebrated House of Commons, we began to talk, as it were, spontaneously about Lord Lonsdale and the Lowthers. The farmer wondered why the Lowthers, that were the owners of so many farms, should be for a system which was so manifestly taking away the estates of the landlords and the capital of the farmers, and giving them to Jews, loan-jobbers, stock-jobbers, placemen, pensioners, sinecure people, and people of the "dead weight." But his wonder ceased; his eyes were opened; and "his heart

seemed to burn within him as I talked to him on the way," when I explained to him the nature of *Crown lands* and "*Crown tenants*," and when I described to him certain districts of property in Westmoreland and other parts. I had not the book in my pocket, but my memory furnished me with quite a sufficiency of matter to make him perceive, that, in supporting the present system, the Lowthers were by no means so foolish as he appeared to think them. From the Lowthers I turned to Mr. Poyntz, who lives at Midhurst in Sussex, and whose name as a "*Crown tenant*" I find in a report lately laid before the House of Commons, and the particulars of which I will state another time for the information of the people of Sussex. I used to wonder myself what made Mr. Poyntz call me a jacobin. I used to think that Mr. Poyntz must be a fool to support the present system. What I have seen in that report convinces me that Mr. Poyntz is no fool, as far as relates to his own interest, at any rate. There is a mine of wealth in these "*Crown lands*." Here are farms, and manors, and mines, and woods, and forests, and houses, and streets, incalculable in value. What can be so proper as to apply this public property towards the discharge of a part, at least, of that public debt, which is hanging round the neck of this nation like a mill-stone? Mr. Ricardo proposes to seize upon a part of the private property of every man, to be given to the stock-jobbing race. At an act of injustice like this the mind revolts. The foolishness of it, besides, is calculated to shock one. But in the *public property* we see the suitable thing. And who can possibly object to this, except those who, amongst them, now divide the possession or benefit of this property? I have once before mentioned, but I will repeat it, that *Marlborough House* in Pall Mall, for which the Prince of Saxe Coburg pays a rent to the Duke of Marlborough of three thousand pounds a year, is rented of this generous public by that most noble duke at the rate of less than *forty pounds* a year. There are three houses in Pall Mall, the whole of which pay a rent *to the public* of about fifteen pounds a year, I think it is. I myself, twenty-two years ago, paid three hundred pounds a year for one of them, to a man that I thought was the owner of them; but I now find that these houses belong to the public. The Duke of Buckingham's house in Pall Mall, which is one of the grandest in all London, and which is not worth less than seven or eight hundred pounds a year, belongs to the public. The duke is the tenant; and I think he pays for it much less than twenty pounds a year. I

speak from memory here all the way along; and therefore not positively; I will, another time, state the particulars from the books. The book that I am now referring to is also of a date of some years back; but I will mention all the particulars another time. Talk of *reducing rents*, indeed! Talk of *generous landlords!* It is the public that is the generous landlord. It is the public that lets its houses and manors and mines and farms at a cheap rate. It certainly would not be so good a landlord if it had a reformed Parliament to manage its affairs, nor would it suffer so many snug *corporations* to carry on their snugglings in the manner that they do, and therefore it is obviously the interest of the rich tenants of this poor public, as well as the interest of the snugglers in corporations, to prevent the poor public from having such a Parliament.

We got into free-quarter again at Lea; and there is nothing like free-quarter, as soldiers well know. Lea is situated on the edge of that immense heath which sweeps down from the summit of Hind-Head, across to the north over innumerable hills of minor altitude and of an infinite variety of shapes towards Farnham, to the north-east, towards the Hog's Back, leading from Farnham to Guildford, and to the east, or nearly so, towards Godalming. Nevertheless, the inclosed lands at Lea are very good and singularly beautiful. The timber of all sorts grows well; the land is light, and being free from stones, very pleasant to work. If you go southward from Lea about a mile you get down into what is called, in the old Acts of Parliament, the *Weald* of Surrey. Here the land is a stiff tenacious loam at top with blue and yellow clay beneath. This weald continues on eastward, and gets into Sussex near East Grinstead: thence it winds about under the hills, into Kent. Here the oak grows finer than in any part of England. The trees are more spiral in their form. They grow much faster than upon any other land. Yet the timber must be better; for, in some of the Acts of Queen Elizabeth's reign, it is provided that the oak for the royal navy shall come out of the Wealds of Surrey, Sussex, or Kent.

ODIHAM, HAMPSHIRE,
Friday, 27 Sept.

From Lea we set off this morning about six o'clock to get free-quarter again at a worthy old friend's at this nice little plain market-town. Our direct road was right over the heath through Tilford to Farnham; but we veered a little to the left

after we came to Tilford, at which place on the green we stopped to look at an *oak tree*, which, when I was a little boy, was but a very little tree, comparatively, and which is now, take it altogether, by far the finest tree that I ever saw in my life. The stem or shaft is short; that is to say, it is short before you come to the first limbs; but it is full *thirty feet round*, at about eight or ten feet from the ground. Out of the stem there come not less than fifteen or sixteen limbs, many of which are from five to ten feet round, and each of which would, in fact, be considered a decent stick of timber. I am not judge enough of timber to say anything about the quantity in the whole tree, but my son stepped the ground, and as nearly as we could judge, the diameter of the extent of the branches was upwards of ninety feet, which would make a circumference of about three hundred feet. The tree is in full growth at this moment. There is a little hole in one of the limbs; but with that exception, there appears not the smallest sign of decay. The tree has made great shoots in all parts of it this last summer and spring; and there are no appearances of *white* upon the trunk, such as are regarded as the symptoms of full growth. There are many sorts of oak in England; two very distinct; one with a pale leaf, and one with a dark leaf: this is of the pale leaf. The tree stands upon Tilford-green, the soil of which is a light loam with a hard sand stone a good way beneath, and, probably, clay beneath that. The spot where the tree stands is about a hundred and twenty feet from the edge of a little river, and the ground on which it stands may be about ten feet higher than the bed of that river.

In quitting Tilford we came on to the land belonging to Waverly Abbey, and then, instead of going on to the town of Farnham, veered away to the left towards Wrecklesham, in order to cross the Farnham and Alton turnpike-road, and to come on by the side of Crondall to Odiham. We went a little out of the way to go to a place called the *Bourn*, which lies in the heath at about a mile from Farnham. It is a winding narrow valley, down which, during the wet season of the year, there runs a stream beginning at the *Holt Forest*, and emptying itself into the *Wey* just below Moor-Park, which was the seat of Sir William Temple when Swift was residing with him. We went to this bourn in order that I might show my son the spot where I received the rudiments of my education. There is a little hop-garden in which I used to work when from eight to ten years old; from which I have scores of times run to follow the hounds, leaving the hoe to do the best it could to destroy

the weeds; but the most interesting thing was a *sand-hill*, which goes from a part of the heath down to the rivulet. As a due mixture of pleasure with toil, I, with two brothers, used occasionally to *desport* ourselves, as the lawyers call it, at this sand-hill. Our diversion was this: we used to go to the top of the hill, which was steeper than the roof of a house; one used to draw his arms out of the sleeves of his smock-frock, and lay himself down with his arms by his sides; and then the others, one at head and the other at feet, sent him rolling down the hill like a barrel or a log of wood. By the time he got to the bottom, his hair, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth were all full of this loose sand; then the others took their turn, and at every roll there was a monstrous spell of laughter. I had often told my sons of this while they were very little, and I now took one of them to see the spot. But that was not all. This was the spot where I was receiving my *education;* and this was the sort of education; and I am perfectly satisfied that if I had not received such an education, or something very much like it; that, if I had been brought up a milksop, with a nursery-maid everlastingly at my heels, I should have been at this day as great a fool, as inefficient a mortal, as any of those frivolous idiots that are turned out from Winchester and Westminster School, or from any of those dens of dunces called colleges and universities. It is impossible to say how much I owe to that sand-hill; and I went to return it my thanks for the ability which it probably gave me to be one of the greatest terrors, to one of the greatest and most powerful bodies of knaves and fools that ever were permitted to afflict this or any other country.

From the Bourn we proceeded on to Wrecklesham, at the end of which we crossed what is called the river Wey. Here we found a parcel of labourers at parish-work. Amongst them was an old playmate of mine. The account they gave of their situation was very dismal. The harvest was over early. The hop-picking is now over; and now they are employed *by the parish;* that is to say, not absolutely digging holes one day and filling them up the next; but at the expense of half-ruined farmers and tradesmen and landlords, to break stones into very small pieces to make nice smooth roads lest the jolting, in going along them, should create bile in the stomach of the over-fed tax-eaters. I call upon mankind to witness this scene; and to say, whether ever the like of this was heard of before. It is a state of things, where all is out of order; where self-preservation, that great law of nature, seems to be set at

defiance; for here are farmers *unable* to pay men for working for them, and yet compelled to pay them for working in doing that which is really of no use to any human being. There lie the hop-poles unstripped. You see a hundred things in the neighbouring fields that want doing. The fences are not nearly what they ought to be. The very meadows, to our right and our left in crossing this little valley, would occupy these men advantageously until the setting in of the frost; and here are they, not, as I said before, actually digging holes one day and filling them up the next; but, to all intents and purposes, as uselessly employed. Is this Mr. Canning's "*Sun of Prosperity?*" Is this the way to increase or preserve a nation's wealth? Is this a sign of wise legislation and of good government? Does this thing "work well," Mr. Canning? Does it prove that we want no change? True, you were born under a kingly government; and so was I as well as you; but I was not born under *Six-Acts;* nor was I born under a state of things like this. I was not born under it, and I do not wish to live under it; and, with God's help, I will change it if I can.

We left these poor fellows, after having given them, not "religious tracts," which would, if they could, make the labourer content with half starvation, but something to get them some bread and cheese and beer, being firmly convinced that it is the body that wants filling and not the mind. However, in speaking of their low wages, I told them that the farmers and hop-planters were as much objects of compassion as themselves, which they acknowledged.

We immediately, after this, crossed the road, and went on towards Crondall upon a soil that soon became stiff loam and flint at top with a bed of chalk beneath. We did not go to Crondall; but kept along over Slade Heath, and through a very pretty place called Well. We arrived at Odiham about half after eleven, at the end of a beautiful ride of about seventeen miles, in a very fine and pleasant day.

WINCHESTER,
Saturday, 28th September.

Just after day-light we started for this place. By the turnpike we could have come through Basingstoke by turning off to the right, or through Alton and Alresford by turning off to the left. Being naturally disposed towards a middle course, we chose to wind down through Upton-Gray, Preston-Candover, Chilton-Candover, Brown-Candover, then down to Ovington,

and into Winchester by the north entrance. From Wrecklesham to Winchester we have come over roads and lanes of flint and chalk. The weather being dry again, the ground under you, as solid as iron, makes a great rattling with the horses' feet. The country where the soil is stiff loam upon chalk, is never bad for corn. Not rich, but never poor. There is at no time anything deserving to be called dirt in the roads. The buildings last a long time, from the absence of fogs and also the absence of humidity in the ground. The absence of dirt makes the people habitually cleanly; and all along through this country the people appear in general to be very neat. It is a country for sheep, which are always sound and good upon this iron soil. The trees grow well, where there are trees. The woods and coppices are not numerous; but they are good, particularly the ash, which always grows well upon the chalk. The oaks, though they do not grow in the spiral form, as upon the clays, are by no means stunted; and some of them very fine trees; I take it, that they require a much greater number of years to bring them to perfection than in the *Wealds*. The wood, perhaps, may be harder; but I have heard that the oak, which grows upon these hard bottoms, is very frequently what the carpenters call *shaky*. The underwoods here consist, almost entirely, of hazel, which is very fine, and much tougher and more durable than that which grows on soils with a moist bottom. This hazel is a thing of great utility here. It furnishes rods wherewith to make fences; but its principal use is to make *wattles* for the folding of sheep in the fields. These things are made much more neatly here than in the south of Hampshire and in Sussex, or in any other part that I have seen. Chalk is the favourite soil of the *yew-tree;* and at Preston-Candover there is an avenue of yew-trees, probably a mile long, each tree containing, as nearly as I can guess, from twelve to twenty feet of timber, which, as the reader knows, implies a tree of considerable size. They have probably been a century or two in growing; but, in any way that timber can be used, the timber of the yew will last, perhaps, ten times as long as the timber of any other tree that we grow in England.

Quitting the Candovers, we came along between the two estates of the two Barings. Sir Thomas, who has supplanted the Duke of Bedford, was to our right, while Alexander, who has supplanted Lord Northington, was on our left. The latter has enclosed, as a sort of outwork to his park, a pretty little down called Northington Down, in which he has planted, here

and there, a clump of trees. But Mr. Baring, not reflecting that woods are not like funds, to be made at a heat, has planted his trees *too large;* so that they are covered with moss, are dying at the top, and are literally growing downward instead of upward. In short, this enclosure and plantation have totally destroyed the beauty of this part of the estate. The down, which was before very beautiful, and formed a sort of *glacis* up to the park pales, is now a marred, ragged, ugly-looking thing. The dying trees, which have been planted long enough for you not to perceive that they have been planted, excite the idea of sterility in the soil. They do injustice to it; for, as a down, it was excellent. Everything that has been done here is to the injury of the estate, and discovers a most shocking want of taste in the projector. Sir Thomas's plantations, or, rather those of his father, have been managed more judiciously.

I do not like to be a sort of spy in a man's neighbourhood; but I will tell Sir Thomas Baring what I have heard; and if he be a man of sense I shall have his thanks, rather than his reproaches, for so doing. I may have been misinformed; but this is what I have heard, that he and also Lady Baring are very charitable; that they are very kind and compassionate to their poor neighbours; but that they tack a sort of condition to this charity; that they insist upon the objects of it adopting their notions with regard to religion; or, at least, that where the people are not what they deem *pious*, they are not objects of their benevolence. I do not say that they are not perfectly sincere themselves, and that their wishes are not the best that can possibly be; but of this I am very certain, that, by pursuing this principle of action, where they make one good man or woman, they will make one hundred hypocrites. It is not little books that can make a people good; that can make them moral; that can restrain them from committing crimes. I believe that books of any sort, never yet had that tendency. Sir Thomas does, I dare say, think me a very wicked man, since I aim at the destruction of the funding system, and what he would call a robbery of what he calls the public creditor; and yet, God help me, I have read books enough, and amongst the rest, a great part of the religious tracts. Amongst the labouring people, the first thing you have to look after is, *common honesty, speaking the truth,* and *refraining from thieving;* and to secure these, the labourer must have *his belly-full* and be *free from fear;* and this belly-full must come to him from out of his *wages*, and not from benevolence of any description. Such being my opinion, I

think Sir Thomas Baring would do better, that he would discover more real benevolence, by using the influence which he must naturally have in his neighbourhood, to prevent a diminution in the wages of labour.

WINCHESTER,
Sunday morning, 29 *Sept.*

Yesterday was market-day here. Everything cheap and falling instead of rising. If it were *over-production* last year that produced the *distress*, when are our miseries to have an end! They will end when these men cease to have sway, and not before.

I had not been in Winchester long before I heard something very interesting about the *manifesto* concerning the poor, which was lately issued here, and upon which I remarked in my last Register but one, in my letter to Sir Thomas Baring. Proceeding upon the true military principle, I looked out for free quarter, which the reader will naturally think difficult for *me* to find in a town containing a *cathedral*. Having done this, I went to the Swan Inn to dine with the farmers. This is the manner that I like best of doing the thing. *Six-Acts* do not, to be sure, prevent us from *dining* together. They do not authorise justices of the peace to kill us, because we meet to dine without their permission. But I do not like dinner-meetings on *my* account. I like much better to go and fall in with the lads of the land, or with anybody else, at their own places of resort; and I am going to place myself down at Uphusband, in excellent free-quarter, in the midst of all the great fairs of the west, in order, before the winter campaign begins, that I may see as many farmers as possible, and that they may hear my opinions, and I theirs. I shall be at Weyhill Fair on the 10th of October, and, perhaps, on some of the succeeding days; and, on one or more of those days, I intend to dine at the White Hart, at Andover. What other fairs or places I shall go to I shall notify hereafter. And this I think the frankest and fairest way. I wish to see many people, and to talk to them: and there are a great many people who wish to see and to talk to me. What better reason can be given for a man's going about the country and dining at fairs and markets?

At the dinner at Winchester we had a good number of opulent yeomen, and many gentlemen joined us after the dinner. The state of the country was well talked over; and, during the *session* (much more sensible than some other *sessions* that I have had to remark on), I made the following

Rustic Harangue

Gentlemen,—Though many here are, I am sure, glad to *see me*, I am not vain enough to suppose that anything other than that of wishing to hear my opinions on the prospects before us can have induced many to choose to be here to dine with me to-day. I shall, before I sit down, propose to you a *toast*, which you will drink, or not, as you choose; but, I shall state one particular wish in that shape, that it may be the more distinctly understood, and the better remembered.

The wish to which I allude relates to the *tithes*. Under that word I mean to speak of all that mass of wealth which is vulgarly called *church property;* but which is, in fact, *public property*, and may, of course, be disposed of as the Parliament shall please. There appears at this moment an uncommon degree of anxiety on the part of the parsons to see the farmers enabled to pay *rents*. The business of the parsons being only with *tithes*, one naturally, at first sight, wonders why they should care so much about *rents*. The fact is this; they see clearly enough, that the landlords will never long go without rents, and suffer them to enjoy the tithes. They see, too, that there must be a struggle between the *land* and the *funds:* they see that there is such a struggle. They see, that it is the taxes that are taking away the rent of the landlord and the capital of the farmer. Yet the parsons are afraid to see the taxes reduced. Why? Because, if the taxes be reduced in any great degree (and nothing short of a great degree will give relief), they see that the interest of the debt cannot be paid; and they know well, that the interest of the debt can never be reduced, until their tithes have been reduced. Thus, then, they find themselves in a great difficulty. They wish the taxes to be kept up and rents to be paid too. Both cannot be, unless some means or other be found out of putting into, or keeping in, the farmer's pocket, money that is not now there.

The scheme that appears to have been fallen upon for this purpose is the strangest in the world, and it must, if attempted to be put into execution, produce something little short of open and general commotion; namely, that of reducing the wages of labour to a mark so low as to make the labourer a walking skeleton. Before I proceed further, it is right that I communicate to you an explanation, which, not an hour ago, I received from Mr. Poulter, relative to the *manifesto* lately issued in this

town by a bench of magistrates of which that gentleman was chairman. I have not the honour to be personally acquainted with Mr. Poulter, but certainly, if I had misunderstood the manifesto, it was right that I should be, if possible, made to understand it. Mr. Poulter, in company with another gentleman, came to me in this inn, and said, that the bench did not mean that their resolutions should have the effect of *lowering the wages;* and that the sums, stated in the paper, were sums to be given in the way of *relief*. We had not the paper before us, and, as the paper contained a good deal about relief, I, in recollection, confounded the two, and said, that I had understood the paper agreeably to the explanation. But, upon looking at the paper again, I see that, as to the *words*, there was a clear recommendation to make the *wages* what is there stated. However, seeing that the chairman himself disavows this, we must conclude that the bench put forth words not expressing their meaning. To this I must add, as connected with the manifesto, that it is stated in that document, that such and such justices were present, and a large and respectable number of yeomen who had been invited to attend. Now, gentlemen, I was, I must confess, struck with this addition to the bench. These gentlemen have not been accustomed to treat farmers with so much attention. It seemed odd that they should want a set of farmers to be present, to give a sort of sanction to their acts. Since my arrival in Winchester, I have found, however, that having them present was not all; for that the names of some of these yeomen were actually inserted in the manuscript of the manifesto, and that those names were expunged *at the request of the parties named*. This is a very singular proceeding, then, altogether. It presents to us a strong picture of the diffidence, or modesty (call it which you please) of the justices; and it shows us, that the yeomen present did not like to have *their names* standing as giving sanction to the resolutions contained in the manifesto. Indeed, they knew well, that those resolutions never could be acted upon. They knew that they could not live in safety even in the same village with labourers, paid at the rate of 3, 4, and 5 shillings a week.

To return, now, gentlemen, to the scheme for squeezing rents out of the bones of the labourer, is it not, upon the face of it, most monstrously absurd, that this scheme should be resorted to, when the plain and easy and just way of insuring rents must present itself to every eye, and can be pursued by the Parliament

whenever it choose? We hear loud outcries against the poor-rates; the *enormous* poor-rates; the *all-devouring* poor-rates; but what are the facts? Why, that, in Great Britain, *six millions* are paid in poor-rates; *seven millions* (or thereabouts) in *tithes*, and *sixty millions* to the fund-people, the army, placemen, and the rest. And yet, nothing of all this seems to be thought of but the *six* millions. Surely the other and so much larger sums ought to be thought of. Even the *six* millions are, for the far greater part, *wages* and not poor-rates. And yet all this outcry is made about these *six* millions, while not a word is said about the other *sixty-seven* millions.

Gentlemen, to enumerate all the ways in which the public money is spent would take me a week. I will mention two classes of persons who are receivers of taxes; and you will then see with what *reason* it is that this outcry is set up against the poor-rates and against the amount of wages. There is a thing called the *Dead Weight.* Incredible as it may seem that such a vulgar appellation should be used in such a way and by such persons, it is a fact that the ministers have laid before the Parliament an account, called the account of the *Dead Weight.* This account tells how five millions three hundred thousand pounds are distributed annually amongst half-pay officers, pensioners, retired commissaries, clerks, and so forth, employed during the last war. If there were nothing more entailed upon us by that war, this is pretty smart-money. Now unjust, unnecessary as that war was, detestable as it was in all its principles and objects, still, to every man, who really did *fight,* or who performed a soldier's duty abroad, I would give *something:* he should not be left destitute. But, gentlemen, is it right for the nation to keep on paying for life crowds of young fellows such as make up the greater part of this *dead weight?* This is not all, however, for, there are the widows and the children who have, and are to have, *pensions too.* You seem surprised, and well you may; but this is the fact. A young fellow who has a pension for life, aye, or an old fellow either, will easily get a wife to enjoy it with him, and he will, I'll warrant him, take care that *she* shall not be *old.* So that here is absolutely a premium for entering into the holy state of matrimony. The husband, you will perceive, cannot prevent the wife from having the pension after his death. She is *our widow,* in this respect, not his. She marries, in fact, with a jointure settled on her. The more children the husband leaves the better for the widow; for each child has a pension for a certain number

of years. The man who, under such circumstances, does not marry, must be a woman-hater. An old man actually going into the grave may, by the mere ceremony of marriage, give any woman a pension for life. Even the widows and children of insane officers are not excluded. If an officer, now insane, but at large, were to marry, there is nothing as the thing now stands to prevent his widow and children from having pensions. Were such things as these ever before heard of in the world? Were such premiums ever before given for breeding gentlemen and ladies, and that, too, while all sorts of projects are on foot to check the breeding of the labouring classes? Can such a thing *go on?* I say it cannot; and, if it could, it must inevitably render this country the most contemptible upon the face of the earth. And yet, not a word of complaint is heard about these five millions and a quarter, expended in this way, while the country rings, fairly resounds, with the outcry about the six millions that are given to the labourers in the shape of poor-rates, but which, in fact, go, for the greater part, to pay what ought to be called *wages*. Unless, then, we speak out here; unless we call for redress here; unless we here seek relief, we shall not only be totally ruined, but we shall *deserve it*.

The other class of persons, to whom I have alluded, as having taxes bestowed on them, are the *poor clergy*. Not of the *church* as by *law* established, to be sure, you will say! Yes, gentlemen, even to the poor clergy of the Established Church. We know well how *rich* that church is; we know well how many millions it annually receives; we know how opulent are the bishops, how rich they die; how rich, in short, a body it is. And yet *fifteen hundred thousand pounds* have, within the same number of years, been given, out of the taxes, partly raised on the labourers, for the relief of the *poor* clergy of that Church, while it is notorious that the livings are given in numerous cases by twos and threes to the same person, and while a clamour, enough to make the sky ring, is made about what is given in the shape of *relief to the labouring classes!* Why, gentlemen, what do we want more than this one fact? Does not this one fact sufficiently characterise the system under which we live? Does not this prove that a change, a great change, is wanted? Would it not be more natural to propose to get this money back from the Church, than to squeeze so much out of the bones of the labourers? This the Parliament can do if it pleases; and this it will do, if you do your duty.

Passing over several other topics, let me, gentlemen, now

come to what, at the present moment, most nearly affects you; namely, the *prospect as to prices*. In the first place, this depends upon whether Peel's Bill will be repealed. As this depends a good deal upon the ministers, and as I am convinced that they know no more what to do in the present emergency than the little boys and girls that are running up and down the street before this house, it is impossible for me, or for any one, to say what will be done in this respect. But, my opinion is decided, that the Bill will *not* be repealed. The ministers see that, if they were *now* to go back to the paper, it would not be the paper of 1819; but a paper never to be redeemed by gold; that it would be *assignats* to all intents and purposes. That must of necessity cause the complete overthrow of the Government in a very short time. If, therefore, the ministers see the thing in this light, it is impossible that they should think of a repeal of Peel's Bill. There appeared, last winter, a strong disposition to repeal the Bill; and I verily believe that a repeal in effect, though not in name, was actually in contemplation. A Bill was brought in which was described beforehand as intended to prolong the issue of small notes, and also to prolong the time for making Bank of England notes a legal tender. This would have been a repealing of Peel's Bill in great part. The Bill, when brought in, and when passed, as it finally was, contained no clause relative to legal tender; and without that clause it was perfectly nugatory. Let me explain to you, gentlemen, what this Bill really is. In the seventeenth year of the late king's reign, an Act was passed for a time limited, to prevent the issue of notes payable to bearer on demand, for any sums less than five pounds. In the twenty-seventh year of the late king's reign, this Act was made *perpetual;* and the preamble of the Act sets forth, that it is made perpetual, because the *preventing of small notes being made has been proved to be for the good of the nation*. Nevertheless, in just ten years afterwards; that is to say, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, when the bank stopped payment, this salutary Act was *suspended;* indeed, it was absolutely necessary, for there was no gold to pay with. It continued suspended, until 1819, when Mr. Peel's Bill was passed, when a Bill was passed to suspend it still further, until the year 1825. You will observe, then, that last winter there were yet three years to come, during which the banks might make small notes if they would. Yet this new Bill was passed last winter to authorise them to make small notes until the year 1833. The measure was wholly

uncalled for. It appeared to be altogether unnecessary; but, as I have just said, the intention was to introduce into this Bill a clause to continue the *legal tender* until 1833; and that would, indeed, have made a great alteration in the state of things; and, if extended to the Bank of England, would have been, in effect, a complete repeal of Peel's Bill.

It was fully expected by the country bankers, that the legal tender clause would have been inserted; but, before it came to the trial, the ministers gave way, and the clause was not inserted. The reason for their giving way, I do verily believe, had its principal foundation in their perceiving, that the public would clearly see that such a measure would make the paper-money merely assignats. The legal tender not having been enacted, the Small-note Bill can do nothing towards augmenting the quantity of circulating medium. As the law now stands, Bank of England notes are, in effect, a *legal tender*. If I owe a debt of twenty pounds, and tender Bank of England notes in payment, the law says that you shall not arrest me; that you may bring your action, if you like; that I may pay the notes into court; that you may go on with your action; that you shall pay all the costs, and I none. At last you gain your action; you obtain judgment and execution, or whatever else the everlasting law allows of. And what have you got then? Why the *notes;* the same identical notes the sheriff will bring you. You will not take them. Go to law with the sheriff then. He pays the *notes* into court. More costs for you to pay. And thus you go on; but without ever touching or seeing gold!

Now, gentlemen, Peel's Bill puts an end to all this pretty work on the first day of next May. If you have a handful of a country banker's rags *now*, and go to him for payment, he will tender you Bank of England notes; and if you like the paying of costs you may go to law for gold. But when the first of next May comes, he must put gold into your hands in exchange for your notes, if you choose it; or you may clap a bailiff's hand upon his shoulder; and if he choose to pay into court, he must pay in gold, and pay your costs also as far as you have gone.

This makes a strange alteration in the thing! And everybody must see that the Bank of England and the country bankers—that all, in short, are preparing for the first of May. It is clear that there must be a farther diminution of the paper-money. It is hard to say the precise degree of effect that this will have upon prices; but that it must bring them down is clear; and, for my own part, I am fully persuaded, that they

will come down to the standard of prices in France, be those prices what they may. This, indeed, was acknowledged by Mr. Huskisson in the Agricultural Report of 1821. That two countries so near together, both having gold as a currency or standard, should differ very widely from each other, in the prices of farm-produce, is next to impossible; and therefore, when our legal tender shall be completely done away, to the prices of France you must come; and those prices cannot, I think, in the present state of Europe, much exceed three or four shillings a bushel for good wheat.

You know, as well as I do, that it is impossible, with the present taxes and rates and tithes, to pay any rent at all with prices upon that scale. Let loan-jobbers, stock-jobbers, Jews, and the whole tribe of tax-eaters say what they will, you know that it is impossible, as you also know it would be cruelly unjust to wring from the labourer the means of paying rent, while those taxes and tithes remain. Something must be taken off. The labourers wages have already been reduced as low as possible. All public pay and salaries ought to be reduced; and the tithes also ought to be reduced, as they might be to a great amount without any injury to religion. The interest of the debt ought to be largely reduced; but, as none of the others can, with any show of justice, take place, without a reduction of the tithes, and as I am for confining myself to one object at present, I will give you as a toast, leaving you to drink it or not as you please, *A large Reduction of Tithes.*

Somebody proposed to drink this toast with *three times three*, which was accordingly done, and the sound might have been heard down to the close.—Upon some gentleman giving *my health*, I took occasion to remind the company, that, the last time I was at Winchester we had the memorable fight with Lockhart "the Brave" and his sable friends. I reminded them that it was in that same room that I told them, that it would not be long before Mr. Lockhart and those sable gentlemen would become enlightened; and I observed that, if we were to judge from a man's language, there was not a landowner in England that more keenly felt than Mr. Lockhart the truth of those predictions which I had put forth at the castle on the day alluded to. I reminded the company that I sailed for America in a few days after that meeting; that they must be well aware that, on the day of the meeting, I knew that I was taking leave of the country, but, I observed, that I had not

been in the least depressed by that circumstance; because I relied, with perfect confidence, on being in this same place again to enjoy, as I now did, a triumph over my adversaries.

After this, Mr. Hector gave a *Constitutional Reform in the Commons' House of Parliament,* which was drunk with great enthusiasm; and Mr. Hector's health having been given, he, in returning thanks, urged his brother yeomen and freeholders to do their duty by coming forward in county meeting and giving their support to those noblemen and gentlemen that were willing to stand forward for a reform and for a reduction of taxation. I held forth to them the example of the county of Kent, which had done itself so much honour by its conduct last spring. What these gentlemen in Hampshire will do, it is not for me to say. If nothing be done by them, they will certainly be ruined, and that ruin they will certainly deserve. It was to the farmers that the Government owed its strength to carry on the war. Having them with it, in consequence of a false and bloated prosperity, it cared not a straw for anybody else. If they, therefore, now do their duty; if they all, like the yeomen and farmers of Kent, come boldly forward, everything will be done necessary to preserve themselves and their country; and if they do not come forward, they will, as men of property, be swept from the face of the earth. The noblemen and gentlemen who are in Parliament, and who are disposed to adopt measures of effectual relief, cannot move with any hope of success unless backed by the yeomen and farmers, and the middling classes throughout the country generally. I do not mean to confine myself to yeomen and farmers, but to take in all tradesmen and men of property. With these at their back, or rather, at the back of these, there are men enough in both Houses of Parliament to propose and to urge measures suitable to the exigency of the case. But without the middling classes to *take the lead,* those noblemen and gentlemen can do nothing. Even the ministers themselves, if they were so disposed (and they must be so disposed at last) could make none of the reforms that are necessary, *without being actually urged on by the middle classes of the community.* This is a very important consideration. A new man, as minister, might indeed propose the reforms himself; but these men, opposition as well as ministry, are so *pledged* to the things that have brought all this ruin upon the country, that they absolutely stand in need of an overpowering call from the people to justify them in doing that which they themselves may think just, and which they may know to be

necessary for the salvation of the country. They dare not take the lead in the necessary reforms. It is too much to be expected of any men upon the face of the earth, pledged and situated as these ministers are; and therefore, unless the people will do their duty, they will have themselves, and only themselves, to thank for their ruin, and for that load of disgrace, and for that insignificance worse than disgrace which seems, after so many years of renown, to be attaching themselves to the name of England.

UPHUSBAND,

Sunday Evening, 29 Sept. 1822.

We came along the turnpike-road, through Wherwell and Andover, and got to this place about 2 o'clock. This country, except at the village and town just mentioned, is very open, a thinnish soil upon a bed of chalk. Between Winchester and Wherwell we came by some hundreds of acres of ground that was formerly most beautiful down, which was broken up in dear-corn times, and which is now a district of thistles and other weeds. If I had such land as this I would soon make it down again. I would for once (that is to say if I had the money) get it quite clean, prepare it as for sowing turnips, get the turnips if possible, feed them off early, or plough the ground if I got no turnips; sow thick with saintfoin and meadow-grass seeds of all sorts, early in September; let the crop stand till the next July; feed it then slenderly with sheep, and dig up all thistles and rank weeds that might appear; keep feeding it, but not too close, during the summer and the fall; and keep on feeding it for ever after as a down. The saintfoin itself would last for many years; and as it disappeared, its place would be supplied by the grass; that sort which was most congenial to the soil, would at last stifle all other sorts, and the land would become a valuable down as formerly.

I see that some plantations of ash and of hazel have been made along here; but, with great submission to the planters, I think they have gone the wrong way to work, as to the mode of preparing the ground. They have planted *small trees*, and that is right; they have *trenched* the ground, and that is also right; but they have brought the bottom soil to the top; and that is *wrong*, always; and especially where the bottom soil is gravel or chalk, or clay. I know that some people will say that this is a *puff*; and let it pass for that; but if any gentleman that is going to plant trees, will look into my *Book on Gardening*,

and into the chapter on *Preparing the Soil*, he will, I think, see how conveniently ground may be trenched without bringing to the top that soil in which the young trees stand so long without making shoots.

This country, though so open, has its beauties. The homesteads in the sheltered bottoms with fine lofty trees about the houses and yards, form a beautiful contrast with the large open fields. The little villages, running straggling along the dells (always with lofty trees and rookeries) are very interesting objects, even in the winter. You feel a sort of satisfaction, when you are out upon the bleak hills yourself, at the thought of the shelter, which is experienced in the dwellings in the valleys.

Andover is a neat and solid market-town. It is supported entirely by the agriculture around it; and how the makers of *population returns* ever came to think of classing the inhabitants of such a town as this under any other head than that of "*persons employed in agriculture*," would appear astonishing to any man who did not know those population return makers as well as I do.

The village of Uphusband, the legal name of which is Hurstbourn Tarrant, is, as the reader will recollect, a great favourite with me, not the less so certainly on account of the excellent free-quarter that it affords.

THROUGH HAMPSHIRE, BERKSHIRE, SURREY, AND SUSSEX, BETWEEN 7TH OCTOBER AND 1ST DECEMBER 1822—327 MILES

7 to 10 October, 1822.

AT Uphusband, a little village in a deep dale, about five miles to the north of Andover, and about three miles to the south of the hills at *Highclere*. The wheat is sown here, and up, and, as usual, at this time of the year, looks very beautiful. The wages of the labourers brought down to *six shillings a week!* a horrible thing to think of; but, I hear, it is still worse in Wiltshire.

11 October.

Went to Weyhill-fair, at which I was about 46 years ago, when I rode a little pony, and remember how proud I was on the occasion; but, I also remember, that my brothers, two out of three of whom were older than I, thought it unfair that my father selected me; and my own reflections upon the occasion have never been forgotten by me. The 11th of October is the Sheep-fair. About £300,000 used, some few years ago, to be carried home by the sheep-sellers. To-day, less, perhaps, than £70,000, and yet the *rents* of these sheep-sellers are, perhaps, as high, on an average, as they were then. The countenances of the farmers were descriptive of their ruinous state. I never, in all my life, beheld a more mournful scene. There is a horse-fair upon another part of the down; and there I saw horses keeping pace in depression with the sheep. A pretty numerous group of the tax-eaters, from Andover and the neighbourhood, were the only persons that had smiles on their faces. I was struck with a young farmer trotting a horse backward and forward to show him off to a couple of gentlemen, who were bargaining for the horse, and one of whom finally purchased him. These *gentlemen* were two of our "*dead-weight*," and the horse was that on which the farmer had pranced in the *Yeomanry Troop!* Here is a turn of things! Distress; pressing distress; dread of the bailiffs alone could have made the farmer sell his horse. If he had the firmness to keep the tears out of his eyes, his heart must have paid the penalty. What, then, must have

been his feelings, if he reflected, as I did, that the purchase-money for the horse had first gone from his pocket into that of the *dead-weight!* And, further, that the horse had pranced about for years for the purpose of subduing all opposition to those very measures, which had finally dismounted the owner!

From this dismal scene, a scene formerly so joyous, we set off back to Uphusband pretty early, were overtaken by the rain, and got a pretty good soaking. The land along here is very good. This whole country has a chalk bottom; but, in the valley on the right of the hill over which you go from Andover to Weyhill, the chalk lies far from the top, and the soil has few flints in it. It is very much like the land about Malden and Maidstone. Met with a farmer who said he must be ruined, unless another "good war" should come! This is no uncommon notion. They saw high prices *with* war, and they thought that the war was the *cause*.

12 *to* 16 *October.*

The fair was too dismal for me to go to it again. My sons went two of the days, and their account of the hop-fair was enough to make one gloomy for a month, particularly as my townsmen of Farnham were, in this case, amongst the sufferers. On the 12th I went to dine with and to harangue the farmers at Andover. Great attention was paid to what I had to say. The crowding to get into the room was a proof of nothing, perhaps, but *curiosity;* but, there must have been a *cause* for the curiosity, and that cause would, under the present circumstances, be matter for reflection with a wise government.

17 *October.*

Went to Newbury to dine with and to harangue the farmers. It was a fair-day. It rained so hard that I had to stop at Burghclere to dry my clothes, and to borrow a greatcoat to keep me dry for the rest of the way; so as not to have to sit in wet clothes. At Newbury the company was not less attentive or less numerous than at Andover. Some one of the tax-eating crew had, I understand, called me an "incendiary." The day is passed for those tricks. They deceive no longer. Here, at Newbury, I took occasion to notice the base accusation of *Dundas*, the member for the county. I stated it as something that I had heard of, and I was proceeding to charge him conditionally, when Mr. Tubb of Shillingford rose from his seat, and said, "I myself, sir, heard him say the words." I had

heard of his vile conduct long before; but, I abstained from charging him with it, till an opportunity should offer for doing it in his own country. After the dinner was over I went back to Burghclere.

18 *to* 20 *October.*

At Burghclere, one half the time writing, and the other half hare-hunting.

21 *October.*

Went back to Uphusband.

22 *October.*

Went to dine with the farmers at Salisbury, and got back to Uphusband by ten o'clock at night, two hours later than I have been out of bed for a great many months.

In quitting Andover to go to Salisbury (17 miles from each other) you cross the beautiful valley that goes winding down amongst the hills to Stockbridge. You then rise into the open country that very soon becomes a part of that large tract of downs called Salisbury Plain. You are not in Wiltshire, however, till you are about half the way to Salisbury. You leave Tidworth away to your right. This is the seat of Asheton Smith; and the fine *coursing* that I once saw there I should have called to recollection with pleasure, if I could have forgotten the hanging of the men at Winchester last spring for resisting one of this Smith's gamekeepers! This Smith's son and a Sir John Pollen are the members for Andover. They are chosen by the corporation. One of the corporation, an attorney named Etwall, is a commissioner of the lottery, or something in that way. It would be a curious thing to ascertain how large a portion of the "public services" is performed by the voters in boroughs and their relations. These persons are singularly kind to the nation. They not only choose a large part of the "representatives of the people;" but they come in person, or by deputy, and perform a very considerable part of the "*public services.*" I should like to know how many of them are employed about the *Salt-Tax*, for instance. A list of these public-spirited persons might be produced to show the *benefit* of the boroughs.

Before you get to Salisbury, you cross the valley that brings down a little river from Amesbury. It is a very beautiful valley. There is a chain of farm-houses and little churches all the way up it. The farms consist of the land on the flats on each side of the river, running out to a greater or less extent, at

different places, towards the hills and downs. Not far above Amesbury is a little village called Netherhaven, where I once saw an *acre of hares*. We were coursing at Everly, a few miles off; and one of the party happening to say that he had seen "an acre of hares" at Mr. Hicks Beech's at Netherhaven, we, who wanted to see the same, or to detect our informant, sent a messenger to beg a day's coursing, which being granted, we went over the next day. Mr. Beech received us very politely. He took us into a wheat stubble close by his paddock; his son took a gallop round, cracking his whip at the same time; the hares (which were very thickly in sight before) started all over the field, ran into a *flock* like sheep; and we all agreed that the flock did cover *an acre of ground*. Mr. Beech had an old greyhound, that I saw lying down in the shrubbery close by the house, while several hares were sitting and skipping about, with just as much confidence as cats sit by a dog in a kitchen or a parlour. Was this *instinct* in either dog or hares? Then, mind, this same greyhound went amongst the rest to course with us out upon the distant hills and lands; and then he ran as eagerly as the rest, and killed the hares with as little remorse. Philosophers will talk a long while before they will make men believe that this was *instinct alone*. I believe that this dog had much more reason than half of the Cossacks have; and I am sure he had a great deal more than many a negro that I have seen.

In crossing this valley to go to Salisbury, I thought of Mr. Beech's hares; but I really have neither thought of nor seen any *game* with pleasure, since the hanging of the two men at Winchester. If no other man will petition for the repeal of the law under which those poor fellows suffered, I will. But let us hope that there will be no need of petitioning. Let us hope that it will be repealed without any express application for it. It is curious enough that laws of this sort should *increase*, while *Sir James Mackintosh* is so resolutely bent on "*softening the criminal code!*"

The company at Salisbury was very numerous; not less than 500 farmers were present. They were very attentive to what I said, and, which rather surprised me, they received very docilely what I said against squeezing the labourers. A fire, in a farm-yard, had lately taken place near Salisbury; so that the subject was a ticklish one. But it was my very first duty to treat of it, and I was resolved, be the consequence what it might, not to neglect that duty.

23 to 26 October.

At Uphusband. At this village, which is a great thoroughfare for sheep and pigs, from Wiltshire and Dorsetshire to Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and away to the north and north-east, we see many farmers from different parts of the country; and, if I had had any doubts before as to the deplorableness of their state, those would now no longer exist. I did indeed, years ago, prove that if we returned to cash payments without a reduction of the debt, and without a rectifying of contracts, the present race of farmers must be ruined. But still, when the thing actually comes, it astounds one. It is like the death of a friend or relation. We talk of its approach without much emotion. We foretell the *when* without much seeming pain. We know it *must be*. But, when it comes, we forget our foretellings, and feel the calamity as acutely as if we had never expected it. The accounts we hear, daily, and almost hourly, of the families of farmers actually coming to the *parish-book*, are enough to make anybody but a boroughmonger feel. That species of monster is to be moved by nothing but his own pecuniary sufferings; and, thank God, the monster is now about to be *reached*. I hear, from all parts, that the parsons are in great alarm! Well they may, if their hearts be too much set upon the treasures of this world; for I can see no possible way of settling this matter justly, without resorting to their temporalities. They have long enough been calling upon all the industrious classes for "sacrifices for the good of the country." The time seems to be come for them to do something in this way themselves. In a short time there will be, because there can be, no rents. And we shall see whether the landlords will then suffer the parsons to continue to receive a tenth part of the produce of the land! In many places the farmers have had the sense and the spirit to *rate* the tithes to the *poor-rates*. This they *ought* to do in all cases, whether the tithes be taken up in kind or not. This, however, sweats the fire-shovel hat gentleman. It "bothers his wig." He does not know what to think of it. He does not know *who to blame;* and, where a parson finds things not to his mind, the first thing he always does is, to look about for somebody to accuse of sedition and blasphemy. Lawyers always begin, in such cases, to hunt the books, to see if there be no *punishment* to apply. But, the devil of it is, neither of them have now anybody to lay on upon! I always told them that there would arise an enemy that would laugh

at all their anathemas, informations, dungeons, halters, and bayonets. One positive good has, however, arisen out of the present calamities, and that is, the *parsons* are grown more *humble* than they were. Cheap corn and a good thumping debt have greatly conduced to the producing of the Christian virtue *humility*, necessary in us all, but doubly necessary in the priesthood. The parson is now one of the parties who is taking away the landlord's estate and the farmer's capital. When the farmer's capital is gone, there will be no rents; but, without a law upon the subject, the parson will still have his tithe, and a tithe upon the *taxes* too, which the land has to bear! Will the landlords stand this? No matter. If there be no reform of the Parliament, they must stand it. The two sets may, for aught I care, worry each other as long as they please. When the present race of farmers are gone (and that will soon be) the landlord and the parson may settle the matter between them. They will be the only parties interested; and which of them shall devour the other appears to be of little consequence to the rest of the community. They agreed most cordially in creating the debt. They went hand in hand in all the measures against the Reformers. They have made, actually made, the very thing that now frightens them, which now menaces them with *total extinction*. They cannot think it unjust, if their prayers be now treated as the prayers of the Reformers were.

27 to 29 October.

At Burghclere. Very nasty weather. On the 28th the fox hounds came to throw off at *Penwood*, in this parish. Having heard that *Dundas* would be out with the hounds, I rode to the place of meeting, in order to look him in the face, and to give him an opportunity to notice, on his own peculiar dunghill, what I had said of him at Newbury. He came. I rode up to him and about him; but he said not a word. The company entered the wood, and I rode back towards my quarters. They found a fox, and quickly lost him. Then they came out of the wood and came back along the road, and met me, and passed me, they as well as I going at a foot pace. I had plenty of time to survey them all well, and to mark their looks. I watched Dundas's eyes, but the devil a bit could I get them to turn *my way*. He is *paid* for the present. We shall see whether he will go, or send an ambassador, or neither, when I shall be at Reading on the 9th of next month.

30 *October.*

Set off for London. Went by Alderbridge, Crookham, Brimton, Mortimer, Strathfield Say, Heckfield Heath, Eversley, Blackwater, and slept at Oakingham. This is, with trifling exceptions, a miserably poor country. Burghclere lies along at the foot of a part of that chain of hills which, in this part, divide Hampshire from Berkshire. The parish just named is, indeed, in Hampshire, but it forms merely the foot of the Highclere and Kingsclere Hills. These hills, from which you can see all across the country, even to the Isle of Wight, are of chalk, and with them, towards the north, ends the chalk. The soil over which I have come to-day is generally a stony sand upon a bed of gravel. With the exception of the land just round Crookham and the other villages, nothing can well be poorer or more villainously ugly. It is all first cousin to Hounslow Heath, of which it is, in fact, a continuation to the westward. There is a clay at the bottom of the gravel; so that you have here nasty stagnant pools without fertility of soil. The rushes grow amongst the gravel; sure sign that there is clay beneath to hold the water; for, unless there be water constantly at their roots, rushes will not grow. Such land is, however, good for *oaks* wherever there is soil enough on the top of the gravel for the oak to get hold, and to send its tap-root down to the clay. The oak is the thing to plant here; and, *therefore,* this whole country contains not one single plantation of oaks! That is to say, as far as I observed. Plenty of *fir*-trees and other rubbish have been recently planted; but no oaks.

At *Strathfield Say* is that everlasting monument of English Wisdom Collective, the *Heir Loom Estate* of the "*greatest Captain of the Age!*" In his peerage it is said that it was wholly out of the power of the nation to reward his services fully; but that "she did what she could!" Well, poor devil! And what could anybody ask for more? It was well, however, that she gave what she did while she was drunk; for, if she had held her hand till now, I am half disposed to think that her gifts would have been very small. I can never forget that we have to pay interest on £50,000 of the money merely owing to the coxcombery of the late Mr. Whitbread, who actually moved that *addition* to one of the grants proposed by the ministers! Now, a great part of the grants is in the way of annuity or pension. It is notorious that, when the grants were made, the pensions would not purchase more than a third part of as

much wheat as they will now. The grants, therefore, have been augmented threefold. What right, then, has any one to say that the *labourer's wages* ought to fall, unless he say that these pensions ought to be reduced! The Hampshire magistrates, when they were putting forth their *manifesto* about the allowances to labourers, should have noticed these pensions of the lord-lieutenant of the county. However, real starvation cannot be inflicted to any very great extent. The present race of farmers must give way, and the attempts to squeeze rents out of the wages of labour must cease. And the matter will finally rest to be settled by the landlords, parsons, and tax-eaters. If the landlords choose to give the greatest captain three times as much as was granted to him, why, let him have it. According to all account, he is no *miser* at any rate; and the estates that pass through his hands may, perhaps, be full as well disposed of as they are at present. Considering the miserable soil I have passed over to-day, I am rather surprised to find Oakingham so decent a town. It has a very handsome market-place, and is by no means an ugly country-town.

31 *October.*

Set off at daylight and got to Kensington about noon. On leaving Oakingham for London, you get upon what is called *Windsor Forest;* that is to say, upon as bleak, as barren, and as villainous a heath as ever man set his eyes on. However, here are new enclosures without end. And here are houses too, here and there, over the whole of this execrable tract of country. "What!" Mr. Canning will say, "will you not allow that the owners of these new enclosures and these houses know their own interests? And are not these *improvements,* and are they not a proof of an addition to the national capital?" To the first I answer, *May be so;* to the two last, *No.* These new enclosures and houses arise out of the beggaring of the parts of the country distant from the vortex of the funds. The farm-houses have long been growing fewer and fewer; the labourers' houses fewer and fewer; and it is manifest to every man who has eyes to see with, that the villages are regularly wasting away. This is the case all over the parts of the kingdom where the tax-eaters do not haunt. In all the really agricultural villages and parts of the kingdom, there is a *shocking decay;* a great dilapidation and constant pulling down or falling down of houses. The farm-houses are not so many as they were forty years ago by three-

fourths. That is to say, the infernal system of Pitt and his followers has annihilated three parts out of four of the farm-houses. The labourers' houses disappear also. And all the *useful* people become less numerous. While these spewy sands and gravel near London are enclosed and built on, good lands in other parts are neglected. These enclosures and buildings are a *waste;* they are means *misapplied;* they are a proof of national decline and not of prosperity. To cultivate and ornament these villainous spots the produce and the population are drawn away from the good lands. There all manner of schemes have been resorted to to get rid of the necessity of *hands;* and I am quite convinced that the population, upon the whole, has not increased, in England, one single soul since I was born; an opinion that I have often expressed, in support of which I have as often offered arguments, and those arguments have *never been answered.* As to this rascally heath, that which has ornamented it has brought misery on millions. The spot is not far distant from the stock-jobbing crew. The roads to it are level. They are smooth. The wretches can go to it from the 'Change without any danger to their worthless necks. And thus it is "*vastly improved, ma'am!*" A set of men who can look upon this as "improvement," who can regard this as a proof of the "increased capital of the country," are pretty fit, it must be allowed, to get the country out of its present difficulties! At the end of this blackguard heath you come (on the road to Egham) to a little place called *Sunning Hill,* which is on the western side of Windsor Park. It is a spot all made into "grounds" and gardens by tax-eaters. The inhabitants of it have beggared twenty agricultural villages and hamlets.

From this place you go across a corner of Windsor Park, and come out at Virginia Water. To Egham is then about two miles. A much more ugly country than that between Egham and Kensington would with great difficulty be found in England. Flat as a pancake, and, until you come to Hammersmith, the soil is a nasty stony dirt upon a bed of gravel. Hounslow Heath, which is only a little worse than the general run, is a sample of all that is bad in soil and villainous in look. Yet this is now enclosed, and what they call "cultivated." Here is a fresh robbery of villages, hamlets, and farm and labourers' buildings and abodes! But here is one of those "*vast improvements, ma'am,*" called *Barracks.* What an "improvement!" What an "addition to the national capital!" For, mind,

Monsieur de Snip, the Surrey Norman, actually said, that the new buildings ought to be reckoned an addition to the national capital! What, Snip! Do you pretend that the nation is *richer*, because the means of making this barrack have been drawn away from the people in taxes? Mind, Monsieur le Normand, the barrack did not drop down from the sky nor spring up out of the earth. It was not created by the unhanged knaves of paper-money. It came out of the people's labour; and when you hear Mr. Ellman tell the committee of 1821, that forty-five years ago every man in his parish brewed his own beer, and that now not one man in that same parish does it; when you hear this, Monsieur de Snip, you might, if you had brains in your skull, be able to estimate the effects of what has produced the barrack. Yet, barracks there must be, or *Gatton* and *Old Sarum* must fall; and the fall of these would break poor Mr. Canning's heart.

8 *November.*

From London to Egham in the evening.

9 *November.*

Started at day-break in a hazy frost, for Reading. The horses' manes and ears covered with the hoar before we got across Windsor Park, which appeared to be a blackguard soil, pretty much like Hounslow Heath, only not flat. A very large part of the park is covered with heath or rushes, sure sign of execrable soil. But the roads are such as might have been made by Solomon. "A greater than Solomon is here!" some one may exclaim. Of that I know nothing. I am but a traveller; and the roads in this park are beautiful indeed. My servant, whom I brought from amongst the hills and flints of Uphusband, must certainly have thought himself in Paradise as he was going through the park. If I had told him that the buildings and the labourers' clothes and meals, at Uphusband, were the *worse* for those pretty roads with edgings cut to the line, he would have wondered at me, I dare say. It would, nevertheless, have been perfectly true; and this is *feelosofee* of a much more useful sort than that which is taught by the Edinburgh Reviewers.

When you get through the park you come to Winkfield, and then (bound for Reading) you go through Binfield, which is ten miles from Egham and as many from Reading. At Binfield I stopped to breakfast, at a very nice country inn called the *Stag and Hounds*. Here you go along on the north border of

that villainous tract of country that I passed over in going from Oakingham to Egham. Much of the land even here is but newly enclosed; and it was really not worth a straw before it was loaded with the fruit of the labour of the people living in the parts of the country distant from the *Fund-Wen*. What injustice! What unnatural changes! Such things cannot be, without producing convulsion in the end! A road as smooth as a die, a real stock-jobber's road, brought us to Reading by eleven o'clock. We dined at one; and very much pleased I was with the company. I have seldom seen a number of persons assembled together, whose approbation I valued more than that of the company of this day. Last year the prime minister said that his speech (the grand speech) was rendered necessary by the "pains that had been taken, in different parts of the country," to persuade the farmers that the distress had arisen out of the *measures of the government*, and *not from over-production!* To be sure I had taken some pains to remove that stupid notion about over-production from the minds of the farmers; but did the stern-path-man *succeed* in counteracting the effect of my efforts? Not he, indeed. And, after his speech was made, and sent forth cheek by jowl with that of the sane Castlereagh, of hole-digging memory, the truths inculcated by me were only the more manifest. This has been a fine meeting at Reading! I feel very proud of it. The morning was fine for me to ride in, and the rain began as soon as I was housed.

I came on horseback 40 miles, slept on the road, and finished my harangue at the end of *twenty-two hours* from leaving Kensington; and I cannot help saying that is pretty well for "*Old* Cobbett." I am delighted with the people that I have seen at Reading. Their kindness to me is nothing in my estimation compared with the sense and spirit which they appear to possess. It is curious to observe how things have *worked* with me. That combination, that sort of *instinctive* union, which has existed for so many years, amongst all the parties, to *keep me down* generally, and particularly, as the *County-Club* called it, to keep me out of Parliament "*at any rate*," this combination has led to the present *haranguing* system, which, in some sort, supplies the place of a seat in Parliament. It may be said, indeed, that I have not the honour to sit in the same room with those great Reformers, Lord John Russell, Sir Massey Lopez, and his guest, Sir Francis Burdett; but man's happiness here below is never perfect; and there may be, besides, people to

believe that a man ought not to break his heart on account of being shut out of such company, especially when he can find such company as I have this day found at Reading.

10 *October.*

Went from Reading, through Aldermaston for Burghclere. The rain has been very heavy, and the water was a good deal out. Here, on my way, I got upon Crookham Common again, which is a sort of continuation of the wretched country about Oakingham. From Highclere I looked, one day, over the flat towards Marlborough; and I there saw some such rascally heaths. So that this villainous tract extends from east to west, with more or less of exceptions, from Hounslow to Hungerford. From north to south it extends from Binfield (which cannot be far from the borders of Buckinghamshire) to the South Downs of Hampshire, and terminates somewhere between Liphook and Petersfield, after stretching over Hindhead, which is certainly the most villainous spot that God ever made. Our ancestors do, indeed, seem to have ascribed its formation to another power; for the most celebrated part of it is called "*the Devil's Punch Bowl.*" In this tract of country there are certainly some very beautiful spots. But these are very few in number, except where the chalk-hills run into the tract. The neighbourhood of Godalming ought hardly to be considered as an exception; for there you are just on the outside of the tract, and begin to enter on the *Wealds;* that is to say, clayey woodlands. All the part of Berkshire of which I have been recently passing over, if I except the tract from Reading to Crookham, is very bad land and a very ugly country.

11 *November.*

Uphusband *once more,* and, for the sixth time this year, over the North Hampshire Hills, which, notwithstanding their everlasting flints, I like very much. As you ride along, even in a *green lane,* the horses' feet make a noise like *hammering.* It seems as if you were riding on a mass of iron. Yet the soil is good, and bears some of the best wheat in England. All these high and, indeed, all chalky lands, are excellent for sheep. But on the top of some of these hills there are as fine meadows as I ever saw. Pasture richer, perhaps, than that about Swindon in the north of Wiltshire. And the singularity is, that this pasture is on the *very tops* of these lofty hills, from which you can see the Isle of Wight. There is a stiff loam, in some places

twenty feet deep, on a bottom of chalk. Though the grass grows so finely, there is no apparent wetness in the land. The wells are more than three hundred feet deep. The main part of the water, for all uses, comes from the clouds; and, indeed, these are pretty constant companions of these chalk hills, which are very often enveloped in clouds and wet, when it is sunshine down at Burghclere or Uphusband. They manure the land here by digging *wells* in the fields, and bringing up the chalk, which they spread about on the land; and which, being free-chalk, is reduced to powder by the frosts. A considerable portion of the land is covered with wood; and as, in the clearing of the land, the clearers followed the good soil, without regard to shape of fields, the forms of the woods are of endless variety, which, added to the never-ceasing inequalities of the surface of the whole, makes this, like all the others of the same description, a very pleasant country.

17 *November.*

Set off from Uphusband for Hambledon. The first place I had to get to was Whitchurch. On my way, and at a short distance from Uphusband, down the valley, I went through a village called *Bourn*, which takes its name from the water that runs down this valley. A *bourn*, in the language of our forefathers, seems to be a river which is, part of the year, *without water*. There is one of these bourns down this pretty valley. It has, generally, no water till towards spring, and then it runs for several months. It is the same at the Candovers, as you go across the downs from Odiham to Winchester.

The little village of *Bourn*, therefore, takes its name from its situation. Then there are two *Hurstbourns*, one above and one below this village of Bourn. *Hurst* means, I believe, a forest. There were, doubtless, one of those on each side of Bourn; and when they became villages, the one above was called *Up*-hurstbourn, and the one below, *Down*-hurstbourn; which names have become *Uphusband* and *Downhusband*. The lawyers, therefore, who, to the immortal honour of high-blood and Norman descent, are making such a pretty story out for the lord chancellor, relative to a noble peer who voted for the bill against the queen, ought to leave off calling the seat of the noble person *Hursperne;* for it is at Downhurstbourn where he lives, and where he was visited by Dr. Bankhead!

Whitchurch is a small town, but famous for being the place where the paper has been made for the *Borough-Bank!* I

passed by the *mill* on my way to get out upon the downs to go to Alresford, where I intended to sleep. I hope the time will come when a monument will be erected where that mill stands, and when on that monument will be inscribed *the curse of England*. This spot ought to be held accursed in all time henceforth and for evermore. It has been the spot from which have sprung more and greater mischiefs than ever plagued mankind before. However, the evils now appear to be fast recoiling on the merciless authors of them; and, therefore, one beholds this scene of paper-making with a less degree of rage than formerly. My blood used to boil when I thought of the wretches who carried on and supported the system. It does not boil now, when I think of them. The curse, which they intended solely for others, is now falling on themselves; and I smile at their sufferings. Blasphemy! Atheism! Who can be an atheist, that sees how *justly* these wretches are treated; with what exact measure they are receiving the evils which they inflicted on others for a time, and which they intended to inflict on them for ever! If, indeed, the monsters had continued to prosper, one might have been an atheist. The true history of the rise, progress and fall of these monsters, of their *power*, their *crimes* and their *punishment*, will do more than has been done before to put an end to the doubts of those who have doubts upon this subject.

Quitting Whitchurch, I went off to the left out of the Winchester road, got out upon the highlands, took an "observation," as the sailors call it, and off I rode, in a straight line, over hedge and ditch, towards the rising ground between Stratton Park and Micheldever Wood; but, before I reached this point, I found some wet meadows and some running water in my way in a little valley running up from the turnpike road to a little place called *West Stratton*. I, therefore, turned to my left, went down to the turnpike, went a little way along it, then turned to my left, went along by Stratton Park pales down East Stratton Street, and then on towards the Grange Park. Stratton Park is the seat of Sir Thomas Baring, who has here several thousands of acres of land; who has the living of Micheldever, to which, I think, Northington and Swallowfield are joined. Above all, he has Micheldever Wood, which, they say, contains a thousand acres, and which is one of the finest oak-woods in England. This large and very beautiful estate must have belonged to the Church at the time of Henry the Eighth's "*reformation*." It was, I believe, given by him to the family of

Russell; and it was, by them, sold to Sir Francis Baring about twenty years ago. Upon the whole, all things considered, the change is for the better. Sir Thomas Baring would not have moved, nay, he *did not* move, for the pardon of *Lopez*, while he left Joseph Swann in gaol for *four years and a half*, without so much as hinting at Swann's case! Yea, verily, I would rather see this estate in the hands of Sir Thomas Baring than in those of Lopez's friend. Besides, it seems to be acknowledged that any title is as good as those derived from the old wife-killer. Castlereagh, when the Whigs talked in a rather rude manner about the sinecure places and pensions, told them that the title of the sinecure man or woman was *as good as the titles of the Duke of Bedford!* this was *plagiarism*, to be sure; for *Burke* had begun it. He called the duke the *Leviathan of grants;* and seemed to hint at the propriety of *overhauling* them a little. When the men of Kent petitioned for a "*just* reduction of the National Debt," Lord John Russell, with that wisdom for which he is renowned, reprobated the prayer; but, having done this in terms not sufficiently unqualified and strong, and having made use of a word of equivocal meaning, the man that cut his own throat at North Cray pitched on upon him and told him that the fundholder had as much right to his dividends as *the Duke of Bedford had to his estates*. Upon this the noble reformer and advocate for Lopez mended his expressions; and really said what the North Cray philosopher said he ought to say! Come, come: Micheldever Wood is in very proper hands! A little girl, of whom I asked my way down into East Stratton, and who was dressed in a camlet gown, white apron and plaid cloak (it was Sunday), and who had a book in her hand, told me that Lady Baring gave her the clothes, and had her taught to read and to sing hymns and spiritual songs.

As I came through the Strattons, I saw not less than a dozen girls clad in this same way. It is impossible not to believe that this is done with a good motive; but it is possible not to believe that it is productive of good. It must create hypocrites, and hypocrisy is the great sin of the age. Society is in a *queer* state when the rich think that they must *educate* the poor in order to insure their *own safety:* for this, at bottom, is the great motive now at work in pushing on the education scheme, though in this particular case, perhaps, there may be a little enthusiasm at work. When persons are glutted with riches; when they have their fill of them; when they are surfeited of all earthly pursuits, they are very apt to begin to think about the next

world; and, the moment they begin to think of that, they begin to look over the *account* that they shall have to present. Hence the far greater part of what are called "charities." But it is the business of *governments* to take care that there shall be very little of this *glutting* with riches, and very little need of "charities."

From Stratton I went on to Northington Down; then round to the south of the Grange Park (Alex. Baring's), down to Abbotson, and over some pretty little green hills to Alresford, which is a nice little town of itself, but which presents a singularly beautiful view from the last little hill coming from Abbotson. I could not pass by the Grange Park without thinking of *Lord and Lady Henry Stuart*, whose lives and deaths surpassed what we read of in the most sentimental romances. Very few things that I have met with in my life ever filled me with sorrow equal to that which I felt at the death of this most virtuous and most amiable pair.

It began raining soon after I got to Alresford, and rained all the evening. I heard here, that a requisition for a county meeting was in the course of being signed in different parts of the county. They mean to petition for reform, I hope. At any rate, I intend to go to see what they do. I saw the *parsons* at the county meeting in 1817. I should like, of all things, to see them at another meeting *now*. These are the persons that I have most steadily in my eye. The war and the debt were for the *tithes* and the *boroughs*. These must stand or fall together now. I always told the parsons that they were the greatest fools in the world to put the tithes on board *the same boat* with the boroughs. I told them so in 1817; and, I fancy, they will soon see all about it.

18 *November.*

Came from Alresford to Hambledon, through Titchbourn, Cheriton, Beauworth, Kilmston, and Exton. This is all a high, hard, dry, fox-hunting country. Like that, indeed, over which I came yesterday. At Titchbourn there is a park, and "great house," as the country-people call it. The place belongs, I believe, to a Sir somebody *Titchbourne*, a family, very likely half as old as the name of the village, which, however, partly takes its name from the *bourn* that runs down the valley. I thought, as I was riding alongside of this park, that I had heard *good* of this family of Titchbourne, and I therefore saw the park *pales* with sorrow. There is not more than one pale in a yard, and those

that remain, and the rails and posts and all, seem tumbling down. This park-paling is perfectly typical of those of the landlords who are *not tax-eaters*. They are wasting away very fast. The tax-eating landlords think to swim out the gale. They are deceived. They are "deluded" by their own greediness.

Kilmston was my next place after Titchbourn, but I wanted to go to Beauworth, so that I had to go through Cheriton; a little, hard, iron village, where all seems to be as old as the hills that surround it. In coming along you see Titchbourn church away to the right, on the side of the hill, a very pretty little view; and this, though such a hard country, is a pretty country.

At Cheriton I found a grand camp of *Gipsys*, just upon the move towards Alresford. I had met some of the scouts first, and afterwards the advanced guard, and here the main body was getting in motion. One of the scouts that I met was a young woman, who, I am sure, was six feet high. There were two or three more in the camp of about the same height; and some most strapping fellows of men. It is curious that this race should have preserved their dark skin and coal-black straight and coarse hair, very much like that of the American Indians. I mean the hair, for the skin has nothing of the copper-colour as that of the Indians has. It is not, either, of the Mulatto cast; that is to say, there is no yellow in it. It is a black mixed with our English colours of pale, or red, and the features are small, like those of the girls in Sussex, and often singularly pretty. The tall girl that I met at Titchbourn, who had a huckster basket on her arm, had most beautiful features. I pulled up my horse, and said, "Can you tell me my fortune, my dear?" She answered in the negative, giving me a look at the same time that seemed to say it was *too late;* and that if I had been thirty years younger she might have seen a little what she could do with me. It is, all circumstances considered, truly surprising that this race should have preserved so perfectly all its distinctive marks.

I came on to Beauworth to inquire after the family of a worthy old farmer, whom I knew there some years ago, and of whose death I had heard at Alresford. A bridle road over some fields and through a coppice took me to Kilmston, formerly a large village, but now mouldered into two farms, and a few miserable tumble-down houses for the labourers. Here is a house that was formerly the residence of the landlord of the place, but is now occupied by one of the farmers. This is a fine country for fox-hunting, and Kilmston belonged to a Mr. Ridge who was a

famous fox-hunter, and who is accused of having spent his fortune in that way. But what do people mean? He had a right to spend his *income*, as his fathers had done before him. It was the Pitt-system, and not the fox-hunting, that took away the principal. The place now belongs to a Mr. Long, whose origin I cannot find out.

From Kilmston I went right over the downs to the top of a hill called *Beacon Hill*, which is one of the loftiest hills in the country. Here you can see the Isle of Wight in detail, a fine sweep of the sea; also away into Sussex, and over the New Forest into Dorsetshire. Just below you, to the east, you look down upon the village of Exton; and you can see up this valley (which is called a *Bourn* too) as far as West-Meon, and down it as far as Soberton. Corhampton, Warnford, Meon-Stoke and Droxford come within these two points; so that here are six villages on this bourn within the space of about five miles. On the other side of the main valley down which the bourn runs, and opposite Beacon Hill, is another such a hill, which they call *Old Winchester Hill*. On the top of this hill there was once a camp, or rather fortress; and the ramparts are now pretty nearly as visible as ever. The same is to be seen on the Beacon Hill at Highclere. These ramparts had nothing of the principles of modern fortification in their formation. You see no signs of salient angles. It was a *ditch* and a *bank*, and that appears to have been all. I had, I think, a full mile to go down from the top of Beacon Hill to Exton. This is the village where that *Parson Baines* lives who, as described by me in 1817, bawled in Lord Cochrane's ear at Winchester in the month of March of that year. Parson *Poulter* lives at Meon-Stoke, which is not a mile further down. So that this valley has something in it besides picturesque views! I asked some countrymen how Poulter and Baines did; but their answer contained too much of *irreverence* for me to give it here.

At Exton I crossed the Gosport turnpike-road, came up the cross valley under the south side of Old Winchester Hill, over Stoke Down, then over West-End Down, and then to my friend's house at West-End in the parish of Hambledon.

Thus have I crossed nearly the whole of this country from the north-west to the south-east, without going five hundred yards on a turnpike-road, and, as nearly as I could do it, in a straight line.

The whole country that I have crossed is loam and flints, upon a bottom of chalk. At Alresford there are some

watered meadows, which are the beginning of a chain of meadows that goes all the way down to Winchester, and hence to Southampton; but even these meadows have, at Alresford, chalk under them. The water that supplies them comes out of *a pond*, called Alresford Pond, which is fed from the high hills in the neighbourhood. These counties are purely agricultural; and they have suffered most cruelly from the accursed Pitt-system. Their hilliness, bleakness, roughness of roads, render them unpleasant to the luxurious, effeminate, tax-eating crew, who never come near them, and who have pared them down to the very bone. The villages are all in a state of *decay*. The farm-buildings dropping down, bit by bit. The produce is, by a few great farmers, dragged to a few spots, and all the rest is falling into decay. If this infernal system could go on for forty years longer, it would make all the labourers as much slaves as the negroes are, and subject to the same sort of discipline and management.

19 *to* 23 *November.*

At West-End. Hambledon is a long, straggling village, lying in a little valley formed by some very pretty but not lofty hills. The environs are much prettier than the village itself, which is not far from the north side of Portsdown Hill. This must have once been a considerable place; for here is a church pretty nearly as large as that at Farnham in Surrey, which is quite sufficient for a large town. The means of living has been drawn away from these villages, and the people follow the means. Cheriton and Kilmston and Hambledon and the like have been beggared for the purpose of giving tax-eaters the means of making "*vast improvements, ma'am,*" on the villainous spewy gravel of Windsor Forest! The thing, however, must go *back*. Revolution here or revolution there: bawl, bellow, alarm, as long as the tax-eaters like, *back* the thing must go. Back, indeed, *it is going* in some quarters. Those scenes of glorious loyalty, the sea-port places, are beginning to be deserted. How many villages has that scene of all that is wicked and odious, Portsmouth, Gosport, and Portsea; how many villages has that hellish assemblage beggared! It is now being scattered *itself!* Houses which there let for forty or fifty pounds a year each, now let for three or four shillings a week each; and thousands, perhaps, cannot be let at all to anybody capable of paying rent. There is an absolute tumbling down taking place, where, so lately, there were such "vast improvements, ma'am!"

Does Monsieur de Snip call those improvements, then? Does he insist that those houses form "an addition to the national capital?" Is it any wonder that a country should be miserable when such notions prevail? And when they can, even in the Parliament, be received with cheering?

24 Nov. Sunday.

Set off from Hambledon to go to Thursley in Surrey, about five miles from Godalming. Here I am at Thursley, after as interesting a day as I ever spent in all my life. They say that "*variety* is charming," and this day I have had of scenes and of soils a variety indeed!

To go to Thursley from Hambledon the plain way was up the downs to Petersfield, and then along the turnpike-road through Liphook, and over Hindhead, at the north-east foot of which Thursley lies. But I had been over that sweet Hindhead, and had seen too much of turnpike-road and of heath, to think of taking another so large a dose of them. The map of Hampshire (and we had none of Surrey) showed me the way to Headley, which lies on the west of Hindhead, down upon the flat. I knew it was but about five miles from Headley to Thursley; and I, therefore, resolved to go to Headley, in spite of all the remonstrances of friends, who represented to me the danger of breaking my neck at Hawkley and of getting buried in the bogs of Woolmer Forest. My route was through East-Meon, Froxfield, Hawkley, Greatham, and then over Woolmer Forest (a *heath* if you please), to Headley.

Off we set over the downs (crossing the bottom sweep of Old Winchester Hill) from West-End to East-Meon. We came down a long and steep hill that led us winding round into the village, which lies in a valley that runs in a direction nearly east and west, and that has a rivulet that comes out of the hills towards Petersfield. If I had not seen anything further to-day, I should have dwelt long on the beauties of this place. Here is a very fine valley, in nearly an elliptical form, sheltered by high hills sloping gradually from it; and not far from the middle of this valley there is a hill nearly in the form of a goblet-glass with the foot and stem broken off and turned upside down. And this is clapped down upon the level of the valley, just as you would put such goblet upon a table. The hill is lofty, partly covered with wood, and it gives an air of great singularity to the scene. I am sure that East-Meon has been a *large place*. The church has a *Saxon tower* pretty nearly equal, as far as I

recollect, to that of the cathedral at Winchester. The rest of the church has been rebuilt, and, perhaps, several times; but the *tower* is complete; it has had *a steeple* put upon it; but it retains all its beauty, and it shows that the church (which is still large) must, at first, have been a very large building. Let those who talk so glibly of the increase of the population in England, go over the country from Highclere to Hambledon. Let them look at the size of the churches, and let them observe those numerous small inclosures on every side of every village, which had, to a certainty, *each its house* in former times. But let them go to East-Meon, and account for that church. Where did the hands come from to make it? Look, however, at the downs, the many square miles of downs near this village, all bearing the *marks of the plough*, and all out of tillage for many many years; yet not one single inch of them but what is vastly superior in quality to any of those great "improvements" on the miserable heaths of Hounslow, Bagshot, and Windsor Forest. It is the destructive, the murderous paper-system, that has transferred the fruit of the labour, and the people along with it, from the different parts of the country to the neighbourhood of the all-devouring *Wen*. I do not believe one word of what is said of the increase of the population. All observation and all reason is against the fact; and, as to the *parliamentary returns*, what need we more than this: that *they* assert that the population of Great Britain has increased from ten to fourteen millions in the last *twenty years!* That is enough! A man that can suck that in will believe, literally believe, that the moon is made of green cheese. Such a thing is too monstrous to be swallowed by anybody but Englishmen, and by any Englishman not brutified by a Pitt-system.

To Mr. Canning

Worth (Sussex),
10 *December* 1822.

Sir,—The agreeable news from France, relative to the intended invasion of Spain, compelled me to break off, in my last letter, in the middle of my *Rural Ride* of Sunday, the 24th of November. Before I mount again, which I shall do in this letter, pray let me ask you what *sort of apology* is to be offered to the nation, if the French Bourbons be permitted to take quiet possession of

Cadiz and of the Spanish naval force? Perhaps you may be disposed to answer, when you have taken time to reflect; and, therefore, leaving you to *muse* on the matter, I will resume my ride.

24 November.

(Sunday.) From Hambledon to Thursley (continued).

From East-Meon, I did not go on to Froxfield church, but turned off to the left to a place (a couple of houses) called *Bower*. Near this I stopped at a friend's house, which is in about as lonely a situation as I ever saw. A very pleasant place however. The lands dry, a nice mixture of woods and fields, and a great variety of hill and dell.

Before I came to East-Meon, the soil of the hills was a shallow loam with flints, on a bottom of chalk; but, on this side of the valley of East-Meon; that is to say, on the north side, the soil on the hills is a deep, stiff loam, on a bed of a sort of gravel mixed with chalk; and the stones, instead of being grey on the outside and blue on the inside, are yellow on the outside and whitish on the inside. In coming on further to the north, I found that the bottom was sometimes gravel and sometimes chalk. Here, at the time when *whatever it was* that formed these hills and valleys, the stuff of which Hindhead is composed seems to have run down and mixed itself with the stuff of which *Old Winchester Hill* is composed. Free chalk (which is the sort found here) is excellent manure for stiff land, and it produces a complete change in the nature of *clays*. It is, therefore, dug here, on the north of East-Meon, about in the fields, where it happens to be found, and is laid out upon the surface, where it is crumbled to powder by the frost, and thus gets incorporated with the loam.

At Bower I got instructions to go to Hawkley, but accompanied with most earnest advice not to go that way, for that it was impossible to get along. The roads were represented as so bad; the floods so much out; the hills and bogs so dangerous; that, really, I began to *doubt;* and, if I had not been brought up amongst the clays of the Holt Forest and the bogs of the neighbouring heaths, I should certainly have turned off to my right, to go over Hindhead, great as was my objection to going that way. "Well, then," said my friend at Bower, "if you *will* go that way, by G—, you must go down *Hawkley Hanger;*" of which he then gave me *such* a description! But even this I found to fall short of the reality. I inquired simply,

whether *people were in the habit* of going down it; and the answer being in the affirmative, on I went through green lanes and bridle-ways till I came to the turnpike-road from Petersfield to Winchester, which I crossed, going into a narrow and almost untrodden green lane, on the side of which I found a cottage. Upon my asking the way to *Hawkley*, the woman at the cottage said, "Right up the lane, sir: you'll come to a *hanger* presently: you must take care, sir: you can't ride down: will your horses *go alone?*"

On we trotted up this pretty green lane; and indeed, we had been coming gently and generally uphill for a good while. The lane was between highish banks and pretty high stuff growing on the banks, so that we could see no distance from us, and could receive not the smallest hint of what was so near at hand. The lane had a little turn towards the end; so that, out we came, all in a moment, at the very edge of the hanger! And never, in all my life, was I so surprised and so delighted! I pulled up my horse, and sat and looked; and it was like looking from the top of a castle down into the sea, except that the valley was land and not water. I looked at my servant, to see what effect this unexpected sight had upon him. His surprise was as great as mine, though he had been bred amongst the North Hampshire hills. Those who had so strenuously dwelt on the dirt and dangers of this route, had said not a word about beauties, the matchless beauties of the scenery. These hangers are woods on the sides of very steep hills. The trees and underwood *hang*, in some sort, to the ground, instead of *standing on* it. Hence these places are called *Hangers*. From the summit of that which I had now to descend, I looked down upon the villages of Hawkley, Greatham, Selborne and some others.

From the south-east, round, southward, to the north-west, the main valley has cross-valleys running out of it, the hills on the sides of which are very steep, and, in many parts, covered with wood. The hills that form these cross-valleys run out into the main valley, like piers into the sea. Two of these promontories, of great height, are on the west side of the main valley, and were the first objects that struck my sight when I came to the edge of the hanger, which was on the south. The ends of these promontories are nearly perpendicular, and their tops so high in the air, that you cannot look at the village below without something like a feeling of apprehension. The leaves are all off, the hop-poles are in stack, the fields have little verdure; but, while the spot is beautiful beyond description even

now, I must leave to imagination to suppose what it is when the trees and hangers and hedges are in leaf, the corn waving, the meadows bright, and the hops upon the poles!

From the south-west, round, eastward, to the north, lie the *heaths*, of which Woolmer Forest makes a part, and these go gradually rising up to Hindhead, the crown of which is to the north-west, leaving the rest of the circle (the part from north to north-west) to be occupied by a continuation of the valley towards Headley, Binstead, Frensham and the Holt Forest. So that even the *contrast* in the view from the top of the hanger is as great as can possibly be imagined. Men, however, are not to have such beautiful views as this without some trouble. We had had the view; but we had to go down the hanger. We had, indeed, some roads to get along, as we could, afterwards; but we had to get down the hanger first. The horses took the lead, and crept partly down upon their feet and partly upon their hocks. It was extremely slippery too; for the soil is a sort of marl, or, as they call it here, maume, or mame, which is, when wet, very much like *grey soap*. In such a case it was likely that I should keep in the rear, which I did, and I descended by taking hold of the branches of the underwood, and so letting myself down. When we got to the bottom, I bade my man, when he should go back to Uphusband, tell the people there that *Ashmansworth Lane* is not the *worst* piece of road in the world. Our worst, however, was not come yet, nor had we by any means seen the most novel sights.

After crossing a little field and going through a farmyard, we came into a lane, which was, at once, road and river. We found a hard bottom, however; and when we got out of the water, we got into a lane with high banks. The banks were quarries of white stone, like Portland-stone, and the bed of the road was of the same stone; and, the rains having been heavy for a day or two before, the whole was as clean and as white as the steps of a fundholder or dead-weight doorway in one of the squares of the *Wen*. Here were we, then, going along a stone road with stone banks, and yet the underwood and trees grew well upon the tops of the banks. In the solid stone beneath us, there were a horse-track and wheel-tracks, the former about three and the latter about six inches deep. How many many ages it must have taken the horses' feet, the wheels, and the water, to wear down this stone so as to form a hollow way! The horses seemed alarmed at their situation; they trod with fear; but they took us along very nicely, and, at last, got us safe into

the indescribable dirt and mire of the road from Hawkley Green to Greatham. Here the bottom of all the land is this solid white stone, and the top is that *mame*, which I have before described. The hop-roots penetrate down into this stone. How deep the stone may go I know not; but, when I came to look up at the end of one of the piers, or promontories, mentioned above, I found that it was all of this same stone.

At Hawkley Green I asked a farmer the way to Thursley. He pointed to one of two roads going from the green; but, it appearing to me that that would lead me up to the London road and over Hindhead, I gave him to understand that I was resolved to get along, somehow or other, through the "low countries." He besought me not to think of it. However, finding me resolved, he got a man to go a little way to put me into the Greatham road. The man came, but the farmer could not let me go off without renewing his entreaties that I would go away to Liphook, in which entreaties the man joined, though he was to be paid very well for his trouble.

Off we went, however, to Greatham. I am thinking whether I ever did see *worse* roads. Upon the whole, I think, I have; though I am not sure that the roads of New Jersey, between Trenton and Elizabeth Town, at the breaking up of winter, be worse. Talk of *shows*, indeed! Take a piece of this road; just a cut across, and a rod long, and carry it up to London. That would be something like a *show!*

Upon leaving Greatham we came out upon Woolmer Forest. Just as we were coming out of Greatham, I asked a man the way to Thursley. "You *must* go to *Liphook*, sir," said he. "But," I said, "I *will not* go to Liphook." These people seemed to be posted at all these stages to turn me aside from my purpose, and to make me go over that *Hindhead*, which I had resolved to avoid. I went on a little further, and asked another man the way to Headley, which, as I have already observed, lies on the western foot of Hindhead, whence I knew there must be a road to Thursley (which lies at the north-east foot) without going over that miserable hill. The man told me that I must go across the *forest*. I asked him whether it was a *good* road: "It is a *sound* road," said he, laying a weighty emphasis upon the word *sound*. "Do people *go* it?" said I. "*Ye-es*," said he. "Oh then," said I, to my man, "as it is a *sound* road, keep you close to my heels, and do not attempt to go aside, not even for a foot." Indeed, it was a *sound* road.

The rain of the night had made the fresh horse tracks visible. And we got to Headley in a short time, over a sand-road, which seemed so delightful after the flints and stone and dirt and sloughs that we had passed over and through since the morning! This road was not, if we had been benighted, without its dangers, the forest being full of quags and quicksands. This is a tract of Crown-lands, or, properly speaking, *public-lands*, on some parts of which our land steward, Mr. Huskisson, is making some plantations of trees, partly fir, and partly other trees. What he can plant the *fir* for, God only knows, seeing that the country is already over-stocked with that rubbish. But this *public-land* concern is a very great concern.

If I were a member of Parliament, I *would* know what timber has been cut down, and what it has been sold for, since year 1790. However, this matter must be *investigated*, first or last. It never can be omitted in the winding up of the concern; and that winding up must come out of wheat at four shillings a bushel. It is said, hereabouts, that a man who lives near Liphook, and who is so mighty a hunter and game pursuer, that they call him *William Rufus;* it is said that this man is *Lord of the Manor of Woolmer Forest.* This he cannot be without *a grant* to that effect; and, if there be a grant, there must have been a *reason* for the grant. This *reason* I should very much like to know; and this I would know if I were a member of Parliament. That the people call him the *Lord of the Manor* is certain; but he can hardly make preserves of the plantations; for it is well known how marvellously *hares* and *young trees* agree together! This is a matter of great public importance; and yet, how, in the present state of things, is an *investigation* to be obtained? Is there a man in parliament that will call for it? Not one. Would a dissolution of Parliament mend the matter? No: for the same men would be there still. They are the same men that have been there for these thirty years; and the *same men* they will be, and they *must be*, until there be *a reform*. To be sure when one dies, or cuts his throat (as in the case of Castlereagh), another *one* comes; but it is the *same body*. And, as long as it is that same body, things will always go on as they now go on. However, as Mr. Canning says the body "*works well*," we must not say the contrary.

The soil of this tract is, generally, a black sand, which, in some places, becomes *peat*, which makes very tolerable fuel. In some parts there is clay at bottom; and there the *oaks* would grow; but not while there are *hares* in any number on the forest.

If trees be to grow here, there ought to be no hares, and as little hunting as possible.

We got to Headley, the sign of the Holly Bush, just at dusk, and just as it began to rain. I had neither eaten nor drunk since eight o'clock in the morning; and as it was a nice little public-house, I at first intended to stay all night, an intention that I afterwards very indiscreetly gave up. I had *laid my plan*, which included the getting to Thursley that night. When, therefore, I had got some cold bacon and bread, and some milk, I began to feel ashamed of stopping short of my *plan*, especially after having so heroically persevered in the "stern path," and so disdainfully scorned to go over Hindhead. I knew that my road lay through a hamlet called *Churt*, where they grow such fine *bennet-grass* seed. There was a moon; but there was also a hazy rain. I had heaths to go over, and I might go into quags. Wishing to execute my plan, however, I at last brought myself to quit a very comfortable turf-fire, and to set off in the rain, having bargained to give a man three shillings to guide me out to the northern foot of Hindhead. I took care to ascertain that my guide knew the road perfectly well; that is to say, I took care to ascertain it as far as I could, which was, indeed, no further than his word would go. Off we set, the guide mounted on his own or master's horse, and with a white smock frock, which enabled us to see him clearly. We trotted on pretty fast for about half an hour; and I perceived, not without some surprise, that the rain, which I knew to be coming from the *south*, met me full in the face, when it ought, according to my reckoning, to have beat upon my right cheek. I called to the guide repeatedly to ask him if he was *sure that he was right*, to which he always answered, "Oh! yes, sir, I know the road." I did not like this, "*I know the road.*" At last, after going about six miles in nearly a southern direction, the guide turned short to the left. That brought the rain upon my right cheek, and, though I could not very well account for the long stretch to the south, I thought that, at any rate, we were *now* in the right track; and, after going about a mile in this new direction, I began to ask the guide *how much further we had to go;* for I had got a pretty good soaking, and was rather impatient to see the foot of Hindhead. Just at this time, in raising my head and looking forward as I spoke to the guide, what should I see but a long, high, and steep *hanger* arising before us, the trees along the top of which I could easily distinguish! The fact was, we were just getting to the outside of the heath, and were on the

brow of a steep hill, which faced this hanging wood. The guide had begun to descend; and I had called to him to stop; for the hill was so steep, that, rain as it did and wet as my saddle must be, I got off my horse in order to walk down. But, now behold, the fellow discovered that he *had lost his way!*—Where we were I could not even guess. There was but one remedy, and that was to get back, if we could. I became guide now; and did as Mr. Western is advising the ministers to do, *retraced* my steps. We went back about half the way that we had come, when we saw two men, who showed us the way that we ought to go. At the end of about a mile, we fortunately found the turnpike-road; not, indeed, at the *foot*, but on the *tip-top* of that very Hindhead, on which I had so repeatedly *vowed* I would not go! We came out on the turnpike some hundred yards on the Liphook side of the buildings called *the Hut;* so that we had the whole of three miles of hill to come down at not much better than a foot pace, with a good pelting rain at our backs.

It is odd enough how differently one is affected by the same sight, under different circumstances. At the "*Holly Bush*" at Headley there was a room full of fellows in white smock frocks, drinking and smoking and talking, and I, who was then dry and warm, *moralised* within myself on their *folly* in spending their time in such a way. But when I got down from Hindhead to the public-house at Road Lane, with my skin soaking and my teeth chattering, I thought just such another group, whom I saw through the window sitting round a good fire with pipes in their mouths, the *wisest assembly* I had ever set my eyes on. A real *Collective Wisdom.* And I most solemnly declare, that I felt a greater veneration for them than I have ever felt even for the *Privy Council,* notwithstanding the Right Honourable Charles Wynn and the Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair belong to the latter.

It was now but a step to my friend's house, where a good fire and a change of clothes soon put all to rights, save and except the having come over Hindhead after all my resolutions. This mortifying circumstance; this having been *beaten,* lost the guide the *three shillings* that I had agreed to give him. "Either," said I, "you did not know the way well, or you did: if the former, it was dishonest in you to undertake to guide me: if the latter, you have wilfully led me miles out of my way." He grumbled; but off he went. He certainly deserved nothing; for he did not know the way, and he prevented some other man from earning and receiving the money. But had he not caused

me to *get upon Hindhead,* he would have had the three shillings. I had, at one time, got my hand in my pocket; but the thought of having been *beaten* pulled it out again.

Thus ended the most interesting day, as far as I know, that I ever passed in all my life. Hawkley-hangers, promontories, and stone-roads will always come into my mind when I see, or hear of, picturesque views. I forgot to mention that, in going from Hawkley to Greatham, the man who went to show me the way, told me at a certain fork, "that road goes to *Selborne.*" This put me in mind of a book, which was once recommended to me, but which I never saw, entitled *The History and Antiquities of Selborne* (or something of that sort), written, I think, by a parson of the name of *White,* brother of Mr. *White,* so long a bookseller in Fleet Street. This parson had, I think, the living of the parish of Selborne. The book was mentioned to me as a work of great curiosity and interest. But, at that time, the THING was biting *so very sharply* that one had no attention to bestow on antiquarian researches. Wheat at 39*s.* a quarter, and South-Down ewes at 12*s.* 6*d.* have so weakened the THING'S jaws and so filed down its teeth, that I shall now certainly read this book if I can get it. By the bye, if *all the parsons* had, for the last thirty years, employed their leisure time in writing the histories of their several parishes, instead of living, as many of them have, engaged in pursuits that I need not here name, neither their situation nor that of their flocks would, perhaps, have been the worse for it at this day.

25 *Nov.*

THURSLEY (SURREY).

In looking back into Hampshire, I see with pleasure the farmers bestirring themselves to get a county meeting called. There were, I was told, nearly five hundred names to a requisition, and those all of land-owners or occupiers.—Precisely what they mean to petition for I do not know; but (and now I address myself to you, Mr. Canning), if they do not petition *for a reform of the Parliament,* they will do worse than nothing. You, sir, have often told us that the House, however got together, "works well." Now, as I said in 1817, just before I went to America to get out of the reach of our friend, the *Old Doctor,* and to use my *long arm;* as I said then, in a letter addressed to Lord Grosvenor, so I say now, show me the inexpediency of reform, and I will hold my tongue. Show us, prove to us, that the House "works well," and I, for my part, give the matter

up. It is not the construction or the motions of a machine that I ever look at: all I look after is *the effect*. When, indeed, I find that the effect is deficient or evil, I look to the construction. And as I now see, and have for many years seen, evil effect, I seek a remedy in an alteration in the machine. There is now nobody, no, not a single man, out of the regions of Whitehall, who will pretend that the country can, without the risk of some great and terrible convulsion, go on, even for twelve months longer, unless there be a great change of some sort in the mode of managing the public affairs.

Could you see and hear what I have seen and heard during this Rural Ride, you would no longer say that the House "works well." Mrs. Canning and your children are dear to you; but, sir, not more dear than are to them the wives and children of, perhaps, two hundred thousand men, who, by the Acts of this same House, see those wives and children doomed to beggary, and to beggary, too, never thought of, never regarded as more likely than a blowing up of the earth or a falling of the sun. It was reserved for this "working well" House to make the firesides of farmers scenes of gloom. These firesides, in which I have always so delighted, I now approach with pain. I was, not long ago, sitting round the fire with as worthy and as industrious a man as all England contains. There was his son, about 19 years of age; two daughters from 15 to 18; and a little boy sitting on the father's knee. I knew, but not from him, that there was *a mortgage* on his farm. I was anxious to induce him *to sell without delay*. With this view I, in an hypothetical and roundabout way, approached *his case*, and at last I came to final consequences. The deep and deeper gloom on a countenance once so cheerful told me what was passing in his breast, when turning away my looks in order to seem not to perceive the effect of my words, I saw the eyes of his wife full of tears. She had made the application; and there were her children before her! And am I to be *banished for life* if I express what I felt upon this occasion! And does this House, then, "work well?" How many men of the most industrious, the most upright, the most exemplary, upon the face of the earth, have been, by this one Act of this House, driven to despair, ending in madness or self-murder, or both! Nay, how many scores! And yet are we to be banished for life, if we endeavour to show that this House does not "work well?"—However, banish or banish not, these facts are notorious: *the House* made all the *Loans* which constitute the debt: *the House* contracted

for the dead weight: *the House* put a stop to gold-payments in 1797: *the House* unanimously passed Peel's Bill. Here are *all* the causes of the ruin, the misery, the anguish, the despair, and the madness and self-murders. Here they are *all.* They have all been Acts of this House; and yet, we are to be banished if we say, in words suitable to the subject, that this House does not "*work well!*"

This one Act, I mean this *Banishment Act,* would be enough, with posterity, to characterise this House. When they read (and can believe what they read) that it actually passed a law to banish for life any one who should write, print, or publish anything having a *tendency* to bring it into *contempt;* when posterity shall read this, and believe it, they will want nothing more to enable them to say what sort of an assembly it was! It was delightful, too, that they should pass this law just after they had passed *Peel's Bill!* Oh, God! thou art *just!* As to *reform,* it *must come.* Let what else will happen, it must come. Whether before, or after, all the estates be transferred, I cannot say. But this I know very well; that the later it come, the *deeper* will it go.

I shall, of course, go on remarking, as occasion offers, upon what is done by and said in this present House; but I know that it can do nothing efficient for the relief of the country. I have seen some men of late, who seem to think that even a reform, enacted or begun by this House, would be an evil; and that it would be better to let the whole thing go on, and produce its natural consequence. I am not of this opinion: I am for a reform as soon as possible, even though it be not, at first, precisely what I could wish; because, if the debt blow up before the reform take place, confusion and uproar there must be; and I do not want to see confusion and uproar. I am for a reform of *some sort,* and *soon;* but when I say of *some sort,* I do not mean of Lord John Russell's sort; I do not mean a reform in the Lopez way. In short, what I want is to see the *men* changed. I want to see *other men* in the House; and as to *who* those other men should be, I really should not be very nice. I have seen the Tierneys, the Bankeses, the Wilberforces, the Michael Angelo Taylors, the Lambs, the Lowthers, the Davis Giddies, the Sir John Sebrights, the Sir Francis Burdetts, the Hobhouses, old or young, Whitbreads the same, the Lord Johns and the Lord Williams and the Lord Henries and the Lord Charleses, and, in short, all *the whole family;* I have seen them all there, all the same faces and names, all my lifetime; I

see that neither adjournment nor prorogation nor dissolution makes any change in *the men;* and caprice let it be if you like, I want to see a change *in the men.* These have done enough in all conscience; or at least, they have done enough to satisfy me. I want to see some fresh faces, and to hear a change of some sort or other in the sounds. A "*hear, hear,*" coming everlastingly from the same mouths, is what I, for my part, am tired of.

I am aware that this is not what the "*great reformers*" in the House mean. They mean, on the contrary, no such thing as a change of men. They mean that *Lopez* should sit there for ever; or, at least, till succeeded by a legitimate heir. I believe that Sir Francis Burdett, for instance, has not the smallest idea of an Act of Parliament ever being made without his assistance, if he chooses to assist, which is not very frequently the case. I believe that he looks upon a seat in the House as being his property; and that the other seat is, and ought to be, held as a sort of leasehold or copyhold under him. My idea of reform, therefore, my change of faces and of names and of sounds will appear quite horrible to him. However, I think the nation begins to be very much of my way of thinking; and this I am very sure of, that we shall never see that change in the management of affairs which we most of us want to see, unless there be a pretty complete change of men.

Some people will blame me for speaking out so broadly upon this subject. But I think it the best way to disguise nothing; to do what is *right;* to be sincere; and to let come what will.

GODALMING,
26 *to* 28 *November.*

I came here to meet my son, who was to return to London when we had done our business.—The turnips are pretty good all over the country, except upon the very thin soils on the chalk. At Thursley they are very good, and so they are upon all these nice light and good lands round about Godalming.

This is a very pretty country. You see few prettier spots than this. The chain of little hills that run along to the south and south-east of Godalming, and the soil, which is a good loam upon a sand-stone bottom, run down on the south side, into what is called the *Weald.* This Weald is a bed of clay, in which nothing grows well but oak trees. It is first the Weald of Surrey, and then the Weald of Sussex. It runs along on the

south of Dorking, Reigate, Bletchingley, Godstone, and then winds away down into Kent. In no part of it, as far as I have observed, do the oaks grow finer than between the sand-hill on the south of Godstone and a place called Fellbridge, where the county of Surrey terminates on the road to East Grinstead.

At Godalming we heard some account of a lawsuit between Mr. Holme Sumner and his tenant, Mr. Nash; but the particulars I must reserve till I have them in black and white.

In all parts of the country, I hear of landlords that begin to *squeak*, which is a certain proof that they begin to feel the bottom of their tenants' pockets. No man can pay rent, I mean any rent at all, except out of capital; or except under some peculiar circumstances, such as having a farm near a spot where the fund-holders are building houses. When I was in Hampshire, I heard of terrible breakings up in the Isle of Wight. They say that the general rout is very near at hand there. I heard of one farmer, who held a farm at seven hundred pounds a year, who paid his rent annually, and punctually, who had, of course, seven hundred pounds to pay to his landlord last Michaelmas; but who, before Michaelmas came, thrashed out and sold (the harvest being so early) the whole of his corn; sold off his stock, bit by bit; got the very goods out of his house, leaving only a bed and some trifling things; sailed with a fair wind over to France with his family; put his mother-in-law into the house to keep possession of the house and farm, and to prevent the landlord from entering upon the land for a year or better, unless he would pay to the mother-in-law a certain sum of money! Doubtless the landlord had already sucked away about three or four times seven hundred pounds from this farmer. He would not be able to enter upon his farm without a process that would cost him some money, and without the farm being pretty well stocked with thistles and docks, and perhaps laid half to common. Farmers on the coast opposite France are not so firmly bounden as those in the interior. Some hundreds of these will have carried their allegiance, their capital (what they have left), and their skill, to go and grease the fat sow, our old friends the Bourbons. I hear of a sharp, greedy, hungry shark of a landlord, who says that "some law must be passed;" that "Parliament must do something to prevent this!" There is a pretty fool for you! There is a great jackass (I beg the real jackass's pardon), to imagine that the people at Westminster can do anything to prevent the French from suffering people to come with their money to settle in France! This fool does not know,

perhaps, that there are members of Parliament that live in France more than they do in England. I have heard of one, who not only lives there, but carries on vineyards there, and is never absent from them, except when he comes over "to attend to his duties in Parliament." He perhaps sells his wine at the same time, and that being genuine, doubtless brings him a good price; so that the occupations harmonise together very well. The Isle of Wight must be rather peculiarly distressed; for it was the scene of monstrous expenditure. When the *pure* Whigs were in power, in 1806, it was proved to them and to the Parliament, that in several instances, *a barn* in the Isle of Wight was rented by the "envy of surrounding nations" for more money than the rest of the whole farm! These barns were wanted as *barracks;* and, indeed, such things were carried on in that island as never could have been carried on under anything that was not absolutely "the admiration of the world." These sweet pickings caused, doubtless, a great rise in the rent of the farms; so that, in this island, there is not only the depression of price, and a greater depression than anywhere else, but also the loss of the pickings, and these together leave the tenants but this simple choice, beggary or flight; and as most of them have had a pretty deal of capital, and will be likely to have some left as yet, they will, as they perceive the danger, naturally flee for succour to the Bourbons. This is, indeed, something new in the history of English agriculture; and were not Mr. Canning so positive to the contrary, one would almost imagine that the thing which has produced it does not work so very well. However, that gentleman seems resolved to prevent us, by his *King of Bohemia* and his two *Red Lions*, from having any change in this thing; and therefore the landlords, in the Isle of Wight, as well as elsewhere, must make the best of the matter.

November 29.

Went on to Guildford, where I slept. Everybody that has been from Godalming to Guildford, knows that there is hardly another such a pretty four miles in all England. The road is good; the soil is good; the houses are neat; the people are neat: the hills, the woods, the meadows, all are beautiful. Nothing wild and bold, to be sure, but exceedingly pretty; and it is almost impossible to ride along these four miles without feelings of pleasure, though you have rain for your companion, as it happened to be with me.

DORKING,
November 30.

I came over the high hill on the south of Guildford, and came down to Chilworth, and up the valley to Albury. I noticed, in my first Rural Ride, this beautiful valley, its hangers, its meadows, its hop-gardens, and its ponds. This valley of Chilworth has great variety, and is very pretty; but after seeing Hawkley, every other place loses in point of beauty and interest. This pretty valley of Chilworth has a run of water which comes out of the high hills, and which, occasionally, spreads into a pond; so that there is in fact a series of ponds connected by this run of water. This valley, which seems to have been created by a bountiful providence, as one of the choicest retreats of man; which seems formed for a scene of innocence and happiness, has been, by ungrateful man, so perverted as to make it instrumental in effecting two of the most damnable of purposes; in carrying into execution two of the most damnable inventions that ever sprang from the minds of men under the influence of the devil! namely, the making of *gunpowder* and of *bank-notes!* Here in this tranquil spot, where the nightingales are to be heard earlier and later in the year than in any other part of England; where the first bursting of the buds is seen in spring, where no rigour of seasons can ever be felt; where everything seems formed for precluding the very thought of wickedness; here has the devil fixed on as one of the seats of his grand manufactory; and perverse and ungrateful man not only lends him his aid, but lends it cheerfully! As to the gunpowder, indeed, we might get over that. In some cases that may be innocently, and, when it sends the lead at the hordes that support a tyrant, meritoriously employed. The alders and the willows, therefore, one can see, without so much regret, turned into powder by the waters of this valley; but, the *bank-notes!* To think that the springs which God has commanded to flow from the sides of these happy hills, for the comfort and the delight of man; to think that these springs should be perverted into means of spreading misery over a whole nation; and that, too, under the base and hypocritical pretence of promoting its *credit* and maintaining its *honour* and its *faith!* There was one circumstance, indeed, that served to mitigate the melancholy excited by these reflections; namely, that a part of these springs have, at times, assisted in turning rags into *Registers!* Somewhat cheered by the thought of this, but, still, in a more melancholy mood

than I had been for a long while, I rode on with my friend towards *Albury*, up the valley, the sand-hills on one side of us and the chalk-hills on the other. Albury is a little village consisting of a few houses, with a large house or two near it. At the end of the village we came to a park, which is the residence of Mr. Drummond. — Having heard a great deal of this park, and of the gardens, I wished very much to see them. My way to Dorking lay through Shire, and it went along on the outside of the park. I *guessed*, as the Yankees say, that there must be a way through the park to Shire; and I fell upon the scheme of going into the park as far as Mr. Drummond's house, and then asking his leave to go out at the other end of it. This scheme, though pretty barefaced, succeeded very well. It is true that I was aware that I had not a *Norman* to deal with; or I should not have ventured upon the experiment. I sent in word that, having got into the park, I should be exceedingly obliged to Mr. Drummond if he would let me go out of it on the side next to Shire. He not only granted this request, but, in the most obliging manner, permitted us to ride all about the park, and to see his gardens, which, without any exception, are, to my fancy, the prettiest in England; that is to say, that I ever saw in England.

They say that these gardens were laid out for one of the Howards, in the reign of Charles the Second, by Mr. Evelyn, who wrote the *Sylva*. The mansion-house, which is by no means magnificent, stands on a little flat by the side of the parish church, having a steep, but not lofty, hill rising up on the south side of it. It looks right across the gardens, which lie on the slope of a hill which runs along at about a quarter of a mile distant from the front of the house. The gardens, of course, lie facing the south. At the back of them, under the hill, is a high wall; and there is also a wall at each end, running from north to south. Between the house and the gardens there is a very beautiful run of water, with a sort of little wild narrow sedgy meadow. The gardens are separated from this by a hedge, running along from east to west. From this hedge there go up the hill, at right angles, several other hedges, which divide the land here into distinct gardens, or orchards. Along at the top of these there goes a yew hedge, or, rather, a row of small yew trees, the trunks of which are bare for about eight or ten feet high, and the tops of which form one solid head of about ten feet high, while the bottom branches come out on each side of the row about eight feet horizontally. This hedge, or row, is *a quarter of a mile long*. There is a nice hard sand-road under

this species of umbrella; and, summer and winter, here is a most delightful walk! Behind this row of yews there is a space, or garden (a quarter of a mile long you will observe), about thirty or forty feet wide, as nearly as I can recollect. At the back of this garden, and facing the yew-tree row, is a wall probably ten feet high, which forms the breastwork of a *terrace;* and it is this terrace which is the most beautiful thing that I ever saw in the gardening way. It is a quarter of a mile long, and, I believe, between thirty and forty feet wide; of the finest green sward, and as level as a die.

The wall, along at the back of this terrace, stands close against the hill, which you see with the trees and underwood upon it rising above the wall. So that here is the finest spot for fruit trees that can possibly be imagined. At both ends of this garden the trees in the park are lofty, and there are a pretty many of them. The hills on the south side of the mansion-house are covered with lofty trees, chiefly beeches and chestnut: so that a warmer, a more sheltered, spot than this, it seems to be impossible to imagine. Observe, too, how judicious it was to plant the row of yew trees at the distance which I have described from the wall which forms the breastwork of the terrace: that wall, as well as the wall at the back of the terrace, are covered with fruit trees, and the yew-tree row is just high enough to defend the former from winds, without injuring it by its shade. In the middle of the wall, at the back of the terrace, there is a recess, about thirty feet in front and twenty feet deep, and here is a *basin*, into which rises a spring coming out of the hill. The overflowings of this basin go under the terrace and down across the garden into the rivulet below. So that here is water at the top, across the middle, and along at the bottom of this garden. Take it altogether, this, certainly, is the prettiest garden that I ever beheld. There was taste and sound judgment at every step in the laying out of this place. Everywhere utility and convenience is combined with beauty. The terrace is by far the finest thing of the sort that I ever saw, and the whole thing altogether is a great compliment to the taste of the times in which it was formed. I know there are some ill-natured persons who will say that I want a revolution that would turn Mr. Drummond out of this place and put me into it. Such persons will hardly believe me, but upon my word I do not. From everything that I hear, Mr. Drummond is very worthy of possessing it himself, seeing that he is famed for his justice and his kindness *towards the labouring classes*, who, God

knows, have very few friends amongst the rich. If what I have heard be true, Mr. Drummond is singularly good in this way; for instead of hunting down an unfortunate creature who has exposed himself to the lash of the law; instead of regarding a crime committed as proof of an inherent disposition to commit crime; instead of rendering the poor creatures desperate by this species of *proscription*, and forcing them on to the *gallows*, merely because they have once merited the *Bridewell;* instead of this, which is the common practice throughout the country, he rather seeks for such unfortunate creatures to take them into his employ, and thus to reclaim them, and to make them repent of their former courses. If this be true, and I am credibly informed that it is, I know of no man in England so worthy of his estate. There may be others, to act in like manner; but I neither know nor have heard of any other. I had, indeed, heard of this, at Alresford in Hampshire; and, to say the truth, it was this circumstance, and this alone, which induced me to ask the favour of Mr. Drummond to go through his park. But, besides that Mr. Drummond is very worthy of his estate, what chance should I have of getting it if it came to a *scramble?* There are others who like pretty gardens, as well as I; and if the question were to be decided according to the law of the strongest, or, as the French call it, by the *droit du plus fort*, my chance would be but a very poor one. The truth is, that you hear nothing but *fool's* talk about revolutions *made for the purpose of getting possession of people's property.* They never have their spring in any such motives. They are *caused by governments themselves;* and though they do sometimes cause a new distribution of property to a certain extent, there never was, perhaps, one single man in this world that had anything to do, worth speaking of, in the causing of a revolution, that did it with any such view. But what a strange thing it is, that there should be men at this time to fear *the loss of estates* as the consequence of a convulsive revolution; at this time, when the estates are actually passing away from the owners before their eyes, and that, too, in consequence of measures which have been adopted for what has been called the *preservation of property*, against the designs of Jacobins and Radicals! Mr. Drummond has, I dare say, the means of preventing his estate from being actually taken away from him; but I am quite certain that that estate, except as a place to live at, is not worth to him, at this moment, one single farthing. What could a revolution do for him *more* than this? If one could suppose the power of

doing what they like placed in the hands of the labouring classes; if one could suppose such a thing as this, which never was yet seen; if one could suppose anything so monstrous as that of a revolution that would leave no public authority anywhere; even in such a case, it is against nature to suppose that the people would come and turn him out of his house and leave him without food; and yet that they must do, to make him, as a landholder, worse off than he is; or, at least, worse off than he must be in a very short time. I saw, in the gardens at Albury Park, what I never saw before in all my life; that is, some plants of the *American Cranberry*. I never saw them in America; for there they grow in those swamps into which I never happened to go at the time of their bearing fruit. I may have seen the plant, but I do not know that I ever did. Here it not only grows, but bears; and there are still some cranberries on the plants now. I tasted them, and they appeared to me to have just the same taste as those in America. They grew in a long bed near the stream of water which I have spoken about, and therefore it is clear that they may be cultivated with great ease in this country. The road, through Shire along to Dorking, runs up the valley between the chalk-hills and the sand-hills; the chalk to our left and the sand to our right. This is called the Home Dale. It begins at Reigate and terminates at Shalford Common, down below Chilworth.

REIGATE,
December 1.

I set off this morning with an intention to go across the weald to Worth; but the red rising of the sun and the other appearances of the morning admonished me to keep upon *high ground;* so I crossed the mole, went along under Boxhill, through Betchworth and Buckland, and got to this place just at the beginning of a day of as heavy rain, and as boisterous wind, as I think I have ever known in England. *In* one rotten borough, one of the most rotten too, and with another still more rotten *up upon the hill,* in Reigate, and close by Gatton, how can I help reflecting, how can my mind be otherwise than filled with reflections on the marvellous deeds of the Collective Wisdom of the nation! At present, however (for I want to get to bed), I will notice only one of those deeds, and that one yet "*incohete,*" a word which Mr. Canning seems to have coined for the *nonce* (which is not a coined word), when Lord Castlereagh (who cut his throat the other day) was accused of making

a *swap*, as the horse-jockeys call it, of a *writer-ship* against a *seat*. It is *barter, truck, change, dicker*, as the Yankees call it, but as our horse-jockeys call it, *swap*, or *chop*. The case was this: the chop had been *begun;* it had been entered on; but had not been completed; just as two jockeys may have *agreed* on a chop and yet not actually *delivered* the horses to one another. Therefore, Mr. Canning said that the act was *incohete*, which means without cohesion, without consequence. Whereupon the House entered on its Journals a solemn resolution, that it was its duty to *watch over its purity with the greatest care;* but that the said act being "*incohete*," the House did not think it necessary to proceed any farther in the matter! It unfortunately happened, however, that in a very few days afterwards, that is to say on the memorable eleventh of June 1809, Mr. Maddocks accused the very same Castlereagh of having actually sold and delivered a seat to Quintin Dick for three thousand pounds. The accuser said he was ready to bring to the bar proof of the fact; and he moved that he might be permitted so to do. Now then what did Mr. Canning say? Why, he said that the reformers were a low degraded crew, and he called upon the House to make a stand against democratical encroachment! And the House did not listen to him, surely? Yes, but it did! And it voted by a thundering majority, that it would not hear the evidence. And this vote was, by the leader of the Whigs, justified upon the ground that the deed complained of by Mr. Maddocks was according to a practice which was as notorious as *the sun at noonday*. So much for the word "*incohete*," which has led me into this long digression. The deed, or achievement, of which I am now about to speak, is not the Marriage Act; for that is *cohete* enough: that has had plenty of consequences. It is the New Turnpike Act, which though passed, is, as yet, "incohete;" and is not to be cohete for some time yet to come. I hope it will become *cohete* during the time that Parliament is sitting, for otherwise it will have *cohesion* pretty nearly equal to that of the Marriage Act. In the first place this Act makes *chalk* and *lime* everywhere liable to turnpike duty, which in many cases they were not before. This is a monstrous oppression upon the owners and occupiers of clay lands; and comes just at the time, too, when they are upon the point, many of them, of being driven out of cultivation, or thrown up to the parish, by other burdens. But it is the provision with regard to the *wheels* which will create the greatest injury, distress and confusion. The wheels which this law orders

to be used on turnpike-roads, on pain of enormous toll, cannot be used on the *cross-roads* throughout more than nine-tenths of the kingdom. To make these roads and the *drove-lanes* (the private roads of farms) fit for the cylindrical wheels described in this Bill, would cost a pound an acre, upon an average, upon all the land in England, and especially in the counties where the land is poorest. It would, in those counties, cost a tenth part of the worth of the fee-simple of the land. And this is enacted, too, at a time when the wagons, the carts, and all the dead stock of a farm; when the whole is falling into a state of irrepair; when all is actually perishing for want of means in the farmer to keep it in repair! This is the time that the Lord Johns and the Lord Henries and the rest of that honourable body have thought proper to enact that the whole of the farmers in England shall have new wheels to their wagons and carts, or that they shall be punished by the payment of heavier tolls! It is useless, perhaps, to say anything about the matter; but I could not help noticing a thing which has created such a general alarm amongst the farmers in every part of the country where I have recently been.

WORTH (SUSSEX),
December 2.

I set off from Reigate this morning, and after a pleasant ride of ten miles, got here to breakfast.—Here, as everywhere else, the farmers appear to think that their last hour is approaching.—Mr. *Charles B——'s farms;* I believe it is *Sir* Charles B——; and I should be sorry to withhold from him his title, though, being said to be a very good sort of a man, he might, perhaps, be able to shift without it: this gentleman's farms are subject of conversation here. The matter is curious in itself, and very well worthy of attention, as illustrative of the present state of things. These farms were, last year, taken into hand by the owner. This was stated in the public papers about a twelvemonth ago. It was said that his tenants would not take the farms again at the rent which he wished to have, and that therefore he took the farms into hand. These farms lie somewhere down in the west of Sussex. In the month of August last I saw (and I think in one of the Brighton newspapers) a paragraph stating that Mr. B——, who had taken his farms into hand the Michaelmas before, had already got in his harvest, and that he had had excellent crops! This was a sort of bragging paragraph; and there was an observation added, which implied that the farmers were great fools for not having

taken the farms! We now hear that Mr. B—— has let his farms. But, now, mark how he has let them. The custom in Sussex is this; when a tenant quits a farm, he receives payment, according to valuation, for what are called the dressings, the half-dressings, for seeds and lays, and for the growth of underwood in coppices and hedgerows; for the dung in the yards; and, in short, for whatever he leaves behind him, which, if he had staid, would have been of value to him. The dressings and half-dressings include, not only the manure that has been recently put into the land, but also the summer ploughings; and, in short, everything which has been done to the land, and the benefit of which has not been taken out again by the farmer. This is a good custom; because it ensures good tillage to the land. It ensures, also, a fair start to the new tenant; but then, observe, it requires some money, which the new tenant must pay down before he can begin, and therefore this custom presumes a pretty deal of capital to be possessed by farmers. Bearing *these* general remarks in mind, we shall see, in a moment, the case of Mr. B——. If my information be correct, he has let his farms: he has found tenants for his farms; but not tenants to pay him anything for dressings, half-dressings, and the rest. He was obliged to pay the out-going tenants for these things. Mind that! He was obliged to pay them according to the custom of the country; but he has got nothing of this sort from his in-coming tenants! It must be a poor farm, indeed, where the valuation does not amount to some hundreds of pounds. So that here is a pretty sum sunk by Mr. B——; and yet even on conditions like these, he has, I dare say, been glad to get his farms off his hands. There can be very little security for the payment of rent where the tenant pays no in-coming; but even if he get no rent at all, Mr. B—— has done well to get his farms off his hands. Now, do I wish to insinuate that Mr. B—— asked too much for his farms last year, and that he wished to squeeze the last shilling out of his farmers? By no means. He bears the character of a mild, just, and very considerate man, by no means greedy, but the contrary. A man very much beloved by his tenants; or, at least, deserving it. But the truth is, he could not believe it possible that his farms were so much fallen in value. He could not believe it possible that his estate had been taken away from him by the leger-demain of the Pitt-system, which he had been supporting all his life: so that he thought, and very naturally thought, that his old tenants were endeavouring to impose upon him, and

therefore resolved to take his farms into hand. Experience has shown him that farms yield no rent, in the hands of the landlord at least; and therefore he has put them into the hands of other people. Mr. B——, like Mr. Western, has not read the *Register*. If he had, he would have taken any trifle from his old tenants, rather than let them go. But he surely might have read the speech of his neighbour and friend Mr. Huskisson, made in the House of Commons in 1814, in which that gentleman said that, with wheat at less than double the price that it bore before the war, it would be impossible for any rent at all to be paid. Mr. B—— might have read this; and he might, having so many opportunities, have asked Mr. Huskisson for an explanation of it. This gentleman is now a great advocate for *national faith;* but may not Mr. B—— ask him whether there be no faith to be kept with the landlord? However, if I am not deceived, Mr. B—— or Sir Charles B—— (for I really do not know which it is) is a member of the Collective! If this be the case he has had something to do with the thing himself; and he must muster up as much as he can of that "patience" which is so strongly recommended by our great new state doctor, Mr. Canning.

I cannot conclude my remarks on this Rural Ride without noticing the new sort of language that I hear everywhere made use of with regard to the parsons, but which language I do not care to repeat. These men may say that I keep company with none but those who utter "sedition and blasphemy;" and if they do say so, there is just as much veracity in their words as I believe there to be charity and sincerity in the hearts of the greater part of them. One thing is certain; indeed, two things: the first is, that almost the whole of the persons that I have conversed with are farmers; and the second is, that they are in this respect all of one mind! It was my intention, at one time, to go along the south of Hampshire to Portsmouth, Fareham, Botley, Southampton, and across the New Forest into Dorsetshire. My affairs made me turn from Hambledon this way; but I had an opportunity of hearing something about the neighbourhood of Botley. Take any one considerable circle where you know everybody, and the condition of that circle will teach you how to judge pretty correctly of the condition of every other part of the country. I asked about the farmers of my old neighbourhood, one by one; and the answers I received only tended to confirm me in the opinion, that the whole race will be destroyed; and that a new race will come, and enter

upon farms without capital and without stock; be a sort of bailiffs to the landlord for a while, and then, if this system go on, bailiffs to the government as trustees for the fundholders. If the account which I have received of Mr. B——'s new mode of letting be true, here is one step further than has been before taken. In all probability the stock upon the farms belongs to him, to be paid for when the tenant can pay for it. Who does not see to what this tends? The man must be blind indeed who cannot see confiscation here; and can he be much less than blind, if he imagine that relief is to be obtained by the *patience* recommended by Mr. Canning?

Thus, sir, have I led you about the country. All sorts of things have I talked of, to be sure; but there are very few of these things which have not their interest of one sort or another. At the end of a hundred miles or two of travelling, stopping here and there; talking freely with everybody. Hearing what gentlemen, farmers, tradesmen, journeymen, labourers, women, girls, boys, and all have to say; reasoning with some, laughing with others, and observing all that passes; and especially if your manner be such as to remove every kind of reserve from every class; at the end of a tramp like this, you get impressed upon your mind a true picture, not only of the state of the country, but of the state of the people's minds throughout the country. And, sir, whether you believe me or not, I have to tell you, that it is my decided opinion that the people, high and low, with one unanimous voice, except where they live upon the taxes, *impute their calamities to the House of Commons.* Whether they be right or wrong is not so much the question, in this case. That such is the fact I am certain; and, having no power to make any change myself, I must leave the making or the refusing of the change to those who have the power. I repeat, and with perfect sincerity, that it would give me as much pain as it would give to any man in England, to see a change *in the form of the government.* With *King, Lords,* and *Commons,* this nation enjoyed many ages of happiness and of glory. *Without Commons,* my opinion is, it never can again see anything but misery and shame; and when I say Commons I *mean* Commons, and, by Commons, I mean men elected by the free voice of the untitled and unprivileged part of the people, who, in fact as well as in law, are the Commons of England.

I am, sir, you most obedient and most humble servant,

WM. COBBETT.

JOURNAL

RIDE FROM KENSINGTON TO WORTH, IN SUSSEX

Monday, May 5, 1823.

FROM London to Reigate, through Sutton, is about as villainous a tract as England contains. The soil is a mixture of gravel and clay, with big yellow stones in it, sure sign of really bad land. Before you descend the hill to go into Reigate, you pass *Gatton* ("Gatton and Old Sarum"), which is a very rascally spot of earth. The trees are here a week later than they are at Tooting. At Reigate they are (in order to save a few hundred yards length of road) cutting through a hill. They have lowered a little hill on the London side of Sutton. Thus is the money of the country actually thrown away: the produce of labour is taken from the industrious, and given to the idlers. Mark the process; the town of Brighton, in Sussex, 50 miles from the Wen, is on the seaside, and is thought by the stock-jobbers to afford a *salubrious air*. It is so situated that a coach, which leaves it not very early in the morning, reaches London by noon; and, starting to go back in two hours and a half afterwards, reaches Brighton not very late at night. Great parcels of stock-jobbers stay at Brighton with the women and children. They skip backward and forward on the coaches, and actually carry on stock-jobbing, in 'Change Alley, though they reside at Brighton. This place is, besides, a place of great resort with the *whiskered* gentry. There are not less than about twenty coaches that leave the Wen every day for this place; and there being three or four different roads, there is a great rivalship for the custom. This sets the people to work to shorten and to level the roads; and here you see hundreds of men and horses constantly at work to make pleasant and quick travelling for the jews and jobbers. The jews and jobbers pay the turnpikes, to be sure; but they get the money from the land and labourer. They drain these, from John-a-Groat's House to the Land's End, and they lay out some of the money on the Brighton roads! "Vast *improvements*, ma'am!" as Mrs. *Scrip* said to Mrs. *Omnium*, in speaking of the new enclosures on the villainous

heaths of Bagshot and Windsor.—Now, some will say, "Well, it is only a change from hand to hand." Very true, and if Daddy Coke of Norfolk like the change, I know not why I should dislike it. More and more new houses are building as you leave the Wen to come on this road. *Whence come* the means of building these new houses and keeping the inhabitants? Do they come out of *trade* and *commerce?* Oh, no! they come from *the land;* but if Daddy Coke like this, what has any one else to do with it? Daddy Coke and Lord Milton like "national faith;" it would be a pity to disappoint their liking. The best of this is, it will bring *down to the very dirt;* it will bring down their faces to the very earth, and fill their mouths full of sand; it will thus pull down a set of the basest lick-spittles of power and the most intolerable tyrants towards their inferiors in wealth, that the sun ever shone on. It is time that these degenerate dogs were swept away at any rate. The blackthorns are in full bloom, and make a grand show. When you quit Reigate to go towards Crawley, you enter on what is called the *Weald of Surrey.* It is a level country, and the soil a very, very strong loam, with clay beneath to a great depth. The fields are small, and about a third of the land covered with oak-woods and coppice-woods. This is a country of wheat and beans; the latter of which are about three inches high, the former about seven, and both looking very well. I did not see a field of bad-looking wheat from Reigate Hill foot to Crawley, nor from Crawley across to this place, where, though the whole country is but poorish, the wheat looks very well; and if this weather hold about twelve days, we shall recover the lost time. They have been stripping trees (taking the bark off) about five or six days. The nightingales sing very much, which is a sign of warm weather. The house-martins and the swallows are come in abundance; and they seldom do come until the weather be set in for mild.

Wednesday, 7 May.

The weather is very fine and warm; the leaves of the *Oaks* are coming out very fast: some of the trees are nearly in half-leaf. The *Birches* are out in leaf. I do not think that I ever saw the wheat look, take it all together, so well as it does at this time. I see, in the stiff land, no signs of worm or slug. The winter, which destroyed so many turnips, must, at any rate, have destroyed these mischievous things. The oats look well. The barley is very young; but I do not see anything amiss with regard to it.—The land between this place and Reigate is stiff.

How the corn may be, in other places, I know not; but, in coming down, I met with a farmer of Bedfordshire, who said that the wheat looked very well in that county; which is not a county of clay, like the Weald of Surrey. I saw a Southdown farmer, who told me that the wheat is good there, and that is a fine corn-country. The bloom of the fruit trees is the finest I ever saw in England. The pear-bloom is, at a distance, like that of the *Gueldre Rose;* so large and bold are the bunches. The plum is equally fine; and even the blackthorn (which is the hedge-plum) has a bloom finer than I ever saw it have before. It is rather *early* to offer any opinion as to the crop of corn; but if I were compelled to bet upon it, I would bet upon a good crop. Frosts frequently come after this time; and, if they come in May, they cause "things to come about" very fast. But if we have no more frosts: in short, if we have, after this, a good summer, we shall have a fine laugh at the Quakers' and the Jews' press. Fifteen days' sun will bring *things about* in reality. The wages of labour, in the country, have taken a rise, and the poor-rates an increase, since first of March. I am glad to hear that the *Straw Bonnet* affair has excited a good deal of attention. In answer to applications upon the subject, I have to observe, that all the information on the subject will be published in the first week of June. Specimens of the *straw* and *plat* will then be to be seen at No. 183, Fleet Street.

FROM THE [LONDON] WEN ACROSS SURREY, ACROSS THE WEST OF SUSSEX, AND INTO THE SOUTH-EAST OF HAMPSHIRE

REIGATE (SURREY),
Saturday, 26 *July*, 1823.

CAME from the Wen, through Croydon. It rained nearly all the way. The corn is good. A great deal of straw. The barley very fine; but all are backward; and, if this weather continue much longer, there must be that "heavenly blight" for which the wise friends of "social order" are so fervently praying. But if the wet now cease, or cease soon, what is to become of the "poor souls of farmers" God only knows! In one article the wishes of our wise government appear to have been gratified to the utmost; and that, too, without the aid of any express form of prayer. I allude to the hops, of which, it is said, that there will be, according to all appearance, none at all! Bravo! Courage, my Lord Liverpool! This article, at any rate, will not choak us, will not distress us, will not make us miserable by "over-production!"—The other day a gentleman (and a man of general good sense too) said to me: "What a deal of wet we have: what do you think of the weather *now?*"—"More rain," said I. "D—n those farmers," said he, "what luck they have! They will be as rich as Jews!"—Incredible as this may seem, it is a fact. But, indeed, there is no folly, if it relate to these matters, which is, nowadays, incredible. The hop affair is a pretty good illustration of the doctrine of "relief" from "diminished production." Mr. Ricardo may now call upon any of the hop-planters for proof of the correctness of his notions. They are ruined, for the greater part, if their all be embarked in hops. How are they to pay rent? I saw a planter, the other day, who sold his hops (Kentish) last fall for sixty shillings a hundred. The same hops will now fetch the owner of them eight pounds, or a hundred and sixty shillings.

Thus the *Quaker* gets rich, and the poor devil of a farmer is squeezed into a gaol. The *Quakers* carry on the far greater part of this work. They are, as to the products of the earth, what the *Jews* are as to gold and silver. How they profit, or,

rather, the degree in which they profit, at the expense of those who own and those who till the land, may be guessed at if we look at their immense worth, and if we, at the same time, reflect that they never work. Here is a sect of non-labourers. One would think that their religion bound them under a curse not to work. Some part of the people of all other sects work; sweat at work; do something that is useful to other people; but here is a sect of buyers and sellers. They make nothing; they cause nothing to come; they breed as well as other sects; but they make none of the raiment or houses, and cause none of the food to come. In order to justify some measure for paring the nails of this grasping sect, it is enough to say of them, which we may with perfect truth, that, if all the other sects were to act like them, *the community must perish.* This is quite enough to say of this sect, of the monstrous privileges of whom we shall, I hope, one of these days, see an end. If I had the dealing with them, I would soon teach them to use the *spade* and the *plough*, and the *musket* too when necessary.

The rye, along the roadside, is ripe enough; and some of it is reaped and in shock. At Mearstam there is a field of cabbages, which, I was told, belonged to Colonel Joliffe. They appear to be early Yorks, and look very well. The rows seem to be about eighteen inches apart. There may be from 15,000 to 20,000 plants to the acre; and I dare say that they will weigh three pounds each, or more. I know of no crop of cattle food equal to this. If they be early Yorks, they will be in perfection in October, just when the grass is almost gone. No five acres of common grass land will, during the year, yield cattle food equal, either in quantity or quality, to what one acre of land, in early Yorks, will produce during three months.

WORTH (SUSSEX),
Wednesday, 30 *July*.

Worth is ten miles from Reigate on the Brighton road, which goes through Horley. Reigate has the Surrey chalk hills close to it on the north, and sand hills along on its south, and nearly close to it also. As soon as you are over the sand hills, you come into a country of *deep* clay; and this is called the *Weald* of Surrey. This Weald winds away round, towards the west into Sussex, and towards the east into Kent. In this part of Surrey, it is about eight miles wide, from north to south, and ends just as you enter the parish of Worth, which is the first

parish (in this part) in the county of Sussex. All across the Weald (the strong and stiff clays) the corn looks very well. I found it looking well from the Wen to Reigate, on the villainous spewy soil between the Wen and Croydon; on the chalk from Croydon to near Reigate; on the loam, sand and chalk (for there are all three) in the valley of Reigate; but not quite so well on the sand. On the clay all the corn looks well. The wheat, where it has begun to die, is dying of a good colour, not black, nor in any way that indicates blight. It is, however, all backward. Some few fields of white wheat are changing colour; but for the greater part it is quite green; and though a sudden change of weather might make a great alteration in a short time, it does appear that the harvest must be later than usual. When I say this, however, I by no means wish to be understood as saying, that it must be so late as to be injurious to the crop. In 1816, I saw a barleyrick making in November. In 1821, I saw wheat uncut, in Suffolk, in October. If we were now to have good, bright, hot weather, for as long a time as we have had wet, the whole of the corn, in these southern counties, would be housed, and great part of it threshed out, by the 10th of September. So that all depends on the weather, which appears to be clearing up in spite of Saint Swithin. This saint's birthday is the 15th of July; and it is said that, if rain fall on his birthday, it will fall on *forty days* successively. But, I believe, that you reckon retrospectively as well as prospectively; and if this be the case, we may, this time, escape the extreme unction; for it began to rain on the 26th of June; so that it rained 19 days before the 15th of July; and as it has rained 16 days since, it has rained, in the whole, 35 days, and, of course, five days more will satisfy this wet soul of a saint. Let him take his five days; and there will be plenty of time for us to have wheat at four shillings a bushel. But if the saint will give us no credit for the 19 days, and will insist upon his forty daily drenchings *after* the fifteenth of July; if he will have such a soaking as this at the celebration of the anniversary of his birth, let us hope that he is prepared with a miracle for feeding us, and with a still more potent miracle for keeping the farmers from riding over us, filled, as Lord Liverpool thinks their pockets will be, by the annihilation of their crops!

The upland meadow grass is, a great deal of it, not cut yet, along the Weald. So that, in these parts, there has not been a great deal of hay spoiled. The clover hay was got in very well: and only a small part of the meadow hay has been spoiled

in this part of the country. This is not the case, however, in other parts, where the grass was forwarder, and where it was cut before the rain came. Upon the whole, however, much hay does not appear to have been spoiled as yet. The farmers along here, have, most of them, begun to cut to-day. This has been a fine day; and it is clear that they expect it to continue. I saw but two pieces of swedish turnips between the Wen and Reigate, but one at Reigate, and but one between Reigate and Worth. During a like distance, in Norfolk or Suffolk, you would see two or three hundred fields of this sort of root. Those that I do see here, look well. The white turnips are just up, or just sown, though there are some which have rough leaves already. This Weald is, indeed, not much of land for turnips! but from what I see here, and from what I know of the weather, I think that the turnips must be generally good. The after-grass is surprisingly fine. The lands, which have had hay cut and carried from them, are, I think, more *beautiful* than I ever saw them before. It should, however, always be borne in mind, that this *beautiful* grass is by no means the *best.* An acre of this grass will not make a quarter part so much butter as an acre of rusty-looking pasture, made rusty by the rays of the sun. Sheep on the commons *die* of the *beautiful* grass produced by long-continued rains at this time of the year. Even geese, hardy as they are, die from the same cause. The rain will give quantity, but without sun the quality must be poor at the best. The woods have not shot much this year. The cold winds, the frosts, that we had up to midsummer, prevented the trees from growing much. They are beginning to shoot now; but the wood must be imperfectly ripened.

I met, at Worth, a beggar who told me, in consequence of my asking where he belonged, that he was born in South Carolina. I found, at last, that he was born in the English army, during the American rebel-war; that he became a soldier himself; and that it had been his fate to serve under the Duke of York, in Holland; under General Whitelock, at Buenos Ayres; under Sir John Moore, at Corunna; and under "the Greatest Captain," at Talavera! This poor fellow did not seem to be at all aware that, in the last case, he partook in *a victory!* He had never before heard of its being a victory. He, poor fool, thought that it was a *defeat.* "Why," said he, "we *ran away,* sir." Oh, yes! said I, and so you did afterwards, perhaps, in Portugal, when Massena was at your heels; but it is only in certain cases that running away is a mark of being defeated; or, rather, it is

only with certain commanders. A matter of much more interest to us, however, is, that the wars for "social order," not forgetting Gatton and Old Sarum, have filled the country with beggars, who have been, or who pretend to have been, soldiers and sailors. For want of looking well into this matter, many good and just, and even sensible men are led to give to these army and navy beggars what they refuse to others. But if reason were consulted, she would ask what pretensions these have to a preference? She would see in them men who had become soliders or sailors because they wished to live without that labour by which other men are content to get their bread. She would ask the soldier beggar whether he did not voluntarily engage to perform services such as were performed at Manchester; and if she pressed him for *the motive* to this engagement, could he assign any motive other than that of wishing to live without work upon the fruit of the work of other men? And why should reason not be listened to? Why should she not be consulted in every such case? And, if she were consulted, which would she tell you was the most worthy of your compassion, the man, who, no matter from what cause, is become a beggar after forty years spent in the raising of food and raiment for others as well as for himself; or the man who, no matter again from what cause, is become a beggar after forty years living upon the labour of others, and, during the greater part of which time, he has been living in a barrack, there kept for purposes explained by Lord Palmerston, and always in readiness to answer those purposes? As to not giving to beggars, I think there is a law against giving! However, give to them people will, as long as they ask. Remove the *cause* of the beggary and we shall see no more beggars; but as long as there are *boroughmongers*, there will be beggars enough.

HORSHAM (SUSSEX),
Thursday, 31 *July*.

I left Worth this afternoon about 5 o'clock, and am got here to sleep, intending to set off for Petworth in the morning, with a view of crossing the South Downs and then going into Hampshire through Havant, and along at the southern foot of Portsdown Hill, where I shall see the earliest corn in England. From Worth you come to Crawley along some pretty good land; you then turn to the left and go two miles along the road from the Wen to Brighton; then you turn to the right, and go over

six of the worst miles in England, which miles terminate but a few hundred yards before you enter Horsham. The first two of these miserable miles go through the estate of Lord Erskine. It was a bare heath with here and there, in the better parts of it, some scrubby birch. It has been, in part, planted with fir-trees, which are as ugly as the heath was: and, in short, it is a most villainous tract. After quitting it, you enter a forest; but a most miserable one; and this is followed by a large common, now enclosed, cut up, disfigured, spoiled, and the labourers all driven from its skirts. I have seldom travelled over eight miles so well calculated to fill the mind with painful reflections. The ride has, however, this in it: that the ground *is* pretty much elevated, and enables you to look about you. You see the Surrey hills away to the north; Hindhead and Blackdown to the north-west and west; and the South Downs from the west to the east. The sun was shining upon all these, though it was cloudy where I was. The soil is a poor, miserable, clayey-looking sand, with a sort of sandstone underneath. When you get down into this town, you are again in the Weald of Sussex. I believe that *Weald* meant *clay*, or low, wet, stiff land. This is a very nice, solid, country town. Very clean, as all the towns in Sussex are. The people very clean. The Sussex women are very nice in their dress and in their houses. The men and boys wear smock-frocks more than they do in some counties. When country people do not they always look dirty and comfortless. This has been a pretty good day; but there was a little rain in the afternoon; so that St. Swithin keeps on as yet, at any rate. The hay has been spoiled here, in cases where it has been cut; but a great deal of it is not yet cut. I speak of the meadows; for the clover-hay was all well got in. The grass, which is not cut, is receiving great injury. It is, in fact, in many cases, rotting upon the ground. As to corn, from Crawley to Horsham, there is none worth speaking of. What there is is very good, in general, considering the quality of the soil. It is about as backward as at Worth: the barley and oats green, and the wheat beginning to change colour.

BILLINGSHURST (SUSSEX),
Friday Morning, 1 *Aug.*

This village is 7 miles from Horsham, and I got here to breakfast about seven o'clock. A very pretty village, and a very nice breakfast, in a very neat little parlour of a very decent public-

house. The landlady sent her son to get me some cream, and he was just such a chap as I was at his age, and dressed just in the same sort of way, his main garment being a blue smock-frock, faded from wear, and mended with pieces of *new* stuff, and, of course, not faded. The sight of this smock-frock brought to my recollection many things very dear to me. This boy will, I dare say, perform his part at Billingshurst, or at some place not far from it. If accident had not taken me from a similar scene, how many villains and fools, who have been well teased and tormented, would have slept in peace at night, and have fearlessly swaggered about by day! When I look at this little chap; at his smock-frock, his nailed shoes, and his clean, plain, and coarse shirt, I ask myself, will anything, I wonder, ever send this chap across the ocean to tackle the base, corrupt, perjured Republican judges of Pennsylvania? Will this little lively, but, at the same time, simple boy, ever become the terror of villains and hypocrites across the Atlantic? What a chain of strange circumstances there must be to lead this boy to thwart a miscreant tyrant like Mackeen, the chief justice and afterwards governor of Pennsylvania, and to expose the corruptions of the band of rascals, called a "Senate and a House of Representatives," at Harrisburgh, in that state!

I was afraid of rain, and got on as fast as I could: that is to say, as fast as my own diligence could help me on; for as to my horse, he is to go only *so fast*. However, I had no rain; and got to Petworth, nine miles further, by about ten o'clock.

PETWORTH (SUSSEX),
Friday Evening, 1 *Aug.*

No rain, until just at sunset, and then very little. I must now look back. From Horsham to within a few miles of Petworth is in the Weald of Sussex; stiff land, small fields, broad hedgerows, and, invariably, thickly planted with fine, growing oak trees. The corn here consists chiefly of wheat and oats. There are some bean-fields, and some few fields of peas; but very little barley along here. The corn is very good all along the Weald; backward; the wheat almost green; the oats quite green; but, late as it is, I see no blight; and the farmers tell me that there is no blight. There may be yet, however; and, therefore, our government, our "*paternal* government," so anxious to prevent "over production," need not *despair*, as yet, at any rate. The beans in the Weald are

not very good. They got lousy before the wet came; and it came rather too late to make them recover what they had lost. What peas there are look well. Along here the wheat, in general, may be fit to cut in about 16 days' time; some sooner; but some later, for some is perfectly green. No swedish turnips all along this country. The white turnips are just up, coming up, or just sown. The farmers are laying out lime upon the wheat fallows, and this is the universal practice of the country. I see very few sheep. There are a good many orchards along in the Weald, and they have some apples this year; but, in general, not many. The apple trees are planted very thickly, and, of course, they are small; but they appear healthy in general; and, in some places, there is a good deal of fruit, even this year. As you approach Petworth, the ground rises and the soil grows lighter. There is a hill which I came over, about two miles from Petworth, whence I had a clear view of the Surrey chalk-hills, Leith Hill, Hindhead, Blackdown, and of the South Downs, towards one part of which I was advancing. The pigs along here are all black, thin-haired, and of precisely the same sort of those that I took from England to Long Island, and with which I pretty well stocked the American States. By the by, the trip which Old Sidmouth and crew gave me to America was attended with some interesting consequences; amongst which were the introducing of the Sussex pigs into the American farm-yards; the introduction of the swedish turnip into the American fields; the introduction of American apple-trees into England; and the introduction of the making, in England, of the straw plat, to supplant the Italian; for had my son not been in America, this last would not have taken place; and in America he would not have been, had it not been for Old Sidmouth and crew. One thing more, and that is of more importance than all the rest, Peel's Bill arose out of the "puff-out" Registers; these arose out of the trip to Long Island; and out of Peel's Bill has arisen the best bothering that the wigs of the boroughmongers ever received, which bothering will end in the destruction of the boroughmongering. It is curious, and very *useful*, thus to trace events to their causes.

Soon after quitting Billingshurst I crossed the river Arun, which has a canal running alongside of it. At this there are large timber and coal yards, and kilns for lime. This appears to be a grand receiving and distributing place. The river goes down to Arundale, and, together with the valley that it runs through, gives the town its name. This valley, which is very

pretty, and which winds about a good deal, is the dale of the Arun: and the town is the town of the Arun-dale. To-day, near a place called Westborough Green, I saw a woman bleaching her home-spun and home-woven linen. I have not seen such a thing before, since I left Long Island. There, and, indeed, all over the American States, north of Maryland, and especially in the New England States, almost the whole of both linen and woollen, used in the country, and a large part of that used in towns, is made in the farm-houses. There are thousands and thousands of families who never use either, except of their own making. All but the weaving is done by the family. There is a loom in the house, and the weaver goes from house to house. I once saw about three thousand farmers, or rather country people, at a horse race in Long Island, and my opinion was, that there were not five hundred who were not dressed in home-spun coats. As to linen, no farmer's family thinks of buying linen. The lords of the loom have taken from the land, in England, this part of its due; and hence one cause of the poverty, misery, and pauperism that are becoming so frightful throughout the country. A national debt, and all the taxation and gambling belonging to it, have a natural tendency to draw wealth into great masses. These masses produce a power of *congregating* manufactures, and of making the many work at them, for the *gain of a few*. The taxing government finds great convenience in these congregations. It can lay its hand easily upon a part of the produce; as ours does with so much effect. But the land suffers greatly from this, and the country must finally feel the fatal effects of it. The country people lose part of their natural employment. The women and children, who ought to provide a great part of the raiment, have nothing to do. The fields *must* have men and boys; but where there are men and boys there will be *women* and *girls;* and as the lords of the loom have now a set of real slaves, by the means of whom they take away a great part of the employment of the country-women and girls, these must be kept by poor rates in whatever degree they lose employment through the lords of the loom. One would think that nothing can be much plainer than this; and yet you hear the *jolterheads* congratulating one another upon the increase of Manchester, and such places! My straw affair will certainly restore to the land some of the employment of its women and girls. It will be impossible for any of the "rich ruffians;" any of the horse-power or steam-power or air-power ruffians; any of these greedy, grinding ruffians, to draw

together bands of men, women and children, and to make them slaves, in the working of straw. The raw material comes of itself, and the hand, and the hand alone, can convert it to use. I thought well of this before I took one single step in the way of supplanting the Leghorn bonnets. If I had not been certain that no rich ruffian, no white slave holder, could ever arise out of it, assuredly one line upon the subject never would have been written by me. Better, a million times, that the money should go to Italy; better that it should go to enrich even the rivals and enemies of the country; than that it should enable these hard, these unfeeling men, to draw English people into crowds and make them slaves, and slaves too of the lowest and most degraded cast.

As I was coming into this town I saw a new-fashioned sort of stone-cracking. A man had a sledge-hammer, and was cracking the heads of the big stones that had been laid on the road a good while ago. This is a very good way; but this man told me that he was set at this, because the farmers had *no employment* for many of the men. "Well," said I, "but they pay you to do this!" "Yes," said he. "Well, then," said I, "is it not better for them to pay you for working *on their land?*" "I can't tell, indeed, sir, how that is." But only think; here is half the haymaking to do: I saw, while I was talking to this man, fifty people in one hay-field of Lord Egremont, making and carrying hay; and yet, at a season like this, the farmers are so poor as to be unable to pay the labourers to work on the land! From this cause there will certainly be some falling off in production. This will, of course, have a tendency to keep prices from falling so low as they would do if there were no falling off. But can this *benefit* the farmer and landlord? The poverty of the farmers is seen in their diminished stock. The animals are sold *younger* than formerly. Last year was a year of great slaughtering. There will be less of everything produced; and the quality of each thing will be worse. It will be a lower and more mean concern altogether. Petworth is a nice market town, but solid and clean. The great abundance of *stone* in the land hereabouts has caused a corresponding liberality in paving and wall-building, so that everything of the building kind has an air of great strength, and produces the agreeable idea of durability. Lord Egremont's house is close to the town, and with its out-buildings, garden walls, and other erections, is, perhaps, nearly as big as the town; though the town is not a very small one. The park is very fine, and consists of a parcel of those hills and dells which

Nature formed here when she was in one of her most sportive modes. I have never seen the earth flung about in such a wild way as round about Hindhead and Blackdown; and this park forms a part of this ground. From an elevated part of it, and indeed, from each of many parts of it, you see all around the country to the distance of many miles. From the south-east to the north-west, the hills are so lofty and so near, that they cut the view rather short; but for the rest of the circle, you can see to a very great distance. It is, upon the whole, a most magnificent seat, and the Jews will not be able to get it from the *present* owner; though, if he live many years, they will give even him a *twist*. If I had time, I would make an actual survey of one whole county, and find out how many of the old gentry have lost their estates, and have been supplanted by the Jews, since Pitt began his reign. I am sure I should prove that, in number, they are one-half extinguished. But it is *now* that they go. The little ones are, indeed, gone; and the rest will follow in proportion as the present farmers are exhausted. These will keep on giving rents as long as they can beg or borrow the money to pay rents with. But a little more time will so completely exhaust them, that they will be unable to pay; and as that takes place, the landlords will lose their estates. Indeed many of them, and even a large portion of them, have, in fact, no estates now. They are *called* theirs; but the mortgagees and annuitants receive the rents. As the rents fall off, sales must take place, unless in cases of entails; and if this thing go on, we shall see acts passed to *cut off entails*, in order that the Jews may be put into full possession. Such, thus far, will be the result of our "glorious victories" over the French! Such will be, in part, the price of the deeds of Pitt, Addington, Perceval and their successors. For having applauded such deeds; for having boasted of the Wellesleys; for having bragged of battles won by *money* and by money *only*, the nation deserves that which it will receive; and as to the landlords, they, above all men living, deserve punishment. They put the power into the hands of Pitt and his crew to torment the people; to keep the people down; to raise soldiers and to build barracks for this purpose. These base landlords laughed when affairs like that of Manchester took place. They laughed at the *Blanketteers*. They laughed when Canning jested about Ogden's rupture. Let them, therefore, now take the full benefit of the measures of Pitt and his crew. They would fain have us believe that the calamities they endure do not arise from the acts of the government.

What do they arise from, then? The Jacobins did not contract the *Debt* of £800,000,000 sterling. The Jacobins did not create a *dead weight* of £150,000,000. The Jacobins did not cause a pauper-charge of £200,000,000 by means of "new inclosure bills," "vast improvements," paper-money, potatoes, and other "proofs of prosperity." The Jacobins did not do these things. And will the government pretend that "Providence" did it? That would be "blasphemy" indeed. — Poh! These things are the price of efforts to crush freedom in France, *lest the example of France should produce a reform in England.* These things are the price of that undertaking; which, however, has not yet been crowned with *success;* for the question is *not yet decided.* They boast of their victory over the French. The Pitt crew boast of their achievements in the war. They boast of the battle of Waterloo. Why! what fools could not get the same, or the like, if they had as much *money* to get it with? Shooting with *a silver gun* is a saying amongst game-eaters. That is to say, *purchasing* the game. A waddling, fat fellow that does not know how to prime and load, will, in this way, beat the best shot in the country. And this is the way that our crew "beat" the people of France. They laid out, in the first place, six hundred millions which they borrowed, and for which they mortgaged the revenues of the nation. Then they contracted for a "dead weight" to the amount of one hundred and fifty millions. Then they stripped the labouring classes of the commons, of their kettles, their bedding, their beer-barrels; and, in short, made them all paupers, and thus fixed on the nation a permanent annual charge of about 8 or 9 millions, or, a gross debt of £200,000,000. By these means, by these anticipations, our crew did what they thought would keep down the French nation for ages; and what they were sure would, for the present, enable them to keep up the *tithes* and other things of the same sort in England. But the crew did not reflect on the *consequences* of the anticipations! Or at least the landlords, who gave the crew their power, did not thus reflect. These consequences are now come, and are coming; and that must be a base man indeed, who does not see them with pleasure.

SINGLETON (SUSSEX),
Saturday, 2 Aug.

Ever since the middle of March, I have been trying remedies for the *hooping-cough,* and have, I believe, tried everything,

except riding, wet to the skin, two or three hours amongst the clouds on the South Downs. This remedy is now under trial. As Lord Liverpool said, the other day, of the Irish Tithe Bill, it is "under experiment." I am treating my disorder (with better success I hope) in somewhat the same way that the pretty fellows at Whitehall treat the disorders of poor Ireland. There is one thing in favour of this remedy of mine, I shall *know* the effect of it, and that, too, in a short time. It rained a little last night. I got off from Petworth without baiting my horse, thinking that the weather looked suspicious, and that St. Swithin meant to treat me to a dose. I had no greatcoat, nor any means of changing my clothes. The hooping-cough made me anxious; but I had fixed on going along the South Downs from Donnington-hill down to Lavant, and then to go on the flat to the south foot of Portsdown-hill, and to reach Fareham to-night. Two men, whom I met soon after I set off, assured me that it would not rain. I came on to Donnington, which lies at the foot of that part of the South Downs which I had to go up. Before I came to this point, I crossed the Arun and its canal again; and here was another place of deposit for timber, lime, coals, and other things. White, in his history of Selborne, mentions a hill, which is one of the Hindhead group, from which two springs (one on each side of the hill) send water into the two *seas* : the *Atlantic* and the *German Ocean !* This is big talk; but it is a fact. One of the streams becomes the *Arun*, which falls into the Channel; and the other, after winding along amongst the hills and hillocks between Hindhead and Godalming, goes into the river *Wey*, which falls into the Thames at Weybridge. The soil upon leaving Petworth, and at Petworth, seems very good; a fine deep loam, a sort of mixture of sand and soft chalk. I then came to a sandy common; a piece of ground that seemed to have no business there; it looked as if it had been tossed from Hindhead or Blackdown. The common, however, during the rage for "improvements," has been *inclosed.* That impudent fellow, Old Rose, stated the number of Inclosure Bills as an indubitable proof of "national prosperity." There was some *rye* upon this common, the sight of which would have gladdened the heart of Lord Liverpool. It was, in parts, not more than eight inches high. It was ripe, and, of course, the straw dead; or I should have found out the owner, and have bought it to make *bonnets* of! I defy the Italians to grow worse rye than this. The reader will recollect that I always said that we could grow *as poor* corn as any Italians that ever lived.

The village of Donton lies at the foot of one of these great chalk ridges, which are called the South Downs. The ridge, in this place, is, I think, about three-fourths of a mile high, by the high road, which is obliged to go twisting about, in order to get to the top of it. The hill sweeps round from about west-north-west to east-south-east; and, of course, it keeps off all the heavy winds, and especially the south-west winds, before which, in this part of England (and all the south and western part of it), even the oak trees seem as if they would gladly flee; from it shaves them up as completely as you see a quickset hedge shaved by hook or shears. Talking of hedges reminds me of having seen a box-hedge, just as I came out of Petworth, more than twelve feet broad, and about fifteen feet high. I dare say it is several centuries old. I think it is about forty yards long. It is a great curiosity.

The apple trees at Donnington show their gratitude to the hill for its shelter; for I have seldom seen apple trees in England so large, so fine, and, in general, so flourishing. I should like to have, or to see, an orchard of American apples under this hill. The hill, you will observe, does not shade the ground at Donnington. It slopes too much for that. But it affords complete shelter from the mischievous winds. It is very pretty to look down upon this little village as you come winding up the hill.

From this hill I ought to have had a most extensive view. I ought to have seen the Isle of Wight and the sea before me; and to have looked back to Chalk Hill at Reigate, at the foot of which I had left some bonnet-grass bleaching. But, alas! *Saint Swithin* had begun his works for the day, before I got to the top of the hill. Soon after the two turnip-hoers had assured me that there would be no rain, I saw, beginning to poke up over the South Downs (then right before me), several parcels of those white, curled clouds, that we call *Judges' Wigs*. And they are just like judges' wigs. Not the *parson-like* things which the judges wear when they have to listen to the dull wrangling and duller jests of the lawyers; but those *big* wigs which hang down about their shoulders, when they are about to tell you a little of *their intentions*, and when their very looks say, "*Stand clear!*" These clouds (if rising from the south-west) hold precisely the same language to the great-coatless traveller. Rain is *sure* to follow them. The sun was shining very beautifully when I first saw these judges' wigs rising over the hills. At the sight of them he soon began to hide his face!

and before I got to the top of the hill of Donton, the white clouds had become black, had spread themselves all around, and a pretty decent and sturdy rain began to fall. I had resolved to come to this place (Singleton) to breakfast. I quitted the turnpike road (from Petworth to Chichester) at a village called Upwaltham, about a mile from Donnington Hill; and came down a lane, which led me first to a village called Eastdean; then to another called Westdean, I suppose; and then to this village of Singleton, and here I am on the turnpike road from Midhurst to Chichester. The lane goes along through some of the finest farms in the world. It is impossible for corn land and for agriculture to be finer than these. In cases like mine, you are pestered to death to find out the way to *set out* to get from place to place. The people you have to deal with are innkeepers, ostlers, and post-boys; and they think you mad if you express your wish to avoid turnpike roads; and a great deal more than half mad, if you talk of going, even from necessity, by any other road. They think you a strange fellow if you will not ride six miles on a turnpike road rather than two on any other road. This plague I experienced on this occasion. I wanted to go from Petworth to Havant. My way was through Singleton and Funtington. I had no business at Chichester, which took me too far to the south. Nor at Midhurst, which took me too far to the west. But though I staid all day (after my arrival) at Petworth, and though I slept there, I could get no directions how to set out to come to Singleton, where I am now. I started, therefore, on the Chichester road, trusting to my inquiries of the country people as I came on. By these means I got hither, down a long valley, on the South Downs, which valley winds and twists about amongst hills, some higher and some lower, forming cross dells, inlets, and ground in such a variety of shapes that it is impossible to describe; and the whole of the ground, hill as well as dell, is fine, most beautiful, corn land, or is covered with trees or underwood. As to St. Swithin, I set him at defiance. The road was flinty, and very flinty. I rode a foot pace, and got here wet to the skin. I am very glad I came this road. The corn is all fine; all good; fine crops, and no appearance of blight. The barley extremely fine. The corn not forwarder than in the Weald. No beans here; few oats comparatively; chiefly wheat and barley; but great quantities of swedish turnips, and those very forward. More swedish turnips here upon one single farm than upon all the farms that I saw between the Wen and Petworth. These

turnips are, in some places, a foot high, and nearly cover the ground. The farmers are, however, plagued by this St. Swithin, who keeps up a continual drip, which prevents the thriving of the turnips and the killing of the weeds. The *orchards* are good here in general. Fine walnut trees, and an abundant crop of walnuts. This is a series of villages all belonging to the Duke of Richmond, the outskirts of whose park and woods come up to these farming lands, all of which belong to him; and I suppose that every inch of land that I came through this morning belongs either to the Duke of Richmond or to Lord Egremont. No *harm* in that, mind, if those who till the land have *fair play;* and I should act unjustly towards these noblemen, if I insinuated that the husbandmen have not fair play, as far as the landlords are concerned; for everybody speaks well of them. There is, besides, *no misery* to be seen here. I have seen no wretchedness in Sussex; nothing to be at all compared to that which I have seen in other parts; and as to these villages in the South Downs, they are beautiful to behold. Hume and other historians rail against the *feudal*-system; and we, "enlightened" and "free" creatures as we are, look back with scorn, or, at least, with surprise and pity, to the "vassalage" of our forefathers. But if the matter were well inquired into, not slurred over, but well and truly examined, we should find, that the people of these villages were *as free* in the days of William Rufus as are the people of the present day; and that vassalage, only under other names, exists now as completely as it existed then. Well; but out of this, if true, arises another question: namely, Whether the millions would derive any benefit from being transferred from these great lords who possess them by hundreds, to Jews and jobbers who would possess them by half-dozens, or by couples? One thing we may say with a certainty of being right: and that is, that the transfer would be bad for the lords themselves. There is an appearance of comfort about the dwellings of the labourers, all along here, that is very pleasant to behold. The gardens are neat, and full of vegetables of the best kinds. I see very few of "Ireland's lazy root;" and never, in this country, will the people be base enough to lie down and expire from starvation under the operation of the *extreme unction!* Nothing but a *potato-eater* will ever do that. As I came along between Upwaltham and Eastdean, I called to me a young man, who, along with other turnip-hoers, was sitting under the shelter of a hedge at breakfast. He came running to me with his victuals in his hand; and I was glad to see that his food

consisted of a good lump of household bread and not a very small piece of *bacon*. I did not envy him his appetite, for I had at that moment a very good one of my own; but I wanted to know the distance I had to go before I should get to a good public-house. In parting with him, I said, "You do get some *bacon* then?" "Oh, yes! sir," said he, and with an emphasis and a swag of the head which seemed to say, "We *must* and *will* have *that*." I saw, and with great delight, a pig at almost every labourer's house. The houses are good and warm; and the gardens some of the very best that I have seen in England. What a difference, good God! what a difference between this country and the neighbourhood of those corrupt places *Great Bedwin* and *Cricklade*. What sort of *breakfast* would this man have had in a mess of *cold potatoes?* Could he have *worked*, and worked in the wet, too, with such food? Monstrous! No society ought to exist where the labourers live in a hog-like sort of way. The *Morning Chronicle* is everlastingly asserting the mischievous consequences of the want of *enlightening* these people "*i' th a sooth;*" and telling us how well they are off in the north. Now, this I know, that in the north, the "enlightened" people eat *sowens, burgoo, porridge*, and *potatoes:* that is to say, *oatmeal and water*, or the root of *extreme unction*. If this be the effect of their *light*, give me the *darkness* "o' th a sooth." This is according to what I have heard. If, when I go to the north, I find the labourers *eating more meat* than those of the "sooth," I shall then say that "enlightening" is a very good thing; but give me none of that "light," or of that "grace," which makes a man content with oatmeal and water, or that makes him patiently lie down and die of starvation amidst abundance of food. The *Morning Chronicle* hears the labourers crying out in Sussex. They are right to cry out in time. When they are actually brought down to the extreme unction, it is useless to cry out. And next to the extreme unction is the *porridge* of the "enlightened" slaves who toil in the factories for the lords of the loom. Talk of *vassals!* Talk of *villains!* Talk of *serfs!* Are there any of these, or did feudal times ever see any of them, so debased, so absolutely slaves, as the poor creatures who, in the "enlightened" north, are compelled to work fourteen hours in a day, in a heat of eighty-four degrees; and who are liable to punishment for looking out at a window of the factory!

This is really a soaking day, thus far. I got here at nine o'clock. I stripped off my coat, and put it by the kitchen

fire. In a parlour just eight feet square I have another fire, and have dried my shirt on my back. We shall see what this does for a hooping cough. The clouds fly so low as to be seen passing by the sides of even little hills on these downs. The Devil is said to be busy in a *high* wind; but he really appears to be busy now in this south-west wind. The Quakers will, next market day, at Mark Lane, be as busy as he. They and the ministers and St. Swithin and Devil all seem to be of a mind.

I must not forget the *churches*. That of Donnington is very small, for a church. It is about twenty feet wide and thirty long. It is, however, sufficient for the population, the amount of which is two hundred and twenty-two, not one half of whom are, of course, ever at church at one time. There is, however, plenty of room for the whole: the "tower" of this church is about double the size of a *sentry-box*. The parson, whose name is Davidson, did not, when the return was laid before Parliament, in 1818, reside in the parish. Though the living is a large living, the parsonage house was let to "a lady and her three daughters." What impudence a man must have to put this into a return! The church at Upwaltham is about such another, and the "tower" still less than that at Donnington. Here the population is seventy-nine. The parish is a rectory, and, in the return before mentioned, the parson (whose name was Tripp), says, that the church will hold the population, but that the parsonage house will not hold him! And why? Because it is "a miserable cottage." I looked about for this "miserable cottage," and could not find it. What an impudent fellow this must have been! And, indeed, what a state of impudence have they not now arrived at! Did he, when he was ordained, talk anything about a fine house to live in? Did Jesus Christ and Saint Paul talk about fine houses? Did not this priest most solemnly vow to God, upon the altar, that he would be constant, in season and out of season, in watching over the souls of his flock? However, it is useless to remonstrate with this set of men. Nothing will have any effect upon them. They will keep grasping at the tithes as long as they can reach them. "A *miserable cottage!*" What impudence! What, Mr. Tripp, is it a fine house that you have been appointed and ordained to live in? Lord Egremont is the patron of Mr. Tripp; and he has a *duty* to perform too; for the living is *not his*: he is, in this case, only an hereditary *trustee* for the public; and he ought to see that this parson resides in the parish, which, according to his own return, yields him £125 a year. Eastdean

is a vicarage, with a population of 353, a church which the parson says will hold 200, and which I say will hold 600 or 700, and a living worth £85 a year, in the gift of the Bishop of Chichester.

Westdean is united with Singleton, the living is in the gift of the church at Chichester and the Duke of Richmond alternately; it is a large living, it has a population of 613, and the two churches, says the parson, will hold 200 people! What careless, or what impudent fellows these must have been. These two churches will hold a thousand people, packed much less close than they are in meeting houses.

At Upwaltham there is a toll gate, and, when the woman opened the door of the house to come and let me through, I saw some *straw plat* lying in a chair. She showed it me; and I found that it was made by her husband, in the evenings, after he came home from work, in order to make him a hat for the harvest. I told her how to get better straw for the purpose; and when I told her that she must cut the grass, or the grain, *green*, she said, "Aye, I dare say it is so: and I wonder we never thought of that before; for we sometimes make hats out of rushes, cut green, and dried, and the hats are very durable." This woman ought to have my *Cottage Economy*. She keeps the toll-gate at Upwaltham, which is called Waltham, and which is on the turnpike road from Petworth to Chichester. Now, if any gentleman, who lives at Chichester, will call upon my son, at the office of the *Register* in Fleet Street, and ask for a copy of *Cottage Economy*, to be given to this woman, he will receive the copy, and my thanks, if he will have the goodness to give it to her, and to point to her the Essay on Straw Plat.

FAREHAM (HANTS),
Saturday, 2 August.

Here I am in spite of St. Swithin!—The truth is, that the saint is like most other oppressors; *rough* him! *rough* him! and he relaxes. After drying myself, and sitting the better part of four hours at Singleton, I started in the rain, boldly setting the saint at defiance, and expecting to have not one dry thread by the time I got to Havant, which is nine miles from Fareham, and four from Cosham. To my most agreeable surprise, the rain ceased before I got by Selsey, I suppose it is called, where Lord Selsey's house and beautiful and fine estate is. On I went, turning off to the right to go to Funtington and Westbourn, and getting to Havant to bait my horse, about four o'clock.

From Lavant (about two miles back from Funtington) the ground begins to be a sea-side flat. The soil is somewhat varied in quality and kind; but, with the exception of an enclosed common between Funtington and Westbourn, it is all good soil. The corn of all kinds good and earlier than further back. They have begun cutting peas here, and, near Lavant, I saw a field of wheat nearly ripe. The swedish turnips very fine, and still earlier than on the South Downs. Prodigious crops of walnuts; but the apples bad along here. The south-west winds have cut them off; and, indeed, how should it be otherwise, if these winds happen to prevail in May, or early in June?

On the new enclosure near Funtington, the wheat and oats are both nearly ripe.

In a new enclosure, near Westbourn, I saw the only really blighted wheat that I have yet seen this year. "Oh!" exclaimed I, "that my Lord Liverpool; that my much respected stern-path-of-duty-man could but see that wheat, which God and the seedsman intended to be *white;* but which the Devil (listening to the prayers of the Quakers) has made *black!* Oh! could but my lord see it, lying flat upon the ground, with the May-weed and the couch-grass pushing up through it, and with a whole flock of rooks pecking away at its ears! Then would my much valued lord say, indeed, that the 'difficulties' of agriculture are about to receive the 'greatest abatement!'"

But now I come to one of the great objects of my journey: that is to say, to see the state of the corn along at the south foot and on the south side of Portsdown Hill. It is impossible that there can be, anywhere, a better corn country than this. The hill is eight miles long, and about three-fourths of a mile high, beginning at the road that runs along at the foot of the hill. On the hill-side the corn land goes rather better than half way up; and, on the sea-side, the corn land is about the third (it may be half) a mile wide. Portsdown Hill is very much in the shape of an oblong tin cover to a dish. From Bedhampton, which lies at the eastern end of the hill, to Fareham, which is at the western end of it, you have brought under your eye not less than eight square miles of corn fields, with scarcely a hedge or ditch of any consequence, and being, on an average, from twenty to forty acres each in extent. The land is excellent. The situation good for manure. The spot the *earliest in the whole kingdom.* Here, if the corn were backward, then the harvest must be backward. We were talking at Reigate of the prospect of a backward harvest. I observed that it was a rule that if no *wheat*

were cut under Portsdown Hill on the hill *fair-day*, 26th July, the harvest must be generally backward. When I made this observation, the fair-day was passed; but I determined in my mind to come and see how the matter stood. When, therefore, I got to the village of Bedhampton, I began to look out pretty sharply. I came on to Wimmering, which is just about the mid-way along the foot of the hill, and there I saw, at a good distance from me, five men reaping in a field of wheat of about 40 acres. I found, upon inquiry, that they began this morning, and that the wheat belongs to Mr. Boniface, of Wimmering. Here the first sheaf is cut that is cut in England: that the reader may depend upon. It was never known that the average even of Hampshire was less than ten days behind the average of Portsdown Hill. The corn under the hill is as good as I ever saw it, except in the year 1813. No beans here. No peas. Scarcely any oats. Wheat, barley, and turnips. The swedish turnips not so good as on the South Downs and near Funtington; but the wheat full as good, rather better; and the barley as good as it is possible to be. In looking at these crops, one wonders whence are to come the hands to clear them off.

A very pleasant ride to-day; and the pleasanter for my having set the wet saint at defiance. It is about thirty miles from Petworth to Fareham; and I got in in very good time. I have now come, if I include my *boltings*, for the purpose of looking at farms and woods, a round hundred miles from the Wen to this town of Fareham; and, in the whole of the hundred miles, I have not seen one single wheat rick, though I have come through as fine corn countries as any in England, and by the homesteads of the richest of farmers. Not one single wheat rick have I seen, and not one rick of any sort of corn. I never saw, nor heard of the like of this before; and if I had not witnessed the fact with my own eyes I could not have believed it. There are some farmers who have corn in their barns perhaps; but when there is no *rick* left, there is very little corn in the hands of farmers. Yet the markets, St. Swithin notwithstanding, do not rise. This harvest must be three weeks later than usual; and the last harvest was three weeks earlier than usual. The last crop was begun upon at once, on account of the badness of the wheat of the year before. So that the last crop will have had to give food for thirteen months and a half. And yet the markets do not rise! And yet there are men, farmers, mad enough to think, that they have "got past the bad place," and that things will come about, and are coming about! And Leth-

bridge, of the Collective, withdraws his motion because he has got what he wanted: namely, a return of good and "*remunerating* prices!" The *Morning Chronicle* of this day, which has met me at this place, has the following paragraph. "The weather is much improved, though it does not yet assume the character of being fine. At the Corn Exchange since Monday the arrivals consist of 7130 quarters of wheat, 450 quarters of barley, 8300 quarters of oats, and 9200 sacks of flour. The demand for wheat is next to zero, and for oats it is extremely dull. To effect sales, prices are not much attended to, for the demand cannot be increased at the present currency. The farmers should pay attention to oats, for the foreign new, under the king's lock, will be brought into consumption, unless a decline takes place immediately, and a weight will thereby be thrown over the markets, which under existing circumstances will be extremely detrimental to the agricultural interests. Its distress however does not deserve much sympathy, for as soon as there was a prospect of the payment of rents, the cause of the people was abandoned by the representatives of agriculture in the Collected Wisdom, and Mr. Brougham's most excellent measure for increasing the consumption of malt was neglected. Where there is no sympathy, none can be expected, and the land proprietors need not in future depend on the assistance of the mercantile and manufacturing interests, should their own distress again require a united effort to remedy the general grievances." As to the mercantile and manufacturing people, what is the land to expect from them? But I agree with the *Chronicle*, that the landlords deserve ruin. They abandoned the public cause the moment they thought that they saw a prospect of getting rents. That prospect will soon disappear, unless they pray hard to St. Swithin to insist upon forty days wet *after* his birthday. I do not see what the farmers can do about the price of oats. They have no power to do anything unless they come with their cavalry horses and storm the "king's lock." In short, it is all confusion in men's minds as well as in their pockets. There must be something completely out of joint, when the government are afraid of the effects of a good crop. I intend to set off to-morrow for Botley, and go thence to Easton; and then to Alton and Crondall and Farnham, to see how the *hops* are there. By the time that I get back to the Wen, I shall know nearly the real state of the case as to crops; and that, at this time, is a great matter.

THROUGH THE SOUTH-EAST OF HAMPSHIRE, BACK THROUGH THE SOUTH-WEST OF SURREY, ALONG THE WEALD OF SURREY, AND THEN OVER THE SURREY HILLS DOWN TO THE WEN

BOTLEY (HAMPSHIRE),
5 *August*, 1823.

I GOT to Fareham on Saturday night, after having got a soaking on the South Downs on the morning of that day. On the Sunday morning, intending to go and spend the day at Titchfield (about three miles and a half from Fareham), and perceiving, upon looking out of the window, about 5 o'clock in the morning, that it was likely to rain, I got up, struck a bustle, got up the ostler, set off and got to my destined point before 7 o'clock in the morning. And here I experienced the benefits of early rising; for I had scarcely got well and safely under cover, when St. Swithin began to pour down again, and he continued to pour during the whole of the day. From Fareham to Titchfield village a large part of the ground is a common enclosed some years ago. It is therefore amongst the worst of the land in the country. Yet, I did not see a bad field of corn along here, and the swedish turnips were, I think, full as fine as any that I saw upon the South Downs. But it is to be observed that this land is in the hands of dead-weight people, and is conveniently situated for the receiving of manure from Portsmouth. Before I got to my friend's house, I passed by a farm where I expected to find a wheat-rick standing. I did not, however; and this is the strongest possible proof that the stock of corn is gone out of the hands of the farmers. I set out from Titchfield at 7 o'clock in the evening, and had seven miles to go to reach Botley. It rained, but I got myself well furnished forth as a defence against the rain. I had not gone two hundred yards before the rain ceased; so that I was singularly fortunate as to rain this day; and I had now to congratulate myself on the success of the remedy for the hooping-cough which I used the day before on the South Downs; for really, though I had a spell or two of coughing on Saturday morning when I set out from Petworth, I have not had, up to this hour, any spell at all since I got wet

upon the South Downs. I got to Botley about nine o'clock, having stopped two or three times to look about me as I went along; for I had, in the first place, to ride, for about three miles of my road, upon a turnpike road of which I was the projector, and, indeed, the maker. In the next place I had to ride, for something better than half a mile of my way, along between fields and coppices that were mine until they came into the hands of the mortgagee, and by the side of cottages of my own building. The only matter of much interest with me was the state of the inhabitants of those cottages. I stopped at two or three places, and made some little inquiries; I rode up to two or three houses in the village of Botley, which I had to pass through, and, just before it was dark, I got to a farm-house close by the church, and what was more, not a great many yards from the dwelling of that delectable creature, the Botley parson, whom, however, I have not seen during my stay at this place.

Botley lies in a valley, the soil of which is a deep and stiff clay. Oak trees grow well; and this year the wheat grows well, as it does upon all the clays that I have seen. I have never seen the wheat better in general, in this part of the country, than it is now. I have, I think, seen it heavier; but never clearer from blight. It is backward compared to the wheat in many other parts; some of it is quite green; but none of it has any appearance of blight. This is not much of a barley country. The oats are good. The beans that I have seen, very indifferent.

The best news that I have learnt here is, that the Botley parson is become quite a gentle creature, compared to what he used to be. The people in the village have told me some most ridiculous stories about his having been hoaxed in London! It seems that somebody danced him up from Botley to London, by telling him that a legacy had been left him, or some such story. Up went the parson on horseback, being in too great a hurry to run the risk of coach. The hoaxers, it appears, got him to some hotel, and there set upon him a whole tribe of applicants, wet-nurses, dry-nurses, lawyers with deeds of conveyance for borrowed money, curates in want of churches, coffin-makers, travelling companions, ladies' maids, dealers in Yorkshire hams, Newcastle coals, and dealers in dried night-soil at Islington. In short, if I am rightly informed, they kept the parson in town for several days, bothered him three parts out of his senses, compelled him to escape, as it were, from a fire; and then, when he got home, he found the village posted all over with handbills giving an account of his adventure, under

the pretence of offering £500 reward for a discovery of the hoaxers! The good of it was the parson ascribed his disgrace *to me,* and they say that he perseveres to this hour in accusing me of it. Upon my word, I had nothing to do with the matter, and this affair only shows that I am not the only friend that the parson has in the world. Though this may have had a tendency to produce in the parson that amelioration of deportment which is said to become him so well, there is something else that has taken place, which has, in all probability, had a more powerful influence in this way; namely, a great reduction in the value of the parson's living, which was at one time little short of five hundred pounds a year, and which, I believe, is now not the half of that sum! This, to be sure, is not only a natural but a necessary consequence of the change in the value of money. The parsons are neither more nor less than another sort of landlords. They must fall, of course, in their demands, or their demands will not be paid. They may take in kind, but that will answer them no purpose at all. They will be less people than they have been, and will continue to grow less and less, until the day when the whole of the tithes and other church property, as it is called, shall be applied to public purposes.

EASTON (HAMPSHIRE),
Wednesday Evening, 6 August.

This village of Easton lies at a few miles towards the north-east from Winchester. It is distant from Botley by the way which I came about fifteen or sixteen miles. I came through Durley, where I went to the house of farmer Mears. I was very much pleased with what I saw at Durley, which is about two miles from Botley, and is certainly one of the most obscure villages in this whole kingdom. Mrs. Mears, the farmer's wife, had made, of the crested dog's tail grass, a bonnet which she wears herself. I there saw girls platting the straw. They had made plat of several degrees of fineness; and they sell it to some person or persons at Fareham, who, I suppose, makes it into bonnets. Mrs. Mears, who is a very intelligent and clever woman, has two girls at work, each of whom earns per week as much (within a shilling) as her father, who is a labouring man, earns per week. The father has at this time only 7*s.* per week. These two girls (and not very stout girls) earn six shillings a week each: thus the income of this family is, from seven shillings a week, raised to nineteen shillings a week. I shall suppose that

this may in some measure be owing to the generosity of ladies in the neighbourhood, and to their desire to promote this domestic manufacture; but if I suppose that these girls receive double compared to what they will receive for the same quantity of labour when the manufacture becomes more general, is it not a great thing to make the income of the family thirteen shillings a week instead of seven? Very little, indeed, could these poor things have done in the field during the last forty days. And, besides, how clean; how healthful; how everything that one could wish, is this sort of employment! The farmer, who is also a very intelligent person, told me that he should endeavour to introduce the manufacture as a thing to assist the obtaining of employment, in order to lessen the amount of the poor-rates. I think it very likely that this will be done in the parish of Durley. A most important matter it is, *to put paupers in the way of ceasing to be paupers*. I could not help admiring the zeal as well as the intelligence of the farmer's wife, who expressed her readiness to teach the girls and women of the parish, in order to enable them to assist themselves. I shall hear, in all probability, of their proceedings at Durley, and if I do, I shall make a point of communicating to the public an account of those interesting proceedings. From the very first; from the first moment of my thinking about this straw affair, I regarded it as likely to assist in bettering the lot of the labouring people. If it has not this effect, I value it not. It is not worth the attention of any of us; but I am satisfied that this is the way in which it will work. I have the pleasure to know that there is one labouring family, at any rate, who are living well through my means. It is I, who, without knowing them, without ever having seen them, without even now knowing their names, have given the means of good living to a family who were before half-starved. This is indisputably my work; and when I reflect that there must necessarily be, now, some hundreds of families, and shortly, many thousands of families, in England, who are and will be, through my means, living well instead of being half-starved, I cannot but feel myself consoled; I cannot but feel that I have some compensation for the sentence passed upon me by Ellenborough, Grose, Le Blanc, and Bailey; and I verily believe, that, in the case of this one single family in the parish of Durley, I have done more good than Bailey ever did in the whole course of his life, notwithstanding his pious commentary on the Book of Common Prayer. I will allow nothing to be good, with regard to the labouring classes, unless it make an addition to their victuals,

drink, or clothing. As to their *minds*, that is much too sublime matter for me to think about. I know that they are in rags, and that they have not a belly-full; and I know that the way to make them good, to make them honest, to make them dutiful, to make them kind to one another, is to enable them to live well; and I also know that none of these things will ever be accomplished by Methodist sermons, and by those stupid, at once stupid and malignant things, and roguish things, called Religious Tracts.

It seems that this farmer at Durley has always read the *Register*, since the first appearance of little *Two-penny Trash*. Had it not been for this reading, Mrs. Mears would not have thought about the grass; and had she not thought about the grass, none of the benefits above mentioned would have arisen to her neighbours. The difference between this affair and the spinning-jenny affairs is this; that the spinning-jenny affairs fill the pockets of "rich ruffians," such as those who would have murdered me at Coventry; and that this straw affair makes an addition to the food and raiment of the labouring classes, and gives not a penny to be pocketed by the rich ruffians.

From Durley I came on in company with farmer Mears through Upham. This Upham is the place where Young, who wrote that bombastical stuff, called *Night Thoughts*, was once the parson, and where, I believe, he was born. Away to the right of Upham lies the little town of Bishop's Waltham, whither I wished to go very much, but it was too late in the day. From Upham we came on upon the high land, called Black Down. This has nothing to do with that Black-down Hill, spoken of in my last ride. We are here getting up upon the chalk hills, which stretch away towards Winchester. The soil here is a poor blackish stuff, with little white stones in it, upon a bed of chalk. It was a down not many years ago The madness and greediness of the days of paper-money led to the breaking of it up. The corn upon it is miserable, but as good as can be expected upon such land.

At the end of this tract, we come to a spot called Whiteflood, and here we cross the old turnpike-road which leads from Winchester to Gosport through Bishop's Waltham. Whiteflood is at the foot of the first of a series of hills over which you come to get to the top of that lofty ridge called Morning Hill. The farmer came to the top of the first hill along with me, and he was just about to turn back, when I, looking away to the left, down a valley which stretched across the other side of the down,

observed a rather singular appearance, and said to the farmer, "What is that coming up that valley? is it smoke, or is it a cloud?" The day had been very fine hitherto; the sun was shining very bright where we were. The farmer answered, "Oh, it's smoke; it comes from Ouselberry, which is down in that bottom behind those trees." So saying, we bid each other good day; he went back, and I went on. Before I had got a hundred and fifty yards from him, the cloud which he had taken for the Ouselberry smoke, came upon the hill and wet me to the skin. He was not far from the house at Whiteflood; but I am sure that he could not entirely escape it. It is curious to observe how the clouds sail about in the hilly countries, and particularly, I think, amongst the chalk-hills. I have never observed the like amongst the sand-hills, or amongst rocks.

From Whiteflood you come over a series of hills, part of which form a rabbit-warren called Longwood warren, on the borders of which is the house and estate of Lord Northesk. These hills are amongst the most barren of the downs of England; yet a part of them was broken up during the rage for improvements; during the rage for what empty men think was an augmenting of the *capital* of the country. On about twenty acres of this land, sown with wheat, I should not suppose that there would be twice twenty bushels of grain! A man must be mad, or nearly mad, to sow wheat upon such a spot. However, a large part of what was enclosed has been thrown out again already, and the rest will be thrown out in a very few years. The down itself was poor; what then must it be as corn-land! Think of the destruction which has here taken place. The herbage was not good, but it was something: it was something for every year, and without trouble. Instead of grass it will now, for twenty years to come, bear nothing but that species of weeds which is hardy enough to grow where the grass will not grow. And this was "augmenting the capital of the nation." These new enclosure-bills were boasted of by George Rose and by Pitt as proofs of national prosperity! When men in power are ignorant to this extent, who is to expect anything but consequences such as we now behold.

From the top of this high land called *Morning Hill*, and the real name of which is *Magdalen Hill*, from a chapel which once stood there dedicated to Mary Magdalen; from the top of this land you have a view of a circle which is upon an average about seventy miles in diameter; and I believe in no one place so little as fifty miles in diameter. You see the Isle of Wight in one

direction, and in the opposite direction you see the high lands in Berkshire. It is not a pleasant view, however. The fertile spots are all too far from you. Descending from this hill, you cross the turnpike-road (about two miles from Winchester), leading from Winchester to London through Alresford and Farnham. As soon as you cross the road, you enter the estate of the descendant of Rollo, Duke of Buckingham, which estate is in the parish of Avington. In this place the duke has a farm, not very good land. It is in his own hands. The corn is indifferent, except the barley, which is everywhere good. You come a full mile from the roadside down through this farm, to the duke's mansion-house at Avington, and to the little village of that name, both of them beautifully situated, amidst fine and lofty trees, fine meadows, and streams of clear water. On this farm of the duke I saw (in a little close by the farm-house) several hens in coops with broods of pheasants instead of chickens. It seems that a gamekeeper lives in the farm-house, and I dare say the duke thinks much more of the pheasants than of the corn. To be very solicitous to preserve what has been raised with so much care and at so much expense, is by no means unnatural; but then there is a measure to be observed here; and that measure was certainly outstretched in the case of Mr. Deller. I here saw, at this gamekeeping farm-house, what I had not seen since my departure from the Wen; namely, a wheat-rick! Hard, indeed, would it have been if a Plantagenet, turned farmer, had not a wheat-rick in his hands. This rick contains, I should think, what they call in Hampshire ten loads of wheat, that is to say, fifty quarters, or four hundred bushels. And this is the only rick, not only of wheat, but of any corn whatever that I have seen since I left London. The turnips, upon this farm, are by no means good; but I was in some measure compensated for the bad turnips by the sight of the duke's turnip-hoers, about a dozen females, amongst whom there were several very pretty girls, and they were as merry as larks. There had been a shower that had brought them into a sort of huddle on the roadside. When I came up to them, they all fixed their eyes upon me, and upon my smiling, they bursted out into laughter. I observed to them that the Duke of Buckingham was a very happy man to have such turnip-hoers, and really they seemed happier and better off than any work-people that I saw in the fields all the way from London to this spot. It is curious enough, but I have always observed that the women along this part of the country are usually tall. These girls were all tall, straight, fair, round-

faced, excellent complexion, and uncommonly gay. They were well dressed, too, and I observed the same of all the men that I saw down at Avington. This could not be the case if the duke were a cruel or hard master; and this is an act of justice due from me to the descendant of Rollo. It is in the house of Mr. Deller that I make these notes, but as it is *injustice* that we dislike, I must do Rollo justice; and I must again say that the good looks and happy faces of his turnip-hoers spoke much more in his praise than could have been spoken by fifty lawyers, like that Storks who was employed, the other day, to plead against the editor of the *Bucks Chronicle*, for publishing an account of the selling-up of farmer Smith, of Ashendon, in that county. I came through the duke's park to come to Easton, which is the next village below Avington. A very pretty park. The house is quite in the bottom; it can be seen in no direction from a distance greater than that of four or five hundred yards. The river Itchen, which rises near Alresford, which runs down through Winchester to Southampton, goes down the middle of this valley, and waters all its immense quantity of meadows. The duke's house stands not far from the river itself. A stream of water is brought from the river to feed a pond before the house. There are several avenues of trees which are very beautiful, and some of which give complete shelter to the kitchen garden, which has, besides, extraordinarily high walls. Never was a greater contrast than that presented by this place and the place of Lord Egremont. The latter is all loftiness. Everything is high about it; it has extensive views in all directions. It sees and can be seen by all the country around. If I had the ousting of one of these noblemen, I certainly, however, would oust the duke, who, I dare say, will by no means be desirous of seeing arise the occasion of putting the sincerity of the compliment to the test. The village of Easton is, like that of Avington, close by the waterside. The meadows are the attraction; and, indeed, it is the meadows that have caused the villages to exist.

SELBORNE (HANTS),
Thursday, 7 August, Noon.

I took leave of Mr. Deller this morning, about 7 o'clock. Came back through Avington Park, through the village of Avington, and, crossing the Itchen river, came over to the village of Itchen Abas. *Abas* means *below*. It is a French word that came over with Duke Rollo's progenitors. There

needs no better proof of the high descent of the duke, and of the antiquity of his family. This is that Itchen Abas where that famous parson-justice, the Reverend Robert Wright, lives, who refused to hear Mr. Deller's complaint against the duke's servant at his own house, and who afterwards, along with Mr. Poulter, bound Mr. Deller over to the quarter sessions for the alleged assault. I have great pleasure in informing the public that Mr. Deller has not had to bear the expenses in this case himself; but that they have been borne by his neighbours, very much to the credit of those neighbours. I hear of an affair between the Duke of Buckingham and a Mr. Bird, who resides in this neighbourhood. If I had had time I should have gone to see Mr. Bird, of whose treatment I have heard a great deal, and an account of which treatment ought to be brought before the public. It is very natural for the Duke of Buckingham to wish to preserve that game which he calls his hobby-horse. It is very natural for him to delight in his hobby; but *hobbies*, my lord duke, ought to be gentle, inoffensive, perfectly harmless little creatures. They ought not to be suffered to kick and fling about them: they ought not to be rough-shod, and, above all things, they ought not to be great things like those which are ridden by the Life Guards: and, like them, be suffered to dance, and caper, and trample poor devils of farmers under foot. Have your hobbies, my lords of the soil, but let them be gentle; in short, let them be hobbies in character with the commons and forests, and not the high-fed hobbies from the barracks at Knightsbridge, such as put poor Mr. Sheriff Waithman's life in jeopardy. That the game should be preserved, every one that knows anything of the country will allow; but every man of any sense must see that it cannot be preserved by sheer force. It must be rather through love than through fear; rather through good-will than through ill-will. If the thing be properly managed, there will be plenty of game, without any severity towards any good man. Mr. Deller's case was so plain: it was so monstrous to think that a man was to be punished for being on his own ground in pursuit of wild animals that he himself had raised: this was so monstrous, that it was only necessary to name it to excite the indignation of the country. And Mr. Deller has, by his spirit and perseverance, by the coolness and the good sense which he has shown throughout the whole of this proceeding, merited the commendation of every man who is not in his heart an oppressor. It occurs to me to ask here, who it is that finally *pays* for those " counsels' opinions " which Poulter

and Wright said they took in the case of Mr. Deller; because, if these counsels' opinions are paid for by the county, and if a justice of the peace can take as many counsels' opinions as he chooses, I should like to know what fellow, who chooses to put on a bobtail wig and call himself a lawyer, may not have a good living given to him by any crony justice at the expense of the county. This never can be legal. It never can be binding on the county to pay for these counsels' opinions. However, leaving this to be inquired into another time, we have here, in Mr. Deller's case, an instance of the worth of counsels' opinions. Mr. Deller went to the two justices, showed them the Register with the Act of Parliament in it, called upon them to act agreeably to that Act of Parliament; but they chose to take counsels' opinion first. The two "counsel," the two "lawyers," the two "learned friends," told them that they were right in rejecting the application of Mr. Deller and in binding him over for the assault; and, after all, this grand jury threw out the bill, and in that throwing out showed that they thought the counsels' opinions not worth a straw.

Being upon the subject of matter connected with the conduct of these parson-justices, I will here mention what is now going on in Hampshire respecting the accounts of the *treasurer of the county*. At the last quarter sessions, or at a meeting of the magistrates previous to the opening of the sessions, there was a discussion relative to this matter. The substance of which appears to have been this; that the treasurer, Mr. George Hollis, whose accounts had been audited, approved of, and passed, every year by the magistrates, is in arrear to the county to the amount of about four thousand pounds. Sir Thomas Baring appears to have been the great stickler against Mr. Hollis, who was but feebly defended by his friends. The treasurer of a county is compelled to find securities. These securities have become *exempted*, in consequence of the annual passing of the accounts by the magistrates! Nothing can be more just than this exemption. I am security, suppose, for a treasurer. The magistrates do not pass his accounts on account of a deficiency. I make good the deficiency. But the magistrates are not to go on year after year passing his accounts, and then, at the end of several years, come and call upon me to make good the deficiencies. Thus say the securities of Mr. Hollis. The magistrates, in fact, are to blame. One of the magistrates, a Reverend Mr. Orde, said that the magistrates were more to blame than the treasurer; and really I think so too; for though Mr. Hollis has been a tool

for many, many years of Old George Rose and the rest of that crew, it seems impossible to believe that he could have intended anything dishonest, seeing that the detection arose out of an account, published by himself in the newspaper, which account he need not have published until three months later than the time when he did publish it. This is, as he himself states, the best possible proof that he was unconscious of any error or any deficiency. The fact appears to be this; that Mr. Hollis, who has for many years been under sheriff as well as treasurer of the county, who holds several other offices, and who has, besides, had large pecuniary transactions with his bankers, has for years had his accounts so blended that he has not known how this money belonging to the county stood. His own statement shows that it was all a mass of confusion. The errors, he says, have arisen, entirely from the negligence of his clerks, and from causes which produced a confusion in his accounts. This is the fact; but he has been in good fat offices too long not to have made a great many persons think that his offices would be better in *their* hands; and they appear resolved to oust him. I, for my part, am glad of it; for I remember his coming up to me in the grand jury chamber, just after the people of St. Stephen's had passed Power-of-Imprisonment Bill in 1817; I remember his coming up to me as the under-sheriff of Willis, the man that we now call Flemming, who has *begun* to build a house at North Stoneham; I remember his coming up to me, and with all the base sauciness of a thorough-paced Pittite, *telling me to disperse or he would take me into custody!* I remember this of Mr. Hollis, and I am therefore glad that calamity has befallen him; but I must say that after reading his own account of the matter; after reading the debate of the magistrates; and after hearing the observations and opinions of well-informed and impartial persons in Hampshire who dislike Mr. Hollis as much as I do; I must say that I think him perfectly clear of all intention to commit anything like fraud, or to make anything worthy of the name of false account; and I am convinced that this affair, which will now prove extremely calamitous to him, might have been laughed at by him at the time when wheat was fifteen shillings a bushel. This change in the affairs of the government; this penury now experienced by the Pittites at Whitehall, reaches, in its influence, to every part of the country. The Barings are now the great men in Hampshire. They were not such in the days of George Rose, while George was able to make the people believe that it was necessary to give their money freely to preserve the

"blessed comforts of religion." George Rose would have thrown his shield over Mr. Hollis; his broad and brazen shield. In Hampshire the *bishop* too is changed. The present is, doubtless, as pious as the last, every bit, and has the same bishop-like views; but it is not the same family; it is not the Garniers and Poulters and Norths and De Grays and Haygarths; it is not precisely the same set who have the power in their hands. Things, therefore, take another turn. The Pittite jolterheads are all broken-backed; and the Barings come forward with their well-known weight of metal. It was exceedingly unfortunate for Mr. Hollis that Sir Thomas Baring happened to be against him. However, the thing will do good altogether. The county is placed in a pretty situation: its treasurer has had his accounts regularly passed by the magistrates; and these magistrates come at last and discover that they have for a long time been passing accounts that they ought not to pass. These magistrates have exempted the securities of Mr. Hollis, but not a word do they say about making good the deficiencies. What redress, then, have the people of the county? They have no redress, unless they can obtain it by petitioning the Parliament; and if they do not petition; if they do not state their case, and that boldly, too, they deserve everything that can befall them from similar causes. I am astonished at the boldness of the magistrates. I am astonished that they should think of calling Mr. Hollis to account without being prepared for rendering an account of their own conduct. However, we shall see what they will do in the end. And when we have seen that, we shall see whether the county will rest quietly under the loss which it is likely to sustain.

I must now go back to Itchen Abas, where, in the farm-yard of a farmer, Courtenay, I saw another wheat-rick. From Itchen Abas I came up the valley to Itchen Stoke. Soon after that I crossed the Itchen river, came out into the Alresford turnpike-road, and came on towards Alresford, having the valley now upon my left. If the hay be down all the way to Southampton in the same manner that it is along here, there are thousands of acres of hay rotting on the sides of this Itchen river. Most of the meadows are watered artificially. The crops of grass are heavy, and they appear to have been cut precisely in the right time to be spoiled. Coming on towards Alresford, I saw a gentleman (about a quarter of a mile beyond Alresford) coming out of his gate with his hat off, looking towards the south-west, as if to see what sort of weather it was likely to be. This

was no other than Mr. Rolleston or Rawlinson, who, it appears, has a box and some land here. This gentleman was, when I lived in Hampshire, one of those worthy men who, in the several counties of England, executed "without any sort of remuneration," such a large portion of that justice which is the envy of surrounding nations and admiration of the world. We are often told, especially in Parliament, of the *disinterestedness* of these persons; of their worthiness, their piety, their loyalty, their excellent qualities of all sorts, but particularly of their *disinterestedness*, in taking upon them the office of justice of the peace; spending so much time, taking so much trouble, and all for nothing at all, but for the pure love of their king and country. And the worst of it is, that our ministers *impose* upon this disinterestedness and generosity; and, as in the case of Mr. Rawlinson, at the end of, perhaps, a dozen years of *services* voluntarily rendered to "king and country," they force him, sorely against his will, no doubt, to become a police magistrate in London! To be sure, there are five or six hundred pounds a year of public money attached to this; but what are these paltry pounds to a "country gentleman," who so disinterestedly rendered us services for so many years? Hampshire is fertile in persons of this disinterested stamp. There is a *'Squire* Greme, who lives across the country, not many miles from the spot where I saw "Mr. Justice" Rawlinson. This 'squire also has served the country for nothing during a great many years; and, of late years, the 'squire junior, eager apparently to emulate his sire, has become a distributor of stamps for this famous county of Hants! What *sons* 'Squire Rawlinson may have is more than I know at present, though I will endeavour to know it, and to find out whether they also be *serving* us. A great deal has been said about the debt of gratitude due from the people to the justices of the peace. An account, containing the names and places of abode of the justices, and of the public money, or titles, received by them and by their relations; such an account would be a very useful thing. We should then know the real amount of this debt of gratitude. We shall see such an account by and by; and we should have seen it long ago, if there had been, in a certain place, only one single man disposed to do his duty.

I came through Alresford about eight o'clock, having loitered a good deal in coming up the valley. After quitting Alresford you come (on the road towards Alton) to the village of Bishop's Sutton; and then to a place called Ropley Dean, where there

is a house or two. Just before you come to Ropley Dean, you see the beginning of the Valley of Itchen. The *Itchen* river falls into the salt water at Southampton. It rises, or rather has its first rise, just by the roadside at Ropley Dean, which is at the foot of that very high land which lies between Alresford and Alton. All along by the Itchen river, up to its very source, there are meadows; and this vale of meadows, which is about twenty-five miles in length, and is, in some places, a mile wide, is, at the point of which I am now speaking, only about twice as wide as my horse is long! This vale of Itchen is worthy of particular attention. There are few spots in England more fertile or more pleasant; and none, I believe, more healthy. Following the bed of the river, or rather, the middle of the vale, it is about five-and-twenty miles in length, from Ropley Dean to the village of South Stoneham, which is just above Southampton. The average width of the meadows is, I should think, a hundred rods at the least; and if I am right in this conjecture, the vale contains about five thousand acres of meadows, large part of which is regularly watered. The sides of the vale are, until you come down to within about six or eight miles of Southampton, hills or rising grounds of chalk, covered more or less thickly with loam. Where the hills rise up very steeply from the valley, the fertility of the corn-lands is not so great; but for a considerable part of the way, the corn-lands are excellent, and the farm-houses, to which those lands belong, are, for the far greater part, under covert of the hills on the edge of the valley. Soon after the rising of the stream, it forms itself into some capital ponds at Alresford. These, doubtless, were augmented by art, in order to supply Winchester with fish. The fertility of this vale, and of the surrounding country, is best proved by the fact that, besides the town of Alresford and that of Southampton, there are seventeen villages, each having its parish church, upon its borders. When we consider these things we are not surprised that a spot situated about half way down this vale should have been chosen for the building of a city, or that that city should have been for a great number of years a place of residence for the kings of England.

Winchester, which is at present a mere nothing to what it once was, stands across the vale at a place where the vale is made very narrow by the jutting forward of two immense hills. From the point where the river passes through the city, you go, whether eastward or westward, a full mile up a very steep hill all the way. The city is, of course, in one of the deepest holes

that can be imagined. It never could have been thought of as a place to be defended since the discovery of gunpowder; and, indeed, one would think that very considerable annoyance might be given to the inhabitants even by the flinging of the flint-stones from the hills down into the city.

At Ropley Dean, before I mounted the hill to come on towards Rotherham Park, I baited my horse. Here the ground is precisely like that at Ashmansworth on the borders of Berkshire, which, indeed, I could see from the ground of which I am now speaking. In coming up the hill, I had the house and farm of Mr. Duthy to my right. Seeing some very fine swedish turnips, I naturally expected that they belonged to this gentleman who is secretary to the Agricultural Society of Hampshire; but I found that they belonged to a farmer Mayhew. The soil is, along upon this high land, a deep loam, bordering on a clay, red in colour, and pretty full of large, rough, yellow-looking stones, very much like some of the land in Huntingdonshire; but here is a bed of chalk under this. Everything is backward here. The wheat is perfectly green in most places; but it is every-where pretty good. I have observed, all the way along, that the wheat is good upon the stiff, strong land. It is so here; but it is very backward. The greater part of it is full three weeks behind the wheat under Portsdown Hill. But few farm-houses come within my sight along here; but in one of them there was a wheat-rick, which is the third I have seen since I quitted the Wen. In descending from this high ground, in order to reach the village of East Tisted, which lies on the turnpike-road from the Wen to Gosport through Alton, I had to cross Rotherham Park. On the right of the park, on a bank of land facing the north-east, I saw a very pretty farm-house, having everything in excellent order, with fine corn-fields about it, and with a wheat-rick standing in the yard. This farm, as I afterwards found, belongs to the owner of Rotherham Park, who is also the owner of East Tisted, who has recently built a new house in the park, who has quite metamorphosed the village of Tisted, within these eight years, who has, indeed, really and truly improved the whole country just round about here, whose name is Scot, well known as a brickmaker at North End, Fulham, and who has, in Hampshire, supplanted a Norman of the name of Powlet. The process by which this transfer has taken place is visible enough, to all eyes but the eyes of the jolterheads. Had there been no debt created to crush liberty in France and to keep down reformers in England, Mr. Scot would not have

had bricks to burn to build houses for the Jews and jobbers and other eaters of taxes; and the Norman Powlet would not have had to pay in taxes, through his own hands and those of his tenants and labourers, the amount of the estate at Tisted, first to be given to the Jews, jobbers and tax-eaters, and then by them to be given to " 'Squire Scot " for his bricks. However, it is not 'Squire Scot who has assisted to pass laws to make people pay double toll on a Sunday. 'Squire Scot had nothing to do with passing the New Game-laws and Old Ellenborough's Act; 'Squire Scot never invented the New Trespass law, in virtue of which John Cockbain of Whitehaven in the county of Cumberland was, by two clergymen and three other magistrates of that county, sentenced to pay one half-penny for damages and seven shillings costs, for going upon a field, the property of William, Earl of Lonsdale. In the passing of this Act, which was one of the first passed in the present reign, 'Squire Scot, the brick-maker, had nothing to do. Go on, good 'squire, thrust out some more of the Normans: with the fruits of the augmentations which you make to the Wen, go, and take from them their mansions, parks, and villages!

At Tisted I crossed the turnpike-road before mentioned, and entered a lane which, at the end of about four miles, brought me to this village of Selborne. My readers will recollect that I mentioned this Selborne when I was giving an account of Hawkley Hanger, last fall. I was desirous of seeing this village, about which I have read in the book of Mr. White, and which a reader has been so good as to send me. From Tisted I came generally up hill till I got within half a mile of this village, when, all of a sudden, I came to the edge of a hill, looked down over all the larger vale of which the little vale of this village makes a part. Here Hindhead and Black Down Hill came full in my view. When I was crossing the forest in Sussex, going from Worth to Horsham, these two great hills lay to my west and north-west. To-day I am got just on the opposite side of them, and see them, of course, towards the east and the south-east, while Leith Hill lies away towards the north-east. This hill, from which you descend down into Selborne, is very lofty; but, indeed, we are here amongst some of the highest hills in the island, and amongst the sources of rivers. The hill over which I have come this morning sends the Itchen river forth from one side of it, and the river Wey, which rises near Alton, from the opposite side of it. Hindhead which lies before me, sends, as I observed upon a former occasion, the Arun forth

towards the south and a stream forth towards the north, which meets the river Wey, somewhere above Godalming. I am told that the springs of these two streams rise in the Hill of Hindhead, or rather, on one side of the hill, at not many yards from each other. The village of Selborne is precisely what it is described by Mr. White. A straggling irregular street, bearing all the marks of great antiquity, and showing, from its lanes and its vicinage generally, that it was once a very considerable place. I went to look at the spot where Mr. White supposes the convent formerly stood. It is very beautiful. Nothing can surpass in beauty these dells and hillocks and hangers, which last are so steep that it is impossible to ascend them, except by means of a serpentine path. I found here deep hollow ways, with beds and sides of solid white stone; but not quite so white and so solid, I think, as the stone which I found in the roads at Hawkley. The churchyard of Selborne is most beautifully situated. The land is good, all about it. The trees are luxuriant and prone to be lofty and large. I measured the yew-tree in the churchyard, and found the trunk to be, according to my measurement, twenty-three feet, eight inches, in circumference. The trunk is very short, as is generally the case with yew-trees; but the head spreads to a very great extent, and the whole tree, though probably several centuries old, appears to be in perfect health. Here are several hop-plantations in and about this village; but, for this once, the prayers of the over-production men will be granted, and the devil of any hops there will be. The bines are scarcely got up the poles; the bines and the leaves are black, nearly, as soot; full as black as a sooty bag or dingy coal-sack, and covered with lice. It is a pity that these hop-planters could not have a parcel of Spaniards and Portuguese to louse their hops for them. Pretty devils to have liberty, when a favourite recreation of the Donna is to crack the lice in the head of the Don! I really shrug up my shoulders thinking of the beasts. Very different from such is my landlady here at Selborne, who, while I am writing my notes, is getting me a rasher of bacon, and has already covered the table with a nice clean cloth. I have never seen such quantities of grapes upon any vines as I see upon the vines in this village, badly pruned as all the vines have been. To be sure, this is a year for grapes, such, I believe, as has been seldom known in England, and the cause is, the perfect ripening of the wood by the last beautiful summer. I am afraid, however, that the grapes come in vain; for this summer has been so cold, and is now so wet,

that we can hardly expect grapes, which are not under glass, to ripen. As I was coming into this village, I observed to a farmer who was standing at his gateway, that people ought to be happy here, for that God had done everything for them. His answer was, that he did not believe there was a more unhappy place in England: for that there were always quarrels of some sort or other going on. This made me call to mind the king's proclamation, relative to a reward for discovering the person who had recently *shot at the parson of this village.* This parson's name is Cobbold, and it really appears that there was a shot fired through his window. He has had law-suits with the people; and I imagine that it was these to which the farmer alluded. The hops are of considerable importance to the village, and their failure must necessarily be attended with consequences very inconvenient to the whole of a population so small as this. Upon inquiry, I find that the hops are equally bad at Alton, Froyle, Crondall, and even at Farnham. I saw them bad in Sussex; I hear that they are bad in Kent; so that hop-planters, at any rate, will be, for once, free from the dreadful evils of abundance. A correspondent asks me what is meant by the statements which he sees in the *Register,* relative to the *hop-duty?* He sees it, he says, continually falling in amount; and he wonders what this means. The thing has not, indeed, been properly explained. It is *a gamble;* and it is hardly right for me to state, in a publication like the *Register,* anything relative to a gamble. However, the case is this: a taxing system is necessarily a system of gambling; a system of betting; stock-jobbing is no more than a system of betting, and the wretched dogs that carry on the traffic are little more, except that they are more criminal, than the waiters at an *E O Table,* or the markers at billiards. The hop duty is so much per pound. The duty was imposed at two separate times. One part of it, therefore, is called the Old Duty, and the other part the New Duty. The old duty was a penny to the pound of hops. The amount of this duty, which can always be ascertained at the Treasury as soon as the hopping season is over, is the surest possible guide in ascertaining the total amount of the growth of hops for the year. If, for instance, the duty were to amount to no more than eight shillings and fourpence, you would be certain that only a hundred pounds of hops had been grown during the year. Hence a system of gambling precisely like the gambling in the funds. I bet you that the duty will not exceed so much. The duty has sometimes exceeded two

hundred thousand pounds. This year, it is supposed, that it will not exceed twenty, thirty, or forty thousand. The gambling fellows are betting all this time; and it is, in fact, an account of the betting which is inserted in the *Register*.

This vile paper-money and funding-system; this system of Dutch descent, begotten by Bishop Burnet, and born in hell; this system has turned everything into a gamble. There are hundreds of men who live by being the agents to carry on gambling. They reside here in the Wen; many of the gamblers live in the country; they write up to their gambling agent, whom they call their stockbroker; he gambles according to their order; and they receive the profit or stand to the loss. Is it possible to conceive a viler calling than that of an agent for the carrying on of gambling? And yet the vagabonds call themselves gentlemen; or, at least, look upon themselves as the superiors of those who sweep the kennels. In like manner is the hop-gamble carried on. The gambling agents in the Wen make the bets for the gamblers in the country; and, perhaps, millions are betted during the year upon the amount of a duty which, at the most, scarcely exceeds a quarter of a million. In such a state of things how are you to expect young men to enter on a course of patient industry? How are you to expect that they will seek to acquire fortune and fame by study or by application of any kind?

Looking back over the road that I have come to-day, and perceiving the direction of the road going from this village in another direction, I perceive that this is a very direct road from Winchester to Farnham. The road, too, appears to have been, from ancient times, sufficiently wide; and when the Bishop of Winchester selected this beautiful spot whereon to erect a monastery, I dare say the roads along here were some of the best in the country.

THURSLEY (SURREY),
Thursday, 7 August.

I got a boy at Selborne to show me along the lanes out into Woolmer Forest on my way to Headley. The lanes were very deep; the wet *malme* just about the colour of rye-meal mixed up with water, and just about as clammy, came, in many places, very nearly up to my horse's belly. There was this comfort, however, that I was sure that there was a bottom, which is by no means the case when you are among clays or quick-sands. After going through these lanes, and along between some fir-

plantations, I came out upon Woolmer Forest, and, to my great satisfaction, soon found myself on the side of those identical plantations, which have been made under the orders of the smooth Mr. Huskisson, and which I noticed last year in my ride from Hambledon to this place. These plantations are of fir, or, at least, I could see nothing else, and they never can be of any more use to the nation than the sprigs of heath which cover the rest of the forest. Is there nobody to inquire what becomes of the income of the crown lands? No, and there never will be, until the whole system be changed. I have seldom ridden on pleasanter ground than that which I found between Woolmer Forest and this beautiful village of Thursley. The day has been fine, too; notwithstanding I saw the judges' terrific wigs as I came up upon the turnpike-road from the village of Itchen. I had but one little scud during the day: just enough for St. Swithin to swear by; but when I was upon the hills, I saw some showers going about the country. From Selborne, I had first to come to Headley, about five miles. I came to the identical public-house where I took my blind guide last year, who took me such a dance to the southward, and led me up to the top of Hindhead at last. I had no business there. My route was through a sort of hamlet called Churt, which lies along on the side and towards the foot of the north of Hindhead, on which side, also, lies the village of Thursley. A line is hardly more straight than is the road from Headley to Thursley; and a prettier ride I never had in the course of my life. It was not the less interesting from the circumstance of its giving me all the way a full view of Crooksbury Hill, the grand scene of my exploits when I was a taker of the nests of crows and magpies.

At Churt I had, upon my left, three hills out upon the common, called the *Devil's Jumps*. The Unitarians will not believe in the Trinity, because they cannot account for it. Will they come here to Churt, go and look at these "Devil's Jumps," and account to me for the placing of these three hills, in the shape of three rather squat sugar-loaves, along in a line upon this heath, or the placing of a rock-stone upon the top of one of them as big as a church tower? For my part, I cannot account for this placing of these hills. That they should have been formed by mere chance is hardly to be believed. How could waters rolling about have formed such hills? How could such hills have bubbled up from beneath? But, in short, it is all wonderful alike: the stripes of loam running down through the chalk-hills; the circular parcels of loam in the midst of chalk-hills;

the lines of flint running parallel with each other horizontally along the chalk-hills; the flints placed in circles as true as a hair in the chalk-hills; the layers of stone at the bottom of hills of loam; the chalk first soft, then some miles further on becoming chalk-stone; then, after another distance, becoming burr-stone, as they call it; and at last, becoming hard white-stone, fit for any buildings; the sand-stone at Hindhead becoming harder and harder till it becomes very nearly iron in Herefordshire, and quite iron in Wales; but, indeed, they once dug iron out of this very Hindhead. The clouds, coming and settling upon the hills, sinking down and creeping along, at last coming out again in springs, and those becoming rivers. Why, it is all equally wonderful, and as to not believing in this or that, because the thing cannot be proved by logical deduction, why is any man to believe in the existence of a God any more than he is to believe in the doctrine of the Trinity? For my part, I think the "Devil's Jumps," as the people here call them, full as wonderful and no more wonderful than hundreds and hundreds of other wonderful things. It is a strange taste which our ancestors had to ascribe no inconsiderable part of these wonders of nature to the Devil. Not far from the Devil's Jumps is that singular place which resembles a sugar-loaf inverted, hollowed out and an outside rim only left. This is called the "*Devil's Punch Bowl;*" and it is very well known in Wiltshire that the forming, or, perhaps, it is the breaking up of Stonehenge is ascribed to the Devil, and that the mark of one of his feet is now said to be seen in one of the stones.

I got to Thursley about sunset, and without experiencing any inconvenience from the wet. I have mentioned the state of the corn as far as Selborne. On this side of that village I find it much forwarder than I found it between Selborne and Ropley Dean. I am here got into some of the very best barley-land in the kingdom; a fine, buttery, stoneless loam, upon a bottom of sand or sand-stone. Finer barley and tu nip-land it is impossible to see. All the corn is good here. The wheat not a heavy crop; but not a light one; and the barley all the way along from Headley to this place as fine, if not finer, than I ever saw it in my life. Indeed I have not seen a bad field of barley since I left the Wen. The corn is not so forward here as under Portsdown Hill; but some farmers intend to begin reaping wheat in a few days. It is monstrous to suppose that the price of corn will not come down. It must come down, good weather or bad weather. If the weather be bad, it will be so

much the worse for the farmer, as well as for the nation at large, and can be of no benefit to any human being but the Quakers, who must now be pretty busy, measuring the crops all over the kingdom. It will be recollected that, in the Report of the Agricultural Committee of 1821, it appeared, from the evidence of one Hodgson, a partner of Cropper, Benson, and Co., Quakers, of Liverpool, that these Quakers sent a set of corn-gaugers into the several counties, just before every harvest; that these fellows stopped here and there, went into the fields, measured off square yards of wheat, clipped off the ears, and carried them off. These they afterwards packed up and sent off to Cropper and Co. at Liverpool. When the whole of the packets were got together, they were rubbed out, measured, weighed, and an estimate made of the amount of the coming crop. This, according to the confession of Hodgson himself, enabled these Quakers to speculate in corn, with the greater chance of gain. This has been done by these men for many years. Their disregard of worldly things; their desire to lay up treasures in heaven; their implicit yielding to the Spirit; these have induced them to send their corn-gaugers over the country regularly year after year; and I will engage that they are at it at this moment. The farmers will bear in mind that the New Trespass-law, though clearly not intended for any such purpose, enables them to go and seize by the throat any of these gaugers that they may catch in their fields. They could not do this formerly; to cut off standing corn was merely a trespass, for which satisfaction was to be attained by action of law. But now you can seize the caitiff who is come as a spy amongst your corn. Before, he could be off and leave you to find out his name as you could; but now you can lay hold of him, as Mr. Deller did of the duke's man, and bring him before a magistrate at once. I do hope that the farmers will look sharp out for these fellows, who are neither more nor less than so many spies. They hold a great deal of corn; they want blight, mildew, rain, hurricanes; but happy I am to see that they will get no blight, at any rate. The grain is formed; everywhere everybody tells me that there is no blight in any sort of corn, except in the beans.

I have not gone through much of a bean country. The beans that I have seen are some of them pretty good, more of them but middling, and still more of them very indifferent.

I am very happy to hear that that beautiful little bird, the American partridge, has been introduced with success to this neighbourhood, by Mr. Leech at Lea. I am told that they

have been heard whistling this summer; that they have been frequently seen, and that there is no doubt that they have broods of young ones. I tried several times to import some of these birds; but I always lost them, by some means or other, before the time arrived for turning them out. They are a beautiful little partridge, and extremely interesting in all their manners. Some persons call them *quail*. If any one will take a quail and compare it with one of these birds, he will see that they cannot be of the same sort. In my *Year's Residence in America*, I have, I think, clearly proved that these birds are partridges, and not quails. In the United States, north of New Jersey, they are called quail: south and south-west of New Jersey they are called partridges. They have been called quail solely on account of their size; for they have none of the manners of quail belonging to them. Quails assemble in flocks like larks, starlings or rooks. Partridges keep in distinct coveys; that is to say, the brood lives distinct from all other broods until the ensuing spring, when it forms itself into pairs and separates. Nothing can be a distinction more clear than this. Our own partridges stick to the same spot from the time that they are hatched to the time that they pair off, and these American partridges do the same. Quails, like larks, get together in flocks at the approach of winter, and move about according to the season, to a greater or less distance from the place where they were bred. These, therefore, which have been brought to Thursley, are partridges; and if they be suffered to live quietly for a season or two, they will stock the whole of that part of the country, where the delightful intermixture of corn-fields, coppices, heaths, furze-fields, ponds and rivulets, is singularly favourable to their increase.

The turnips cannot fail to be good in such a season and in such land; yet the farmers are most dreadfully tormented with the weeds, and with the superabundant turnips. Here, my Lord Liverpool, is over production indeed! They have sown their fields broad-cast; they have no means of destroying the weeds by the plough; they have no intervals to bury them in; and they *hoe*, or *scratch*, as Mr. Tull calls it; and then comes St. Swithin and sets the weeds and the hoed-up turnips again. Then there is another hoeing or scratching; and then comes St. Swithin again: so that there is hoe, hoe, muddle, muddle, and such a fretting and stewing; such a looking up to Hindhead to see when it is going to be fine; when, if that beautiful field of twenty acres, which I have now before my eyes, and wherein

I see half a dozen men hoeing and poking and muddling, looking up to see how long it is before they must take to their heels to get under the trees to obtain shelter from the coming shower; when, I say, if that beautiful field had been sowed upon ridges at four feet apart, according to the plan in my *Year's Residence*, not a weed would have been to be seen in the field, the turnip-plants would have been three times the size that they now are, the expense would have not been a fourth part of that which has already taken place, and all the muddling and poking about of weeds, and all the fretting and all the stewing would have been spared; and as to the amount of the crop, I am now looking at the best land in England for swedish turnips, and I have no scruple to assert that, if it had been sown after my manner, it would have had a crop double the weight of that which it now will have. I think I know of a field of turnips, sown much later than the field now before me, and sown in rows at nearly four feet apart, which will have a crop double the weight of that which will be produced in yon beautiful field.

REIGATE (SURREY),
Friday, 8 *August*.

At the end of a long, twisting-about ride, but a most delightful ride, I got to this place about nine o'clock in the evening. From Thursley I came to Brook, and there crossed the turnpike-road from London to Chichester through Godalming and Midhurst. Thence I came on, turning upon the left upon the sandhills of Hambledon (in Surrey, mind). On one of these hills is one of those precious jobs, called "*Semaphores*." For what reason this pretty name is given to a sort of telegraph house, stuck up at public expense upon a high hill; for what reason this outlandish name is given to the thing, I must leave the reader to guess; but as to the thing itself, I know that it means this: a pretence for giving a good sum of the public money away every year to some one that the borough-system has condemned this labouring and toiling nation to provide for. The Dead Weight of nearly about six millions sterling a year; that is to say, this curse entailed upon the country on account of the late wars against the liberties of the French people, this Dead Weight is, however, falling, in part, at least, upon the landed jolterheads who were so eager to create it, and who thought that no part of it would fall upon themselves. Theirs has been a grand mistake. They saw the war carried on without any loss or any

cost to themselves. By the means of paper-money and loans, the labouring classes were made to pay the whole of the expenses of the war. When the war was over, the jolterheads thought they would get gold back again to make all secure; and some of them really said, I am told, that it was high time to put an end to the gains of the paper-money people. The jolterheads quite overlooked the circumstance that, in returning to gold, they doubled and trebled what they had to pay on account of the debt, and that, at last, they were bringing the burden upon themselves. Grand, also, was the mistake of the jolterheads, when they approved of the squanderings upon the Dead Weight. They thought that the labouring classes were going to pay the whole of the expenses of the Knights of Waterloo, and of the other heroes of the war. The jolterheads thought that they should have none of this to pay. Some of them had relations belonging to the Dead Weight, and all of them were willing to make the labouring classes toil like asses for the support of those who had what was called "fought and bled" for Gatton and Old Sarum. The jolterheads have now found, however, that a pretty good share of the expense is to fall upon themselves. Their mortgagees are letting them know that *Semaphores* and such pretty things cost something, and that it is unreasonable for a loyal country gentleman, a friend of "social order" and of the "blessed comforts of religion" to expect to have semaphores and to keep his estate too.

This Dead Weight is, unquestionably, a thing such as the world never saw before. Here are not only a tribe of pensioned naval and military officers, commissaries, quarter-masters, pursers, and God knows what besides; not only these, but their wives and children are to be pensioned, after the death of the heroes themselves. Nor does it signify, it seems, whether the hero were married, before he became part of the Dead Weight, or since. Upon the death of the man, the pension is to begin with the wife, and a pension for each child; so that, if there be a large family of children, the family, in many cases, actually gains by the death of the father! Was such a thing as this ever before heard of in the world? Any man that is going to die has nothing to do but to marry a girl to give her a pension for life to be paid out of the sweat of the people; and it was distinctly stated, during the session of Parliament before the last, that the widows and children of insane officers were to have the same treatment as the rest! Here is the envy of surrounding nations and the admiration of the world! In addition, then, to twenty

thousand parsons, more than twenty thousand stockbrokers and stockjobbers perhaps; forty or fifty thousand tax-gatherers; thousands upon thousands of military and naval officers in full pay; in addition to all these, here are the thousands upon thousands of pairs of this Dead Weight, all busily engaged in breeding gentlemen and ladies; and all while Malthus is wanting to put a check upon the breeding of the labouring classes; all receiving a *premium for breeding!* Where is Malthus? Where is this check-population parson! Where are his friends, the Edinburgh Reviewers? Faith, I believe they have given him up. They begin to be ashamed of giving countenance to a man who wants to check the breeding of those who labour, while he says not a word about those two hundred thousand breeding pairs, whose offspring are necessarily to be maintained at the public charge. Well may these fatteners upon the labour of others rail against the Radicals! Let them once take the fan to their hand, and they will, I warrant it, thoroughly purge the floor. However, it is a consolation to know that the jolter-heads who have been the promoters of the measures that have led to these heavy charges; it is a consolation to know that the jolterheads have now to bear part of the charges, and that they cannot any longer make them fall exclusively upon the shoulders of the labouring classes. The disgust that one feels at seeing the whiskers, and hearing the copper heels rattle, is in some measure compensated for by the reflection that the expense of them is now beginning to fall upon the malignant and tyrannical jolter-heads who are the principal cause of their being created.

Bidding the *Semaphore* good-bye, I came along by the church at Hambledon, and then crossed a little common and the turn-pike-road, from London to Chichester through Godalming and Petworth; not Midhurst, as before. The turnpike-road here is one of the best that ever I saw. It is like the road upon Horley Common, near Worth, and like that between Godstone and East Grinstead; and the cause of this is, that it is made of precisely the same sort of stone, which, they tell me, is brought, in some cases, even from Blackdown Hill, which cannot be less, I should think, than twelve miles distant. This stone is brought in great lumps, and then cracked into little pieces. The next village I came to after Hambledon was Hascomb, famous for its *beech*, insomuch that it is called *Hascomb Beech*.

There are two lofty hills here, between which you go out of the sandy country down into the Weald. Here are hills of all heights and forms. Whether they came in consequence of a

boiling of the earth, I know not; but, in form, they very much resemble the bubbles upon the top of the water of a pot which is violently boiling. The soil is a beautiful loam upon a bed of sand. Springs start here and there at the feet of the hills; and little rivulets pour away in all directions. The roads are difficult merely on account of their extreme unevenness; the bottom is everywhere sound, and everything that meets the eye is beautiful; trees, coppices, cornfields, meadows; and then the distant views in every direction. From one spot I saw this morning Hindhead, Blackdown Hill, Lord Egremont's house and park at Petworth, Donnington Hill, over which I went to go on the South Downs, the South Downs near Lewes: the forest at Worth, Turner's Hill, and then all the way round into Kent and back to the Surrey Hills at Godstone. From Hascomb I began to descend into the low country. I had Leith Hill before me; but my plan was, not to go over it or any part of it, but to go along below it in the real Weald of Surrey. A little way back from Hascomb, I had seen a *field of carrots;* and now I was descending into a country where, strictly speaking, only three things will grow well—grass, wheat, and oak trees. At Goose Green, I crossed a turnpike-road leading from Guildford to Horsham and Arundel. I next come, after crossing a canal, to a common called Smithwood Common. Leith Hill was full in front of me, but I turned away to the right, and went through the lanes to come to Ewhurst, leaving Crawley to my right. Before I got to Ewhurst, I crossed another turnpike-road, leading from Guildford to Horsham, and going on to Worthing or some of those towns.

At Ewhurst, which is a very pretty village, and the church of which is most delightfully situated, I treated my horse to some oats, and myself to a rasher of bacon. I had now to come, according to my project, round among the lanes at about a couple of miles distance from the foot of Leith Hill, in order to get first to Ockley, then to Holmwood, and then to Reigate. From Ewhurst the first three miles was the deepest clay that I ever saw, to the best of my recollection. I was warned of the difficulty of getting along; but I was not to be frightened at the sound of clay. Wagons, too, had been dragged along the lanes by some means or another; and where a wagon-horse could go, my horse could go. It took me, however, a good hour and a half to get along these three miles. Now, mind, this is the real *weald*, where the clay is *bottomless;* where there is no stone of any sort underneath, as at Worth and all along from Crawley

to Billingshurst through Horsham. This clayey land is fed with water soaking from the sand-hills; and in this particular place from the immense hill of Leith. All along here the oak-woods are beautiful. I saw scores of acres by the roadside, where the young oaks stood as regularly as if they had been planted. The orchards are not bad along here, and, perhaps, they are a good deal indebted to the shelter they receive. The wheat very good, all through the weald, but backward.

At Ockley I passed the house of a Mr. Steer, who has a great quantity of hay-land, which is very pretty. Here I came along the turnpike-road that leads from Dorking to Horsham. When I got within about two or three miles of Dorking, I turned off to the right, came across the Holmwood, into the lanes leading down to Gadbrook Common, which has of late years been inclosed. It is all clay here; but, in the whole of my ride, I have not seen much finer fields of wheat than I saw here. Out of these lanes I turned up to " Betchworth " (I believe it is), and from Betchworth came along a chalk hill to my left and the sand hills to my right, till I got to this place.

WEN,
Sunday, 10 *August*.

I stayed at Reigate yesterday, and came to the Wen to-day, every step of the way in a rain; as good a soaking as any devotee of St. Swithin ever underwent for his sake. I promised that I would give an account of the effect which the soaking on the South Downs, on Saturday the 2nd instant, had upon the hooping-cough. I do not recommend the remedy to others; but this I will say, that I had a spell of the hooping-cough, the day before I got that soaking, and that I have not had a single spell since; though I have slept in several different beds, and got a second soaking in going from Botley to Easton. The truth is, I believe, that rain upon the South Downs, or at any place near the sea, is by no means the same thing with rain in the interior. No man ever catches cold from getting wet with sea water; and, indeed, I have never known an instance of a man catching cold at sea. The air upon the South Downs is saltish, I dare say; and the clouds may bring something a little partaking of the nature of sea water.

At Thursley I left the turnip-hoers poking and pulling and muddling about the weeds, and wholly incapable, after all, of putting the turnips in anything like the state in which they ought to be. The weeds that had been hoed up twice, were

growing again, and it was the same with the turnips that had been hoed up. In leaving Reigate this morning, it was with great pleasure that I saw a field of swedish turnips, drilled upon ridges at about four feet distance, the whole field as clean as the cleanest of garden ground. The turnips standing at equal distances in the row, and having the appearance of being, in every respect, in a prosperous state. I should not be afraid to bet that these turnips, thus standing in rows at nearly four feet distance, will be a crop twice as large as any in the parish of Thursley, though there is, I imagine, some of the finest turnip-land in the kingdom. It seems strange, that men are not to be convinced of the advantage of the row-culture for turnips. They will insist upon believing that there is some *ground lost.* They will also insist upon believing that the row-culture is the most expensive. How can there be ground lost if the crop be larger? And as to the expense, take one year with another, the broadcast method must be twice as expensive as the other. Wet as it has been to-day, I took time to look well about me as I came along. The wheat, even in this ragamuffin part of the country, is good, with the exception of one piece, which lies on your left hand as you come down from Banstead Down. It is very good at Banstead itself, though that is a country sufficiently poor. Just on the other side of Sutton there is a little good land, and in a place or two I thought I saw the wheat a little blighted. A labouring man told me that it was where the heaps of dung had been laid. The barley here is most beautiful, as, indeed, it is all over the country.

Between Sutton and the Wen there is, in fact, little besides houses, gardens, grass plats and other matters to accommodate the Jews and jobbers, and the mistresses and bastards that are put out a-keeping. But, in a dell, which the turnpike-road crosses about a mile on this side of Sutton, there are two fields of as stiff land, I think, as I ever saw in my life. In summer time this land bakes so hard that they cannot plough it unless it be wet. When you have ploughed it, and the sun comes again, it bakes again. One of these fields had been thus ploughed and cross-ploughed in the month of June, and I saw the ground when it was lying in lumps of the size of portmanteaus, and not very small ones either. It would have been impossible to reduce this ground to small particles, except by the means of sledge hammers. The two fields, to which I alluded just now, are alongside of this ploughed field, and they are now in wheat. The heavy rain of to-day, aided by the south-west wind, made

the wheat bend pretty nearly to lying down; but you shall rarely see two finer fields of wheat. It is red wheat; a coarseish kind, and the straw stout and strong; but the ears are long, broad and full; and I did not perceive anything approaching towards a speck in the straw. Such land as this, such very stiff land, seldom carries a very large crop; but I should think that these fields would exceed four quarters to an acre; and the wheat is by no means so backward as it is in some places. There is no corn, that I recollect, from the spot just spoken of, to almost the street of Kensington. I came up by Earl's Court, where there is, amongst the market gardens, a field of wheat. One would suppose that this must be the finest wheat in the world. By no means. It rained hard, to be sure, and I had not much time for being particular in my survey; but this field appears to me to have some blight in it; and as to crop, whether of corn or of straw, it is nothing to compare to the general run of the wheat in the wealds of Sussex or of Surrey; what, then, is it, if compared with the wheat on the South Downs, under Portsdown Hill, on the sea-flats at Havant and at Tichfield, and along on the banks of the Itchen!

Thus I have concluded this "rural ride," from the Wen and back again to the Wen, being, taking in all the turnings and windings, as near as can be, two hundred miles in length. My objects were to ascertain the state of the crops, both of hops and of corn. The hop-affair is soon settled, for there will be no hops. As to the corn, my remark is this: that on all the clays, on all the stiff lands upon the chalk; on all the rich lands, indeed, but more especially on all the stiff lands, the wheat is as good as I recollect ever to have seen it, and has as much straw. On all the light lands and poor lands, the wheat is thin, and, though not short, by no means good. The oats are pretty good almost everywhere; and I have not seen a bad field of barley during the whole of my ride; though there is no species of soil in England, except that of the fens, over which I have not passed. The state of the farmers is much worse than it was last year, notwithstanding the ridiculous falsehoods of the London newspapers, and the more ridiculous delusion of the jolterheads. In numerous instances the farmers, who continue in their farms, have ceased to farm for themselves, and merely hold the land for the landlords. The delusion caused by the rise of the price of corn has pretty nearly vanished already; and if St. Swithin would but get out of the way with his drippings for about a month, this delusion would disappear, never to return. In the

meanwhile, however, the London newspapers are doing what they can to keep up the delusion; and in a paper called *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, edited, I am told, by a place-hunting lawyer; in that stupid paper of this day, I find the following passage:— "So late as January last, the average price of wheat was 39*s.* per quarter, and on the 29th ult. it was above 62*s.* As it has been rising ever since, it may *now be quoted as little under* 65*s.* So that in this article alone, there is a rise of more than *thirty-five* per cent. Under these circumstances, it is not likely that we shall hear anything of *agricultural distress*. A writer of considerable talents, but no prophet, had *frightened* the kingdom by a confident prediction that wheat, after the 1st of May, would sink to 4*s.* per bushel, and that under the effects of Mr. Peel's bill, and the payments in cash by the Bank of England, it would *never again exceed that price!* Nay, so assured was Mr. Cobbett of the mathematical certainty of his deductions on the subject, that he did not hesitate to make use of the following language: 'And farther, if what I say do not come to pass, I will give any one leave to broil me on a gridiron, and for that purpose I will get one of the best gridirons I can possibly get made, and it shall be hung out as near to my premises as possible, in the Strand, so that it shall be seen by everybody as they pass along.' The 1st of May has now passed, Mr. Peel's bill has not been repealed, and the Bank of England has paid its notes in cash, and yet wheat has risen nearly 40 per cent."

Here is a tissue of falsehoods! But only think of a country being "*frightened*" by the prospect of a low price of provisions! When such an idea can possibly find its way even into the shallow brain of a cracked-skull lawyer; when such an idea can possibly be put into print at any rate, there must be something totally wrong in the state of the country. Here is this lawyer telling his readers that I had frightened the kingdom, by saying that wheat would be sold at four shillings a bushel. Again I say, that there must be something wrong, something greatly out of place, some great disease at work in the community, or such an idea as this could never have found its way *into print*. Into the head of a cracked-skull lawyer, it might, perhaps, have entered at any time; but for it to find its way into print, there must be something in the state of society wholly out of joint. As to the rest of this article, it is a tissue of down-right lies. The writer says that the price of wheat is sixty-five shillings a quarter. The fact is, that on the second instant, the price was fifty-nine shillings and seven-pence: and it is now about two shillings less

than that. Then again, this writer must know, that I never said that wheat would not rise above four shillings a bushel; but that on the contrary I always expressly said that the price would be affected by the seasons, and that I thought that the price would vibrate between three shillings a bushel and seven shillings a bushel. Then again, Peel's bill has, in part, been repealed; if it had not, there could have been no small note in circulation at this day. So that this lawyer is "*All lie.*" In obedience to the wishes of a lady, I have been reading about the plans of Mr. Owen; and though I do not as yet see my way clear as to how we can arrange matters with regard to the young girls and the young fellows, I am quite clear that his institution would be most excellent for the disposal of the lawyers. One of his squares would be at a great distance from all other habitations; in the midst of *Lord Erskine's estate* for instance, mentioned by me in a former ride; and nothing could be so fitting, his lordship long having been called *the father of the Bar;* in the midst of this estate, with no town or village within miles of them, we might have one of Mr. Owen's squares, and set the bob-tailed brotherhood most effectually at work. Pray, can any one pretend to say that a spade or shovel would not become the hands of this blunder-headed editor of *Bell's Messenger* better than a pen? However, these miserable falsehoods can cause the delusion to exist but for a very short space of time.

The quantity of the harvest will be great. If the quality be bad, owing to wet weather, the price will be still lower than it would have been in case of dry weather. The price, therefore, must come down; and if the newspapers were conducted by men who had any sense of honour or shame, those men must be covered with confusion.

RIDE THROUGH THE NORTH-EAST PART OF SUSSEX, AND ALL ACROSS KENT, FROM THE WEALD OF SUSSEX, TO DOVER

WORTH (SUSSEX),
Friday, 29 August, 1823.

I HAVE so often described the soil and other matters appertaining to the country between the Wen and this place, that my readers will rejoice at being spared the repetition here. As to the harvest, however, I find that they were deluged here on Tuesday last, though we got but little, comparatively, at Kensington. Between Mitcham and Sutton they were making wheat-ricks. The corn has not been injured here worth notice. Now and then an ear in the butts *grown;* and grown wheat is a sad thing! You may almost as well be without wheat altogether. However, very little harm has been done here as yet.

At Walton Heath I saw a man who had suffered most terribly from the *game-laws*. He saw me going by, and came out to tell me his story; and a horrible story it is, as the public will find, when it shall come regularly and fully before them. Apropos of game-works: I asked who was *the judge* at the Somersetshire Assizes, the other day. A correspondent tells me that it was Judge Burrough. I am well aware that, as this correspondent observes, "gamekeepers ought not to be *shot at.*" This is not the point. It is not a *gamekeeper* in the usual sense of that word; it is a man seizing another without a warrant. That is what it is; and this, and Old Ellenborough's Act, are *new things* in England, and things of which the laws of England, "the birthright of Englishmen," knew nothing. Yet farmer Voke ought not to have shot at the gamekeeper, or seizer, without warrant: he ought not to have shot at him; and he would not had it not been for the law that put him in danger of being transported on the evidence of this man. So that it is, clearly, the terrible law that, in these cases, produces the violence. Yet, admire with me, reader, the singular turn of the mind of Sir James Mackintosh, whose whole soul appears to have been long bent on the "amelioration of the Penal Code," and who has never said one single word about this new and most terrible

part of it! Sir James, after years of incessant toil, has, I believe, succeeded in getting a repeal of the laws for the punishment of "witchcraft," of the very existence of which laws the nation was unacquainted. But the devil a word has he said about the *game-laws*, which put into the gaols a full third part of the prisoners, and to hold which prisoners the gaols have actually been enlarged in all parts of the country! Singular turn of mind! Singular "humanity!" Ah! Sir James knows very well what he is at. He understands the state of his constituents at Knaresborough too well to meddle with game-laws. He has a "friend," I dare say, who knows more about game-laws than he does. However, the poor *witches* are safe: thank Sir James for that. Mr. Carlile's sister and Mrs. Wright are in gaol, and may be there for life! But the poor witches are safe. No hypocrite; no base pretender to religion; no atrocious, savage, *black*-hearted wretch, who would murder half mankind rather than not live on the labours of others; no monster of this kind can now persecute the poor witches, thanks to Sir James, who has obtained security for them in all their rides through the air, and in all their sailings upon the horseponds!

TONBRIDGE WELLS (KENT),
Saturday, 30 *August*.

I came from Worth about seven this morning, passed through East Grinstead, over Holthigh Common, through Ashurst, and thence to this place. The morning was very fine, and I left them at Worth making a wheat-rick. There was no show for rain till about one o'clock, as I was approaching Ashurst. The shattering that came at first I thought nothing of; but the clouds soon grew up all round, and the rain set in for the afternoon. The buildings at Ashurst (which is the first parish in Kent on quitting Sussex) are a mill, an alehouse, a church, and about six or seven other houses. I stopped at the alehouse to bait my horse; and, for want of bacon, was compelled to put up with bread and cheese for myself. I waited in vain for the rain to cease or to slacken, and the *want of bacon* made me fear as to a *bed*. So, about five o'clock, I, without greatcoat, got upon my horse, and came to this place, just as fast and no faster than if it had been fine weather. A very fine soaking! If the South Downs have left any little remnant of the hooping cough, *this* will take it away to be sure. I made not the least haste to get out of the rain, I stopped, here and there, as usual, and asked

questions about the corn, the hops, and other things. But the moment I got in I got a good fire, and set about the work of drying in good earnest. It costing me nothing for drink, I can afford to have plenty of fire. I have not been in the house an hour; and all my clothes are now as dry as if they had never been wet. It is not getting wet that hurts you, if you keep moving while you are wet. It is the suffering of yourself to be *inactive*, while the wet clothes are on your back.

The country that I have come over to-day is a very pretty one. The soil is a pale yellow loam, looking like brick earth, but rather sandy; but the bottom is a softish stone. Now and then, where you go through hollow ways (as at East Grinstead) the sides are solid rock. And, indeed, the rocks sometimes (on the sides of hills) show themselves above ground, and, mixed amongst the woods, make very interesting objects. On the road from the Wen to Brighton, through Godstone and over Turner's Hill, and which road I crossed this morning in coming from Worth to East Grinstead; on that road, which goes through Lindfield, and which is by far the pleasantest coach-road from the Wen to Brighton; on the side of this road, on which coaches now go from the Wen to Brighton, there is a long chain of rocks, or, rather, rocky hills, with trees growing amongst the rocks, or apparently out of them, as they do in the woods near Ross in Herefordshire, and as they do in the Blue Mountains in America, where you can see no earth at all; where all seems rock, and yet where the trees grow most beautifully. At the place, of which I am now speaking, that is to say, by the side of this pleasant road to Brighton, and between Turner's Hill and Lindfield, there is a rock, which they call "*Big-upon-Little;*" that is to say, a rock upon another, having nothing else to rest upon, and the top one being longer and wider than the top of the one it lies on. This big rock is no trifling concern, being as big, perhaps, as a not very small house. How, then, *came* this big upon little? What lifted up the big? It balances itself naturally enough; but what tossed it up? I do not like to *pay* a parson for teaching me, while I have "*God's own word*" to teach me; but if any parson will tell me *how* big *came* upon little, I do not know that I shall grudge him a trifle. And if he cannot tell me this: if he say, All that we have to do is to *admire* and *adore;* then I tell him, that I can admire and adore without his *aid,* and that I will keep my money in my pocket.

To return to the soil of this country, it is such a loam as I have described with this stone beneath; sometimes the top soil

is lighter and sometimes heavier; sometimes the stone is harder and sometimes softer; but this is the general character of it all the way from Worth to Tonbridge Wells. This land is what may be called the *middle kind*. The wheat crop about 20 to 24 bushels to an acre, on an average of years. The grass fields not bad, and all the fields will grow grass; I mean make upland meadows. The woods good, though not of the finest. The land seems to be about thus divided: three-tenths *woods*, two-tenths *grass*, a tenth of a tenth *hops*, and the rest *corn-land*. These make very pretty surface, especially as it is a rarity to see a *pollard tree*, and as nobody is so beastly as to *trim trees up* like the elms near the Wen. The country has no *flat* spot in it; yet the hills are not high. My road was a gentle rise or a gentle descent all the way. Continual new views strike the eye; but there is little variety in them: all is pretty, but nothing strikingly beautiful. The labouring people look pretty well. They have pigs. They invariably do best in the *woodland* and *forest* and *wild* countries. Where the mighty grasper has *all under his eye*, they can get but little. These are cross-roads, mere parish roads; but they are very good. While I was at the alehouse at Ashurst, I heard some labouring men talking about the roads; and they having observed that the parish roads had become so wonderfully better within the last seven or eight years, I put in my word, and said: "It is odd enough, too, that the parish roads should become *better and better* as the farmers become *poorer and poorer!*" They looked at one another, and put on a sort of *expecting* look; for my observation seemed to *ask for information*. At last one of them said, "Why, it is because the farmers *have not the money to employ men*, and so they are put on the roads." "Yes," said I, "but they must pay them there." They said no more, and only *looked hard at one another*. They had, probably, never thought about this before. They seemed puzzled by it, and well they might, for it has bothered the wigs of boroughmongers, parsons and lawyers, and will bother them yet. Yes, this country now contains a body of occupiers of the land, who suffer the land to go to decay for want of means to pay a sufficiency of labourers; and, at the same time, are compelled to pay those labourers for doing that which is of no use to the occupiers! There, Collective Wisdom! Go: brag of that! Call that "the envy of surrounding nations and the admiration of the world."

This is a great *nut* year. I saw them hanging very thick on the way-side during a great part of this day's ride; and they

put me in mind of the old saying, "That a great *nut* year is a great year for that class whom the lawyers, in their Latin phrase, call the 'sons and daughters of nobody.'" I once asked a farmer, who had often been overseer of the poor, whether he really thought that there was any ground for this old saying, or whether he thought it was mere banter? He said that he was sure that there were good grounds for it; and he even cited instances in proof, and mentioned one particular year, when there were four times as many of this class as ever had been born in a year in the parish before; an effect which he ascribed solely to the crop of nuts of the year before. Now, if this be the case, ought not Parson Malthus, Lawyer Scarlett, and the rest of that tribe, to turn their attention to the nut-trees? The *Vice Society* too, with that holy man Wilberforce at its head, ought to look out sharp after these mischievous nut-trees. A law to cause them all to be grubbed up, and thrown into the fire, would, certainly, be far less unreasonable than many things which we have seen and heard of.

The corn from Worth to this place is pretty good. The farmers say it is a small crop; other people, and especially the labourers, say that it is a good crop. I think it is not large and not small; about an average crop; perhaps rather less, for the land is rather light, and this is not a year for light lands. But there is no blight, no mildew, in spite of all the prayers of the "loyal." The wheat about a third cut, and none carried. No other corn begun upon. Hops very bad till I came within a few miles of this place, when I saw some, which I should suppose, would bear about six hundredweight to the acre. The orchards no great things along here. Some apples here and there; but small and stunted. I do not know that I have seen to-day any one *tree* well loaded with fine apples.

TENTERDEN (KENT),
Sunday, 31 *August*.

Here I am after a most delightful ride of twenty-four miles, through Frant, Lamberhurst, Goudhurst, Milkhouse Street, Benenden, and Rolvenden. By making a great stir in rousing waiters and "boots" and maids, and by leaving behind me the name of "a d—d noisy, troublesome fellow," I got clear of "*the Wells*," and out of the contagion of its Wen-engendered inhabitants, time enough to meet the first rays of the sun, on the hill that you come up in order to get to Frant, which is a most beautiful little village at about two miles from "*the*

Wells." Here the land belongs, I suppose, to Lord Abergavenny, who has a mansion and park here. A very pretty place, and kept, seemingly, in very nice order. I saw here what I never saw before: the bloom of the *common heath* we wholly overlook; but it is a very pretty thing; and here, when the plantations were made, and as they grew up, heath was *left to grow* on the sides of the roads in the plantations. The heath is not so much of a dwarf as we suppose. This is four feet high; and, being in full bloom, it makes the prettiest border that can be imagined. This place of Lord Abergavenny is, altogether, a very pretty place; and so far from grudging him the possession of it, I should feel pleasure at seeing it in his possession, and should pray God to preserve it to him, and from the unholy and ruthless touch of the Jews and jobbers; but I cannot forget this lord's *sinecure!* I cannot forget that he has, for doing nothing, received of the public money more than sufficient to buy such an estate as this. I cannot forget that this estate may, perhaps, have actually been bought with that money. Not being able to forget this, and with my mind filled with reflections of this sort, I got up to the church at Frant, and just by I saw a *School-house* with this motto on it: "*Train up a child as he should walk*," etc. That is to say, try to breed up the boys and girls of this village in such a way that they may never know anything about Lord Abergavenny's sinecure; or, knowing about it, that they may think it *right* that he should roll in wealth coming to him in such a way. The projectors deceive nobody but themselves! They are working for the destruction of their own system. In looking back over "*the Wells*" I cannot but admire the operation of the gambling system. This little *toadstool* is a thing created entirely by the gamble; and the means have, hitherto, come out of the wages of labour. These means are *now* coming out of the farmer's capital and out of the landlord's estate; the labourers are stripped; they can give no more; the saddle is now fixing itself upon the right back.

In quitting Frant I descended into a country more woody than that behind me. I asked a man whose fine woods those were that I pointed to, and I fairly gave *a start* when he said, the Marquis Camden's. Milton talks of the *Leviathan* in a way to make one draw in one's shoulders with fear; and I appeal to any one, who has been at sea when a whale has come near the ship, whether he has not, at the first sight of the monster, made a sort of involuntary movement, as if to *get out of the way*. Such was the movement that I now made. However, soon coming

to myself, on I walked my horse by the side of my pedestrian informant. It is Bayham Abbey that this great and awful sinecure placeman owns in this part of the county. Another great estate he owns near Sevenoaks. But here alone he spreads his length and breadth over more, they say, than ten or twelve thousand acres of land, great part of which consists of oak-woods. But, indeed, what estates might he not purchase? Not much less than thirty years he held a place, a sinecure place, that yielded him about thirty thousand pounds a-year! At any rate, he, according to Parliamentary accounts, has received, of public money, little short of a million of guineas. These, at 30 guineas an acre, would buy thirty thousand acres of land. And what did he have all this money *for?* Answer me that question, Wilberforce, you who called him a "bright star," when he gave up *a part* of his enormous sinecure. He gave up all but the *trifling* sum of nearly three thousand pounds a-year! What a bright star! And *when* did he give it up? When the *Radicals* had made the country ring with it. When his name was, by their means, getting into every mouth in the kingdom; when every radical speech and petition contained the name of Camden. Then it was, and not till then, that this "bright star," let fall part of its "brilliancy." So that Wilberforce ought to have thanked the *Radicals*, and not Camden. When he let go his grasp, he talked of the merits of his father. His father was a lawyer, who was exceedingly well paid for what he did without a million of money being given to his son. But there is something rather out of common-place to be observed about this father. This father was the contemporary of Yorke, who became Lord Hardwicke. Pratt and Yorke, and the merit of Pratt was, that he was constantly opposed to the principles of Yorke. Yorke was called a *Tory* and Pratt a *Whig;* but the devil of it was, both got to be lords; and, in one shape or another, the families of both have, from that day to this, been receiving great parcels of the public money! Beautiful system! The Tories were for *rewarding Yorke;* the Whigs were for *rewarding Pratt.* The ministers (all in good time!) humoured both parties; and the stupid people, divided into *tools of two factions*, actually applauded, now one part of them, and now the other part of them, the squandering away of their substance. They were like the man and his wife in the fable who, to spite one another, gave away to the cunning mumper the whole of their dinner bit by bit. *This species* of folly is over at any rate. The people are no longer fools enough to be *partisans.* They make no

distinctions. The nonsense about "court party" and "country party" is at an end. Who thinks anything more of the name of *Erskine* than of that of *Scott?* As the people told the two factions at Maidstone, when they, with Camden at their head, met to congratulate the Regent on the marriage of his daughter, "they are all tarred with the same brush;" and tarred with the same brush they must be, until there be a real reform of the parliament. However, the people are no longer deceived. They are not duped. They *know* that the thing is that which it is. The people of the present day would laugh at disputes (carried on with so much gravity!) about the *principles* of Pratt and the *principles* of Yorke. "You are all tarred with the same brush," said the sensible people of Maidstone; and, in those words, they expressed the opinion of the whole country, boroughmongers and tax-eaters excepted.

The country from Frant to Lamberhurst is very woody. I should think five-tenths woods and three grass. The corn, what there is of it, is about the same as farther back. I saw a hop-garden just before I got to Lamberhurst, which will have about two or three hundredweight to the acre. This Lamberhurst is a very pretty place. It lies in a valley with beautiful hills round it. The pastures about here are very fine; and the roads are as smooth and as handsome as those in Windsor Park.

From the last-mentioned place I had three miles to come to Goudhurst, the tower of the church of which is pretty lofty of itself, and the church stands upon the very summit of one of the steepest and highest hills in this part of the country. The church-yard has a view of about twenty-five miles in diameter; and the whole is over a very fine country, though the character of the country differs little from that which I have before described.

Before I got to Goudhurst, I passed by the side of a village called Horsenden, and saw some very large hop-grounds away to my right. I should suppose there were fifty acres; and they appeared to me to look pretty well. I found that they belonged to a Mr. Springate, and people say that it will grow half as many hops as he grew last year, while people in general will not grow a tenth part so many. This hop growing and dealing have always been a *gamble;* and this puts me in mind of the horrible treatment which Mr. Waddington received on account of what was called his *forestalling* in hops! It is useless to talk: as long as that gentleman remains uncompensated for his sufferings, there can be no hope of better days. Ellenborough was his counsel; he afterwards became judge; but nothing was

ever done to undo what Kenyon had done. However, Mr. Waddington will, I trust, yet live to obtain justice. He has, in the meanwhile, given the thing now and then a blow; and he has the satisfaction to see it reel about like a drunken man.

I got to Goudhurst to breakfast, and as I heard that the Dean of Rochester was to preach a sermon in behalf of the *National Schools*, I stopped to hear him. In waiting for his reverence I went to the Methodist Meeting-house, where I found the Sunday school boys and girls asembled, to the almost filling of the place, which was about thirty feet long and eighteen wide. The "minister" was not come, and the schoolmaster was reading to the children out of a *tract-book*, and shaking the brimstone bag at them most furiously. This schoolmaster was a *sleek*-looking young fellow: his skin perfectly tight: well fed, I'll warrant him: and he has discovered the way of living, without work, on the labour of those that do work. There were 36 little fellows in smock-frocks, and about as many girls listening to him; and I dare say he eats as much meat as any ten of them. By this time the *dean*, I thought, would be coming on; and, therefore, to the church I went; but to my great disappointment, I found that the parson was operating *preparatory* to the appearance of the dean, who was to come on in the afternoon, when I, agreeably to my plan, must be off. The sermon was from 2 Chronicles xxxi. 21., and the words of this text described King Hezekiah as a most *zealous man*, doing whatever he did *with all his heart*. I write from *memory*, mind, and, therefore, I do not pretend to quote exact words; and I may be a little in error, perhaps, as to chapter or verse. The object of the preacher was to hold up to his hearers the example of Hezekiah, and particularly in the case of the school affair. He called upon them to subscribe with all their hearts; but, alas! how little of *persuasive power* was there in what he said! No effort to make them see *the use of the schools*. No inducement *proved* to exist. No argument, in short, nor anything to move. No appeal either to the *reason*, or to the *feeling*. All was general, commonplace, cold observation; and that, too, in language which the far greater part of the hearers could not understand. This church is about 110 feet long and 70 feet wide in the clear. It would hold *three thousand people*, and it had in it 214, besides 53 Sunday School or National School boys; and these sat together, in a sort of lodge, up in a corner, 16 feet long and 10 feet wide. Now, will any Parson Malthus, or anybody else, have the impudence to tell me that this church was built for the use of a

population not more numerous than the present? To be sure, when this church was built, there could be no idea of a Methodist meeting coming to *assist* the church, and as little, I dare say, was it expected that the preachers in the church would ever call upon the faithful to subscribe money to be sent up to one Joshua Watson (living in a Wen) to be by him laid out in "promoting Christian knowledge;" but, at any rate, the Methodists cannot take away above four or five hundred; and what, then, was this great church built *for*, if there were no more people, in those days, at Goudhurst, than there are now? It is very true that the *labouring* people have, in a great measure, ceased to go to church. There were scarcely any of that class at this great country church to-day. I do not believe there were *ten*. I can remember when they were so numerous that the parson could not attempt to begin till the rattling of their nailed shoes ceased. I have seen, I am sure, five hundred boys and men in smock-frocks coming out of church at one time. To-day has been a fine day: there would have been many at church to-day, if ever there are; and here I have another to add to the many things that convince me that the labouring classes have, in great part, ceased to go to church; that their way of thinking and feeling with regard to both church and clergy are totally changed; and that there is now very little *moral hold* which the latter possess. This preaching for money to support the schools is a most curious affair altogether. The king sends a *circular letter* to the bishops (as I understand it) to cause subscriptions for the schools; and the bishops (if I am rightly told) tell the parish clergy to send the money, when collected, to Joshua Watson, the treasurer of a society in the Wen, "for promoting Christian knowledge!" What! the church and all its clergy put into motion to get money from the people, to send up to one Joshua Watson, a wine-merchant, or late a wine-merchant, in Mincing Lane, Fenchurch Street, London, in order that the said wine-merchant may apply the money to the "promoting of Christian knowledge!" What! all the deacons, priests, curates perpetual, vicars, rectors, prebends, doctors, deans, archdeacons and fathers in God, right reverend and most reverend; all! yea all, engaged in getting money together to send to a wine-merchant that he may lay it out in the promoting of Christian knowledge *in their own flocks!* Oh, brave wine-merchant! What a prince of godliness must this wine-merchant be! I say wine-merchant, or late wine-merchant, of Mincing Lane, Fenchurch Street, London. And, for God's sake, some good parson, do send me up

a copy of the king's circular, and also of the bishop's order to send the money to Joshua Watson; for some precious sport we will have with Joshua and his "society" before we have done with them!

After "service" I mounted my horse and jogged on through Milkhouse Street to Benenden, where I passed through the estate, and in sight of the house of Mr. Hodges. He keeps it very neat and has planted a good deal. His *ash* do very well; but the *chesnut* do not, as it seems to me. He ought to have the American chesnut, if he have any. If I could discover *an everlasting hop-pole*, and one, too, that would grow faster even than the ash, would not these Kentish hop-planters put me in the Kalendar along with their famous Saint Thomas of Canterbury? We shall see this, one of these days.

Coming through the village of Benenden, I heard a man at my right talking very loud about *houses! houses! houses!* It was a Methodist parson, in a house close by the road side. I pulled up, and stood still, in the middle of the road, but looking, in silent soberness, into the window (which was open) of the room in which the preacher was at work. I believe my stopping rather disconcerted him; for he got into shocking *repetition*. "Do you *know*," said he, laying great stress on the word *know*: "do you *know*, that you have ready for you houses, houses I say; I say do you know; do you know that you have houses in the heavens not made with hands? Do you know this from *experience?* Has the blessed Jesus *told you so?*" And on he went to say that, if Jesus had told them so, they would be saved, and that if he had not, and did not, they would be damned. Some girls whom I saw in the room, plump and rosy as could be, did not seem at all daunted by these menaces; and indeed, they appeared to me to be thinking much more about getting houses for themselves *in this world first;* just to *see a little* before they entered, or endeavoured to enter, or even thought much about, those "*houses*" of which the parson was speaking: houses with pig-styes and little snug gardens attached to them, together with all the other domestic and conjugal circumstances, these girls seemed to me to be preparing themselves for. The truth is, these fellows have no power on the minds of any but the miserable.

Scarcely had I proceeded a hundred yards from the place where this fellow was bawling, when I came to the very situation which he ought to have occupied, I mean the *stocks*, which the people of Benenden have, with singular humanity, fitted up with

a *bench*, so that the patient, while he is receiving the benefit of the remedy, is not exposed to the danger of catching cold by sitting, as in other places, upon the ground, always damp, and sometimes actually wet. But I would ask the people of Benenden what is the *use* of this humane precaution, and, indeed, what is the use of the stocks themselves, if, while a fellow is ranting and bawling in the manner just described, at the distance of a hundred yards from the stocks, the stocks (as is here actually the case) are almost hidden by grass and nettles? This, however, is the case all over the country; not nettles and grass indeed smothering the stocks, but I never see any feet peeping through the holes, anywhere, though I find Methodist parsons everywhere, and though *the law compels the parishes to keep up* all the pairs of stocks that exist in all parts of them; and, in some parishes, they have to keep up several pairs. I am aware that a good part of the use of the stocks is the *terror* they ought to produce. I am not supposing that they are of no use because not continually furnished with legs. But there is a wide difference between *always* and *never;* and it is clear that a fellow, who has had the stocks under his eye all his lifetime, and has *never* seen a pair of feet peeping through them, will stand no more in awe of the stocks than rooks do of an old shoy-hoy, or than the ministers or their agents do of Hobhouse and Burdett. Stocks that never pinch a pair of ankles are like ministerial responsibility; a thing to talk about, but for no other use; a mere mockery; a thing laughed at by those whom it is intended to keep in check. It is time that the stocks were again *in use*, or that the expense of keeping them up were put an end to.

This mild, this gentle, this good-humoured sort of correction is *not enough* for our present rulers. But mark the consequence; gaols ten times as big as formerly; houses of correction; treadmills; the hulks; and the country filled with *spies* of one sort and another, *game-spies*, or other spies, and if a hare or pheasant come to an untimely death, *police-officers* from the Wen are not unfrequently called down to find out and secure the bloody offender! *Mark this*, Englishmen! Mark how we take to those things, which we formerly ridiculed in the French; and take them up too just as that brave and spirited people have shaken them off! I saw, not long ago, an account of a Wen police-officer being sent into the country, where he assumed *a disguise*, joined some poachers (as they are called), got into their secrets, went out in the night with them, and then (having laid his plans with the game-people) assisted to take them and convict them.

What! is this *England!* Is this the land of "manly hearts?" Is this the country that laughed at the French for their submissions? What! are police-officers kept for this? Does the law say so? However, thank God Almighty the estates are passing away into the hands of those who have had borrowed from them the money to uphold this monster of a system. The Debt! The blessed Debt will, at last, restore to us freedom.

Just after I quitted Benenden, I saw some bunches of *straw* lying upon the quickset hedge of a cottage garden. I found, upon inquiry, that they were bunches of the straw of grass. Seeing a face through the window of the cottage, I called out and asked what that straw was for. The person within said, it was to make *Leghorn-plat* with. I asked him (it was a young man) how he knew how to do it. He said he had got a little book that had been made by Mr. Cobbett. I told him that I was the man, and should like to see some of his work; and asked him to bring it out to me, I being afraid to tie my horse. He told me that he was a *cripple*, and that he could not come out. At last I went in, leaving my horse to be held by a little girl. I found a young man, who has been a cripple for fourteen years. Some ladies in the neighbourhood had got him the book, and his family had got him the grass. He had made some very nice plat, and he had knitted the greater part of the crown of a bonnet, and had done the whole very nicely, though, as to the knitting, he had proceeded in a way to make it very tedious. He was knitting upon a block. However, these little matters will soon be set to rights. There will soon be persons to teach knitting in all parts of the country. I left this unfortunate young man with the pleasing reflection that I had, in all likelihood, been the cause of his gaining a good living, by his labour, during the rest of his life. How long will it be before my calumniators, the false and infamous London press, will take the whole of it together, and leave out its evil, do as much good as my pen has done in this one instance! How long will it be ere the ruffians, the base hirelings, the infamous traders who own and who conduct that press; how long ere one of them, or all of them together, shall cause a cottage to smile; shall add one ounce to the meal of the labouring man!

Rolvenden was my next village, and thence I could see the lofty church of Tenterden on the top of a hill at three miles distance. This Rolvenden is a very beautiful village; and, indeed, such are all the places along here. These villages are not like those in the *iron* counties, as I call them; that is, the

counties of flint and chalk. Here the houses have gardens in front of them as well as behind; and there is a good deal of show and finery about them and their gardens. The high roads are without a stone in them; and everything looks like *gentility*. At this place, I saw several *arbutuses* in one garden, and much finer than we see them in general; though, mind, this is no proof of a mild climate; for the arbutus is a native of one much colder than that of England, and indeed than that of Scotland.

Coming from Benenden to Rolvenden I saw some swedish turnips, and, strange as the reader will think it, the first I saw after leaving Worth! The reason I take to be this: the farms are all furnished with grass fields as in Devonshire about Honiton. These grass fields give hay for the sheep and cattle in winter, or, at any rate, they do all that is not done by the white turnips. It may be a question, whether it would be more *profitable* to break up, and sow swedes; but this is the reason of their not being cultivated along here. White turnips are more easily got than swedes; they may be sown later; and, with good hay, they will fat cattle and sheep; but the swedes will do this business without hay. In Norfolk and Suffolk the land is not generally of a nature to make hay-fields. Therefore the people there resort to swedes. This has been a sad time for these hay-farmers, however, all along here. They have but just finished haymaking; and I see, all along my way, from East Grinstead to this place, hay-ricks the colour of dirt and *smoking* like dung-heaps.

Just before I got to this place (Tenterden), I crossed a bit of marsh land, which I found, upon inquiry, is a sort of little branch or spray running out of that immense and famous tract of country called *Romney Marsh*, which, I find, I have to cross to-morrow, in order to get to Dover, along by the seaside, through Hythe and Folkestone.

This Tenterden is a market town, and a singularly bright spot. It consists of one street, which is, in some places, more, perhaps, than two hundred feet wide. On one side of the street the houses have gardens before them, from 20 to 70 feet deep. The town is upon a hill; the afternoon was very fine, and just as I rose the hill and entered the street, the people had come out of church and were moving along towards their houses. It was a very fine sight. *Shabbily-dressed people do not go to church.* I saw, in short, drawn out before me, the dress and beauty of the town; and a great many very, very pretty girls I saw; and saw them, too, in their best attire. I remember the girls in the

Pays de Caux, and, really, I think those of Tenterden resemble them. I do not know why they should not; for there is the *Pays de Caux*, only just over the water; just opposite this very place.

The hops about here are not so very bad. They say that one man, near this town, will have eight tons of hops upon ten acres of land! This is a great crop any year: a very great crop. This man may, perhaps, sell his hops for 1600 pounds! What a *gambling* concern it is! However, such hop-growing always was and always must be. It is a thing of perfect hazard.

The church at this place is a very large and fine old building. The tower stands upon a base thirty feet square. Like the church at Goudhurst, it will hold three thousand people. And, let it be observed, that, when these churches were built, people had not yet thought of cramming them with *pews*, as a stable is filled with stalls. Those who built these churches had no idea that worshipping God meant going to *sit* to hear a man talk out what he called preaching. By *worship*, they meant very different things; and, above all things, when they had made a fine and noble building, they did not dream of disfiguring the inside of it by filling its floor with large and deep boxes made of deal boards. In short, the floor was the place for the worshippers to stand or to kneel; and there was *no distinction*; no *high* place and no *low* place; all were upon a level *before God* at any rate. Some were not stuck into pews lined with green or red cloth, while others were crammed into corners to stand erect, or sit on the floor. These odious distinctions are of Protestant origin and growth. This lazy lolling in pews we owe to what is called the *Reformation*. A place filled with benches and boxes looks like an eating or a drinking place; but certainly not like a place of worship. A Frenchman, who had been driven from St. Domingo to Philadelphia by the Wilberforces of France, went to church along with me one Sunday. He had never been in a Protestant place of *worship* before. Upon looking round him, and seeing everybody comfortably seated, while a couple of good stoves were keeping the place as warm as a slack oven, he exclaimed: "*Pardi! On sert Dieu bien à son aise ici!*" That is: "Egad! they serve God very much at their ease here!" I always think of this, when I see a church full of pews; as, indeed, is now always the case with our churches. Those who built these churches had no idea of this: they made their calculations as to the people to be contained in them, not making any allowance for *deal boards*. I often wonder how it is that the present parsons are not ashamed to call the churches *theirs!* They

must know the origin of them; and how they can look at them, and, at the same time, revile the Catholics, is astonishing to me.

This evening I have been to the Methodist Meeting-house. I was attracted, fairly drawn all down the street, by the *singing*. When I came to the place the parson was got into prayer. His hands were clenched together and held up, his face turned up and back so as to be nearly parallel with the ceiling, and he was bawling away with his "do thou," and "mayest thou," and "may we," enough to stun one. Noisy, however, as he was, he was unable to fix the attention of a parcel of girls in the gallery, whose eyes were all over the place, while his eyes were so devoutly shut up. After a deal of this rigmarole called prayer, came the *preachy*, as the negroes call it; and a *preachy* it really was. Such a mixture of whining cant and of foppish affectation I scarcely ever heard in my life. The text was (I speak from memory) one of Saint Peter's epistles (if he have more than one) the 18th chapter and 4th verse. The words were to this amount: that, *as the righteous would be saved with difficulty, what must become of the ungodly and the sinner!* After as neat a dish of nonsense and of impertinences as one could wish to have served up, came the distinction between the *ungodly* and the *sinner*. The sinner was one who did moral wrong; the ungodly, one who did no moral wrong, but who was not regenerated. *Both*, he positively told us, were to be damned. One was just as bad as the other. Moral rectitude was to do nothing in saving the man. He was to be damned, unless born again, and how was he to be born again, unless he came to the regeneration shop, and gave the fellows money? He distinctly told us that a man perfectly moral might be damned; and that "the vilest of the vile, and the basest of the base" (I quote his very words) "would be saved if they became regenerate; and that colliers, whose souls had been as black as their coals, had by regeneration become bright as the saints that sing before God and the Lamb." And will the *Edinburgh Reviewers* again find fault with me for cutting at this bawling, canting crew? Monstrous it is to think that the clergy of the church really encourage these roving fanatics. The church seems aware of its loss of credit and of power. It seems willing to lean even upon these men; who, be it observed, seem, on their part, to have taken the church under their protection. They always pray for the *Ministry;* I mean the ministry at *Whitehall*. They are most "loyal" souls. The THING *protects them;* and they lend their aid *in upholding the* THING. What silly, nay, what base

creatures those must be, who really give their money, give their pennies, which ought to buy bread for their own children; who thus give their money to these lazy and impudent fellows, who call themselves ministers of God, who prowl about the country living easy and jovial lives upon the fruit of the labour of other people. However, it is, in some measure, these people's fault. If they did not give, the others could not receive. I wish to see every labouring man well fed and well clad; but, really, the man who gives any portion of his earnings to these fellows deserves to want: he deserves to be pinched with hunger: misery is the just reward of this worst species of prodigality.

The *singing* makes a great part of what passes in these meeting-houses. A number of women and girls singing together make very sweet sounds. Few men there are who have not felt *the power* of sounds of this sort. Men are sometimes pretty nearly bewitched without knowing how. *Eyes* do a good deal, but *tongues* do more. We may talk of sparkling eyes and snowy bosoms as long as we please; but what are these with a croaking, masculine voice? The parson seemed to be fully aware of the importance of this part of the "service." The subject of his hymn was something about *love:* Christian love; love of Jesus; but still it was about *love;* and the parson read, or gave out, the verses, in a singularly *soft* and *sighing* voice, with his head on one side, and giving it rather a swing. I am satisfied that the singing forms great part of the *attraction.* Young girls like to sing; and young men like to hear them. Nay, old ones too; and, as I have just said, it was the singing that *drew* me three hundred yards down the street at Tenterden, to enter this meeting-house. By the by, I wrote some hymns myself, and published them in "*Twopenny Trash.*" I will give any Methodist parson leave to put them into his hymn book.

FOLKESTONE (KENT),
Monday (*Noon*), 1 *Sept.*

I have had a fine ride, and I suppose the Quakers have had a fine time of it at Mark Lane.

From Tenterden I set off at five o'clock, and got to Appledore after a most delightful ride, the high land upon my right, and the low land on my left. The fog was so thick and white along some of the low land that I should have taken it for water, if little hills and trees had not risen up through it here and there. Indeed, the view was very much like those which are presented in the deep valleys, near the great rivers in New Brunswick

(North America) at the time when the snows melt in the spring, and when, in sailing over those valleys, you look down from the side of your canoe, and see the lofty woods beneath you! I once went in a log canoe across a *sylvan sea* of this description, the canoe being paddled by two Yankees. We started in a stream; the stream became a wide water, and that water got deeper and deeper, as I could see by the trees (all was woods), till we got to sail amongst *the top branches of the trees*. By and by we got into a large open space; a piece of water a mile or two, or three or four wide, with *the woods under us!* A fog, with the tops of trees rising through it, is very much like this; and such was the fog that I saw this morning in my ride to Appledore. The church at Appledore is very large. Big enough to hold 3000 people; and the place does not seem to contain half a thousand old enough to go to church.

In coming along I saw a wheat-rick making, though I hardly think the wheat can be dry under the bands. The corn is all good here; and I am told they give twelve shillings an acre for reaping wheat.

In quitting this Appledore I crossed a canal and entered on Romney Marsh. This was grass-land on both sides of me to a great distance. The flocks and herds immense. The sheep are of a breed that takes its name from the marsh. They are called Romney Marsh sheep. Very pretty and large. The wethers, when fat, weigh about twelve stone, or one hundred pounds. The faces of these sheep are white; and, indeed, the whole sheep is as white as a piece of writing-paper. The wool does not look dirty and oily like that of other sheep. The cattle appear to be all of the *Sussex* breed. Red, loosed-limbed, and, they say, a great deal better than the Devonshire. How curious is the *natural economy* of a country! The *forests* of Sussex; those miserable tracts of heath and fern and bushes and sand called Ashdown Forest and Saint Leonard's Forest, to which latter Lord Erskine's estate belongs; these wretched tracts and the not much less wretched farms in their neighbourhood, *breed the cattle* which we see *fatting* in Romney Marsh! They are calved in the spring; they are weaned in a little bit of grass-land; they are then put into stubbles and about in the fallows for the first summer; they are brought into the yard to winter on rough hay, peas-haulm, or barley-straw; the next two summers they spend in the rough woods or in the forests; the two winters they live on straw; they then pass another summer on the forest or at *work*; and then they come here or go

elsewhere to be fatted. With cattle of this kind and with sheep such as I have spoken of before, this Marsh abounds in every part of it; and the sight is most beautiful.

At three miles from Appledore I came through Snargate, a village with five houses, and with a church capable of containing two thousand people! The vagabonds tell us, however, that we have a wonderful increase of population! These vagabonds will be hanged by and by, or else justice will have fled from the face of the earth.

At Brenzett (a mile further on) I with great difficulty got a rasher of bacon for breakfast. The few houses that there are, are miserable in the extreme. The church here (only a *mile* from the last) nearly as large; and nobody to go to it. What! will the *vagabonds* attempt to make us believe that these churches were *built for nothing!* "*Dark ages*" indeed those must have been, if these churches were erected without there being any more people than there are now. But *who* built them? Where did the *means*, where did the hands come from? This place presents another proof of the truth of my old observation: *rich land* and *poor labourers*. From the window of the house in which I could scarcely get a rasher of bacon, and not an egg, I saw numberless flocks and herds fatting, and the fields loaded with corn!

The next village, which was two miles further on, was Old Romney, and along here I had, for great part of the way, cornfields on one side of me and grass-land on the other. I asked what the amount of the crop of wheat would be. They told me better than five quarters to the acre. I thought so myself. I have a sample of the red wheat and another of the white. They are both very fine. They reap the wheat here nearly two feet from the ground; and even then they cut it three feet long! I never saw corn like this before. It very far exceeds the corn under Portsdown Hill, that at Gosport and Tichfield. They have here about eight hundred large, very large, sheaves to an acre. I wonder how long it will be after the end of the world before Mr. Birkbeck will see the American "Prairies" half so good as this Marsh. In a garden here I saw some very fine onions, and a prodigious crop; sure sign of most excellent land. At this Old Romney there is a church (two miles only from the last mind!) fit to contain one thousand five hundred people, and there are for the people of the parish to live in twenty-two or twenty-three houses! And yet the *vagabonds* have the impudence to tell us, that the population of England has vastly

increased! Curious system that depopulates Romney Marsh and peoples Bagshot Heath! It is an unnatural system. It is the *vagabond's* system. It is a system that must be destroyed, or that will destroy the country.

The rotten borough of New Romney came next in my way; and here, to my great surprise, I found myself upon the sea-beach; for I had not looked at a map of Kent for years, and perhaps, never. I had got a list of places from a friend in Sussex, whom I asked to give me a route to Dover, and to send me through those parts of Kent which he thought would be most interesting to me. Never was I so much surprised as when I saw *a sail*. This place, now that the *squanderings* of the THING are over, is, they say, become miserably poor.

From New Romney to Dimchurch is about four miles: all along I had the sea-beach on my right, and, on my left, sometimes grass-land and sometimes corn-land. They told me here, and also further back in the Marsh, that they were to have 15*s*. an acre for reaping wheat.

From Dimchurch to Hythe you go on the sea beach, and nearly the same from Hythe to Sandgate, from which last place you come over the hill to Folkestone. But let me look back. Here has been the squandering! Here has been the pauper-making work! Here we see some of these causes that are now sending some farmers to the workhouse and driving others to flee the country or to cut their throats!

I had baited my horse at New Romney, and was coming jogging along very soberly, now looking at the sea, then looking at the cattle, then the corn, when my eye, in swinging round, lighted upon a great round building, standing upon the beach. I had scarcely had time to think about what it could be, when twenty or thirty others, standing along the coast, caught my eye; and if any one had been behind me, he might have heard me exclaim, in a voice that made my horse bound, "The *Martello Towers* by——!" Oh, Lord! To think that I should be destined to behold these monuments of the wisdom of Pitt and Dundas and Perceval! Good God! Here they are, piles of bricks in a circular form about three hundred feet (*guess*) circumference at the base, about forty feet high, and about one hundred and fifty feet circumference at the top. There is a door-way, about midway up, in each, and each has two windows. Cannons were to be fired from the top of these things, in order to defend the country against the French Jacobins!

I think I have counted along here upwards of thirty of these

ridiculous things, which I dare say cost five, perhaps ten, thousand pounds each; and one of which was, I am told, *sold* on the coast of Sussex, the other day, for two hundred pounds! There is, they say, a chain of these things all the way to Hastings! I dare say they cost millions. But far indeed are these from being all, or half, or a quarter of the squanderings along here. Hythe is half *barracks;* the hills are covered with barracks; and barracks most expensive, most squandering, fill up the side of the hill. Here is a canal (I crossed it at Appledore) made for the length of thirty miles (from Hythe, in Kent, to Rye, in Sussex) to *keep out the French;* for those armies who had so often crossed the Rhine and the Danube, were to be kept back by a canal, made by Pitt, thirty feet wide at the most! All along the coast there are works of some sort or other; incessant sinks of money; walls of immense dimensions; masses of stone brought and put into piles. Then you see some of the walls and buildings falling down; some that have never been finished. The whole thing, all taken together, looks as if a spell had been, all of a sudden, set upon the workmen; or, in the words of the Scripture, here is the "*desolation of abomination, standing in high places.*" However, all is right. These things were made with the hearty good will of those who are now coming to ruin in consequence of the debt, contracted for the purpose of making these things! This is all *just.* The load will come, at last, upon the right shoulders.

Between Hythe and Sandgate (a village at about two miles from Hythe) I first saw the French coast. The chalk cliffs at Calais are as plain to the view as possible, and also the land, which they tell me is near Boulogne.

Folkestone lies under a hill here, as Reigate does in Surrey, only here the sea is open to your right as you come along. The corn is very early here, and very fine. All cut, even the beans; and they will be ready to cart in a day or two. Folkestone is now a little place; probably a quarter part as big as it was formerly. Here is a church one hundred and twenty feet long and fifty feet wide. It is a sort of little cathedral. The churchyard has evidently been three times as large as it is now.

Before I got into Folkestone I saw no less than eighty-four men, women, and boys and girls gleaning or leasing in a field of about ten acres. The people all along here complain most bitterly of the *change of times.* The truth is that the squandered millions are gone! The nation has now to suffer for this squandering. The money served to silence some; to make others

bawl; to cause the good to be oppressed; to cause the bad to be exalted; to "crush the Jacobins": and what is the *result?* What is the *end?* The *end* is not yet come; but as to the result thus far, go, ask the families of those farmers, who, after having, for so many years, threatened to shoot Jacobins, have, in instances not a few, shot themselves! Go, ask the ghosts of Pitt and of Castlereagh what has, thus far, been the *result!* Go, ask the Hampshire farmer, who, not many months since, actually blowed out his own brains with one of those very pistols which he had long carried in his yeomanry cavalry holsters, to be ready "to keep down the Jacobins and Radicals!" O God! inscrutable are thy ways; but thou art just, and of thy justice what a complete proof have we in the case of these very martello towers! They were erected to keep out the Jacobin French, lest they should come and assist the Jacobin English. The *loyal* people of this coast were fattened by the building of them. Pitt and his loyal *Cinque Ports* waged interminable war against Jacobins. These very towers are now used to keep these *loyal* Cinque Ports themselves in order. These towers are now used to lodge men, whose business it is to sally forth, not upon Jacobins, but upon *smugglers!* Thus, after having sucked up millions of the nation's money, these loyal Cinque Ports are squeezed again: kept in order, kept down, by the very towers which they rejoiced to see rise to keep down the Jacobins.

DOVER,

Monday, 1 *Sept., Evening.*

I got here this evening about six o'clock, having come to-day thirty-six miles; but I must defer my remarks on the country between Folkestone and this place; a most interesting spot, and well worthy of particular attention. What place I shall date from after Dover I am by no means certain; but be it from what place it may, the continuation of my journal shall be published, in due course. If the Atlantic Ocean could not cut off the communication between me and my readers, a mere strip of water, not much wider than an American river, will hardly do it. I am, in real truth, undecided, as yet, whether I shall go on to France, or back to the *Wen*. I think I shall, when I go out of this inn, toss the bridle upon my horse's neck, and let him decide for me. I am sure he is more fit to decide on such a point than our ministers are to decide on any point connected with the happiness, greatness, and honour of this kingdom.

FROM DOVER, THROUGH THE ISLE OF THANET, BY CANTERBURY AND FAVERSHAM, ACROSS TO MAIDSTONE, UP TO TONBRIDGE, THROUGH THE WEALD OF KENT AND OVER THE HILLS BY WESTERHAM AND HAYS, TO THE WEN

DOVER,

Wednesday, 3 *Sept.* 1823 (*Evening*).

ON Monday I was balancing in my own mind whether I should go to France or not. To-day I have decided the question in the negative, and shall set off this evening for the Isle of Thanet; that spot so famous for corn.

I broke off without giving an account of the country between Folkestone and Dover, which is a very interesting one in itself, and was peculiarly interesting to me on many accounts. I have often mentioned, in describing the parts of the country over which I have travelled; I have often mentioned the *chalk-ridge* and also the *sand-ridge*, which I had traced, running parallel with each other from about Farnham, in Surrey, to Sevenoaks, in Kent. The reader must remember how particular I have been to observe that, in going up from Chilworth and Albury, through Dorking, Reigate, Godstone, and so on, the two chains, or ridges, approach so near to each other, that, in many places, you actually have a chalk-bank to your right and a sand-bank to your left, at not more than forty yards from each other. In some places, these chains of hills run off from each other to a great distance, even to a distance of twenty miles. They then approach again towards each other, and so they go on. I was always desirous to ascertain whether these chains, or ridges, continued on thus *to the sea*. I have now found that they do. And if you go out into the channel, at Folkestone, there you see a sand cliff and a chalk cliff. Folkestone stands upon the sand, in a little dell about seven hundred or eight hundred yards from the very termination of the ridge. All the way along, the chalk ridge is the most lofty, until you come to Leith Hill and Hindhead; and here, at Folkestone, the sand-ridge tapers off in a sort of flat towards the sea. The land is like what it is at

Reigate, a very steep hill; a hill of full a mile high, and bending exactly in the same manner as the hill at Reigate does. The turnpike-road winds up it and goes over it in exactly the same manner as that at Reigate. The land to the south of the hill begins a poor, thin, white loam upon the chalk; soon gets to be a very fine rich loam upon the chalk; goes on till it mingles the chalky loam with the sandy loam; and thus it goes on down to the sea-beach, or to the edge of the cliff. It is a beautiful bed of earth here, resembling in extent that on the south side of Portsdown Hill rather than that of Reigate. The crops here are always good if they are good anywhere. A large part of this fine tract of land, as well as the little town of Sandgate (which is a beautiful little place upon the beach itself), and also great part of the town of Folkestone belong, they tell me, to Lord Radnor, who takes his title of viscount from Folkestone. Upon the hill begins, and continues on for some miles, that stiff red loam, approaching to a clay, which I have several times described as forming the soil at the top of this chalk-ridge. I spoke of it in the *Register* of the 16th of August last, page 409, and I then said that it was like the land on the top of this very ridge at Ashmansworth in the north of Hampshire. At Reigate you find precisely the same soil upon the top of the hill, a very red, clayey sort of loam, with big yellow flint stones in it. Everywhere, the soil is the same upon the top of the high part of this ridge. I have now found it to be the same, on the edge of the sea, that I found it on the north-east corner of Hampshire.

From the hill, you keep descending all the way to Dover, a distance of about six miles, and it is absolutely six miles of down hill. On your right, you have the lofty land which forms a series of chalk cliffs, from the top of which you look into the sea; on your left, you have ground that goes rising up from you in the same sort of way. The turnpike-road goes down the middle of a valley, each side of which, as far as you can see, may be about a mile and a half. It is six miles long, you will remember; and here, therefore, with very little interruption, very few chasms, there are *eighteen square miles of corn*. It is a patch such as you very seldom see, and especially of corn so good as it is here. I should think that the wheat all along here would average pretty nearly four quarters to the acre. A few oats are sown. A great deal of barley, and that a very fine crop.

The town of Dover is like other sea-port towns; but really much more clean, and with less blackguard people in it than I

ever observed in any sea-port before. It is a most picturesque place, to be sure. On one side of it rises, upon the top of a very steep hill, the Old Castle, with all its fortifications. On the other side of it there is another chalk hill, the side of which is pretty nearly perpendicular, and rises up from sixty to a hundred feet higher than the tops of the houses, which stand pretty nearly close to the foot of the hill.

I got into Dover rather late. It was dusk when I was going down the street towards the quay. I happened to look up, and was quite astonished to perceive cows grazing upon a spot apparently fifty feet above the tops of the houses, and measuring horizontally not, perhaps, more than ten or twenty feet from a line which would have formed a continuation into the air. I went up to the same spot, the next day, myself; and you actually look down upon the houses, as you look out of a window upon people in the street. The valley that runs down from Folkestone is, when it gets to Dover, crossed by another valley that runs down from Canterbury, or, at least, from the Canterbury direction. It is in the gorge of this cross valley that Dover is built. The two chalk hills jut out into the sea, and the water that comes up between them forms a harbour for this ancient, most interesting, and beautiful place. On the hill to the north stands the castle of Dover, which is fortified in the ancient manner, except on the sea side, where it has the steep *Cliff* for a fortification. On the south side of the town the hill is, I believe, rather more lofty than that on the north side; and here is that cliff which is described by Shakespeare in the play of *King Lear*. It is fearfully steep, certainly. Very nearly perpendicular for a considerable distance. The grass grows well, to the very tip of the cliff; and you see cows and sheep grazing there with as much unconcern as if grazing in the bottom of a valley.

It was not, however, these natural curiosities that took me over *this* hill; I went to see, with my own eyes, something of the sorts of means that had been made use of to squander away countless millions of money. Here is a hill containing, probably, a couple of square miles or more, hollowed like a honeycomb. Here are line upon line, trench upon trench, cavern upon cavern, bomb-proof upon bomb-proof; in short the very sight of the thing convinces you that either madness the most humiliating, or profligacy the most scandalous must have been at work here for years. The question that every man of sense asks is: What reason had you to suppose that the *French would ever*

come to this hill to attack it, while the rest of the country was so much more easy to assail? However, let any man of good plain understanding go and look at the works that have here been performed and that are now all tumbling into ruin. Let him ask what this cavern was for; what that ditch was for; what this tank was for; and why all these horrible holes and hiding-places at an expense of millions upon millions? Let this scene be brought and placed under the eyes of the people of England, and let them be told that Pitt and Dundas and Perceval had these things done to prevent the country from being conquered; with voice unanimous the nation would instantly exclaim: Let the French or let the devil take us, rather than let us resort to means of defence like these. This is, perhaps, the only set of fortifications in the world ever framed for mere *hiding*. There is no appearance of any intention to annoy an enemy. It is a parcel of holes made in a hill, to hide Englishmen from Frenchmen. Just as if the Frenchmen would come to this hill! Just as if they would not go (if they came at all) and land in Romney Marsh, or on Pevensey Level, or anywhere else, rather than come to this hill; rather than come to crawl up Shakespeare's Cliff. All the way along the coast, from this very hill to Portsmouth; or pretty nearly all the way, is a flat. What the devil should they come to this hill for, then? And when you ask this question, they tell you that it is to have an army here *behind* the French, after they had marched into the country! And for a purpose like this; for a purpose so stupid, so senseless, so mad as this, and withal, so scandalously disgraceful, more brick and stone have been buried in this hill than would go to build a neat new cottage for every labouring men in the counties of Kent and of Sussex!

Dreadful is the scourge of such ministers. However, those who supported them will now have to suffer. The money must have been squandered purposely, and for the worst ends. Fool as Pitt was; unfit as an old hack of a lawyer, like Dundas, was to judge of the means of defending the country, stupid as both these fellows were, and as their brother lawyer, Perceval, was too: unfit as these lawyers were to judge in any such a case, they must have known that this was an useless expenditure of money. They must have known that; and, therefore, their general folly, their general ignorance, is no apology for their conduct. What they wanted was to prevent the landing, not of Frenchmen, but of French principles; that is to say, to prevent the example of the French from being alluring to the

people of England. The devil a bit did they care for the Bourbons. They rejoiced at the killing of the king. They rejoiced at the atheistical decree. They rejoiced at everything calculated to alarm the timid and to excite horror in the people of England in general. They wanted to keep out of England those principles which had a natural tendency to destroy boroughmongering, and to put an end to peculation and plunder. No matter whether by the means of martello towers, making a great chalk hill a honeycomb, cutting a canal thirty feet wide to stop the march of the armies of the Danube and the Rhine: no matter how they squandered the money, so that it silenced some and made others bawl to answer their great purpose of preventing French example from having an influence in England. Simply their object was this: to make the French people miserable; to force back the Bourbons upon them as a *means* of making them miserable; to degrade France, to make the people wretched; and then to have to say to the people of England, Look there: *see what they have got by their attempts to obtain liberty!* This was their object. They did not want martello towers and honeycombed chalk hills and mad canals: they did not want these to keep out the French armies. The boroughmongers and the parsons cared nothing about the French armies. It was the French example that the lawyers, boroughmongers and parsons wished to keep out. And what have they done? It is impossible to be upon this honeycombed hill, upon this enormous mass of anti-jacobin expenditure, without seeing the chalk cliffs of Calais and the cornfields of France. At this season it is impossible to see those fields without knowing that the farmers are getting in their corn there as well as here; and it is impossible to think of that fact without reflecting, at the same time, on the example which the farmers of France hold out to the farmers of England. Looking down from this very anti-jacobin hill, this day, I saw the parsons' shocks of wheat and barley, left in the field after the farmer had taken his away. Turning my head, and looking across the Channel, "There," said I, pointing to France, "there the spirited and sensible people have ridded themselves of this burden, of which our farmers so bitterly complain." It is impossible not to recollect here, that, in numerous petitions, sent up, too, by the *loyal*, complaints have been made that the English farmer has to carry on a competition against the French farmer who has *no tithes to pay!* Well, *loyal gentlemen*, why do not you petition, then, to be relieved from tithes? What do

you mean else? Do you mean to call upon our big gentlemen at Whitehall for them to compel the French to pay tithes? Oh, you loyal fools! Better hold your tongues about the French not paying tithes. Better do that, at any rate; for never will they pay tithes again.

Here is a large tract of *land* upon these hills at Dover, which is the property of the public, having been purchased at an enormous expense. This is now let out as pasture land to people of the town. I dare say that the letting of this land is a curious affair. If there were a member for Dover who would do what he ought to do, he would soon get before the public a list of the tenants, and of the rents paid by them. I should like very much to see such list. Butterworth, the bookseller in Fleet Street, he who is a sort of metropolitan of the Methodists, is one of the members for Dover. The other is, I believe, that Wilbraham or Bootle or Bootle Wilbraham, or some such name, that is a Lancashire magistrate. So that Dover is prettily set up. However, there is nothing of this sort that can, in the present state of things, be deemed to be of any real consequence. As long as the people at Whitehall can go on paying the interest of the debt in full, so long will there be no change worth the attention of any rational man. In the meanwhile, the French nation will be going on rising over us; and our ministers will be cringing and crawling to every nation upon earth who is known to possess a cannon or a barrel of powder.

This very day I have read Mr. Canning's speech at Liverpool, with a Yankee consul sitting on his right hand. Not a word now about the bits of bunting and the fir frigates; but now, America is the lovely daughter, who in a moment of excessive love has gone off with a lover (to wit, the French) and left the tender mother to mourn! What a fop! And this is the man that talked so big and so bold. This is the clever, the profound, the blustering, too, and above all things, "the high spirited" Mr. Canning. However, more of this hereafter. I must get from this Dover, as fast as I can.

SANDWICH,
Wednesday, 3 *Sept., Night.*

I got to this place about half an hour after the ringing of the eight o'clock bell, or curfew, which I heard at about two miles distance from the place. From the town of Dover you come up the Castle Hill, and have a most beautiful view from the top of it. You have the sea, the chalk cliffs of Calais, the

high land at Boulogne, the town of Dover just under you, the valley towards Folkestone, and the much more beautiful valley towards Canterbury; and going on a little further, you have the Downs and the Essex or Suffolk coast in full view, with a most beautiful corn country to ride along through. The corn was chiefly cut between Dover and Walmer. The barley almost all cut and tied up in sheaf. Nothing but the beans seemed to remain standing along here. They are not quite so good as the rest of the corn; but they are by no means bad. When I came to the village of Walmer, I inquired for the castle; that famous place, where Pitt, Dundas, Perceval, and all the whole tribe of plotters against the French Revolution had carried on their plots. After coming through the village of Walmer, you see the entrance of the castle away to the right. It is situated pretty nearly on the water's edge, and at the bottom of a little dell, about a furlong or so from the turnpike-road. This is now the habitation of our great minister, Robert Bankes Jenkinson, son of Charles of that name. When I was told, by a girl who was leasing in a field by the road side, that that was Walmer Castle, I stopped short, pulled my horse round, looked steadfastly at the gateway, and could not help exclaiming: "Oh, thou who inhabitest that famous dwelling; thou, who hast always been in place, let who might be out of place! Oh, thou everlasting placeman! thou sage of 'over-production,' do but cast thine eyes upon this barley field, where, if I am not greatly deceived, there are from seven to eight quarters upon the acre! Oh, thou whose *Courier* newspaper has just informed its readers that wheat will be seventy shillings the quarter in the month of November: oh, thou wise man, I pray thee come forth from thy castle, and tell me what thou wilt do if wheat should happen to be, at the appointed time, thirty-five shillings, instead of seventy shillings, the quarter. Sage of over-production, farewell. If thou hast life, thou wilt be minister as long as thou canst pay the interest of the debt in full, but not one moment longer. The moment thou ceasest to be able to squeeze from the Normans a sufficiency to count down to the Jews their full tale, that moment, thou great stern-path-of-duty man, thou wilt begin to be taught the true meaning of the words *Ministerial Responsibility*."

Deal is a most villainous place. It is full of filthy-looking people. Great desolation of abomination has been going on here; tremendous barracks, partly pulled down and partly tumbling down, and partly occupied by soldiers. Everything

seems upon the perish. I was glad to hurry along through it, and to leave its inns and public-houses to be occupied by the tarred, and trowsered, and blue-and-buff crew whose very vicinage I always detest. From Deal you come along to Upper Deal, which, it seems, was the original village; thence upon a beautiful road to Sandwich, which is a rotten borough. Rottenness, putridity is excellent for land, but bad for boroughs. This place, which is as villainous a hole as one would wish to see, is surrounded by some of the finest land in the world. Along on one side of it lies a marsh. On the other sides of it is land which they tell me bears *seven quarters* of wheat to an acre. It is certainly very fine; for I saw large pieces of radish-seed on the roadside; this seed is grown for the seedsmen in London; and it will grow on none but rich land. All the corn is carried here except some beans and some barley.

CANTERBURY,

Thursday Afternoon, 4 Sept.

In quitting Sandwich, you immediately cross a river up which vessels bring coals from the sea. This marsh is about a couple of miles wide. It begins at the sea-beach, opposite the Downs, to my right hand, coming from Sandwich, and it wheels round to my left and ends at the sea-beach, opposite Margate roads. This marsh was formerly covered with the sea, very likely; and hence the land within this sort of semicircle, the name of which is Thanet, was called an *Isle*. It is, in fact, an island now, for the same reason that Portsea is an island, and that New York is an island; for there certainly is the water in this river that goes round and connects one part of the sea with the other. I had to cross this river, and to cross the marsh, before I got into the famous Isle of Thanet, which it was my intention to cross. Soon after crossing the river, I passed by a place for making salt, and could not help recollecting that there are no excisemen in these salt-making places in France, that, before the Revolution, the French were most cruelly oppressed by the duties on salt, that they had to endure, on that account, the most horrid tyranny that ever was known, except, perhaps, that practised in an *Exchequer* that shall here be nameless; that thousands and thousands of men and women were every year sent to the galleys for what was called smuggling salt; that the fathers and even the mothers were imprisoned or whipped if the children were detected in smuggling salt: I could not help reflecting, with delight, as I looked at these salt-pans in the Isle of Thanet; I

could not help reflecting, that in spite of Pitt, Dundas, Perceval, and the rest of the crew, in spite of the caverns of Dover and the martello towers in Romney Marsh: in spite of all the spies and all the bayonets, and the six hundred millions of debt and the hundred and fifty millions of dead-weight, and the two hundred millions of poor-rates that are now squeezing the borough-mongers, squeezing the farmers, puzzling the fellows at White-hall and making Mark Lane a scene of greater interest than the Chamber of the Privy Council; with delight as I jogged along under the first beams of the sun, I reflected that, in spite of all the malignant measures that had brought so much misery upon England, the gallant French people had ridded themselves of the tyranny which sent them to the galleys for endeavouring to use without tax the salt which God sent upon their shores. Can any man tell why we should still be paying five, or six, or seven shillings a bushel for salt, instead of one? We did pay fifteen shillings a bushel, tax. And why is two shillings a bushel kept on? Because, if they were taken off, the salt-tax-gathering crew must be discharged! This tax of two shillings a bushel causes the consumer to pay five, at the least, more than he would if there were no tax at all! When, great God! when shall we be allowed to enjoy God's gifts, in freedom, as the people of France enjoy them?

On the marsh I found the same sort of sheep as on Romney Marsh; but the cattle here are chiefly Welsh; black, and called runts. They are nice hardy cattle; and, I am told, that this is the description of cattle that they fat all the way up on this north side of Kent.—When I got upon the corn land in the Isle of Thanet, I got into a garden indeed. There is hardly any fallow; comparatively few turnips. It is a country of corn. Most of the harvest is in; but there are some fields of wheat and of barley not yet housed. A great many pieces of lucerne, and all of them very fine. I left Ramsgate to my right about three miles, and went right across the island to Margate; but that place is so thickly settled with stock-jobbing cuckolds, at this time of the year, that, having no fancy to get their horns stuck into me, I turned away to my left when I got within about half a mile of the town. I got to a little hamlet, where I breakfasted; but could get no corn for my horse, and no bacon for myself! All was corn around me. Barns, I should think, two hundred feet long; ricks of enormous size and most numerous; crops of wheat, five quarters to an acre, on the average; and a public-house without either bacon or corn! The labourers' houses, all

along through this island, beggarly in the extreme. The people dirty, poor-looking; ragged, but particularly *dirty*. The men and boys with dirty faces, and dirty smock-frocks, and dirty shirts; and, good God! what a difference between the wife of a labouring man here, and the wife of a labouring man in the forests and woodlands of Hampshire and Sussex! Invariably have I observed that the richer the soil, and the more destitute of woods; that is to say, the more purely a corn country, the more miserable the labourers. The cause is this, the great, the big bull frog grasps all. In this beautiful island every inch of land is appropriated by the rich. No hedges, no ditches, no commons, no grassy lanes: a country divided into great farms; a few trees surround the great farm-house. All the rest is bare of trees; and the wretched labourer has not a stick of wood, and has no place for a pig or cow to graze, or even to lie down upon. The rabbit countries are the countries for labouring men. There the ground is not so valuable. There it is not so easily appropriated by the few. Here, in this island, the work is almost all done by the horses. The horses plough the ground; they sow the ground; they hoe the ground; they carry the corn home; they thresh it out; and they carry it to market: nay, in this island, they *rake* the ground; they rake up the straggling straws and ears; so that they do the whole, except the reaping and the mowing. It is impossible to have an idea of anything more miserable than the state of the labourers in this part of the country.

After coming by Margate, I passed a village called Monckton, and another called Sarr. At Sarr there is a bridge, over which you come out of the island, as you go into it over the bridge at Sandwich. At Monckton they had *seventeen men working on the roads*, though the harvest was not quite in, and though, of course, it had all to be threshed out; but, at Monckton, they had *four threshing machines;* and they have three threshing machines at Sarr, though there, also, they have several men upon the roads! This is a shocking state of things; and in spite of everything that the Jenkinsons and the Scots can do, this state of things must be changed.

At Sarr, or a little way further back, I saw a man who had just begun to reap a field of canary seed. The plants were too far advanced to be cut in order to be bleached for the making of plat; but I got the reaper to select me a few green stalks that grew near a bush that stood on the outside of the piece. These I have brought on with me, in order to give them a trial.

At Sarr I began to cross the marsh, and had, after this, to come through the village of Up-street, and another village called Steady, before I got to Canterbury. At Up-street I was struck with the words written upon a board which was fastened upon a pole, which pole was standing in a garden near a neat little box of a house. The words were these. "PARADISE PLACE. *Spring guns and steel traps are set here.*" A pretty idea it must give us of Paradise to know that spring guns and steel traps are set in it! This is doubtless some stock-jobber's place; for, in the first place, the name is likely to have been selected by one of that crew; and, in the next place, whenever any of them go to the country, they look upon it that they are to begin a sort of warfare against everything around them. They invariably look upon every labourer as a thief.

As you approach Canterbury, from the Isle of Thanet, you have another instance of the squanderings of the lawyer ministers. Nothing equals the ditches, the caverns, the holes, the tanks, and hiding-places of the hill at Dover; but, considerable as the city of Canterbury is, that city, within its gates, stands upon less ground than those horrible erections, the barracks of Pitt, Dundas, and Perceval. They are perfectly enormous; but thanks be unto God, they begin to crumble down. They have a sickly hue: all is lassitude about them: endless are their lawns, their gravel walks, and their ornaments; but their lawns are unshaven, their gravel walks grassy, and their ornaments putting on the garments of ugliness. You see the grass growing opposite the doorways. A hole in the window strikes you here and there. Lamp posts there are, but no lamps. Here are horse-barracks, foot-barracks, artillery-barracks, engineer-barracks: a whole country of barracks; but only here and there a soldier. The thing is actually perishing. It is typical of the state of the great Thing of things. It gave me inexpressible pleasure to perceive the gloom that seemed to hang over these barracks, which once swarmed with soldiers and their blithe companions, as a hive swarms with bees. These barracks now look like the environs of a hive in winter. Westminster Abbey Church is not the place for the monument of Pitt; the statue of the great snorting bawler ought to be stuck up here, just in the midst of this hundred or two of acres covered with barracks. These barracks, too, were erected in order to compel the French to return to the payment of tithes; in order to bring their necks again under the yoke of the lords and the clergy. That has not been accomplished. The French, as Mr. Hoggart assures us, have neither

tithes, taxes, nor rates; and the people of Canterbury know that they have a *hop-duty* to pay, while Mr. Hoggart, of Broad Street, tells them that he has farms to let, in France, where there are hop-gardens and where there is no hop-duty. They have lately had races at Canterbury; and the mayor and aldermen, in order to get the Prince Leopold to attend them, presented him with the Freedom of the City; but it rained all the time and he did not come! The mayor and aldermen do not understand things half so well as this German gentleman, who has managed his matters as well, I think, as any one that I ever heard of.

This fine old town, or rather city, is remarkable for cleanliness and niceness, notwithstanding it has a cathedral in it. The country round it is very rich, and this year, while the hops are so bad in most other parts, they are not so very bad just about Canterbury.

ELVERTON FARM, NEAR FAVERSHAM,
Friday Morning, 5 *Sept.*

In going through Canterbury, yesterday, I gave a boy sixpence to hold my horse, while I went into the cathedral, just to thank St. Swithin for the trick that he had played my friends, the Quakers. Led along by the wet weather till after the harvest had actually begun, and then to find the weather turn fine, all of a sudden! This must have soused them pretty decently; and I hear of one, who, at Canterbury, has made a bargain by which he will certainly lose two thousand pounds. The land where I am now is equal to that of the Isle of Thanet. The harvest is nearly over, and all the crops have been prodigiously fine. In coming from Canterbury, you come to the top of a hill, called Baughton Hill, at four miles from Canterbury on the London Road; and you there look down into one of the finest flats in England. A piece of marsh comes up nearly to Faversham; and at the edge of that marsh lies the farm where I now am. The land here is a deep loam upon chalk; and this is also the nature of the land in the Isle of Thanet and all the way from that to Dover. The orchards grow well upon this soil. The trees grow finely, the fruit is large and of fine flavour.

In 1821 I gave Mr. William Waller, who lives here, some American apple-cuttings; and he has now some as fine Newtown Pippins as one would wish to see. They are very large of their sort; very free in their growth; and they promise to be very fine apples of the kind. Mr. Waller had cuttings from me of

several sorts, in 1822. These were cut down last year; they have, of course, made shoots this summer; and great numbers of these shoots have fruit-spurs, which will have blossom, if not fruit, next year. This very rarely happens, I believe; and the state of Mr. Waller's trees clearly proves to me that the introduction of these American trees would be a great improvement.

My American apples, when I left Kensington, promised to be very fine; and the apples, which I have frequently mentioned as being upon cuttings imported last spring, promised to come to perfection; a thing which, I believe, we have not an instance of before.

MERRYWORTH,
Friday Evening, 5 *Sept.*

A friend at Tenterden told me that, if I had a mind to know Kent, I must go through Romney Marsh to Dover, from Dover to Sandwich, from Sandwich to Margate, from Margate to Canterbury, from Canterbury to Faversham, from Faversham to Maidstone, and from Maidstone to Tonbridge. I found from Mr. Waller, this morning, that the regular turnpike route, from his house to Maidstone, was through Sittingbourne. I had been along that road several times; and besides, to be covered with dust was what I could not think of, when I had it in my power to get to Maidstone without it. I took the road across the country, quitting the London road, or rather, crossing it, in the dell, between Ospringe and Green Street. I instantly began to go up hill, slowly, indeed; but up hill. I came through the villages of Newnham, Doddington, Ringlestone, and to that of Hollingbourne. I had come up hill for thirteen miles, from Mr. Waller's house. At last, I got to the top of this hill, and went along, for some distance, upon level ground. I found I was got upon just the same sort of land as that on the hill at Folkestone, at Reigate, at Ropley, and at Ashmansworth. The red clayey loam, mixed up with great yellow flint stones. I found fine meadows here, just such as are at Ashmansworth (that is to say, on the north Hampshire hills). This sort of ground is characterised by an astonishing depth that they have to go for the water. At Ashmansworth, they go to a depth of more than three hundred feet. As I was riding along upon the top of this hill in Kent, I saw the same beautiful sort of meadows that there are at Ashmansworth; I saw the corn backward; I was just thinking to go up to some house, to ask how far they had to go for water, when I saw a large well-bucket, and all the

chains and wheels belonging to such a concern; but here was also the tackle for a *horse* to work in drawing up the water! I asked about the depth of the well; and the information I received must have been incorrect; because I was told it was three hundred yards. I asked this of a public-house keeper further on, not seeing anybody where the farm-house was. I make no doubt that the depth is, as near as possible, that of Ashmansworth. Upon the top of this hill, I saw the finest field of beans that I have seen this year, and, by very far, indeed, the *finest piece of hops*. A beautiful piece of hops, surrounded by beautiful plantations of young ash, producing poles for hop-gardens. My road here pointed towards the west. It soon wheeled round towards the south; and, all of a sudden, I found myself upon the edge of a hill, as lofty and as steep as that at Folkestone, at Reigate, or at Ashmansworth. It was the same famous chalk ridge that I was crossing again. When I got to the edge of the hill, and before I got off my horse to lead him down this more than mile of hill, I sat and surveyed the prospect before me, and to the right and to the left. This is what the people of Kent call the *Garden of Eden*. It is a district of meadows, corn fields, hop-gardens, and orchards of apples, pears, cherries and filberts, with very little if any land which cannot, with propriety, be called good. There are plantations of chestnut and of ash frequently occurring; and as these are cut when long enough to make poles for hops, they are at all times objects of great beauty.

At the foot of the hill of which I have been speaking is the village of Hollingbourne; thence you come on to Maidstone. From Maidstone to this place (Merryworth) is about seven miles, and these are the finest seven miles that I have ever seen in England or anywhere else. The Medway is to your left, with its meadows about a mile wide. You cross the Medway, in coming out of Maidstone, and it goes and finds its way down to Rochester, through a break in the chalk ridge. From Maidstone to Merryworth, I should think that there were hop-gardens on one half of the way on both sides of the road. Then looking across the Medway, you see hop-gardens and orchards two miles deep, on the side of a gently rising ground: and this continues with you all the way from Maidstone to Merryworth. The orchards form a great feature of the country; and the plantations of ashes and of chestnuts that I mentioned before, add greatly to the beauty. These gardens of hops are kept very clean, in general, though some of them have been neglected this

year owing to the bad appearance of the crop. The culture is sometimes mixed: that is to say, apple-trees or cherry-trees or filbert-trees and hops, in the same ground. This is a good way, they say, of raising an orchard. I do not believe it; and I think that nothing is gained by any of these mixtures. They plant apple-trees or cherry-trees in rows here; they then plant a filbert-tree close to each of these large fruit-trees; and then they cultivate the middle of the ground by planting potatoes. This is being too greedy. It is impossible that they can gain by this. What they gain one way they lose the other way; and I verily believe that the most profitable way would be never to mix things at all. In coming from Maidstone I passed through a village called Teston, where Lord Basham has a seat.

TONBRIDGE,
Saturday Morning, 6 Sept.

I came off from Merryworth a little before five o'clock, passed the seat of Lord Torrington, the friend of Mr. Barretto. This Mr. Barretto ought not to be forgotten so soon. In 1820 he sued for articles of the peace against Lord Torrington, for having menaced him, in consequence of his having pressed his lordship about some money. It seems that Lord Torrington had known him in the East Indies; that they came home together, or soon after one another; that his lordship invited Mr. Barretto to his best parties in India; that he got him introduced at court in England by Sidmouth; that he got him made a *Fellow of the Royal Society;* and that he tried to get him introduced into Parliament. His lordship, when Barretto rudely pressed him for his money, reminded him of all this, and of the many difficulties that he had had to overcome with regard to his *colour* and so forth. Nevertheless, the dingy skinned court visitant pressed in such a way that Lord Torrington was obliged to be pretty smart with him, whereupon the other sued for articles of the peace against his lordship; but these were not granted by the court. This Barretto issued a handbill at the last election as a candidate for St. Albans. I am truly sorry that he was not elected. Lord Camelford threatened to put in his black fellow; but he was a sad swaggering fellow; and had, at last, too much of the boroughmonger in him to do a thing so meritorious. Lord Torrington's is but an indifferent looking place.

I here began to see South Down sheep again, which I had not seen since the time I left Tenterden. All along here the

villages are at not more than two miles distance from each other. They have all large churches, and scarcely anybody to go to them. At a village called Hadlow, there is a house belonging to a Mr. May, the most singular looking thing I ever saw. An immense house stuck all over with a parcel of chimneys, or things like chimneys; little brick columns, with a sort of caps on them, looking like carnation sticks, with caps at the top to catch the earwigs. The building is all of brick, and has the oddest appearance of anything I ever saw. This Tonbridge is but a common country town, though very clean, and the people looking very well. The climate must be pretty warm here, for in entering the town I saw a large Althea Frutex in bloom, a thing rare enough, any year, and particularly a year like this.

WESTERHAM,
Saturday, Noon, 6. Sept.

Instead of going on to the Wen along the turnpike-road through Sevenoaks, I turned to my left when I got about a mile out of Tonbridge, in order to come along that tract of country called the Weald of Kent; that is to say, the solid clays, which have no bottom, which are unmixed with chalk, sand, stone, or anything else; the country of dirty roads and of oak trees. I stopped at Tonbridge only a few minutes; but in the Weald I stopped to breakfast at a place called Leigh. From Leigh I came to Chittingstone causeway, leaving Tonbridge Wells six miles over the hills to my left. From Chittingstone I came to Bough-beach, thence to Four Elms, and thence to this little market-town of Westerham, which is just upon the border of Kent. Indeed, Kent, Surrey, and Sussex form a joining very near to this town. Westerham, exactly like Reigate and Godstone, and Sevenoaks, and Dorking, and Folkestone, lies between the sand-ridge and the chalk-ridge. The valley is here a little wider than at Reigate, and that is all the difference there is between the places. As soon as you get over the sand hill to the south of Reigate, you get into the Weald of Surrey; and here, as soon as you get over the sand hill to the south of Westerham, you get into the Weald of Kent.

I have now, in order to get to the Wen, to cross the chalk-ridge once more, and at a point where I never crossed it before. Coming through the Weald I found the corn very good; and low as the ground is, wet as it is, cold as it is, there will be very little of the wheat which will not be housed before Saturday

night. All the corn is good, and the barley excellent. Not far from Bough-beach, I saw two oak trees, one of which was, they told me, more than thirty feet round, and the other more than twenty-seven; but they have been hollow for half a century. They are not much bigger than the oak upon Tilford Green, if any. I mean in the trunk; but they are hollow, while that tree is sound in all its parts, and growing still. I have had a most beautiful ride through the Weald. The day is very hot; but I have been in the shade; and my horse's feet very often in the rivulets and wet lanes. In one place I rode above a mile completely arched over by the boughs of the underwood, growing in the banks of the lane. What an odd taste that man must have who prefers a turnpike-road to a lane like this.

Very near to Westerham there are hops: and I have seen now and then a little bit of hop garden, even in the Weald. Hops will grow well where lucerne will grow well; and lucerne will grow well where there is a rich top and a dry bottom. When therefore you see hops in the Weald, it is on the side of some hill, where there is sand or stone at bottom, and not where there is real clay beneath. There appear to be hops, here and there, all along from nearly at Dover to Alton, in Hampshire. You find them all along Kent; you find them at Westerham; across at Worth, in Sussex; at Godstone, in Surrey; over to the north of Merrow Down, near Guildford; at Godalming; under the Hog's-back, at Farnham; and all along that way to Alton. But there, I think, they end. The whole face of the country seems to rise, when you get just beyond Alton, and to keep up. Whether you look to the north, the south, or west, the land seems to rise, and the hops cease, till you come again away to the north-west, in Herefordshire.

KENSINGTON,
Saturday Night, 6 Sept.

Here I close my day, at the end of forty-four miles. In coming up the chalk hill from Westerham, I prepared myself for the red stiff clay-like loam, the big yellow flints and the meadows; and I found them all. I have now gone over this chalk-ridge in the following places: at Coombe in the north-west of Hampshire; I mean the north-west corner, the very extremity of the county. I have gone over it at Ashmansworth, or Highclere, going from Newbury to Andover; at King's Clere, going from Newbury to Winchester; at Ropley, going from Alresford to Selborne; at Dippinghall going from Crondall to Thursly; at

Merrow, going from Chertsey to Chilworth; at Reigate; at Westerham, and then, between these, at Godstone; at Sevenoaks, going from London to Battle; at Hollingbourne, as mentioned above, and at Folkestone. In all these places I have crossed this chalk-ridge. Everywhere, upon the top of it, I have found a flat, and the soil of all these flats I have found to be a red stiff loam mingled up with big yellow flints. A soil difficult to work; but by no means bad, whether for wood, hops, grass, orchards or corn. I once before mentioned that I was assured that the pasture upon these bleak hills was as rich as that which is found in the north of Wiltshire, in the neighbourhood of Swindon, where they make some of the best cheese in the kingdom. Upon these hills I have never found the labouring people poor and miserable, as in the rich vales. All is not appropriated where there are coppices and wood, where the cultivation is not so easy and the produce so very large.

After getting up the hill from Westerham, I had a general descent to perform all the way to the Thames. When you get to Beckenham, which is the last parish in Kent, the country begins to assume a cockney-like appearance; all is artificial, and you no longer feel any interest in it. I was anxious to make this journey into Kent, in the midst of harvest, in order that I might *know* the real state of the crops. The result of my observations and my inquiries is, that the crop is a *full average* crop of everything except barley, and that the barley yields a great deal more than an average crop. I thought that the beans were very poor during my ride into Hampshire; but I then saw no real bean countries. I have seen such countries now; and I do not think that the beans present us with a bad crop. As to the quality, it is, in no case (except perhaps the barley), equal to that of last year. We had, last year, an Italian summer. When the wheat or other grain has to *ripen in wet weather*, it will not be *bright*, as it will when it has to ripen in fair weather. It will have a dingy or clouded appearance; and perhaps the flour may not be quite so good. The wheat, in fact, will not be so heavy. In order to enable others to judge, as well as myself, I took samples from the fields as I went along. I took them very fairly, and as often as I thought that there was any material change in the soil or other circumstances. During the ride I took sixteen samples. These are now at the office of the *Register*, in Fleet Street, where they may be seen by any gentleman who thinks the information likely to be useful to him. The samples are numbered, and there is a reference pointing out the place

where each sample was taken. The opinions that I gather amount to this: that there is an average crop of everything, and a little more of barley.

Now then we shall see how all this tallies with the schemes, with the intentions and expectations of our matchless gentlemen at Whitehall. These wise men have put forth their views in the *Courier* of the 27th of August, and in words which ought never to be forgotten, and which, at any rate, shall be recorded here.

"GRAIN.—During the present unsettled state of the weather, it is impossible for the best informed persons to anticipate upon good grounds what will be the future price of agricultural produce. Should the season even yet prove favourable, for the operations of the harvest, there is every probability of the average price of grain continuing at that exact price, which will prove most conducive to the interests of the corn growers, and at the same time encouraging to the agriculture of our colonial possessions. We do not speak lightly on this subject, for we are aware that his majesty's ministers have been fully alive to the inquiries from all qualified quarters as to the effect likely to be produced on the markets from the addition of the present crops to the stock of wheat already on hand. The result of these inquiries is, that in the highest quarters there exists the full expectation that towards the month of November the price of wheat will nearly approach to seventy shillings, a price which, while it affords the extent of remuneration to the British farmer recognised by the corn laws, will at the same time admit of the sale of the Canadian bonded wheat; and the introduction of this foreign corn, grown by British colonists, will contribute to keeping down our markets, and exclude foreign grain from other quarters."

There's nice gentlemen of Whitehall! What pretty gentlemen they are! "*Envy of surrounding nations,*" indeed, to be under command of pretty gentlemen who can make calculations so nice, and put forth predictions so positive upon such a subject! "*Admiration of the world*" indeed, to live under the command of men who can so control seasons and markets; or, at least, who can so dive into the secrets of trade, and find out the contents of the fields, barns, and ricks, as to be able to balance things so nicely as to cause the Canadian corn to find a market, without injuring the sale of that of the British farmer, and without admitting that of the French farmer and the other farmers of the continent! Happy, too happy, rogues that we

are, to be under the guidance of such pretty gentlemen, and right just is it that we should be banished for life, if we utter a word *tending* to bring such pretty gentlemen into contempt.

Let it be observed that this paragraph *must* have come from Whitehall. This wretched paper is the demi-official organ of the government. As to the owners of the paper, Daniel Stewart, that notorious fellow, Street, and the rest of them, not excluding the brother of the great Oracle, which brother bought, the other day, a share of this vehicle of baseness and folly; as to these fellows, they have no control other than what relates to the expenditure and the receipts of the vehicle. They get their news from the offices of the Whitehall people, and their paper is the mouthpiece of those same people. Mark this, I I pray you, reader; and let the French people mark it, too, and then take their revenge for the Waterloo insolence. This being the case, then, this paragraph proceeding from the pretty gentlemen, what a light it throws on their expectations, their hopes, and their fears. They see that wheat at seventy shillings a quarter is *necessary* to them! Ah! pray mark that! They see that wheat at seventy shillings a quarter is necessary to them; and, therefore, they say that wheat will be at seventy shillings a quarter, the price, as they call it, necessary to remunerate the British farmer. And how do the conjurors at Whitehall know this? Why, they have made full inquiries "in qualified quarters." And the qualified quarters have satisfied the "highest quarters," that, "towards the month of November, the price of wheat will nearly approach to seventy shillings the quarter!" I wonder what the words towards the "end of November" may mean. Devil's in't if middle of September is not "*towards* November;" and the wheat, instead of going on towards seventy shillings, is very fast coming down to forty. The beast who wrote this paragraph; the pretty beast; this "envy of surrounding nations" wrote it on the 27th of August, *a soaking wet Saturday!* The pretty beast was not aware that the next day was going to be fine, and that we were to have only the succeeding Tuesday and half the following Saturday of wet weather until the whole of the harvest should be in. The pretty beast wrote while the rain was spattering against the window; and he did "not speak lightly," but was fully aware that the highest quarters, having made inquiries of the qualified quarters, were sure that wheat would be at seventy shillings during the ensuing year. What will be the price of wheat it is impossible for any one of say. I know a gentleman, who is a very good

judge of such matters, who is of opinion that the average price of wheat will be thirty-two shillings a quarter, or lower, before Christmas; this is not quite half what the *highest quarters* expect, in consequence of the inquiries which they have made of the *qualified quarters*. I do not say that the average of wheat will come down to thirty-two shillings; but this I know, that at Reading, last Saturday, about forty-five shillings was the price; and I hear that, in Norfolk, the price is forty-two. The *highest quarters*, and the infamous London press, will, at any rate, be prettily exposed before Christmas. Old Sir Thomas Lethbridge, too, and Gaffer Gooch, and his base tribe of Pittites at Ipswich; Coke and Suffield, and their crew; all these will be prettily laughed at; nor will that "tall soul," Lord Milton, escape being reminded of his profound and patriotic observation relative to "this self-renovating country." No sooner did he see the wheat get up to sixty or seventy shillings than he lost all his alarms; found that all things were right, turned his back on Yorkshire reformers, and went and toiled for Scarlett at Peterborough: and discovered that there was nothing wrong, at last, and that the "self-renovating country" would triumph over all its difficulties!—So it will, "tall soul;" it will triumph over all its difficulties: it will renovate itself: it will purge itself of rotten boroughs, of vile boroughmongers, their tools and their stopgaps; it will purge itself of all the villainies which now corrode its heart; it will, in short, free itself from those curses which the expenditure of eight or nine hundred millions of English money took place in order to make perpetual; it will, in short, become as free from oppression, as easy and as happy as the gallant and sensible nation on the other side of the Channel. This is the sort of renovation, but not renovation by the means of wheat at seventy shillings a quarter. Renovation it will have: it will rouse and will shake from itself curses like the pension which is paid to Burke's executors. This is the sort of renovation, "tall soul;" and not wheat at seventy shillings a quarter, while it is at twenty-five shillings a quarter in France. Pray observe, reader, how the "tall soul" *catched* at the rise in the price of wheat: how he *snapped* at it: how quickly he ceased his attacks upon the Whitehall people and upon the system. He thought he had been deceived: he thought that things were coming about again; and so he drew in his horns, and began to talk about the self-renovating country. This was the tone of them *all*. This was the tone of all the boroughmongers; all the friends of the system; all those who, like Lethbridge, had

begun to be staggered. They had deviated, for a moment, into our path! but they popped back again the moment they saw the price of wheat rise! All the enemies of reform, all the calumniators of reformers, all the friends of the system, most anxiously desired a rise in the price of wheat. Mark the curious fact that all the vile press of London; the whole of that infamous press; that newspapers, magazines, reviews: the whole of the base thing; and a baser surely this world never saw; that the whole of this base thing rejoiced, exulted, crowed over me, and told an impudent lie, in order to have the crowing; crowed, for what? *Because wheat and bread were become dear!* A newspaper hatched under a corrupt priest, a profligate priest, and recently espoused to the hell of Pall Mall; even this vile thing crowed because wheat and bread had become dear! Now, it is notorious that, heretofore, every periodical publication in this kingdom was in the constant habit of lamenting when bread became dear, and of rejoicing when it became cheap. This is notorious. Nay, it is equally notorious, that this infamous press was everlastingly assailing bakers, and millers, and butchers, for not selling bread, flour, and meat cheaper than they were selling them. In how many hundreds of instances has this infamous press caused attacks to be made by the mob upon tradesmen of this description! All these things are notorious. Moreover, notorious it is that, long previous to every harvest, this infamous, this execrable, this beastly press, was engaged in stunning the public with accounts of the *great crop* which was just coming forward! There was always, with this press, a prodigiously large crop. This was invariably the case. It was never known to be the contrary.

Now these things are perfectly well known to every man in England. How comes it, then, reader, that the profligate, the trading, the lying, the infamous press of London, has now totally changed its tone and bias. The base thing never now tells us that there is a great crop or even a good crop. It never now wants cheap bread and cheap wheat and cheap meat. It never now finds fault of bakers and butchers. It now always endeavours to make it appear that corn is dearer than it is. The base *Morning Herald*, about three weeks ago, not only suppressed the fact of the fall of wheat, but asserted that there had been a rise in the price. Now *why is all this?* That is a great question, reader. That is a very interesting question. Why has this infamous press, which always pursues that which it thinks its own interest; why has it taken this strange turn? This is the

reason: stupid as the base thing is, it has arrived at a conviction that if the price of the produce of the land cannot be kept up to something approaching ten shillings a bushel for good wheat, the hellish system of funding must be blown up. The infamous press has arrived at a conviction that that cheating, that fraudulent system by which this press lives, must be destroyed unless the price of corn can be kept up. The infamous traders of the press are perfectly well satisfied that the interest of the debt must be reduced, unless wheat can be kept up to nearly ten shillings a bushel. Stupid as they are, and stupid as the fellows down at Westminster are, they know very well that the whole system, stock-jobbers, Jews, cant and all, go to the devil at once as soon as a deduction is made from the interest of the debt. Knowing this, they want wheat to sell high; because it has, at last, been hammered into their skulls that the interest cannot be paid in full if wheat sells low. Delightful is the dilemma in which they are. Dear bread does not suit their manufactories, and cheap bread does not suit their debt. "*Envy of surrounding nations*," how hard it is that Providence will not enable your farmers to sell dear and the consumers to buy cheap! These are the things that you want. Admiration of the world you are; but have these things you will not. There may be those, indeed, who question whether you yourself know what you want; but, at any rate, if you want these things, you will not have them.

Before I conclude, let me ask the reader to take a look at the *singularity* of the tone and tricks of this Six-Acts Government. Is it not a novelty in the world to see a government, and in ordinary seasons, too, having its whole soul absorbed in considerations relating to the price of corn? There are our neighbours, the French, who have got a government engaged in taking military possession of a great neighbouring kingdom to free which from these very French we have recently expended a *hundred and fifty millions of money*. Our neighbours have got a government that is thus engaged, and we have got a government that employs itself in making incessant "inquiries in all the qualified quarters" relative to the price of wheat! Curious employment for a government! Singular occupation for the ministers of the Great George! They seem to think nothing of Spain, with its eleven millions of people, being in fact added to France. Wholly insensible do they appear to concerns of this sort, while they sit thinking, day and night, upon the price of the bushel of wheat!

However, they are not, after all, such fools as they appear to be. Despicable, indeed, must be that nation whose safety or whose happiness does, in any degree, depend on so fluctuating a thing as the price of corn. This is a matter that we must take as it comes. The seasons will be what they will be; and all the calculations of statesmen must be made wholly independent of the changes and chances of seasons. This has always been the case, to be sure. What nation could ever carry on its affairs, if it had to take into consideration the price of corn? Nevertheless, such is the situation of *our government* that its very existence, in its present way, depends upon the price of corn. The pretty fellows at Whitehall, if you may say to them: Well, but look at Spain; look at the enormous strides of the French; think of the consequences in case of another war; look, too, at the growing marine of America. See, Mr. Jenkinson, see, Mr. Canning, see, Mr. Huskisson, see, Mr. Peel, and all ye tribe of Grenvilles, see, what tremendous dangers are gathering together about us! "*Us!*" Aye, about *you;* but pray think what tremendous dangers wheat at four shillings a bushel will bring about *us!* This is the gist. Here lies the whole of it. We laugh at a government employing itself in making calculations about the price of corn, and in employing its press to put forth market puffs. We laugh at these things; but we should not laugh, if we considered that it is on the price of wheat that the duration of the power and the profits of these men depends. They know what they want; and they wish to believe themselves, and to make others believe, that they shall have it. I have observed before, but it is necessary to observe again, that all those who are for the system, let them be Opposition or Opposition not, feel as Whitehall feels about the price of corn. I have given an instance in the "tall soul;" but it is the same with the whole of them, with the whole of those who do not wish to see this infernal system changed. I was informed, and I believe it to be true, that the Marquis of Lansdowne said, last April, when the great rise took place in the price of corn, that he had always thought that the cash-measures had but little effect on prices; but that he was now satisfied that those measures had no effect at all on prices! Now, what is our situation; what is the situation of this country, if we must have the present ministry, or a ministry of which the Marquis of Lansdowne is to be a member, if the Marquis of Lansdowne did utter these words? And again, I say, that I verily believe he did utter them.

Ours is a government that now seems to depend very much

upon the *weather*. The old type of a ship at sea will not do now, ours is a weather government; and to know the state of it, we must have recourse to those glasses that the Jews carry about. Weather depends upon the winds, in a great measure; and I have no scruple to say, that the situation of those two right honourable youths, that are now gone to the Lakes in the north; that their situation, next winter, will be rendered very irksome, not to say perilous, by the present easterly wind, if it should continue about fifteen days longer. Pitt, when he had just made a monstrous issue of paper, and had, thereby, actually put the match which blowed up the old She Devil in 1797—Pitt, at that time, congratulated the nation that the wisdom of parliament had established a solid system of finance. Anything but solid it assuredly was; but his system of finance was as worthy of being called solid, as that system of government which now manifestly depends upon the weather and the winds.

Since my return home (it is now Thursday, 11th September), I have received letters from the east, from the north, and from the west. All tell me that the harvest is very far advanced, and that the crops are free from blight. These letters are not particular as to the weight of the crop; except that they all say that the barley is excellent. The wind is now coming from the east. There is every appearance of the fine weather continuing. Before Christmas, we shall have the wheat down to what will be a fair average price in future. I always said that the late rise was a mere puff. It was, in part, a scarcity rise. The wheat of 1821 was grown and bad. That of 1822 had to be begun upon in July. The crop has had to last thirteen months and a half. The present crop will have to last only eleven months, or less. The crop of barley, last year, was so very bad; so very small; and the crop of the year before so very bad in quality that wheat was malted, last year, in great quantities, instead of barley. This year, the crop of barley is prodigious. All these things considered, wheat, if the cash-measures had had no effect, must have been a hundred and forty shillings a quarter, and barley eighty. Yet the first never got to seventy, and the latter never got to forty! And yet there was a man who calls himself a statesman to say that that mere puff of a rise satisfied him that the cash-measures had never had any effect! Ah! they are all *afraid* to believe in the effect of those cash-measures: they tremble like children at the sight of the rod, when you hold up before them the effect of those cash-measures. Their only hope is, that I am wrong in my opinions upon that

subject; because, if I am right, their system is condemned to speedy destruction!

I thus conclude, for the present, my remarks relative to the harvest and the price of corn. It is the great subject of the day; and the comfort is that we are now speedily to see whether I be right or whether the Marquis of Lansdowne be right. As to the infamous London press, the moment the wheat comes down to forty shillings, that is to say, an average government return of forty shillings, I will spend ten pounds in placarding this infamous press, after the manner in which we used to placard the base and detestable enemies of the queen. This infamous press has been what is vulgarly called "running its rigs" for several months past. The *Quakers* have been urging it on, underhanded. They have, I understand, been bribing it pretty deeply, in order to calumniate me, and to favour their own monopoly, but, thank God, the cunning knaves have outwitted themselves. They won't play at cards; but they will play at *Stocks;* they will play at lottery tickets, and they will play at Mark Lane. They have played a silly game, this time. Saint Swithin, that good old Roman Catholic Saint, seemed to have set a trap for them: he went on, wet, wet, wet, even until the harvest began. Then, after two or three days' sunshine, shocking wet again. The ground soaking, the wheat growing, and the "*Friends*," the gentle Friends, seeking the Spirit, were as busy amongst the sacks at Mark Lane as the devil in a high wind. In short they bought away, with all the gain of Godliness, *and a little more*, before their eyes. All of a sudden, Saint Swithin took away his clouds; out came the sun; the wind got round to the east; just sun enough and just wind enough; and as the wheat ricks everywhere rose up, the long jaws of the Quakers dropped down; and their faces of slate became of a darker hue. That sect will certainly be punished this year; and let us hope that such a change will take place in their concerns as will compel a part of them to labour, at any rate; for, at present, their sect is a perfect monster in society; a whole sect, not one man of whom earns his living by the sweat of his brow. A sect a great deal worse than the Jews; for some of them do work. However, God send us the easterly wind for another fortnight, and we shall certainly see some of this sect at work.

FROM KENSINGTON, ACROSS SURREY, AND ALONG THAT COUNTY

REIGATE,
Wednesday Evening, 19 *October*, 1825.

HAVING some business at Hartswood, near Reigate, I intended to come off this morning on horseback, along with my son Richard, but it rained so furiously the last night that we gave up the horse project for to-day, being, by appointment, to be at Reigate by ten o'clock to-day: so that we came off this morning at five o'clock in a post-chaise, intending to return home and take our horses. Finding, however, that we cannot quit this place till Friday, we have now sent for our horses, though the weather is dreadfully wet. But we are under a farm-house roof, and the wind may whistle and the rain fall as much as they like.

REIGATE,
Thursday Evening, 20 *October*.

Having done my business at Hartswood to-day about eleven o'clock, I went to a sale at a farm, which the farmer is quitting. Here I had a view of what has long been going on all over the country. The farm, which belongs to *Christ's Hospital*, has been held by a man of the name of Charington, in whose family the lease has been, I hear, a great number of years. The house is hidden by trees. It stands in the Weald of Surrey, close by the *River Mole*, which is here a mere rivulet, though just below this house the rivulet supplies the very prettiest flour-mill I ever saw in my life.

Everything about this farm-house was formerly the scene of *plain manners* and *plentiful living*. Oak clothes-chests, oak bedsteads, oak chests of drawers, and oak tables to eat on, long, strong, and well supplied with joint stools. Some of the things were many hundreds of years old. But all appeared to be in a state of decay and nearly of *disuse*. There appeared to have been hardly any *family* in that house, where formerly there were, in all probability, from ten to fifteen men, boys, and maids: and, which was the worst of all, there was a *parlour*. Aye, and

a *carpet* and *bell-pull* too! One end of the front of this once plain and substantial house had been moulded into a "*parlour;*" and there was the mahogany table, and the fine chairs, and the fine glass, and all as bare-faced upstart as any stock-jobber in the kingdom can boast of. And there were the decanters, the glasses, the "dinner-set" of crockery-ware, and all just in the true stock-jobber style. And I dare say it has been *'Squire* Charington and the *Miss* Charington's; and not plain Master Charington, and his son Hodge, and his daughter Betty Charington, all of whom this accursed system has, in all likelihood, transmuted into a species of mock gentlefolks, while it has ground the labourers down into real slaves. Why do not farmers now *feed* and *lodge* their work-people, as they did formerly? Because they cannot keep them *upon so little* as they give them in wages. This is the real cause of the change. There needs no more to prove that the lot of the working classes has become worse than it formerly was. This fact alone is quite sufficient to settle this point. All the world knows that a number of people, boarded in the same house, and at the same table, can, with as good food, be boarded much cheaper than those persons divided into twos, threes, or fours, can be boarded. This is a well-known truth: therefore, if the farmer now shuts his pantry against his labourers, and pays them wholly in money, is it not clear that he does it because he thereby gives them a living *cheaper* to him; that is to say, a *worse* living than formerly? Mind, he has *a house* for them; a kitchen for them to sit in, bedrooms for them to sleep in, tables, and stools, and benches, of everlasting duration. All these he has: all these *cost him nothing;* and yet so much does he gain by pinching them in wages that he lets all these things remain as of no use rather than feed labourers in the house. Judge, then, of the *change* that has taken place in the condition of these labourers! And be astonished, if you can, at the *pauperism* and the *crimes* that now disgrace this once happy and moral England.

The land produces, on an average, what it always produced, but there is a new distribution of the produce. This 'Squire Charington's father used, I dare say, to sit at the head of the oak-table along with his men, say grace to them, and cut up the meat and the pudding. He might take a cup of *strong beer* to himself, when they had none; but that was pretty nearly all the difference in their manner of living. So that *all* lived well. But the *'squire* had many *wine-decanters* and *wine-glasses* and "*a dinner set,*" and a "*breakfast set,*" and "*dessert knives;*" and

these evidently imply carryings on and a consumption that must of necessity have greatly robbed the long oak table if it had remained fully tenanted. That long table could not share in the work of the decanters and the dinner set. Therefore, it became almost untenanted; the labourers retreated to hovels, called cottages; and instead of board and lodging, they got money; so little of it as to enable the employer to drink wine; but, then, that he might not reduce them to *quite starvation*, they were enabled to come to him, in the *king's name*, and demand food *as paupers*. And now, mind, that which a man receives in the *king's name*, he knows well he has *by force;* and it is not in nature that he should *thank* anybody for it, and least of all the party *from whom it is forced*. Then, if this sort of force be insufficient to obtain him enough to eat and to keep him warm, is it surprising if he think it no great offence against God (who created no man to starve) to use another sort of force more within his own control? Is it, in short, surprising, if he resort to *theft* and *robbery?*

This is not only the *natural* progress, but it *has been* the progress in England. The blame is not justly imputed to 'Squire Charington and his like: the blame belongs to the infernal stock-jobbing system. There was no reason to expect that farmers would not endeavour to keep pace, in point of show and luxury, with fund-holders, and with all the tribes that *war* and *taxes* created. Farmers were not the authors of the mischief; and *now* they are compelled to shut the labourers out of their houses, and to pinch them in their wages, in order to be able to pay their own taxes; and, besides this, the manners and the principles of the working class are so changed that a sort of self-preservation bids the farmer (especially in some counties) to keep them from beneath his roof.

I could not quit this farm-house without reflecting on the thousands of scores of bacon and thousands of bushels of bread that had been eaten from the long oak-table which, I said to myself, is now perhaps going at last to the bottom of a bridge that some stock-jobber will stick up over an artificial river in his cockney garden. "*By —— it shan't,*" said I, almost in a real passion: and so I requested a friend to buy it for me; and if he do so, I will take it to Kensington, or to Fleet Street, and keep it for the good it has done in the world.

When the old farm-houses are down (and down they must come in time) what a miserable thing the country will be! Those that are now erected are mere painted shells, with a

mistress within, who is stuck up in a place she calls a *parlour*, with, if she have children, the "young ladies and gentlemen" about her: some showy chairs and a sofa (a *sofa* by all means): half a dozen prints in gilt frames hanging up: some swinging book-shelves with novels and tracts upon them: a dinner brought in by a girl that is perhaps better "educated" than she: two or three nick-nacks to eat instead of a piece of bacon and a pudding: the house too neat for a dirty-shoed carter to be allowed to come into; and everything proclaiming to every sensible beholder that there is here a constant anxiety to make a *show* not warranted by the reality. The children (which is the worst part of it) are all too clever to *work:* they are all to be *gentlefolks*. Go to plough! Good God! What, "young gentlemen" go to plough! They become *clerks*, or some skimmy-dish thing or other. They flee from the dirty *work* as cunning horses do from the bridle. What misery is all this! What a mass of materials for producing that general and *dreadful convulsion* that must, first or last, come and blow this funding and jobbing and enslaving and starving system to atoms!

I was going, to-day, by the side of a plat of ground, where there was a very fine flock of *turkeys*. I stopped to admire them, and observed to the owner how fine they were, when he answered, "We owe them entirely *to you*, sir, for we never raised one till we read your *Cottage Economy*." I then told him that we had, this year, raised two broods at Kensington, one black and one white, one of nine and one of eight; but that, about three weeks back, they appeared to become dull and pale about the head; and that, therefore, I sent them to a farm-house, where they recovered instantly, and the broods being such a contrast to each other in point of colour, they were now, when prowling over a grass field, amongst the most agreeable sights that I had ever seen. I intended, of course, to let them get their full growth at Kensington, where they were in a grass plat about fifteen yards square, and where I thought that the feeding of them, in great abundance, with lettuces and other greens from the garden, together with grain, would carry them on to perfection. But I found that I was wrong; and that though you may raise them to a certain size in a small place and with such management, they then, if so much confined, begin to be sickly. Several of mine began actually to droop: and the very day they were sent into the country, they became as gay as ever, and in three days all the colour about their heads came back to them.

This town of Reigate had, in former times, a priory, which

had considerable estates in the neighbourbood; and this is brought to my recollection by a circumstance which has recently taken place in this very town. We all know how long it has been the fashion for us to take it for *granted* that the monasteries were *bad things;* but of late I have made some hundreds of thousands of very good Protestants begin to suspect that monasteries were better than *poor-rates,* and that monks and nuns, who *fed the poor,* were better than sinecure and pension men and women, who *feed upon the poor.* But how came the monasteries! How came this that was at Reigate, for instance? Why it was, if I recollect correctly, *founded by a Surrey gentleman,* who gave this spot and other estates to it, and who, as was usual, provided that masses were to be said in it for his soul and those of others, and that it should, as usual, give aid to the poor and needy.

Now, upon the face of the transaction, what *harm* could this do the community? On the contrary, it must, one would think, do it *good;* for here was this estate given to a set of landlords who never could quit the spot; who could have no families; who could save no money; who could hold no private property; who could make no will; who must spend all their income at Reigate and near it; who, as was the custom, fed the poor, administered to the sick, and taught some, at least, of the people, *gratis.* This, upon the face of the thing, seems to be a very good way of disposing of a rich man's estate.

"Aye, but," it is said, "he left his estate away from his relations." That is not *sure,* by any means. The contrary is fairly to be presumed. Doubtless, it was the custom for Catholic priests, before they took their leave of a dying rich man, to advise him to think of the *Church and the Poor;* that is to say, to exhort him to bequeath something to them; and this has been made a monstrous charge against that Church. It is surprising how blind men are, when they have a mind to be blind; what despicable dolts they are, when they desire to be cheated. We of the Church of England must have a special deal of good sense and of modesty, to be sure, to rail against the Catholic Church on this account, when our own Common Prayer Book, copied from an act of parliament, *commands our parsons to do just the same thing!*

Ah! say the Dissenters, and particularly the Unitarians; that queer sect, who will have all the wisdom in the world to themselves; who will believe and won't believe; who will be Christians and who won't have *a Christ;* who will laugh at you, if

you believe in the Trinity, and who would (if they could) boil you in oil if you do not believe in the Resurrection: "Oh!" say the Dissenters, "we know very well that your *Church parsons* are commanded to get, if they can, dying people to give their money and estates to the Church and *the poor*, as they call the concern, though the *poor*, we believe, come in for very little which is got in this way. But what is *your Church?* We are the real Christians; and we, upon our souls, never play such tricks; never, no never, terrify old women out of their stockings full of guineas." "And as to us," say the Unitarians, "we, the most *liberal* creatures upon earth; we, whose virtue is indignant at the tricks by which the monks and nuns got legacies from dying people to the injury of heirs and other relations; we, who are the really enlightened, the truly consistent, the benevolent, the disinterested, the exclusive patentees of the *salt of the earth*, which is sold only at, or by express permission from our old and original warehouse and manufactory, Essex Street, in the Strand, first street on the left, going from Temple Bar towards Charing Cross; we defy you to show that Unitarian parsons. . . ."

Stop your protestations and hear my Reigate anecdote, which, as I said above, brought the recollection of the Old Priory into my head. The readers of the *Register* heard me, several times, some years ago, mention Mr. Baron Maseres, who was, for a great many years, what they call Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer. He lived partly in London and partly at Reigate, for more, I believe, than half a century; and he died, about two years ago, or less, leaving, I am told, *more than a quarter of a million of money*. The Baron came to see me, in Pall Mall, in 1800. He always came frequently to see me, wherever I was in London; not by any means omitting to *come to see me in Newgate*, where I was imprisoned for two years, with a thousand pounds fine and seven years' heavy bail, for having expressed my indignation at the flogging of Englishmen, in the heart of England, under a guard of German bayonets; and to Newgate he always came in *his wig and gown*, in order, as he said, to show his abhorrence of the sentence. I several times passed a week, or more, with the Baron at his house, at Reigate, and might have passed many more, if my time and taste would have permitted me to accept of his invitations. Therefore, I knew the Baron well. He was a most conscientious man; he was when I first knew him still a very clever man; he retained all his faculties to a very great age; in 1815, I think it was, I got

a letter from him, written in a firm hand, correctly as to grammar and ably as to matter, and he must then have been little short of ninety. He never was a bright man; but had always been a very sensible, just and humane man, and a man too who always cared a great deal for the public good; and he was the only man that I ever heard of, who refused to have his salary augmented, when an augmentation was offered, and when all other such salaries were augmented. I had heard of this: I asked him about it when I saw him again; and he said: "There was no *work* to be added, and I saw no justice in adding to the salary. It must," added he, "be *paid by somebody*, and the more I take, the less that somebody must have."

He did not save money for money's sake. He saved it because his habits would not let him spend it. He kept a house in Rathbone Place, chambers in the Temple, and his very pretty place at Reigate. He was by no means stingy, but his scale and habits were cheap. Then, consider, too, a bachelor of nearly a hundred years old. His father left him a fortune, his brother (who also died a very old bachelor), left him another; and the money lay in the funds, and it went on doubling itself over and over again, till it became that immense mass which we have seen above, and which, when the Baron was making his will, he had neither Catholic priest nor Protestant parson to exhort him to leave to the Church and the poor, instead of his relations; though, as we shall presently see, he had somebody else to whom to leave his great heap of money.

The Baron was a most implacable enemy of the Catholics, as Catholics. There was rather a peculiar reason for this, his grandfather having been a *French Hugonot* and having fled with his children to England, at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantz. The Baron was a very humane man; his humanity made him assist to support the French emigrant priests; but, at the same time, he caused Sir Richard Musgrave's book against the Irish Catholics to be published at his own expense. He and I never agreed upon this subject; and this subject was, with him, a *vital* one. He had no asperity in his nature; he was naturally all gentleness and benevolence; and, therefore, he never *resented* what I said to him on this subject (and which nobody else ever, I believe, ventured to say to him): but he did not like it; and he liked it the less because I certainly beat him in the argument. However, this was long before he visited me in Newgate: and it never produced (though the dispute was frequently revived) any difference in his conduct

towards me, which was uniformly friendly to the last time I saw him before his memory was gone.

There was great excuse for the Baron. From his very birth he had been taught to hate and abhor the Catholic religion. He had been told that his father and mother had been driven out of France by the Catholics: and there was *that mother* dinning this in his ears, and all manner of horrible stories along with it, during all the tender years of his life. In short, the prejudice made part of his very frame. In the year 1803, in August, I think it was, I had gone down to his house on a Friday, and was there on a Sunday. After dinner he and I and his brother walked to the Priory, as is still called the mansion house, in the dell at Reigate, which is now occupied by Lord Eastnor, and in which a Mr. Birket, I think, then lived. After coming away from the Priory, the Baron (whose native place was Betchworth, about two or three miles from Reigate), who knew the history of every house and everything else in this part of the country, began to tell me why the place was called *the Priory*. From this he came to the *superstition* and *dark ignorance* that induced people to found monasteries; and he dwelt particularly on the *injustice to heirs and relations;* and he went on, in the usual Protestant strain, and with all the bitterness of which he was capable, against those *crafty priests*, who thus *plundered families* by means of the influence which they had over people in their dotage, or who were naturally weak-minded.

Alas! poor Baron! he does not seem to have at all foreseen what was to become of his own money! What would he have said to me, if I had answered his observations by predicting, that *he* would give his great mass of money to a little parson for that parson's own private use; leave only a mere pittance to his own relations; leave the little parson his house in which we were then sitting (along with all his other real property); that the little parson would come into the house and take possession; and that his own relations (two nieces) would walk out! Yet all this has actually taken place, and that, too, after the poor old Baron's four score years of jokes about the tricks of *Popish* priests, practised, in the *dark ages*, upon the *ignorant* and *superstitious* people of Reigate.

When I first knew the Baron he was a staunch *Church of England man*. He went to church every Sunday once, at least. He used to take me to Reigate church: and I observed that he was very well versed in his prayer book. But a decisive proof of his zeal as a Church of England man is, that he settled

an annual sum on the incumbent of Reigate, in order to induce him to preach, or pray (I forget which), in the church, twice on a Sunday, instead of once; and in case this additional preaching, or praying, were not performed in Reigate church, the annuity was to go (and sometimes it does now go) to the poor of an adjoining parish, and not to those of Reigate, lest I suppose the parson, the overseers, and other ratepayers, might happen to think that the Baron's annuity would be better laid out in food for the bodies than for the souls of the poor; or, in other words, lest the money should be taken annually and added to the poor-rates to ease the purses of the farmers.

It did not, I dare say, occur to the poor Baron (when he was making this settlement), that he was now giving money to make a church parson put up additional prayers, though he had, all his lifetime, been laughing at those who, in the *dark* ages, gave money for this purpose to Catholic priests. Nor did it, I dare say, occur to the Baron that, in his contingent settlement of the annuity on the poor of an adjoining parish he as good as declared his opinion that he distrusted the piety of the parson, the overseers, the churchwardens, and, indeed, of all the people of Reigate: yes, at the very moment that he was providing additional prayers for them, he in the very same parchment put a provision which clearly showed that he was thoroughly convinced that they, overseers, churchwardens, people, parson and all, loved money better than prayers.

What was this, then? Was it hypocrisy; was it ostentation? No: mistake. The Baron thought that those who could not go to church in the morning ought to have an opportunity of going in the afternoon. He was aware of the power of money; but when he came to make his obligatory clause, he was compelled to do that which reflected great discredit on the very Church and religion which it was his object to honour and uphold.

However, the Baron *was* a staunch churchman as this fact clearly proves: several years he had become what they call an *Unitarian*. The first time (I think) that I perceived this was in 1812. He came to see me in Newgate, and he soon began to talk about *religion*, which had not been much his habit. He went on at a great rate, laughing about the Trinity; and I remember that he repeated the Unitarian distich, which makes *a joke* of the idea of there being a devil, and which they all repeat to you, and at the same time laugh and look as cunning and as priggish as jackdaws; just as if they were wiser than all

the rest in the world! I hate to hear the conceited and disgusting prigs seeming to take it for granted that they only are wise because others *believe* in the incarnation without being able to reconcile it to *reason*. The prigs don't consider that there is no more *reason* for the *resurrection* than for the *incarnation;* and yet having taken it into their heads to *come up again*, they would murder you, if they dared, if you were to deny the *resurrection*. I do most heartily despise this priggish set for their conceit and impudence; but seeing that they want *reason* for the incarnation; seeing that they will have *effects*, here, ascribed to none but *usual causes*, let me put a question or two to them.

1. *Whence* comes the *white clover*, that comes up and covers all the ground, in America, where hard-wood trees, after standing for thousands of years, have been burnt down?
2. *Whence* come (in similar cases as to self-woods) the hurtleberries in some places, and the raspberries in others?
3. *Whence* come fish in new made places where no fish have ever been put?
4. *What causes* horse-hair to become living things?
5. *What causes* frogs to come in drops of rain, or those drops of rain to turn to frogs, the moment they are on the earth?
6. *What causes* musquitoes to come in rain water caught in a glass, covered over immediately with oil paper, tied down and so kept till full of these winged torments?
7. *What causes* flounders, real little *flat fish*, brown on one side, white on the other, mouth side-ways, with tail, fins, and all, *leaping alive*, in the *inside* of a rotten sheep's, and of every rotten sheep's, *liver?*

There, prigs; answer these questions. Fifty might be given you; but these are enough. Answer these. I suppose you will not deny the facts? They are all notoriously true. The *last*, which of itself would be quite enough for you, will be attested on oath, if you like it, by any farmer, ploughman, and shepherd in England. Answer this question 7, or hold your conceited gabble about the "*impossibility*" of that which I need not here name.

Men of sense do not attempt to discover that which it is *impossible* to discover. They leave things pretty much as they

find them; and take care, at least, not to make changes of any sort without very evident necessity. The poor Baron, however, appeared to be quite eaten up with his "*rational* Christianity." He talked like a man who has made a *discovery* of his *own*. He seemed as pleased as I, when I was a boy, used to be, when I had just found a rabbit's stop, or a blackbird's nest full of young ones. I do not recollect what I said upon this occasion. It is most likely that I said nothing in contradiction to him. I saw the Baron many times after this, but I never talked with him about religion.

Before the summer of 1822, I had not seen him for a year or two, perhaps. But in July of that year, on a very hot day, I was going down Rathbone Place, and, happening to cast my eye on the Baron's house, I knocked at the door to ask how he was. His man-servant came to the door, and told me that his master was at dinner. "Well," said I, "never mind; give my best respects to him." But the servant (who had always been with him since I knew him) begged me to come in, for that he was sure his master would be glad to see me. I thought, as it was likely that I might never see him again, I would go in. The servant announced me, and the Baron said, "Beg him to walk in." In I went, and there I found the Baron at dinner; but *not quite alone;* nor without *spiritual* as well as carnal and vegetable nourishment before him: for there, on the opposite side of his *vis-à-vis* dining table, sat that nice, neat, straight, prim piece of mortality, commonly called the Reverend Robert Fellowes, who was the chaplain to the unfortunate queen until Mr. Alderman Wood's son came to supply his place, and who was now, I could clearly see, in a fair way enough. I had dined, and so I let them dine on. The Baron was become quite a child, or worse, as to mind, though he ate as heartily as I ever saw him, and he was always a great eater. When his servant said, "Here is Mr. Cobbett, sir;" he said, "How do you do, sir? I have read much of your writings, sir; but *never had the pleasure to see your person before.*" After a time I made him recollect me; but he, directly after, being about to relate something about America, turned towards me and said, "*Were you ever in America*, sir?" But I must mention one proof of the state of his mind. Mr. Fellowes asked me about the news from Ireland, where the people were then in a state of starvation (1822), and I answering that it was likely that many of them would actually be starved to death, the Baron, quitting his green goose and green pease, turned to me and said, "*Starved*, sir! Why don't they go to

the parish?" "Why," said I, "you know, sir, that there are no poor-rates in Ireland." Upon this he exclaimed, "What! no poor-rates in Ireland? Why not? I did not know that; I can't think how that can be." And then he rambled on in a childish sort of way.

At the end of about half an hour, or it might be more, I shook hands with the poor old Baron for the last time, well convinced that I should never see him again, and not less convinced that I had seen his *heir*. He died in about a year or so afterwards, left to his own family about £20,000, and to his ghostly guide, the Holy Robert Fellowes, all the rest of his immense fortune, which, as I have been told, amounts to more than a quarter of a million of money.

Now, the public will recollect that, while Mr. Fellowes was at the queen's, he was, in the public papers, charged with being an *Unitarian*, at the same time that he officiated *as her chaplain*. It is also well known that he never publicly contradicted this. It is, besides, the general belief at Reigate. However, this we know well, that he is a parson, of one sort or the other, and that he is not a Catholic priest. That is enough for me. I see this poor, foolish old man leaving a monstrous mass of money to this little Protestant parson, whom he had not even known more, I believe, than about three or four years. When the will was made I cannot say. I know nothing at all about that. I am supposing that all was perfectly fair; that the Baron had his senses when he made his will; that he clearly meant to do that which he did. But, then, I must insist that, if he had left the money to a *Catholic priest*, to be by him expended on the endowment of a convent, wherein to say masses and to feed and teach the poor, it would have been a more sensible and public-spirited part in the Baron, much more beneficial to the town and environs of Reigate, and beyond all measure more honourable to his own memory.

CHILWORTH,
Friday Evening, 21 Oct.

It has been very fine to-day. Yesterday morning there was *snow* on Reigate Hill, enough to look white from where we were in the valley. We set off about half-past one o'clock, and came all down the valley, through Buckland, Betchworth, Dorking, Sheer and Aldbury, to this place. Very few prettier rides in England, and the weather beautifully fine. There are more

meeting-houses than churches in the vale, and I have heard of no less than five people, in this vale, who have gone crazy on account of religion.

To-morrow we intend to move on towards the west; to take a look, just a look, at the Hampshire parsons again. The turnips seem fine; but they cannot be large. All other things are very fine indeed. Everything seems to prognosticate a hard winter. All the country people say that it will be so.

FROM CHILWORTH, IN SURREY, TO WINCHESTER

THURSLEY, FOUR MILES FROM
GODALMING, SURREY,
Sunday Evening, 23 October, 1825.

WE set out from Chilworth to-day about noon. This is a little hamlet, lying under the south side of St. Martha's Hill; and on the other side of that hill, a little to the north-west, is the town of Guildford, which (taken with its environs) I, who have seen so many, many towns, think the prettiest, and, taken all together, the most agreeable and most happy-looking that I ever saw in my life. Here are hill and dell in endless variety. Here are the chalk and the sand, vieing with each other in making beautiful scenes. Here is a navigable river and fine meadows. Here are woods and downs. Here is something of everything but *fat marshes* and their skeleton-making *agues*. The vale, all the way down to Chilworth from Reigate, is very delightful.

We did not go to Guildford, nor did we cross the *River Wey*, to come through Godalming; but bore away to our left, and came through the village of Hambleton, going first to Hascomb to show Richard the South Downs from that high land, which looks southward over the *Wealds* of Surrey and Sussex, with all their fine and innumerable oak-trees. Those that travel on turnpike-roads know nothing of England.—From Hascomb to Thursley almost the whole way is across fields, or commons, or along narrow lands. Here we see the people without any disguise or affectation. Against a *great road* things are made for *show*. Here we see them *without any show*. And here we gain real knowledge as to their situation.—We crossed to-day three turnpike-roads, that from Guildford to Horsham, that from Godalming to Worthing, I believe, and that from Godalming to Chichester.

THURSLEY,
Wednesday, 26 Oct.

The weather has been beautiful ever since last Thursday morning; but there has been a white frost every morning, and the

days have been coldish. *Here,* however, I am quite at home in a room where there is one of my *American fireplaces,* bought by my host of Mr. Judson of Kensington, who has made many a score of families comfortable, instead of sitting shivering in the cold. At the house of the gentleman whose house I am now in, there is a good deal of *fuel-wood;* and here I see in the parlours those fine and cheerful fires that make a great part of the happiness of the Americans. But these fires are to be had only in this sort of fireplace. Ten times the fuel; nay, no quantity, would effect the same object, in any other fireplace. It is equally good for coal as for wood; but, for *pleasure,* a wood-fire is the thing. There is round about almost every gentleman's or great farmer's house more wood suffered to rot every year, in one shape or another, than would make (with this fireplace) a couple of rooms constantly warm, from October to June. *Here,* peat, turf, saw-dust, and wood, are burnt in these fireplaces. My present host has three of the fireplaces.

Being out a-coursing to-day, I saw a queer-looking building upon one of the thousands of hills that nature has tossed up in endless variety of form round the skirts of the lofty Hindhead. This building is, it seems, called a *Semaphore,* or *Semiphare,* or something of that sort. What this word may have been hatched out of I cannot say; but it means a *job,* I am sure. To call it an *alarm-post* would not have been so convenient; for people not endued with Scotch *intellect* might have wondered why the devil we should have to pay for alarm-posts; and might have thought that, with all our "glorious victories," we had "brought our hogs to a fine market" if our dread of the enemy were such as to induce us to have alarm-posts all over the country! Such unintellectual people might have thought that we had "conquered France by the immortal Wellington" to little purpose, if we were still in such fear as to build alarm-posts; and they might, in addition, have observed that for many hundred of years England stood in need of neither signal-posts nor standing army of mercenaries; but relied safely on the courage and public spirit of the people themselves. By calling the thing by an outlandish name, these reflections amongst the unintellectual are obviated. *Alarm-post* would be a nasty name; and it would puzzle people exceedingly, when they saw one of these at a place like Ashe, a little village on the north side of the chalk-ridge (called the Hog's Back) going from Guildford to Farnham! What can this be *for?* Why are these expensive things put up

all over the country? Respecting the movements of *whom* is wanted this *alarm-system?* Will no member ask this in parliament? Not one: not a man: and yet it is a thing to ask about. Ah! it is in vain, THING, that you thus are *making your preparations;* in vain that you are setting your trammels! The debt, the blessed debt, that best ally of the people, will break them all; will snap them, as the hornet does the cobweb; and even these very "Semaphores" contribute towards the force of that ever-blessed debt. Curious to see how things *work!* The "glorious revolution," which was made for the avowed purpose of maintaining the Protestant ascendency, and which was followed by such terrible persecution of the Catholics; that "glorious" affair, which set aside a race of kings, because they were Catholics, served as the *precedent* for the American revolution, also called "glorious," and this second revolution compelled the successors of the makers of the first to begin to cease their persecutions of the Catholics! Then again, the debt was made to raise and keep armies on foot to prevent reform of parliament, because, as it was feared by the aristocracy, reform would have humbled them; and this debt, created for this purpose, is fast sweeping the aristocracy out of their estates, as a clown, with his foot, kicks field-mice out of their nests. There was a hope that the debt could have been reduced by stealth, as it were; that the aristocracy could have been saved in this way. That hope now no longer exists. In all likelihood the funds will keep going down. What is to prevent this, if the interest of Exchequer Bills be raised, as the broadsheet tells us it is to be? What! the funds fall in time of peace; and the French funds not fall in time of peace! However, it will all happen just as it ought to happen. Even the next session of parliament will bring out matters of some interest. The thing is now working in the surest possible way.

The great business of life, in the country, appertains, in some way or other, to the *game*, and especially at this time of the year. If it were not for the game, a country life would be like an *everlasting honeymoon*, which would, in about half a century, put an end to the human race. In towns, or large villages, people make a shift to find the means of rubbing the rust off from each other by a vast variety of sources of contest. A couple of wives meeting in the street, and giving each other a wry look, or a look not quite civil enough, will, if the parties be hard pushed for a ground of contention, do pretty well. But in the country there is, alas! no such resource. Here are no

walls for people to take of each other. Here they are so placed as to prevent the possibility of such lucky local contact. Here is more than room of every sort, elbow, leg, horse, or carriage, for them all. Even *at church* (most of the people being in the meeting-houses) the pews are surprisingly too large. Here, therefore, where all circumstances seem calculated to cause never-ceasing concord with its accompanying dullness, there would be no relief at all, were it not for the *game*. This, happily, supplies the place of all other sources of alternate dispute and reconciliation; it keeps all in life and motion, from the lord down to the hedger. When I see two men, whether in a market-room, by the way-side, in a parlour, in a church-yard, or even in the church itself, engaged in manifestly deep and most momentous discourse, I will, if it be any time between September and February, bet ten to one that it is, in some way or other, about *the game*. The wives and daughters hear so much of it that they inevitably get engaged in the disputes; and thus all are kept in a state of vivid animation. I should like very much to be able to take a spot, a circle of 12 miles in diameter, and take an exact account of all the *time* spent by each individual, above the age of ten (that is the age they begin at), in talking, during the game season of one year, about the game and about sporting exploits. I verily believe that it would amount, upon an average, to six times as much as all the other talk put together; and, as to the anger, the satisfaction, the scolding, the commendation, the chagrin, the exultation, the envy, the emulation, where are there any of these in the country unconnected with *the game?*

There is, however, an important distinction to be made between *hunters* (including coursers) and *shooters*. The latter are, as far as relates to their exploits, a disagreeable class compared with the former; and the reason of this is, their doings are almost wholly their own; while, in the case of the others, the achievements are the property of the dogs. Nobody likes to hear another talk *much* in praise of his own acts, unless those acts have a manifest tendency to produce some good to the hearer; and shooters do talk *much* of their own exploits, and those exploits rather tend to *humiliate* the hearer. Then, a *greater shooter* will, nine times out of ten, go so far as almost to *lie a little;* and though people do not tell him of it, they do not like him the better for it; and he but too frequently discovers that they do not believe him: whereas, hunters are mere followers of the dogs, as mere spectators; their praises, if any

are called for, are bestowed on the greyhounds, the hounds, the fox, the hare, or the horses. There is a little rivalship in the riding, or in the behaviour of the horses; but this has so little to do with the personal merit of the sportsmen, that it never produces a want of good fellowship in the evening of the day. A shooter who has been *missing* all day, must have an uncommon share of good sense not to feel mortified while the slaughterers are relating the adventures of that day; and this is what cannot exist in the case of the hunters. Bring me into a room, with a dozen men in it, who have been sporting all day; or rather let me be in an adjoining room, where I can hear the sound of their voices, without being able to distinguish the words, and I will bet ten to one that I tell whether they be hunters or shooters.

I was once acquainted with a *famous shooter* whose name was William Ewing. He was a barrister of Philadelphia, but became far more renowned by his gun than by his law cases. We spent scores of days together a shooting, and were extremely well matched, I having excellent dogs and caring little about my reputation as a shot, his dogs being good for nothing, and he caring more about his reputation as a shot than as a lawyer. The fact which I am going to relate respecting this gentleman ought to be a warning to young men how they become enamoured of this species of vanity. We had gone about ten miles from our home, to shoot where partridges were said to be very plentiful. We found them so. In the course of a November day, he had, just before dark, shot, and sent to the farm-house, or kept in his bag, *ninety-nine* partridges. He made some few *double shots*, and he might have a *miss* or two, for he sometimes shot when out of my sight, on account of the woods. However, he said that he killed at every shot; and as he had counted the birds, when he went to dinner at the farm-house and when he cleaned his gun, he, just before sunset, knew that he had killed *ninety-nine* partridges, every one upon the wing, and a great part of them in woods very thickly set with largish trees. It was a grand achievement; but, unfortunately, he wanted to make it *a hundred*. The sun was setting, and, in that country, darkness comes almost at once; it is more like the going out of a candle than that of a fire; and I wanted to be off, as we had a very bad road to go, and as he, being under strict petticoat government, to which he most loyally and dutifully submitted, was compelled to get home that night, taking me with him, the vehicle (horse and gig) being mine. I, therefore, pressed him to come away,

and moved on myself towards the house (that of old John Brown, in Bucks county, grandfather of that General Brown, who gave some of our whiskered heroes such a rough handling last war, which was waged for the purpose of "deposing James Madison"), at which house I would have stayed all night, but from which I was compelled to go by that watchful government, under which he had the good fortune to live. Therefore I was in haste to be off. No: he would kill the *hundredth* bird! In vain did I talk of the bad road and its many dangers for want of moon. The poor partridges, which we had scattered about, were *calling* all around us; and, just at this moment, up got one under his feet, in a field in which the wheat was three or four inches high. He shot and *missed*. "That's it," said he, running as if to *pick up* the bird. "What!" said I, "you don't think you *killed*, do you? Why there is the bird now, not only alive, but *calling* in that wood;" which was at about a hundred yards' distance. He, in that *form of words* usually employed in such cases, asserted that he shot the bird and saw it fall; and I, in much about the same form of words, asserted that he had *missed*, and that I, with my own eyes, saw the bird fly into the wood. This was too much! To *miss* once out of a hundred times! To lose such a chance of immortality! He was a good-humoured man; I liked him very much; and I could not help feeling for him, when he said, "Well, *sir*, I killed the bird; and if you choose to go away and take your dog away, so as to prevent me from *finding* it, you must do it; the dog is yours, to be sure." "The *dog*," said I, in a very mild tone, "why, Ewing, there is the spot; and could we not see it, upon this smooth green surface, if it were there?" However, he began to *look about;* and I called the dog, and affected to join him in the search. Pity for his weakness got the better of my dread of the bad road. After walking backward and forward many times upon about twenty yards square with our eyes to the ground, looking for what both of us knew was not there, I had passed him (he going one way and I the other), and I happened to be turning round just after I had passed him, when I saw him, putting his hand behind him, *take a partridge out of his bag and let it fall upon the ground!* I felt no temptation to detect him, but turned away my head, and kept looking about. Presently he, having returned to the spot where the bird was, called out to me, in a most triumphant tone, "*Here! here!* Come here!" I went up to him, and he, pointing with his finger down to the bird, and looking hard in my face at the same time, said, "There, Cobbett; I hope that will be a

warning to you never to be obstinate again!" "Well," said I, "come along:" and away we went as merry as larks. When we got to Brown's, he told them the story, triumphed over me most clamorously; and though he often repeated the story to my face, I never had the heart to let him know that I knew of the imposition, which puerile vanity had induced so sensible and honourable a man to be mean enough to practise.

A *professed shot* is, almost always, a very disagreeable brother sportsman. He must, in the first place, have a head rather of the emptiest to *pride himself* upon so poor a talent. Then he is always out of temper, if the game fail, or if he miss it. He never participates in that great delight which all sensible men enjoy at beholding the beautiful action, the docility, the zeal, the wonderful sagacity of the pointer and the setter. He is always thinking about *himself:* always anxious to surpass his companions. I remember that, once, Ewing and I had lost our dog. We were in a wood, and the dog had gone out and found a covey in a wheat stubble joining the wood. We had been whistling and calling him for, perhaps, half an hour or more. When we came out of the wood we saw him pointing, with one foot up; and soon after, he, keeping his foot and body unmoved, gently turned round his head towards the spot where he heard us, as if to bid us come on, and when he saw that we saw him, turned his head back again. I was so delighted that I stopped to look with admiration. Ewing, astonished at my want of alacrity, pushed on, shot one of the partridges, and thought no more about the conduct of the dog than if the sagacious creature had had nothing at all to do with the matter. When I left America, in 1800, I gave this dog to Lord Henry Stuart, who was, when he came home a year or two afterwards, about to bring him to astonish the sportsmen even in England; but those of Pennsylvania were resolved not to part with him, and therefore they *stole* him the night before his lordship came away. Lord Henry had plenty of pointers after his return, and he *saw* hundreds; but always declared that he never saw anything approaching in excellence this American dog. For the information of sportsmen I ought to say that this was a small-headed and sharp-nosed pointer, hair as fine as that of a greyhound, little and short ears, very light in the body, very long legged, and swift as a good lurcher. I had him a puppy, and he never had any *breaking*, but he pointed staunchly at once; and I am of opinion that this sort is, in all respects, better than the heavy breed. Mr. Thornton (I beg his pardon, I believe he is now a knight of some sort), who

was, and perhaps still is, our envoy in Portugal, at the time here referred to was a sort of partner with Lord Henry in this famous dog; and gratitude (to the memory of *the dog* I mean) will, I am sure, or at least, I hope so, make him bear witness to the truth of my character of him; and if one could hear an ambassador *speak out*, I think that Mr. Thornton would acknowledge that his calling has brought him in pretty close contact with many a man who was possessed of most tremendous political power, without possessing half the sagacity, half the understanding, of this dog, and without being a thousandth part so faithful to his trust.

I am quite satisfied that there are as many *sorts* of men as there are of dogs. Swift was a man, and so is Walter the base. But is the *sort* the same? It cannot be *education* alone that makes the amazing difference that we see. Besides, we see men of the very same rank and riches and education differing as widely as the pointer does from the pug. The name, *man*, is common to all the sorts, and hence arises very great mischief. What confusion must there be in rural affairs, if there were no names whereby to distinguish hounds, greyhounds, pointers, spaniels, terriers, and sheep dogs, from each other! And what pretty work if, without regard to the *sorts* of dogs, men were to attempt to *employ them!* Yet this is done in the case of *men!* A man is always *a man;* and without the least regard as to the *sort*, they are promiscuously placed in all kinds of situations. Now, if Mr. Brougham, Doctors Birkbeck, Macculloch and Black, and that profound personage, Lord John Russell, will, in their forthcoming "London University," teach us how to divide men *into sorts*, instead of teaching us to "augment the capital of the nation" by making paper-money, they will render us a real service. That will be *feelosofy* worth attending to. What would be said of the 'squire who should take a fox-hound out to find partridges for him to shoot at? Yet would this be *more* absurd than to set a man to law-making who was manifestly formed for the express purpose of sweeping the streets or digging out sewers?

FARNHAM, SURREY,
Thursday, 27 *Oct.*

We came over the heath from Thursley, this morning, on our way to Winchester. Mr. Wyndham's fox-hounds are coming to Thursley on Saturday. More than three-fourths of all the interesting talk in that neighbourhood, for some days past, has

been about this anxiously looked-for event. I have seen no man, or boy, who did not talk about it. There had been a false report about it; the hounds did *not come;* and the anger of the disappointed people was very great. At last, however, the *authentic* intelligence came, and I left them all as happy as if all were young and all just going to be married. An abatement of my pleasure, however, on this joyous occasion was, that I brought away with me *one*, who was as eager as the best of them. Richard, though now only 11 years and 6 months old, had, it seems, one fox-hunt, in Herefordshire, last winter; and he actually has begun to talk rather *contemptuously* of hare hunting. To show me that he is in no *danger*, he has been leaping his horse over banks and ditches by the road side, all our way across the country from Reigate; and he joined with such glee in talking of the expected arrival of the fox-hounds that I felt some little pain at bringing him away. My engagement at Winchester is for Saturday; but if it had not been so, the deep and hidden ruts in the heath, in a wood in the midst of which the hounds are sure to find, and the immense concourse of horsemen that is sure to be assembled, would have made me bring him away. Upon the high, hard and open countries I should not be afraid for him, but here the danger would have been greater than it would have been right for me to suffer him to run.

We came hither by the way of Waverley Abbey and Moore Park. On the commons I showed Richard some of my old hunting scenes, when I was of his age, or younger, reminding him that I was obliged to hunt on foot. We got leave to go and see the grounds at Waverley where all the old monks' garden walls are totally gone, and where the spot is become a sort of lawn. I showed him the spot where the strawberry garden was, and where I, when sent to gather *hautboys*, used to eat every remarkably fine one, instead of letting it go to be eaten by Sir Robert Rich. I showed him a tree, close by the ruins of the Abbey, from a limb of which I once fell into the river, in an attempt to take the nest of a *crow*, which had artfully placed it upon a branch so far from the trunk as not to be able to bear the weight of a boy eight years old. I showed him an old elm-tree, which was hollow even then, into which I, when a very little boy, once saw a cat go, that was as big as a middle-sized spaniel dog, for relating which I got a great scolding, for standing to which I, at last, got a beating; but stand to which I still did. I have since many times repeated it; and I would take my oath of it to this day. When in New Brunswick I saw the great wild grey cat,

which is there called a *Lucifee;* and it seemed to me to be just such a cat as I had seen at Waverley. I found the ruins not very greatly diminished; but it is strange how small the mansion, and ground, and everything but the trees, appeared to me. They were all great to my mind when I saw them last; and that early impression had remained, whenever I had talked or thought of the spot; so that, when I came to see them again, after seeing the sea and so many other immense things, it seemed as if they had all been made small. This was not the case with regard to the trees, which are nearly as big here as they are any where else; and the old cat-elm, for instance, which Richard measured with his whip, is about 16 or 17 feet round.

From Waverley we went to Moore Park, once the seat of Sir William Temple, and when I was a very little boy, the seat of a lady, or a Mrs. Temple. Here I showed Richard Mother Ludlum's Hole; but, alas! it is not the enchanting place that I knew it, nor that which Grose describes in his Antiquities! The semicircular paling is gone; the basins, to catch the never-ceasing little stream, are gone; the iron cups, fastened by chains, for people to drink out of, are gone; the pavement all broken to pieces; the seats for people to sit on, on both sides of the cave, torn up and gone; the stream that ran down a clean paved channel now making a dirty gutter; and the ground opposite, which was a grove, chiefly of laurels, intersected by closely mowed grass-walks, now become a poor, ragged-looking alder-coppice. Near the mansion, I showed Richard the hill upon which Dean Swift tells us he used to run for exercise, while he was pursuing his studies here; and I would have showed him the garden-seat, under which Sir William Temple's heart was buried, agreeably to his will; but the seat was gone, also the wall at the back of it; and the exquisitely beautiful little lawn in which the seat stood was turned into a parcel of divers-shaped cockney-clumps, planted according to the strictest rules of artificial and refined vulgarity.

At Waverley, Mr. Thompson, a merchant of some sort, has succeeded (after the monks) the Orby Hunters and Sir Robert Rich. At Moore Park, a Mr. Laing, a West India planter or merchant, has succeeded the Temples; and at the castle of Farnham, which you see from Moore Park, Bishop Prettyman Tomline has, at last, after perfectly regular and due gradations, succeeded William of Wykham! In coming up from Moore Park to Farnham town, I stopped opposite the door of a little old house, where there appeared to be a great parcel of children.

"There, Dick," said I, "when I was just such a little creature as that whom you see in the door-way, I lived in this very house with my grandmother Cobbett." He pulled up his horse, and looked *very hard at it*, but said nothing, and on we came.

WINCHESTER,
Sunday Noon, 30 Oct.

We came away from Farnham about noon on Friday, promising Bishop Prettyman to notice him and his way of living more fully on our return. At Alton we got some bread and cheese at a friend's, and then came to Alresford by Medstead, in order to have fine turf to ride on, and to see on this lofty land that which is, perhaps, the finest *beech-wood* in all England. These high down countries are not garden plats, like Kent; but they have, from my first seeing them, when I was about *ten*, always been my delight. Large sweeping downs, and deep dells here and there, with villages amongst lofty trees, are my great delight. When we got to Alresford it was nearly dark, and not being able to find a room to our liking, we resolved to go, though in the dark, to Easton, a village about six miles from Alresford down by the side of the Hichen River.

Coming from Easton yesterday, I learned that Sir Charles Ogle, the eldest son and successor of Sir Chaloner Ogle, had sold, to some *general*, his mansion and estate at Martyr's Worthy, a village on the north side of the Hichen, just opposite Easton. The Ogles had been here for *a couple of centuries* perhaps. They are *gone off now*, "for good and all," as the country people call it. Well, what I have to say to Sir Charles Ogle upon this occasion is this: "It was *you*, who moved at the county meeting, in 1817, that *Address to the Regent*, which you brought ready engrossed upon parchment, which Fleming, the sheriff, declared to have been carried, though a word of it never was heard by the meeting; which address *applauded the power of imprisonment bill, just then passed;* and the like of which address you will not in all human probability ever again move in Hampshire, and, I hope, nowhere else. So, you see, Sir Charles, there is one consolation, at any rate."

I learned, too, that Greame, a famously loyal 'squire and justice, whose son was, a few years ago, made a distributor of stamps in this county, was become so modest as to exchange his big and ancient mansion at Cheriton, or somewhere there, for a very moderate-sized house in the town of Alresford! I saw his

household goods advertised in the Hampshire newspaper, a little while ago, to be sold by public auction. I rubbed my eyes, or, rather, my spectacles, and looked again and again; for I remembered the loyal 'squire; and I, with singular satisfaction, record this change in his scale of existence, which has, no doubt, proceeded solely from that prevalence of mind over matter which the Scotch *feelosofers* have taken such pains to inculcate, and which makes him flee from greatness as from that which diminishes the quantity of "*intellectual* enjoyment"; and so now he,

> "Wondering man can want the larger pile,
> Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile."

And they really tell me that his present house is not much bigger than that of my dear, good old grandmother Cobbett. But (and it may not be wholly useless for the 'squire to know it) she never burnt *candles;* but *rushes* dipped in grease, as I have described them in my *Cottage Economy;* and this was one of the means that she made use of in order to secure a bit of good bacon and good bread to eat, and that made her never give me *potatoes*, cold or hot. No bad hint for the 'squire, father of the distributor of stamps. Good bacon is a very nice thing, I can assure him; and if the quantity be small, it is all the sweeter; provided, however, it be not *too small*. This 'squire used to be a great friend of Old George Rose. But his patron's taste was different from his. George preferred a big house to a little one: and George *began* with a little one, and *ended* with a big one.

Just by Alresford, there was another old friend and supporter of Old George Rose, 'Squire Rawlinson, whom I remember a a very great 'squire in this county. He is now a *police*-'squire in London, and is one of those guardians of the Wen, respecting whose proceedings we read eternal columns in the broadsheet.

This being Sunday, I heard, about 7 o'clock in the morning, a sort of a jangling, made by a bell or two in the *cathedral*. We were getting ready to be off, to cross the country to Burghclere, which lies under the lofty hills at Highclere, about 22 miles from this city; but hearing the bells of the cathedral, I took Richard to show him that ancient and most magnificent pile, and particularly to show him the tomb of that famous bishop of Winchester, William of Wykham; who was the chancellor and the minister of the great and glorious king, Edward III.; who sprang from poor parents in the little village of Wykham, three miles from Botley; and who, amongst other great and most

munificent deeds, founded the famous college, or school, of Winchester, and also one of the colleges of Oxford. I told Richard about this as we went from the inn down to the cathedral; and when I *showed him the tomb*, where the bishop lies on his back, in his Catholic robes, with his mitre on his head, his shepherd's crook by his side, with little children at his feet, their hands put together in a praying attitude, he looked with a degree of inquisitive earnestness that pleased me very much. I took him as far as I could about the cathedral. The "service" was now begun. There is a *dean*, and God knows how many *prebends* belonging to this immensely rich bishopric and chapter: and there were, at this "service," *two or three men* and *five or six boys* in white surplices, with a congregation of *fifteen women* and *four men!* Gracious God! If William of Wykham could, at that moment, have been raised from his tomb! If Saint Swithin, whose name the cathedral bears, or Alfred the Great, to whom St. Swithin was tutor: if either of these could have come, and had been told, that *that* was *now* what was carried on by men, who talked of the "*damnable* errors" of those who founded that very church! But it beggars one's feelings to attempt to find words whereby to express them upon such a subject and such an occasion. How, then, am I to describe what I felt when I yesterday saw in Hyde Meadow a *county bridewell* standing on the very spot where stood the abbey which was founded and endowed by Alfred, which contained the bones of that maker of the English name, and also those of the learned monk, St. Grimbald, whom Alfred brought to England *to begin the teaching at Oxford!*

After we came out of the cathedral, Richard said, "Why, papa, nobody can build such places *now*, can they?" "No, my dear," said I. "That building was made when there were no poor wretches in England called *paupers;* when there were no *poor-rates;* when every labouring man was clothed in good woollen cloth; and when all had a plenty of meat and bread and beer." This talk lasted us to the inn, where, just as we were going to set off, it most curiously happened that a parcel which had come from Kensington by the night coach was put into my hands by the landlord, containing, amongst other things, a pamphlet, sent to me from Rome, being an Italian translation of No. I. of the *Protestant Reformation.* I will here insert the title for the satisfaction of Doctor Black, who, some time ago expressed his utter astonishment that "*such* a work should be published in the *nineteenth* century." Why, Doctor? Did

you want me to stop till the *twentieth* century? That would have been a little too long, Doctor.

Storia
Della
Riforma Protestante
In Inghilterra ed in Irlanda
La quale Dimostra
Come un tal' avvenimento ha impoverito
E degradato il grosso del popolo in que' paesi
in una serie di lettere indirizzate
A tutti i sensati e guisti inglesi
Da
Guglielmo Cobbett
E
Dall' inglese recate in italiano
Da
Dominico Gregorj.
Roma 1825.
Presso Francesco Bourlie.
Con Approvazione.

There, Doctor Black. Write *you* a book that shall be translated into *any* foreign language; and when you have done that, you may *again* call mine "pig's meat."

FROM WINCHESTER TO BURGHCLERE

BURGHCLERE,
Monday Morning, 31 *October*, 1825.

WE had, or I had, resolved not to breakfast at Winchester yesterday: and yet we were detained till nearly noon. But at last off we came, *fasting*. The turnpike-road from Winchester to this place comes through a village called Sutton Scotney, and then through Whitchurch, which lies on the Andover and London road, through Basingstoke. We did not take the cross-turnpike till we came to Whitchurch. We went to King's Worthy; that is about two miles on the road from Winchester to London; and then, turning short to our left, came up upon the downs to the north of Winchester race-course. Here, looking back at the city and at the fine valley above and below it, and at the many smaller valleys that run down from the high ridges into that great and fertile valley, I could not help admiring the taste of the ancient kings, who made this city (which once covered all the hill round about, and which contained 92 churches and chapels) a chief place of their residence. There are not many finer spots in England; and if I were to take in a circle of eight or ten miles of semi-diameter, I should say that I believe there is not one so fine. Here are hill, dell, water, meadows, woods, corn-fields, downs: and all of them very fine and very beautifully disposed. This country does not present to us that sort of beauties which we see about Guildford and Godalming, and round the skirts of Hindhead and Blackdown, where the ground lies in the form that the surface-water in a boiling copper would be in, if you could, by word of command, *make it be still*, the variously-shaped bubbles all sticking up; and really, to look at the face of the earth, who can help imagining that some such process has produced its present form? Leaving this matter to be solved by those who laugh at mysteries, I repeat, that the country round Winchester does not present to us beauties of *this sort;* but of a sort which I like a great deal better. Arthur Young calls the vale between Farnham and Alton *the finest ten miles* in England. Here is a

river with fine meadows on each side of it, and with rising grounds on each outside of the meadows, those grounds having some hop-gardens and some pretty woods. But, though I was born in this vale, I must confess that the ten miles between Maidstone and Tunbridge (which the Kentish folks call the *Garden of Eden*) is a great deal finer; for here, with a river three times as big, and a vale three times as broad, there are, on rising grounds six times as broad, not only hop-gardens and beautiful woods, but immense orchards of apples, pears, plums, cherries and filberts, and these, in many cases, with gooseberries and currants and raspberries beneath; and, all taken together, the vale is really worthy of the appellation which it bears. But even this spot, which I believe to be the very finest, as to fertility and diminutive beauty, in this whole world, I, for my part, do not like so well; nay, as a spot to *live on*, I thing nothing at all of it, compared with a country where high downs prevail, with here and there a large wood on the top or the side of a hill, and where you see, in the deep dells, here and there a farm-house, and here and there a village, the buildings sheltered by a group of lofty trees.

This is my taste, and here, in the north of Hampshire, it has its full gratification. I like to look at the winding side of a great down, with two or three numerous flocks of sheep on it, belonging to different farms; and to see, lower down, the folds, in the fields, ready to receive them for the night. We had, when we got upon the downs, after leaving Winchester, this sort of country all the way to Whitchurch. Our point of destination was this village of Burghclere, which lies close under the north side of the lofty hill at Highclere, which is called Beacon-hill, and on the top of which there are still the marks of a Roman encampment. We saw this hill as soon as we got on Winchester downs; and without any regard to *roads*, we *steered* for it, as sailors do for a land-mark. Of these 13 miles (from Winchester to Whitchurch) we rode about eight or nine upon the *green-sward*, or over fields equally smooth. And here is one great pleasure of living in countries of this sort: no sloughs, no ditches, no nasty dirty lanes, and the hedges, where there are any, are more for boundary marks than for fences. Fine for hunting and coursing: no impediments; no gates to open; nothing to impede the dogs, the horses, or the view. The water is not *seen running;* but the great bed of chalk *holds it*, and the sun draws it up for the benefit of the grass and the corn; and whatever inconvenience is experienced from the necessity of

deep wells, and of driving sheep and cattle far to water, is amply made up for by the goodness of the water, and by the complete absence of floods, of drains, of ditches and of water-furrows. As *things now are*, however, these countries have one great draw-back: the poor day-labourers suffer from the want of fuel, and they have nothing but their *bare pay*. For these reasons they are greatly worse off than those of the *woodland countries*; and it is really surprising what a difference there is between the faces that you see here, and the round, red faces that you see in the *wealds* and the *forests*, particularly in Sussex, where the labourers *will* have a *meat-pudding* of some sort or other; and where they *will* have *a fire* to sit by in the winter.

After steering for some time, we came down to a very fine farm-house, which we stopped a little to admire; and I asked Richard whether *that* was not a place to be happy in. The village, which we found to be Stoke-Charity, was about a mile lower down this little vale. Before we got to it, we overtook the owner of the farm, who knew me, though I did not know him; but when I found it was Mr. Hinton Bailey, of whom and whose farm I had heard so much, I was not at all surprised at the fineness of what I had just seen. I told him that the word *charity*, making, as it did, part of the name of this place, had nearly inspired me with boldness enough to go to the farm-house, in the ancient style, and ask for something to eat; for that we had not yet breakfasted. He asked us to go back; but at Burghclere we were *resolved to dine*. After, however, crossing the village, and beginning again to ascend the downs, we came to a labourer's (*once a farm-house*), where I asked the man whether he had any *bread and cheese*, and was not a little pleased to hear him say "*Yes*." Then I asked him to give us a bit, protesting that we had not yet broken our fast. He answered in the affirmative, at once, though I did not talk of payment. His wife brought out the cut loaf, and a piece of Wiltshire cheese, and I took them in hand, gave Richard a good hunch, and took another for myself. I verily believe that all the pleasure of eating enjoyed by all the feeders in London in a whole year does not equal that which we enjoyed in gnawing this bread and cheese, as we rode over this cold down, whip and bridle-reins in one hand, and the hunch in the other. Richard, who was purse bearer, gave the woman, by my direction, about enough to buy two quartern loaves: for she told me that they had to buy their bread *at the mill*, not being able to bake themselves for *want of fuel;* and this, as I said before, is one of the

draw-backs in this sort of country. I wish every one of these people had an *American fireplace*. Here they might then, even in these bare countries, have comfortable warmth. Rubbish of any sort would, by this means, give them warmth. I am now, at six o'clock in the morning, sitting in a room where one of these fireplaces, with very light *turf* in it, gives as good and steady a warmth as it is possible to feel, and which room has, too, been *cured of smoking* by this fireplace.

Before we got this supply of bread and cheese, we, though in ordinary times a couple of singularly jovial companions, and seldom going a hundred yards (except going very fast) without one or the other speaking, began to grow *dull*, or rather *glum*. The way seemed long; and, when I had to speak in answer to Richard, the speaking was as brief as might be. Unfortunately, just at this critical period, one of the loops that held the straps of Richard's little portmanteau broke; and it became necessary (just before we overtook Mr. Bailey) for me to fasten the portmanteau on before me, upon my saddle. This, which was not the work of more than five minutes, would, had I had *a breakfast*, have been nothing at all, and, indeed, matter of laughter. But, *now*, it was *something*. It was his "*fault*" for capering and jerking about "*so*." I jumped off, saying, "*Here!* I'll carry it *myself*." And then I began to take off the remaining strap, pulling with great violence and in great haste. Just at this time my eyes met his, in which I saw *great surprise;* and, feeling the just rebuke, feeling heartily ashamed of myself, I instantly changed my tone and manner, cast the blame upon the saddler, and talked of the effectual means which we would take to prevent the like in future.

Now, if such was the effect produced upon me by the want of food for only two or three hours; me, who had dined well the day before and eaten toast and butter the over-night; if the missing of only one breakfast, and that, too, from my own whim, while I had money in my pocket, to get one at any public-house, and while I could get one only for asking for at any farm-house; if the not having breakfasted could, and under such circumstances, make me what you may call "*cross*" to a child like this, whom I must necessarily love so much, and to whom I never speak but in the very kindest manner; if this mere absence of a breakfast could thus put me *out of temper*, how great are the allowances that we ought to make for the poor creatures who, in this once happy and now miserable country, are doomed to lead a life of constant labour and of half-starvation. I suppose that,

as we rode away from the cottage, we gnawed up, between us, a pound of bread and a quarter of a pound of cheese. Here was about *five-pence* worth at present prices. Even this, which was only a mere *snap*, a mere *stay-stomach*, for us, would, for us two, come to 3*s*. a week all but a penny. How, then, gracious God! is a labouring man, his wife, and, perhaps, four or five small children, to exist upon 8*s*. or 9*s*. a week! Aye, and to find house-rent, clothing, bedding and fuel out of it? Richard and I ate here, at his snap, more, and much more, than the average of labourers, their wives and children, have to eat in a whole day, and that the labourer has to *work* on too!

When we got here to Burghclere, we were again as *hungry* as hunters. What, then, must be the life of these poor creatures? But is not the state of the country, is not the hellishness of the system, all depicted in this one disgraceful and damning fact, that the magistrates, who settle on what the *labouring poor* ought to have to live on, ALLOW THEM LESS THAN IS ALLOWED TO FELONS IN THE GAOLS, and allow them *nothing for clothing and fuel and house-rent!* And yet, while this is notoriously the case, while the main body of the working class in England are fed and clad and even lodged worse than felons, and are daily becoming even worse and worse off, the king is advised to tell the parliament, and the world, that we are in a state of *unexampled prosperity*, and that this prosperity must be *permanent*, because *all the* GREAT *interests* are *prospering!* THE WORKING PEOPLE ARE NOT, THEN, "A *GREAT* INTEREST"! THEY WILL BE FOUND TO BE ONE, BY AND BY. What is to be the *end* of this? What can be the *end* of it, but dreadful convulsion? What other can be produced by a system, which allows the *felon* better food, better clothing, and better lodging than the *honest labourer?*

I see that there has been a grand *humanity-meeting* in Norfolk, to assure the parliament that these humanity-people will *back* it in any measures that it may adopt for freeing the NEGROES. Mr. Buxton figured here, also Lord Suffield, who appear to have been the two principal actors, or *showers-off*. This same Mr. Buxton opposed the bill intended to relieve the poor in England by breaking a little into the brewers' monopoly; and, as to Lord Suffield, if he really wish to *free slaves*, let him go to Wykham in this county, where he will see some drawing, like horses, gravel to repair the roads for the stock-jobbers and dead-weight and the seat-dealers to ride smoothly on. If he go down a little further, he will see CONVICTS AT PRECISELY THE SAME WORK,

harnessed in JUST THE SAME WAY ; but the convicts he will find hale and ruddy-cheeked, in dresses sufficiently warm, and bawling and singing; while he will find the labourers thin, ragged, shivering, dejected mortals, such as never were seen in any other country upon earth. There is not a negro in the West Indies who has not more to eat in a day than the average of English labourers have to eat in a week, and of better food too. Colonel Wodehouse and a man of the name of Hoseason (whence came he?), who opposed this humanity-scheme, talked of the sums necessary to pay the owners of the slaves. They took special care not to tell the humanity-men *to look at home for slaves to free*. No, no! that would have applied to themselves, as well as to Lord Suffield and humanity Buxton. If it were worth while to *reason* with these people, one might ask them, whether they do not think that *another war* is likely to relieve them of all these cares, simply by making the colonies transfer their allegiance or assert their independence? But to reason with them is useless. If they can busy themselves with compassion for the negroes, while they uphold the system that makes the labourers of England more wretched, and beyond all measure more wretched than any negro slaves are, or ever were, or ever can be, they are unworthy of anything but our contempt.

But the " education " canters are the most curious fellows of all. They have seen " education " as they call it, and crimes, go on increasing together, till the gaols, though six times their former dimensions, will hardly suffice; and yet the canting creatures still cry that crimes arise from want of what they call " education! " They see the felon better fed and better clad than the honest labourer. They see this; and yet they continually cry that the crimes arise from a want of " education! " What can be the cause of this perverseness? It is not perverseness: it is *roguery*, *corruption*, and *tyranny*. The tyrant, the unfeeling tyrant, squeezes the labourers for gain's sake; and the corrupt politician and literary or tub rogue find an excuse for him by pretending that it is not want of food and clothing, but want of education, that makes the poor, starving wretches thieves and robbers. If the press, if only the press, were to do its duty, or but a tenth part of its duty, this hellish system could not go on. But it favours the system by ascribing the misery to wrong causes. The causes are these: the tax-gatherer presses the landlord; the landlord the farmer; and the farmer the labourer. Here it falls at last; and this class is made so miserable, that a *felon's* life is better than that of a *labourer*. Does

there want any *other cause* to produce crimes? But on these causes, so clear to the eye of reason, so plain from experience, the press scarcely ever says a single word; while it keeps bothering our brains about education and morality; and about ignorance and immorality leading to *felonies*. To be sure immorality leads to felonies. Who does not know that? But who is to expect morality in a half-starved man, who is whipped if he do not work, though he has not, for his whole day's food, so much as I and my little boy snapped up in six or seven minutes upon Stoke-Charity down? Aye! but if the press were to ascribe the increase of crimes to the true causes, it must *go further back*. It must go to the *cause of the taxes*. It must go to the debt, the dead-weight, the thundering standing army, the enormous sinecures, pensions, and grants; and this would suit but a very small part of *a press*, which lives and thrives principally by one or the other of these.

As with the press, so is it with Mr. Brougham, and all such politicians. They stop short, or, rather, they begin in the middle. They attempt to prevent the evils of the deadly ivy by cropping off, or, rather, bruising a little, a few of its leaves. They do not assail even its branches, while they appear to look upon the *trunk* as something *too sacred* even to be *looked at* with vulgar eyes. Is not the injury recently done to about *forty thousand poor families* in and near Plymouth, by the Small-note Bill, a thing that Mr. Brougham ought to think about before he thinks anything more about *educating* those poor families? Yet, will he, when he again meets the ministers, say a word about this monstrous evil? I am afraid that no member will say a word about it; I am rather more than afraid that *he* will not. And *why?* Because, if he reproach the ministers with this crying cruelty, they will ask him first, how this is to be prevented without a repeal of the Small-note Bill (by which Peel's Bill was partly repealed); then they will ask him how the prices are to be kept up without the small-notes; then they will say, "Does the honourable and learned gentleman *wish to see wheat at four shillings a bushel again?*"

B. No (looking at Mr. Western and Daddy Coke), no, no, no! Upon my honour, no!

MIN. Does the honourable and learned gentleman wish to see Cobbett again at county meetings, and to see petitions again coming from those meetings, calling for a reduction of the interest of the . . . ?

B. No, no, no, upon my soul, no!

MIN. Does the honourable and learned gentleman wish to see that "*equitable* adjustment," which Cobbett has a thousand times declared can never take place without an application, to new purposes, of that great mass of public property, commonly called Church property?

B. (Almost bursting with rage) How *dare* the honourable gentleman to suppose me capable of such a thought?

MIN. We suppose nothing. We only ask the question; and we ask it, because to put an end to the small notes would inevitably produce all these things; and it is impossible to have small notes to the extent necessary to *keep up prices*, without having, now and then, *breaking banks*. Banks cannot break without *producing misery*; you must have the *consequence*, if you will have the *cause*. The honourable and learned gentleman wants the feast without the reckoning. In short, is the honourable and learned gentleman for putting an end to "*public credit*"?

B. No, no, no, no!

MIN. Then would it not be better for the honourable and learned gentleman to *hold his tongue*?

All men of sense and sincerity will, at once, answer this last question in the affirmative. They will all say that this is not *opposition* to the ministers. The ministers do not *wish* to see 40,000 families, nor any families at all (who give them *no real annoyance*), reduced to misery; they do not *wish* to cripple their own tax-payers; very far from it. If they could carry on the debt and dead-weight and place and pension and barrack system, without reducing any *quiet* people to misery, they would like it exceedingly; But they *do* wish to carry on that system; and he does not *oppose* them who does not endeavour to put an end to the system.

This is done by nobody in parliament; and, therefore, there is, in fact, *no opposition;* and this is felt by the whole nation; and this is the reason why *the people* now take so little interest in what is said and done in parliament, compared to that which they formerly took. This is the reason why there is no man, or men, whom the people seem to care at all about. A great portion of the people now clearly understand the nature and effects of the system; they are not now to be deceived by speeches and professions. If Pitt and Fox had *now to start*, there would be no "Pittites" and "Foxites." Those happy days of political humbug are gone for ever. The "gentlemen *opposite*" are opposite only as to mere *local position*. They sit on the

opposite side of the house: that's all. In every other respect they are like parson and clerk; or, perhaps, rather more like the rooks and jackdaws: one *caw* and the other *chatter;* but both have the same object in view: both are in pursuit of the same sort of diet. One set is, to be sure, IN place, and the other OUT; but though the rooks keep the jackdaws on the inferior branches, these latter would be as clamorous as the rooks themselves against *felling the tree;* and just as clamorous would the "gentlemen opposite" be against any one who should propose to put down the system itself. And yet, unless you do *that,* things must go on in the present way, and *felons* must be *better fed* than *honest labourers;* and starvation and thieving and robbing and gaol-building and transporting and hanging and penal laws must go on increasing, as they have gone on from the day of the establishment of the debt to the present hour. Apropos of *penal laws,* Doctor Black (of the *Morning Chronicle*) is now filling whole columns with very just remarks on the new and terrible law, which makes the taking of an apple *felony;* but he says not a word about the *silence* of Sir Jammy (the humane *code-softener*) upon this subject! The "*humanity* and *liberality*" of the parliament have relieved men addicted to *fraud* and to *certain other crimes* from the disgrace of the pillory, and they have, since Castlereagh cut his own throat, relieved *self-slayers* from the disgrace of the cross-road burial; but the same parliament, amidst all the workings of this rare humanity and liberality, have made it *felony to take an apple off a tree,* which last year was a trivial trespass, and was formerly no offence at all! However, even this *is necessary,* as long as this bank note system continue in its present way; and all complaints about severity of laws, levelled at the poor, are useless and foolish; and these complaints are even base in those who do their best to uphold a system which has brought *the honest labourer to be fed worse than the felon.* What, short of such laws, can prevent *starving men* from coming to take away the dinners of those who have plenty? "*Education!*" Despicable cant and nonsense! What education, what moral precepts, can quiet the gnawings and ragings of hunger?

Looking, now, back again, for a minute to the little village of *Stoke Charity,* the name of which seems to indicate that its rents formerly belonged wholly to the poor and indigent part of the community: it is near to Winchester, that grand scene of ancient learning, piety and munificence. Be this as it may, the parish formerly contained ten farms, and it now contains but

two, which are owned by Mr. Hinton Bailey and his nephew, and, therefore, which may probably become *one*. There used to be ten well-fed families in this parish, at any rate: these, taking five to a family, made fifty well-fed people. And now all are half-starved, except the curate and the two families. The *blame* is not the landowner's; it is nobody's; it is due to the infernal *funding* and *taxing* system, which *of necessity* drives property into large masses in order to *save itself;* which crushes little proprietors down into labourers; and which presses them down in that state, there takes their wages from them and makes them *paupers*, their share of food and raiment being taken away to support debt and dead-weight and army and all the rest of the enormous expenses, which are required to sustain this intolerable system. Those, therefore, are fools or hypocrites who affect to wish to better the lot of the poor labourers and manufacturers, while they, at the same time, either actively or passively, uphold the system which is the manifest cause of it. Here is a system which, clearly as the nose upon your face, you see taking away the little gentleman's estate, the little farmer's farm, the poor labourer's meat-dinner and Sunday-coat; and while you see this so plainly, you, fool or hypocrite, as you are, cry out for supporting the system that causes it all! Go on, base wretch; but remember, that of such a progress dreadful must be the end. The day will come when millions of long-suffering creatures will be in a state that they and you now little dream of. All that we now behold of *combinations* and the like are mere *indications* of what the great body of the suffering people *feel*, and of the thoughts that are passing in their minds. The *coaxing* work of *schools* and *tracts* will only add to what would be quite enough without them. There is not a labourer in the whole country who does not see to the bottom of this *coaxing* work. They are *not deceived* in this respect. Hunger has opened their eyes. I'll engage that there is not, even in this obscure village of Stoke Charity, one single creature, however forlorn, who does not understand all about the *real motives* of the school and the tract and Bible affair as well as Butterworth, or Rivington, or as Joshua Watson himself.

Just after we had finished the bread and cheese, we crossed the turnpike-road that goes from Basingstoke to Stockbridge; and Mr. Bailey had told us that we were then to bear away to our right, and go to the end of a wood (which we saw one end of), and keep round with that wood, or coppice, as he called it, to our left; but we, seeing Beacon Hill more to the left, and resolving

to go, as nearly as possible, in a straight line to it, steered directly over the fields; that is to say, pieces of ground from 30 to 100 acres in each. But a hill which we had to go over, had here hidden from our sight a part of this "coppice," which consists, perhaps, of 150 or 200 acres, and which we found sweeping round, in a crescent-like form so far, from towards our left, as to bring our land-mark over the coppice at about the mid-length of the latter. Upon this discovery we slackened sail; for this coppice might be a mile across; and though the bottom was sound enough, being a coverlet of flints upon a bed of chalk, the underwood was too high and too thick for us to face, being, as we were, at so great a distance from the means of obtaining a fresh supply of clothes. Our leather leggings would have stood anything; but our coats were of the common kind; and before we saw the other side of the coppice we should, I dare say, have been as ragged as forest-ponies in the month of March.

In this dilemma I stopped, and looked at the coppice. Luckily two boys, who had been cutting sticks (to *sell*, I dare say, at least *I hope so*), made their appearance, at about half a mile off on the side for the coppice. Richard galloped off to the boys, from whom he found that, in one part of the coppice, there was a road cut across, the point of entrance into which road they explained to him. This was to us what the discovery of a canal across the isthmus of Darien would be to a ship in the Gulf of Mexico wanting to get into the Pacific without doubling Cape Horn. A beautiful road we found it. I should suppose the best part of a mile long, perfectly straight, the surface sound and smooth, about eight feet wide, the whole length seen at once, and, when you are at one end, the other end seeming to be hardly a yard wide. When we got about half way, we found a road that crossed this. These roads are, I suppose, cut for the hunters. They are very pretty, at any rate, and we found this one very convenient; for it cut our way short by a full half mile.

From this coppice to Whitchurch is not more than about four miles, and we soon reached it, because here you begin to descend into the *vale* in which this little town lies, and through which there runs that *stream* which turns the mill of 'Squire Portal, and which mill makes the Bank of England note-paper! Talk of the Thames and the Hudson with their forests of masts; talk of the Nile and the Delaware bearing the food of millions on their bosoms; talk of the Ganges and the Mississippi sending forth over the world their silks and their cottons; talk of the

Rio de la Plata and the other rivers, their beds pebbled with silver and gold and diamonds. What as to their effect on the condition of mankind, as to the virtues, the vices, the enjoyments and the sufferings of men; what are all these rivers put together compared with the *river of Whitchurch*, which a man of threescore may jump across dry-shod, which moistens a quarter of a mile wide of poor, rushy meadow, which washes the skirts of the park and game preserves of that bright patrician who wedded the daughter of Hanson, the attorney and late solicitor to the Stamp Office, and which is, to look at it, of far less importance than any gutter in the Wen! Yet this river, by merely turning a wheel, which wheel sets some rag-tearers and grinders and washers and re-compressers in motion, has produced a greater effect on the condition of men than has been produced on that condition by all the other rivers, all the seas, all the mines and all the continents in the world. The discovery of America, and the consequent discovery and use of vast quantities of silver and gold, did, indeed, produce great effects on the nations of Europe. They changed the value of money, and caused, as all such changes must, a *transfer of property*, raising up new families and pulling down old ones, a transfer very little favourable either to *morality*, or to real and *substantial liberty*. But this cause worked *slowly;* its consequences came on by slow *degrees;* it made a transfer of property, but it made that transfer in so small a degree, and it left the property quiet in the hands of the new possessor *for so long a time*, that the effect was not violent, and was not, at any rate, such as to uproot possessors by whole districts, as the hurricane uproots the forests.

Not so the product of the little sedgy rivulet of Whitchurch! It has, in the short space of a hundred and thirty-one years, and, indeed, in the space of the last *forty*, caused greater changes as to property than had been caused by all other things put together in the long course of seven centuries, though during that course there had been a sweeping, confiscating Protestant reformation. Let us look back to the place where I started on this present rural ride. Poor old Baron Maseres succeeded at Reigate by little Parson Fellowes, and at Betchworth (three miles on my road) by Kendrick, is no bad instance to begin with; for the Baron was nobly descended, though from French ancestors. At Albury, fifteen miles on my road, Mr. Drummond (a banker) is in the seat of one of the Howards, and, close by, he has bought the estate, just pulled down the house, and blotted

out the memory of the Godschalls. At Chilworth, two miles further down the same vale, and close under St. Martha's Hill, Mr. Tinkler, a powder-maker (succeeding Hill, another powder-maker, who had been a breeches-maker at Hounslow) has got the old mansion and the estate of the old Duchess of Marlborough, who frequently resided in what was then a large quadrangular mansion, but the remains of which now serve as out farm-buildings and a farm-house, which I found inhabited by a poor labourer and his family, the farm being in the hands of the powder-maker, who does not find the once noble seat good enough for him. Coming on to Waverley Abbey, there is Mr. Thompson, a merchant, succeeding the Orby Hunters and Sir Robert Rich. Close adjoining, Mr. Laing, a West India dealer of some sort, has stepped into the place of the lineal descendants of Sir William Temple. At Farnham the park and palace remain in the hands of a Bishop of Winchester, as they have done for about eight hundred years: but why is this? Because they are public property; because they cannot, without express laws, be transferred. Therefore the product of the rivulet of Whitchurch has had no effect upon the ownership of these, which are still in the hands of a Bishop of Winchester; not of a William of Wykham, to be sure; but still in those of a bishop, at any rate. Coming on to old Alresford (twenty miles from Farnham) Sheriff, the son of a Sheriff, who was a commissary in the American war, has succeeded the Gages. Two miles further on, at Abbotston (down on the side of the Itchen) Alexander Baring has succeeded the heirs and successors of the Duke of Bolton, the remains of whose noble mansion I once saw here. Not above a mile higher up, the same Baring has, at the Grange, with its noble mansion, park and estate, succeeded the heirs of Lord Northington; and at only about two miles further, Sir Thomas Baring, at Stratton Park, has succeeded the Russells in the ownership of the estates of Stratton and Micheldover, which were once the property of Alfred the Great! Stepping back, and following my road, down by the side of the meadows of the beautiful river Itchen, and coming to Easton, I look across to Martyr's Worthy, and there see (as I observed before) the Ogles succeeded by a general or a colonel somebody; but who, or whence, I cannot learn.

This is all in less than four score miles, from Reigate even to this place where I now am. Oh! mighty rivulet of Whitchurch! All our properties, all our laws, all our manners, all our minds, you have changed! This, which I have noticed, has all taken

place within forty, and, most of it, within *ten* years. The *small gentry*, to about the *third* rank upwards (considering there to be five ranks from the smallest gentry up to the greatest nobility), are *all gone*, nearly to a man, and the small farmers along with them. The Barings alone have, I should think, swallowed up thirty or forty of these small gentry without perceiving it. They, indeed, swallow up the biggest race of all; but innumerable small fry slip down unperceived, like caplins down the throats of the sharks, while these latter *feel* only the cod-fish. It frequently happens, too, that a big gentleman or nobleman, whose estate has been big enough to resist for a long while, and who has swilled up many caplin-gentry, goes down the throat of the loan-dealer with all the caplins in his belly.

Thus the Whitchurch rivulet goes on, shifting property from hand to hand. The big, in order to save themselves from being "*swallowed up quick*" (as we used to be taught to say, in our Church prayers against Buonaparte), make use of their *voices* to get, through place, pension, or sinecure, something back from the taxes. Others of them *fall in love* with the *daughters* and *widows* of paper-money people, big brewers, and the like; and sometimes their daughters *fall in love* with the paper-money people's sons, or the fathers of those sons; and whether they be *Jews*, or not, seems to be little matter with this all-subduing passion of love. But the *small gentry* have no resource. While *war* lasted, "*glorious* war," there was a resource; but *now*, alas! not only is there no war, but there is *no hope of war;* and not a few of them will actually come to the *parish-book*. There is no place for them in the army, church, navy, customs, excise, pension-list, or anywhere else. All these are now wanted by "their *betters*." A stock-jobber's family will not look at such pennyless things. So that, while they have been the active, the zealous, the efficient instruments, in compelling the working classes to submit to half-starvation, they have at any rate been brought to the most abject ruin themselves; for which I most heartily thank God. The "harvest of war" is never to return without a total blowing up of the paper-system. Spain must belong to France, St. Domingo must pay her tribute. America must be paid for slaves taken away in war, she must have Florida, she must go on openly and avowedly making a navy for the purpose of humbling us; and all this, and ten times more, if France and America should choose; and yet we can have *no war* as long as the paper-system last; and if *that cease*, then *what is to come!*

BURGHCLERE,
Sunday Morning, 6 November.

It has been fine all the week, until to-day, when we intended to set off for Hurstbourn-Tarrant, vulgarly called Uphusband, but the rain seems as if it would stop us. From Whitchurch to within two miles of this place, it is the same sort of country as between Winchester and Whitchurch. High, chalk bottom, open downs or large fields, with here and there a farm-house in a dell, sheltered by lofty trees, which, to my taste, is the most pleasant situation in the world.

This has been, with Richard, one whole week of hare-hunting, and with me, three days and a half. The weather has been amongst the finest that I ever saw, and Lord Caernarvon's preserves fill the country with hares, while these hares invite us to ride about and to see his park and estate, at this fine season of the year, in every direction. We are now on the north side of that Beacon Hill for which we steered last Sunday. This makes part of a chain of lofty chalk-hills and downs, which divides all the lower part of Hampshire from Berkshire, though the ancient ruler, owner, of the former took a little strip all along, on the flat, on this side of the chain, in order, I suppose, to make the ownership of the hills themselves the more clear of all dispute; just as the owner of a field-hedge and bank owns also the ditch on his neighbour's side. From these hills you look, at one view, over the whole of Berkshire, into Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, and you can see the Isle of Wight and the sea. On this north side the chalk soon ceases, the sand and clay begin, and the oak-woods cover a great part of the surface. Amongst these is the farm-house in which we are, and from the warmth and good fare of which we do not mean to stir until we can do it without the chance of a wet skin.

This rain has given me time to look at the newspapers of about a week old. Oh, oh! The cotton lords are tearing! Thank God for that! The lords of the anvil are snapping! Thank God for that too! They have kept poor souls, then, in a heat of 84 degrees to little purpose, after all. The "great interests" mentioned in the king's speech do not, *then*, all continue to flourish! The "prosperity" was not, then, "permanent" though the king was advised to assert so positively that it was! "Anglo-Mexican and Pasco-Peruvian" fall in price, and the *Chronicle* assures me that "the respectable owners of the Mexican mining shares mean to take measures to protect their

property." Indeed! Like *protecting* the Spanish bonds, I suppose? Will the *Chronicle* be so good as to tell us the names of these "*respectable* persons?" Doctor Black must know their names; or else he could not know them to be *respectable.* If the parties be those that I have heard, these mining works may possibly operate with them as an emetic, and make them throw up a part, at least, of what they have taken down.

There has, I see, at New York been that confusion which I, four months ago, said would and must take place; that breaking of merchants and all the ruin which, in such a case, spreads itself about, ruining families and producing fraud and despair. Here will be, between the two countries, an interchange of cause and effect, proceeding from the dealings in *cotton,* until, first and last, two or three hundred thousands of persons have, at one spell of paper-money work, been made to drink deep of misery. I pity none but the poor English creatures who are compelled to work on the wool of this accursed weed, which has done so much mischief to England. The slaves who cultivate and gather the cotton are well fed. They do not suffer. The sufferers are those who spin it and weave it and colour it, and the wretched beings who cover with it those bodies which, as in the time of old Fortescue, ought to be "clothed throughout in good woollens."

One newspaper says that Mr. Huskisson is gone to Paris, and thinks it *likely* that he will endeavour to "inculcate in the mind of the Bourbons wise principles of *free trade!*" What the devil next! Persuade them, I suppose, that it is for *their good* that English goods should be admitted into France and into St. Domingo with little or no duty? Persuade them to make a treaty of commerce with him; and, in short, persuade them to make *France help to pay the interest of our debt and dead-weight,* lest our system of paper should go to pieces, and lest that should be followed by *a radical reform,* which reform would be injurious to "the monarchical principle!" This newspaper politician does, however, *think* that the Bourbons will be "too dull" to comprehend these "*enlightened* and *liberal*" notions; and I think so too. I think the Bourbons, or, rather, those who will speak for them, will say: "No thank you. You contracted your debt without our participation; you made your *dead-weight* for your own purposes; the seizure of our museums and the loss of our frontier towns followed your victory of Waterloo, though we were 'your Allies' at the time; you made us pay an enormous tribute after that battle, and kept possession of part

of France till we had paid it; you *wished*, the other day, to keep us out of Spain, and you, Mr. Huskisson, in a speech at Liverpool, called our deliverance of the King of Spain an *unjust and unprincipled act of aggression*, while Mr. Canning *prayed to God* that we might not succeed. No thank you, Mr. Huskisson, no. No coaxing, sir: we saw, then, too clearly the *advantage we derived from your having a debt and a dead-weight*, to wish to assist in relieving you from either. 'Monarchical principle' here, or 'monarchical principle' there, we know that your mill-stone debt is our best security. We like to have your wishes, your prayers, and your abuse against us, rather than your *subsidies* and your *fleets:* and so, farewell, Mr. Huskisson: if you like, the English may drink French wine; but whether they do or not, the French shall not wear your rotten cottons. And, as a last word, how did you maintain the 'monarchical principle,' the 'paternal principle,' or as Castlereagh called it, the 'social system,' when you called that an unjust and unprincipled aggression which put an end to the bargain by which the convents and other church-property of Spain were to be transferred to the Jews and jobbers of London? Bon jour, Monsieur Huskisson, ci-devant membre et orateur du club de quatre vingt neuf!"

If they do not actually say this to him, this is what they will think; and that is, as to the effect, precisely the same thing. It is childishness to suppose that any nation will act from a desire of *serving all other nations, or any one other nation, as well as itself.* It will make, unless compelled, no compact by which it does not think itself *a gainer;* and amongst its gains, it must, and always does, reckon the injury to its rivals. It is a stupid idea that *all nations are to gain* by anything. Whatever is the gain of one, must, in some way or other, be a loss to another. So that this new project of "free trade" and "mutual gain" is as pure a humbug as that which the newspapers carried on, during the "glorious days" of loans, when they told us, at every loan, that the bargain was "equally advantageous to the contractors and to the public!" The fact is the "free trade" project is clearly the effect of a *consciousness of our weakness.* As long as we felt *strong*, we felt *bold*, we had no thought of *conciliating* the world; we upheld a system of *exclusion*, which long experience proved to be founded in *sound policy.* But we now find that our debts and our loads of various sorts cripple us. We feel our incapacity for the *carrying of trade sword in hand:* and so we have given up all our old maxims, and are

endeavouring to persuade the world that we are anxious to enjoy no advantages that are not enjoyed also by our neighbours. Alas! the world sees very clearly the cause of all this; and the world *laughs at us* for our imaginary cunning. My old doggrel, that used to make me and my friends laugh in Long Island, is precisely pat to this case.

When his maw was stuffed with paper,
How John Bull did prance and caper!
How he foam'd and how he roar'd:
How his neighbours all he gored!
How he scrap'd the ground and hurl'd
Dirt and filth on all the world!
But John Bull of paper empty,
Though in midst of peace and plenty,
Is modest grown as worn-out sinner,
As Scottish laird that wants a dinner;
As Wilberforce, become content
A rotten burgh to represent;
As Blue and Buff, when, after hunting
On Yankee coasts their "*bits of bunting*,"
Came softly back across the seas,
And silent were as mice in cheese.

Yes, the whole world, and particularly the French and the Yankees, see very clearly the *course* of this fit of modesty and of liberality into which we have so recently fallen. They know well that a *war* would play the very devil with our national faith. They know, in short, that no ministers in their senses will think of supporting the paper system through another war. They know well that no ministers that now exist, or are likely to exist, will venture to endanger the paper-system; and therefore they know that (for England) they may now do just what they please. When the French were about to invade Spain, Mr. Canning said that his last despatch on the subject was to be understood as a *protest*, on the part of England, against permanent occupation of any part of Spain by France. There the French are, however; and at the end of two years and a half he says that he knows nothing about any intention that they have to quit Spain, or any part of it.

Why, Saint Domingo *was* independent. We had traded with it as an independent state. Is it not clear that if we had said the word (and had been known to be able to *arm*), France would not have attempted to treat that fine and rich country as a colony? Mark how wise this measure of France! How *just*, too; to obtain by means of a tribute from the St. Domingoians compensation for the *loyalists* of that country! Was this done with regard to the loyalists of *America*, in the reign of the good

jubilee George III.? Oh, no! Those loyalists had to be paid, and many of them have even yet, at the end of more than half a century, to be paid out of taxes raised on *us*, for the losses occasioned by their disinterested loyalty! This was a master-stroke on the part of France; she gets about seven millions sterling in the way of tribute; she makes that rich island yield to her great commercial advantages; and she, at the same time, paves the way for effecting one of two objects; namely, getting the island back again, or throwing our islands into confusion, whenever it shall be her interest to do it.

This might have been prevented by *a word* from us, if we had been ready for *war*. But we are grown *modest;* we are grown *liberal;* we do not want to engross that which fairly belongs to our neighbours! We have undergone a change, somewhat like that which marriage produces on a blustering fellow, who, while single, can but just clear his teeth. This change is quite surprising, and especially by the time that the second child comes, the man is *loaded;* he looks like a loaded man; his voice becomes so soft and gentle compared to what it used to be. Just such are the effects of *our load:* but the worst of it is, our neighbours are *not* thus loaded. However, far be it from me to *regret* this, or any part of it. The load is the people's best friend. If that could, *without reform;* if that could be shaken off, leaving the seat-men and the parsons in their present state, I would not live in England another day! And I say this with as much seriousness as if I were upon my death-bed.

The wise men of the newspapers are for a repeal of the *Corn Laws*. With all my heart. I will join anybody in a petition for their repeal. But this will not be done. We shall stop short of this extent of "liberality," let what may be the consequence to the manufacturers. The cotton lords must all go, to the last man, rather than a repeal of these laws will take place: and of this the newspaper wise men may be assured. The farmers can but just rub along now, with all their high prices and low wages. What would be their state, and that of their landlords, if the wheat were to come down again to 4, 5, or even 6 shillings a bushel? Universal agricultural bankruptcy would be the almost instant consequence. Many of them are now deep in debt from the effects of 1820, 1821, and 1822. One more year like 1822 would have broken the whole mass up, and left the lands to be cultivated, under the overseers, for the benefit of the paupers. Society would have been nearly dissolved, and the state of nature would have returned. The Small-Note Bill, co-

operating with the corn laws, have given a respite, and nothing more. This bill must remain *efficient*, paper-money must cover the country, and the corn laws must remain in force; or an "equitable adjustment" must take place; or to a state of nature this country must return. What, then, as *I want* a repeal of the corn laws, and also *want* to get rid of the paper-money, I must want to see this return to a state of nature? By no means. I want the "equitable adjustment," and I am quite sure that no adjustment can be *equitable* which does not apply *every penny's worth of public property* to the payment of the fund-holders and dead-weight and the like. Clearly just and reasonable as this is, however, the very mention of it makes the FIRE-SHOVELS, and some others, half mad. It makes them storm and rant and swear like Bedlamites. But it is curious to hear them talk of the impracticability of it; when they all know that, by only two or three acts of parliament, Henry VIII. did ten times as much as it would now I hope be necessary to do. If the duty were imposed *on me*, no statesman, legislator or lawyer, but a simple citizen, I think I could, in less than twenty-four hours, draw up an act, that would give satisfaction to, I will not say *every man;* but to, at least, ninety-nine out of every hundred; an act that would put all affairs of money and of religion to rights at once; but that would, I must confess, soon take from us that amiable *modesty*, of which I have spoken above, and which is so conspicuously shown in our works of free trade and liberality.

The weather is clearing up; our horses are saddled, and we are off.

FROM BURGHCLERE TO PETERSFIELD

HURSTBOURN TARRANT (OR UPHUSBAND),
Monday, 7 November, 1825.

WE came off from Burghclere yesterday afternoon, crossing Lord Caernarvon's park, going out of it on the west side of Beacon Hill, and sloping away to our right over the downs towards Woodcote. The afternoon was singularly beautiful. The downs (even the poorest of them) are perfectly green; the sheep on the downs look, this year, like fatting sheep: we came through a fine flock of ewes, and, looking round us, we saw, all at once, seven flocks, on different parts of the downs, each flock on an average containing at least 500 sheep.

It is about six miles from Burghclere to this place; and we made it about twelve; not in order to avoid the turnpike-road; but because we do not ride about to *see* turnpike-roads; and, moreover, because I had seen this most monstrously hilly turnpike-road before. We came through a village called Woodcote, and another called Binley. I never saw any inhabited places more recluse than these. Yet into these the all-searching eye of the taxing Thing reaches. Its exciseman can tell it what is doing even in the little odd corner of Binley; for even there I saw, over the door of a place not half so good as the place in which my fowls roost, "*Licensed to deal in tea and tobacco.*" Poor, half-starved wretches of Binley! The hand of taxation, the collection for the sinecures and pensions, must fix its nails even in them, who really appeared too miserable to be called by the name of *people.* Yet there was one whom the taxing Thing had licensed (good God! *licensed!*) to serve out cat-lap to these wretched creatures! And our impudent and ignorant newspaper scribes talk of the *degraded state of the people of Spain!* Impudent impostors! Can they show a group so wretched, so miserable, so truly enslaved as this, in all Spain? No: and those of them who are not sheer fools know it well. But there would have been misery equal to this in Spain if the Jews and jobbers could have carried the bond-scheme into effect. The people of Spain were, through the instrumentality of patriot-loan makers, within an inch of being made as "enlightened" as

the poor, starving things of Binley. They would soon have had people "licensed" to make them pay the Jews for permission to chew tobacco, or to have a light in their dreary abodes. The people of Spain were preserved from this by the French army, for which the Jews cursed the French army; and the same army put an end to those "bonds," by means of which *pious* Protestants hoped to be able to get at the convents in Spain, and thereby put down "idolatry" in that country. These bonds seem now not to be worth a farthing; and so after all the Spanish people will have no one "licensed" by the Jews to make them pay for turning the fat of their sheep into candles and soap. These poor creatures that I behold here *pass their lives amidst flocks of sheep;* but never does a morsel of mutton enter their lips. A labouring man told me, at Binley, that he had not tasted meat since harvest; and his looks vouched for the statement. Let the Spaniards come and look at this poor shotten-herring of a creature; and then let them estimate what is due to a set of "enlightening" and loan-making "patriots." Old Fortescue says that "the English are clothed in good woollens throughout," and that they have "plenty of flesh of all sorts to eat." Yes, but at this time the nation was not mortgaged. The "enlightening" patriots would have made Spain what England now is. The people must never more, after a few years, have tasted mutton, though living surrounded with flocks of sheep.

EASTON, NEAR WINCHESTER,
Wednesday Evening, 9 *Nov.*

I intended to go from Uphusband to Stonehenge, thence to Old Sarum, and thence through the New Forest, to Southampton and Botley, and thence across into Sussex, to see Up-Park, and Cowdry House. But, then, there must be no loss of time: I must adhere to a certain route as strictly as a regiment on a march. I had written the route: and Laverstock, after seeing Stonehenge and Old Sarum, was to be the resting-place of yesterday (Tuesday); but when it came, it brought rain with it after a white frost on Monday. It was likely to rain again to-day. It became necessary to change the route, as I must get to London by a certain day; and as the first day, on the new route, brought us here.

I had been three times at Uphusband before, and had, as my readers will, perhaps, recollect, described the bourn here, or the *brook*. It has, in general, no water at all in it from August to

March. There is the bed of a little river; but no water. In March, or thereabouts, the water begins to boil up, in thousands upon thousands of places, in the little narrow meadows, just above the village; that is to say a little higher up the valley. When the chalk hills are full; when the chalk will hold no more water; then it comes out at the lowest spots near these immense hills and becomes a rivulet first, and then a river. But until this visit to Uphusband (or Hurstbourn Tarrant, as the map calls it), little did I imagine that this rivulet, dry half the year, was the head of the river Teste, which, after passing through Stockbridge and Rumsey, falls into the sea near Southampton.

We had to follow the bed of this river to Bourne; but there the water begins to appear; and it runs all the year long about a mile lower down. Here it crosses Lord Portsmouth's out-park, and our road took us the same way to the village called Down Husband, the scene (as the broadsheet tells us) of so many of that noble lord's ringing and cart-driving exploits. Here we crossed the London and Andover road, and leaving Andover to our right and Whitchurch to our left, we came on to Long Parish, where, crossing the water, we came up again on that high country which continues all across to Winchester. After passing Bullington, Sutton, and Wonston, we veered away from Stoke Charity, and came across the fields to the high down, whence you see Winchester, or rather the cathedral; for, at this distance, you can distinguish nothing else clearly.

As we had to come to this place, which is three miles *up* the river Itchen from Winchester, we crossed the Winchester and Basingstoke road at King's Worthy. This brought us, before we crossed the river, along through Martyr's Worthy, so long the seat of the Ogles, and now, as I observed in my last *Register*, sold to a general or colonel. These Ogles had been deans, I believe; or prebends, or something of that sort: and the one that used to live here had been, and was when he died, an "admiral." However, this last one, "Sir Charles," the loyal address mover, is my man for the present. We saw, down by the water-side, opposite to "Sir Charles's" *late* family mansion, a beautiful strawberry garden, capable of being watered by a branch of the Itchen which comes close by it, and which is, I suppose, brought there on purpose. Just by, on the greensward, under the shade of very fine trees, is an alcove, wherein to sit to eat the strawberries, coming from the little garden just mentioned, and met by bowls of cream coming from a little milk-house, shaded by another clump a little lower down the

stream. What delight! What a terrestrial paradise! "Sir Charles" might be very frequently in this paradise, while that Sidmouth, whose bill he so applauded, had many men shut up in loathsome dungeons! Ah, well! "Sir Charles," those very men may, perhaps, at this moment, envy neither you nor Sidmouth; no, nor Sidmouth's son and heir, even though Clerk of the Pells. At any rate, it is not likely that "Sir Charles" will sit again in this paradise, contemplating another *loyal address*, to carry to a county meeting ready engrossed on parchment, to be presented by Fleming and supported by Lockhart and the "Hampshire parsons."

I think I saw, as I came along, the new owner of the estate. It seems that he bought it "stock and fluke" as the sailors call it; that is to say, that he bought movables and the whole. He appeared to me to be a keen man. I can't find out where he comes from, or what he, or his father, has been. I like to see the revolution going on; but I like to be able to trace the parties a little more *closely*. "Sir Charles," the loyal address gentleman, lives in London, I hear. I will, I think, call upon him (if I can find him out) when I get back, and ask how he does now? There is one Hollest, a George Hollest, who figured pretty bigly on that same loyal address day. This man is become quite an inoffensive harmless creature. If we were to have another county meeting, he would not, I think, threaten to put the sash down upon anybody's head! Oh! Peel, Peel, Peel! Thy bill, oh, Peel, did sicken them so! Let us, oh, thou offspring of the great Spinning Jenny promoter, who subscribed ten thousand pounds towards the late "glorious" war; who was, after that, made a baronet, and whose biographers (in the Baronetage) tell the world that he had a "presentiment that he should be the founder of a family." Oh, thou, thou great Peel, do thou let us have only two more years of thy bill! Or, oh, great Peel, minister of the interior, do thou let us have repeal of Corn Bill! Either will do, great Peel. We shall then see such *modest* squires, and parsons looking so queer! However, if thou wilt not listen to us, great Peel, we must, perhaps (and only perhaps), wait a little longer. It is sure to come *at last*, and to come, too, in the most efficient way.

The water in the Itchen is, they say, famed for its clearness. As I was crossing the river the other day, at Avington, I told Richard to look at it, and I asked him if he did not think it very clear. I now find that this has been remarked by very ancient writers. I see, in a newspaper just received, an account of

dreadful fires in New Brunswick. It is curious that, in my *Register* of the 29th October (dated from Chilworth in Surrey), I should have put a question, relative to the white clover, the huckleberries, or the raspberries, which start up after the burning down of woods in America. These fires have been at two places which I saw when there were hardly any people in the whole country; and if there never had been any people there to this day, it would have been a good thing for England. Those colonies are a dead expense, without a possibility of their ever being of any use. There are, I see, a church and a barrack destroyed. And why a barrack? What! were there bayonets wanted already to keep the people in order? For as to an *enemy*, where was he to come from? And if there really be an enemy anywhere there about, would it not be a wise way to leave the worthless country to him, to use it after his own way? I was at that very Fredericton, where they say thirty houses and thirty-nine barns have now been burnt. I can remember when there was no more thought of there ever being a barn there than there is now thought of there being economy in our government. The English money used to be spent prettily in that country. What do *we* want with armies and barracks and chaplains in those woods? What does anybody want with them; but *we*, above all the rest of the world? There is nothing there, no house, no barrack, no wharf, nothing, but what is bought with taxes raised on the half-starving people of England. What do *we* want with these wildernesses? Ah! but they are wanted by creatures who will not work in England, and whom this fine system of ours sends out into those woods to live in idleness upon the fruit of English labour. The soldier, the commissary, the barrack-master, all the whole tribe, no matter under what *name;* what keeps them? They are paid "by government;" and I wish that we constantly bore in mind that the "government" pays *our* money. It is, to be sure, sorrowful to hear of such fires and such dreadful effects proceeding from them; but to me it is beyond all measure *more sorrowful* to see *the labourers of England worse fed than the convicts in the gaols;* and I know very well that these worthless and jobbing colonies have assisted to bring England into this horrible state. The honest labouring man is allowed (aye, by the magistrates) less food than the felon in the goal; and the felon is clothed and has fuel; and the labouring man has nothing allowed for these. These worthless colonies, which find places for people that the Thing provides for, have helped to produce this dreadful state in England.

Therefore, any *assistance* the sufferers should never have from me, while I could find an honest and industrious English labourer (unloaded with a family too) fed worse than a felon in the gaols; and this I can find in every part of the country.

PETERSFIELD,
Friday Evening, 11 *November*.

We lost another day at Easton; the whole of yesterday it having rained the whole day; so that we could not have come an inch but in the wet. We started, therefore, this morning, coming through the Duke of Buckingham's park, at Avington, which is close by Easton, and on the same side of the Itchen. This is a very beautiful place. The house is close down at the edge of the meadow land; there is a lawn before it, and a pond supplied by the Itchen, at the end of the lawn, and bounded by the park on the other side. The high road, through the park, goes very near to this water; and we saw thousands of wild-ducks in the pond, or sitting round on the green edges of it, while, on one side of the pond, the hares and pheasants were moving about upon a gravel walk on the side of a very fine plantation. We looked down upon all this from a rising ground, and the water, like a looking-glass, showed us the trees, and even the animals. This is certainly one of the very prettiest spots in the world. The wild water-fowl seem to take particular delight in this place. There are a great many at Lord Caernarvon's; but there the water is much larger, and the ground and wood about it comparatively rude and coarse. Here, at Avington, everything is in such beautiful order; the lawn before the house is of the finest green, and most neatly kept; and the edge of the pond (which is of several acres) is as smooth as if it formed part of a bowling-green. To see so many *wild*-fowl, in a situation where everything is in the *parterre*-order, has a most pleasant effect on the mind; and Richard and I, like Pope's cock in the farm-yard, could not help *thanking* the duke and duchess for having generously made such ample provision for our pleasure, and that, too, merely to please us as we were passing along. Now this is the advantage of going about on *horseback*. On foot, the fatigue is too great, and you go too slowly. In any sort of carriage, you cannot get into the *real country places*. To travel in stage coaches is to be hurried along by force, in a box, with an air-hole in it, and constantly exposed to broken limbs, the *danger* being much greater than that of

ship-board, and the *noise* much more disagreeable, while the *company* is frequently not a great deal more to one's liking.

From this beautiful spot we had to mount gradually the downs to the southward; but it is impossible to quit the vale of the Itchen without one more look back at it. To form a just estimate of its real value, and that of the lands near it, it is only necessary to know that, from its source, at Bishop's Sutton, this river has, on its two banks, in the distance of nine miles (before it reaches Winchester) thirteen parish churches. There must have been some *people* to erect these churches. It is not true, then, that Pitt and George III. *created the English nation*, notwithstanding all that the Scotch *feelosofers* are ready to swear about the matter. In short, there can be no doubt in the mind of any rational man that in the time of the Plantagenets England was more populous than it is now.

When we began to get up towards the downs we, to our great surprise, saw them covered with *snow*. "Sad times coming on for poor Sir Glory," said I to Richard. "Why?" said Dick. It was too cold to talk much; and, besides, a great sluggishness in his horse made us both rather serious. The horse had been too hard ridden at Burghclere, and had got cold. This made us change our route again, and instead of going over the downs towards Hambledon, in our way to see the park and the innumerable hares and pheasants of Sir Harry Featherstone, we pulled away more to the left, to go through Bramdean, and so on to Petersfield, contracting greatly our intended circuit. And besides, I had never seen Bramdean, the spot on which, it is said, Alfred fought his last great and glorious battle with the Danes. A fine country for a battle, sure enough!

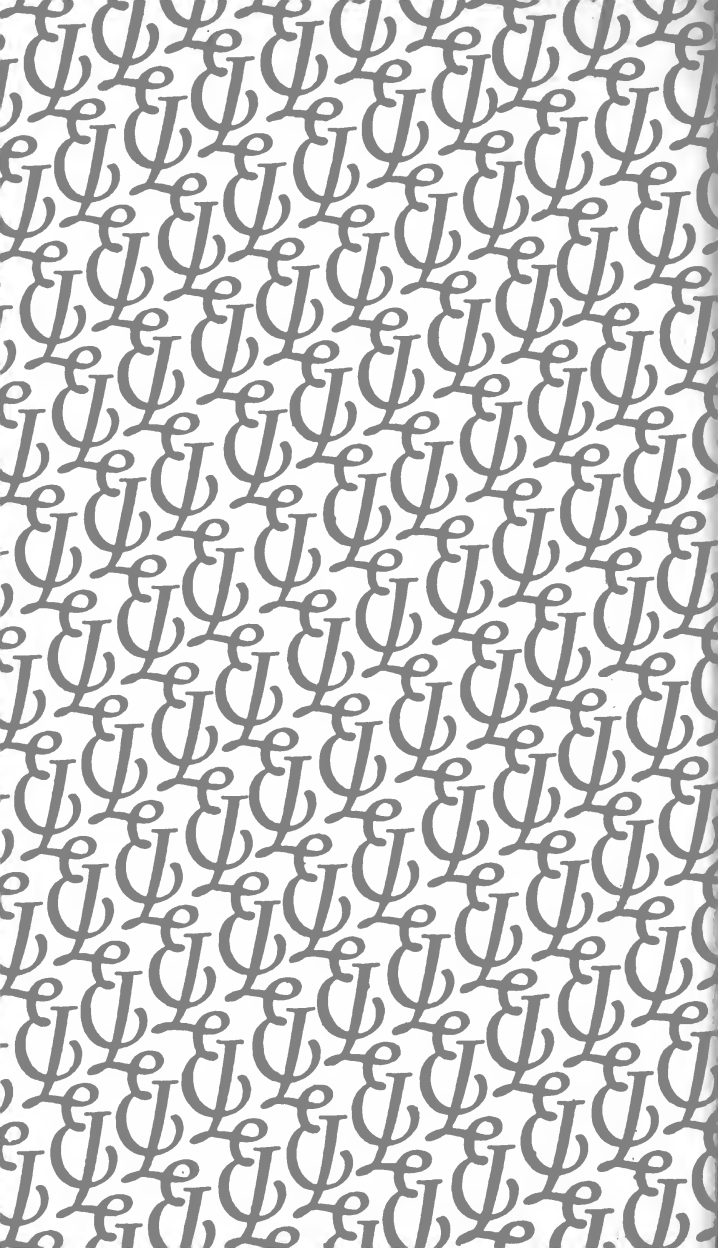
A little to our right, as we came along, we left the village of Kimston, where Squire Græme once lived, as was before related. Here, too, lived a Squire Ridge, a famous fox-hunter, at a great mansion, now used as a farm-house; and it is curious enough that this squire's son-in-law, one Gunner, an attorney at Bishop's Waltham, is steward to the man who now owns the estate.

Before we got to Petersfield, we called at an old friend's and got some bread and cheese and small beer, which we preferred to strong. In approaching Petersfield we began to descend from the high chalk-country, which (with the exception of the valleys of the Itchen and the Teste) had lasted us from Uphusband (almost the north-west point of the county) to this place, which is not far from the south-east point of it. Here we quit

flint and chalk and downs, and take to sand, clay, hedges, and coppices; and here, on the verge of Hampshire, we begin again to see those endless little bubble-formed hills that we before saw round the foot of Hindhead. We have got in in very good time, and got, at the Dolphin, good stabling for our horses. The waiters and people at inns *look so hard at us* to see us so liberal as to horse-feed, fire, candle, beds, and room, while we are so very very sparing in the article of *drink!* They seem to pity our taste. I hear people complain of the "exorbitant charges" at inns; but my wonder always is how the people can live with charging so little. Except in one single instance, I have uniformly, since I have been from home, thought the charges too low for people to live by.

This long evening has given me time to look at the *Star* newspaper of last night; and I see that, with all possible desire to disguise the fact, there is a great "*panic*" brewing. It is impossible that this thing can go on, in its present way, for any length of time. The talk about "speculations"; that is to say, "adventurous dealings or, rather, commercial gamblings;" the talk about *these* having been the cause of the breakings and the other symptoms of approaching convulsion, is the most miserable nonsense that ever was conceived in the heads of idiots. These are *effect;* not *cause*. The cause is the *Small-note Bill*, that last brilliant effort of the joint mind of Van and Castlereagh. That bill was, as I always called it, a *respite;* and it was, and could be, nothing more. It could only put off the evil hour; it could not prevent the final arrival of that hour. To have proceeded with Peel's bill was, indeed, to produce total convulsion. The land must have been surrendered to the overseers for the use of the poor. That is to say, without an "equitable adjustment." But that adjustment as prayed for by Kent, Norfolk, Hereford, and Surrey, might have taken place; it *ought* to have taken place: and it must, at last, take place, or convulsion must come. As to the *nature* of this "adjustment," is it not most distinctly described in the Norfolk petition? Is not that memorable petition now in the Journals of the House of Commons? What more is wanted than to act on the prayer of that very petition? Had I to draw up a petition again, I would not change a single word of that. It pleased Mr. Brougham's "best public instructor" to abuse that petition, and it pleased Daddy Coke and the Hickory Quaker, Gurney, and the wise barn-orator, to calumniate its author. They succeeded; but their success was but shame to them; and that author is yet destined

to triumph over them. I have seen no London paper for ten days, until to-day; and I should not have seen this if the waiter had not forced it upon me. I know *very nearly* what will happen by *next May*, or thereabouts; and as to the manner in which things will work in the meanwhile, it is of far less consequence to the nation than it is what sort of weather I shall have to ride in to-morrow. One thing, however, I wish to observe, and that is, that if any attempt be made to repeal the *Corn Bill*, the main body of the farmers will be crushed into total ruin. I come into *contact* with few who are not gentlemen or very substantial farmers: but I know the state of the *whole;* and I know that even with present prices, and with *honest labourers fed worse than felons*, it is *rub-and-go* with nineteen-twentieths of the farmers; and of this fact I beseech the ministers to be well aware. And with this fact staring them in the face! with that other horrid fact, that by the regulations of the *magistrates* (who cannot avoid it, mind), the honest labourer is fed worse than the convicted felon; with the breakings of merchants, so ruinous to confiding foreigners, so disgraceful to the name of England; with the thousands of industrious and care-taking creatures reduced to beggary by bank-paper; with panic upon panic, plunging thousands upon thousands into despair: with all this notorious as the sun at noon-day, will they again advise their royal master to tell the parliament and the world, that this country is "in a state of unequalled prosperity," and that this prosperity "must be permanent, because *all* the great interests are *flourishing?*" Let them! That will not alter the *result.* I had been, for several weeks, saying, that the *seeming prosperity* was *fallacious;* that the cause of it must lead to *ultimate* and shocking ruin; that it could not last, because it arose from causes so manifestly *fictitious;* that, in short, it was the fair-looking, but poisonous, fruit of a miserable expedient. I had been saying this for several weeks, when out came the king's speech and gave me and my doctrines the *lie direct* as to every point. Well: now, then, we shall *soon see.*



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