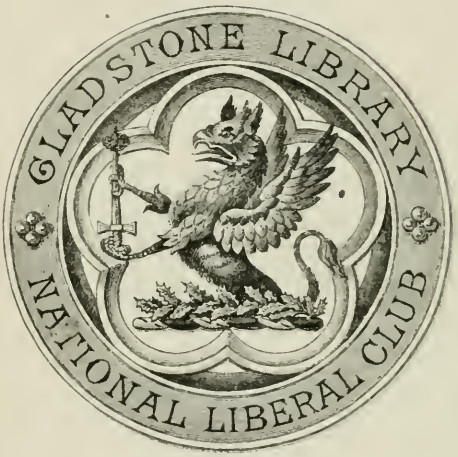

STATE AND PROSPECTS

OF

BRITISH AGRICULTURE;

BEING A

COMPENDIUM OF THE EVIDENCE

GIVEN BEFORE

A COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

APPOINTED IN 1836 TO ENQUIRE INTO

AGRICULTURAL DISTRESS.

WITH A FEW

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

BY WILLIAM HUTT, ESQ., M. P.

" I would recommend those persons who feel disposed to question the utility of this Enquiry, to read with care and attention the Evidence which has been collected. It is true that it contains nothing to flatter, with delusive hope, the farmer who has neither skill, energy, nor capital. But to one who takes the conduct of a farm with a determination to apply it to those improvements which the progress of science has extended to Agriculture; and who, possessing industry and intelligence, has also the means by which alone they can be made available to him, *the perusal of this Evidence will afford abundant encouragement.*"—ADDRESS TO HIS CONSTITUENTS, BY C. S. LEFEVRE, ESQ., M. P., CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL DISTRESS.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

JAMES RIDGWAY AND SONS, PICCADILLY.

1837.

"Only let Mr. Hutt's pamphlet find its way into the Farmers' houses of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the delusions of a quarter of a century will vanish in another year from all capable and dispassionate minds."—*New Monthly Magazine.*

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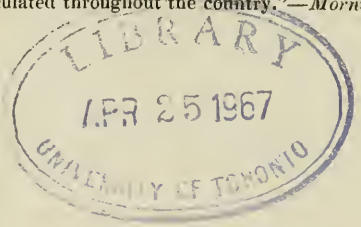

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COMMITTEE.

Lord John Russell,
Sir Robert Peel,
Sir James Graham,
Mr. Shaw Lefevre (Chairman),
Marquess of Chandos,
Mr. Cayley,
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Mr. Wodehouse.

TO

H. T. M. WITHAM, ESQ. F.G.S.

ETC. ETC. ETC.

LATINGTON HALL, COUNTY OF YORK.

My Dear Sir,

You will remember an anecdote, in ancient story, of a lawgiver who caused the current coin of his country to be made of materials so cumbrous, that it fell into disuse and disrepute. A fate somewhat similar to this, and from a similar cause, commonly attends the Reports of Parliamentary Committees. Valuable as much of their evidence frequently is, it comes before the public in so voluminous a shape, that except it is made the groundwork of legislative enactment, little advantage is ever derived from it by the public. This defect, which applies to most Parliamentary reports, seems to me to apply particularly to that of the late Committee on the State of Agriculture. It contains very much instructive and valuable information, but that information is scattered over three folio volumes, one of which exceeds 600 pages in length.—Who will read it? In such a form, is the evidence reported by the committee ever likely to be studied or even consulted by men whose time is devoted to productive industry? A few country gentlemen, of unusual diligence and courage, and here and there an indefatigable member of parliament, may get through the very diffuse and repeated matter which these volumes contain—but since no bill is likely to be founded on it—as concerns the public, so long as it is in the keeping of three volumes folio, the evidence collected by the committee will be nearly thrown away.

In order that it may become familiar to those who are

most interested in a knowledge of it, I have endeavoured to reduce it to the compass of a volume, the perusal of which will not greatly tax the leisure moments of the most busy. I have endeavoured also to bring together and arrange the abrupt and desultory questions into which an inquiry of this sort necessarily falls, so that the facts elicited may be more clearly, as well as more agreeably considered. I have classed the facts chiefly under the following heads :—Evidence on Agriculture in England and in Scotland, Evidence on the Currency, Evidence of Corn Factors, &c. Independent of its intrinsic value, which is very considerable, I think the greater attention is due to this evidence, because it is now pretty clear, that no new parliamentary committee on the state of agriculture, will be appointed for some years to come.

The small degree of credit to which I can lay claim, on account of this volume, must depend entirely on the judgment and fidelity with which I have executed the task of laying before the public a compendium of the Committee's Report. Assuredly I have taken some pains with my book ; I wished to render it serviceable to the public, and I was anxious to inscribe it to you, whose noble exertions in promoting the happiness and improvement of others, deserve a higher tribute than any efforts of mine can bestow.

Although I have deemed it necessary to explain, in a few prefatory remarks, the course I have adopted in reducing the compass of the parliamentary volumes, it has been far from my thought to attempt any thing like a general essay on the state and prospects of agriculture. To such a task I am wholly incompetent, and, even were the fact otherwise, the pamphlet which the chairman of the Agricultural Committee, Mr. Charles Shaw Lefevre, has recently published, would render any such undertaking on my part supererogatory. I wish that all persons interested in agriculture could be induced to read that able and honest publication. There has been of late years a great tendency among writers and public speakers to set before farmers, as the means of bettering their condition, representations which, if not altogether pernicious, are perfectly fallacious and empyrical. Mr. Lefevre has descended to none of these vulgar expedients for gaining a false popula-

rity. He has followed too closely the dictates of his own enlightened and honourable mind to practice any delusion; on the contrary, in the language and with the authority of experience and observation, he has explained the real causes of existing distress, and with no less firmness than ability, he has pointed out the only measures that can remove it. The agriculturists are his debtors.

No subject has occasioned more discordancy of sentiment in this country than Agriculture, and from a mass of statements so extensive and so various as this committee collected, it would not have been difficult to have made such a selection as would support any preconceived opinions I myself might entertain. I have carefully avoided any tendency that way. I have endeavoured to lay before the public the evidence on all important debateable matters, without preference or partiality. I have, of course, assumed the power of deciding what is important, but with one exception (of which I will speak hereafter), I have never aimed at diminishing the report by omitting any statement which I believed could possibly be deemed of value by a particular side. I have proposed as the guide of my proceeding, in the first place, to bring under the notice of the farmer such suggestions, for the improved management of land and stock, as might prove to him of practical utility, and, in the next, to record with care all observations which tended to explain the cause of existing depression and distress in agricultural affairs.

I have passed over, without quotation, the entire evidence of some of the witnesses where I found nothing much calculated to illustrate these objects. Among others, that of Mr. Jacob, of the Board of Trade. I have taken the same course with Messrs. Morton, Sherborn, and Tillyer, because, though their testimony is far from uninteresting, yet, from the proximity of their land to London, and the facility with which they can heap on manure, they seemed rather to belong to the class of market gardeners than of farmers. I have omitted all the evidence expressly relating to the state of farming in Ireland, for our agriculturists can derive no advantage from the experience of Irish husbandry, and other matters connected with Ireland, are sufficiently stated by incidental testimony.

It is with respect to the currency that I have exercised a discretion which I can hardly expect all parties will commend. I am quite prepared, however, to justify the step I have adopted. A great deal of the time of the committee was taken up in cross-examining farmers on the subject of the currency, and frequently in constraining them to express an opinion respecting it, when they had frankly declared it was a matter they did not understand.

I have made no extracts from such evidence. The subject is a difficult one, and I do not consider farmers very great authority upon it. I have, however, gone further, I have passed over all that Messrs. Spooner, Muntz, and Burgess delivered, respecting the currency. These gentlemen take so romantic a view of the matter, that in examining their statements, one cannot help deploring that eccentricity of mind to which great talent and even genius is proverbially allied. The hope of tampering with the currency could not, recently, have been very high among the more sober of those who approve of such a policy. Its allies have formed but a feeble band in the House of Commons, comprising few men of great abilities, and not one of much political importance. Out of doors, the proposition has been very little more successful. The intelligence and the property of the country equally repudiate it. Many farmers, indeed, have declared in its favour, not because they pretend to understand the question, but because they have been constantly assured that it would make them rich and prosperous, by persons who should have known better, and whose sincerity, when they are sincere, is so like dishonesty that it deserves to be confounded with it. On the whole, the currency question is on the decline, and the dissemination of the evidence taken before the committee on Agriculture is not calculated to prop it up. I earnestly recommend to those who entertain doubts upon this subject, to read with attention the information elicited from Lord Ashburton, Lord Radnor, and Mr. Sanders, especially that portion of it given in reply to the questions of Sir James Graham and Sir Robert Peel.

Lord Ashburton, who, since the death of Mr. Ricardo, appears to me to understand the nature and operation of money better than any other man in public life, and who

was expressly cited before the committee with the hope of bolstering up the case of "the currency party," scouted as the most idle of all delusions, the idea that the agriculturists could derive any peculiar benefit from lowering the standard of value. On the contrary, he reprobated such a proceeding as not only incapable of affording any special advantage to the landed interest, but as certain to involve all interests in suffering and confusion.*

Lord Radnor is a political economist of another school. He is well known as an advocate of the late Mr. Cobbett's opinions on the subject of money. He is a man, however, of fearless honesty of character, and one who loves the cause of truth better than any other cause. It is a curious spectacle to see him who has resolutely adhered to the doctrines of the "Register" through a long public life, expressing a doubt at last, whether the state of the country is not a proof that he has been mistaken in the view he has contended for so many years. Very few men, I suspect, abandon, on a merely dispassionate consideration, an opinion of which they once think they have been convinced. With regard to the consequences to agriculture, and to every other interest, of depreciating the currency, Lord Radnor, Lord Ashburton, and Mr. Sanders are all agreed. Even Mr. Hoggard (whose evidence is curious, though I am not disposed to concur in all his views,) is averse to lowering the standard of value.

Although I have thought it undesirable to reprint any of the general expositions of currency theories, to which the committee was compelled to listen, I have admitted into these pages, perhaps, somewhat needlessly, all the evidence given by practical farmers which was intended to prove that agriculture could never again yield a profit under the

* The opinion Lord Ashburton expresses of the superior security given by the French Monetary System as compared with our own, is one to which I entirely subscribe. I trust the subject will, before very long, engage the attention of Parliament. Indeed the effects which were produced on the metallic currency of this country by the alterations of the relative value of gold and silver in the United States' Mint, seemed likely at one time to compel very serious attention to this subject. The extraordinary derangement of the commercial relations between the two countries has arrested that efflux of gold from Britain to America, which under ordinary circumstances must have ensued from President Jackson's policy, and before the operation of it on our currency can now be renewed, it is probable that the recruited coffers of the Bank will be equal to the emergency. But the country and the Bank seem to have escaped a very fearful conjuncture. This matter is admirably explained in a paper signed P. in the Morning Chronicle, 25th March, 1837.

present monetary system, or which was supposed to explain particular phenomena in regard to prices, through the medium of the currency.

The opinion here referred to, that agriculture cannot prosper with the present currency, which is so strongly insisted on by some parties, involves its votaries in such a maze of perplexity and inconsistency as to facts, that the adhesion to it may be considered as a curious anecdote in the history of the human mind—it certainly forms a striking proof of the desperate credulity of theorists.

1st.—It is maintained that the high price of wool and mutton during the last two or three years, is attributable in no degree to the activity and prosperity of the manufacturing classes, but arose entirely from the rot of 1829 and 1830.*

2d.—That the high price of beef is entirely to be referred to the failure of the green crops through the country.

3d.—That barley and oats were selling at good prices, not from any increased demand for them, but wholly in consequence of dry seasons and scarcity.

4th.—That the low price of wheat was not owing to dry seasons, extended cultivation and consequent abundance, but to Peel's bill and the absence of £1. notes.

I need not observe that these imaginations will be found to be as much opposed to unquestionable evidence as they are to the deductions of argument and common sense.

But although there is a great discrepancy of opinion with respect to causes in speaking of agricultural affairs, there is, I apprehend, little contrariety with respect to effects.

That English farmers, especially those on the low clay soils, are far from a state of prosperity, is a fact unfortunately,

* The style of interrogation frequently resorted to in this Committee to elicit answers of a particular description was of a nature which, however, dexterous, is, I believe, seldom adopted, or thought desirable, on similar occasions. Among other instances is this—Witnesses having stated their belief that the high price of wool during the last two or three years arose out of the activity of the manufacturing and commercial interests were required to state if they would adhere to that opinion should it appear that the exportation of woollen goods during that period had decreased. Now, whatever impression this question was intended to convey, it should be told that the supposition is not correct, the exportation of woollen commodities, in those years, has increased progressively. It appears, by official documents that the declared value of British woollen manufactures exported during the last three years was officially registered as follows:—

1834	£5,736,000
1835	6,840,000
1836	7,636,000

but too clearly established. Many are in great distress; but a more pernicious auxiliary, a more unsafe guide, they cannot take for their deliverance, than that man who, expressing strong sympathy for their distresses, advises them not to consider their rents, not to avail themselves of those improvements in farming, which tend to increase production or diminish its cost, not to rescue themselves by their own exertions, as the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain and the agriculturists of Scotland have done before them —but to continue in the habits of 1790, and to look for their safety in some hocus pocus of the currency, or other mysterious benefit which Parliament is to work out for them.

Some relief is attainable to the farmer by the reduction of his local burthens, and to that object his exertions would be wisely directed. There are few districts in England where, under a responsible system of administration, the county rates might not be diminished in amount, and their proceeds more usefully applied. Again, the unequal pressure of the land-tax, as explained to the committee by Mr. Wood, the Chairman of the Board of Taxes, as well as the singular error by which it is assessed only on one species of property, although several are declared subject to it by the law which imposes it, are matters well worthy of attentive consideration. Difficult and complicated as the question of the land-tax has become, I know no reason why an attempt at a more equitable assessment of it should be abandoned as hopeless.

Great benefit may be expected (more perhaps to the south of the Trent than northward) from the working of the New Poor Law Act. I know nothing which afforded me so much satisfaction in studying the evidence on agriculture, as the almost unanimous testimony of the parties examined in favour of the practical operation of this law. Landowners, farmers, land agents, merchants, manufacturers, every man who has had an opportunity of witnessing its effects, speaks of them in terms of the warmest praise. And the economical advantages which this law has produced—important as they certainly are, seem utterly undeserving of attention in comparison of the great moral and social improvements with which they have been conjoined. That a great outcry should be raised against a measure which,

besides that it afforded so ready an instrument to the reckless spirit of party, diverted into new channels seven millions of revenue, is no matter for rational surprise. The day will come when society will do justice to this law and to its authors, when it will probably be pronounced the most benevolent work of legislation that ever emanated from Parliament.

It is hardly necessary to say anything on the subject of the malt-tax, which has already excited so much discussion as the public is willing to attend to. Although the advantage of repeal may have been exaggerated; although this case may be another illustration of what I remember to have heard Lord Althorp declare was the result of his experience, "that the benefit of taking a tax off is never commensurate with the evil of laying it on," still there can be no doubt that the abolition of the malt-tax would be a prodigious boon to the interests of agriculture. Whence, however, are 6,000,000 of revenue to be gathered as a substitute? However desirable a good we may prove the remission of the malt-tax to be, it is, I believe unattainable.

Indeed, I am convinced that few persons will rise from the perusal of this evidence without being satisfied, that whatever alleviation the farmer might derive from external aid it is from his own resources that he must chiefly extract the means of ameliorating his condition.

The most interesting, as well as the most instructive portion of the evidence taken before the committee—whether it be considered singly or in connection with the rest—is that tendered by the agriculturists of Scotland. The contrast exhibited in the state and prospects of the farmers on different sides of the Tweed, is perhaps as striking a phenomenon as the progress of society has ever simultaneously developed. While the English farmer, in spite of exertion, is too frequently keeping up a difficult struggle with loss and insolvency—looking almost despondingly to the future, and like most men who are suffering, irritable, and in a temper to listen too much to any quackery that promises immediate relief—while this is the condition of the English farmer, his Scotch neighbour is conducting his affairs with high spirits and great success. In a country less favoured by soil and climate, he is farming to a profit, and actually

in many instances paying not only a higher rent (in which I include local burthens of each country) but carrying on a more expensive cultivation in reference to the quality of his land, than most Englishmen would undertake. Instead of tasking the omnipotence of parliament to assist him, he boldly declares that he only desires to be let alone, or if in any case he refers to legislative interference, it is that he may be less encumbered by those protective laws which afford a factitious and dangerous monopoly to agriculture.

The following Statement, which I copy from Mr. Lefevre, derived from the evidence of both English and Scotch farmers, is deserving the utmost attention :—

NAME of WITNESS.	Rent, Tithe, and Parochial Burthens.			Annual Average Expense per Acre.			TOTAL.			Quality of Land, estimated by average Produce per Acre in Wheat.	——
ENGLISH.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.		
Brickwell...	1	15	0	3	19	0	5	14	0	30	
Rolfe.....	1	11	6	3	13	6	5	5	0	24	
Cox.....	1	15	0	4	2	2	5	17	2	30	
—											Mr. Hope's rent is a corn rent, calculated with wheat at 50*s.* per qr. Messrs. Hope, Bell, & Robertson have not only been farming profitably for the last three years, but have spent large sums in furrow draining.
SCOTCH.											
Hope.....	2	3	9	2	12	0	4	15	9	29	
Bell.....	1	8	8	2	0	7	3	9	3	28	
Robertson..	1	19	0	2	16	0	4	5	0	30	
—											
ENGLISH.											
Bennett....	0	16	0	1	16	10	2	12	10	18	Tithe Free.
Crowther..	1	2	0	2	8	7	3	10	7	22	

I observe that Mr. Cayley, who deservedly enjoys the reputation of much intelligence and deep concern for the interests of agriculture, but with whose favourite theories the condition of Scottish farmers by no means agrees, seems to attach little value to these statements.* He would discredit their correctness, and he accounts for what he cannot entirely resist by temporary and incidental causes far removed from improved husbandry. "Scotland, he says, has the advantage of one pound notes. The wages of labour are very much lower in that country, and the rot which destroyed 8,000,000 sheep in England a few years ago did not affect Scotland at all."

I have never reflected on Mr. Cayley's assertion, that the

* A letter to H. Handley, Esq., M. P., by E. S. Cayley, Esq., M. P.

circulation of £1. notes in Scotland is a cause of prosperity in that country, knowing, as of course he does, that they are exchangeable for gold on demand, without astonishment. Mr. Cayley cannot imagine that the system which he contends would convert England into a perfect Atlantis of happiness * actually prevails in Scotland; he cannot suppose that the standard is depreciated in that country. He cannot think that prices are higher in Scotland (nay, he indirectly admits they are lower), for he accounts in some degree for the superior profits of farming in the sister kingdom, by the steam navigation which conveys its agricultural produce to London. What then does Mr. Cayley mean by citing the circulation of one pound notes as a cause of Scottish prosperity? The bankers of Scotland do not give greater accommodation than those of England. There is abundant evidence, both here and elsewhere, to prove that English bankers afford the utmost facility to agriculturists whenever they are in good credit; Scottish bankers assuredly do no more.

The other two facts, alleged by Mr. Cayley to prove his point, are little better than gratuitous assertions, in which he sets his authority against that of almost all the witnesses.

Mr. Oliphant, M. P. for Perth, says, he gives 9*s.* a week to his labourers, and several other parties say the same thing. Now the Scottish labourer may do more work for his wages than the English, but 9*s.* a week for a husbandry labourer would not be considered very low wages in the North Riding of Yorkshire. The argument is, of course, the same, whether the wages are paid in money or in money's worth. Then, again, Mr. Cayley's assertion that England suffered a loss of eight millions of sheep by the rot of 1829, is probable a fact of which he is thoroughly convinced, but how the number, which others cannot compute, was revealed to him, he has not explained. It seems greatly exaggerated.

Mr. Cayley appears, however, to distrust the representations unanimously made by the Scotch farmers, of their

* In the year 1833 Mr. Cayley is reported to have spoken thus in the House of Commons:—"It was his solemn conviction that if relief were granted by depreciating the currency, a child by a silken cord might guide the vast machine of government. If this relief were refused, not an angel from Heaven could direct the helm of state."

prosperity. He states, that he asked every one of them, if the farmers in their district were as wealthy now as they were fifteen years ago,* and that they uniformly replied—"No, they were not." He adds, he is convinced that, whatever advance Scotland may have made during the last fifteen years, a greater has been made by England, whose farmers are in a state of "relentless ruin." I should really like to know how it happens that the respectable and intelligent Scotchmen, examined before this committee, were all induced to give a delusive account of their prospects and condition. How does it fall out that men of character, coming from various parts of the country, without any apparent bond of union or ostensible motive for deceit, should uniformly assert that they are doing well when they are doing ill.

——— "How or why
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?"

Is it not more candid, as well as more reasonable, to suppose that they spoke the truth, and that the uniformity of their evidence arose from the uniformity of their condition?

That they have lost a great deal of capital since the termination of the war, is not only highly probable in itself, but very consistent with the fact that they are now wearing round. There is no doubt that the expectation, created by the original corn law, of wheat selling above 80*s.* a quarter, induced farmers, both in Scotland and in England, to take farms on rents far above what the prices they realized ever enabled them to pay. Rent, consequently, continued to be paid out of the capital of the farmer, till a conviction of the delusion excited by the act of parliament, a sense of their own interests, and a feeling of justice and generosity on the part of the landlords, produced an abatement in rents. But this abatement did not take place till the hopelessness of selling wheat at 80*s.* was demonstrated, and until a great deal of the tenant's capital had been lost. The disaster, indeed, was not quite unattended with beneficial results. While this painful change was in operation, the Scotch farmer instead of idly calling upon Providence for relief; instead of beguiling himself in his adversity with indolent faith in the power of parliamentary committees, or with

* This does not appear in the printed evidence.

expectations that a change in the currency would, he knew not how, give him "better prices," addressed himself with energy and intelligence to overcome the difficulties that oppressed him. In this honourable contest he has been at last signally successful. He is now doing well. Instead, then, of indulging in sneers at the frugality, the sub-soil ploughs and other means of cheapening the cost of production, by which the Scotch farmers have risen above the pressure of adversity, it would be better taste and higher wisdom did Mr. Cayley encourage Englishmen to imitate their example.

Mr. Cayley's opinion of the superiority of English husbandry needs no discussion.

"It will be seen," says Mr. Lefevre, "by a perusal of the evidence of Scotch witnesses, that they turn their attention to the breeding, fattening, and general management of stock to a much greater extent than is usually done by the English farmer. The productive powers of the land are thus increased by the additional quantity of manure raised, and it suffers less exhaustion in consequence of the less frequent recurrence of the grain crop." But, perhaps, the greatest superiority of the Scotch system of farming is exhibited in a better mode of draining the land.—Considerable as have been the improvements undertaken in this respect in England, they have been far greater in Scotland. Indeed the plan of furrow draining adopted in the East Lothian, especially when combined with the operation of stirring the sub-soil, as introduced by Mr. Smith, of Deanston, constitutes one of the most important practical discoveries ever made in the science of agriculture. It is the more valuable, because it seems applicable to every description of soil, and on all, when effectually applied seems to produce results perfectly surprising.

The mode of operation, as well as its effects, are very fully and clearly explained in the evidence of Mr. Smith himself, and in a paper transmitted by Mr. Kennedy, who speaks of both from considerable personal experience. The system of applying the sub-soil plough may be briefly explained. The land having been drained in a manner very particularly described, the surface soil is turned up by the common plough, its ordinary depth being about 6 inches, a

strong plough, of rather a peculiar construction, is then introduced, and the sub-soil is broken up to the depth of one foot, the common plough comes round again, and the active soil is spread over the sub-soil, without, however, mixing with it. The whole operation is now performed.

The sub-soil being stirred up, the air and the weather penetrate it; the rain filters through it into the drains beneath, and this, with the action of the atmosphere upon it, produces a complete change both chemical and mechanical in its composition. The active soil is prodigiously improved by the change, but when after a short succession of crops, the upper and lower soils are ploughed up and blended together, a new soil is created of great depth and extraordinary fertility. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to remind the practical farmer, that the sub-soil should not be stirred without first draining it, and that to mix the sub-soil with the surface till the former has been exposed to the action of the air for some time, will produce sterility instead of increased power of production. Such, then, has been the course of successful farming in Scotland.

Intelligence, activity, and capital, are essential to the properity not of the farmer only, but of every man who, in times like these, devotes himself to the work of production. Rash experiments are, no doubt, to be avoided, but it is perhaps, as little the part of a prudent man to disregard those improved systems which have been happily resorted to by his intelligent and enterprising neighbours. But too many English farmers it is to be feared are engaged in carrying on their business without capital—a case in which success is almost impossible, either in agriculture or any other department of active life.

Beside the obvious and immediate advantage of profit which must result to the farmer either from increasing on a given outlay, the acreable produce of his land, or what is the same thing, raising an equal amount of produce at a smaller cost, another most important object is attained. Every improvement which tends to remunerate the agriculturist at a lower cost, every step which makes him less dependent on the corn laws for carrying on his business with success, is a guarantee not only for the healthful continuance of his business, but for the security of the capital he

has invested in his farm. At present much of the farmer's capital—a few years ago a still greater proportion of it—existed under the sufferance of an act of parliament, which, fairly or unfairly, I will not now stop to inquire, is opposed to the desires and interests of a very large and powerful body of the nation. An act which is actively assailed by the public press of the country—a stirring theme for popular excitement—and which large associations of men are banded together to remove. Under present circumstances, the agriculturist must feel with some alarm that a great portion of his property is constantly made to hang on the uncertain issue of a parliamentary debate, and that though the legislature should succeed for the time in maintaining the protection inviolate, if ever the price of bread should rise immoderately before the admission of foreign corn, the physical force of the country would overbear the authority of parliament, and produce a scene in which even the most rigid upholders of protection would be glad to see it repealed and forgotten.

I very much doubt if foreign corn would find its way into our markets, paying a fixed duty of *5s.* a quarter, if our home prices ranged between 40*s.* and 45*s.* I know that many persons will tell me it is perfectly Utopian to expect that anything like 45*s.* per quarter will remunerate the grower of wheat. I can only say that several witnesses from Scotland seem to hold a different opinion, and that I recollect it was maintained in Parliament in 1815, that no wheat could be grown in England under 80*s.* a quarter. We have survived one fallacy, I believe we shall survive the other.

The term, remunerating price, is frequently made use of respecting the sale of corn, as if there were some fixed uniform point in the scale of prices below which the cultivation of corn could not answer to the farmer wholly irrespective of the cost of its production. But it must be evident to every one who has considered the subject at all, that remuneration, which means the difference between the selling price of a given quantity of corn and the cost of bringing it to market, must depend on a multitude of circumstances, which will vary in different seasons with themselves, and in the same season with one another.—Soil,

situation, rent, local burthens, facilities of conveyance, the relation of demand and supply in the corn market, must all affect the remunerating price, to say nothing of the capital, skill, and industry of the individual cultivator. We know, for instance, that the price which yields a sufficient profit to the Scotch farmers is often quite unremunerative to the greater part of the English.

It is, however, an admitted fact, that the expense of growing corn even in England has greatly diminished since the year 1815; the remunerating price has, in consequence, probably undergone a proportionate reduction. But in Scotland, where with greater capital and higher intelligence, a more judicious system of farming, more effective draining, cheap and commodious conveyance, and a greater extent of chemical and mechanical power have been resorted to, a prodigious change has taken place in regard to cost and remuneration. The revolution is going on. In that country, lower prices and adequate remuneration may yet be expected. The career of agricultural improvement is equally certain in Ireland, and although it was proved before this Committee that very small quantities of wheat had been imported from that country into England, during the last three years, it is impossible to doubt that unless Irish produce is excluded from our markets by being under-sold there, we must look forward hereafter to large importations from that kingdom. There is an opinion very prevalent among those who are anxious to establish Poor Laws in Ireland, that since the people under such a system would no longer subsist, as they now do, on weeds and potatoes, but would consume a large portion of the corn raised by their labour, Irish produce would, in consequence come less into competition with our own. The very reverse of this however, I believe, would take place. The immediate effect of Poor Laws in Ireland (accompanied as they must be by some extensive measure of emigration), would be the consolidation of farms, the reclaiming of waste land, a more scientific and economical mode of cultivation, and consequently a very large surplus production. England would therefore be exposed to a competition with Ireland far surpassing anything hitherto experienced. All this must stimulate the progress of skil-

ful and thrifty cultivation among English farmers, and their efforts will be very materially assisted by the operation of various measures enacted by Parliament for their relief, such as the Tithe and Poor Law Acts—the abolition of Statute Labour, and County-rates diminished, by the expense of prosecutions being charged on the Consolidated Fund. Looking then to what is going on in reference to agriculture in every part of the United Kingdom, I feel convinced that the day is not far distant when such a reduction will take place in the remunerating price of corn that British agriculture will not require the invidious and pernicious propping of protective laws, but will be able by its independent power to maintain its own security.

Yet, however important to our best interests remuneration at low prices may be, steadiness in the price of food is of almost equal concern. This country is exposed, by the nature of its banking and monetary systems to very fearful vicissitudes of excitement and depression in its trading transactions —vicissitudes that too frequently arrest the course of successful enterprise, with whatever prudence it may be directed, and that suddenly contract or cut off the means of existence to thousands of our industrious people. No one can be ignorant of the misery created in Great Britain by the convulsions in 1825 and 1836. In one respect, however, alternation in the price of food is even a greater evil than these—for it is of far more frequent recurrence. And it is superadded to the mischief already pointed out. It is an unfortunate event, that some measures which have been suggested, as tending not only to maintain equality in the price of corn, but also to give valuable assistance to commerce; and that, without, as it seems to me, the slightest detriment to the agriculturist, but very much the reverse, should have been condemned by that body generally, and by the legislature. I allude to the proposition to renew "the Grinding Act," which expired in 1825.

Suppose that a merchant sending British flour (or foreign flour on which duty has been paid) abroad, received for every barrel exported a certificate or debenture of 25*s.*, which he was at liberty to pay to the customs as money, whenever he might desire to liberate foreign corn from bond—What would be the consequence? Why this: that

a quantity of corn would be taken out of our market for exportation whenever it was very cheap, and prices were tending to a ruinous depression, and that the privations of our people would be mitigated in times of scarcity by a corresponding introduction of foreign corn. The plan, by taking off the surplus in the one case, and supplying deficiency in the other, would promote steady prices, and correct in some degree the irregularities of the seasons, and the disastrous effects of our fluctuating corn duties.

The question of the Corn Laws is frequently considered in the investigation before us. It is, unfortunately, a subject seldom approached by disputants without angry feelings on both sides. I have long been favourable to the admission of foreign corn at a fixed moderate duty, and the study of this evidence has not changed my opinion of its policy. Yet I admit that the temperate, and, apparently, long-considered views of such men as Mr. Sanders deserve every attention.

One grave objection to the present Corn Laws appears to me to be the fluctuations they occasion in price whenever foreign corn is admitted. The steadiness observed in our markets in the years 1833, 1834, and 1835, arose from their being undisturbed by importations from abroad. As our Corn Laws have some times been commended for producing equality in prices, it is worth while to record the maximum and minimum price of wheat, according to the official averages, during those years in which we were compelled to resort to foreign produce. And it will thus be seen how little ground there is for approving of the Corn Laws on account of steady prices.

		s.	d.			s.	d.
1828	19th Sept.	58	6	1830	6th Aug.	74	11
	24th Oct.	76	0		17th Sept.	60	2
1829	5th July	71	5	1831	1st April	72	4
	30th Oct.	55	4		7th Oct.	61	0

In the years 1832, 1833, 1834, and 1835, the market was very little influenced by the introduction of foreign corn.

		s.	d.
1836	15th Jan.	35	5
	30th Dec.	60	3

If, then, it be admitted, and with these facts before us it cannot well be denied, that one of the effects of the existing

law is alternations in the price of food, it is productive of one of the greatest evils that can affect society.

The only further subject to which I would call your attention is the very important and gratifying fact, a fact abundantly affirmed by evidences from all parts of Great Britain, of the superior condition of the husbandry labourers, as compared with any preceding period. When Arthur Young undertook his Agricultural Tours in 1767, 1768, and 1770, it was computed, at the then average price of labour and wheat, that the labourer could earn nearly five-sixths of a peck of wheat a-day. In 1810 and 1811, according to the same authority, the average value of wheat and labour having both increased in equal ratio, the labourers' wages were nearly at the same point as forty years ago. The intermediate periods, were, of course, subject to fluctuations, but, in general, the average must have been about the same; the wages of a labourer, during that time, seldom varying much from five-sixths of a peck of wheat a-day. According to the average price of wheat and labour in 1836, wages must have been doubled in amount, and the means of our labouring population of providing themselves and families with the comforts and necessaries of life augmented in the same proportion!

Sincerely hoping that this volume may be the means of dispelling error, and extending useful information on a subject of such deep national importance as that of agriculture, and that a work which cannot possibly acquire reputation to its author, and is very unlikely to convey profit, may be found of practical utility to others, I have unaffected pleasure in dedicating it to you.

Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Your very sincere friend,

WILLIAM HUTT.

London, March 18, 1836.

EVIDENCE GIVEN BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

ON

AGRICULTURAL DISTRESS.

EVIDENCE OF ENGLISH AGRICULTURISTS.

Evidence of Mr. Thomas Neve.

Kent Farmers dependent on Corn; not so well off now as in 1833—Hop Farmers better—Great Improvement of Land by Draining—Expense of Draining decreased by the Use of Pearson's Draining Plough—Cost of Plough—Used with Horses—Mr. E. Denison, M.P., had applied a Windlass to it successfully—Suited both to Grazing and Arable Land—Expense of Draining by this Means not more than One-third the Expense of ordinary Draining—Expenses of Cultivation have decreased only by this Means—Parliament could relieve the Farmer in no other Way than by repealing the Malt Tax—Would not like a Property Tax to be substituted—Much Clover is grown in Kent—A Disadvantage to take off the Duty on Clover Seed—Commutation of Tithes into a permanent Rent Charge desirable.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Benenden, in Kent.

What is your occupation?—A grazier, farmer, and land agent.

To whom are you land agent?—To several different gentlemen.

Are you acquainted with a considerable district of country in the county of Kent?—A considerable district, principally in the Wealds of Kent and Sussex.

What is the nature of the soil?—The greater part of it is stiff clay land; that is the prevailing character of the soil.

Comparing the state of the farmers in that district of country at the present time, with their state in 1833, do you consider it better or worse?—I think where they are dependent principally on corn, they are in a worse situation; but where they have a considerable quantity of hops, I think the hop farmers are in rather a better situation.

Has there been much improvement going on lately, by draining or otherwise, in the land in that neighbourhood?—There has been a considerable improvement.

What has been the effect of that improvement?—A considerable increase of crops, certainly.

Is it going on at the present moment?—I think it is, but not to so great a degree as it was after the wet seasons; from having had

such dry seasons, the farmers are not quite so keen in under-draining as they were.

Is that done at the expense of the farmer or of the landlord?—Principally at the expense of the farmer.

Is it an expensive sort of draining?—The expense has very much lessened indeed within the last few years, by the discovery of the draining plough, which is used a good deal in our part of the country upon the clay soils.

Mr. Clive.] You are acquainted with Pearson's plough for draining?—I am.

Is it what you have used?—It is.

Do you think that plough, as applied, answers the purpose for which it was intended?—It does, decidedly.

Is it an expensive mode of draining?—No, it is not; the plough itself and the tools are rather expensive in the first instance.

The expenses do not exceed more than 25*l.*, do they?—No; I think about 20*l.* or guineas, for the plough and the tools.

What do you imagine is the cost per acre of draining land, to which it can be applied?—It does not exceed 2*l.* per acre.

How many men do you employ, on this system of draining?—Generally about 20, independently of those who are employed in driving the horses.

How many horses do you employ?—Eight.

And yet you say that the expense per acre is not more than 2*l.*?—I did not mean to include the expense of the horses in that sum, because it is done at a season of the year when the horses would be standing still if they were not employed in that way.

Chairman.] How many acres do you drain in a day?—About two acres a day.

Will land so drained bear turnips?—It will, but turnips are not much grown in our district.

How many horses are necessary to plough the land, when the draining has begun to act?—Generally four horses are employed in breaking up, and afterwards two or three in the stirring.

Previously to the land being drained, how many horses were you obliged to employ upon it?—Never less than four.

Then there has been no diminution in the number of horses necessary to be employed?—The farms generally are not very large with us, and upon most farms there is a four-horse team kept. It would not enable a farmer to send two teams to work the land; sometimes four are put on when they are not absolutely necessary. The land certainly ploughs more lightly after it is drained.

Would not it answer to the farmer to plough with two horses in preference to four?—In our district, if we do not require four horses in the winter we generally do in the summer, when there is a great deal more work to do.

Then you retain the horses for other purposes?—Yes.

Mr. Clive.] Do you ever apply the windlass to that plough, in

preference to eight horses?—We have not tried that in our neighbourhood; it has been done.

With what success has it been tried?—Mr. Denison, the Member for Nottinghamshire, wrote to me some time back, saying that he had tried it with very good effect.

But you yourself have not experienced it?—No.

Mr. Evans.] What is the nature of the drain formed by the plough; are there any stones or any thing put into it afterwards?—Nothing after the drain is cut by the plough. There is a wooden slide, about six feet in length, put in, that exactly fits the bottom of the drain, and upon that the clay that is taken out is rammed; and this slide is gradually drawn forward.

In subsequent ploughings, is not there danger that that kind of trench will be broken through by the plough and the horses?—From experience I find that that is not the case.

What is the depth of the drain?—Two inches and a half, or three inches.

What may be the width at the bottom of the drain?—About an inch at the bottom, and about two inches at the top.

What is the distance from one drain to another?—About nine feet.

Mr. Sanford.] How long has that system of draining that you spoke of been applied to the land in your neighbourhood?—About eight years.

Has it been chiefly applied to arable or to grazing land?—To both, principally to arable.

Do you think it is likely to cause a permanent improvement in the land?—I do, decidedly.

What is the comparative expense of that species of draining, with the other sort of draining which is usually adopted?—I should say it is not more than a third of the expense.

Has it been very generally adopted?—It has, to a considerable extent.

And now the system is increasing?—Yes, it is certainly

It applies particularly to the heavy clay land?—Yes, it does; it certainly is not adapted for light soils.

Had there been other descriptions of draining adopted upon the clay lands previously?—Not to any great extent.

What was it previously; the stone draining or the tile draining?—Principally wood was used in the drains; brushwood, bushes, and so forth.

Broken stone had not been used?—No, it had not.

In consequence of this draining, has there been an increased quantity of wheat grown?—I think there has.

Should you say that the last three harvests have been favourable to that part of the country?—Very much so, in consequence of dry seasons.

What would you say was the average amount of the wheat crop

per acre, during the last two or three years?—I should say from three quarters to three and a half.

What is the usual average?—Not more, if so much, as two quarters and a half.

And you attribute that increase entirely to the favourable seasons of the last three years, and not to improvements of the soil?—In a great measure to the fine seasons we have had.

Have the expenses of cultivation diminished in any way besides, owing to the draining?—They are diminished by draining considerably, but in no other way that I know of.

Is the amount of the poor rates the same now as it was three years ago?—No, they are lessened considerably.

Has the Poor Law Amendment Bill been carried into effect in your neighbourhood?—It has, a few months only.

Not a sufficient period to enable you to judge of the effect of it?—I have no doubt it will tend very much to lessen the rates.

Do you consider that the labourer is well off at present with the wages he receives?—I never knew him so well paid since I have been a farmer, compared with the prices of provisions.

What is the price of labour now in your district?—Two shillings a day.

Can you suggest any measure of relief which it is in the power of the Legislature to afford the farmer under the present circumstances?—I do not know any relief which can be afforded to the farmer except the malt duty could be taken off.

You think the repeal of the malt duty would increase the demand for hops, and that would improve the condition of the farmer?—I think it would; and it would enable the farmer to give his labourers beer, which very few do at present.

Did you ever hear a plan proposed, that the farmer should have the privilege of malting his own barley, free of duty?—I have heard it suggested.

Do you think that would be advantageous to the farmer?—I think it would.

Sir Edward Knatchbull.] Is there any other duty except the malt duty that presses heavily upon the farmer, by the repeal of which you could be relieved?—I am not aware of any other.

As regards taxation, the repeal of the malt duty is the only tax, the repeal of which would benefit the farmer?—I think it is.

Are you aware of the amount that the malt duty produces to the revenue?—I understand it is about 5,000,000*l.*

If the repeal of the malt duty was to take place, do not you imagine that some substitute for that 5,000,000*l.* must be provided?—I suppose there must.

Can you suggest any substitute to make up the deficiency?—I cannot.

Would it be satisfactory or convenient to substitute a property tax instead?—I certainly should not prefer it myself.

You would rather that the malt duty was continued than have a property tax?—I certainly should.

Is much clover grown there?—A considerable quantity.

Do you grow any clover for seed?—Only for my own use.

Do the farmers generally grow clover for seed in that country?—A great many do.

Then it would be no advantage to those farmers to have a reduction of the duty on clover seed?—I think it would be rather a disadvantage.

Does the cultivation of clover seed employ a great number of labourers?—It does in the winter months.

Chairman.] Is the land in the district of Kent, with which you are best acquainted, subject to tithe?—Yes, it is.

Is tithe generally taken by composition or in kind?—Generally by composition, but in some cases it is taken in kind.

On arable land, what is the composition per acre on the average?—It varies almost in every parish.

Upon your own farm?—Upon my own farm it is very low; I pay 6*s.* an acre for wheat, and 4*s.* for lent corn.

What for pasture?—We have a modus that covers the pasture land.

Do you consider that it would be an advantage to have the tithes commuted and a permanent rent-charge?—I think it would.

Evidence of Mr. John Ellis.

Farmers in Leicestershire not worse off now than in 1833—More Lime is used in improving Land now than twenty-five Years ago—Great Benefit of a Railway—Draining has been going on rapidly the last two Years—Advantage of it on strong Land found out—Drains Chatmoss—Mode of Draining and Cultivation—Corn Laws—Fixed Duty best—Present System holds out delusive Hopes—Very high Prices not advantageous to Farmers—Steady Prices most important—Could not do at present without Protection, but trusts to come to that ultimately, and by Degrees—Average Price of Wheat will not be above 50*s.*—Averages now not unfairly taken—Best for the Legislature to let Agriculture alone—Agitation of the Question injurious—Average Produce, per Acre, of Wheat, twenty-eight Bushels—Clay Farmers at a low Ebb, but benefited by the late fine Seasons—Rot among Sheep two Years ago caused a Rise of Price—Deficiency is now replaced.

Chairman.] Where do you live?—At Beaumont Lays, near the town of Leicester.

What is your occupation?—Until within the last three years I have been a farmer entirely; I still occupy about 400 acres of land, but I have other business now; I am a coal and lime merchant, and I am concerned in the cultivation of a farm at Chatmoss, in Lancashire.

In what part of the county is your farm situated?—Within two miles of Leicester.

Is that an arable farm or a grass farm?—About 150 acres arable and the rest grass.

Can you state from your own experience what is the condition of

the farmers in that part of the country, as compared with 1833? —I should say it is not at all worse than it was in 1833, rather better; and I can give a reason for coming to that conclusion: I am a lime merchant as well as a farmer, and the lime that I sell goes chiefly among the agriculturists, and I find they use quite as much as they did, and they pay quite as well for it; and therefore I conclude that they are not in a worse situation than they were two years ago.

Is there a greater quantity of lime consumed in the improvement of the soil?—What I sell is consumed almost entirely in the improvement of the soil; it is rather a new thing at Leicester; it is brought there in consequence of the opening up of a railway.

In what description of soil is that lime applied?—This kind of lime is applied more particularly to strong heavy land, clay land.

Mr. Cayley.] How far used the lime to come before the railroad was made?—It would have been about 20 miles to fetch the lime by land carriage before this railroad was made.

What would it have cost to have fetched a ton of lime to your farm before this railroad was made?—It would have cost me at least 10*s.* a ton.

What does it cost now?—It has now a land carriage upon it of about three miles before it gets to the railroad, which is at 2*s.* 6*d.*, and it is brought on the railway at 2*d.* a ton per mile, and that will make it about 5*s.* 6*d.*; it is a saving of one-half in the expense of transit.

The cost of carriage was a virtual prohibition?—Yes, I never used a pound of it.

Lord John Russell.] Comparing the present time with twenty or twenty-five years ago, do you think there is more lime used for the improvement of the soil by the farmers or less?—I think more now than twenty-five years ago.

With regard to expensive manures generally, is there more or less used?—In my neighbourhood more used, for this reason, that I live within two miles of the town of Leicester; that town of Leicester in more than twenty years has more than doubled itself, that is, it has risen from 22,000 to at least 45,000 now. I have been a large purchaser of manure ever since I was a farmer, and I find that the demand for manure is as great as ever it was, and that it all goes upon the land in the neighbourhood of Leicester; and, therefore, the demand must have increased rather than decreased, because the supply has doubled.

Mr. Loch.] Have there been considerable improvements made upon the lands in draining and otherwise in the last three years? —Yes, I think the improvements have gone on more rapidly the last two years. In reference to draining, people have found the great advantage of having the strong land drained.

What is the system of draining pursued in your district?—It varies a good deal; I introduced the system used in Essex, that is,

of draining with straw, and that has been of great advantage. There is a great deal drained with stones and some with tiles, and a good deal with turf.

Do you drain up the furrows?—Yes, now almost invariably.

What is the expense per acre?—It depends upon the width of the lands; ours is an old tillage country drawn into lands of very different widths; it will vary from 25*s.* to 35*s.* an acre draining it in the cheap way with straw.

With tiles?—It would cost twice as much with tiles.

What is the depth?—I drained it deeper than I should again; they were put in nearly two feet; I should not drain that land more than 18 or 20 inches if I did it again.

Mr. Miles.] Had you any outfall; did you lay tiles?—No; the straw is of no use but to support the clay above it till it adheres together; if you were to lay tiles it would stop it up.

Mr. Clive.] Then your principle is this, that the straw preserves the clay for a certain period, and then the clay becomes hardened, and it forms a firm drain?—Yes; if you open the drain in about two years, you will find that it adheres together; I generally contrive to do it when the field has had wheat, and a moderate crop of stubble will drain a whole field.

Mr. Miles.] Does the clay above the straw not get so adhesive as to prevent the water getting through it into the drain?—Draining with straw has an advantage over tiles in that respect; when you put in a tile, you put in clay upon it again, and that soon becomes so adhesive that nothing can get through it; but in draining with loose straw it leaves pores in the clay, and leaves a possibility of the water getting down, and it has the effect that it drains better.

Mr. Clive.] Then the stubble may be from six to eight inches long, and that laid up in the drain causes an aqueduct which brings the water down the drain?—Yes. We take out a narrow spot at the bottom of the drain, as if we were going to do it with turf, and push the straw into that, and it will stand twenty years.

Mr. Miles.] What depth of straw do you lay at the bottom of the drain?—Three or four inches.

What is the present state of cultivation in Chatmoss?—It is a speculation that I and some friends of mine entered into there in consequence of the Liverpool and Manchester railway going over that moss; we fancied that it would some day turn to account, and we took 660 acres upon a long lease for 68 years, at a progressive rent amounting ultimately to 5*s.* an acre, and we commenced four or five years ago to cultivate the land.

What was your first process?—I cannot exactly state the expense of it. First we drained it; that bog is 30 feet deep; we did not take all the water off, but we drain it three or four feet deep; we drain it with the bog itself.

Will you explain that?—That bog cannot be treated as other land

is; a man goes and takes out a sod a foot deep, and lays it upon one side, and it lies there two or three weeks, till the bog has emptied itself of its immense body of water to that depth; then after that a man comes and takes out another, and lets it lie another fortnight or three weeks, till the water is drained out; then we take a narrow spit out of the bottom; then we turn the first piece upside down, and lay it on like common turf drain.

How long after that process is it before you can get upon the land with any implements?—It is better that it should be done two years before, but I think that in six months we can plough it.

You plough it with pattens upon the horses' feet?—Yes.

Is that very slow and expensive?—No, it costs about 10*s.* an acre the first ploughing.

Are your horses liable to accidents?—No, I cannot say that they are; we find that we have scarcely any accidents.

How many ploughings do you require before you venture any crop upon it?—We give it three.

At what intervals?—Three ploughings and three harrowings; we plough it in the spring generally; we let it lie twelve months if we can; we grow potatoes the first time, and some had wheat the first time.

Then from the commencement of the draining to the first return what lapse of time is there?—There ought to be two years, at least, or two and a half to do it fairly.

Do you find that it requires liming or manuring?—Lime is of no use; that is a curious thing; we manure it very highly from Manchester, this is six miles from Manchester, and we get the manure by the railway; we put on 40 tons an acre, but we marl it very highly: the next process is marling it; we put on 120 tons of marl an acre; under our lease we have power to take out of Mr. Trafford's estate as much marl as we want, paying him for the land that we take away that is all round the moss, and then we have laid a railway upon the moss, and we have temporary railways about the field in which we do the work.

Mr. Sanford.] What description of marl is it?—Good clay marl.

Mr. Handley.] Have you heard of an invention of a steam plough of Mr. Heathcote's, on Redmoss, near Bolton?—No.

Is it a brother of yours who resides upon Chatmoss?—A brother-in-law, his name is Evans.

He has not communicated to you that such an instrument is in existence, and is working now upon Redmoss?—No.

Should you conceive that a steam-engine working ploughs by seven men, and burning peat such as you yourself have upon Chatmoss would be a very valuable instrument in moss cultivation?—I should think it would, if you get coals cheap.

Have you ever tried draining moss by pressure?—Never.

What may be the produce of your potato crop upon the average?—It varies exceedingly according to the season, because if there

comes a very dry season after we have planted with potatoes, the moss is reduced into soil; we have pulled it to pieces, and filled it full of marl and full of manure, but still the moss is all fibres, and if it comes very dry, the little rain that comes never gets into it, and we almost lose the crop; if it come a good, fair season, such as the year 1830, we get a very good crop, a crop of 250 bushels an acre, or from that to 300.

For which you have a good market at Manchester?—Yes.

Are those potatoes of a quality used for household purposes?—Most of them.

You succeed that by wheat?—Yes, we sow it partly with wheat first; it is a great job to get it ready for potatoes.

What is the amount in point of bulk when taken up with wheat?—It is not a large crop; it will not grow more than 16 to 24 bushels an acre.

Is there a great proportion of straw?—No, a very small proportion of straw.

Does the wheat after potatoes generally answer better than wheat taken the first crop?—Quite as well.

What is the next?—Clover; it grows remarkably well.

Red clover?—Yes.

Do you mow or graze the clover?—We mow it, and send a part of it into Manchester Green, and mow the rest for hay.

Do you let it remain more than one year?—Yes, but we find it does not answer at present.

What do you then take it up with?—With wheat; that depends upon the season; sometimes it has answered well, and sometimes not so well.

Do you find that a crop of wheat upon the clover lays is better than the first crop?—We have hardly gone round enough yet; I think it is about the same; the first crop we had was in 1829, and then in 1830.

Is it your intention then to revert to potatoes, and make the course potatoes, wheat, clover, wheat?—Yes, I think so.

When you speak of lime not being suitable for that moss, is the water that is expressed from that moss generally prejudicial to vegetation?—I do not think it is; we should see it in the ditches if it was; but the ditches grass down to the very spot.

Have you found any of the drains close?—Yes; they close for this reason; that if we drain that moss a yard deep, being a sponge full of water in the first instance, when we have got the water out it compresses, and in the course of three or four years we should get the plough into these drains; in the course of four or five years it would want draining afresh.

Have you any means of judging how much the surface has sunk in one course of cropping?—I should think from 9 to 12 inches.

Do you know whether the value of Chatmoss has increased since you made your bargain?—Yes, very much; there is a great deal come into cultivation since.

There is a belief that Chatmoss will be studded with villas soon, is there not?—It will be no doubt; there are a number building upon it now; we have a pretty place upon it already.

Mr. Sanford.] Will trees grow upon it?—We have planted it with hedges and they grow as well as anywhere.

Chairman.] Do you observe any great improvement in the land as you go on farming it?—Yes, there is a part of it that Mr. Roscoe commenced farming in the war, and lost a great deal of money upon it, but he brought a certain small part of it into cultivation, and Mr. Baines, the Member for Leeds, has it; he bought the lease when it was sold, and he goes on cultivating it; he has it in his own hands, and that which has been in cultivation twenty years he has got into something approaching good land, and got as fine crops of wheat as you would wish to see.

Mr. Loch.] With regard to the question of low prices, have you ever considered how those low prices might be affected by the present system of corn laws?—Latterly they have not been affected at all by the corn laws, because we are living entirely on our own growth. I have thought a good deal upon the corn laws, and if I had been asked that question two years ago, I should have said without hesitation that it would be desirable to abolish the present system so as to have a fixed duty, but since I have seen that we can grow so much more than we want ourselves, I doubt whether that would be a safe plan to resort to. But I think the present duty is too high for this reason, that I think it gives a fictitious value to land, that it gives the farmers an expectation that something is to come to their relief that can never arrive, and on that account it holds up the value of land fictitiously.

Then you think it induced the tenants to make larger offers than in the result they have been able to pay?—I think so; farmers are naturally prone to expect high prices, and they have been expecting something that was not likely to happen.

Then what alteration would you recommend?—Mine is a vague opinion, but I should propose to retain the fluctuating duty, and to reduce it one-half. I think that that would be all the protection that we ought to have.

Mr. Clay.] When you say "reduce it one-half," do you mean that you would make it begin at 60*s.* instead of 70*s.*?—Yes.

Mr. Clive.] Would you take off the extreme ends of the duty altogether?—I think it might be left where it is, only changing from 70*s.* to 60*s.*

Chairman.] Would you stop at the two last stages of the scale, and have a fixed duty of 5*s.*, and never a lower duty than 5*s.*?—That is a point upon which I have not thought; but I should not think that would be a bad plan, because I think the 5*s.* would be no injury to anybody.

Mr. B. Baring.] You object to the present scale of corn laws, because it encourages delusive hopes in the farmer's mind; is not the farmer undeceived at present?—I think the farmer is anxious

for some change in the corn laws, he does not know what; but he finds that he has not got the advantage that he expected to get. The fact is, that it is the seasons and himself that have brought these low prices upon him.

The present corn laws no longer continue to raise their delusive hopes?—I cannot say; the men that occupy the poor soils are not very intelligent men.

Would not any change encourage other delusive hopes?—Not if you were to lower the duty.

It is for the advantage of the farmer to raise prices, is it not?—I do not think so, I am not of that opinion, I do not think it is the advantage of the farmer to have very high prices.

What do you consider most advantageous to the farmer?—A steady price; that the farmer when he goes to take land should look to some steady price and not look to adventitious circumstances to help him out of a difficulty.

What is the effect upon the market of the present corn law?—It has no effect at all now; the supply of corn is a mere supply and demand amongst ourselves.

In the long run what has been the effect of the present corn laws?—It has tended to keep up the price when we have had bad seasons.

Do you think the present scale has had the effect of creating greater fluctuations of price than there would have been under a more reduced scale?—That is a question that I cannot answer, not having been in the corn trade, but I am certain that the corn laws have raised delusive hopes in the farmers.

Mr. Clay.] You are decidedly of opinion that steadiness of price is the circumstance most important to the farmer?—My opinion is not in accordance with that of most people with respect to the interests of landlord and tenant; up to a certain point I hold that they go together, that it is the interest of the tenant to keep the land in good condition as it is of the landlord that he should do so, but his landlord's interest is to have a high price to enable him to pay a high rent, I do not think it is the tenant's interest to be clamorous about a high price, it makes very little difference to me whether I pay a high price or a low price, and I think the country thrives better all round me if the price is a moderate one; it is better for me not to have a high price provided my expenses are in proportion.

The farmer is a capitalist, and it is of importance to him to be able to calculate the returns upon his capital?—Just so.

He would do that better and feel more certainty if he were sure of a steady price of wheat?—Yes, he would.

Supposing that the present system or any system of corn laws tends to produce fluctuation in the price of wheat, that must be ruinous in its consequences to the farmer?—There is no doubt of it.

Mr. Miles.] Do you think you could do without protection al-

together ?—Not in the present state of things, I think we must come to that ultimately, but we must go by easy steps.

But you think that the poorer class of farmers at present look at 60*s.* as the price at which wheat can be maintained ?—Yes.

Is it your opinion that upon the average of years prices can attain to that height ?—It is my opinion that they cannot, and that they will not attain 50*s.* with fine seasons.

And the consequence is that the poorer farmers have fallacious hopes raised ?—Yes.

Mr. Sanford.] You stated that you would like to see a fluctuating scale of duty with the highest point at 60*s.*, what is the average price that you think that would be likely to produce in the market ?—I think it would not produce an average of more than 50*s.* a quarter ; I think that we ought to have expenses brought down till we can grow wheat at 50*s.*

Mr. Clive.] Are you satisfied that the averages are fairly taken ?—I think that they are not unfairly taken now, but a great part of the corn sold in country markets is never included.

If the seller as well as the buyer was to give in a return, would that be a satisfactory arrangement ?—It would create a great deal of trouble, and I think it is better to throw the onus upon one party, and to attach a penalty upon it. There is a penalty, but it is hardly ever inflicted.

Mr. Clay.] Do you think under the present system it is possible to detect a well-concerted fraud ?—It would be very difficult to detect it.

Sir Robert Peel.] You think upon the whole the Legislature can take no better course than to leave agriculture alone ?—No, that is just all I should ask as an agriculturist, that you would be so good as not to meddle with us at all ; the thing is in a natural course of adjustment ; I consider it a matter now resting between landlord and tenant, and only let the thing alone, and it will adjust itself ; but if the Legislature interfere with it, my opinion is that they will derange the thing.

Do not you think it is much better that the agriculturists should understand that they will be let alone, and that they must trust to their own resources than to excite in them false expectations of relief ?—Yes, I do, and I was very sorry to see this Committee appointed upon that account, and I should be glad to see the question set at rest.

Mr. Cayley.] Do you think you would be so prosperous, even if your rent was reduced, if you lived 20 or 25 miles from Leicester ?—It would depend upon how much it was reduced ; if it was reduced in a fair ratio.

Do you consider that your land producing 36 or 38 bushels per acre of wheat, and 51 or 50 bushels of barley, is land of an ordinary description ?—It is land of fair quality, neither the best nor the worst.

What should you consider the average production upon average description of land?—I think the average of wheat has been very much underrated in the evidence before these Committees; I should say it was 28 bushels an acre.

Do you think you would be able to make that land so productive if it was not for the manure you have from the cows you keep?—If it were not for the manure I purchase and bring from the town of Leicester I should not.

You were understood to say, that you furnish the town of Leicester considerably with milk?—Yes; I keep a breeding stock, and I sell my milk at the town of Leicester.

Would you have had such a demand for milk had you not been so near the town of Leicester?—Certainly not.

Therefore that is an advantage which ordinary farmers have not?—It is.

Do you think the late extraordinary fine seasons for clay land have tended to improve the condition of the land?—I think they have, but the mere clay-land farmers had got to a very low ebb.

Would a clay-land farm generally produce more than 20 bushels an acre without draining?—Certainly not, because it depends almost entirely on the seasons without draining.

Do you think the prosperity of the clay-land farmer has arisen mainly from a succession of extraordinary seasons?—It has.

Was not his condition 2 years ago, one of a state of suffering not only from a fall of prices, but from three or four very wet seasons?—Most certainly it was.

Did not those wet seasons produce a great pestilence among the sheep flocks?—Yes, in my neighbourhood; but from having drained my land I only lost one, and mine was as rotten a farm as any in the county of Leicester.

Speaking of the farmers generally in the county of Leicester, did they lose very considerably?—Yes.

Do you think the rot in sheep tended to increase the price of sheep?—Very much.

Do you think that those parties who did not lose their sheep would have been benefited by the rise that took place?—Yes, I benefited myself.

Do you think that loss has been supplied?—I think at present, with the present crop of lambs, the country is as full of sheep as I ever knew it. I think it has just now regained the point.

Can you speak of the crop of lambs in any other district than your own?—I cannot this year; I have no doubt there has been a great loss in many parts of the country.

Evidence of Mr. John Hancock.

State of Agriculture worse than in 1833—Flax grown instead of Wheat during the last three years—Suited only to best Soils—Chief Remedy for Farmers lies between Landlord and Tenant—But Farmers on their own Land badly off—Malt tax might be taken off—Other Taxes unimportant—Irish produce has kept down prices in England—Clover Seed—A great Disadvantage to take off Foreign Duty—Low Price of Corn occasioned by increased Consumption of Potatoes.

Mr. Sanford.] You were examined before the Committee in 1833 were not you ?—I was.

Are you still in the occupation of the same land you were at that time ?—Yes.

Have you any observations to make with regard to the state of agriculture in the neighbourhood with which you are acquainted which you would wish to add to the evidence which you gave in 1833?—Yes, certainly it is worse than it was. Wheat has gone down from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* a bushel.

In consequence of the low price of wheat has there been much less land sown to wheat the last year ?—I should think much less, one-fourth, and from that to one-fifth.

What have the farmers done with that land which ought to have been sown with wheat in the regular course ?—In consequence of the failure of turnips they were obliged to let the leyland remain in grass a year longer, and more is sown to barley and flax.

Has there been any new crop introduced into the country to supply the place of the wheat crop?—The last three years flax has increased very much in our neighbourhood, where the land is good and calculated for flax.

Do you think that a beneficial crop to a farmer ?—He can sow few acres a year; I do not think a farmer on 100 acres of mixed land can sow more than from six to eight acres out of 60 of arable, to do himself much good, for the flax must be sown on the best of the land, and it must be clean and put in a very good state as to manure, or the crop is not certain.

It is not a crop which can be adopted on the poor land ?—No, it must be the very best of the arable land.

Can it be adopted on the heavy clay lands ?—Not so much to advantage ; there is some of the heavy land will do very well when it is in a good state, and in a good season ; but the best loam soils and sands are best adapted for the growth of flax.

To what extent do you apply those observations, in point of district?—I should think from Wellington, or in fact all the way from Tiverton up to the end of our county, close to Yeovil and Sherborne.

An extent of 40 or 50 miles ?—Yes, the growth of flax has increased ; it had almost got out of use, from the very low price, when corn came down so low it induced persons to grow more flax ; the price of flax increased the last two or three years.

What is the general character of the soil of that county ?—The

general character of the soil of that county is rich sand, stone, brush, and loamy soils; they sow turnips and wheat after flax, and wheat is generally prosperous after that crop; and turnips after flax is generally very good, where it is not too heavy a soil.

The persons occupying that land you consider to be in a worse state than they were in 1833?—Certainly.

Can you suggest to the Committee any remedies which you think would give them relief?—I do not know that I can; the principal remedies, I think, must be between landlord and tenant, in a great measure. I do not think we can be benefited much, as to taxes, unless the malt tax were taxen off, that would ease our farmers and cause them to grow much more barley; ours being a county for sheep, I think it would benefit the farmers a great deal, and would cause a great consumption of barley.

You are unable to suggest any remedy that could give relief, except a remedy between landlord and tenant?—Yes, I think the Irish produce has kept down for the last two or three years our produce rather lower; but I think that if Ireland is to be considered as an integral part of our country, the same as Devonshire to Somerset, or Somerset to Dorset, they ought to bear the same burthens as we do with regard to poor rates and taxes, and every thing of that kind.

Mr. Heathcote.] Are there many small proprietors in your part of the country?—Yes, there are.

Then a reduction of rent would be no advantage to those that cultivate their own ground?—No, not to persons on their own estates.

What is the condition of those small proprietors?—They can just move along.

Are many estates mortgaged?—Yes, a great many of them, no doubt.

They find great difficulty in paying the interest of the mortgage with the falling price of corn?—Yes, and many elder branches of families have had the estate given them, subject to annuities.

Is there any idea in that part of the country that the price of bread is too high for the price of corn?—I think that the baker has nearly the same profit on baking a sack of flour at this time as he had when the price of corn was much higher.

Are you to be understood to say that the county rate is £30, on a rental of £2,000?—Yes, from £1,800. to £2,000; the county rate is about £30.

Have you ever turned your attention to the means of relieving the farmer?—I think that the principal relief must be between the landlord and the tenant, and what can be saved from the poor rates; what little taxes we pay do not affect us much, for on farm houses and windows, and on the riding horse it is very small.

Do you save any clover seed in Somersetshire?—We do a great deal after the first mowing the after-grass seed.

Are you aware that it has been proposed to take off the protecting duty of £1. a cwt. on clover-seed; do you think that would be an advantage or a great disadvantage to the farmer?—A great disadvantage.

You are aware that those who buy their seed would gain an advantage?—Perhaps they would.

You think, that though a great advantage in some cases, it would be a great local injury?—Yes, it would to our county and some part of Devon. We generally sow clover seed after the first sowing, notwithstanding the seasons have been so favourable the last two or three years, the clover seed generally has been a very bad crop, although the appearance of it was very good. There is a small fly, that lays its eggs when the seed is in a glutinous state, and the insect destroys the seed; I recollect the last season it had every appearance of a good crop, but I cut it for hay, and put some salt with it, about a quarter of a hundred to every load of hay; two or three days afterwards this clover hay began to ferment, and that brought out these insects innumerable, it was very near the barn door, and the barn door and lintels were covered with the insects.

You think that the growing of clover seed, though an advantage to the agriculturist, in your part of the country, is attended with uncertainty?—It is attended with uncertainty in some seasons, but we have generally, in two or three years, a good crop.

Mr. Sanford.] Is not there a prejudice in that part of the country that frequently clover seed imported fails?—Yes; the seed by not being kept well will not succeed. The turnip seed and flax seed, and all sorts of grass seed should undergo a certain heat in some kiln or in the sun; if kept over a year it will vegetate in part, and it will not grow well. We sometimes get some of that mixed up by the factors with the other bright seed, and sent down to the country, and a great part will not grow.

Contrary to the usual experience of farmers that the foreign is better, the farmers in that part of the country prefer their home grown?—Yes; sometimes they will buy a few pounds for change of seed.

Chairman.] Taking off the duty on clover seed would not check the price of English clover seed, would it?—I should think it would.

Mr. Cayley.] What has the low price of wheat come from?—From the number of potatoes in a great measure among the lower classes, which they prefer eating to bread, and I believe the higher classes too get fried potatoes for breakfast, and many prefer them to bread.

When did this change in taste begin?—More so from 1829 to 1830.

Was there any fall in the price before 1830?—Yes; we had a fall in the price in 1822.

Did they not eat potatoes formerly?—Yes; they have been

grown to a considerable extent for the last 30 years, but I think they have been increasing much of late; and since the allotment system came in, the poor people grow much more than they did before, and many small farmers let out potato ground, to make up their rental; they can make more by that than by any thing else.

Evidence of Mr. Samuel Goodman.

Reduction of Poor Rates—Poor Law Act advantageous—County Rate presses heavily on Agriculturists—Little improvement on Farms of late years—Draining—Manuring useless without Draining, but tells immediately after: it has saved Witness from Ruin—No Mode of Culture will pay at present Prices—Wheat should be 60s. per Quarter—The Legislature could give no Relief but by equalizing Poor Rate, Highway Rate, and County Rate—Repeal of Malt Tax not needed—Commutation of Tithes desirable—Cultivation of Flax: it is a Crop that might be profitably introduced.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Hurstpier Point, in the county of Sussex.

Do you occupy a large tract of land there?—Between seven and eight hundred acres.

What is the nature of the soil upon that farm?—Principally wet, stiff, cold clays.

Have you drained lately?—I have under-drained nearly every acre.

Has there been any reduction of the expenditure upon your farm the last few years?—As to poor rates a very considerable reduction.

Is your parish situated in any of the poor law unions?—It is.

What is the name of that union?—The Cuckfield Union.

What has been the reduction of the rate in that parish?—When I first took the farm I had as many as five 10*s.* rates in the year; and about six years ago I was appointed churchwarden of the parish, I then paid strict attention to the mode of relieving the men; I never gave them any money, but found them work, and in under-draining the lands I generally found in the winter a very great portion of work for the labourers then out of employment.

Then you had improved the condition of the poor in your parish before the New Poor Law was introduced?—Considerably.

Has there been a considerable reduction of the poor rates since the introduction of that measure?—I think this last year we have saved about a six and six-penny rate in the parish.

Will you state what was the gross amount that you paid for the relief of the poor in 1834, and what you paid in the last year?—I cannot charge my memory, but the reduction has been considerable; I can state the money that I saved last year, since the introduction of the New Poor Law Bill, I think about £40. for my share of the poor rates.

Is the county rate taken out of the poor rate?—The county rates, I think, press excessively heavy upon the agriculturists from the same cause, because the house property is not rated for it.

Is there any land unoccupied in that part of Sussex?—Not an acre.

Have you observed much improvement going on upon the farms of late years?—Very little.

What sort of draining is it that you have followed upon your farm?—My under-draining has consisted either of chalk or of bushes, for I had done the principal part of it before the duty was taken off tiles.

Is it across the ridges or in the furrows?—Across the ridges.

You have never tried making the drains up the furrows?—No; I have tried mole ploughing, and I think that will last about twenty years.

What does it cost you per acre?—It depends upon the demand for labour; it varies from 2*l.* to 3*l.* and 4*l.*; perhaps the average about 2*l.* 15*s.* an acre.

That you have done without any allowance from the landlord?—I have.

You never made use of any thing but chalk?—Chalk and bushes; and in meadows I have turned the turf, and I think that that is the best plan.

Have your meadows been improved equally by draining as the other fields?—The meadows have improved more than the other. I think it is of no use manuring land without you under-drain.

Chairman.] Does not a better description of grass come upon those meadows that have been drained?—Considerably.

More nutrition?—Decidedly, and a heavier weight of hay after it is got into the stack; you find the trusses much smaller, but though they do not appear so much in the rick they are much heavier.

Mr. Loch.] What is the difference in the expense of the two modes of draining you have pursued?—Between the turf and the chalk the only difference is the expense of the carriage of the material, and the thickness in which you are obliged to put the drains, in some lands you are obliged to go much thicker than others.

How close do you make your drains in a stiff clay?—If I do it with a mole plough, I put them about seven or eight feet apart; and if I under-drain, and fill them up with chalk, perhaps they are double that distance.

When you drain with a mole plough, you go up the furrows?—Yes, or else across the field, it depends upon where the springs are.

What do you do with the ditches, do you scour them in the first instance?—If I take a farm out of condition, I begin with scouring the ditches, and after that I begin to drain, and then to manure.

What is the depth of your drains?—From 18 inches to 2 feet.

Do you purchase manure or produce it upon your farm?—I have paid as much as 700*l.* in one year for manure since I have been a farmer.

Is that stable-yard manure?—All stable-yard manure.

Mr. Evans.] Do not you find that the land is much improved by draining, and that you can pay rent with greater facility?—Yes; but it takes some time to return the money.

Chairman.] Is yours stiff soil?—We have some stiff, but principally sandy and loamy, and what we call stone rush.

Has the land you speak of been drained with tiles?—No; sand and other stone; we break them into small pieces of about four inches diameter, and stone it about 20 inches deep.

Is the object of those drains to take off the springs?—Yes; our land is very undulating, we are subject to springs more than almost any other county; they are not to be found in midland counties; we get more overshot mills from water than in any other parts.

When the springs are cut off, does not the land improve?—Yes, almost immediately, but still it will take a considerable time for the return of the expense. I think it costs us about 3*s.* for 20 feet in length, for digging, carriage, and laying in the stones.

When land has been drained, all the manure you put upon it tells for as much more?—Yes, that would tell almost immediately. I think I have drained as much land as any tenant farmer in the county of Somerset. I do not think I have laid out less, within the last 25 or 30 years, than 2,000*l.* in draining.

Did you find that outlay advantageous to you?—I think that outlay saved me from ultimate ruin as a farmer, because till I laid out that money that land produced me nothing; and now I have got it into that cultivation, that though I pay 28*s.* an acre for it, I think it may save me from losing a great deal by it.

After land has been drained in the manner in which your farm has been drained, if it has been let at a fair rent, do you consider that a farmer occupying such land is able to go on under the present prices?—With the present prices, when we have been selling wheat at 8*l.* to 9*l.* a load, it is impossible that any mode of culture could enable a farmer to live at those prices.

What should be the average price to enable a farmer to live upon such land as you occupy?—I think with an average price of 13*l.* to 15*l.* a load, there is a possibility of farmers living.

That is about 60*s.* a quarter?—Fifteen pounds is about 60*s.* a qr.

Do you think it is in the power of the legislature to give any measure of relief to the farmer?—I do not think there is any legislative enactment that could benefit the agricultural interest particularly; but I think there are measures that might be introduced that would benefit them; those that I have before stated, by a proper equalization of taxation as to the burthens that come upon the agriculturists, which I conceive they have no right to bear over and above the shopkeepers. There are many shopkeepers living in the country who perhaps pay 20*l.* or 30*l.* a-year for their house, and their returns in business will be 3,000*l.* or 4,000*l.*, and they pay to the support of the poor and to county rates and high-

way rates about 20*s.* a-year; and there is a farmer in the parish turning about 2,000*l.* a-year, that pays 150*l.* or 200*l.* a-year. I think that is one of the principal causes of the farmer's heavy burthens, they bearing nearly the whole of the statute duty and county rates.

Mr. Sanford.] Is there any government tax, by taking off which, you think the farmer might be relieved?—I am not a grower of barley, but I think it is the general opinion of the agriculturists that grow barley, that if there was a remission of the malt tax they would be benefited; but I do not think that would benefit them; I do not think it would be any thing into their pocket; it would take a great deal from the revenue, but I observe from common observation, riding through the country every day 80 miles, that the men are generally very jolly; that they have quite as much beer as they know what to do with; and if they had it much cheaper I think we should find a difficulty in keeping them to work at all.

Are you desirous of having a commutation of tithes?—Certainly; I think that would do away with a great deal of unpleasant feeling, and the land would be farmed much better, and we should go on with a better heart in the management and improvement of the farm.

Mr. Sanford.] The growth of flax produces a vast quantity of labour for poor people, does it not?—A great deal of labour.

A large quantity of labour in proportion for the agricultural population than any other crop which is grown?—Yes, considerably so.

What is the profit made by the farmer on an average crop of flax?—About 3*l.* if they get a good crop.

How much is expended per acre in labour?—I think on an acre of flax it will cost about 11*l.* the labour, the seed, the rent and so on; the labour itself will come to about 6*l.*

How many pack an acre can you grow?—A pack is 240 pounds, generally they tie it up in dozen pounds, and twenty dozen is a pack; if we get about two packs an acre, we consider that a good crop. I think it could not be taken at more than five and thirty dozen an acre.

What will be a remunerating price per pack to the farmer?—They will grow it at the present price, being from 6*l.* to 6*l.* 10*s.* per pack, 6*l.* 15*s.* some have fetched; there are various qualities, take the average from six guineas to 6*l.* 10*s.*

What rent would that allow the farmer to pay?—That would allow the farmer to pay about 40*s.* an acre for the best land, then there is manure and other things; the manure of the land would cost the farmer from 3*l.* to 4*l.* an acre, the rest would be in labour.

At what period of the year is that labour?—In the winter months; we find it very convenient when we have a few acres of

flax, in the depth of winter we can put about half a dozen in the flax shop, and take them out on a few hours' notice to do other work if required.

Mr. Evans.] Is not that one of the most scourging crops you have?—No; I am of opinion that no landowner should suffer a tenant to grow on about 60 acres of arable land more than 6 to 8 acres in a season, for the land ought to be in a good state of cultivation.

A good crop of flax leaves the ground very clean?—Yes, the dropping of the leaves of the flax on land; and it does not impoverish the land so much as potatoes nor mangle wurzel either, for that kind of root creates a great deal of manure.

Mr. Sanford.] You think, from your experience as an old flax-grower, that it is a crop that might be very profitably introduced generally throughout the good lands of England?—Yes; a fair profit for the quantity that can be sown, particularly in the county of Somerset. I know in the county from Yeovil down to Crewkerne, Chard, and Ilminster, and even to Wellington, flax has been grown ever since I can recollect, to advantage.

Speaking from experience, has the growth of flax increased or diminished of late years?—It has increased the last three years; but I think when the price of corn was higher flax got down, about six or eight years since, to 4*l.* a pack; I sold some flax of my brother-in-law, grown six or seven years, in the year 1831, for about 4*l.*

Evidence of Mr. Robert Hatch Stares.

Farmers decidedly worse off now than in 1833, owing to the low Prices—Wheat should be 60*s.* or 64*s.* per Quarter—Only Improvement in Cultivation, artificial Manure and Introduction of Green Crops—Not difficult to procure Tenants—Only large Capitalists use Bone Manure—A Man with no Capital is ruined—No Draining—A Farmer of known Capital has no difficulty in getting Credit—Tithes, Poor Rates, and Price of Labour should be reduced, and Malt Tax repealed—Would rather Malt Tax were repealed, even if Duty on Barley were repealed also—A Farmer should make 15 per Cent. on his Capital—Clover Seed: English preferred.

Chairman.] You reside at Droxford, in Hampshire, do you not?—I do.

Do you hold a large quantity of land in your own hands?—Twelve hundred acres.

Is that your own property?—About 500 acres is my own.

Are you acquainted with the condition of the farmers of a considerable district of Hampshire?—Yes, I value the land occasionally, therefore I have an opportunity of knowing the situation of many of them in our own county.

Comparing their condition at the present time with their condition in 1833, is it better or worse?—Decidedly worse.

To what do you attribute that?—Low prices.

What would be the remunerating price of wheat?—I think not less than 60*s.* to 64*s.* for a man to make interest of his money.

Mr. Sanford.] Can you suggest any means by which the price of 64*s.* could be obtained?—I cannot undertake to do that.

Has there been much improvement in draining in your country?—We have very little land of that description to require draining.

The only improvement made is the use of artificial manure?—And a different system of crops, by the introduction of green crops.

The system of changing the crop?—Yes.

Are you aware of any lands that have run out of lease in your neighbourhood of late?—There is one just run out in my neighbourhood.

Is there any difficulty in procuring a tenant in case a farm comes out of lease?—No; no difficulty at all, I am sorry to say.

Is that at a diminished rent, or the same rent?—At a somewhat diminished rent.

Are they men of capital?—Some are, and some, I think, are not; it is difficult to speak to that; I have reason to think that some are not men of the capital they ought to be; I think that farmers take a farm they ought to stock with 3,000*l.*, who have not 2,000*l.*

There is no land gone fairly out of cultivation?—A great many farmers are turning their attention to sheep and grass in preference to corn.

Have you in your neighbourhood down lands?—Yes; I have no downs of my own.

Was there much of that down land ploughed up during the war?—Yes, a good deal.

Would not it have been better if that land had never been broken up?—I think the occupiers at the time made money by it; at the present price of things, I think it would be better for the present occupiers if it was now in down.

That species of land has been cultivated to grow white crops?—White and green crops.

If persons attempt to grow wheat on that land, it is not extraordinary that they should lose by it?—It will grow wheat if cultivated on the five course system.

You believe the farmers of down land near to you could do more by cultivating it in severalty than with others?—Yes.

Would you apply bone dust to that?—Yes.

Chairman.] You were speaking of using bone dust for manure, do you think that is the custom generally with the farmers in your neighbourhood?—Not half of them I should think, only the men who have a large capital employed.

Do you think farmers of large capital have been in the habit of employing artificial manure of late years?—Yes.

You think, in respect of cultivation, land has improved rather than otherwise in consequence of that?—Where a man had good capital I think it has improved.

Where a man had little or no capital, what is the consequence?—The farms have become deteriorated, and the farmer ruined.

It is impossible for a man without some other trade to go on?—It is.

Has there been much improvement in draining in your country?—We have very little land of that description to require draining.

Mr. Miles.] You average the growth of wheat at about 20 bushels an acre?—Yes.

Suppose you did not apply bone dust, you could not obtain that produce?—I consider 20 bushels an acre the average growth without bones.

What expense per acre do you go to for bone dust?—About 50*s.* per acre.

Can you suggest any remedy which it is in the power of the Legislature to afford the farmers?—If you alter the currency, prices would rise, but I do not understand the question sufficiently. I know very well years ago when it was 1*l.* notes instead of sovereigns, it was very easy for all the small farmers to go to the bankers and get 20*l.*, 30*l.*, or 40*l.* lent them, when they cannot get it now in sovereigns.

Is there any difficulty in a farmer of known capital getting money now?—I apprehend not, if he has good security to offer.

You cannot get it on personal security unless a man of known character?—I should think not.

Will you answer the question separate and distinct from the currency, can you suggest any other remedy or mode of relief the legislature can apply to the farmers?—Yes, if you can reduce tithes, poor rates, labour (and the total repeal of the malt tax) to what it was from 1780 to 1790, when wheat averaged at 48*s.*; I should prefer that to any alteration of the currency. Although the produce is greater upon a well-cultivated farm than it was 40 years ago, the capital employed is also greater, and the quantity of labour as compared with 1790 is 20 per cent. more. When I look round, and find by my own accounts that the labour, the tithes, the poors' rates, and various other charges, are so great, with the price of wheat at 40*s.* a quarter, and barley at 34*s.*, we see that we have now greater burthens in proportion to those we had in 1792.

If rents were reduced to the rents of 1792, should you be in the same situation?—No, I am paying now near three times the amount of tithe and poor rates, &c., that was paid by my father.

Supposing every thing reduced, there is no other remedy you can suggest but the alteration of the currency?—Or the reduction of expenditure.

Mr. Sanford.] Would a reduction of any government tax relieve you?—I am not aware of any reduction that the government can make, except the malt tax; I believe the farmers pay no window tax, and I think they have a riding horse free.

Chairman.] Suppose the malt tax to be repealed with a property tax substituted, should you prefer that?—I think a tenant farmer would be better off. I do not think I should as an owner and occupier, but I would rather have the malt tax off, and a tax on property put on.

Suppose the duty on foreign barley was repealed at the same time that the malt tax was repealed, do you think that the farmer would gain much by the reduction?—Why should the duty be taken off barley any more than from wheat? I would rather have no malt duty, and abolish the tax on barley, than have it as it is now.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Is there any tax so annoying as the malt tax, either in ratio of tax or the amount levied under it?—I am not aware of anything equal to it; it would be a great stimulus to a labouring man to have the means of brewing, and I have no doubt he would soon find the means to brew if he could get the malt free of duty.

Have you made any calculation what difference per acre it would make if the malt tax were taken off?—I have put it in this way, supposing a farm to produce 200 quarters a year, the first saving would be 12*l.* or 14*l.* a year upon the quantity the farmer brewed; then I calculate putting on 4*s.* on the barley he sold, making together from 40*l.* to 50*l.* a year difference upon a farm growing 200 quarters of barley.

Do you think that would increase the cultivation of malt?—I think it will be increased.

Mr. Miles.] Your general account for the last three years, taking every thing into calculation is, that you have got by your flock, but that you have lost by the wheat, has your profit by your flock made up for the loss?—No, notwithstanding the flock has paid, the price of wheat being so low does not make up the difference, it is not a remuneration.

What do you consider a fair profit upon a farm?—I think a man ought not to have less than 15 per cent. for his capital employed.

Mr. Heathcote.] Have you any agreement as to the rotation of crops?—I am not particularly bound as to the rotation, except that I shall not take more than two white crops following.

How much clover seed do you sow to an acre?—Twelve pounds.

Would you like to have your clover seed cheaper?—It would make a very little difference.

Would you like the duty on clover seed to be reduced?—It would be injurious in counties where it is grown to a great extent.

Mr. Sanford.] Do you prefer the foreign clover seed to the English?—No, I do not; some farmers do.

As an annual purchaser, do you generally select that grown in England?—Yes, generally.

Mr. Miles.] Do you not find it useful to change your seed?—Yes.

All your land is not of the same description?—No, not quite all.

Evidence of Christopher Comyns Parker, Esq.

Manages 20,000 Acres of Land in Essex—Condition of Farmers very bad—Many Improvements in Land of late Years—Poor Law very beneficial—The Legislature could benefit the Farmer only by not interfering with the Corn Laws—Present Corn Laws as good as they can be for the Farmer—Duty might have been a shilling higher at starting—A fixed Duty could not give equal Protection—Farmers' Accounts would bear a more satisfactory Inspection now than in 1821—Not so rich as a Body—Have parted with their Capital to their Landlords—Burthens on Land should be more equally divided—No Reason to expect that Prices will be higher—Rot among Sheep probably one of the Causes of the Price of Wool—Change of Tenantry is owing to insufficient Capital, or want of Knowledge, or imprudent Habits.

Chairman] Where do you reside?—At Woodham Mortimer, in Essex.

Do you farm largely in that county?—Rather more than two thousand acres.

In what part of Essex is that?—It is what is called Dengy Hundred; the eastern part; part on the upland and part marsh.

Are you acquainted with any other land in the county of Essex?—A great part of it.

You have the management of some property?—I have.

What is the extent of the property of which you have the management?—Nearly or quite 20,000 acres.

What is the nature of the soil on your farm?—It varies; some turnip land, other very heavy land, heavy loam and other marsh soil, alluvial soil.

What do you calculate the acreable produce of wheat upon your heavy land?—It depends so much upon seasons; land in a good state of cultivation averages from 24 to 30 bushels.

How often is that land cropped with wheat?—Some of our best lands are farmed on the six course husbandry, and others on the four course; the four course once in four years, and the six course twice in six years.

Do you confine the six course husbandry to the heavy land?—No; six course husbandry is more suited to a mixed friable soil; the very heavy land, I think, ought not to be farmed with the six course.

Will you describe the course of husbandry on your heavy land?—First, fallow; second year, oats or barley; then one-eighth clover and one-eighth beans, peas, or tares; last year of the course, wheat.

Upon that part of your farm have you gained or lost within the

last three years?—Within the last three years I should think rather gained than lost.

You say upon the mixed land you adopt the six course system, will you state what that course is?—Beginning with fallow, oats, or barley, clover or grasses, then wheat, then peas, beans, tares or mangel wurzel; as a last crop, wheat or barley, according to the condition of the land.

Have you cultivated that portion of your farm to a profit the last three years?—I should hope a trifling profit, but very little; the prices have been too low to afford much profit the last three years.

You occupy some marsh land?—I do.

Is that marsh land valuable?—Some very good, and some very bad.

Is the land rented, or your own property?—Some of the marsh land is my own property, and some rented.

What is the rent of the marsh land?—Part of my marsh is 30*s.* an acre, and the other 28*s.*; but that at 30*s.* an acre is entirely grass, and the 28*s.* is about 60 acres out of 180 in arable.

Do you consider it of advantage to a farm to have a portion of marsh land attached to it?—Decidedly; it enables you to keep stock, and of course to make more manure during the winter.

What is the condition of the farmers in that part of the county of Essex with which you are so well acquainted?—The condition of the farmers in part of my neighbourhood has been very bad.

Where farms have been re-let to new tenants have those tenants gone on in improvements in draining, and so on?—I have never seen more improvements in draining, liming, and chalking, than within the last three years.

Do you consider that the distressed state of those farmers can be at all attributed to the rents not having been lowered sufficiently in time?—I should say very materially, the landlords not prudently lowering their rents earlier than they have done.

Do you think the total reduction of rent would have been less if the rents had been lowered sooner?—I know farms that men of capital were occupying that were 25*s.* and 30*s.* an acre, and they offered a pound, and they have since been let for 12*s.* to 14*s.* and 15*s.* an acre, and I believe that had they been reduced to 1*l.* at that time, those tenants would now have been in possession of them, and they would never have been impoverished in their cultivation.

And the farms would have been in a better condition?—Yes; it has been by persisting in the high rents that the farms have been worked out of condition, and then no person would take them except at a very low rent.

There is likewise greater skill in husbandry?—There is certainly better knowledge of how to produce good crops than in 1797.

Then where the tenants are farming with capital, you consider that they are in a better condition than they were?—I should rather say that they are farming in hopes of being in a better condition.

Are the poor rates heavy in your part of Essex?—Not very.

Has the Poor Law Amendment Bill come into operation there?—It has, and very beneficially.

Has there been a considerable reduction of the rates in consequence?—We have not yet been long enough at work to create a considerable reduction of rates by the effect of the new Poor Law Bill, but the poor rates have been decreasing by the better management of the farmers the last three or four years.

What has been the effect upon the character of the labourers by the introduction of this new system of poor laws?—I can hardly give a decided opinion upon that point, it has been so short a time in operation; but an increased attention to oblige their masters is now visible.

Is the condition of the labourers in that part of Essex good or bad?—I think good, being able generally to find employment at fair wages.

Are there many persons out of employment?—I am not aware of any out of employment now.

You have no railroad at present constructing in that part?—We have an extra demand for labour to take our hands: they are nearly all employed in agricultural labour.

Is the corn thrashed by machinery or by manual labour?—Some use machinery, but not so much as they did a few years back.

Can you suggest any measure of relief to the farmers, which it is in the power of the Legislature to afford them?—I am not aware of any legislative interference that could benefit the farmer, unless they can lower the expenses upon a farm, and by not interfering or tampering with the corn laws, give confidence.

Then it is your opinion that the farmer has more to expect from his landlord, and from having a confidence in the steadiness of prices, than he has from any interference of the Legislature?—I think that the tenant must look to the contract between himself and his landlord, with a confidence in the corn laws; without that confidence, there is no speculation with those who are purchasers of corn, nor can farmers hold with any safety.

When you speak of confidence in the corn laws, do you mean confidence in having protection against foreign competition, or confidence in the present system of Corn Laws?—Confidence in having a sufficient protection against foreign competition. I consider the present corn laws as good as they can be for the English farmer; they prevent our having a supply when we do not want it, and when we do want it we do not object to other persons having corn at a moderate price.

Do not you think that they hold out hopes of a continuance of a higher rate of price than can ever be realized?—The corn laws have been in operation but a few years, they commenced with large foreign supplies; we have been only put on our own growth the last four years, I do not think if the present laws continue that we should be often interfered with by foreign supply.

In those years in which we were dependent upon foreign supply, do not you consider that a greater quantity of corn was introduced for home consumption, in consequence of the low rate of duty, than was necessary?—I consider the very low price of corn to have been occasioned by the foreign supply during the deficient years, by which the granaries were all filled, which, with the good crops of wheat for the last four years, have caused the supply to exceed the demand.

Do not these corn laws hold out a temptation to the merchant to throw in large supplies when he has an opportunity of doing so at a mere nominal duty?—Had the duty been higher at the starting price than it is at a shilling, it certainly would be a better protection.

Do you think it would be possible to afford an equal protection to the farmers by a fixed duty?—I think there is no fixed duty, but such as the country would not be satisfied with, that could protect the English grower.

Mr. Cayley.] What should you say as to the condition of the farmers now and in 1821, or the period immediately after the passing of Mr. Peel's bill?—I think the accounts of the farmers would bear a more satisfactory inspection now than they would have done in 1821.

Take the whole of the farmers in the county of Essex, do you think they are possessed of as much capital now as they were in 1821?—Certainly not.

Then they have been labouring now for 15 years, and have expended a great deal of industry and skill and capital, with no return at all, as a body?—They have been parting with their capital a great many of them to their landlords, and to other persons, whose charges upon them were excessively high.

Before 1819, and so far back as you can remember, were the landlords so very hard-hearted a body as to rob their tenants of their capital?—I would not use the expression of hard-hearted; they had not a correct knowledge of the value of their property, and they did not seem to understand, that if every article the farm produced sold for less money, that the farm would yield a less rent.

How many years have you been a farmer?—Forty.

In your early days was farming an uncertain trade?—It has been uncertain during the 40 years I have been in it.

You say that the burthens and expenses of the land have not been much diminished, in proportion to the fall of prices?—Certainly not.

Can you contemplate any legislative act which shall reduce the burthens upon land?—More equally dividing some of those burthens between persons possessed of other property besides that of land.

Mr. Heathcote.] Do you think, speaking of Scotland, wheat would be grown generally at the price of 50*s.* a quarter, except upon the very fine soils?—No, upon the wheat soils only.

When you speak of wheat soils, do you confine that to land of superior quality?—Yes.

Sir James Graham.] Is not red wheat now grown in Scotland, where oats, 20 years ago, were grown with difficulty?—Yes, if the land is well prepared.

And at not much greater cost if it has been made dry?—That sort of land has generally been well dried.

The first cost of draining being incurred, the cost of growing red wheat is not greater than the cost of growing oats used to be?—No; if potatoes is taken instead of the fallow.

Do you think the proprietors of estates in Scotland would continue to go on investing capital in the same way should they have reason to think that such would be the state of things hereafter?—I do not see any great reason to expect the prices to be much higher than what they are now.

Mr. Cayley.] Speaking of the period for three or four years before the last two years, the prices of sheep and cattle were higher immediately before that, were they not?—Sheep were dearer after the loss from the rot; in some of those years they were higher, and in others lower.

Was the rot very extensive in your district?—Not at all in our district.

Was it upon your own farm?—Not at all.

Were you aware of very extensive losses in other districts?—We heard of them, and were aware of it by the extra price in the purchase of lean stock.

Did not this cause a rise in the price of wool?—I have understood the increased price of wool to be attributed to the loss of sheep by the rot, and I conceive it is very probable that it was one of the causes.

What other causes were there?—The other cause was an active trade among the manufacturers creating a demand beyond the supply.

You have spoken of a great change of tenantry; were the men that were swept away from their farms men of prudent habits, and good character?—Many men of prudent habits, but I should think without sufficient capital for the farms in which they were engaged.

Can you state as a fact, that the greater part of those tenantry that have been swept away were persons that farmed with insufficient capital?—I think the greater part of the persons that were swept away have either been men that entered upon it with an insufficient capital, or with want of knowledge, or were living in a way that they were not justified in doing, had they been landlords with full capital instead of tenants.

Do you think that none of them were farmers that had succeeded their fathers upon their farms, and who have been swept away by the fall in prices?—The men who succeeded their fathers, and who are prudent men, I now see in occupation of their farms, and I hope with prospects of doing well.

Were the farmers of your county of old times in your early days men of great capital?—Much better capital than at present.

In times before the war?—Taking them in the aggregate, I should think men of better capital before the war than previously to the depression of prices.

Is that in consequence of the farmers having lost their money owing to the depression of prices?—The very high prices of corn caused many persons to take farms without anything like sufficient capital for the management of them, hoping, that if they could survive one or two harvests, the produce of their farms would give them capital.

Was not the other statement of the case equally true, that men of large capital were induced to go into farming under the expectation of making a profit, and instead of that they lost their capital?—If they went into farming without a knowledge of the business they generally lost money.

Evidence of Mr. William Cox.

For the last three Years has not been farming to a Profit—Owing to low Prices—A great many Farmers have failed, and half the rest are Insolvent—Labourers well off—Poor Law Bill advantageous.—A great many Persons formerly adverse to it are now friendly—Tenants have not always been found for unoccupied Farms—Two Farms specified—How they are cultivated.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Scotsgrove, in Buckinghamshire.

Are you a farmer?—Yes; and appraiser of farming-stock, and a land-valuer.

What is the extent of your farm?—I farm 1,800 acres.

What is the quality of the soil?—There are different soils; I have some strong stiff clay, some bad clay, and useful turnip land.

Is the farm which you have which is a stiff clay soil a farm by itself?—Yes.

For the last three years have you been farming that land to a profit?—Decidedly not to a profit.

Has that been owing principally to the low price of wheat?—To the low price of produce altogether; we consider that the standard of prices is too low; we are making a good price of beans now, from an accidental circumstance, the failure of the turnip crop.

What is the extent of the stiff-clay farm?—I have but 400 acres of arable land; I have 1,400 acres of grass land, and the wheat on the land is about a third of that.

What is the rotation of crops upon that farm?—My rotation is different from the custom of the country. The custom of the country is, for that description of land, first, fallow, then wheat, then beans, and then oats; the four-course system. I have adopted a different system. I take a green crop upon the fallows, feed off with sheep, and I have two crops of corn.

What is the acreable produce of that land?—It averages about

thirty bushels of wheat, and four and a half quarters of beans, and five quarters of oats.

Is there a great deal of land of that quality in your neighbourhood?—Yes.

Are the farmers doing well or ill that occupy land of that description?—A great part have failed: and more than half the rest, if they were to reckon, would be insolvent.

Chairman.] What is the condition of the labourers in your neighbourhood?—The labourers are not well off in Buckinghamshire.

Are there many out of employment?—We have not so many out of employment as we had; there are very few out of employment now, in consequence of the railroads and other public works.

Has the new poor law come into operation in your neighbourhood?—Yes.

Is your parish included in any union?—Yes.

How long has it been so?—Since Midsummer.

Has that had an advantageous effect upon the conduct of the labourers?—To a certain extent it has benefited the rate-payer. I think it has worked well with the idle and the profligate.

The farmer now expects to get, and does get, a fair day's work from the labourer for the wages he gives him?—Yes.

Which he did not do before the new poor law came into operation?—No.

Sir Robert Price.] In your part of the country you were not very favourably disposed to the poor law?—I was not.

Nevertheless you think it has done some good?—I think it has worked well where there has been sympathy manifested by the guardians and by the employers. I know many parishes, where, indiscriminately, they pay the man without a family, and the man with a family, the same wages; and I do the same, but I give all the men that have large families the best task-work, so that by working more hours in the day they can earn a little more money.

You are now of opinion that it is likely to lower the rates, and to have a good moral effect upon the lazy and indolent?—It will work well where there is a little sympathy manifested.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Do not you think that now there is every disposition to give aid to the new Poor-law Bill, provided it is not pressed forward with precipitate haste?—I think there are many persons that were averse to it are now friendly to it. I think, that generally speaking, it is a favourite arrangement.

Chairman.] Have new tenants been found for unoccupied farms?—For some of them there have, and some of them are in the landlords' hands; a nobleman has two on hand near Aylesbury.

Were those farms exhausted by the tenants before they left them?—One of those alluded to had as good a tenant upon it as any in the country.

Have those farms been offered to be let at a reduced rent?—I cannot say; but I know the landlord would not occupy that description of land, if he could get good tenants.

Mr. Loch.] Are those farms in a good state of cultivation?—One was in the hands of a very excellent farmer.

In what condition did he leave it?—I think it was left in good condition.

Has there been any draining or other improvement made in the farm?—The proprietor has drained it since he had it on hand.

Was the other farm in good condition?—I think it was.

Mr. Clive.] Were the buildings in good repair?—Yes, they were new.

Adapted for the convenience of the farm in all respects?—Yes.

Mr. Loch.] Then why did the tenants go?—They went because they had lost a good deal of money.

Chairman.] If the rent of those farms had been reduced after the war to a proper level, do you think those farmers would have left those farms?—There is one of them that I would not have without rent at all.

Sir Robert Price.] What was the rent?—I suppose 15*s.* an acre.

Chairman.] Why would you not have it without rent?—Because I should lose money.

Is it an expensive farm to cultivate?—It is an expensive farm.

Are the poor-rates heavy upon that farm?—The poor-rates are heavy; it is not a good parish.

How much an acre?—I suppose this is rated at about 15*s.* an acre, and about 6*s.* in the pound.

Six shillings in the pound upon a three-fourths' valuation?—I do not think it was a three-fourths' valuation; they have had a new rate since, because it was too high, and some of the occupiers were dissatisfied.

What is the acreable produce of that farm?—If it was farmed remarkably well, it might produce 20 bushels of wheat an acre.

Would not it answer to drain that land?—It has been drained.

Mr. Loch.] How deep do they plough?—As deep as the staple will allow them; I suppose the staple is not more than three or four inches.

Chairman.] How often do they grow wheat upon that land?—They have been in the habit of having it every third year.

Is not that a most ruinous system, upon so shallow a soil?—It is a very bad system.

Mr. Clive.] It can never pay its expenses?—Never.

Chairman.] If the land were cropped differently, and had wheat once in six years instead of once in three, and a great portion of it was in clover, would not that be better?—It is not adapted for clover.

Mr. Wodhouse.] Is this wheat and bean land?—It is wheat and oat land of the worst sort.

Evidence of Mr. John Brickwell.

Is acquainted with Buckinghamshire—Farmers there in great Distress—One Farm thrown out of Cultivation—It was let in 1826 and 1827 at 20*s.* an acre—Cannot compete with Wheat from Ireland—With Irish Poor Laws the Country would be better cultivated and the Produce much increased—English Land would then be of little or no Value—Condition of Buckingham Labourers improved by the Poor Law Act—Cultivation has fallen off in that Part of the Country—Land is getting foul and over cropped—Could not reduce Expenses of Cultivation—In Buckingham the lowest price at which Wheat can be grown is 50*s.* per qr.—There has been no Improvement introduced of late Years.

Marquis of Chandos.] Are you well acquainted with the county of Buckingham in which you reside?—Yes.

What is the state of the part of the county in which you reside?—I hear complaints from the farmers whom I meet that they cannot pay their way; that produce is selling so low they are very much distressed: that is the general complaint when I meet them.

Was there not a farm in the neighbourhood of Buckingham which was thrown entirely out of cultivation?—There are two; this was in the parish adjoining that in which I live; one adjoining my own farm let three years ago at 5*s.* an acre, and wheat was then 7*s.* per bushel, and now wheat is 4*s.* 6*d.*, that farm can be of course worth nothing; the persons who see it all refuse it at any rent.

On what ground do they refuse it?—Because the price of produce will not answer.

At what did that farm let several years ago?—At about 20*s.* an acre; it was a poor farm, rather wet clay land.

How many years ago?—I should think about 1826 or 1827; I do not know what the exact rent was; I believe it might have been about 20*s.* an acre, and now it is worth nothing.

Are the Committee to understand that that farm is entirely given up as far as cultivation goes?—No, the owner now cultivates it, but for two years he let it lie waste and did not cultivate it at all. He now occupies it himself, but cannot let it even now; one reason that caused him to take it into his own hands was that there was a dispute about the poor rates: proceedings were taken before the magistrates, and I believe they decided that he ought to pay the poor rates, and in order to make something towards the poor rates, he cultivated it.

Sir Robert Peel.] What is the name of the parish where the farm, which was out of cultivation two years ago, is situate?—Thornborough, three and a half miles from Buckingham.

Are not you under particular disadvantages in respect to fuel in some parts of Buckinghamshire; are not coals very dear?—That cannot be the case with me, for the canal runs through my farm to Buckingham, and goes near this part of Thornborough; the people go down to the canal and fetch their coals up from the boats at 14*d.* a hundred, which is 23*s.* 4*d.* a ton.

In what state are the farm buildings on that farm?—I have not seen that farm very lately, but I believe they are in a ruinous state. I recollect, three years ago, when it was out of cultivation, the poor went and pulled the gates from the farm, and they took several of the doors from the buildings and burned them, and it was in quite a state of waste.

Sir James Graham.] Has the poor's rate increased in this parish in which these farms are situate within the last five years?—They did increase very considerably in that parish, and that was a very burdensome parish, but they are reduced since the new Poor Law Bill came into operation. We commenced the union at Buckingham last September, and as far as we are able to judge from September up to this time, the poor rates are lower, and I have no doubt they will ultimately be lower.

Chairman.] You say that you expect there will be some saving through the operation of the new Poor Law Bill?—Yes.

Has the condition of the labourer been better or worse since the operation of the bill?—I think the labourer is much improved; under the old system the labourer was not so attentive to his duties; I have found they are much more assiduous and attentive, and the condition of the labourer is improved as far as that goes, but I do not think his pecuniary circumstances are better; perhaps he will get better wages when he gets less from the parish.

Did the farm you mentioned pay tithe in kind?—No, it is subject to a corn rent in lieu of tithe.

The tithe is commuted?—It is, and a corn rent established on the enclosure.

Supposing this land, which you say was subject to 12*s.* in the pound poor rates and paid a commutation for tithe, had to compete with land of equal quality which neither paid the tithe nor poor rate, as for instance the land in Ireland, do you think that would be a fair and equal competition?—It would not compete with it at all.

If you meet in the Buckingham market with wheat from Ireland raised on land of that same quality, but which pays neither poor rate nor tithe, you cannot be surprised at the fall of the price of wheat?—No, the Irish produce comes here not subject to those taxes, and of course they can unsell us in our own market and have a profit themselves.

Mr. Young.] Supposing the people of Ireland were able to consume all their own present produce, the state of agriculture would be generally improved?—I should apprehend that prices would be improved.

Then the country would be better cultivated?—I should apprehend that would be the case.

And the produce of the country would be greatly increased?—It would be increased, no doubt; it is capable, no doubt, of great improvement.

Wheat at present is grown in only 15 counties, in Ireland, out of the 32. Witnesses well acquainted with that country say that it might be grown in all the 32, and that the present produce might be doubled; then the English markets would be still more affected than they are?—Then English land would become of little or no value.

Marquis of Chandos.] From the number of years you have been acquainted with the farming interest you have had great experience, and being a practical farmer yourself, you state that considerable distress exists among the farmers; what, in your opinion, would tend to relieve them from the difficulties?—I should suggest one material thing would be to better the condition of the poor in Ireland, to enable them to consume a portion of their own produce instead of sending it over here.

Do you think that the unrestricted use of barley would be of use to the farmer?—The unrestricted use of barley, in my humble opinion, would be of immense advantage to the farmer.

Can you state what would be the benefit in amount per annum to you?—I use about 21 quarters of malt a year; the immediate saving to me would be about 21*l.*, but then I should use double that quantity if I could give that cheap beverage to my labourers.

With regard to the county rates, do you believe that any thing there could be done to relieve the farmer?—If it were to be paid from some other source, of course it would be a great benefit.

Mr. Sanford.] You have said that a modification of the malt tax might be a considerable relief to the arable farmer?—I did not say modification; I mean a total repeal of it, so far as it is consumed by the farmer on his own premises. I think any trifling modification will not be any advantage whatever.

Would the removal of any other Government tax afford any great relief to the farmer?—I do not at present see any immediate direct tax upon the farmer to any great amount that could relieve him very considerably.

Sir James Graham.] Is the outlay of capital on land suspended in the county of Bucks?—I think a great part of the capital has been exhausted by paying the rents; where the tenant could not pay the rent out of produce, he has been curtailing his expense in various ways, in many cases not cultivating the land so well as he used for want of means.

Has there been any outlay on the part of the landlords?—In some instances I am sent for by gentlemen, who have said, if you can do anything to relieve my tenants do it, and I advised him to give an allowance for under-draining, and so on; he has said to me, "Go to such a farm, and see that 20*l.* or 30*l.* is laid out this winter on that farm:" and I have done it with good effect in some instances.

Has no effort been made on the part of the landlord and tenant jointly on the property of the landlord, to meet the fall of price, by draining and farm building?—I have known them if not apply to

the agent to apply to the landlord to ask for half the expense of lime to make more manure, and I have known of cases where the agents have said, "No, if you want it you must apply for it yourself;" and I have known the agent meet them in many instances; but, generally speaking, I do not think there has been much done to meet the tenant in that way, in the part which I know.

Should you say that the cultivation of Buckinghamshire has fallen off within these last eight or ten years?—I should say so in the neighbourhood in which I live.

In what respect?—The land is getting very foul and overcropped; in some places driven further than it should be.

There is very superior grass land in Buckinghamshire, is there not?—Yes; the Vale of Aylesbury has always been considered superior.

Grazing has not been unprofitable the last two years, has it?—I am not a grazier myself, therefore I cannot speak to that; but I do not think it has been a very good trade. Before Christmas last, meat was selling at a very low price, and at a loss to the grazier; but there was one reason perhaps for that, it was a very dry summer, and the cattle did not come fat to market; the farmers were obliged to sell them before they were completely made up, and when Christmas arrived the supply was smaller.

Is land saleable in Buckinghamshire?—There has very little changed hands lately; we do not often hear of land changing hands in our neighbourhood: if it was to be sold, it would be sold at a much lower price than it was some years ago.

At how many years' purchase will land, not accommodation land, but in ordinary situations for investment, sell?—Perhaps on poor soils about 25 years' purchase, unless it was a desirable spot, then at more.

Mr. Loch.] Is it your opinion, that you could not reduce any of the expenses of that land under the plough?—I do not see how; if we were to pay our labourers lower they would be very much distressed: under the new system we pay low rates, but we must pay higher wages.

When a farm is out of occupation, is there any difficulty in getting a tenant?—There has been considerable, if they were poor farms.

Mr. Cayley.] Even land producing thirty bushels of wheat an acre?—It would not on the wheat crop, it might taking in the other crops, but there would be no profit.

If this land, bearing thirty bushels of wheat, would not pay rent, it is a natural deduction that other land of less produce could not pay rent?—Certainly that would be still more deficient, for there would be the expense of cultivation with less produce.

Setting the rent aside, is it your opinion that if it were not for the produce of the cattle or sheep, the farmer could not have made a profit for the last ten years?—Yes.

Do you consider the price of wool at all operated on by the rot

in sheep three or four years ago?—I should think that must be considerably overcome; I have heard there is considerable exportation of wool from the county of Kent to France.

Is there not a rise in bacon this year?—Bacon hogs are about a shilling a score higher than they were a few months ago.

You have stated that the light land does better for cultivation at the present time than the heavy land?—Yes; because two horses will do the work instead of three or four, and you cannot keep a horse for less than 25*l.* a-year.

Do you cultivate the upland soil with bones?—I do not, but I know it is done in the neighbourhood of Buckingham; I know bones are used, and I saw several loads of bones sent from Buckingham to the Duke of Bedford's last year.

Is it a general system of cultivation in the uplands?—No; if it was general I do not think they would get a supply of bones.

How much land is there in the county of Buckingham which would pay the rent at 5*s.* a bushel for wheat?—None; my calculation is, that the lowest price at which wheat can be grown is fifty-six shillings a quarter to pay rent, at forty shillings a quarter, there is no rent without any profit: fifty-six shillings is the lowest price at which it can be grown.

Should you say, taking into consideration the arable district with which you are acquainted, there is more or less wheat grown on an acre than there was twenty years ago?—I should say, generally speaking, the land does not produce quite so much, especially where I live; but others I know have improved their system of farming, and grow more.

What do you call remunerating prices?—I should say the lowest price at which we can grow wheat is 56*s.*, then it ought to be from 56*s.* to 64*s.*; and I hope never to see wheat above 8*s.* a bushel as long as I live.

You think that the labourer would be better off when wheat was 8*s.* a bushel?— Yes.

You would be able to employ more labourers at that price?—Yes.

Has it ever occurred to you how the price could be raised to 8*s.*?—No, unless we grow less, or unless we have more consumers; perhaps the argument may go to the currency, which is a question that I know nothing at all about, and do not profess to understand.

The Chairman.] Do you recollect the price of oats last year?—No; I think about the same as now.

Then the importation of oats from Ireland has not affected oats?—Probably they might have sold better if so many had not come in; the price of peas is 32*s.* 2*d.*

You are satisfied with the price of oats?—From 20*s.* to 24*s.* would be sufficient.

Supposing the price of wheat were to rise in proportion to other corn, do you think the farmers' condition would be satisfactory?—

No, there would be no profit. If wheat got up to 7*s.* a bushel, I should be satisfied; but an advance of 6*d.* or 1*s.* a bushel would not be satisfactory to the farmer, for he would still be subject to a loss.

Unless you plough with two horses instead of four?—I always do that when I can; but with due submission, I think no man can plough my farm with less than four in breaking up. I should be very glad to set my two horses by any two Yorkshire horses, and I think I should be able to compete with them.

Mr. Sanford.] You say you have known the farm you cultivate eight and forty years?—I have cultivated it myself thirty-six. I have known it longer, living with my grandfather.

At that period was the produce of the land equal to what it is now?—Some part of the farm was not in cultivation, but the other that was cultivated was as good as it is now.

Have you introduced any new system of cultivation which has rendered the method of cultivating that land cheaper than it was before?—No, I do not know that we have; that land was always pretty well farmed which was in cultivation; perhaps I grow turnips on parts where there were none grown before.

Which renders it a surer system than the fallow system?—Yes, it assists in the growth of barley.

You state that the rate of wages at that time was about 6*s.* a week, at the present time about 8*s.* a week. Does the rent which is paid at the present time, and that paid at the former period, bear a relative proportion to the wages?—It does upon that particular farm. I cannot answer for other persons' farms.

Evidence of Mr. John Houghton.

Receives Rents for many Gentlemen in several Counties—Rents are much reduced—Distress is very great on clay Lands—It would be a Relief to allow Farmers to use Malt free of Duty—Price of Wool is owing to the late Rot, and Prosperity of Manufactures—Many Farmers were ruined by the Paper Money—They have done better since 1828—A Farmer with good Security can obtain accommodation to any Extent—Light Soil not in as great Distress as heavy—Both improved lately by Draining—Chief Complaint in Price of Wheat—Other Produce tolerable—Improvement in Scotland considerable—Wheat grown on Lands waste but a few Years ago—No permanent Benefit from Alteration in Currency—Mortgage foreclosed in consequence of low Wheat Price.

Marquis of Chandos.] Do you receive rents for many gentlemen?—I do.

In different counties?—Yes.

Name them?—In the counties of Lincoln, Buckingham, Middlesex, Surrey, Berks, Sussex, Northampton, and Suffolk; and value lands also in other counties.

How many years have you been employed in this way?—I commenced farming in the year 1822.

What is the state of the farms on those properties now, as com-

pared with a few years ago?—Rents are much reduced, and particularly in the county of Buckingham. An instance I would prove of a farm, reduced from 1,300*l.* a-year to 870*l.*

Within what period?—From the year 1814 to the present period.

What is the description of that land?—Principally grass of the best description.

It is one of the best grass farms in the county of Buckingham?—Yes.

At how many years' purchase was that farm sold?—At 29; rather over, but under 30 years' purchase.

That is one of the finest farms in the county?—It is.

Have you not arable farms, in the county of Buckingham, over which you are steward?—Yes, I have.

What is their state now compared with the state of the grazing farms to which you allude?—On the heavy clay lands the distress is very great, more than it is on the turnip and barley lands, or grass land.

How do you account for that distress upon the clay lands?—From the low price of wheat.

Do you find that the capital of the farmers has been diminishing?—Certainly, I think the great distress has been on the heavy land farms.

Have the farmers been paying their rents out of their produce, or out of their capital?—If you take the heavy clay land, certainly out of their capital.

Have the goodness to state to the Committee what your opinion is as to the mode of relief which could be brought to bear on the present distress?—The commutation of tithe would be a very great thing; another, to allow us the use of barley for our own use on our farms exclusively.

What besides?—I should also consider that we are entitled to a reduction of the county rates, and also a reduction in the assessed taxes; I apprehend the assessed taxes, in point of amount, are very small; from not knowing the laws, many illiterate farmers get into all sorts of scrapes by using a horse or carrier's cart.

Taking ten or twelve years together, when was it a very prosperous time for farmers?—If there has been benefit any where, there has been none on heavy land.

Is there any land producing 30 bushels an acre?—Yes.

What is the condition of those that farm that land?—They are badly off.

Wool has borne a high price within the last five years?—It has.

To what do you attribute that?—To our manufactures being so prosperous.

Would not you attribute the rise in the wool to the rot in sheep?—Yes, in part: but I also attribute it in part to there being such a good trade for the commodity.

Though the effect of the rot has been got over, the deficiency

caused by the rot has not been supplied, therefore the effect of the rot would still be felt on price?—The effect of the rot would now be got over; and unless the manufacturers were in a very prosperous state we could not keep up the price of wool to what it is now.

You stated, that a great many farmers were ruined in consequence of the paper system?—Yes, a great many in my opinion were ruined who had borrowed money of bankers.

Can you state whether more have been ruined since or before 1825?—I think we have had great ruin since that time; but now we are getting over the effects of returning from a paper currency, and I think it would be better not to go back again.

Do you think the farmers can go on much longer, as things now are?—Not without relief, but that can be given without paper currency: I can point out another plan, by allowing the corn to be distilled for spirits, and the spirits exported; that would be a very great relief for this country, and not any injury whatever to the revenue.

Mr. Sanford.] Are you to be understood to say, that a farmer at the present moment having a good security to offer, can without any difficulty obtain money?—To any amount.

Is the system of corn rents acted on in the counties with which you are acquainted?—We have part in corn rent and part in money payment, but the corn rent I do not consider a good way of adjusting rent myself.

Are you acquainted with what is supposed to have been the origin of corn rents?—We have them in our leases from the earliest ages, but I am not able to speak to the origin of them.

Do you find by means of draining and manuring with bone-dust you can cultivate the soil with a profit?—Wherever the oxide of iron does not predominate I can.

Chairman.] Is it your opinion that the consumption of potatoes by the poor has had any effect upon the price of wheat?—I am quite satisfied it has not, for the price of wheat has been so low it has put it into the power of persons to have that, in fact, as a substitute for other things.

Mr. Sanford.] To what purpose is rye straw applied?—For thatch, for horses' collars, and for brick-makers.

Mr. Cayley.] You think the land is deteriorating in cultivation from the want of sufficient labour upon it?—Yes.

Had the farmers any difficulty in finding security when they were better off?—They would not have so much difficulty as they have now.

To what do you attribute the greater difficulty they now feel in finding security?—Because they as a class of men are not so good to lend money to, as they were formerly; the men to whom I allude are the men on the cold clay lands, they are much distressed.

Supposing the price of produce were to rise, and the farmers to

get a remuneration for their capital, and there was to be a steady state of things for the agricultural interest, do you think that the banker then would be more ready to advance money to the farmer?—My opinion is exactly the same about that, that the prudent bankers would not advance except to those men who they saw would probably pay them again.

Do you conceive persons of good character and good ability as farmers, can obtain money as easily as they used to do?—Quite; I am certain of it; I am speaking of the bankers where I am connected.

Mr. Clive.] Do not you think it would be a better plan for the tenant to come to the landlord?—I think it would, but many landlords who are needy would say they must have the money.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Should you not say that that covenant which forbids the carrying away the hay from the premises is a wise covenant?—I do not; if I see a man who is anxious and striving to get on and improving his farm, and I think it to his benefit to sell hay and straw, all I say is, take care to lay it out in bone-dust or other manure: if he was going to quit the farm I should prohibit his doing it.

Mr. Cayley.] You have spoken of farmers paying their bills less punctually in adverse circumstances; does it come within the scope of your knowledge, that while the farmers are paying their rents punctually to the landlords they are running bills with their tradesmen?—I have known that, because when I have been paying workmen in provincial towns they have said, you have all the money out of the place for rents, and the tenants cannot pay me.

That is a general complaint among the tradesmen?—Generally, I believe.

Mr. Clay.] You have spoken of the change of times for farmers, are they less able to pay rent and less able to pay tradesmen?—Yes; there is not that quantity of improvement carried on, and the farmer has not had so much work done during the depression of agriculture as formerly.

Since what period?—I should say it has never been carried on with so much spirit as since the year 1825, just before the panic, that was when the thing was going on most swimmingly; then farmers were doing well. The panic happened in December, 1825, but then we were selling wheat at the best price, and every thing going on well.

Mr. Cayley.] From time immemorial it has been the custom, even before the war, to grow wheat upon wet heavy land with a profit?—Yes, and that land, owing to the depressed state of agriculture, has been over-cropped and mismanaged, and that has made it much worse.

Mr. Dunlop.] Are you acquainted with the turnip and clover lands?—Yes.

Has the cultivation of that species of land improved within the last 15 years?—Very much.

Is there more wheat grown upon that class of land than there used to be?—Much more.

Do you consider the relative value which used to exist between the light and heavy soils to be altered?—It has been.

In favour of which?—Of the light soils.

Do you consider the light soil now to be in as great distress as the heavy?—Certainly not.

It is your opinion that wheat can be grown in England at a much lower price now than it used to be when it was grown on the heavy soils?—Yes.

Mr. Robert Clive.] Have there been great improvements in Lincolnshire?—Very great, indeed.

Mr. Cayley.] Are you acquainted with the nature of those improvements?—Not particularly.

They have added to the growth of wheat?—Very much on the whole of the lands from Lowth to Barton, where I should say, thirty or forty years ago, wheat was scarcely known, the land was, generally speaking, uncultivated, as far as the best system of farming goes.

Mr. Dunlop.] Are you acquainted with any heavy clay lands which have been drained lately?—Yes, I have drained thousands of chains.

Has not a great improvement taken place upon that land?—It is vastly improved.

Has not a great deal of money been laid out in improving light soils?—Yes; there has been more money laid out on the light lands than the heavy.

Is it your opinion that if the same scale of improvement had been carried forward in the heavy as upon the light lands they would have been more productive?—It is not possible to carry on the same improvements on those as on the light soils, because the sub-soil is tenacious, and we cannot grow turnips upon them; if we could feed sheep, we could improve them.

In your opinion the light soils have come into use, and the heavy soils have been depreciated?—Decidedly.

Sir Robert Peel.] Speaking of the heavy lands, as compared with twenty years since, do you think it will be found that the cultivation is better now than it was twenty years since?—I think that the cultivation of clay lands is nearly stationary; there have been large sums laid out on part in under-draining, while others have gone back from the want of attention, and from the want of capital.

In respect of the light lands, has there been a decided improvement?—I am certain of that.

Within the last twenty years?—Yes.

The productive quality of that land has much increased?—Yes.

There is more wheat grown upon it?—Yes.

Supposing there should not be a corresponding demand for wheat in proportion as that class of land increases, it must make the heavy clay land less profitable?—Yes.

You do not complain of the price of mutton now?—No.

Of wool?—No.

Of barley, you cannot expect much increase in that?—No, not much.

Oats?—Oats we should wish for a little increase.

Beans?—If we had 4*s.* a quarter more, we should not have much fault to find.

The chief complaint is on account of the depression in the price of wheat?—Yes, that is where the farmer is suffering most; that is where he looks for his rent in the spring of the year, when he should have the price of his wheat to raise the money for his rent; when he is looking for a large sum of money to meet his payments; when he comes to thresh out and carry to market, his expenses almost take the whole price.

His interest must be affected if wheat is poured in from Ireland, and the improved cultivation in Ireland occasions more to be sent in from that country?—Yes.

Take the case of other land, in which the recent improvement in agriculture has taken place; first, where there is a fair proportion of light soil, and then, secondly, a case of almost exclusively light soil, and where the turnip and barley system can be introduced; is there any difficulty in letting that at a fair rental?—There is no difficulty in letting a good turnip farm.

Do not you think, in some parts of the country there is a good deal of competition where land is to be let?—We have no difficulty in letting some descriptions of farms; the difficulty we have is in letting the heavy clay lands; the farmers will not take them.

Have you any remedy for the heavy clay land; supposing you were enabled to carry into effect any plan which you have for increasing the prosperity of the heavy clay lands, what would you suggest?—I have been trying that very much myself, by advising landlords to lay out money in permanent improvements; and where the tenant is poor, instead of making an abatement of 10 per cent., to improve the farm.

Mr. Sanford.] With reference to the questions which have been put to you, do you think there has been an equal quantity of labour and capital employed upon the clay lands, under your observation, as there has been upon the light?—Certainly not.

Mr. Cayley.] Who are the competitors for those farms which you say are unoccupied?—Men without money; for a man who has got money will not take them.

Do you think the price of wheat has fallen for want of that?—I have no hesitation in saying, that if you let out more paper, there would be men found who would have that paper, and would speculate and so on, and for a time that would raise prices, but then the remedy would be worse than the disease.

Was it the raw wool that was exported?—Yes, there was a good deal of wool exported to France.

You have spoken of the importation from Ireland and the improved system of cultivation in Scotland ; do you know anything personally of the importations from Ireland, or the improved system of cultivation in Scotland ?—During the last summer I went to both Scotland and Ireland too.

You said that you have been to Scotland ; will you speak with respect to the cultivation there ?—From my own observation upon the estates that I saw and the information gained from what I met in that neighbourhood, they pointed out to me estates there under the finest state of cultivation that they said 30 years ago were mere waste.

Has the increase in the growth of wheat in Lincolnshire taken place within the last five or six years ?—Within about ten years ; there is much more wheat grown now than there was ten years ago, and I have rode with men whom I am acquainted with in the county of Lincoln, and they have said that the district that we have rode over within ten years never used to grow anything.

Mr. Loch] Is not there a large district of Lincolnshire under cultivation now with wheat, which was not under culture a few years ago ?—Yes.

Sir Robert Peel.] As a man who has had very extensive acquaintance with agriculture, and who has paid some attention to the question of currency, do you think that it would be an advantage to farmers, either upon the heavy or light soil, to have an increase of prices arising solely from an action upon the currency ?—I am sure it would not ; my opinion is this, that if we were to have an alteration in the currency, prices would rise for the time, but that we should suffer for it afterwards.

Speaking generally, notwithstanding that the tenant contracted an obligation to pay under a lease, yet the landlord has taken his circumstances into consideration and has made a reduction of rent ?—That very much depends upon circumstances ; I have known instances where landlords have acted very liberally towards their tenants, and I have also known instances where there have been acts of great oppression. Where I have complained most, and where I always shall complain, are instances where I have let farms to tenants at low rates, and they have very much improved them, and the clergyman has come in and taken his tithe. I could name instances where that has been done, where the tithe used to be about a couple of shillings an acre, and an improved system of husbandry has been carried on, and he has taken advantage of it ; and the tenant, rather than let the crops go from his old land has suffered imposition.

Mr. Cayley.] Can you assign in your mind any particular reason for the estate alluded to becoming so much diminished in value as to fall within the grasp of the mortgagee ?—My opinion is this, that it is that description of soil that will grow nothing in its present state but wheat, and wheat has been so very low in price that persons have not been found to purchase it.

Sir Robert Peel.] The mortgage of which you spoke was entered into about 22 years ago ?—Yes ; or if the mortgage was not entered into, the effect of that mortgage was by the will.

Do not you think that the party calculated upon a continuance of war prices ?—I should say he did.

Supposing the price of wheat to have been materially reduced by any other cause besides the currency, or by any causes acting in conjunction with the currency, would it have a prejudicial effect upon the interest of the owner of the estate ; would a low price of wheat, proceeding from any cause, have a prejudicial effect upon that land ?—Yes, it would.

Evidence of Mr. John Rolfe.

Is a Farmer, Appraiser, and Surveyor of Estates—Cost of Cultivation same as some Years ago—Rents paid very badly since 1833—Considers there is now a Scarcity of Sheep—Agriculture not ameliorated—Reduction in Rent not equal to that in Price—Farmers nearly ruined—Removal of Malt Tax would give Relief—Poor Laws would improve Ireland.

Marquis of Chandos.] Where do you live ?—At Beaconsfield, in the county of Bucks.

What is your occupation ?—A farmer, and an appraiser of farming stock.

You are in the habit also of surveying estates ?—Yes, I am.

Do you rent land to a large extent ?—I rent between 200 and 300 acres.

Is that light land ?—Light arable land.

Comparing the state of agriculture in the county of Buckingham ten years ago and the present time, should you say it has gone back much ?—Very much indeed.

What is the rent you pay for land ?—Twenty shillings per acre.

Do you use wheat for any other purpose but that of human food now ?—I have not done it ; some have ground wheat for the pigs ; some have given it to their horses, but that was principally the grown wheat of the last harvest but one.

What is the cost of the cultivation of your farm per acre now as compared with what it was some years ago ?—The cost of cultivation is very much the same ; there is a little difference in the price of labour.

Mr. Cayley.] Can you state how rents are paid in your district ?—Rents have heretofore, till the last two years, been very well paid.

How have they been paid since 1833 ?—They have been paid very badly.

Even on the light soils you speak of ?—Yes.

What will become of the landlord ?—We shall be all beggars together.

You say rents have been paid within the last few years, have the

tradesmen's bills been paid by the farmers?—I consider that they have been paid, and the landlord in many instances left unpaid.

You stated that wool and sheep and beef bear a good price, can you at all attribute that higher price to any particular cause?—I consider that the stock of sheep was very much shortened a few years ago by the rot, a great many rotted and died, and I consider that there is now a scarcity of sheep in the country.

Is it your opinion that the foreign corn, being in bond, tends to prevent the dealers speculating in corn?—Yes, I think that they would be more free and unshackled if it was not hanging over their heads.

Mr. Attwood.] You have given an account of an acre of land for four years, on which there appears to be a loss of 4*l.*; does that calculation apply to the whole of the 300 acres you occupy?—Not the meadow part of it; I have about 50 acres of meadow, ploughing of course does not apply to that.

You have lost a pound an acre on 250 acres?—I am prepared to prove it, if necessary.

That appears to take the whole of the rent which has been paid out of your capital, instead of leaving you a moderate remuneration?—Yes.

Do you think if the present price of agricultural produce should not advance, the present rate of agricultural wages can be continued to be paid in your district?—I think that the agricultural labourer would cease to be employed altogether, unless the landlord would say, I will give up land free of rent, which cannot be expected.

Looking back to the year 1833, has there been any particular amelioration in the condition of agriculture since that period?—There has been no amelioration; it has been quite the reverse of that.

Of course you do not speak of improvident men, and men incapable of managing a farm?—No; I know several farmers now that are on the brink of ruin, and cannot pay their landlords their rent, and they are, I should say, penniless; they are really hard-working, industrious men, and deserving of every encouragement; and though they are sinking, it has been from no want of prudence or industry on their part.

Was the farming trade in former times a trade of a hazardous nature which occasioned ruin to industrious and prudent men?—No.

During the war farming was not reckoned a trade in which a prudent man lost all his fortune?—Certainly not.

Do you think then that the tenants of this country to a great extent hold their farms upon sufferance only, and at the mercy of the landlords?—Yes, I do.

To what extent should you say that was the case?—I should say that one-half at least in our neighbourhood are subject to that. In the parish where I reside, to my own certain knowledge, if the landlord was to say, I will have the whole of the rent that is now in arrear, the tenant must give up.

Then you mean to say that one-half of the tenantry in your district are insolvent?—Yes, I do.

Has the reduction of rent been equal to the fall in price of corn?—Certainly not; nor if the whole of the rent was reduced it would not be equal.

Mr. Miles.] When any farms are untenanted in your district, is there any difficulty in getting tenants?—Yes.

Sir Edward Knatchbull.] Can you inform the Committee whether there is any direct tax which presses upon the farmer, the removal of which would give relief?—I should think the greatest relief that could be given in that respect would be the removal of the malt tax.

Is there any assessed tax that presses upon you, the removal of which would benefit you?—Yes.

What?—My riding-horse and groom. I pay 1*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.* for my riding-horse, and for my groom, a pound.

Do you suppose that, generally speaking, farmers in the occupation of 200*l.* a-year have a horse and groom?—If you have a riding-horse you are charged with a groom. I do not keep a groom, but I pay for one though he be a common day-labourer that looks after my horse.

What do you consider would be the effect of introducing poor laws into Ireland; as to Ireland itself, would it improve it or not?—I think it would.

If the productive power of the country were augmented, would it not throw in a greater surplus of produce into this country?—If it were augmented to a greater extent than it is now.

Evidence of Mr. John Curtis.

Resides at Amersham in Buckinghamshire—A Farmer—Repeal of Malt Tax would relieve Farmers—Importation of Foreign Corn has produced the fall in Price—Loss to Farmer almost entirely in Wheat Prices—Poor Rates have been reduced lately.

Marquis of Chandos.] Where do you reside?—At Amersham, in Buckinghamshire.

Have you resided upon the farm you now hold for many years?—Fifteen.

Has the capital of the farmers in your opinion diminished?—I should say considerably.

Will you state in what way farmers are worst off?—In the first place they have cropped their land hard, and it is now getting into bad condition; it is getting foul, and the stock diminishes.

Being in this state of difficulty, which you state the farmers are in, have you ever turned your attention to what you think would benefit and relieve them?—If we could have a repeal of the malt tax I think it would have brought prosperity.

Is there any other way in which the farmer would be benefited?

—Yes, if he malted his own barley, I think he would use it for many purposes.

Of your own knowledge are you aware of any farmers in your neighbourhood who have been entirely ruined within the last few years?—Yes; one or two entirely.

How do they pay their landlord; do you suppose that they pay their landlord out of their profit or out of their capital?—Last year I paid my landlord nearly half out of my capital.

What is the situation of the farmers in your neighbourhood generally?—They are very badly off; the poor-land farmers are very badly off.

What is the character of those men that you allude to; are they men of prudent habits?—Many of them are men of very prudent habits, but being poor and having no stock, they find it very difficult to get along, and if they were sold up, they would have nothing.

Mr. Cayley.] Has it ever occurred to you what has produced the great fall in the price of produce?—The importation of foreign corn of course has produced it.

Has there been any foreign importation since 1833?—There has been none comparatively speaking.

Then do you consider that foreign importation is the cause of the reduction in price?—The foreign importation previous to that was the cause; the supply of foreign corn was so great, that when we had a good crop it was not wanted.

Has the foreign corn ever come into the market since 1833?—Not since that; but it is the previous importation that I am speaking of.

Sir Edward Knatchbull.] If the malt tax was to be repealed, would you be satisfied to have a property tax instead of it?—No tax would injure me so much as the malt tax.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Do you think that you are sufficiently acquainted with the generality of soils throughout Europe, as to say whether they are or are not capable of growing good barley?—I am told that the severity of the winters upon the Continent rots turnips, and you can have no good barley without good turnip land; and the cultivation of turnips upon the Continent I am told is not general.

Mr. Miles.] You state that you cultivate 300 acres of land; now dividing those 300 acres into the different species of cultivation, how much pasture have you?—About 30 acres.

How much in the cultivation of wheat?—About 50 acres of wheat, 50 acres of turnips, 50 acres of barley, 50 acres of grass, and 50, partly tares, and some few oats.

Now looking at the different descriptions of soils; first of all the grass, has the produce of your grass enabled you to pay the rent upon the grass land?—What little grass I have is very good; that is the best part of my farm.

You are a great loser by the produce of wheat?—I am.

Are you a loser or a gainer by the produce of barley?—I should say barley is a fair price this year; I am a gainer rather than a loser.

How are you upon your oats?—Of the oats I grow very few, and my oats are very good.

Then the green crops, the vetches and so on, how have they produced this year?—Pretty well; it is rather a light crop, on account of the season.

Mr. Cayley.] You have stated that the condition of the labourers is good; you mean those that are employed?—Those that are employed; and there are very few out of employment.

Chairman.] Has the poor-rate been reduced lately?—Yes; the Poor Law Bill works well with us.

Evidence of Mr. John Kemp.

Lives at Southminster, Essex—Has been a Farmer eighteen Years—Agricultural Distress has been increasing—Farming Capital much diminished—To allow Farmers to make Malt would be of use—Rents and Capital reduced—Farmers generally in a State of Insolvency.

The Marquis of Chandos.] Where do you live?—Southminster, Essex.

Have you resided for the last eight years upon this farm at Southminster?—I have resided there 16 or 18 years, but I resided there upon the farm when let to my father.

What do you pay an acre for it?—I pay 30*s.* an acre for it; that is my contract with my landlord.

As a farmer, you are in distress?—Undoubtedly so.

Has that distress been increasing gradually, or has it come upon you very suddenly?—It has been increasing gradually.

Are you satisfied with the prices of meat?—No, the grazing department has been very bad.

With regard to the price of wool, are you satisfied with that?—Yes.

With regard to wheat you state that the market is down as regards that; can you assign to the Committee any cause for that depression in the wheat market?—No, I cannot; unless it is from the productions of the seasons: in the last three years there has been a great improvement in the average quantity per acre on our growth, and consequently the supply has been greater.

Do you consider then the quantity of wheat in the market has been the cause of the depression of the price?—I should say so.

Has the capital of the farmers in your neighbourhood and under your knowledge diminished or not?—Very much diminished.

Has any land gone out of cultivation in your neighbourhood?—No, I believe not; there has been a great quantity of land left on

hand with the landlords, and they have taken it and farmed it themselves; that has been very much out of condition.

What is the average value of land in your neighbourhood for sale?- -I should say about 24*s.* an acre; that is about what the rental is, I should think.

With regard to the price of barley, are you satisfied with that? —Yes; we do not grow the first quality of barley in our district.

Having stated to the Committee the situation of yourself and of the farmers in the neighbourhood where you reside, can you point out to the Committee any relief which could be given you from this distress?—I do not know of any unless it was to improve the price of wheat.

Would it be of any service to you, supposing you were allowed to make use of the barley that you grow to your own purpose in the way of malting?---It would be of use, no doubt.

What was the rate in your parish previous to the passing of the Poor Law Bill, and what is it now?—Our expenditure in the parish used to be 1,600*l.*, and last year it was not more than 1,200*l.*

What is the state of the small farmer about you; the man who rents an hundred acres?—As bad off as the poor man.

Are farmers paying rents from their profits or their capital?— From their capital.

What does your farm stand at now?—It stands at 730*l.*; ten years ago the rent was not paid at a thousand.

The O'Connor Don.] Is it paid at 730*l.*?—No, it is not now, there is an abatement made upon that.

Chairman.] You state that you are in the habit of cropping your farm in the proportion of one-third of wheat; is not that a very large proportion?—No, not for our district; it is the system that is adopted throughout the whole; it is what our covenants allow.

What is your rotation of crops?—One-third of wheat, one-sixth of barley and oats, one-sixth peas and beans, one-sixth clover, and one-sixth fallow.

You state that in 1828, 1829, and 1830, the farmers were in a deplorable condition in your neighbourhood?—They were.

Do you consider that their condition has improved since that period?—Yes, I should say it has.

And if there was any considerable rise in the price of wheat, would they be tolerably well off?—No, far from it; they would be able to live.

Mr. Cayley.] Taking the labourers as a body, are they as well employed as they used to be?—They have been very well employed for the last three years.

Do you think, that upon the average, the higher price, from a scarce season, compensates the farmer for the deficiency of his crop?—No; for at the time when corn was so high, about six years ago, during the wet seasons, we were certainly worse off than we are now, and wheat was much higher.

Have the rents been sufficiently reduced in your neighbourhood, do you think, compared with the reduction in the price of corn? —Certainly not, compared with the price of corn; I think in many instances if the tenants were farming without paying any rent, they would not be able to do more than to keep themselves up.

Suppose the landlords sued their tenants for all arrears, what do you think would be the consequence to the landlords?—They would have all their farms on their hands.

You consider then that the tenants now are merely holding their farms on the sufferance and at the mercy of the landlords?—In many cases that is the case; where they are not, they have borrowed capital to carry on their farms with.

Has your farm been drained?—No, we do not drain much.

How have you improved your cultivation?—The season has been very favourable to us.

That is the work of Providence?—Yes; but we have taken every advantage of that, and there has been a great deal done by the tenant in consequence of the dry seasons.

If he was more remunerated, do you think he would cultivate his farm better?—Yes.

Chairman.]—What proportion of the loss you have experienced, has fallen upon your pasture land?—I do not know in what proportion the loss has been, but my pasture land has been very bad in the last two years, we have never made any thing of the stock, from the dryness of the season; the marshes have produced no grass whatever, and the last year particularly so.

Evidence of Mr. William Thurnall.

Resides at Duxford, Cambridge—Is a Farmer—Has lost great sums by Farming—Believes the Contraction of Currency has caused it—Farms are not worth cultivating Rent-free—Farmers bordering on Insolvency—Condition of Labourers worse than 20 Years ago—Irish and Foreign Corn causes much of the evil, but the Currency most.

Mr. Sanford.] Where do you reside?—At Duxford, in Cambridgeshire.

What is the size of your farm?—Upwards of 400 acres.

What is the description of your land?—Light land.

Will you state whether it has remunerated you for the labour? —Certainly not; I have lost an immense sum of money; I lost more than the whole rent of my farm last year; the year before I lost upwards of 300*l.*

To what do you attribute that great loss?—I have been of opinion that it is the contraction of the currency.

Mr. Cayley.] Do you esteem that sort of arable soil in the present day more profitable than other species of land?—I do not know what land is profitable now.

Is it not easy land to cultivate?—Certainly easier than heavy land.

But still, notwithstanding the small proportion of labour used upon this farm it has not paid you any profit?—Certainly not.

Do you mean that the high price of meat does not compensate the farmer for the expenses he has been at in raising that meat?—Certainly not, not where they have failed in the turnip crops; I am speaking of the light land farms which grow turnips.

The price of wool is very high, is it not?—I am not prepared to say what the price is now, but wool has been selling remarkably well; but I conceive that that has been owing to the enormous rot which took place two or three years ago.

Do you think that that loss has not been supplied?—I think that it is now, in part, because the breed of sheep comes up very rapidly, and I think that it is in a great measure supplied.

Do you think that as yet they have reduced rents equivalent to the reduced price of corn?—If my landlord would offer me my farm rent-free, as we have had the prices lately, I would not accept it.

Do you know many farms similarly circumstanced that you would not take rent-free?—I scarcely know one.

But you are aware that barley and oats have borne a high price; but that you attribute to a scarcity?—It was from growing merely a half crop on light barley soils.

What, in your opinion, is the condition of the tenantry generally in your neighbourhood?—I think verging on insolvency, generally in the most desperate state that men can possibly be.

You say that you are an oil-crusher, do you sell as much oil-cake as you used to do?—Not a fourth; I have sold more oil-cake than all the crushers in my neighbourhood do now; there are five in that trade, and in rape-dust, which is very considerably used in our neighbourhood; the trade is reduced to a mere nothing, in consequence of the farmers not being able to purchase it.

In consequence of the farmers not using this rape-dust, can they grow as good crops as they used to do?—Certainly not, and the land will feel it in the course of a year or two very materially indeed.

You say that you sell less oil-cake and less rape-dust, do you get as well paid for that as you used to do?—No, that has caused me many unhappy moments; I believe at this moment my book debts with the farmers are not worth ten shillings in the pound; there are two farmers in the Cambridge gaol at this moment, and I dare scarcely open a letter, knowing the state of the farmers, fearing that it may contain notice of some bad debt or other.

Are those men who are verging on insolvency, men of prudent character and industrious habits?—I am speaking only of that class of men.

And yet those men are on the verge of ruin?—Yes, not only in Cambridge, but generally speaking, great part of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex.

Are the expenses of cultivation diminished in proportion to the fall in the price of produce?—No.

Comparing the present condition of the labourers with their condition 15 or 20 years ago, taking the labourers generally, those employed and those unemployed, do you think their condition is worse or better than it was 15 or 20 years ago?—Taking the employed and unemployed I should say worse.

Has the want of employment any demoralizing effect upon them?—It has demoralized nearly the whole of them, they are in a very desperate state, they are in such a state of excitement, that they are ripe for every thing in the world. I will venture to say, that I could take my horse to the district in which I reside, and put the whole of it in a state of revolution, and any other farmer who is well known, I have no doubt, could do the same before to-morrow at this time.

Do you attribute that to the want of the employment of labourers?—That is one cause, and they have an amazing prejudice against the Poor Law Bill.

You stated that you think the chief cause of all this distress arises from the low price of agricultural produce, and you have stated that you conceive that state of low prices is attributable to the change in the currency?—I conceive that that is the main cause; Irish produce is another cause; want of protection against the foreign corn is another; but I should say that the contraction of the currency is the main cause.

Evidence of Mr. Charles Page.

Lives at Southminster, Essex—Is an extensive Farmer—Has lost considerably every Year; principally in Wheat—The Capital of Farmers has diminished considerably within the last ten Years—Not many Labourers out of Employ—The Rates are much reduced—Not much Land converted into Pasture—Sales of Property have been considerable—Productive Power of Land has increased, but is weighed down by low Prices and heavy Rents.

Marquis of Chandos.] Where do you live?—At Southminster, in the county of Essex.

There you rent about eleven hundred acres?—Somewhere thereabouts.

Have you lost or gained this last year upon your farm?—In fact I have lost every year since I have been in business.

Have you lost principally upon the wheat or the barley crop?—The loss upon the wheat crop I think is the most material.

Is the Committee to understand that you were as badly off 10 years ago as you are now?—I think not so bad as at the present

moment, because we have had one or two very bad years in the price of corn, and we have been very badly situated as to grazing.

Do you consider that the land in your neighbourhood is as well cultivated as it was ten years ago?—The land in the neighbourhood in which I live is much better cultivated at the present moment than it was five or six years ago.

Do the farmers lay out much money?—That has a great deal to do with it, of course; but we have had three or four excessively fine seasons, which have very much reduced the expense of bringing the land into a good state of cultivation; and I think there is another reason, that is, that a very great portion of the land in our district has been out of occupation; it has fallen into the hands of the landlord, and he has done a vast deal himself to bring about the improved state of our country.

What is the description of that land?—It is very heavy, tenacious, expensive land to cultivate, requiring three horses instead of two.

Do you consider that the capital of the farmer has diminished?—Yes, very materially.

Do you believe that the tenants in your neighbourhood are in arrears much?—I should think they are.

Chairman.] Have the rates been reduced in consequence of the introduction of the new Poor Law?—There is no doubt the rates will be reduced, and even at the present moment they are very much reduced; whether it is by anticipation or not, I cannot tell, but there is a great difference in the rate.

What should you say is the condition of the labourer?—I think the condition of the agricultural labourer is bad at present.

Are there many labourers out of employ?—Not in our district.

What is the amount of wages per week that they receive?—The wages are 9*s.* per week, that is, 1*s.* 6*d.* a day.

Have you lost or gained in the last five years upon the pasture land?—We have lost considerably, but that is to be attributed chiefly, I think, to the extraordinary dry seasons we have had in our district last year and the year before.

Sir James Graham] Have you sown much land out lately for the purpose of converting it into pasture?—No, it has not been done in our district to any extent.

Chairman.] You were understood to say, that one-fourth of the arable part of your farm is always in barley or oats. Now taking into consideration the prices of barley or oats for the last five years, have you lost or gained upon these crops?—I should think there is a material loss.

Upon clover, peas, and beans, have you lost or gained?—Upon those there must be a decided loss.

Sir James Graham.] Have there been any sales of property in your neighbourhood?—The sales of property in our neighbourhood in the last twelve years have been very considerable.

Has not the effect of an outlay of capital, upon the land so bought, been to increase the produce of that land?—No doubt.

When owners begin to occupy their own land is it not attended with an outlay of capital?—In every case.

Has it been attended also with an increase of the produce of the land?—It has in most cases.

As relates to the produce of the land, has it increased the produce?—The productive power of the land has increased within the last three years.

Mr. Cayley.] Do you think that the increase of crops by better cultivation will compensate for the falling off of the produce, where farmers have cultivated ill?—Yes, it will exceed that.

Sir James Graham.] Then what bears you down is the low price of wheat and the weight of rent?—No, I do not think it is the rent entirely; it is a combination of causes.

The low price of wheat and the weight of rent, are those two things the causes of your difficulties?—The price of corn generally for the last seven years has been the cause of the distress of the farmer.

The rent has nothing to do with it?—Yes, of course the rent has had a great deal to do with it, because a vast deal of land has produced no rent at all.

Evidence of George Smallpiece, Esq.

Lives near Guildford—Is an Occupier and Valuer of Land, and extensive Dealer in Sheep—Supply of Sheep has diminished greatly from the Rot—Farmers have not yet recovered from it—Draining has increased the Supply of Wheat—Considers sixty Shillings a remunerating Price for Wheat—Loss in Sheep Flocks operates on Price of Beef—Farmers have made more Money during the last three good Seasons—Poor Rates reduced considerably—Land sells for thirty or thirty-two Years' Purchase in Surrey, owing to the Value of Timber—The Repeal of the Malt Tax would partially relieve Farmers—Potatoes have tended to reduce Wheat Prices—Composition of Tithes would be an advantage.

Chairman.] Are you an occupier of land to any great extent?—I occupy about 500 or 600 acres, near Guildford.

Are you employed extensively as a land valuer?—Yes.

Comparing the state of the tenantry at the present moment with the state of the tenantry in 1833, should you say that their condition is better or worse?—I think generally it is a little improved of late.

You are an extensive dealer in sheep?—Yes.

Have you observed whether there has been any diminution in the supply of sheep in the great fairs in the country?—Yes, a considerable diminution last autumn.

To what do you attribute that?—In the latter part of the autumn the price was so low; there was a great fall in sheep the last year, between July and October; in the West of England I think nearly one-third.

Do you think the sheep farmers have recovered the effects of the rot?—Not altogether.

Should you say that there has been a large amount of capital expended in the cultivation of the soil of late?—I am afraid that the farmers have very little capital; I think their capital is gone, in the Weald where the greatest improvement is, it is owing to the dry summers which have killed their couch, and the land is much drained.

Is not the effect of draining to increase the production of wheat? —No doubt of it.

So that farmers who have great numbers of sheep upon their farms, and who farm light barley land, taking the present price of barley and the present price of wool, are doing tolerably well?—I think they are; we have not half the quantity of sheep upon the land that we have in general, owing to the loss of our turnips principally.

Can you suggest any mode by which the condition of the farmers can be improved?—No, I cannot; nothing but higher prices will improve them in my opinion.

A higher price of wheat or of all grain?—No, I think other grain is at a fair remunerating price: I think barley, and peas, and beans, have been at a fair price.

What should you say is a remunerating price for wheat?—I do not think we can grow it under 3*l.* a quarter.

On a light or a strong soil?—I think that must be the average; then upon the light soils we should get a little more, because we grow a better quality.

Mr. Cayley.] Should you attribute any part of the high price of wool to the non-filling up of that deficiency?—I think there are several causes for that, and last year there was a short growth of wool.

What is expected from the next year's clip?—I anticipate a most miserable clip; our sheep are all starved almost; I never saw sheep in such a condition, and they will not grow much more than two-thirds of the wool.

The higher price of meat compared with wheat the last few years, do you attribute that to the scarcity of sheep in consequence of rot?—Yes; the effect of the rot has not been fully recovered.

Will not a loss in the sheep flocks operate upon the price of beef? —No doubt of it.

Then the higher price of beef, as well as of mutton, you attribute in a great measure to the rot which took place a few years ago?—Yes, partly so, and partly to the failure of the turnip crops.

You stated in 1833, that no land in the Weald could be cultivated under 50*s.* a quarter, do you remain of that opinion?—Yes, I do not think it can; they can grow almost as much wheat again in a dry summer as they can in a wet one in the Weald.

Do you attribute the improved condition of the farmer within

the last three years to the good seasons he has had?—I do not think the farmers have improved as to their capital, because I do not think they have got any; but the land has very much improved.

Have they been making more money?—They have, a little more.

Do you attribute that to the three favourable seasons?—Yes, in the clay soils.

Sir James Graham.] You understood that upon the farm which you yourself occupied in the parish of Billinghurst upon which the poor-rate was 10*s.* an acre in 1833, the poor-rate is now reduced to one-half?—I do not occupy it now, but I believe that is the case.

You threw it up because the poor-rate was double the rent?—I was not farming it on my own account but for the proprietor.

You stated that the poor-rate had taken the place of rent as compared with the period before the war, in the Weald of Sussex, that what was rent before the war had become poor-rate, and that what was poor-rate is now rent; does that proportion still continue since the alteration of the poor law?—No, they are relieved a great deal by the new poor law.

As only two years have elapsed it is getting rapidly towards it?—The poor law has certainly done wonders in some parishes.

You state that the condition of the tenantry is improved?—I think they are a little improved; I do not think they are much, but I think lately the little farmer in the Weald of Surrey and Sussex, is a little better off than he was.

Do you mean to state, that the heavy clay lands are much improved since 1833?—Yes, you could not let the heavy clay lands in 1833, and now, owing to dry summers, they are improved.

How is it that the farmer on the heavy clay farm you have mentioned, near Guildford, is unable to carry it on?—Because it is out of condition, it is not worth getting up, it is exactly like an old horse out of condition.

Has there been much change of ownership in land?—A great deal.

But if they bring their land to market it is quite saleable?—No doubt it is.

Mr. Clay.] How do you reconcile the facts of much draining having been done, and their having rather more stock, with the fact of their having no capital?—They have had a great number of surplus labourers, and they can get the draining done at a very trifling expense, and they principally drain with prith or underwood.

Sir Robert Price.] Do not you partly attribute the high price of wool and of meat to the great prosperity of the manufacturing interest?—Of course an increased consumption must raise the price; but we raise a great deal more meat than we did; there is such an immense quantity of pig meat raised from the growth of potatoes; I consider that the potatoes are the great thing that reduce the price of wheat.

Mr. Miles.] You say that several sales of land have taken place in the district with which you are acquainted; are you aware at what rate those sales have been effected, at how many years' purchase?—Land sells for more years' purchase in Surrey than in almost any other county; 30 years' purchase is our general price; but even this poor, bad, clay land will sell for 32 years' purchase, because the rent is a mere nothing, and the landlord gets a greater interest upon the timber thereon.

Marquis of Chandos.] You think a repeal of the malt tax would be a relief to the farmer?—It would be a benefit, but I think not to so very great an extent.

What do you think would relieve the agricultural interest?—I am afraid that nothing will give them much relief except an increased price of wheat.

Mr. Cayley.] How do you propose to get that increase in the price of wheat?—I do not know.

Has it ever occurred to you what caused the fall in the price of wheat?—I think that a great part of it is the increase of potatoes.

Do you think that the draining he has done lately will not be a loss rather than a gain?—There is no improvement so great as draining wet land.

Sir R. Price.] Do you think the composition of tithes would be an advantage?—I think very great, because it will encourage cultivation, there are so many oppressive cases that will be got rid of.

And in those cases particularly more produce might be obtained from the land?—No doubt of it.

Evidence of Mr. Robert Babbs.

Is a Farmer—Believes Rents are now being paid out of Capital—The late productive Seasons have benefited Farmers—Land worth 14*s.* an Acre Rent, has been sold at £20. an Acre—The Purchasers were Men of Capital—The Land so purchased has been much improved, and its Produce increased—Land generally not in such good Heart as seventeen Years ago—More artificial Manure was then used—If all Rates were removed 5*s.* per Bushel would not be a remunerating Price.

Chairman.] Are you a farmer?—I am.

Is your farm of 288 acres arable?—There are 224 acres of arable, and the rest is in grass.

Is it heavy land?—It is very heavy land, strong loam land.

What is the course of husbandry that you pursue upon that farm?—Six course husbandry.

Marquis of Chandos.] Do you believe whether the farmers are paying their rent out of their capital or out of the profits of their farms?—I believe the farmers have been paying their rents out of the capital they employ.

Is that your case?—It has been my case.

Has the land been cropped harder in your neighbourhood than it used to be?—I think it has.

What is the state of the small farmer as compared with the man that occupies largely?—I think he is very little better than a pauper, a 40 acre farmer.

Is that upon good land?—I do not say he is so bad upon the good land as he is upon the strong heavy loam land.

Are you acquainted with other parts of Essex?—Not much acquainted, only in the neighbourhood of Dengie hundred.

Within the sphere of your knowledge, in the neighbourhood of Dengie, are you of opinion that the state of the farmer now is worse than it was four years ago?—I think it is improved within four years.

How has it improved?—In consequence of the productive seasons.

Have you improved your own farm?—I think I have improved the condition of my land; somewhat owing to good seasons, and bringing more money into my business.

Sir James Graham.] Do you keep regular books?—No, I do not keep regular books.

Do you take stock once a year?—No.

Do you as a practical farmer say that it is possible to know, year by year, what is the precise amount of your profit and loss without keeping regular books and taking stock annually?—I cannot state the precise profit and loss annually.

Has much land changed owners in the last four or five years in your neighbourhood?—There has; but I do not think there has been much change of ownership of land; I can recollect a sale of 1300 acres in the neighbourhood around me, within two miles of me.

Since when has that purchase been made?—In 1830 there was one purchase of 500 acres, and this last year there was a sale of 500 acres.

How many years purchase did it sell for upon the last rent given by the tenant?—It sold for 20*l.* an acre.

Was it better land than yours?—The same quality of land.

The same quality of land as yours which is let at 14*s.* an acre?—The same as mine, which is let at 14*s.* an acre.

The two farms to which you have referred have brought about 30 years' purchase, and you stated that the 1,300 acres sold since 1830 brought about that price?—About 20*l.* an acre.

Which is about 30 years' purchase upon the rent?—Yes.

Did men of capital buy those 1,300 acres?—They did.

On buying them what have they done with them; have they improved them, or left them as they found them?—Improved them.

With a considerable outlay?—With a considerable outlay.

Are they more productive since they were so purchased by men of capital than they were when they were in the occupation of a tenant? Yes.

If that should have taken place to any considerable extent in

other districts, namely, that sub-divisions and sales of property shall have taken place, and men of capital shall have recently purchased and laid out capital upon their purchases, would that account for the increase of produce?—I think it would, in some degree.

Would not such increase of produce again account for the lower price of wheat?—It does account for it.

Mr. Cayley.] Do you think that the land in your neighbourhood, generally speaking, is in as good heart as it was fifteen or seventeen years ago?—I do not think it is; it is not so congenial to the growth of corn as it was.

Then it will not grow as large crops as it did then?—I think it will not.

You have been asked, if the landlord takes the land into his own hands, whether there will not be a greater produce from that land; do you think, upon the average, that the landlord can cultivate the land profitably?—I do not think there will be any profit arising from the landlord's cultivation: when the land falls into the landlord's hands, it is worked out in consequence of the distress of the tenant, and he is obliged to make a considerable outlay before he can make it produce again.

Mr. Sanford.] You say you commenced farming about seventeen years ago; were you acquainted with the system of farming in your neighbourhood before that period?—Yes; I was brought up in the neighbourhood.

Was it the same system that you now pursue?—The same.

When you commenced farming, was it the habit of the farmer to bring more artificial manure upon the ground?—I think it was; seventeen years ago there was more chalk and more London manure used.

Do you think at the present moment the crops are less than they were when you began farming?—They are about the same.

Sir Edward Knatchbull.] Do you compound for tithes?—Yes.

What do you pay for arable land?—About 5*s.* 6*d.* an acre.

Lord John Russell.] What is the rent of the land upon which the tithe is 5*s.* 6*d.*?—The rent of my own is about 14*s.*

You said that the late abundant seasons for wheat have been an advantage to the farmers in your district; do you consider that the abundance of the seasons has been the principal cause of the low price of wheat?—I do.

You would not say that a higher price of wheat, caused by wet seasons in future, could be any advantage to him?—Certainly not; if 1832 had been a wet season after 1831, I think the farmers in our neighbourhood could not have held their occupation at all; I think it must all have gone out of occupation.

Mr. Miles.] Have you drained at all in your county?—No.

You have stated that land which now lets at 14*s.* an acre is worth to purchase 20*l.* an acre, and that seventeen years ago the

same description of land which let at 30*s.* an acre was then worth 30*l.* to 35*l.* an acre, then do you conceive that the value of land has increased or decreased since that time?—I think the value of land would remain about the same in proportion to produce; the price of produce seventeen years ago was 85*s.* a quarter.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Are you aware that some of the Essex wheats are equal in quality to the finest Dantzic wheat?—I do not think any wheat we produce is equal to the Dantzic wheat; I do not think that it ever obtained so much money.

If poor rates, church rates, highway rates, and every other sort of rate were altogether removed, could they then grow it at 5*s.* a bushel?—Certainly not.

Evidence of Mr. Thomas Bowyer.

Is a Farmer—Condition of Farmers about the same as three Years ago—Wheat Produce has increased—Prices have diminished in consequence—Removing Local Taxes and the Malt Tax would benefit Farmers—In Huntingdonshire the Farmers are badly off—Very much in Arrear—The best Turnip Land would pay at 5*s.* a bushel, but no other—The Condition of the Farmer much better twenty Years ago—Draining has increased and will increase the Supply of Wheat—The Commodities necessary for the Labourer have much fallen in Price.

What quantity of land do you occupy?—Two hundred acres of arable land, and about the same quantity of grass land.

Do you consider the condition of the farmer improved since 1833?—No; I think it is much the same as in 1833.

Has there been any increase in the produce of wheat upon your own farm?—There has been a great increase in the last three years.

Should you say, then, that the low price of wheat might be attributed partly to the increased production of wheat, and partly to the quality of the wheat producing an increased quantity of flour?—The low price of wheat I consider to arise partly from the increased production, and partly from the extra quantity sown; there has been a greater breadth considerably the last three years than in any year since I have been in trade.

Should you say that there was any diminution in the demand for wheat?—None.

Have the expenses of your farm been reduced within the last three years?—Yes, rent, considerably.

Have there been many farms out of occupation in your neighbourhood?—A great many have changed hands, and there are several now out of occupation.

When they have changed hands, have the succeeding tenants been men of capital?—No, not in all cases.

Do you consider that agriculture in your neighbourhood is not carried on by men of capital?—No, in a number of instances it is not.

Can you suggest any mode by which the condition of the farmer

could be improved?—Except by removing the local taxes, or assisting him in the malt tax; I know of no other mode.

Mr. Handley.] Can you speak to the quantity and quality produced upon that land?—Yes; the strong clay lands of Huntingdon are now nearly all drained, and in a much better preparation to grow barley; the great proportion is drained with tiles, and the custom is to sow it much earlier; nearly half the barley for this year I should think is now sown, a thing I never before knew, and the increased breadth of the barley will be extraordinary.

Mr. Heathcote.] You say that at present there is a considerable demand for malt; but do you think, under common circumstances, the cold clay land you speak of would be suitable for growing barley?—Yes, I do not say that it would grow so much barley as the best turnip land, but it would be equal in quality.

Mr. Miles.] What quantity of barley have you averaged in the last three years upon the clay land?—I should think four quarters and a half.

Has that been remunerative to the farmer?—It has to farmers who have had the rents reduced, on that portion of their farms.

Mr. Cayley.] What is the condition of the tenantry generally of Huntingdonshire?—They are at a very low ebb, indeed; I think nearly half of them almost have nothing.

They are in arrear very much?—Very much.

Can they pay their bills better now than in 1833?—No, they cannot.

How are the rents paid?—Badly.

Are rents or bills paid the best?—Rents, I think.

Is it your opinion, that in order to pay his rent the farmer neglects to pay his bills?—If a farmer is under a gentleman that he wants to continue under he will pay his rent and leave his bills; but if he has made up his mind to leave, he will pay his bills and leave his rent.

How much land is there in Huntingdonshire that would pay a rent at 5*s.* a bushel for wheat?—I think the best turnip land would pay a rent at 5*s.* a bushel; but the light wood land would not pay a shilling, and I question whether the clay land would.

What proportion do the different classes bear to each other?—The strong clay is the larger proportion, and the turnip land is nearly one-third.

Comparing the present time with twenty years ago, which is the best for the farmer?—Twenty years ago, considerably.

Do you think it was better for all parties connected with the land?—Certainly, twenty years ago was far superior to the present time.

Sir James Graham.] You mentioned tile draining: has it lately been introduced into those counties?—It has been introduced some years, but not to the extent it has been the last three years; it is now very great.

Since 1833 a very great breadth of these strong lands has been drained?—Yes.

Does that affect the produce of those lands?—Yes, it produces more from being kept drier in the winter.

Does it render you less dependent upon the variation of the seasons?—Not much.

Then, in a series of years, this extensive draining will add materially to the average produce?—Yes, and improve the quality also.

And consequently it will diminish somewhat the cost of production?—It will.

And it will render a less price, a remunerating price, whether it be for barley or for wheat?—In proportion it will; the cost of production must be very little less, but still it will be less, inasmuch as it will produce more per acre at the same expense.

If you take a farm upon lease, you calculate upon the variation of the seasons, and anything which shall render the produce more certain and less variable is, in a series of years, equal to an increase of production?—It is.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Has the breadth of wheat increased in other parts of Huntingdonshire besides the fen land?—Yes.

Has that been the case in Cambridgeshire?—Yes.

In Northamptonshire?—Yes.

And in Bedfordshire?—Yes.

Mr. Miles.] Have the different commodities necessary for the labourer fallen very much in price?—Bread is the principal one, and that has fallen.

Articles of clothing?—They are much lower.

Mr. Evans.] Has there been any economy in agricultural labour by the introduction of threshing machines?—There is a great deal of corn threshed by machine, which certainly supersedes manual labour very much.

And so far it is economical?—Where all the hands can be employed, it is economical; but where there is a surplus of hands, it is not economy, because they must be maintained by the parish.

Evidence of Mr. Evan David.

Capital of the Farmer has been disappearing—Value of Estates generally diminished—Bonding System injurious to the Farmer.

Mr. Cayley.] Is there much distress among the farmers in Glamorganshire?—Very much; the capital of the tenantry has been disappearing in the last ten, twelve, or fifteen years.

Are there many insolvent now?—Many have become insolvent, and I could enumerate several others whose losses have been very great; I should say nearly 45,000*l.* have been sunk by four-and-twenty farmers within ten miles of me in the period I have stated.

Were these men of industrious prudent habits?—They were, with very few exceptions.

Do you estimate that by the sales which have taken place?—I know one case in particular where an estate was bought in 1811 at 42,000*l.*; to my knowledge upwards of 30,000*l.* has been laid out on it in agricultural improvements, and it is now offered for sale at 37,000*l.* I can enumerate several other farms where the reduction in rent has been great, such as 800*l.* to 500*l.*, and also a reduction in another farm, now in the hands of the proprietor, from 350*l.* to 250*l.*; another from 120*l.* to 60*l.*, and from 120*l.* to 50*l.*

The expenses in 1834 were considerably higher than in 1790?—Yes.

The produce fetched much less?—Taking an average of the value of all agricultural produce, it is rather greater in 1835 than it was in 1790; but the expenses are increased in a much greater ratio.

Do you think that the low price of produce arises in any degree from the existing corn laws?—The bonding system I consider highly injurious to the British growers of corn.

Evidence of John Ellman, Esq.

Resides at Glynde, in Sussex—Occupies 1,300 acres—The Wool-Farmers are well off: since 1833 they have done well—Wheat Price reduced in consequence of extra Production and improved Quality—Considers the new Poor Law as the Salvation of his County—Has improved the Condition of the Labourer—Thinks the Flock-masters have recovered the Effects of the Rot—The Irish Produce interferes seriously with the English Farmer—On Clay Soils the yield of Wheat has increased ten Bushels an Acre—The present high Price of Wool has not arisen from a Deficiency in the Produce.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Glynde, near Lewes, in Sussex.

What number of acres do you occupy?—With my own, and what I hire, I occupy about 1,300 acres.

Comparing the present period with 1833 what should you say is the condition of the farmer?—It depends very much upon whether I take the farmer upon the one soil or the farmer upon the other.

First of all upon the light chalk?—In consequence of the increased price of wool we have been much better off of late years; comparing it with 1833 it is not higher than it was then; the price of store sheep from the total failure of the turnip crop was very much diminished last autumn in our neighbourhood; we breed a great many sheep, and sell to other counties to fatten them, and, of course, from the total failure of the turnip crop the price was very much diminished last year as compared with 1833.

Taking the last three years together have the sheep farmers done well or not?—Certainly very well from 1833; I consider the situation of the light chalk farmer stationary, where wheat does not form a considerable portion of the produce.

With reference to the clay land, what is the condition of the cultivators of the clay land?—With respect to the condition of the cultivators of the clay lands in consequence of their having grown immense crops these last two years, particularly compared with the great diminution of the poor rates owing to the Poor Law Bill (which I consider the salvation of our county), I think they are as well off as they were three years ago.

Do you think that the increased production of wheat, and the increased weight of the wheat, from its better quality, would be sufficient to account in any way for the low price of wheat at present?—I think so, certainly.

Should you say there has been any decrease in the consumption of wheat?—I do not think there has in our neighbourhood; on the contrary, I think the consumption has increased.

Do you consider that there are more potatoes grown now than formerly?—Not many more; I consider one cause of the increased consumption of wheat in our neighbourhood has arisen from the new Poor Law system, by which relief is given in kind, and a great deal of money which would have gone otherwise to the beer shops, is given in bread to the poor people.

Should you say that since the new Poor Law has been in operation there has been any change in the habits of the labourer; do you consider that he is a better servant now than he was before?—A most extraordinary change for the better; I consider that they are now very much as they were before the riots in 1830.

Then the moral effect upon the labourer has been quite as good as the saving in the rates has been beneficial to the farmer?—Entirely; I consider that we have made friends of our best labourers, and put the others at defiance, and that is as the thing should be.

Should you say that the flock masters have recovered the effects of the rot; are their flocks now as numerous as they were before the rot took place?—I think they are quite as numerous.

Then you would not consider that the high price of mutton, or the high price of wool has any reference to the rot in sheep that took place before 1828?—I do not think it has now.

Is the rent upon your farm the same as it was ten years ago?—I pay a corn rent; I would not take the farm without.

Then since 1833 they certainly have not advanced?—About the same, I should say.

What particular Irish produce do you complain of as interfering with your produce?—Every thing; we have the Irish oats every market day.

You consider that the repeal of the malt tax would be a great benefit to the farming interest?—An immense benefit.

Mr. Miles] You state that you pay a corn rent upon the arable land, what is the corn rent paid, as compared with the produce per acre?—I scarcely know how to calculate it, because there is barley and oats.

Is your rent estimated upon the different kinds of corn?—No, it is done upon wheat, the basis upon which it gows is this, that when I made my agreement with the landlord I said, "I will give you so many quarters of wheat, if I can grow so much more it is my gain, if I grow so much less it is my loss."

How much was it per acre on your farm at Glynde, how many quarters of wheat do you pay as rent per acre?—Perhaps about a sack or nearly four bushels upon the land actually in tillage.

Since you have been under this agreement with your landlord, have you improved your land much?—My father before me occupied the farm for fifty years, and he spared no expense at all in farming, so that my only aim is to keep it up as he left it.

Mr. Handley.] What do you consider to have been the increase in the average yield upon the clay soils in your county?—I consider upon those clay soils, 20 bushels an acre to be the average in general, and I think for the last year they averaged at least thirty.

You consider there was an increase of ten bushels an acre?—At least that.

Is it your opinion that the present high price of mutton is not owing rather to a deficiency of the turnip crop?—I consider it entirely owing to that.

You have stated that the price of wool was very low before the rot began, and has been very high since; now, taking barley, and wheat, and wool, may not the prices of those articles, in a considerable degree, be said to have arisen from deficiency?—I think the present price of wool has not arisen from a deficiency; I think we have recovered that.

Evidence of Mr. George Webb Hall.

Resides in the County of Gloucester—Has lost in Farming 215*l.* in twelve Years—Condition of Farmers in the Neighbourhood of Bristol has deteriorated—Want of Confidence between Landlord and Tenant—Good Harvests are the Cause of the low Prices—Poor Laws in Ireland would cure the Evil.

Mr. Miles.] Where do you reside?—In the county of Gloucestershire, about three miles from the city of Bristol.

You have been brought up a farmer?—From my earliest years.

How much do you occupy of your own?—I occupy 200 acres in Gloucestershire, of which I am direct tenant, and 500 acres I occupy in conjunction with a friend who is the proprietor of the estate.

Has a good system of cultivation the effect of eventually reducing the cost of cultivation?—It has decidedly; land placed in good condition is cultivated at less expense than that in a more sterile state. The operation of manure is to render the soil more easy of cultivation.

How many years have you cultivated the farm?—Five years.

What is the result of your accounts?—The expense of cultivating it in 1831-32, was 2,666*l.*; the receipts were 2,588*l.* In 1832-33, the expenses, 2,907*l.*; the proceeds, 2,437*l.* In 1833-34, the expenses 2,868*l.*; the proceeds, 2,390*l.* In 1834-35, the expenses, 2,802*l.*; the proceeds, 2,066*l.* The year 1835-36 I have taken as nearly as I can, with the rent standing at 400*l.*; the expenses are 2,195*l.*; the cultivation was altered in consequence, although no credit is taken in either case for any improvement which is existing, to a considerable extent, in the land, and the proceeds are, 2,121*l.*

Chairman.] At what do you put the interest of the capital?—Five per cent.; but, I must state, that, although I have not taken credit for improvements existing in the land to a very considerable extent, a very slight improvement over five hundred acres of land would come to a great deal of money. Therefore, I wish to be very distinctly understood, that in those accounts no credit is taken for improvements existing in the land.

Mr. Sanford.] From the account, what is your gross loss in the 12 years?—The balance of loss is 215*l.*

Then if your improvements are worth 1000*l.* you can hardly say that you have lost, but rather you have an actual gain to the amount of 750*l.*?—I think so; but I am a tenant at will, and as such I cannot fairly take to myself the value of that improvement, which is unquestionably my own as a matter of moral right.

Mr. Miles.] From your knowledge of the agriculturists immediately in the vicinity of Bristol, should you say that their state has improved or deteriorated since the year 1833?—I think it has deteriorated.

What is the general state of connexion between landlord and tenant in your country?—I certainly do think that that is by no means upon a satisfactory footing. I do not think there is that confidence between them which is for the mutual interest of both parties.

What abatement, generally speaking, has taken place in rent from the high times of the war?—I am scarcely conversant with the rents at the high times of the war, but I think an abatement of rent has not been so general in that neighbourhood as it has been in other parts of the country.

What do you conceive to be the cause of the present low state of agricultural produce?—I believe the low state of agricultural produce at present to arise from a variety of causes; the first I should say to have been the bounty of Heaven in two or three good harvests.

What remedies would you propose to meet the existing depression?—The first matter I would state is poor laws for Ireland, which, I think, on grounds of justice and of policy, are most imperatively called for. By poor laws I allude to the principle of the 43rd of Elizabeth, which is in fact a premium of insurance entered into by civilized classes of the country against sedition and against starvation.

Evidence of Mr. Charles Howard.

Farmers worse off than in 1833—Rents have been reduced, but they have been paid out of Capital—Many Farms have gone out of Cultivation—High Price of Wool caused by the Rot in 1831—The Loss has been pretty well made up—Greater Difficulty in getting Credit with Bankers—Tenants have no Credit with Bankers—Better Cultivation in Northumberland than in Yorkshire—Great Advantage in using Malt for Cattle—Ploughing up the Grass Lands has kept the Tenant longer on his Legs.

Mr. Cayley.] Taking the period since the last Committee sat in 1833, what do you consider to be the comparative state of the farming interests now and at that time?—Decidedly and progressively worse.

Do you take into your consideration every species of land, or one species of land more than another?—I think upon the sheep farms, the upland farms, from the increased demand which there has been for sheep, the distress has rather decreased; sheep have been very high.

Then with respect to the low land farms?—Their situation has been progressively much worse.

Have the Holderness farmers in your opinion been paying much rent, or has the cultivation paid the expenses in the last three years?—The rents have been considerably reduced; but those reduced rents have been paid from the capital of occupiers.

You have spoken of part of this land having already ceased to be cultivated; can you speak of that from your own knowledge to any considerable extent?—To a very considerable extent; I know a number of farms, 100 acres here and 200 there, that have been utterly unlet and not cultivated, lying completely waste.

Since when?—Since 1829, 1830, and 1831.

What will it amount to in point of acres what you think has already gone out of cultivation, and what you believe runs a very considerable chance of going out of cultivation, provided prices remain what they have been the last year or two?—An immense tract; 50,000 acres.

To what do you attribute the increase in the price of wool?—To the dreadful rot that took place in the three wet years terminating in 1831.

Has that loss, in your opinion, been extensively made up since the period when it took place?—Pretty well made up, but not nearly fully made up; I do not think that we have half the quantity of sheep that we used to have.

Speaking practically, do you find any inconveniences from the country bankers not issuing so largely as they used to do?—I used to have good personal credit with my bankers; I used not to be asked for any security, nor feel it necessary to look at my banker's book to see how I was going on, but I should very much scruple now to overdraw my bankers.

Do you think the tenants generally find the same thing with the bankers?—Yes, the tenants have no credit.

Why?—They have lost confidence in the country; the bankers know that they are poor, and they have no longer confidence in them.

Mr. Cayley.] Are the present wages of labourers paid out of the profits of the farmer, or out of the capital?—Out of his capital.

Do you think that state of things can go on for any long period?—Certainly not.

Do you know any district in England where there is better cultivation carried on than in the East Riding?—Yes, along the banks of the Till in Northumberland the cultivation is very decidedly better.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Have you ever made any experiments, or has it occurred to you to hear of any experiments being made in malt as food for cattle?—I am quite aware of the advantage of using malt as food for cattle, I have tried the experiment myself.

What was the result of your experiment?—Two-thirds of malt was decidedly superior to the full quantity of barley.

To what description of cattle do you apply it?—I merely tried it as an experiment, some years ago, upon Scotch cattle, and particularly I applied it to a very trifling article, poultry; I found that I could fatten fowls more rapidly with two-thirds of the quantity of malt than I could with a full quantity of barley.

Did you ever try it with sheep?—No.

Did you ever make an experiment with the horse?—Very frequently.

What is the effect with the horse?—It is astonishing; I know no means by which I can lay on flesh so rapidly as by giving him malt or linseed, the effect is wonderful upon the horse.

Did you ever hear of any other persons that have made the same experiments?—I have often read of such experiments being tried, and the result always appears to be the same.

Mr. Loch.] Has the land that has gone out of cultivation consisted of whole or portions of farms?—Of whole farms, with the exception of small parts of those farms.

Will you describe the land that has gone out of cultivation?—Strong poor clay land.

Has any money been expended by the landlords on the soil, either in scouring the ditches or in under-ground draining?—Not upon those farms that have gone out of cultivation, and have remained out of cultivation; but the end of those farms is generally that the landlord takes them into his own hands for a year, or something of that sort, and improves them, and lets them at a reduced rent afterwards.

Then a prudent expenditure of capital, in time, might have saved those farms from going out of cultivation?—Yes.

You stated, that in consequence of the depressed state of the

farming interest of that country the landlords have permitted a considerable portion of the old grass lands to be ploughed up; has that tended to precipitate the affairs of the tenant, or otherwise?—It has kept the tenant longer upon his legs.

But it has more materially deteriorated the condition of those farms upon which the permission was given?—Decidedly so.

Mr. Cayley.] Either you think that the land will go out of cultivation and produce a diminished supply, or you think that the Legislature will interfere in some way so as to produce a rise in price?—Exactly.

And you think that is the view of those persons that buy those farms at present?—I do believe it.

Evidence of Mr. James Grinding Cooper.

Farmer not so well off as in 1833—Cultivation of the Land not so good as it was formerly—Many Estates for Sale lately—Removal of local Burdens will not be a sufficient Relief—Tenants generally in a deplorable Condition—Labourers badly off.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Blythburgh, in Suffolk.

What is the state of the farmer?—The condition of the farmer I consider to be bordering on ruin; he is not so well off as he was in 1833.

Do you know any farms untenanted in that part of Suffolk?—I know a farm that has been untenanted till within the last month or so; the landlord could not let it; but I think he has let it within the last month or six weeks.

Was it let at a reduced rent?—I believe at a very reduced rent.

To a man of capital?—I believe to a man of capital at the present time.

Do you know any other farms that have been without tenants?—I have known a small farm last year without a tenant; it was a considerable time in letting.

What sort of land was that?—The principal part of it very heavy land.

Should you say that the cultivation was worse generally in your district at present than it had been previously?—Taking a circle of twenty miles in my neighbourhood I should say that the cultivation is not so good as it was a few years back.

Have there been any estates for sale lately?—Yes.

What number of years' purchase have they fetched?—I can state the case of a farm situated in Earlsoham, in Suffolk. In 1813 the farm was purchased for 4000*l.*; at that time it was mortgaged for 2000*l.*; it is now offered for sale at 2000*l.*, and they cannot obtain that price.

Mr. Clay.] Was it light land?—No, stiff heavy land.

Sir R. Price.] Can you mention any other mode of relief besides relieving you of the local burdens?—I consider that the local

burdens would be a relief, but not to the extent we want; we want more money for our corn.

Can you suggest any mode of bringing that to pass?—I am not sufficiently acquainted with the subject to explain that mode; but it is generally thought an extension of the currency would have that effect.

Mr. Cayley.] Have not you stated that the price of other articles, such as barley and wool and lambs, have risen through scarcity?—I consider when the barley crop was not an average in the years have spoken of, that of course would tend to raise the price of barley.

Therefore, although there may be a tendency to fall, from the diminution of the currency, there may, on the other hand, be a tendency to rise from a diminution of crop?—Yes.

Do you think that the tenants generally speaking are in a very deplorable state?—Generally speaking they are.

If they were pushed hard for their arrears, what would be the consequence?—I should say, taking the farmers as a body they are an insolvent set; there are many exceptions.

Mr. Wodehouse.] If all those rates, poor rates, county rates, and so on, were entirely taken off your shoulders, do you think you could afford to grow wheat at the price you received last year, namely, a fraction under 5*s.* a bushel?—No, I could not.

Mr. Heathcote.] What is the state of the labourers in your part of the country that have regular work?—I believe they are generally not well off; I have men working with me regularly that never have any thing but water to drink.

Chairman.] What is the condition of the aged and infirm poor under the new Poor Law?—I believe the aged and infirm have an allowance made them when they are quite incapable of doing work.

Are they better taken care of now than they were formerly?—I am not aware that there is any difference made to improve the condition of the aged and infirm, but as inmates of the house, I understand that the old are divided from the boys and girls, and so far they are more comfortable.

Evidence of Mr. Robert John Atkinson.

Wold Land has been much improved by the Use of Bones—Lime a good Manure for heavy Soils—Have no regular System of Cropping in Lincolnshire—Land would be improved by Under-draining—Labourers are well off—Farmers not so distressed as in some Districts—Land will not pay with Wheat at 5*s.* a bushel.

Mr. Pelham.] Where do you reside?—At Brocklesby in the county of Lincoln.

Do you consider the general condition of the Wold land to have been improved during the last fifteen or sixteen years?—It has

been very much improved within the last fifteen or sixteen years, but the greatest improvement took place previous to that period.

To what do you attribute the improvement?—To the use of bones and marle, and sowing the land down with small seeds for pasture.

Can you state how many bushels of bones are generally used upon a Wold farm of 500 acres?—It will depend a good deal upon the proportion of land falling to be fallowed; the usual quantity is about two quarters per acre of broken bones, half inch bones with the dust in them.

What is the general system of cropping upon a Wold farm?—The best system of cropping a Wold farm is what is called a five-field course; first fallows or rather turnips, barley, two years seeds for pasture, and then wheat or oats.

Is there not also a four-course system upon the Wolds?—Yes, and that is turnips, barley, seeds for one year, and then wheat or oats, most generally wheat.

Do you consider lime a good manure for clay lands?—Yes, very useful for heavy soils.

Do you think the clay lands in that part of Lincolnshire would be improved if more lime was used?—Undoubtedly.

Do you consider the clay land well managed or ill managed in that part of Lincolnshire?—With a few exceptions I consider it very ill managed indeed.

In what respect?—They have no regular system of cropping, very frequently taking four or five crops in succession; the land generally wants draining, and very little attention has been paid to under-draining.

Do you think there is much distress among the clay farmers?—Partially they have all felt distress, in consequence of the low price of wheat, and their land not being in a good and sufficient state of management to enable them to meet that low price. I consider that the low price of wheat for the last three years has not been a remunerating price to a clay farmer; he must experience a loss, particularly where he is not able to keep any sheep.

Do you think that by proper management more wheat per acre could be grown in the clay lands?—I have no doubt of it.

You have stated that you would recommend the farmers on clay soils to under-drain the land more than they do. Do you think if they were to under-drain the land more they could keep more sheep upon that land than they do at present?—The opinion amongst the clay farmers at present is, that if the land was sown with seeds the sheep would rot upon the seeds; but I am of opinion that if the land was under-drained it would not be the case, they would then be able to keep their sheep without danger upon the clay land.

Are the labourers well off now on the clay lands?—The labourers both upon the clay and upon the Wolds, I believe, are very well off in our part of the country.

Do you ever remember the labourers being better off than they are at present?—No, I do not recollect their ever being better off than they are at present.

What should you call an average crop of wheat upon the clay lands?—I should think the clays have not averaged more than 20 bushels per acre for the last ten years back; probably scarcely so much.

What should you call an average crop of wheat upon the Wold lands?—From 28 to 30 bushels.

Are the county rates heavy in your part of Lincolnshire?—They are considered so.

Mr. Cayley.] According to you the farmers are very prosperous?—I do not mean to say that they are prosperous; but they have not experienced the distress that farmers in many districts have done.

You say the management of the clay land is worse than it was?—I think it is in our neighbourhood.

They have scourged the land in consequence of their distress?—No doubt of it; but the system of management upon our clays has always been bad.

Do you remember when the style of husbandry was worse than it is now in the clays?—No, I do not remember that it was ever worse than it is at present.

Do you think, that after draining, if the price of wheat remains at 5*s*. a bushel, that the land will pay?—No.

Evidence of Mr. Francis Isles.

Resides in the county of Lincoln—Condition of the Farmers in the Wolds much the same as in 1833, but not so good in the Clays—Much Draining has been done in Lincolnshire, by which the Land is improved—Crops in the Wolds for the last three Years have been abundant—Could not have made a Profit on the Clay Land for the last six Years—Great Increase in the Growth of Wheat on the Uplands.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Barnoldby-le-Beck, in the county of Lincoln.

What is your occupation?—I am a farmer. I farm about 1650 acres.

Are you acquainted with the state of agriculture in a large district of country in Lincolnshire?—Yes.

Comparing the condition of the farmer in that district in the year 1833 and at present, should you say that it is improved or not?—I should say that it is much the same on the Wolds, not so good in the clays; the clays have been progressively getting worse.

Is the wheat on the Wolds of as fine a quality as that grown upon the clay lands?—Yes, quite.

Can it enter into competition with it in the markets in Lincolnshire?—Yes.

Has there been much draining done in the clay lands in that part of the county of Lincoln?—Yes.

Has not that improved the condition of the land?—Very much.

Where clay land has been drained, is it not capable of bearing green crops, turnips for instance?—In some districts, not in all.

In the district with which you are immediately acquainted, state what the crops have been for the last three harvests?—The crops in the Wold for the last three harvests have been very abundant.

Have they been equally abundant in the clay land?—Yes, they have been, I think, proportionably so in the last three years.

Above an average crop?—Yes, certainly.

What would you state was the average crop per acre on the Wolds of wheat?—28 or 30 bushels per acre.

Upon the clay farms?—Twenty.

Mr. Cayley.] Taking the clay land for the last six years, do you think you have been making any profit by it?—No.

Since what time has there been a great increase of the growth of wheat upon the uplands?—There has been a great increase within ten years.

Has that been in consequence of the general introduction of bone husbandry?—In a great measure.

Has it particularly increased in the last five or six years?—Yes, it has increased within five or six years.

Evidence of Mr. Samuel Byron.

Lives in Lincolnshire—His Farm improved since 1833—Low Price of Wheat caused by the late abundant Harvests, and by the Quantity of Grazing Land which has been brought into Tillage.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At North Killingholme, in the county of Lincoln.

What is the extent of your farm?—I occupy 1,000 acres of land.

Comparing the condition of your farm with 1833 is it improved or not?—It is improved.

Do you rely entirely or mainly on your wheat crop?—The small farmers do rely almost entirely on the wheat crop.

To what do you attribute the low price of wheat?—I attribute it in the first place to an abundantly great harvest, in the next to the great quantity of grazing land that has been converted into tillage.

Evidence of Mr. William Umbers.

Lives in Warwickshire—30*s.* a quarter would be a protecting Duty for Wheat—Whea cannot be grown at 8*s.* a Bushel with any Profit.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Where do you reside?—At Weston-hall, near Leamington Spa, in the county of Warwick.

What is the extent of your occupation?—I occupy now about 700 acres.

Chairman.] What amount of duty would you propose as a protection to the farmer?—I should say 30*s.* a quarter.

You said you could not grow wheat profitably under 64*s.* a quarter, and you said that with regard to light land as well as clay land?—Upon a great breadth of land that is appropriated to the growth of corn, I am decidedly of opinion that it cannot be grown at 8*s.* a bushel with any profit.

Do you think that the land has upon the whole been better cultivated the last ten years than it was before?—No, worse.

Then it will not grow so much?—No.

Evidence of Mr. Samuel Bickerton.

Lives in Shropshire—Farmers worse off than they were two Years ago—Clay Lands getting into a bad State—8*s.* a remunerating Price for Wheat—Good Barley can be grown on Clay Soil.

Mr. Clive.] Where do you reside?—At Sanford, in the parish of West Felton, near Oswestry, in Shropshire.

How long have you been connected with agriculture?—All my life.

What is the state of the farmers in your neighbourhood generally?—I believe the farmers in the neighbourhood generally are worse off than they were two years ago.

Comparing the last three years with the preceding years, has the produce been greater or less?—I think the produce of the last three years has been rather greater than otherwise, according to the condition and the quality of the land.

Are any clay soils going out of cultivation in your neighbourhood?—The clay soils are getting in a worse state of cultivation, I believe.

What is a remunerating price for wheat, in your opinion?—I should think about 8*s.*

You are well acquainted with the management of the clay soils; can barley of good quality be grown on clay soils?—I have seen as good barley grown on clay soils as ever I have seen in my life; I do not think they grow quite so much in quantity unless the season is particularly fine.

Chairman.] Is that in clay that has been drained?—Where it has been well under-drained.

EVIDENCE OF SCOTCH AGRICULTURISTS, &c.

Evidence of Mr. Robert Hope.

Great attention to deep Draining in the last twenty Years—Done at the Expense of the Tenant—Would not have Drained without a Lease—Good Crops for the last four Years—Land in East Lothian is all Let on Lease, usually for nineteen or twenty Years—Two-thirds of the Country is at a Corn Rent—It is regulated almost entirely by the Price of Wheat alone—Farmers at a Corn Rent have not suffered—Thrashing Mills employed by every Farmer: many worked by Steam: a great Saving by this Means—Corn Laws: they have not been beneficial—Expenses—A vast Improvement in the East Lothians in the last twenty Years.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Fanton Barnes, near Haddington.

Do you occupy a considerable tract of land there?—Yes, I occupy 520 acres, or about 650 English acres.

What is the nature of the soil?—It is generally heavy land, upon a close retentive subsoil.

Do you rent under anybody, or is it your own land?—I rent my land under Mrs. Hamilton Nesbitt Fergusson.

You say it is a strong retentive soil; have you improved it lately by draining?—Yes; I have done a good deal by draining, within the last 20 years.

Is that principally furrow-draining?—Within the last 20 years there is a great deal done in deep-draining; and within the last three years we have now begun to furrow drain.

Has that draining been done entirely at the expense of the tenant, or jointly at the expense of the tenant and the landlord?—Hitherto it has been done by the tenant; in future, I shall be allowed a hundred a year by the proprietor.

Is it tile draining?—Yes.

Mr. Baring.] Do you know what rent your father paid an acre in 1793?—A guinea and a half in 1793.

Since that time has the land been deep drained?—Yes.

Do you know what it cost upon the whole farm?—I believe that the way we are draining now, in furrow-draining, costs about 4*l.* to 5*l.* an acre.

The farm has been also improved by liming; what did that cost an acre?—About 9*l.* an acre, carriage included.

Was the whole farm done with lime?—Almost the whole farm was done with lime.

Mr. Loch.] At your expense?—Yes; that exhausted my capital.

Mr. Baring.] But the farm was let upon an improving lease?

—Yes; I was anxious to improve it to the utmost, with a view to meet the high money-rent.

Mr. Loch.] How much money have you expended altogether in furrow-draining, within the last three or four years; you say that it cost from 4*l.* to 5*l.* an acre; how many acres have you done?—I have only been engaged furrow-draining two years; my lease only commenced recently, and I have laid out about 120*l.* in each of the last two years.

And you expect a return in the additional produce of the land? —Yes, naturally.

Would you have laid this out if you had had no lease?—No, it could not have been expected.

How long is your lease for?—Twenty-one years.

What was the rent that you paid, previous to the present rent, in 1834?—1,365*l.* was the average rent that I paid for the four years ending in 1831, and the average of the three years succeeding that was 1,020*l.*

What has been the state of your crops the last three or four years?—We have had very good crops the last four years.

Good crops of wheat, or of every description?—Generally speaking, all the crops have been good; but of the wheat every crop, the last four years, has been fully above an average crop.

Does that equally apply to oats and barley?—I would say that they have been fair average crops, nothing particular; the Spring grains have been all fair average crops.

When did you take this farm?—I succeeded my father; I have been there since I was very young; since the year 1801.

Then you can say confidently that the crops of the last four years have been considerably more than the average of the preceding years?—Decidedly superior.

Is land in East Lothian let chiefly upon lease, or from year to year?---It is all let upon lease.

What is the usual term of the leases?—Nineteen or twenty-one years is the general term of lease.

Is it let at a money-rent or a corn-rent?—At least two-thirds of the county is now let at a corn-rent; twenty years ago it was at money-rent, and now there are at least two-thirds converted into corn-rents.

Is the corn-rent regulated by the price of wheat, or of any other grain?—Almost invariably by the price of wheat; in a few cases, barley or oats may be taken, but nineteen-twentieths are wheat entirely.

Chairman.] As your rent has varied according to the price of wheat, and as your labourers' wages have varied with the price of corn, it is presumed that you have not suffered much distress from the low price of wheat for the last two years?---No; the farmers who have a corn-rent have not suffered any thing for the last four years with us, because our rent is regulated by the price of wheat;

and one great proportion of our farm servants are paid in kind, and their wages rise and fall according to the price of grain chiefly.

What is the course of cropping in that soil?—We have a six-course rotation upon land such as I occupy. We bgin with fallow, wheat, grass or clover, oats, beans, and wheat.

No turnips?—Nothing worth speaking of; and as many potatoes as serve the farm, but none for sale.

Mr. Miles.] Do you grow those upon the fallows?---No, upon the bean portion.

Chairman.] Do you plough with two horses?—Yes.

Have you employed thrashing mills?—Yes, we have all thrashing mills; every farmer in the country has a thrashing mill.

Are those thrashing mills worked by water, or by horses, or by steam?—They are getting rapidly to be worked by steam; I think there are about 63 or 64 steam engines in the county.

What is the first cost of one of those steam thrashing machines?—A high-pressure engine of six-horse power, such as I have, of the best construction, is 145*l.*

What quantity of corn will it thrash out per day?—We can easily thrash 30 quarters of wheat. I reckon that we can thrash 24 bushels an hour of wheat, and about 40 bushels of other grain.

What is the consumption of coal per hour, to feed the engine?—A ton for 10 hours.

At what price do you purchase it per ton?—It is at various prices; I can purchase coal at present for the engine at 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* the ton; it is an inferior kind of coal; that is at the coalpit.

What does it cost you at home?—At the most it is not exceeding 8*s.* a ton, valuing the full price of labour for the hire of a cart.

Have you experienced a great saving in consequence of the employment of the thrashing machine?—Yes, we consider it a very great advantage.

How much a quarter do you save by it?—I reckon the expense of thrashing does not exceed 1*s.* a quarter for wheat, and from 8*d.* to 9*d.* for other grains; that includes carting the corn and carrying off the straw, and farming the corn to a certain extent.

Does that include all the labour of feeding the engine and watching the engine?—Yes, and coal.

Does it include interest upon the prime cost of the machine?—It would even allow a smaller per centage upon that.

Mr. Loch.] Have you ever thought any thing about the present corn laws, whether they are beneficial to the farmer, or not?—Yes, they have been often discussed, but it is a very general feeling among those that pay corn-rents, that they have not been hitherto beneficial, but the very reverse of being beneficial.

What is your reason for that opinion?—It induced men to offer more than has been well realized by the price of corn, because it was generally expected from the corn laws, that prices would be

kept up to something like what they promised; that the import of foreign corn would be restricted, and by that means keep up the price of the home growth to 70*s.* or so.

Is it the operation of the law, or some other cause, that has made the price of wheat so low, in your opinion?—I think the law has had nothing to do in bringing down the price of wheat; I think it is the favourable seasons and the abundant crops.

The favourable seasons and the abundant crops have affected the price of wheat, not the corn laws?—Yes.

Then how has the corn law disappointed your expectation?—Because it led those that took farms at money-rents, to give a much higher rent than they would have done.

Then they did not calculate upon such favourable seasons?—They did not expect that a series of favourable seasons would ever reduce prices at the rate we have seen the last six months.

Then is it the opinion of you and those other gentlemen that have considered the subject in the way you mention, that the present corn law ought to continue, or do you think that any change would be beneficial to the farmer?—From what we experienced in the year 1831, I am disposed to think that a change might be more beneficial to the farmer, by reducing the scale at which foreign corn is imported.

By reducing the limit?—Yes.

How would that be more favourable to you?—Because prices were run to the top of the scale in 1829; before any foreign corn could be imported, they were run up so high as 70*s.* a quarter; when we could not grow so much wheat as we paid in rent, and had the price only run up to 60*s.* a quarter, we should just have had so much less money to make up the deficient quantity of wheat.

Then, it is as affects corn-rents, that your observationap plies?—It applies entirely to that.

Mr. Sanford.] You have stated that the existing corn law you consider is prejudicial to the farmer; is your opinion founded upon the circumstance of there having been a miscalculation as to the effects to be produced by the corn laws, or upon the working of the corn laws themselves?—I think by the present working of the corn laws that it may run prices too high for the interest of the farmers in years of scarcity; before any foreign corn can be admitted into the country, prices may be run up so high as to be prejudicial to the interest of the farmer; because in such a year as we had in 1831, we could not grow so much wheat as we had to pay in rent.

Mr. Clay.] If the result of this corn law should be to produce great fluctuations in price, you would think that effect would apply to all farmers?—I think it has been prejudicial to those that even pay a money-rent, because I am sure that if it had not been for the corn laws, they would not have given so high a money-rent.

Mr. Sanford.] That proceeded from a miscalculation, upon their part, as to the effect to be produced by the corn law?—It was merely a miscalculation.

You mentioned, that you made use of rape-cake as manure; what does that cost you an acre?—It costs about 5*l.* per ton, and we lay on from half a ton to a ton an acre; last year and this year I have expended 300*l.* upon rape-cake alone.

Have you purchased any manure besides?—Nothing to speak of.

Have you purchased any lime since your new lease began?—Yes.

How much?—About 38*l.* a few months ago.

Then, since your new lease commenced, you have expended upon draining 240*l.*, upon extra manure in rape-cake 300*l.*, and 40*l.* upon lime?—Yes.

How long does the effect of lime last?—We reckon that when land has been once thoroughly limed, it never again reverts to the same appearance; that is the general opinion, and, so far as my observation has gone, that is the case.

What do you reckon thoroughly limed?—We apply 60 bolls of six bushels a boll, that was 360 bushels, to the Scotch acre.

What does it cost you a boll?—Two shillings a boll.

Do you feed any cattle?—Yes, from 70 to 90, in the winter, upon turnips, &c.

Where do you send your cattle?—Chiefly to Edinburgh and Glasgow; some to Morpeth.

Have you introduced an economical method of feeding cattle?—Yes, I have a report here upon the subject.

So that upon clay lands, you are able to feed cattle at a more economical rate than if you were to raise turnips for feeding them?—This experiment will show that, I think.

Will you state shortly what it is?—I had twenty cattle, I put them into four lots, each of five; to one I gave the produce of three and a half imperial acres of turnips; to another five I gave the produce of an acre and three quarters of turnips, and an acre and three quarters of potatoes; to another five I gave an acre and three quarters produce of beans, and an acre and three quarters of turnips; to another five, an acre and three quarters of beans, and an acre and three quarters of potatoes.

What has been the result of those different methods of feeding?—The quantity of food stored for lot No. 1, was 49 ton 10 cwt., and the total food consumed by that number was 48 ton 18 cwt. The increase in girth upon that lot upon turnips alone was 2 feet two inches; the increase on lot No. 2, on turnips and potatoes, was 2 feet 5½ inches; the increase upon the turnips and meal, was 3 feet 1 inch; and the increase upon the potatoes and meal, was 3 feet ½ inch. But I must say that the girthing by which they were tried is not altogether a certain mode; but I expect to get an accurate return; indeed the cattle were sold with that obligation, that the fleshers should keep a correct account of the weight of beef, tallow, and hide.

Were the whole of the cattle the same kind of cattle?—Yes, they were bred by myself, two years old, and of the same quality; they were lotted by two gentlemen, one of whom is here, and I attended to their keeping.

You have stated that your expenses upon an acre are about 2*l.* 12*s.* and your rent about 2*l.* 3*s*, making together about 4*l* 15*s.*; you stated that the incomings upon an acre are about 6*l.*; that will leave you per acre 1*l.* 5*s.* a year; you are in a prosperous condition, surely, if you are receiving on the whole of your farm 687*l.* a year?—Yes, but that is upon the supposition that we grow the crops I have mentioned, which have been grown the last three or four years.

Do not you receive a less price in consequence of those fuller crops?—Yes, but we pay so much less rent.

You stated the price to be 50*s.*; have you been receiving 50*s.* a quarter, for the last three years, for your wheat?—I think it has been about 2*l.* 2*s.*

But the last year it was 36*s.*?—Yes.

Supposing the price was to remain about 40*s.* a quarter upon an average of years, what would be your condition then?—I think, with good crops, we might make a fair shift.

With average crops?—With average crops.

You say that in the last three years you have got 657 quarters upon your wheat land, and 384 in the four years previous; were the four years previous average seasons?—Not at all, they were very far inferior to that.

Then the 657 is not all to be attributed to good crops, but the 384 is to be attributed in a great degree to bad crops?—To a series of very unfavourable seasons.

Did they grow more than half an average crop during those wet seasons?—Yes, they grew more than half an average crop, because they were rather more than half of the last four, which are above an average.

Taking the last four together, were they much above an average?—They have been fully above an average.

Are the lands in East Lothian as well cultivated now as they were twenty or thirty years ago?—Yes, they are as well cultivated as ever they were.

Are they better cultivated?—Better than they were four years ago, because we had five years ago a series of very unfavourable seasons.

Taking the period before that, do you perceive any improvement in the husbandry of the Lothians within the last twenty years?—A vast improvement within the last thirty years; a great part of the heavy land in the county was limed; now that was an immense improvement, and it was an expensive improvement.

If the cultivation has very much improved within the last twenty years, how did it happen that your father was able to pay the same

rent within 10*l.* that you now pay?—The expenditure was more moderate at that period; there were fewer labourers kept upon the farm.

Evidence of Mr. Andrew Howden.

Has drained a great deal both by Deep Draining and Furrow Draining—By Furrow Draining has been able to grow Turnips on Soils formerly quite unfit—Cost from 6*l.* to 12*l.* per Acre—Nature of the Furrow Drains—The Drained Land has paid a fair Interest for the Money expended on it—Tenantry in East Lothian improved in Circumstances within the last three or four years—Mainly owing to the Conversion of Money Rents into Corn Rents—Cultivation improving—Farmers were better off in 1792—Mr. A. Howden better off than when he started in Life—All other Farmers in his Neighbourhood have been forced to leave—They were ruined by taking Farms on a Supposition that Corn was to be 80*s.* a Quarter—Corn Laws have deceived both Landlord and Tenant—Education of Farmers in Scotland—His own three Sons—Clover Seed—It would be Advantageous to the Farmer in the East Lothians to take off the Duty on Foreign Clover Seed—Potatoes.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Lawhead, in East Lothan.

Do you occupy a large farm?—About 500 Scotch acres, 625 English.

Do you rent it, or is it your own property?—I rent one farm from the Earl of Haddington, and the other from Miss Dalrymple, of Hailes.

What is the nature of the soil?—The nature of the Lawhead farm, which I hold of Lord Haddington, is a turnip soil.

What is the extent of that?---Two hundred Scotch acres.

What is the other?—Partly turnip soil and partly clay soil.

Is yours a corn-rent or a money-rent?—A corn-rent now.

Has your farm been improved by drainage within the last four or five years?—I commenced farming in 1792; I had then three years of a lease to run, which had been taken by my father; I took a lease then of 21 years, and then I drained, and in consequence of that it is only now that I am furrow-draining the lay land.

Your first draining was not furrow-draining?—No.

Your deep draining is to take off the spring water, and furrow-draining is to take off the rain water?—Yes.

By means of furrow-draining have you been able to grow turnips upon land that was formerly unfit to grow turnips?—I have; this very season I have had a proof of it.

Will your describe your mode of furrow-draining?—In my case, being situated near to a mountain which is slaty, I have an opportunity of getting flat stones, and although I have in some instances drained with tile, I generally use stones, what we call couple drains, and put six or eight inches of rock metal above it.

What is the depth of the drains?—Two feet and a half.

Do you make up each furrow, or each second furrow?---Generally speaking, I have done it in alternate furrows.

How much does it cost an acre?—From 6*l.* to 12*l.* an acre.

Is that entirely at your own expense?---It has been hitherto; but I expect that Miss Dalrymple, who is a very kind proprietor, will allow me a part of it.

Sir Robert Peel.] Is there any lateral line between the two main drains?---There is a good deal of stone in different parts of the farm, and we often find bursts of water from the rock, and for those bursts we cut a strong cross-drain, so as to lead it into a furrow-drain.

What is the distance of the two furrow-drains from each other? ---My ridges are only 16 feet; generally through the county they are 18 feet.

In stiff land, does the influence of that drain extend on each side six or eight feet?---Yes; I have never seen any land that was wet after it was furrow-drained, however wet it was before.

It is not necessary to have a side drain in stiff clay?---There is no land that I know that is wet after that process.

The drain is dug in the ordinary way, preparatory to the tile being put in?---With me it is; but I believe there are other persons that cut the drain narrower; but I get them cut to the depth of two feet and a half; in most cases the drains are filled up by the mould getting in, and therefore I deepen the drain more than some people do; I believe that two feet is usual.

Chairman.] Have you a tile at the bottom?—No, two slates; and where I have put a tile, I have put the concave side uppermost, and covered it with a slatish stone, so that the stream of water is in the circular part of the drain; and then I put about six or eight inches of stone above it.

Was this draining done entirely at your own expense?—Entirely at my own expense in the outset.

Have you ever been allowed anything from your landlord for drainage?—No; I am in expectation of it.

Has it paid you a fair interest for your money?—I think it has; the farm was in a state of nature when I entered, and I improved it very much by draining.

What is the state of the tenantry in East Lothian, within your knowledge?—Better than it was.

When did the improvement take place?—I think within three or four years.

Is that in consequence of the fine seasons?—Mainly, I apprehend, and also in consequence of the conversion of money-rent into corn-rent.

You consider that to be a great advantage to the farmer?—The greatest of any.

In these corn-rents is there any maximum, or do they rise to the full price of corn?—I had a maximum with the Earl of Haddington, when he converted it into bolls; our boll is four bushels; the maximum at that time with Lord Haddington was 44*s.* a boll, and it is now 35*s.*, that is 70*s.* a quarter.

Should you say that the cultivation of the farms generally in that part of East Lothian has improved?— I think considerably.

Mr. Cayley.] Do you think the farmers, generally speaking, were better off before the war, in 1792, than they are now?—I think so.

Do you think they were making more money?—With me there would be no question of it, because it was then that we acquired capital, which kept us upon our feet for a time.

Do you think, from 1830 to the present time, you have been increasing your capital much?—I think, if I sold off, I am better now than when I started in life.

If you had been sold off in 1820, do you think you would have been better off than you are now?—I do not know that mine is a fair case to be taken as a general case, because I started very poor in life, and I have had a hard struggle, and other circumstances that contributed to assist me: I am the only remaining farmer in the parish where I was brought up; except myself, there is not a farmer nor the son of a farmer remaining within the parish but myself.

What is the reason of their having all gone away?—The money-rents that were exacted of them; they all conceived that they were to have 80*s.* a quarter, and their calculations were made upon that; it soon appeared that that could not be realized, and they were not converted, and ruin has been the consequence.

Then there has been a great change of tenantry in your neighbourhood?—There has been.

And that has been caused by the fall of prices?—Yes, and the want of accommodation on the part of the proprietors.

The proprietors have not reduced their rents in proportion?—They now have generally done so; but they were later in doing it than the circumstances required, and therefore the tenantry fell.

In your opinion, did the corn law that was made in 1815 deceive both the landlord and the tenant?—It did; I believe that the calculation upon which they took at that time was almost universally 4*l.* a quarter.

The general impression was, that the corn laws then made would have the effect of keeping wheat at the price of 80*s.*, and both landlord and tenant were deceived in that?—Yes.

There was some other cause at work, which brought the price down?—I do not know.

If the corn law had not the effect of keeping up the price, something must have reduced the price?—It did reduce; but as to the cause, I shall not pretend to say.

The corn law having promised a price of 80*s.* failed to perform it?—Yes.

Mr. B. Baring.]—Comparing the education of the farmers in Scotland and in England, how would a farmer in Scotland, holding 500 acres, bring up his son to husbandry?—I have three sons; I was advanced in life before I married; I am giving them the

best education I can, but they will be nothing but farmers; but I am not exactly breeding them as I was bred myself, for I was just a regular labourer under my father for four years in my youth, but I am sending them at an expense, for the three of them, of 100*l.* a-year board; it is what I cannot very well spare, but I think it is the best manner in which I can spend money on their account.

Where do you send them?—To the neighbouring town; I have them a part of the day, each of them, in a writer's office, to learn to do business.

Sir James Graham.] Are they taught practically all the operations of husbandry?—When I get them home, I shall make them attend to every part of it, to do the work just as I did; because I have had a number of young men under my charge, and several of them have been gentlemen that have kept horses; and I have had another set, that held the plough, and attended to every part of the work, and three out of four of those that practically made themselves acquainted with it are thriving, whereas I can scarcely name one of the others that is.

Your own sons you will make hold the plough?—I will.

Mr. B. Baring.] What kind of education do they get in the town?—The person is a good mathematician, but he also is a good Latin scholar, and they will be taught Latin.

And agricultural chemistry?—No, I mean to send them with their mother to Edinburgh in the coming season; she will watch over them a year in the town.

Will chemistry then form a part of their education?—I believe that it sometimes does, and it is my purpose that it should be so; I have thought of bringing up two of them to form a judgment of land, and to sell their judgment, seeing there are others that I have noticed in the line that have made more money than by farming; I intend one of them to manage the farm at home, and the other to go abroad.

Mr. Evans.] What age will they be when they return to you?—Eighteen.

Sir James Graham.] What quantity of clover-seed do you sow an acre?—Sixteen pounds a Scotch acre.

Would you think it advantageous to the farmers of East Lothian if the price of clover-seed were reduced?—Yes, it would benefit me about 15*l.* a-year.

What reduction do you contemplate when you say that?—Twenty shillings a hundred weight I was calculating upon the duty.

What would be the feeling of the farmers generally, as to reducing the duty?—They would feel gratified by its change, because we scarcely ever think of saving the seed; our climate is quite unsuited to it.

If you wish to ensure a crop, you must grow a large quantity?—Yes; I think I should lose, if I sowed a small quantity.

Therefore it is an object to the Scottish farmers, and to the

farmers in the north generally, who must sow a large quantity, to have the price of clover-seed considerably reduced?—Yes.

Mr. Miles.] Do you prefer English clover, or foreign?—Much the same; the English clover is generally stronger.

Sir James Graham.] Is not the foreign better than the British?—I scarcely think I know any difference; I have sown both with equal success.

How did you give the potatoes?—Raw; at one time I competed for the premium of the Highland Society; I believe I was the first to determine that steaming was not an advantage, that the raw food rather fed better than the steamed food.

Are not beasts fed upon raw potatoes apt to swell?—Yes; and therefore we dare not give them potatoes at all times.

Does not steaming obviate that?—Yes, I think it does.

How do you give the bean meal?—Crushed at the mill.

In that rough state?—Yes.

Evidence of Mr. John Brodie.

Resides in the County of Haddington—By Draining has grown Turnips where formerly they would not grow—Expects the Expense will pay him—Drains thirty-six Feet from each other in alternate Furrows—Draining with Tiles and Flats, costs about 4*l.* 10*s.* an acre, with Stones about 4*l.*—Furrow Draining the greatest Improvement that ever took place in East Lothian—Foreign Manures have also tended to increase Production—When Tenants have met with liberality, the Improvements go on—Low Price has been occasioned by great Crops, the Result of fine Seasons—North of England Clay Lands are behind hand—They can pay but little Rent—They want Draining—Very little Flax or Hemp grown in Haddington—It is an exhausting Crop.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Amisfield Mains, in the county of Haddington.

Do you farm extensively in that county?—About 950 imperial acres.

What is the nature of the soil upon your farm?—It is, part of it, dry turnip land, another part is loam upon a damp sub-soil, and there is part of it clay.

Is it one farm or more?—Two farms, where I reside under the Earl of Wemys, and the other is the property of Lord Blantyre.

Is the first farm all of one description of soil?—No, a mixed soil; there are about 250 acres fit to grow turnips, and the other part we have to fallow once in six years.

What is the other farm?—It was exceedingly wet when I got it ten years ago, but by draining we have made a considerable part of it turnip land which never grew turnips before.

Is your rent a corn-rent or a money-rent?—The farm I have been draining is a corn-rent, the other farm is a money-rent.

Was that draining done entirely at your own expense?—I got 1,000*l.* from the proprietor out of the first five years' rent, to drain and make additional buildings. This was calculated upon when I

took the farm. When I gave in my offer, I stipulated to have 500*l.* for draining and improving; that offer was not accepted, but I was requested to make out a second offer, with a stipulation for an allowance of 200*l.* annually out of the first five years' rents. I calculated that I could afford to give twelve and a half quarters of wheat more of rent, and got the farm upon that offer.

Then part of your rent is interest of money that has been spent in improving your farm ?—Yes.

Have you done anything upon your own account, independent of this ?—Yes ; I soon found that I had got all the money laid out, and that it would be necessary for me to continue the draining, even although it should be done at my own expense. In the mean time I lost my landlord, and the estate devolved upon a minor ; and I soon found that I could not get anything from his guardians for stone drains. I have since been allowed 200*l.* for tiles, but that does not half cover what I have laid out on tiles. Other small drains I have done with stones set up on edge, and I found they answer on a hard sub-soil, and where the stones do not sink into the ground ; but where there is sand, stones do not answer the purpose so well as tiles.

Do you think the improvement that you have made yourself upon your farm, in the way of draining, has paid you ?—I think it will pay me in the end ; it has made a great improvement in the soil.

You can grow turnips now where you could not grow them before ?—Yes ; I had about 50 acres of turnips last year, where before I could only grow small patches of them.

Mr. Loch.] Have you drained any portion of your very worst clay land ?—Yes.

Is that the land which is now capable of bearing turnips, which formerly was not capable of bearing turnips ?—The worst clay land is not suitable to bearing turnips, unless it had more drains than I spoke of. It would require one in every 18 feet, and I do not know whether that would be sufficient, it would be so much hurt by taking off the turnips.

What is the particular improvement that has occurred in consequence of your draining your clay land in the way you have done? —The plants thrive better ; we have heavier crops, and they are more easily kept clean.

Mr. Miles.] What soil is it which is now turnip land where it was not before ?—It is generally loam, part on a sandy sub-soil, and some of it a hard retentive sub-soil.

Mr. Loch.] Was it a clay soil above the sub-soil or a loamy soil ?—It is a loamy soil, the water was kept up by an impervious clay.

How near are the drains to each other ?—Thirty-six feet from each other in general.

Then it is in alternate furrows ?---Yes.

What is the depth of the drain?—About two and a half feet.

What is the expense per acre of draining according to the system you have followed?—If you drain with tiles and flats and alternate furrows, it costs about 4*l.* 10*s.* the imperial acre; and if you do it with stone, it is about half of that, but the cartage of the stones is not included in that; the cartage would cost 20*s.*

Then it is nearly 4*l.* an acre?—Yes.

Mr. Miles.] What size are the drain-stones?—Perhaps 6 inches broad; but all of that size are set up on edge, closely packed together in the bottom of the drain, and the small stones are put upon the top.

It is a sort of slaty stone?---Yes, we prefer it.

Mr. Loch.] What depth is left between the bottom of the furrow and the top of the drain?—Rather more than 10 inches.

The depth of the tile and the stones and the drain together is 14 inches?---If it is a sandy sub-soil, we do not use the stones above the tiles.

You fill it up, either in one way or another, to the depth of 14 inches?—If we are draining through a sandy subsoil, it requires nothing but a very little straw above the tiles; if a hard subsoil, it requires either to be gravel or small stones, or the switchings of hedges.

Chairman.] Is not sandy subsoil liable to wash into the drains?—We put a little straw above the tiles.

Mr. Loch.] Then when you fill it up with stones, it is 14 inches altogether?—Yes.

Had there been any draining done upon the farm previously, according to the old system of deep draining upon the land?—The money stipulated for in the lease was all expended, except about 200*l.* in deep drains across the fields and flood-water drains.

The money that was stipulated for was laid out upon the old system of cutting cross drains?—Yes; some of them very deep, and there were several places where flood-water came through the middle of fields in open ditches. I got those closed in by building upon the sides, and I had stones put below them to prevent the water running away the sides, and covered them with large stones above, and those drains were in general about 18 inches high in the sides, and from 14 to 16 inches wide. Those were very expensive, and they ran away with a great part of the money. We began with 6 feet drains; it was the custom at that time to cut deep to get into the water; but we did not make the fields sufficiently dry for carrying turnips and eating off a part with sheep.

Are the ditches well scoured round the fields?—Yes.

What depth are they?---They are three feet deep, with a good slope upon the side, perhaps five feet wide upon the top.

What is the depth of the furrow?—We plough from 7 to 9 inches deep.

Have you stirred the subsoil in this instance by any subsequent

ploughing, or by what is known by the name of Smith of Dainston's plough?—No, I have never seen that practised.

Have you trench-ploughed at all?—Not at all; all our ploughing is deep; we think it an advantage if we begin deep to continue so. Some people plough deep once in six years, but I think it is the best way to begin and continue deep.

Mr. Loch.] Were you examined before the former Committee on Agriculture?—Yes, in 1821.

Have there been any improvements made in East Lothian since 1821?—Yes, the furrow-draining, in my opinion, is the greatest improvement that ever took place in East Lothian; foreign manures have also tended much to increase production.

From what period has that taken place?---There has been a good deal of draining for ten or twelve years; but the furrow-draining has only been common about the half of that time.

Has the difficulty of the times rather added to it, by causing a necessity for greater exertions?---In newly-taken farms the landlord has often assisted in the drainage; in other cases people saw the improvement, and they have gone on with it at their own expense. But it is such a permanent improvement, that the proprietors in many instances have assisted the tenants in it.

Then, the low prices have not of late years stopped the improvements in East Lothian?—With some farmers it has done so, because many were not able to keep their farms at a money-rent; and if the proprietors in general had not converted their rents into wheat, there would have been a great many more failures. The conversion of money-rent into wheat, was the saving of the tenantry.

Where the tenantry have been met with liberality on the part of the landlords, the improvements have continued to go on?—I think so.

In your opinion, what has the low price of wheat, that has lately existed in this country, been owing to?—To the great crops.

Is that from improved cultivation or the state of the season?—The seasons have materially tended to it, I think. If we had had such seasons as there were in 1827 to 1831, both inclusive, the difference in the crops of wheat would have been very little, because no cultivation could have prevented the damage done by the fly and mildew.

Then, it is entirely owing to the better seasons you think?—I think so.

Is there any thing, in your opinion, that parliament could now do to assist the tenants?—Nothing, that I know of; unless any improvement could be made in the present corn-law, to make it more perfect.

Do you know anything of the cultivation of other parts of Scotland except the Lothians?—Yes, I have frequently been in Berwickshire, Roxburghshire, and Mid-Lothian.

Do you know the improvements that have been made in the

West of Scotland latterly by tile draining?—I have heard of it, but I have never been there.

Do you know any thing of the cultivation of any part of England?—Very little, except travelling South, when I was here before, and now.

What appears to be the state of the clay lands in England?—They appear rather behind in the North part.

Are they in a state to pay much rent?—No, I think not; the wet land can pay very little.

Does it appear much exhausted?—Yes; very much neglected.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Is that from the want of draining?—Yes.

Mr. Sanford.] Has there been any flax or hemp cultivated in your neighbourhood?—Very little; at one time it was customary to grow flax for the servants, but that is given up; they get money instead, which is much better for them.

Is the land calculated for the growth of flax?—I cannot answer that question; it is not reckoned a profitable crop; it deteriorates the land, and leaves nothing to improve it.

Evidence of Mr. David Walker.

Resides in Aberdeenshire—Tenants improving during the last three or four Years—Leases of nineteen Years prevail—Bone Dust much used—Lime brought from Sunderland and Newcastle—The Country, both in Light and Clay Soils, is in a higher State of Cultivation than formerly—Furrow Draining has greatly improved the Condition of the Land—Costs about 6*l.* per Acre—It has been going on for the last four or five Years—Has used the Sub-soil Plough—It is one of the most beneficial Inventions made of late Years—Labourers in a good Condition, and all employed—Much fat Cattle sent to London by Steam—Much new Land has been brought into Cultivation of late Years, at an Expense of 10*l.* to 15*l.* per Acre—Parliament can do nothing for Agriculturists—They are in a good and wholesome Condition.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—In Aberdeen, in Scotland.

What is your occupation?—Land-surveyor and land-valuer.

Do you occupy any land yourself?—Yes, I occupy a farm of about 220 acres.

Is that in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen?—About twelve miles from Aberdeen, in the county of Kincardine.

Are you well acquainted with the state of the tenantry in Aberdeenshire?—I am.

Has the condition of the tenantry in the county of Aberdeen improved or not within the last three or four years?—I think it has improved within the last three years.

Does that observation apply equally to those that hold upon a corn-rent and those upon a money-rent?—It applies to both; but I think more to those that pay money-rents, in consequence of the increased price of cattle.

What is the nature of the soil in that country?—What we call turnip soil, light land.

What are the crops principally grown upon it?—Oats, bear and barley; very little wheat.

Bear is a coarse description of barley?—It is.

It is used for malting as well as barley?—It is.

Do the tenants usually occupy the farms under leases?—Under leases, generally of nineteen years' endurance.

What are the rotations of crops upon their farms?—The general rotation is five years or seven years; the five years consist of turnips, potatoes, and other green crops, succeeded by bear and barley, with grass two years, and then oats, and then turnips and potatoes.

Mr. Loch.] What is the seven years' shift?—It differs in this respect, that the grass is allowed to lie three years, and then they take two successive white crops.

Do they manure again for the second crop?—Very seldom.

Is it supposed in that country, that by letting the grass lie three years, they can afford to take two white crops?—That is the general impression.

What is your opinion upon that?—I am rather inclined to differ from it, and to prefer the five-course system.

Chairman.] Do you manure with bone-dust?—It is very generally used in the county.

Mr. Caley.] How much per acre?—It varies from 10 to 25 bushels the imperial acre, according to the mode of applying it.

Do you put any fold-yard manure?—Yes, it is sometimes put in with the common farm-yard dung, and sometimes by itself; and the system of dibbling is very much introduced now, and it is dibbled in.

How many cart-loads of fold-yard manure do you apply to an acre, in conjunction with a medium quantity of bones?—From 10 to 15 loads of fold-yard manure.

Mr. Loch.] Do you mean that you dibble the whole of the crop?—The bones are dibbled.

Do you lime at all?—Yes.

To what extent?—To the extent of 8 to 15 bolls of lime per acre.

What is that in bushels?—It is four times that in bushels.

What does it cost you per acre?—About 3*s.* a boll.

Where does the lime come from?—Partly from England; we have got limestone in the county.

Chairman.] Does it come in the shape of ballast?—It is sent for to Sunderland and Newcastle.

Has there been much improvement going on, in liming and boning and artificial manure, in Aberdeenshire?—A great deal.

Then you consider the country to be in a higher state of cultivation than it was four or five years ago?—Yes.

Mr. Cayley.] Do you apply that to all sorts of land, or the light land?—To the light land particularly, but I think improve-

ments are going on, even upon the stiff clay land; draining is carried to greater perfection than it has been before.

Chairman.] Upon any farm that you are in the habit of surveying, is there much of that stiff clay land?—Yes, there is, in some parts of the country along the coast.

Has that been much improved by draining?—It has.

Is that stone-draining or tile-draining?—Stones where they can be had; tile-draining is very little used.

Mr. Loch.] Is it furrow-draining?—Furrow-draining is what I allude to, when I speak of draining clay land.

What has been the effect upon the land which has been so furrow-drained?—It is very much improved in its fertility by the drainage; it is more friable than it was; they can cultivate turnips upon it when it is put into that state, which could not be done before.

What is the expense of draining per acre?—About 6*l.* to do it thoroughly.

At whose expense is that done; the landlord's or the tenant's?—Sometimes both; the proprietor often casts the drains, and the tenant fills them.

Chairman.] What rent will your clay land bear when it is drained?—From 16*s.* to 20*s.* the imperial acre.

Mr. Cayley.] How long has this system of draining been going on?—Four or five years.

What led to the great stimulus to the draining?—The state that the land was in previous to its being drained.

Do you plough with two horses?—Generally with two; sometimes with four, after the first crop of oats, and before turnips.

How deep do you plough when you plough with a pair of hosses?—In ploughing from clover generally five to six inches deep.

How much do you plough in a day at that rate with a pair of horses?—About a Scotch acre, that is, about an acre and a quarter imperial.

In the other ploughings what is the depth to which you go then?—From eight inches to a foot.

What is the nature of your subsoil?—In some parts of the county it is sand and gravel, and in other parts of the county along the coast it is a retentive clay.

How deep do you plough into it?—As deep as they can go.

When is it that they use the four horses?—Before turnips or fallow.

How deep do you go when you make use of the four horses?—About a foot.

And how much do you plough with the four horses at that depth?—About an imperial acre.

Chairman.] Did you ever see the subsoil plough?—Yes.

Mr. Loch.] How do you find it act?—Remarkably well upon a soil that requires it.

It stirs the subsoil without raising it to the surface?—Yes.

And gives a much greater depth for the water to sink into?—Yes; it is one of the most beneficial implements of husbandry that has been invented for many years.

How many horses do you work it with?—Four, and sometimes six.

What depth do you go with it?—There is a plough with a pair of horses goes before it that turns over the furrow about six or eight inches deep, and the subsoil plough follows in the same track to the depth of about twelve or sixteen inches?—

Then it is about ten inches?—Yes.

Do you do that without also furrow-draining, or is it done in conjunction with furrow-draining?—It ought to be done in conjunction with it, but it is sometimes done without it.

What is the expense of ploughing an acre in that way with the subsoil plough, including the first ploughing with a pair of horses?—From 20*s.* to 24*s.* an acre.

That is an expense entirely borne by the tenant?—Altogether.

Does the tenant find it his advantage to be at that expense in order to make the ploughing so deep?—I have no doubt of it.

How long has it been practised in Aberdeenshire?—Trench-ploughing has been in practice a great many years, but not with the same description of subsoil plough.

You reckon that a great improvement?—I do, very great.

Chairman.] What is the condition of the labourers in that part of Scotland?—The condition of the labourers, I think, is good.

Are they all employed? They are.

Do you pay them in kind or in money?—Money generally.

Mr. Heathcote.] Do not they use spirits more than beer in that county?—Not farm servants.

Mr. Loch.] Have you been in the habit of sending a good number of cattle to the London market by steam?—Yes, and it is increasing very much.

Do you fatten them in your country?—Yes.

That is a new source of profit?—It is, the introduction of steam navigation has been of great consequence to Aberdeen on that account.

Mr. Miles.] What is the expense per head of sending them to London by steam?—About 1*l.* 16*s.* for landing them, and there are other charges, which make it altogether amount to from 45*s.* to 50*s.* when sold.

Had you been in the habit of ever sending any drove previously?—It was that which I alluded to in answer to a former question.

Were they ever fat?—Seldom or never fat.

Has there been much new land got into cultivation, in Aberdeen, the last few years which was heath before?—Yes.

What is the expense of bringing in an acre of land from heath? —The whole expense may be from 10*l.* to 15*l.* an acre.

Is there any thing in the condition of the farming interest in that district that could be relieved by any aid from Parliament? —I am not aware of any aid that Parliament could give the agricultural interest in Aberdeenshire that would be of much benefit to them.

Then you think that, if they are left alone, they will gradually get into a good and wholesome state?—I do think so.

Are they in that condition now? – Yes, I reckon them so.

And that they have improved the last three or four years?—I am certain they are better, and in much better spirits than they were three years ago.

Evidence of Lawrence Oliphant, Esq. M.P.

Is Member for Perth—Agriculture has greatly improved in the last sixteen years—It has been produced by Furrow Draining and Bone Manure—Furrow Draining is chiefly an Improvement for Clay Soil, and Bone Dust for Light Soils—Land in Perthshire is mostly let for nineteen Years, and on a Corn Rent—All out-goings in Scotland, except Road Money, is paid by the Landlord—Public Prosecutions in Scotland paid out of a general Cess—Furrow Draining costs about 2*l.* per Acre—Trench Ploughing is essential to the Improvement after Furrow Draining—It would be an advantage to take off the Duty on Clover Seed—Scotch Banking could not be introduced into England—A great deal of Upland in Perthshire—Farmers on them doing well—Farms in East Lothian generally large—The tendency is to increase small Farms—Both the Quantity and Quality of Corn on a large Farm superior to a small—All the People, Male and Female, can Read and Write—Soil in England might produce a great deal more—A Scotsman is surprised at the State of England, many thousand Acres there produce only one-fourth part of what they are capable—It is the result of Ignorance—Men with Science and Capital have pushed the slothful and ignorant Men out of the Market—Production has outstripped Consumption—Proved by the Population and Corn Returns—Science may prevent in a great Degree the Effects of Weather.

Chairman.] You are member for Perth?—I am.

Are you a large proprietor in Perthshire?—I am a considerable proprietor in Perthshire.

Do you occupy much land yourself?—I may mention at once that all the acres that I shall speak of are Scotch acres; I occupy about 800 acres of my own.

Have you turned your attention to the state of agriculture generally in the county of Perth?—I have.

Has it improved of late years?—In my part exceedingly; the quantity of produce has increased exceedingly within the last 16 or 20 years.

Has there been much furrow-draining introduced?—A very considerable quantity.

Has that been the principal improvement?—That and bone dust.

Is the soil of a light description?—The soil is very various; we have a great deal of red till, which is a coarse clay, highly impregnated with iron, and very full of stones.

Do you find that bone dust is equally applicable to that soil as to the light sandy soils?—No, it is not; the furrow-draining is the principal improvement upon that soil.

Is there a great produce of wheat grown in Perthshire?—The wheat has increased exceedingly upon that coarse till that I speak of from the furrow-draining. Upon a great quantity of land that never was attempted to be cultivated with wheat, it is now perhaps the best crop that can be grown upon it. I myself put a hundred acres of that land under wheat, which was formerly only adapted to a very poor crop of oats.

Is that wheat exported principally to England?—No; it is consumed in the neighbourhood.

What is the average produce per acre?—We have a fine clay, perhaps the best wheat land in Great Britain, (which is not what I have before alluded to,) that was furrow-drained many years earlier; it was there that furrow-draining began; these fine clays are on a level almost with the sea, being only 10 feet above the sea, and evidently the deposit of some former sea; they were furrow-drained, and the great increase of produce obtained from that process induced us to attempt it upon the higher and colder stiff clays, and there we have succeeded equally well. The produce is still very much greater upon the low land than it is upon the upper, but we can grow five quarters of wheat easily upon the cold clay, and perhaps half a quarter more.

Mr. Miles.] What did you grow previously upon the till soil?—In many parts it was not worth the expense of cultivation.

Chairman.] Is the land in Perthshire principally let on leases?—Almost entirely on leases of 19 years.

Upon a corn-rent or a money-rent?—It is now coming fast into a corn-rent; and in my opinion ought to be entirely a corn-rent. My opinion is, that we are fast shaking ourselves together right, and if we are only let alone, we shall, in a short time, have no complaints; as it is, we have not many. If the landlords would only look after their own interest, and attend to their own business, and take their rent in a corn-rent, and pay their jointures and annuities also by a corn-rent, I have no hesitation in saying there would be no complaint in the course of the next twenty years.

The poor-rates are divided between the landlord and the tenant?—They are by law, but it is very seldom exacted of the tenant; I am not aware of any part of Perthshire where the poor rate is exacted from the tenant.

Have you a regular poor rate in your parish?—Not in my parish, but in one parish that I have land in we have, but not the principal one.

Can you state what it is per acre?—Perhaps 50*l.* a year in the whole parish.

Is it a large parish?—About 2,000 or 3,000 people.

But poor rate is not generally established in that part of Scotland?—It is not, I am happy to say.

How are the public prosecutions of the county paid for in Scotland?—It is by assessment upon a valuation which was made over all Scotland, I think about 200 years ago, in the reign of Charles the 2nd, upon which all public burdens are rated.

Is there an annual assessment of the county according to that rate, for the purpose of paying those prosecutions?—There is.

You stated that you have a large farm in your own hands; you stated also that you have drained it considerably; can you state the cost of the draining per acre, and can you describe the process?—My process is this; it so happens in my estate that the old furrows were tolerably straight, the width of the furrows, originally, was five yards, and I put a drain in every alternate furrow to the depth of two feet two inches, which I cut at the expense of a halfpenny a yard; I fill those drains with broken stones precisely the same as the road metal here, to the depth of fourteen inches; I put the turf upon the top of it, and plough in the stuff that was taken out; I then make two ridges into one, giving it a circle something like a turnpike road, so that all water passes then into the new furrows, making one ridge into two; from that operation I have found the crop so even I could not tell where the furrow was when the wheat was in its ear, the furrows being generally better than even the top of the ridge; before I had often walked up a furrow without touching a head of wheat, fully losing three feet in every ridge by water.

Do you know what it cost you per acre?—Under 2*l.*

Have you any notion what repayment, in the shape of interest, you have obtained from laying out that money?—I should say the first crop pays it over and over again. With my tenantry, in leases that I have made since I began this operation, I have contracted to cut one-half of those drains upon this principle for nothing, provided it is limed, and done according to my directions, which I hold to be equal to 10*s.* per acre.

Then they cut the remainder of the drains and fill up all?—Yes.

As to the bone dust, you use it extensively?—I have used it to a considerable extent, and intend to use it to a much greater. I am cultivating land now 800 and odd feet above the level of the sea, which two years ago was entirely covered with heath; I have enclosed it with wire fencing, at an expense of about 6*d.* a yard, stones in that part of the country being of a nature that do not stand the weather, they are well adapted for making furrow drains, but not at all for building walls, and I have fallen upon a plan of wire-fencing, with oak posts, and with five wires complete, which costs me 6*d.* per yard.

Do you prefer that to planting hedges?—I have attempted hedges; it is a hard matter to contend against a high climate and sheep.

Chairman.] Are those wire fences capable of resisting cattle?—They will resist any thing; the fox-hunters will complain loudly of the impossibility of getting over the country.

What is the size of the top wire?—It is No. 8, the remainder are No. 6.

Mr. Loch.] What is the effect of the use of bone manure upon land?—The possibility of growing turnips upon the top of the mountains.

Have you grown turnips in such situations?—I have grown turnips at the height of between seven and eight hundred feet, better turnips than I have grown within one foot of the level of the sea.

What is the rotation of cropping upon that land at that height above the sea?—I have no rotation, but I bring in the land with one or two oat crops, according to the toughness of the original sward, I then bone-dust it, and lay it out with barley.

Do you plough it up again?—Not if it will give good grass.

Mr. Miles.] Are you very particular in your choice of grass-seed?—I have sown a good many of the new-fashioned grasses, but I cannot speak to them as being of so great advantage as many people seem to think; the white and yellow clover and cow grass upon the very high lands are what I recommend.

You of course use only two horses in ploughing?—Yes, except in trench-ploughing after the furrow-draining, I then use six and sometimes four with a very large plough, not Mr. Smith's plough; I have tried Mr. Smith's plough, but I was obliged to give it up, it would not answer with my stiff clay with so many stones in it; it did answer exceedingly well in a particular soil, which is very common in Scotland, what we call a moor land, but in my land I found that a large plough upon the common principle was a better tool.

When you use four horses how deep do you go?—About a foot to 14 inches.

That is an essential improvement connected with the furrow-draining?—It is.

The furrow-draining by itself would not be so great an improvement?—Certainly not.

Chairman.] You spoke of the high price of clover seed, and the disadvantage that was to the small farmers?—It is felt exceedingly; it amounts to more than half-a-crown per acre of direct tax.

How much of that is duty?—The whole of that is duty. If a man sows 14lbs. of clover seed to an acre, the duty is about twopence-farthing per lb.

Do you find there is any difference between the foreign clover seed and the English clover seed; which do you prefer?—There is no great difference, but it is a matter of no consequence which we sow, because the price of English clover seed is enhanced exactly to the extent of the duty.

Do not the main benefits of the Scotch system of banking arise from the joint stock system?—From the joint stock system, coupled with the knowledge that each banker possesses of the security and funds of his neighbour bankers: in fact the Scotch bankers have, if I may so term it, a clearing-house once a fortnight or once a

week in Edinburgh; if any joint stock bank should be running riot, and issuing a great deal more notes than the other bankers thought they were capable of redeeming, they would not do business with them, and in that way the whole system is kept in check and works very well; I do not think over the wide extent of England such a system could be practicable, and I therefore think that the farmers and the community at large are better off under the present system of sovereigns.

Is that because you think the English bankers more ignorant than the Scotch bankers?—It is not from ignorance, but from the wide extent of country that I do not think it is possible to systematize it, (at least in less than an immense length of time,) into the way in which we have it conducted in Scotland.

Is there much upland in Perthshire?—An immense quantity.

The upland farmers have been doing very well, have not they?—We have all been doing pretty well except the men that grow nothing but wheat.

But persons growing nothing but wheat have not been doing well?—Wheat farmers that took their farms when wheat was high, naturally cannot pay their rent with the present price of wheat.

Chairman.] Do you mean money-rent or corn-rent?—Money-rent.

Mr. Cayley.] Have you any inferior clay lands in your district?—A great quantity.

Producing how much?—Without it is furrow-drained, little or nothing.

Would it pay for cultivation if there was no rent upon it?—A great deal is uncultivated at present.

Used it to be cultivated?—They might take a flying crop of oats off it, and leave it again.

Was it the custom in the country at the time of better prices to cultivate that species of land?—A good deal of it was attempted to be cultivated; whenever it was drained in the least degree the tenant immediately succeeded, and that has been going on more or less ever since the war; if the new system of draining had not been followed to a great extent, that kind of land could not have been retained in cultivation.

What is the size of the farms generally?—In highly cultivated counties they are very large; in East Lothian they are, some of them, a thousand acres.

What is the size of the smaller farms?—The smaller are one or two hundred acres.

Is the present tendency to increase or to diminish the size of farms?—As the power of cultivation increases, the small farms are united and put into one farming. It is impossible in this country altogether to bring a great quantity of waste land under cultivation at one time, as the small farmers are driven out of one particular part of a gentleman's estate he generally endeavours to put them upon some other waste lands at a small rent, to bring them into

something like cultivation, and in the course of the next 30 or 40 years those people are again turned out to make room for larger farmers.

Both the quantity and quality of the corn raised upon a large farm is superior to that upon a small one?—It is.

Mr. Young.] With regard to the state of education among the people, are they generally able to read and write?—They are; there is not a man in my parish, nor a woman, that cannot read and write.

Mr. Miles.] Is there a great difference between the cultivation of Scotland and England?—There is in most parts; there is some very fine farming in Northumberland, but, generally speaking, I should say, that upon the soil of England the produce might with very great ease be doubled.

Its productive qualities are not sufficiently drawn out?—Nothing like it; it astonishes a Scotchman who comes to England to see so fine a soil under so fine a climate lying in such a state.

Mr. Cayley.] Have you ever heard of Scotch farmers coming to England and taking farms?—I have.

Do you find that they get very rich?—A man changing his situation is not able to take the advantages that a native would were he possessed of the same knowledge.

Are you at all acquainted with English farming?—No, I am not, except that if I had capital to lay out, I think I should buy land in England in preference to Scotland.

Do you think Scotland is too far north?—No; but I think there are many thousands of acres of the best land in England yielding only one-fourth part of the produce, which a very small amount of intelligence and industry applied to it would quadruple.

You think it is from ignorance on the part of the farming interest in England that that land is not made profitable?—Yes, in a great measure.

But that land, with all the ignorance of the farmers of England, used to be profitable during the war and before the war?—Profitable is a vague term; I look to the quantity of produce extracted out of the earth; the being profitable must depend upon their rent and their outgoings.

Are you not aware that by putting in an extra dose of capital into the land you may make crops grow almost upon a deal board, but that the expense may not be repaid by the crop?—I do not know any land in England, within my own knowledge, as to which I am not satisfied that if I were to purchase it at the market price, and expend capital upon it, it would return more than 5 per cent. upon the prime cost of the land and the capital expended.

Can you explain why the same species of land which could be cultivated without a rent to advantage before the war, cannot now be cultivated to advantage with the same prices existing?—Because in other parts of the country land has been found, and men of ca-

pital and science have got upon that land, and brought a quantity of produce into the market, and have thus driven out the slothful and ignorant man who cultivated the land alluded to.

Do you conceive that the slothful and ignorant man, since the war, is more ignorant and more slothful than he was before the war?—I think that a greater quantity of science and capital, within the last few years, has been exercised by a very considerable portion of the agriculturists over the country, which have brought under cultivation great tracts of land formerly not cultivated, and driven out of cultivation the land occupied by another set of men.

Do you think the system of cultivation has gone back in England, generally speaking?—No.

Then you think that those men whom you designate as ignorant and slothful men, cannot repay themselves for cultivating land, even with all the advantages of improved husbandry?—Not till the consumption shall have eaten up the additional supply poured into the market by the still progressing uplands.

Have you ever made a comparative estimate of the increase of the growth of wheat, and the increase of the population since the fall of prices?---I believe it was a very general opinion, at the time of the first corn law in 1815, that this country could not produce anything like what it consumed. The consequence was, both the farmer and the proprietor conceived that, by getting the ports shut up at a particular price, the monopoly would be complete with regard to our own produce. It certainly was so, but the increase of cultivation has far outstripped the consumption, and our low prices are now attributable simply to two or three good years, and the increased cultivation by bone manure and furrow-draining.

Do you know how much the population has increased since the war?---The population at this moment is increasing at 880 souls per diem over Great Britain and Ireland.

Have you ever gone into any accurate calculation, taking the whole increase of the population since the war, as to whether the increase of produce has been sufficient to meet that increase of population?---It has outstripped it very considerably.

Will you give the data upon which you found that conclusion?---I derive it from the corn returns.

How do the corn returns show that? We have imported none for three years?---From the year 1803 to the year 1815 or 1816 this country imported vast quantities of grain. Before the year 1800 this country for the eight years before was stationary. For many years previous to that period this country exported a vast quantity of corn; it therefore follows that we are not only able to supply ourselves from our own soil, but the low prices are the effect of our soil growing more than we can consume, even to exportation.

If, for some period previous to 1800, we exported; and if for a certain period succeeding that we were stationary, neither exported nor imported, and from the next period, namely, from 1803 to 1815, we did not export, but were obliged to import, does not that show rather that the population was treading upon the heels of the supply?—The vast consumption of our army in various parts of the world required a very great exportation to supply our troops in Portugal and other places.

Would not those human mouths be obliged to be fed if they had remained at home?—The loss, in many cases, was great; perhaps whole fleets of produce might be destroyed by a storm.

You take it as the main basis of the calculation, that prices have fallen, and therefore you are led to the conclusion that the supply must have exceeded the demand?---I do not take it as a conclusion, but it is a fact that the supply has far outstripped the demand, notwithstanding the 880 souls added to the population every day, because we have not gone to our neighbours for a single bushel of grain the last three years.

Have not there been extraordinary crops the last three years?---There have.

Have you any right to calculate upon more than the average supply?---I think science will go a great way to prevent the weather having its hitherto usual effects upon crops.

Evidence of Mr. William Bell.

Is acquainted with Berwickshire and the East Lothian—Pays 760*l.* Rent for 552 Acres—Is farming to a Profit—The Condition of Farmers in Berwickshire is most satisfactory—Crops have been abundant the last three Years—Can now pasture forty Score of Sheep where there were only five Score—The Farm is yielding more Rent and more Profit—Stock sent to London Market by Steam—Farmers in Northumberland can get Accommodation from Bankers if they deserve it—Bankers in Scotland are liberal to the Agricultural Interest, but not to Persons of doubtful Credit—7*s.* per Bushel is a remunerating Price for Wheat, 28*s.* per Quarter for Barley, and 22*s.* for Oats—If there were heavier local Burthens in Scotland the Rent would be less—It would be very improper for the Legislature to attempt to uphold Prices—If higher Prices are necessary for the Farmer in England, Rents should be lowered—Present Corn Laws have latterly given the Agriculturist a complete Monopoly—A fixed Duty might be more satisfactory—It would prevent Fluctuations—A fixed Duty has not prevented Fluctuations in the Price of Tallow and Wool—Would propose to place the fixed Duty on Corn as high as it could be borne, and to lower it gradually to nothing—4*l.* or 5*l.* worth of Lime laid on per Acre once in 19 Years—Duty on Clover Seed should be taken off—The only Legislative Relief would be a Remission of Taxes—When the Malt Tax is touched, it should be a Total Remission—Property Tax should be a last Resource—His Produce, per Acre of Wheat, is 3 Qrs. 5 Bushels—Oats, 6 Qrs.—Barley, 43 Bushels—Beans, 3 Qrs. 2 Bushels—Potatoes, 34 Bushels—Keeps a Pair of Horses, per 62½ Acres—Expenses of his Farm—Turnpikes heavy—Corn Rents have saved the Tenantry in East Lothian—Wheat might be cultivated profitably at 6*s.* a Bushel—It would be difficult to say how low a Price might yield a Profit—40*s.* per Quarter for Wheat, would pay on Clay Land—A great Competition for unlet Farms, especially Turnip Soils—Rents have dropped since the War.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?---In the county of Berwick.

Do you occupy any considerable portion of land in Berwickshire?---A farm of 550 acres.

Have you any other employment?---I am employed in the valuation of land for letting and for sale; and I have the direction of letting, and collection of rents of some property.

When you speak of acres, do you mean imperial or Scotch?---Imperial acres; and I have the direction of a farm in East Lothian, for my son, who is a writer to the signet in Edinburgh.

Then you can speak generally to the state of agriculture in Berwickshire, as well as to your own particular farm?---I can speak particularly as to Berwickshire, and generally as to East Lothian.

How many arable acres does your farm contain?---Five hundred and fifty arable acres.

How many acres of pasture?---I suppose you mean permanent pasture; we have very little permanent pasture in Scotland.

What is your course of cropping?---My general course of cropping is a five shift husbandry; that is, two-fifths of the farm in grass or pasture, two-fifths in corn crop, and one-fifth bare fallow and turnips.

Do you consider that the best system of husbandry that can be followed both for the tenant and landlord?---I consider it, generally speaking, the best system. I may mention, however, that for the last three or four years, I have followed the six shift system; that is, one-half the farm in grass, one-sixth in bare fallow and turnips, and two-sixths in corn crops. Stock and wool have paid so much better than corn for some years past, that I have considered it advisable to retain a larger portion of the farm in grass.

Mr. Denison.] What is the mode of draining?---Parallel or furrow-draining is not yet introduced as a system into Berwickshire. The drains are generally laid across the situations where the water shows most. Stones are very scarce in Berwickshire, and tile draining is only lately come into fashion.

Then, you would not call it a well drained farm in comparison with those farms that have been drained upon the new principles, and in the best way?---Certainly not.

The drains you speak of are rather for spring water than for taking the surface water off?---They are for both puposes; they are generally three to four feet drains.

Mr. Miles.] Out of the 500 acres how many of them are properly drained?---I do not consider that any of them are properly drained.

Have your gains been very much more upon that which is properly drained than upon the other?---Upon that portion which was drained of course they have, because it would have been very much injured by the wet if it had not; but I have no field that I consider completely drained.

If you had not laid out so much in draining would your farm have been profitable to you?---I consider that the draining that I did paid me the outlay decidedly.

Would it have been profitable without your having laid out that money in draining?---I do not think my draining has been to that extent as materially to affect the general return, but whatever money I have laid out in draining I have been well paid for.

Mr. Dunlop.] Would not the farm be worth more than five per cent. per annum more if it were drained, than it would be worth without being drained?---Most decidedly.

Chairman.] To return to your own farm; you say the soil there is clay?---My farm is a strong clay soil.

You have been farming for 16 years?---Yes.

During that time have you been farming to a profit?---Certainly I have.

Chairman.] What is your rent for 552 acres?---760*l.*

You are acquainted with the general state of agriculture in the county of Berwick; what do you say is the condition of the farmer generally in Berwickshire?---The condition of the farmer in Berwickshire is in general in a most satisfactory state.

What has been the state of the crops the last three years?---There have been three or four very abundant wheat crops in succession.

Mr. Dunlop.] Do you consider that your stock is as good or better than it was when it came into your farm?---When I came into the farm there were only about five score of sheep upon the lands, and I am able to pasture this year upwards of 40 score of sheep.

Mr. Denison.] Then your farm has improved under the management that you have bestowed upon it?---It is paying more rent, and yielding more profit.

Mr. Loch.] In what year did you take the farm?---In 1820.

Did you pay more rent when you took it than was paid before?---I paid 262*l.* more than was paid before.

And you have had no reduction during the currency of your lease?—I never got a farthing of reduction from a landlord in my life.

And notwithstanding that, you have farmed to a profit, and have had a fair remuneration for your capital?—Yes.

Mr. Cayley.] Have you any advantage in Berwickshire in consequence of steam navigation?—We have this year; there is now a very considerable transit of fat stock to the London market.

And the price of stock is very high in the London market?—Yes, and that has raised the price very much with us.

Do you know the reason of that rise of price in the London market?--The increased consumption.

Do you think we are in a prosperous state now?—I think we are progressing to a prosperous state.

You were in an adverse state before?—It was considered the last three or four years that we were, but I think there is a decided change to amendment, and I consider that that arises very much from the prosperous state of our commercial and manufacturing interests.

Do you think that the Northumberland bankers give accommodation as easily as the Scotch bankers do?—I am not sure that they give the same facility; but I believe that all persons in good credit, in Northumberland, can get such credit as they deserve.

Is not the system of accommodating farmers in England, generally speaking, the system of cash credits?—I am not aware.

Setting aside the mode in which it is done, is not it the fact, that twenty years ago a farmer of good character could get accommodation from a banker much more easily than he can now?—I am not aware how it is in England; it is not the case in Scotland; there never was greater facility in Scotland than there is now. At the same time I would beg to state, that I do not think bank credit is absolutely necessary for the farmer.

Mr. Sanford.] Are the bankers in Scotland liberal in their accommodation to the agricultural interest?—Wherever a farmer has good credit, he has plenty of accommodation.

Can those who are of doubtful credit get money?—I should suppose not.

Mr. Cayley.] Do the bankers lend more easily now than during the war?—I cannot say.

What is the price of corn which you think would bring your land into a state of profitable cultivation?—We consider 7*s.* a bushel a remunerating price for wheat.

What should you think a proper price for barley?—About 28*s.* a quarter.

And oats?— About a guinea or 22*s.* a quarter.

If you require those prices in Scotland, where your local burthens are not so great as they are in England, the English farmer would require higher prices?—The consumer would make no distinction I suppose as to that.

Chairman.] If you had greater burdens on your farms in Scotland, you would pay less rent?—Yes.

Mr. Cayley.] If, by any legislative measure, it be possible to uphold the prices, in order to assist the farmer, would you say that that would be desirable?—I think it would be a very improper thing to do; it would oppress the consumer to relieve the farmer.

Then you would rather that the land in England, which requires a higher price, should cease to be cultivated, than raise the prices to meet the wants of the farmer?—No; I think the rent should be assimilated to the prices; a man should pay less rent if he receives less prices.

Mr. Loch.] Have you altered the management of your farm according to the state of the markets; that is to say, when corn was high, had you more under cultivation; and when corn was low, had you more under grass?—I certainly ploughed less land when the prices of corn became low, and by that means my farm will be prepared for ploughing more liberally if corn should rise in price.

Is it your opinion that your district is going on improving in agriculture?—Decidedly.

In your opinion can Parliament do anything to relieve the farmers? —I am not satisfied that they have the power of doing anything; if they did any thing, I think it would only shift the burthen to the consumer.

Have you ever thought whether the corn laws affect the farmer beneficially or otherwise?—The present corn laws have operated of late as a complete prohibition against the sale of foreign corn, and I cannot conceive that any other protection can be given beyond a monopoly of the market.

Do you conceive that a system of average, such as the present, or a fixed duty, would be beneficial to the farmer?—I am not sure that a fixed duty would not be ultimately the most satisfactory; but it is a difficult question, because a fixed duty in scarce seasons would not be submitted to.

Upon the whole, are you satisfied with the present corn law?—I should consider it a complete protection against foreign corn.

And you would make no alteration?—Unless an alteration was made to a fixed duty.

Mr. Handley.] What is your reason for supposing a fixed duty would be preferable?—By the present corn law, whenever the price approaches near the rate at which the foreign corn can be brought into the market with a profit, the prices may possibly be run up to that rate by artificial means; thus a great quantity of corn would be improperly liberated and thrown upon the market, and this might probably depress the market for the whole season; now at a fixed duty that could not take place.

Do you consider that a fixed duty would have the effect of preventing fluctuation?—I think so; I think it would make the price more uniform.

You are aware that there are two articles of agricultural produce that for years were subject to a fixed duty, namely wool and tallow; are you aware whether or no they have not fluctuated very considerably in price?—They have fluctuated very much; but I understand that wool was only at a penny a pound, a mere nominal duty.

Has the foreign corn imported into this country been the surplus corn of Europe, or has it been grown expressly for this market?—I believe that it is the surplus corn of Europe; this is the best market they can bring it to.

If by a fixed duty you made this market a certain market, is it your opinion that considerable tracts of country might not be brought into cultivation on the Continent expressly to supply this market?—Perhaps they might to a certain extent.

Would not that be prejudicial to the farmers of this country?—They would probably take something else from us in lieu of that.

Under the present system of corn laws, when a prohibition lasts

so many years as it has done, is not that the best protection against the growth of foreign corn for the supply of this market?—I have stated distinctly that I think the farmer has no reason to complain of the present law; that it is a sufficient protection to him.

Have you ever considered what would be the proper amount of fixed duty?—My notion would be, if a fixed duty was to take place I would lay it on as high as the country could bear it, and I would reduce it gradually 1*s.* or 2*s.* every year, till it came to a nominal duty; and during the operation of that, the landlord and tenant would come to an adjustment, and the land would find its natural value.

At what would you begin, and where would you stop?—It would require a great deal of consideration.

Mr. Sanford.] How many years has this system of cultivation of the clay land been introduced in Scotland?—Probably the last 20 or 30 years.

Previously to 1820?—Yes; it was usual previous to that period to follow the four shift husbandry, but I consider that very injurious, and cannot be maintained without a great deal of foreign manure.

Are you aware of the rents paid for the same land for that period?—The rent has varied very much; I have mentioned that my farm was 500*l.* a-year, and now it is 762*l.*

And you attribute that entirely to the improved system of cultivation?—I could not pay that rent unless I farmed it upon a very different system from the mode practised formerly.

What amount of capital per acre has been expended upon that farm?—I consider it takes between 4*l.* and 5*l.* an acre to put a proper stock upon the farm.

The question refers to permanent improvement?—I referred to the stocking of the farm; the extent of improvements depends upon the occupier; some men will lay out 1,000*l.*, and others not half, and others not one-fourth.

What is the quantity of lime per acre that you are in the habit of placing upon the land?—We cannot lime properly under 4*l.* or 5*l.* per acre.

How many bushels do you place upon an acre?—It varies very much upon different land; the turnip soil does not require so much as the clay land.

Upon the heavy clay land?—We generally give 10 or 12 single cart-loads per acre.

How many imperial bushels would that be?—About 200 bushels per acre.

How frequently is that liming repeated?—We consider that once in the lease is sufficient, once in 19 or 20 years, if the land is gently treated afterwards, and not over cropped.

You conceive that one liming will be of sufficient duration to give an improvement in the land for the term?—Yes.

And at the end of that period is it necessary to lime again?—I think it is.

How long will the draining last?—It is considered a permanent improvement, and it will certainly last a great deal longer than the lease.

In the course of a few years the expenses of your farm would greatly diminish?—Yes.

Do you grow any clover?—No.

Have you ever considered whether the remission of the duty on clover seed would be desirable?—Certainly; it would be desirable, because it is only grown by three or four counties in England, and it has the effect of giving them a monopoly over the rest of the kingdom; and in a farm of 500 acres it would give a relief to the extent of about 15*l.* a-year.

Are you of opinion that the foreign clover seed is superior to that grown in England?—It should be, for the climate is better.

Mr. Sanford.] Do you prefer the foreign clover seed?—No, I do not; we take them indiscriminately; we consider the seed from Holland very good.

Do you ever find that the seed from Holland has failed you?—They all fail in the red clover.

When you first purchase it is it not apt to fail?—Not more so than the English; it is generally very good.

Mr. Evans.] Does your ground get tired of clover?—Yes, it does.

After how many years?—In the four shift husbandry the clover will not remain but goes out.

Can you repeat clover twice in eight years?—Twice in ten or twelve years we consider very safe; that is, farming on the five or six shift system.

But by constant cropping with clover you find that the land gets tired of it?—Yes.

Earl of Lincoln.] You said that the only legislative relief would be a remission of such taxes as press upon agriculture. To what taxes do you particularly allude?—I allude more particularly to the malt tax; I think it would be very desirable if that could be remitted, but it seems to be allowed upon all hands that the revenue cannot admit of its abolition without a substitute being provided from some other source. This would be only shifting the burthen from the farmer to some other class of the community, and would be affecting some other branch of industry which might have as much reason to complain as the farmer. I cannot see that that would be attended with the beneficial effects anticipated, as the burthen would be reverting in a greater or less degree upon the agricultural interest.

Are you of opinion that the remission of the malt tax to be a benefit to the farmer must be a total remission?—Yes, if it is remitted at all, because, in a partial remission, nearly the same machinery

and the same expense would exist as at present; it would be more desirable that there should be a total remission.

If you had the option between the imposition of a property tax and the total remission of the malt tax which would you choose? —I think a property tax should never be imposed except in the last necessity.

Chairman.] What is your produce per acre upon an acre of wheat?—About three-quarters five bushels to the imperial acre.

What is the average produce of your oats per imperial acre?---Six quarters the imperial acre.

What is the produce per acre of barley upon the imperial acre? —About 43 bushels the imperial acre.

Can you state the acreable produce of the beans upon your farm?—About three quarters two bushels.

How many bushels of potatoes do you grow upon an acre?—About 34 bushels.

As to the expenditure upon your farm, how many horses do you keep?—Generally a pair of horses for every 62½ English acres.

What amount of labour do you employ upon the same extent of land?—For every six ploughmen I think it requires four labourers; I have made a note of the expense of working a 300 Scotch acre farm, or 375 imperial. Six ploughmen and twelve work horses, 80*l.* for a man and horses, 480*l* ; four other men 25*l.* each, 100*l.*; women and boys employed through the year, 80*l.*; harvest work, 160*l.*; total, 820*l.* The above is calculated for working on a rotation of six, but if the grass is allowed to remain two years, the establishment would be enough for a farm containing 50 acres more of land, with only a shepherd in addition for managing the flock.

Upon your farm of 500 acres, do you keep sheep?—We graze the two farms together.

Have you any poor rates?—Yes, being in the parish of Haddington we have more than is customary in other parts of the county. It costs me, as tenant upon the two farms, about 36*l.* a-year.

And that in consequence of the old people coming to live in the towns?—Yes.

What does your poor rate amount to?—About 36*l.* in the year upon the two farms.

Does your landlord pay an equal amount?—Yes, it is divided between the landlord and the tenant.

What does the statute duty amount to?—About 20 guineas upon the two farms.

Are there any other local taxes?—None else.

Mr. Loch.] Do the turnpikes bear heavily upon you?—Yes.

What is the condition of the tenantry generally in East Lothian, where the landlords have met their difficulties by converting the fixed rents into corn-rents?—They have been doing very well this year, where there is no minimum; and for the last four years, ever since 1832, they have been doing very well. They have had

good crops, and if they got low prices, they had only a low rent to pay out of an abundant crop.

In the distress you alluded to, as having existed previously, is it your opinion that it could have been met in any other way, than by the landlords meeting the difficulties of the tenant; in your opinion, could Parliament have done any thing to relieve those difficulties?—It is not my opinion that Parliament could have done any thing. I think, from experience, that we are hardly able to keep up the prices, and the corn-rent seems to me to be the very thing which saved the tenantry.

Mr. Wodehouse.] What is the lowest price at which you would say that wheat could be cultivated throughout Scotland generally?—That is a question that I could not answer.

Could it be cultivated at lower than 6*s.* a bushel?—It would appear so, at least for the last four years it does not average so much, but that is in consequence of abundant crops.

Could you pay your present rent at 6*s.* a bushel?—With the present crops I could.

Could you pay your present rent at 6*s.* a bushel upon a fair average of produce?—I think that is rather a small price at an average produce.

Chairman.] But your rent would bear a proportion to it, would it not?—It would.

Mr. Cayley.] Do you think it will be profitable to cultivate that land at 40*s.* for wheat?—I do not know; not with ordinary crops.

If the price of wheat remains at 40*s.* even if the draining answers your fullest expectations, do you think it will be profitable to cultivate that land?—If at a wheat rent I can cultivate it, but not with bad crops.

Upon an average of years?—Upon such crops as I have had on an average of nine years, I can do it.

Is your clay land the least profitable land to cultivate?—Yes.

Can you imagine a price at which the clay land would cease to be profitable to cultivate?—Yes.

What would be the price that you would name?—It would all depend upon the season.

Taking the average of seasons?—Perhaps 40*s.* is as low as it could be cultivated at.

The clay land is a very uncertain kind of land, and is very much exposed to the fluctuations of seasons, and taking all those fluctuations you would say 40*s.* is the lowest price upon the average at which that clay land would pay, even with the improved draining?—I should think so, but it is not a question that I can very well answer.

Mr. Cayley.] As a farmer you can calculate what price would pay you upon the clay land?—I certainly could, but I could not say how low prices might run, and yet cultivate with a profit.

Mr. Loch.] Have there been any farms let lately in your part of the country?—Yes, several.

Are there any out of occupation now that you can get no tenants for?—Quite the reverse; tenants cannot get them.

Those farms that have been let, have they been let at the same rents or higher rents than they were let at previously?—I think on turnip soils they are giving as much rent or more than they did 20 years ago; there is a great demand for them by tenants of skill and capital.

Upon clay lands what is the case?—The competition is not the same, but they are letting readily at a fair rent.

Have the rents of such land dropped much since the war?—Of course they have, because during the war the value of land was very capricious, but 20 years ago the war was over.

Earl of Lincoln.] Did you say that the rent on turnip soils had been increased the last few years?—The last twelve months.

You attribute that of course to the improvement in the price of meat?—I do.

To what do you attribute the improvement in the price of meat?—To the increase and prosperity of the commercial and manufacturing interests.

Evidence of Mr. William Browne.

Lives in Ayrshire—Clay Land generally wet—Much improved by draining—Rents vary from 30*s.* to 45*s.* per Scotch Acre—Leases generally for 19 Years—System and expense of Draining explained—Sub-soil Ploughing—Great Benefit expected from it—Draining is an indispensable Accompaniment—Sub-soil Ploughing costs from 16*s.* to 20*s.* per Acre—Tenants pay their Rents without Arrears—Breed of Cattle improved in Ayrshire by Draining—No Advantage in sending Cattle to Market by Steam—They go to Carlisle by Land—Labourers' Wages—Irish employed—Rents rising—The Tenant's only out-going beside Rent is Road Money—Land reclaimed—No Land going out of Cultivation—Farmers in Ayrshire have not made so much Money as nineteen Years ago, but are doing well.

Mr. Dunlop.] Where do you reside?—At Greenock Mains, in Ayrshire.

Do you farm yourself?—Yes.

How many acres have you?—About 400 imperial acres.

How long have you been a farmer?—Nineteen years.

Are you well acquainted with the general state of agriculture in Ayrshire as well as your own farm?—Yes; I lately had a conversation with a great many of my friends in the county of Ayr upon the subject of agriculture, particularly since I knew that I was to be summoned here.

Did you go through almost all the parishes in your neighbourhood?—I went through a great many of the parishes of the county, and made inquiry.

What are the descriptions of soil in Ayrshire?—The soils in Ayrshire are very different; the county stretches along the coast, and

towards the shore and along the banks of the rivers there is a good deal of light land ; further up in the county there is strong clay land ; then towards the upper part of the county there is a good deal of waste, uncultivated land.

As to the heavy clay soil, what sort of soil is that in its natural state ?—Generally wet.

How many bushels an acre would you expect upon that land before it was improved ?—Some parts of it grow but little, and other parts grow a good quantity, even in its present state ; generally speaking, I should think from five to six quarters of oats.

Mr. Loch.] Does it grow wheat at all ?—It is not a wheat country, but there is a good deal of wheat grown in some parts, particularly since the system of draining has been introduced.

Mr. Dunlop.] When you state the produce of an acre, do you mean a Scotch acre ?—Yes.

Can it be materially improved by the outlay of capital upon it ?—Yes.

What kind of improvement is the first that is generally made upon the wet land ?—Draining is the first improvement.

Are those drains generally made by the landlord or by the tenant ?—Sometimes in the one way and sometimes in the other ; the Duke of Portland, who introduced draining into our county, and has prosecuted it further than any other proprietor, is at the expense of draining, and the tenants pay him a per centage.

About what amount ?—About five per cent.

Are the tenants in Ayrshire generally ready to pay five per cent. upon the outlay in draining ?—I think so.

Can you state what increase of production is generally caused by draining in that way ?—It differs according to the quality of the land, and the degree of wetness ; but I should think from one-third to one-fourth additional produce, if it is properly cultivated.

What rent is generally charged for that clay land ?—The rents vary much ; but I should say the average per Scotch acre may be from about 30*s.* to 45*s.*

Is that a money-rent or a corn-rent ?—In most instances it is a money-rent ; but in some instances the rent is paid according to the fiar's prices of the county in grain and other produce, such as cheese.

Can you state what is the length of the leases in Ayrshire ?—Generally for 18 or 19 years.

Can you state the expense of furrow-draining an acre ?—The expense of the draining depends upon the distance at which the drains are introduced.

Will you state the most improved system ?—Upon the most retentive sub-soil, the distance is generally from 10 to 12 feet ; the depth of the drain is 22 inches, and the width varies according as it is intended to be filled.

Mr. Loch.] How deep do you fill up the tile drains ?—The tiles themselves raise the drain about six inches, then a sod of three or

four inches thick is put above the tile, and generally speaking, a quantity of the earth which came out of the drain above that, and then the furrow is ploughed in above the whole.

Mr. Dunlop.] How many inches of earth will you have above the tile?—From eight to sixteen, according to the depth of the furrow in which the drain is put.

If you only filled it eight inches, you would calculate upon bringing down the furrow?—Of course the ridges rise generally high in the centre, and hollow in the original furrow.

Can you state what depth you would expect the drain to stand, how many inches would there be above the tile?—About as much as would be a large furrow above the sod, which is immediately put in above the tile, from 9 to 12 inches.

What would it be altogether?—From 13 to 16 inches.

Mr. Loch.] What is the expense an acre?—At the distance of 12 feet, it is 7*l.* 18*s.* 9*d.*; but at the distance of 18 feet it is 5*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.*

Mr. Evans.] Do you lay in the stones indiscriminately, or lay a first course?—Some do it one way and some the other, itdepends a good deal upon the kind of stones; if they are round land stones, they are generally broken and thrown in, if they are quarried stones, which can be raised in beds or layers, they are generally set with the hand and a water-course left.

Mr. Loch.] What is the depth of your ploughing?—We plough generally about from six to eight inches deep.

Do not you disturb the sub-soil at all?—The more improved mode of husbandry is now to sub-soil plough the land; but it is found that the drains put in will not admit of a sub-soil ploughing, and that they, the farmers, must either make them deeper, or else they will not be able to get the sub-soil plough used.

When you talk of sub-soiling what is the system?—The general plan is to plough with a common plough the depth of an ordinary furrow, at seven or eight inches, and then the sub-soil plough follows in the same line, deepening the soil, but not bringing up the sub-soil so as to cover the first furrows; the one plough in fact follows the other.

What is the nature of the plough that you plough the sub-soil with?—It is much the same as the common plough, only stronger, and without a mould board.

How deep do you go altogether?—About from 16 to 18 inches.

Is that found to be very beneficial upon those sub-soils?—It has not been long tried, but great benefit is expected to be derived from it.

Mr. Dunlop.] Have the crops been looking well upon those sub-soil lands?—Yes.

Mr. Handley.] How many horses do you employ upon those sub-soil ploughs?—It depends upon the stiffness of the sub-soil; if the sub-soil is not stiff, two are generally used; but stiff sub-soils are ploughed with three or four horses, accompanied with men with picks and hoes, to raise up the stones.

Mr. Miles·] How often is it necessary to use the sub-soil plough?—It has been so recently introduced that we cannot say; but it is expected that one sub-soiling may be sufficient for the length of the lease.

Of course, the great beneficial result from the sub-soiling plough is getting rid of the top water?—Yes, and gradually deepening the soil.

From the short experience you have had, do you find that the sub-soiling is much more beneficial where it has been well drained?—We have only had the experience of sub-soiling for about two years; but I should think that land that is both drained and sub-soiled would be in a better state to receive the crop than when it had only been drained and not sub-soiled.

At what would you put the expense per acre of using the sub-soil plough?—Upon that land which cannot be sub-soiled with less than four horses, of course it would be a double expense of ploughing.

Taking the four horses, what would be the expense?—It cannot be less than about 16*s.* or 20*s.* an acre, if you use four horses.

Mr. Dunlop.] Do you find, from the draining, a great improvement in the grass?—Yes.

Which has enabled farmers to get a much improved breed of cattle?—Yes.

Mr. Dunlop.] You stated that great improvement had been made in the breed of cattle; can you state to what extent they have improved?—About seventy years ago the breed of cattle in Ayrshire was considered not to be better than the present breeds of Arran and Kintyre, and other parts of Argyleshire; but by means of some spirited proprietors, an improved breed of cattle was introduced into the county, which is now spread over the whole county, and has extended to other counties, called the Ayrshire breed of dairy cows.

In the higher parts of Ayrshire there are a great quantity of sheep?—Yes.

Sheep have been paying well this year?—They have; th estock farmer is more flourishing than any other.

Have the farmers in Ayrshire been sending fat sheep to England?—Not that I am aware of; it is more a breeding country than a fatting country; they fat a few bullocks upon the shore, where they have turnips, and a few sheep, but the upper part of the county is mostly for breeding black-faced sheep.

Has the price improved since the steam navigation?—I could not say that we feel much direct advantage from the steam navigation; our cattle are generally bought up by the dealers and driven up over land.

Mr. Clive.] The effect of steam navigation, hitherto, has not induced you or others to fatten cattle for the purpose of being transported at once from Ayrshire to London?—Not yet; but I

believe in other parts of Scotland it has been practised, although not in Ayrshire.

Do you ever transport your cattle from Ayrshire to Liverpool?—No, there is very little of that takes place, they are generally bought up by the English dealers and driven over land to Carlisle market.

Mr. Dunlop.] The cattle that are driven from Ayrshire are almost all in a lean state?—Yes, there are very few fatted, except along the coast.

Chairman.] Do you pay your labourers in kind or in money?—Generally in money.

Mr. Dunlop.] What are the wages of an able-bodied labourer now in Ayrshire?—According to the worth of the labourer, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a day.

What are the wages of farm servants living in the farmer's house?—The best ploughmen get from 7*l.* to 8*l.* for half a year, with board in the house.

Mr. Evans.] Do you employ Irish labourers?—A good many; we could not get on without them. A great many of the labourers in the country are employed in manufactures.

And it would be a disadvantage to you if they were not to come from Ireland?—Of course it would; we should have to pay higher wages, and perhaps not get the work done so regularly.

With all those improvements, what is the state of the farmer; is he able to pay the rent which you have given as the rent of those farms?—I am not aware of almost any arrears of rent.

What is your own state as a farmer; is it better or worse than it was a few years ago?—Better.

You state that from an actual valuation of your stock?—Yes, I take a valuation every year.

You know that the result is an improved result?—Yes.

Can you state the rotation generally followed upon the heavy land?—The general rotation in Ayrshire is from six to nine years; the leases are made eighteen or nineteen years to suit that rotation, and they get twice through the land in nineteen years, upon the nine-years' course; and three times upon the six-years' course. The first year is generally grass, rented at a less price, till the farmer gets things prepared, so as to go on regularly with his rotation; then, after he gets his land prepared by liming and manuring, he ploughs it, a third or fourth, according to his agreement with his landlord, and sows oats upon it; the other two-thirds or three-fourths is in grass. The farm is divided into so many fields that one field is taken from grass each year, so that there is a field in what is called ley or ley-corn; another in a green crop, and the third in white crop, and sown down with grass seeds. Where the six years' rotation is followed, two successive white crops are taken, and no green crop; and the grass seeds are sown with the second crop, and so on through the whole course of the lease.

How many years of grass afterwards?—Either four or six, according as he takes two or three crops.

Is it not six, generally, upon a dairy farm?—Six, generally, upon a dairy farm.

Chairman.] How long have you pursued the system of a six or nine year course in Ayrshire?—I have always done that; my father's course was a twelve year course, viz., having only a fourth part of the land in crop, and three-fourths in grass, and taking three successive wheat crops from each break, and one of rye grass hay. The system generally has been pursued in Ayrshire for the last 50 or 60 years.

You consider that by giving the land so much rest while it is in grass you can farm the land to a better profit?—We consider that the rest improves the land and is equivalent to manure.

Can you state what is the average produce per acre of wheat?—The average produce of wheat upon the lands which are under wheat, may be about four and a half quarters the Scotch acre, and the average of the oats upon a Scotch acre, may be about six quarters.

What is the general condition of the farmers, upon those heavy soils, at the present time?—Upon pretty large farms, where the tenant is industrious, and has a good capital, I consider that they are doing very fairly? they are making things better, rather than worse. Upon small farms again, in poor soil, where the tenant has not much capital, I dare say they are not improving their condition much.

What do you call a large farm?—The farms in Ayrshire are generally small; 150 acres is considered a large farm; we have in some instances farms much larger than that, but generally speaking they are from 50 to 100 or 150 acres.

When you say that small farmers without capital are not improving their condition much, do you consider that a man without capital has a right to expect to do well in any trade?—No, he has nothing to lose.

Have there been any improvements made upon the light soils of Ayrshire?—Yes; by cleaning, and manuring with the sea-weed along the shore.

How have they paid?—They are improving their condition; they get their manure at little expense, and I believe they are doing as well as any other class in the country.

Do you consider the condition of the farmers upon the light soils to be good?—I consider that they are improving their condition as much as those upon the stronger soils, although their soil is more precarious from drought.

There was a considerable reduction of rent immediately after the war?—Yes, but the farms just now are rising, and there is a great demand for farms.

How much per cent. are they rising?—I could not say as to the

per centage; but I know that in the event of a farm coming out of lease, there are a great many people wishing to have it; and, in some instances, not fewer than twenty or thirty applicants.

Persons of capital?—Yes.

How long has that increased demand been in existence?—There was always a demand for farms, even at the worst of times; but it is increasing yearly now.

How should there have been a demand in the bad times for farms, if it was a losing trade?—I do not mean that there was a demand for them then at the advanced rent, but at a fair valuation, by people of skill and respectability.

And now, there is not only a great demand, but an advance in the rents?—Yes.

Is the rise that is now taking place any thing equal to the reduction that before took place?—No, I do not think it is so high; the land which is now let for 2*l.* or 2*l.* 5*s.* was let above 3*l.* during war times.

Mr. Miles.] How much reduction took place upon the rent after the war? How far was it depressed from the war rent of 3*l.*?—I came down from 3*l.* to 2*l.* or 2*l.* 5*s.*, or about a third.

Mr. Handley.] When you speak of 2*l.* 5*s.*, is that land which has been drained?—Land which is capable of being drained.

In the 2*l.* 5*s.* do you include the five per cent. paid to the landlord?—No; that is in addition to the rent; but that rent applies to very good land, which carries large crops, when it is properly drained and managed.

Mr. Loch.] What are the other out-goings that the tenant would have to pay in addition to his rent; what has he to pay for road money?—The road money, I think, is 1*l.* 10*s.* per 100*l.* Scots valuation; I do not suppose it is 1*s.* per acre, in any instance, and in most cases much less.

Have you any poor rates?—None.

Have you any payment to the schoolmaster?—Yes; the schoolmaster in each parish receives a salary, which is about 30*l.* a year.

Do you pay any thing to the clergyman?—No; that is paid by the landlord.

Mr. Miles.] What do the local and public burthens amount to upon your farm of 400 acres?—The assessed taxes upon my farm, for the county are about 8*l.* yearly, and the parish assessments, including both the landlord and tenant's share amounts to about 15*l.*, so that the whole public burthens affecting my farm, both for the tenant, and the landlord, may amount to 23*l.* yearly.

That includes what the landlord pays?—Yes; the tenant in general pays his share, and gets a reduction.

When he pays the rent?—Yes.

Then upon the farm of 400 acres which you cultivate, your public and parochial burdens are about 11*l.* 10*s.*?—Eleven pounds ten shillings affecting the tenant.

How do you pay for the roads in Ayrshire; have you county roads or turnpike roads?—We have both.

How are the county roads repaired?—The general practice is for the proprietors to make roads for their own estates, and then to apply the composition money of each parish to the upholding of them.

Each parish keeps its own roads in repair?—It does.

Mr. Dunlop.] Can you state to the committee any instances of great improvements that have been made upon land?—Yes. A neighbour of mine, Mr. Buchanan, of Catrine Bank, had a flow moss of fifteen acres in extent, perhaps twenty feet deep of moss, which was not worth in his estimation 1*d.* an acre; he drained it to the depth of four feet; he did not use either tiles or stones, but after he had cut the drains a certain width and depth, he then cut out a slope in the centre of the original cut, and put down the surface sod or turf, upon the shoulders which were left at the bottom of the drain, and which he found to suit the purpose very well, and he ultimately drained the whole 15 acres in that way; and now, after obtaining crops of oats, turnips, and all kinds of things upon that moss, he has laid it down into grass, and it is now estimated as being worth 2*l.* an acre in grass. The expense of drainage and management cost 14*l.* an acre before he reaped the first crop.

Chairman.] Will that be converted into any other crop?—He expects now that he will be able to plough it with horses the same as the other land.

Mr. Handley.] What was his process after draining?—Applying lime; and there is a large cotton mill in the neighbourhood; the night soil from the cotton mill was applied to the surface, and clay in some parts.

Any marle?—No, we have no marle of any consequence.

Mr. Evans] What kind of sample of corn grows upon it?—I believe that the oats he grew upon that moss would weigh from 38 to 40 pounds a bushel.

A great quantity of straw?—Yes, pretty fair.

Mr. Handley.] What was his course of cropping?—The first crop was oats, and then a green crop of turnips and potatoes; he raised very large quantities of potatoes upon that moss; in some instances from 60 to 80 bolls an acre, or from 18 to 24 tons.

Was the ground sufficiently solid to be ploughed by horses?—No, it was all cultivated by the spade; but he expects now that it is drained and consolidated, that he will be able to plough it.

Are these drains standing?—They are still standing; he did not immediately complete the drainage, but allowed them to stand over during the heat of summer, so as to peat the shoulders at the bottom of the drain.

After the potatoes what was the crop?—Partly wheat, partly barley, and partly oats.

And then sowed it with grass?—Yes.

Mr. Clive.] Have there not been many lands brought into cultivation in consequence of the high prices during the war?—I have no doubt that there have.

Have those lands, within your knowledge, gone out of cultivation since that period?—No; cultivation is still increasing.

Do you apprehend that that cultivation pays those that cultivate it?—It has always paid me, and I should think it pays others, or else they would not go on with it.

The question refers to light soils?—There is no land gone out of cultivation that I am aware of, in consequence of low prices; there may be land formerly cultivated with wheat turned to oats or grass, but I am not aware of any lands that have gone to waste.

Then under the low prices it still continues to be cultivated?—There is still an increasing disposition to improve lands which are at present under cultivation, and to bring under cultivation lands which at present are waste.

Mr. Cayley.] Taking the condition of the Ayrshire farmers generally, should you state that upon the whole they are as rich a body of men as they were 19 years ago?—I should think there has not been so much money made in Ayrshire, still the farmers are in comfortable circumstances, and I believe their mode of living is improved.

Mr. Dunlop.] Taking a general view of the state of agriculture in the county of Ayr, do you see anything that the Legislature can do to benefit the farmer?—No; I think the Legislature should not interfere with the farmers; and in making a general visit through the country I did not find any complaints, with the exception of two or three things; the general impression seems to be, that whatever difficulties do exist can be best remedied by the landlords.

Will you state what those things were of which you complain?—A number of tenants think that much good would be done by altering the law of entails, so far as to admit the proprietors of entailed estates to rank the expenses of draining and other permanent improvements upon land as burthens upon the heirs of entail; and second, that the toll dues upon manure should be reduced. In the county of Ayr manure pays at the toll-bars the same as other things: another suggestion is, that rookeries should be placed upon such a footing as not to be hurtful to the surrounding country.

Mr. Evans.] Are you annoyed with game?—In some places. Then there is a fourth suggestion: it is alleged, that foreign corn is imported to British America, and then brought to Britain as Colonial produce.

Evidence of Mr. James Church.

Resides in Dumfries-shire on the Borders of Cumberland—Farms about 650 Acres—Has drained his Farm with Tiles—System of Draining explained—A great Portion of the Farm was Moorland twenty-five Years ago—There was fine Moor-game shooting on it—It has been Limed at his own Expense—In consequence of the Tile-drains is growing Wheat where Moor-game used to be—Grows fine Turnips and Potatoes there—Has reclaimed about 600 acres, and would do so now—Has the Advantage of Liverpool Steam-vessels for his Stock—Is richer than he was twenty Years ago—Many Farmers are thriving; some have been unfortunate—The Legislature can do nothing for the Farmer—It is a Question between him and his Landlord—Cultivation is a little extended on the Border—British Clover is as good as Foreign—The Produce of the Duke of Buccleugh's Drumlanrig Estate has nearly doubled since 1819—The Annandale Estate is very much improved; also Lord Selkirk's and Mr. Monteith's Estates.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At the Tower of Sark, in the county of Dumfries.

Is that upon the borders of Cumberland?—Yes.

You are a farmer?—I am.

What is the extent of your farm?—About 650 acres, the farm that I reside upon.

Is that your property, or do you rent it?—I rent it from his Grace the Duke of Buccleugh.

Mr. Loch.] Have you done much towards draining your farm?—Yes; with tiles.

Chairman.] How are those drains cut?—Diagonally across the furrows.

How deep are those drains cut?—About 2½ feet, upon an average.

Are they done with tiles or stones?—With tiles.

Do they fill-in the earth at the top of the tiles?—We put the surface-earth on, and do all we can to keep the clay out of the drains.

And drains so laid will take off the spring-water as well as the surface-water?—Yes, I have often found springs in consequence of cutting those drains, and then I am obliged to widen and cut the drains much deeper; even as deep as 8 or 10 feet.

Did you ever see any furrow-draining practised in Scotland?—Not to any great extent.

Do you consider that this cross draining is an improvement upon the furrow-draining?—Yes, I have seen it to a great extent upon my neighbour, Sir James Graham's property.

What is the advantage of it?—I think it is a great advantage upon our land, which has a porous bottom, like a great part of the land in the west of Scotland and in Cumberland; and I find the water gets in and goes down the furrow into the drain. If you miss a furrow it will stand with water; but if you carry an angle through the furrow there is a crevice every here and there to take the water.

Mr. Loch.] Sir James Graham has drained to a considerable extent?—His tenants have drained to a great extent.

And he has made liberal allowances to them?—Yes, he has given them every encouragement.

And that has produced a very great improvement?—An immense improvement upon his estate; and that induced me to commence.

Sir James began to show an example in your district?—Yes, some years before we practised it.

He has laid down a good deal into grass?—There is a great deal in grass; but draining is as useful in arable land as in grass.

Mr. Miles.] Have you been in the habit of laying down a slate floor to your drains?—Yes.

Why do you prefer slate to tiles?—The slate is much firmer and harder, and a man can set his foot upon a slate, but if he sets his foot upon a tile it will break.

Sir James Graham.] Has not the smoothness of the slate a great advantage that no dirt accumulates upon it?—Yes.

Mr. Miles.] Which is most expensive to you?—About the same; I get slates laid down at the sea-side about 15*s.* to 17*s.* a 1000, and we can carry 1500 or 2000 in a cart; but for those who are situated far from the sea it would be different.

Mr. Heathcote.] What do you give for tiles?—If I bought them they would cost me 30*s.* a 1000 for three inch ones.

Does that include the burning?—Yes.

Chairman.] When did you first take this farm?—In 1806.

What was the condition of the farm when you first took it?—It was most of it moss, and a great deal of it had never been ploughed; it had not an inclosure upon it, nor yet a road. The Duke of Buccleugh gave me that at a moderate rent, and I set to work and ploughed most of it, and brought it into cultivation, by taking two crops of oats and liming it. I ploughed it with a thin furrow and limed it, and then took two crops of oats in succession, and got great crops.

Mr. Loch.] How much lime did you put upon it?—Very little; because if you lime it too much you injure it, and it produces chickweed. I put about 60 or 70 imperial bushels an acre.

What did it cost you?—At the kilns it would cost about 3*d.* the imperial bushel, exclusive of drawing.

That was your own money expended?—Solely.

The landlord did not assist you?—No; only gave me thorns to make hedges, and I did all the enclosures myself. His Grace kept the hedges clean for three years. I made upwards of eight miles of hedges.

Sir James Graham.] A great deal of this was heath?—Yes.

With moor-game upon it?—Yes, a fine shooting moor.

Mr. Loch.] What was the next process?—Growing rape upon it after two crops of oats, and letting it lie in grass two or three years; then after that it went on in the regular five-crop rotation.

Chairman.] How do you crop that land at present?—Two years in grass; for instance, it is sown out, I cut about 20 acres of hay, and the rest is pasture for two years, and the third year oats in general; the fourth year a green crop of some kind, or bare fallow; the fifth year wheat, oats, and sometimes barley sown with seeds.

Do you grow much wheat?—I grow a good deal of wheat; in consequence of having these tile-drains I find that I can grow wheat where I could not before.

Sir James Graham.] You are now growing wheat where moor-game used to be, and where heath was when you took that farm?—I am doing it to a considerable extent; I have about 42 acres of wheat land.

When you entered upon that farm that land was wild, with heath upon it?—Nothing but heath and flying bent.

And there was fine grouse-shooting upon that very farm?—Yes.

Chairman.] Can you grow good turnips upon that land?—Since it was drained I can; before I could not get them more than one year in ten.

Mr. Loch.] Is your's a singular case, or is that the case of the district generally?—I think it would be the case generally if the same system was adopted; and I have heard that many of my neighbours mean to do so on both sides of the border; in which case turnips and potatoes will be as near as possible a certain crop when the land is thus drained.

Sir James Graham.] Upon the English border, immediately adjoining you, is there not a considerable tract of land which was moor 14 years ago which is now in fine cultivation?—Yes, it grows fine turnips and potatoes.

Mr. Loch.] Is there more wheat grown in that district than when you began farming?—A great deal more; red particularly.

Sir James Graham.] Is not red wheat now grown where oats used to be?—We can get as much wheat now upon poor clay land after a fallow as we can get oats.

And this entirely in consequence of draining?—Yes.

Mr. Cayley.] How many acres did you reclaim of this kind?—About 600 acres.

How long were you about it?—I was not long in reclaiming it; it was when times were very good, and I got good crops in five or six years. I went over it all.

Then you got it all done by about 1811?—Or 1813, rather.

Prices at that time would pay you?—Yes.

Supposing you had to enter upon that farm now, do you think you would be induced to lay out the same amount in improving it?—I would not scruple to do so.

Who are those potatoes grown by, that you say are grown upon the moor borders?—By farmers.

Not by cottagers?—The cottagers also grow potatoes.

Do the farmers grow a great quantity of potatoes?—I had about 26 acres of potatoes myself last year.

Is that one of the first crops you can get?—No; we generally take rape first.

Have you applied much lime to that soil?—It must be all limed before it will produce vegetation.

Is lime near at hand?—From four to seven miles.

If the lime had not been near, could you have reclaimed so extensively?—It would have been far more expensive.

What does it cost you a chaldron?—I do not know; it is about 3*d.* a bushel.

Have you not had some advantage lately with regard to steam-packets going to Liverpool?—Yes, we find it very convenient for our fat stock.

How long has that been in operation?—About five years, but it is increasing; there is competition in the trade now.

That causes a great demand for stock?—Yes; especially in these times, when stock is high.

So far as your stock is concerned, your farm is very profitable?—At present it is.

The prices of stock now are high?—They are remunerating.

Have the prices of stock rather risen lately?—Considerably.

Are you much acquainted with the farmers in your district?—Yes.

Are they as rich a body of men as they were 20 years ago?—It is a difficult question to answer. I know that I am richer myself than I was 20 years ago.

But taking a farmer upon land that was in a fair state of cultivation 20 years ago, and had been for some time before, do you think he is now as rich as he was 20 years ago?—That is a question I cannot answer. I know a good many farmers that are thriving very well, and I have known some that have been unfortunate, and the times must be against them no doubt; the prices of grain have been low.

Chairman.] Do you think it possible for a man to farm advantageously who has only a grain farm?—Impossible; a man must have some stock in order to do so.

Sir James Graham.] Should you say that it was in the power of the Legislature to do anything for your benefit, looking at the general condition of your neighbourhood, and the present state of the law as affecting agriculture?—I cannot see that they can do anything.

If things are let alone, and landlords act fairly towards their tenants, can you see anything that the State can do to improve their condition?—The landlord can do much more than the State.

And you think it is a question mainly of rent between the landlord and the tenant?—Certainly it is; and it is a question with the landlord to choose an active and enterprising tenant.

And the tenant to choose his landlord?—The tenant will endeavour to take care of that.

Taking a survey of the district of the Scottish border since the year 1819, should you say that draining had increased or otherwise on the cultivated land?—I think it has rather increased, but not very considerably.

Has more wheat been grown?—More wheat is grown decidedly, and less barley and oats.

Would you like to have a return published by the government annually, of the quantities sown of wheat, barley, and oats, in each parish throughout Great Britain, so that you might have a knowledge of the proportions of each cultivated throughout the kingdom?—It would make us speculate.

You would then speculate with some data, but now you speculate without data?—Yes; I am keeping all my wheat.

You expect that wheat will rise?—Yes.

What clover seed do you sow?—Red and white, and occasionally yellow.

Foreign or British?—We generally have foreign; but we consider British grown as good as the foreign.

Would you like to have clover seed cheaper?—It would be an advantage. I do not know whether it would do much good.

What difference would it be to you if you had clover seed one half cheaper?—It would make a difference of 10*l.* or 15*l.* a-year.

Do you know the Duke of Buccleugh's Drumlanrig estate?—Yes.

Should not you say that the produce of that estate has very greatly improved since 1819?—Yes, I think it must be doubled since that time.

Do you know the Annandale estate?—Yes.

Has not that improved very much?—Very much.

And the produce very much increased?—Yes.

Mr. Loch.] Do you know Lord Selkirk's estate?—Yes.

Has the improvement upon that estate been very great since 1819?—Very great.

Mr. Dunlop.] Mr. Monteith's estate, has that much improved?—It was improved earlier than 1819, and they are going on improving it still.

Mr Loch.] Are the improvements you have described on the Duke of Buccleugh's estate and the Annandale estate, and Lord Selkirk's estate still going on?—Yes, they are going on up to the present period.

Sir James Graham.] Then generally speaking, the difficulties of the times and the present low prices have been met in your neighbourhood, both in Scotland and in the north of England, by increased exertions on the part of the landlords and tenants?—Certainly they have.

And their increased exertions have added to the produce?—That is my opinion.

Mr. Wodehouse] Speaking of Scotland generally, what is the lowest price at which you think they can grow wheat with confidence?—Since I commenced farming, it was the general opinion that wheat could not be produced under 80*s.* a quarter, but I rather suspect now that 64*s.* would be considered a fair price. There would not be much profit at 60*s.* or 64*s.*; it would merely be remunerating.

Sir James Graham.] As to the condition of the labouring population in your neighbourhood, should you say that they were as well off at this moment, considering their wages and the price of the articles which they use, as at any former period in your memory?—Generally speaking, the labourers are well off.

Mr. Wodehouse.] What wages do you pay?—About 18*l.* and 20*d.* a-day.

Chairman.] Are the wages paid in money?—Yes.

Evidence of Mr. George Robertson.

Resides in Kincardineshire—Tenants in the East of Scotland are very prosperous—A great Improvement going on since 1824—A Change of Cropping and much Draining—Bone Dust has been used on the dry Soils—Rape Dust is beginning to be used—Wheat not paying well, Barley and Grass has been substituted—Great Competition among Tenants—There has been a fair Adjustment between Landlord and Tenant—The State can give very little Relief—Rents have fallen, but the entire Rental of Scotland is as great as ever from increased Cultivation—High Price of Meat this Year owing to the Failure of the Turnip Crop in England, and the thriving State of Trade—Farmers are not making as much as during the War, but there are fewer Adventurers among them—The distress previous to 1824 had no particular Reference to the Currency—Rotation of Crops—Present Corn Law—Remarks on the Farmers and Farms in England.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—In Kincardineshire, at Balmanno, six miles from Montrose.

What is your occupation?—I am a farmer, surveyor, and agent for several estates.

What is the condition of the farmers in the counties in the east of Scotland?—I should not say that they are in a very prosperous state; but I never knew them in a more sound and healthy state than they are now.

Are they principally tenants on lease?—All on lease.

Are the leases of long duration?—Nineteen and 21 years; and some improving leases a little longer.

Are the rents principally corn-rents or money-rents?—Partly both.

Have there been many improvements going on in that district of country the last few years?—There has been a great spirit of improvement since the year 1824.

Of what do those improvements consist?—They chiefly consist of an alteration of the system altogether, particularly from fallow

as a preparation for wheat; they now cultivate potatoes very generally, followed by barley.

Is the soil a wet soil or a dry soil?—All kinds of soils; clay, loam, gravel, &c.

On the wet soil has much draining been done?—A great deal of draining has been done, and they find the turnips do very well, and to be of good feeding quality.

Have the dry soils been manured with bone-dust?—They have very extensively; bone-manure has made a very considerable alteration in the husbandry of Scotland, and rape-dust is now beginning to be used.

Was there much wheat grown there previously?—There was a great deal grown during the war; but they find that it does not pay, and they have altered the system from wheat to barley, and a great deal more is laid down to grass. The introduction of sheep husbandry has become more common of late, particularly for feeding off turnips raised by bone-dust.

Has there been any difficulty in getting tenants?—The very reverse; there is a great competition for them.

In those cases have the farms been let at reduced rents or at higher rents?—They have generally been about the old rents; it depends greatly, however, whether the land is improveable or not. In Strathmore, in a district of Forfarshire, there has been a great deal of money-rent converted into corn-rent by the fiar's prices.

Sir James Graham.] You say that agriculture has improved in those counties since 1824; is the condition of the farmer better or worse than it was before 1824?—It is very much improved.

Speaking generally of Aberdeenshire, Forfarshire, and Kincardineshire, you would say that the condition of the occupying tenant has improved?—Very much.

An adjustment has taken place between the farmer and the landlord in those counties with respect to rent?—There has; an adjustment has taken place, and in many cases abatements have been given, not universally, but pretty generally; and the commutation of money into corn-rent has been a great relief to the farmer.

Where there has been no abatement of rent there has been an outlay in draining and improving?—Generally there has.

And you say that throughout those counties the condition of the working farmer is better than it was in 1824?—Decidedly. After the conclusion of the war, adventurers and speculators were turned out of the field; there never was a more sound class of tenants than there is at present.

Can you suggest any thing that the State can do to improve the condition of the working farmers in the three counties you are best acquainted with?—I am afraid the State can do little. The tenants must depend very much upon themselves. If the malt-tax were reduced it might no doubt relieve them a little.

Except an alteration of the malt-tax, is there anything that you can suggest?—The agricultural interest may be partially relieved by the Legislature, by a property-tax and a modified tax on income.

You suggest that as a means of relief for the working farmer?—I do not know that that would relieve him very much.

Is there any thing else that you would suggest?---A fixed valuation of tithes in England.

Is there any appearance of diminution of capital to be embarked in the cultivation of land in those counties?—None whatever.

No mistrust which leads to an unwillingness to lay it out in land?—None in the least; they have great confidence in the landlords.

Mr. Heathcote.] Have rents not fallen?—I think the rental of Scotland now as great as it was at any former period. I believe there is much waste land brought into cultivation; the quantity of produce is of course increased, which has tended to keep up the general rental.

But upon the same land?—In some of the districts the clay land is not so high; but that is made up by the rise of rent in other districts.

Has there been a great expenditure of capital by the landowners upon the land?—There has; but the great improvements have been done by the tenants.

Mr. Cayley.] How long has that been in operation?—Two or three or four years; but it has been coming into operation for some time.

Has the price of meat been high this year?—It has.

To what do you attribute that?—To two causes; to the failure of the turnip crop in England and the opening of the London market to us, and to the thriving state of the other great interests.

Supposing your condition had been very bad previous to 1824, yet the opening of the London market might have tended to recover you from the state of distress?—The Scotch farmer has been always looking about him. When he saw that wheat did not pay, he immediately altered his system. When the preparation was fallow, he took to potatoes as a preparation for wheat, and he found that profitable both for rearing and feeding cattle for the market.

When was it that he did not find wheat a remunerating crop?—I cannot state the exact time.

Was it before 1824?—Before and since.

Do you remember the great loss in the sheep flocks of England four or five years ago?—Yes; I was in England, and I heard of it.

Did that produce a great destruction?—That is a question I cannot speak to, because I am not conversant with the state of England particularly.

Did the price of sheep and wool rise after that rot?—I believe it did.

You say that the farmers are looking forward to better times. Now if they have been so prosperous since 1824, what occasion have they to look for better times?—They are in a sound and healthy state; but I never knew the time when agriculture was a very lucrative pursuit.

Are they making as much now as they ever did?—Not so much as during the war; but there are now fewer adventurers, and there is an immense economy in labour, and great skill and great enterprise amongst them.

Was there any distress amongst the farmers previous to 1824?—There was before the abatements began to take place; there were a great many that had taken land at a high rate, and many of these were turned out of the field.

Did they take their farms at a high rate because of the high price of produce?—They took farms during the war at almost any rate at which they could get them.

Sir James Graham.] You said that the state of affairs now is sound; do you think that the state of affairs in any agricultural district in Scotland during the war was sound?—No.

Has that increased the produce considerably?—Very considerably.

Would you like to see a recurrence of it?—Certainly not.

With all the difficulties of the present moment, do you think the Scotch farmers would like to return to war prices and the war state of affairs which proved to be so unsound?—No; they have no wish to return to that; they consider that the adjustment is now nearly completed, and that they are in a much better state than they ever were.

And they would rather be let alone than tampered with?—Yes.

Mr. Cayley.] Did it ever occur to you what produced the fall in prices?—I think it was returning from the artificial state in which the country was placed by a combination of circumstances to a natural state.

Have you ever considered the question of the currency?—Not particularly.

Do you look upon the 1*l.* notes to be an advantage to you?—I do not know.

Would you like to be rid of them?—I think we should get on pretty well if we were placed upon the same footing as in England; there is no want of credit.

You would not like to part with the 1*l.* notes?—We have no wish for a change.

You remember that Scotchmen made a great noise about it in 1826, when it was proposed to take the 1*l.* notes away?—Yes.

They thought it of advantage to them that the notes should remain?—They did.

Do you remember whether the springs of 1832 and 1833 were very dry?—We are not so much affected by that as in England; our land is pretty well drained, and a dry season we consider of advantage for getting the seeds well in.

But after the spring crops have come up, if the whole of May is dry, do you consider that an advantage?—Dry seasons are generally of advantage; with the exception of 1826, I scarcely ever knew Scotland suffer from a dry season.

Supposing that mutton had borne the same proportionate price when wheat fell to 40*s.*, do you think the Scotch farmer would then have been enabled to make a good living?—The Scotch farmer would have tried something else than wheat; he would have extended his grass cultivation.

And that would have tended to reduce the price of meat still more?—No doubt.

And if the price of barley had been also reduced?—Those are all regulated by the demand by the manufacturing and commercial classes.

Do you know anything of the state of the manufacturing and commercial classes?—My belief is that they were never more prosperous.

How long has that been the case?—It has been gradually coming on for years.

In the face of that increasing prosperity has there not been a decline in the price of wheat?—That may be accounted for by the great additional average crops for a series of years.

Are you able to perceive a great increase in the demand of the operative classes?—Very great in flour and meat; and I have no doubt the increased price of barley is caused by a demand for malting in England.

Supposing the supply and demand for labour to remain the same, will not eventually the price of labour fall in proportion to the fall in the price of food?—At present the demand for labour for the manufacturing interest is so great, that we can scarcely get hands for necessary operations of agriculture.

And that sustains the wages?—No doubt it does.

Will you state the rotation that you adopt?—There is the rotation of the Castle Farm of Thornton; I may again mention that about one-third of my farm is very poor; it is a cold soil upon a rather retentive bottom, and that bottom is strongly impregnated with the oxide of iron. The rotation I follow is, first, turnip and potatoes; second, barley, with grass seed; third, pasture; fourth, pasture; fifth, pasture; sixth, pasture; then oats; then next, turnip, with bone-manure. The ninth is barley, oats or wheat; the tenth is potatoes with tares, peas, &c., dunged. That is a break which every odd thing is thrown into. The eleventh is barley or wheat, with seeds; the twelfth is red clover, and the thirteenth is oats or wheat; then comes the turnip and the barley, and then grass again. It is a 13 years' rotation.

Is that the common way of cropping land in that part of the country?—No, that is a rotation of my own; the common way is a five-shift course, of which there is a variety. The first is potatoes

or fallow; but there is very little fallow in the country now, except in very strong stiff clays where they cannot keep the thistles out; the second is wheat; third, beans; fourth, barley; fifth, clover; sixth, oats; seventh, turnips; eighth, wheat or barley; ninth, pasture; tenth, pasture; and eleventh, oats. This is the rotation for one farm upon an estate under my own management.

Sir James Graham.] Has not that change of practice in those counties by feeding their cattle on the farms and sending them fat, instead of sending them lean to England, led to the production of a much greater quantity of manure upon the farms?—No doubt of it.

Has not the application of that manure led to a great increase of produce?—No question of it.

You have been asked with reference to the price of wheat governing the price of meat; can you anticipate a very great falling off in the price of meat, when you consider that the population of this country is increasing so rapidly, and that the manufacturing employment of that population is so great as it is at present?—No; I think the price of agricultural produce must keep up; that is to say, if the manufacturing classes prosper and live as they are doing.

Therefore, though wheat should be imported free of duty, and the price of wheat should very materially fall, you cannot anticipate a corresponding fall in the price of meat, considering the increase of the population and the extensive employment of the manufacturing population?—I cannot answer that question without thinking of it.

But you are not prepared to say that the price of wheat in present circumstances governs the price of meat?—No, I do not think it does; I do not think the price of any one kind of farm-produce governs another; it depends very much upon the state of other great interests, and whether these interests are in a thriving state or not.

Do you think the present corn law produces a steadier price than a fixed duty would do?—I do not know; a fixed duty would be liable to be tampered with upon any clamour about a bad crop. The pressure from without would perhaps influence the Legislature, and therefore I think we are better as we are.

Sir Robert Price.] But practically when it becomes a very high price, the ports are almost open now?—I believe they are.

Chairman.] Are you at all acquainted with the mode of management of land in England?—Not particularly, but I have travelled a good deal in England, and have been always observing it, and as a farmer, and as being conversant with these matters, have seen a good deal of it in going about.

Having observed the state of the land by the side of the high roads, do you think that the farming in England is as perfect as it might be?—I do not think so. There is one thing that strikes me very strongly as to the management in England, and that is, that

generally in large farms there is a certain proportion of grass land that is devoted exclusively to grazing sheep, the other part of the farm is under a rotation for cropping, generally far too severe. The rotation is frequently a six-shift course, and very few cattle are kept. It occurs to me that the rotation should embrace also a grass course, which would enable the farmer to rear cattle, to feed them, to consume his straw, and by having a greater portion of land under turnip and potatoes, to increase the quantity of the dung, and improve the quality of it, by which means the land would be kept in better order. I cannot see, by the system followed generally by the English farmer, how he can get dung for manuring his fallow breaks.

Your opinion is, that the English farms are generally overcropped by the corn crops?—That is decidedly my opinion. By introducing two or three years' grass in his rotation, and by rearing cattle along with his sheep, the English farmer would materially improve the condition of his farm.

By that mode of management you double the fertility of the soil; the land recovers itself while it is at rest under the grass crop, and you enable the farmer to raise a greater quantity of manure, which he may place upon the land?—Yes; and there would also be a great return from the cattle.

Do you conceive that you grow your corn crops at considerably less expense by your system of management than they do in England?—No question of it; and we have a return from our cattle also.

Do you think that system of management might be made applicable to the cold wet clay land of England with advantage?—I think the potato husbandry might be introduced after draining with advantage; they may fatten a great deal with potatoes.

Do not you think it is perfectly hopeless to attempt to farm the clay land by merely cropping it with a grain crop without a sufficient quantity of grass land and of stock?—I think even upon the cold clays grass might be introduced; we grow the finest turnips upon clay land; and the objection to poaching the land is done away with by storing them before frost sets in. The turnips carried home are given to the cattle tied up for fattening, and also to those in the straw yards.

Evidence of Mr. William Menzies.

Resides near Alloa, in Scotland—Is a factor for 18,000 Scotch acres—All on Lease to Tenants—They are thriving, and improving the Land—Much draining and deep ploughing is going on—Rent is increasing—The Sub-soil Plough is much in use—Its Effects, and the sort of Draining it requires—Farms are in good Condition in the Neighbourhood, and pay their Rents—Labourers are well off—Wages from 9*s.* to 10*s.* a-week—Scotch Beef and Mutton preferable to English.

Where do you reside?—At Tully Allan, near Alloa.

Are you the factor of some large estates in Scotland?—Factor for Lord Viscount Keith's trustees' estates, and for Lady Baroness Keith's, in Kinross-shire, Perthshire, and Kincardineshire.

What is the extent of that district with which you are particularly acquainted?—I am acquainted from Tully Allan upwards to Stonehaven; about the extent of one hundred miles I travel; but those estates are situated not all over that extent, but in those different counties, to the extent of 18,000 Scotch acres.

Are the tenantry of those estates in a good condition at present?—They are in very good condition; they are thriving and improving their lands.

Are they tenants on lease, or tenants at will?—They are tenants on lease.

What is the length of the leases?—Fifteen and nineteen years.

Are they upon a money-rent or upon a corn-rent?—They are principally upon a money-rent, convertible into corn, and payable by the fiar's prices of the county; generally half is paid in money, and half of it in that way.

Mr. Loch.] Are the improvements in the county, in the districts you are acquainted with, going on, or have they been checked?—They are going on progressively and rapidly; draining and improving waste land; draining and deep-ploughing land already in cultivation.

Are there any portions of the estate upon which the leases have expired, and which have been let in again?—Yes.

Do you get the same, or a lower rent, or a better rent?—We get a better rent, but that was in consequence of the system of improvement which had been taking place in the course of the lease, which caused the rent to rise.

What was the condition of the land upon which the improvements were made, at the commencement of the lease which has just expired?—They were principally light soils, with strong sub-soils.

Upon letting them anew you got better rents than the old rents?—Yes; but that was in consequence of the improvements that had been made in the course of the lease.

By whom were those improvements made?—Partly by the landlord and partly by the tenant.

What was the nature of the improvements?—Generally draining and inclosing.

What proportion of those improvements may have been borne by the landlord, and what by the tenant?—The landlord paid for the opening of the drains, and the tenants paid the filling of them up; the landlord paid the building of the fences, and the tenants performed the carriages.

Then there has been a considerable quantity of land that was nearly unproductive at the beginning of the lease which is now in a state of cultivation, and the rents have risen?—Yes.

In that strong sub-soil farm did you try to stir up the sub-soil?—It has not been done upon that farm, but upon some others in the neighbourhood the soil has been stirred.

By Mr. Smith of Deanston's plough?—Yes, or the same sort of plough.

With what effect has that been done?—In a farm in Kinrossshire the cost of the sub-soil ploughing was 9*l.* an acre, and the whole expense was 25*l.* for one year, and 34*l.* an acre altogether for two years, and the two crops were 37*l.*, which left a profit of 3*l.* upon the whole, after paying all the expenses.

Was that including rent?—Including rent.

What made the expense of the sub-soil ploughing so great?—That included every thing; furrow draining and every other expense whatever.

Have you got the particulars of those expenses?—Yes.

Will you be so good as to read it?—Thirty roods of drains per Scotch acre, at 2*s.* per rood, 3*l.*; 90 square yards of broken stones, at 6*d.* per square yard, 2*l.* 5*s.*; account of carting stones, including filling and turfing, 2*l.* 10*s.*; expenses connected with sub-soil ploughing, 1*l.* 5*s.*; amount for draining and trenching, 9*l.*

The total expense of that improvement, at the end of the second year, was 34*l.*, and the amount of the produce 37*l.*, leaving 3*l.* after paying rent and all other expenses?—Yes; the expense was paid in two years, and 3*l.* over for interest.

Do you suppose that that result was chiefly owing to that system of improvement?—Entirely; the land we considered worth 25*s.* an acre before the improvemement began, and after it was finished it was considered worth 3*l.* an acre.

Have you seen that system of improvement pursued upon any other farm?—No, except lately I have seen it in Stirlingshire, to the westward of Stirlingshire.

Near Mr. Smith's own place?—Yes; there it was merely a trial and competition.

Sir James Graham.] Will you describe the mode of ploughing adopted by Mr. Smith?—The general way is, a plough with a pair of horses passes first and lays over the surface soil, and that is followed by the sub-soil plough, which turns up the sub-soil to the depth of sixteen inches, including what was turned over by the two-horse plough.

By how many horses is that drawn?—Four horses, but sometimes three will do the work.

There is no mould board to the second plough?—No.

But it is a coulter, which moves the sub-soil without throwing it up?—Yes.

To what depth does the first plough without a mould board go?—About six or eight inches.

And the second plough with a coulter, without a mould board?—About ten inches.

Making altogether how much?—About from sixteen to eighteen inches generally.

What quantity will four horses plough in a day with Mr. Smith's plough?—About half to a whole Scotch acre.

That can only be used in land which has not been tile or stone-drained previously?—Yes; it can be used, but it has no good effect without the draining.

Is there not great danger of its going down to the tile drains, in land which has been drained before this operation?—Yes, if the drains have not been sufficiently deep so as to be entirely out of the reach of the plough.

All clay land which has been drained by drains across the ridges is exposed to danger from this depth of ploughing?—Yes, if the drains have not been deep enough.

It is peculiarly applicable to clay land which has not been tile-drained, but is about to be tile-drained?—Yes, it is, and to all retentive bottomed land.

Mr. Handley.] When you speak of clay land, is the land which is ploughed by four horses a very tenacious sub-soil?—Yes; this plough will penetrate any kind of strong sub-soil.

Sir James Graham.] Is not the plough of a very peculiar construction?—Yes, Mr. Smith's plough is of a peculiar construction.

Mr. Handley.] Have you found in your experience that the sub-soil of a tenacious clay, when once broken up by this sub-soil plough, unites again?—No; I should think if it is deep ploughed afterwards and mixed with the surface soil, which I think should always be the case, then of course it could not adhere again; but we have not had sufficient experience to prove this.

Sir James Graham.] With a mould-board plough?—Yes.

Mr. Handley.] Then in that case you bring up as much sub-soil as you have surface soil?—Yes, part sub-soil; but I think it is a good not an evil, if it is mixed with the surface soil at the time the manure is given to the fallow or green crop.

But there are some clays that have been stirred by the sub-soil plough, beneath the furrow; would they unite again?—If they were a strong tenacious clay I think they might; the trenching plough should be applied, which would prevent this.

Have you found that the sole of the sub-soil plough renders the bottom of the furrow more impervious to water?—I should think it might on some clays, but we have not had any experience of such.

Sir James Graham.] At what depth do you lay the drains after this operation of ploughing in with Mr. Smith's plough?—The drains should be laid at least eighteen inches deep, and under the sixteen inches turned over by the plough, and should be from one to two inches clear of it, so as there might be no chance of the sole of the plough touching the top of the drain.

Then you lay the drain lower than you disturb with the sub-soil plough?—Yes.

How do you break the crust which intervenes between the bottom of the ploughing and the top of the drain; is there not a hard substance still unbroken?---No; if the sub-soil plough goes along it, it breaks it to the required depth, but the drain must come up fully to the height of the sub-soil plough; the stones or fillings not to that height, a cover of turf, or heath, or other substance intervening.

You so manage it that the top of the drain is always at the bottom of the sub-soil broken by the plough?—The stone must not come where the plough reaches.

How do you fill in the drains?---Either with tiles or stones in part, or with stones entirely; if it is a soil in which plenty of small stones are to be found or to be got near, it is the cheapest and best fillings; in the alluvial lands stones are difficult to be got, and tiles are generally used.

How do you lay the drains; across the ridges or in the furrows?---In the furrows generally.

Have you been at Deanston?---Yes.

How has Mr. Smith done it?—He runs his drains parallel with each other, and pays no regard to furrows.

And not across?---Some of his drains are probably made across, should it happen to be necessary for any purpose.

From your experience, is it your opinion that it is better to lay them in the furrows or across?---I think it is better upon the steep banks, where the water can run down, to lay them in the furrows, should some circumstance not render it advisable to adopt another mode.

What depth do you make the ridges?---Eighteen feet.

Twice gathered?---Certainly, in lands not drained; though drained lands do not require ridges at all. Mr. Smith has no ridges; all the land I have laid down to grass is laid down without ridges or furrows.

What is the condition of the farmers in your district?---They are in good circumstances.

Are they dissatisfied with their present condition?---They are dissatisfied with the low prices, principally of wheat, oats, and barley; potatoes have been good, also prices of cattle; but from being placed principally upon a corn rent, they generally pay their rents, and continue to live and thrive.

Except the cases where rents are not adjusted to the prices, is there any dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in that neighbourhood?—Yes; but there are very few of that description; I may say none.

The rents are adjusted?—The rents are adjusted to the times long ago.

Where the rents are adjusted to the times, do the farmers think the Legislature can do anything to assist them?—The general

belief in those counties is, so far as my information goes, that the legislature can do little or nothing for them.

And they are contented with their position, where the rents are adjusted to the prices?—Generally contented.

Are the labouring population contented?—Yes, I think the labouring population at present are contented, and in full employment at good wages.

Do you ever recollect them in more comfortable circumstances?—No; I think they are in as comfortable circumstances as I ever recollect them to have been; good wages, and prices of provisions low.

What are the labourer's wages?—Nine shillings a week at present; 9*s.* to 10*s.*

Paid generally in money, or in produce?—In money.

What is the state of the cattle markets in Scotland at present?—They are very good.

Do you conceive that that will be the case in ordinary years, or only when there is a scarcity in England?—I think if there was a plenty in England, of course there would not be a demand from Scotland to the same extent; but the Scotch beef and mutton is preferable to that of the English breeds, therefore will always command a market in London.

Evidence of Mr. Archibald M'Dougal.

Resides in Roxburghshire—Farms 2000 Acres—Tenantry as prosperous as they have ever been—Very great Improvements going on—A good deal of Wheat grown in Roxburghshire—Present Rents could be paid at 6*s.* a Bushel for Wheat—Bone Dust is much used as Manure—Lime is the most efficacious Manure—Has done a good deal of Draining—All Stone Drains.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Cessford, in Roxburghshire, on the estates of the Duke of Roxburgh.

Are you an extensive farmer in that county?—My farm is 2000 acres.

Are you at all employed as an agent to manage other estates?—No, but I act as trustee on other farms besides.

Are you well acquainted with the state of agriculture in that county in Scotland?—From the extent of my business I ought to be well acquainted with it; I think I am; and I manage a farm of 1200 acres under the Duke of Roxburgh, for the widow of my late brother, or, as trustee for the creditors.

What is the condition of the tenantry in that part of Roxburgh?—I think they are just in as comfortable circumstances as they were ever known to be.

Have great improvements been going on in that part of the country?—At this moment I never saw it carried on with more

spirit, some years ago there was rather a kind of laxity, but at this moment it is in a very spirited state indeed.

Are those improvements carried on at the expense of the landlord or the tenant?—Sometimes the landlord assists, but it is generally at the expense of the tenant; the landlord usually assists in building, enclosing and draining.

Have tenantry all of them leases?—The whole of them; there is no tenant without a lease.

For nineteen or twenty-one years?—That is the general time; but there are some leases granted for fourteen or sixteen years on different estates.

Is Roxburghshire a wheat-growing county?—We grow a considerable extent of wheat.

Has there been more wheat grown these last twenty years than in former years?—I think not, I think it has decreased; the prices of wheat have not been equal to those of other grains, and we sow according to the returns we expect.

What is the lowest price per bushel at which you think wheat could be generally grown in Scotland, with a fair rent and a remuneration, on land of the quality of which you are now speaking?—From 6*s*. 6*d*. to 7*s* a bushel; I do not think we should have any difficulty, with the economical mode we are now adopting, to be paid at that price.

Could the present rents, in that part of Scotland of which you are speaking, be maintained at the price of 6*s*. a bushel?—I am perfectly certain they could, taking the fiar's prices at the time as a criterion, for it is 10*s*. a boll, or nearly 10*s*. a boll above the fiar's prices, which this year was about 4*s*. 8*d*. a bushel.

How many bushels per acre would you say is the average produce?—From 28 to 30 bushels, that is on good wheat lands, and there is only a proportion of the crop in wheat; but that I consider a good crop.

What species of manure did you apply?—The farm-yard manure is first used, and bone dust has become extremely beneficial.

Is the bone dust equally applicable to the clay soil soils?—No, it is only for the gravel or light soils.

Mr. Heathcote.] Have you found that lime, as applied to clay, is as efficacious as to other species of soil?—We consider lime the most efficacious manure for that soil of any we can apply.

Is it not better in a soil where there are the remains of vegetable matter?—Yes; but we do not consider that a stiff soil can do without it, if it is to be perfectly reduced; the lime does not act as manure, but as a stimulus; and, with a slight application of stable-yard dung, the lime will have a most wonderful effect.

By itself have you found it has as much effect upon a stiff retentive clay as on other soils?—We find it has a very good effect.

In that part of your farm that is heavy soil, you have done any

draining?—I have done a great deal of draining, both on the clay and light soils.

Your drains are stone drains?—Yes, all of them.

Are they furrow drains?—No, they are taken from the springs; for on my farm they would be of very little use, the wet being mostly from springs; and if we do not catch these springs, draining will be of no use at all.

Do those drains carry off the surface water?—We can get it off without a great expense, and furrow-draining is not successful in those respects; in my barn-yard, which is pretty extensive, I have furrow-drained it all, without being much benefited, and there are 200 rods of drains in it.

EVIDENCE RESPECTING SUB-SOIL PLOUGHING AND THE PLOUGH.

STATEMENT by T. F. KENNEDY, ESQ., of Dunure, formerly M.P. for the Ayr Burghs, respecting his experience of the System of Draining and Sub-soil Ploughing, recommended by Mr. Smith, of Deanston, in the County of Stirling.

MAY, 1836.

I have practised Mr. Smith's system of draining and sub-soil ploughing upon my farm, in the county of Ayr, during the last three years, and the result has fully justified every anticipation of benefit. It is applicable to all soils not rocky which have not an absolutely porous sub-soil, the great object being, that the sub-soil should be rendered artificially porous, and that all rain-water should sink on the spot on which it falls, and that no running of water should take place on the surface.

There was at the outset considerable difficulty in having the work executed; it was arduous, and those engaged in the superintendence and labour were adverse, because they did not see the principles of the system or the advantages which were likely to arise. A little encouragement and a distinct intimation that there must be perseverance, overcame every difficulty. This observation applies to the sub-soil ploughing, while some difficulty attached to perfect execution of the drains, in having them made of the full depth of 30 inches, and filled neither too much nor too little, and with all due care in all particulars which must be attended to to secure permanence in the effects. I have invariably made the drains twelve feet apart, in order to secure the effect being complete; being much impressed with the folly of spending a considerable sum per acre in the operation, and still failing to obtain what I may term perfection in the system. I have also used broken stones as the material when they could be obtained within such a distance as to prevent the expense of cartage being excessive; in other cases I have

used tiles, with a layer of three or four inches of stones or gravel over them. When stones alone were used, the drains have been uniformly thirty inches deep, leaving 16 inches for the operation of the plough and sub-soil plough ; where tiles have been used, the depth has been about 24 inches, the same depth for the ploughs being left as in the other cases. A crop of oats has generally been taken after the drains have been executed, and the land has been comparatively dry, but even the visible effect has been very imperfect until the sub-soil plough has been applied. By means of this plough the whole obdurate undercrust of the soil has been broken up, and all water has instantly escaped, and, after six or eight months of the alternations of heat and cold, wet and dry, a most remarkable change has appeared in the condition of the soil ; what was before obdurate and retentive has become comparatively mellow and friable, and the longer the time since the operation has been performed the greater has been the perceptible progressive effect. The operation of the sub-soil plough has produced cracks and crevices and interstices to the depth of 16 inches, through these the rain passes off with rapidity, and these crevices are immediately filled by the air of the atmosphere, and during dry and hot weather these cracks and crevices are multiplied to an indefinite extent, and in clay soils to an extent quite remarkable. Instead of resuming its original tenacity, there seems to be a decided change effected in the character of the component parts of the land to the depth the plough has reached. It is for the skilful farmer to apply manure judiciously according to the state of each field. Drilled green crop has followed a crop of oats, and the land which before was unfit to grow turnips has become fitted for that crop, although, perhaps, a little rough and cloddy during the first year. Next has come a crop of wheat, and in it has been seen the great and remarkable effects of the system in the condition of the soil and the quantity of produce. Land which was before, in truth, unfit to carry wheat from extreme wetness has become altogether the reverse, being sown with wheat without ridges and furrows, being perfectly porous; all rain disappearing as it falls, and being carried off by filtration to the many drains, and each drain having little more than a thread of water to carry off. Possibly the land of which I speak might have previously yielded a precarious produce of 20, or at the utmost 24 bushels of wheat per imperial acre, while in its improved state, the actual produce of the crop of 1835 has been 40 bushels thrashed out, a few bushels of which were not very good in quality, owing to what is now to be mentioned. The fault of the crop was, that it was too strong, and there being much rain while it ripened it was laid down. Had this not occurred, the quality of the whole would have been good, and there is no doubt that six or eight bushels more per acre would have been obtained. The facts, therefore, are most satisfactory, because the result in the first wheat crop may truly be said to be twenty bushels of wheat of

extra produce, in return for an expense of 10*l.* 10*s.* per acre, which was the cost of the drainage and the extra expense of sub-soil ploughing. It ought to be stated, that with the turnips, the land was well manured, and subsequently abundantly. After the wheat was carried, and during the winter, the field was ploughed about nine inches deep with the ordinary plough, and remained rough until the month of March, the whole rains of winter, which were excessive, sinking as they fell. Towards the end of March, the field was harrowed, drilled, and sown with beans, without any manure. The crop is promising, and there can be no doubt that the powers of the soil which have now been brought into action, will render it abundant. The soil is so powerful, that it is intended to take a crop of wheat after the beans, without any manure, but taking care to make the land perfectly clean, and there is little doubt that the wheat crop of 1837 so treated will be more productive than that of 1835, because it will be less superabundant in straw and incur less probable injury from being laid down.

I have selected one field, respecting which to state this progress; I might say the same of all the others which have been similarly treated so far as they have advanced in their progress. I have as yet no experience of grass, as the tillage has hitherto been carried on, and I am persuaded that beyond one year it would be injudicious immediately to introduce grass into the rotation upon land which was naturally so retentive, because it might have a tendency to revert that condition. I am equally, however, of opinion, that a rotation of six or eight years would totally alter the permanent character of the soil, and after such a period of continued cultivation I have no doubt that very fine pasture might be established upon a soil which was before incapable of bearing any but the most worthless.

My experience on a moderate scale leads me to say, that the system is the greatest discovery which has been made in agriculture (because it is applicable to soils hitherto almost intractable and most expensive to cultivate), provided it be applied only where the altitude justifies the undertaking, by securing a climate suitable to valuable crops. It, in truth, converts almost the worst into the best land, that is, the most powerful in respect of production, because the quality of land to which it is applicable, the heavy clays and retentive sub-soils, will yield heavier crops after such treatment than the lighter loams and many of those varieties of soil which hitherto have been so pleasant to the agriculturist to cultivate.

The reformation which the system effects on lands which previously were looked on as hopeless is quite surprising, and no one believes it until it is seen, but again I say, that the whole success depends on the perfect and complete manner in which the operations are executed, as any thing merely being an approximation to the system will end in disappointment. The expense of what is

perfect must not be grudged, and as surely as it is liberally given will it be abundantly repaid. I would also say, that the effects of the draining and sub-soil ploughing are dependent on each other; the one is comparatively worthless without the other; the ploughing would be thrown away without the previous draining, and the draining is a poor improvement compared to the combined effect with the sub-soil ploughing.

I may state, that my bailiff and the ploughmen who worked the sub-soil plough, certainly in the outset thought my orders almost foolish (but who nevertheless carried them into effect faithfully), now see the effects of the system, and are fully sensible of the extraordinary effects resulting from it.

The various views of the advantages might be multiplied to any extent, but a concise statement of them seems to be, that the most obdurate and intractable soils assume a friable and mellow character, and at the same time are rendered permanently most productive. A system which is applicable to 10 acres is equally so, in its principle, to 10,000 or 100,000 acres, and consequently the system becomes a most important national consideration. My decided impression is, that capital judiciously applied in the execution of this system may yield a return varying from 10 to 40 or 50 per cent., according to the various circumstances attending the infinite variety of cases in which the system may be carried into effect. Every thing depends on the mode and perfection of execution, if any one thinks of limiting the expense of complete execution, he may rest assured, that the recompense will be still more restricted, and that it is more judicious to improve one acre well, than to deceive himself by a superficial operation on a more extended surface.

A remarkable effect is, that the harvest is considerably earlier on land so treated than on the same land in its previous state, and it is scarcely necessary to remark, that there will be a constant return for the same seed and labour and manure far greater than when they are applied to land in a naturally wet condition.

I do not think that any thing more useful could be done than that agricultural associations should offer premiums, such as to induce persons to make an experiment of this system; if such premiums were continued for a few years, they might speedily be discontinued, as the ample repayment which would arise from the system itself, would be the best security for a continuance of the system throughout the kingdom. T. F. Kennedy.

Evidence of James Smith, Esq.

Inventor of the Sub-soil Plough.

Chairman.] You live at Deanston?—Yes.

Where is that?—In the western district of Perthshire, in Scotland.

Do you occupy a considerable farm in that part of Scotland?—About 200 acres.

Have you improved your farm lately?—I have.

In what way?—Chiefly by thorough draining and sub-soil ploughing.

What was the nature of the soil upon your farm?—It was various; there is some part of it rather light soil, some of it gravelly upon the edge of the river, and some lightish loam, with rather a tenacious bottom, and in other parts a stiff sandy clay.

Is it a stiff sub-soil?—Some part of it very stiff.

And it was all subject very much to wet?—The greater part of it was covered with rushes and bent before being drained.

Will you describe to the Committee your mode of draining?—The principle upon which I drain is to put in drains frequently, so that there may be opportunities for the water to pass off, because I find that in our climate the chief injury arises from the water that falls from the heavens.

Are those drains placed up the furrows or across the land?—They are placed in the same direction that the furrows were before, but I have now no furrows. I lay all my fields down without any furrows. I object to furrows, because water is allowed to collect in a body, and thereby ruins the soil.

The fact is that those drains are so frequent that they answer the purpose of furrows?—Yes, they answer the purpose of furrows.

How far are they apart?—Twenty-one feet, and two feet six inches deep to the bottom.

Do you drain with stones or with tiles?—Chiefly with broken stones, because I have stones upon the land.

You spoke of sub-soil ploughing; you are the inventor of a sub-soil plough?—I am.

Do you use it after draining?—After draining. I first take a grain crop, and then after the separation of that crop from the ground I sub-soil plough.

How far do you fill up the drain with stones?—I put in 12 inches of stones, leaving 18 inches between the upper part of the drain and the surface of the soil, and then I cover them most carefully with very thin sods, overlapping at the joinings, because it is of the first importance to prevent the soil which has been recently removed from running into the drains. There are many drains destroyed by means of the soil getting in at the top.

The water comes in at the side of the drains?—Yes, by fissures in the sub-soil.

Will you describe the operation of the sub-soil plough?—I have got a plate of it here *(producing the same)*. The principle upon which I constructed that plough was this, that I saw it was of the greatest importance to break up the sub-soil, especially where it was tenacious. I saw that the common trench plough, when used

to break up the sub-soil, at the same time turned over the recently moved sub-soil to mix with the surface soil, which induced a sort of partial sterility for a time. I then bethought me of having a plough that would move the sub-soil, still retaining the active soil upon the surface, and I considered how I should construct it to have the least draught, so that the horses might easily draw it, because I was aware that it would require considerable force. I therefore made the plough as thin as possible in its transverse section, and the share of the plough, which is usually made with a free point not touching upon the lower part of the plough, and I found it was apt in stony land to get knocked out of its place, and therefore I made a mortice in the sock, and inserted the point of the share in this mortice: then in order to move the sub-soil as much as possible, I placed an oblique spur upon the one side of the plough, which throws up the sub-soil after the furrow has been divided and breaks it, but does not throw it further up than the bottom of the furrow of the active soil.

Mr. Handley.] Does not the spur increase the draught?—It does not materially.

How many horses does it require to work that plough?—Generally four horses in ordinary sub-soils, but upon some it has been necessary to use eight horses.

How deep do you plough?—Sixteen inches from the surface.

Mr. Loch.] What is the depth of the original furrow?—Six inches; we first go on with the common plough and turn over a furrow of the depth of six or eight inches, and then the sub-soil plough goes and stirs up the bottom without bringing the soil further up than its original position, then when the common plough comes round again, it throws the active soil upon that part which has been sub-soiled.

Then the advantage of stirring up the sub-soil is that the water which falls gets down to the bottom of the second furrow so as to relieve the upper soil from the effects of the rain that falls?—Yes; *besides, there is a constant operation of the air upon the sub-soil, which converts it into soil.*

Mr. Cayley.] Is it with a view to draining principally?—With a view first to draining, and then to converting the sub-soil into a fit soil for growing plants.

It makes the soil more permeable?—Yes.

How long have you been doing this?—About twelve years.

In the first instance, if you were to turn up that sub-soil, it would not be a productive soil, and therefore you prepare it by this course for subsequent turning up when it is prepared?—Yes.

When you conceive it to have come into a proper state for vegetation, do you turn it up at once or gradually?—At once.

Do you find that the soil will be very productive the first year after it is turned up?—I find it so.

Do you stir it up with the old soil?—I sub-soil it only once. I

then take a green crop, followed by a grain crop, then it lies three years in grass, and then after that, I take a crop of oats, and then after, I turn it up to the depth of sixteen inches.

Then it takes about three or four years to bring the sub-soil to a proper degree of preparation?—It does.

After the sub-soil has been brought into a proper degree of preparation for vegetation, have you ever tried the experiment of bringing in a certain proportion, say a fourth part of the sub-soil after it is prepared, into co-operation with the active soil?—I have, and it answers very well.

Do you consider that the bringing into play the whole of the sub-soil at once is a better thing and more productive than holding in reserve a portion of the sub-soil?—I think it is.

After turning up the sub-soil, how many years have you grown crops upon it?—My mode of cropping is a seven years' shift, and I have now four fields undergoing a second shift.

Have you had the experience of what the condition of the previous active soil becomes, from being in a state of rest for several years?—It is all mixed together.

Then the effect of your system is to produce a new soil instead of the old one?—Yes.

Mr. Denison.] According to your plan, supposing you were not to have turned up any of this sub-soil, but merely to have had your sub-soil plough pass through it, and were to go on cultivating without any thing being turned up to the top, instead of producing sterility, would even that produce an improvement of the crop?—It would, and a continued improvement.

After getting upon land that has been sub-soil ploughed, and then ploughing it up again, do you find that the sub-soil continues friable?—I do to the bottom.

With strong tenacious soils you do not find that it is run together again?—No.

Mr. Heathcote.] You have no furrows, and you plough 16 inches deep in all parts of the farm?—Yes.

Do you find that the water stands at the bottom of the furrow any length of time before it gets into the drain?—I do not think it does, but I cannot see the bottom of the furrow.

When you turn it up how do you find it?—I find it particularly dry, and sometimes, where the land has been poached in consequence of taking off a green crop, still it is perfectly dry at the bottom of the furrow.

You do not find that the treading of horses has any effect upon it at that depth?—None whatever; the effect of the most thorough poaching does not go beyond six inches, and below that it is found quite dry.

Will this sub-soil ploughing apply to all species of soils?—I have never yet seen any soil that it would not apply to.

The most retentive stiff soil?—Yes, and deep bog as well.

Mr. Denison.] After breaking up the sub-soil, but without turning it up to the top, suppose the farmer was to continue to plough it seven or eight inches, in that case how long do you think the operation on the sub-soil would remain effectual, or how soon do you suppose it would run together again?—*I think it would never run together in a solid form, because, when it has been turned up there is a constant circulation of the water and the air, which prevents running together again; and when soil is laid in a dry position and exposed to the atmosphere, it seems to get some sort of attractive quality;* if you look at any mould you will find that it is all in little globules, and those are gathered together in large masses, forming larger globules which keep the soil open.

Do you think that the mere operation of allowing water and air to pass among the soil at a considerable depth in the ground would, to a certain degree, produce that effect upon solid clay of converting it partially into soil?—I think it would.

Mr. Heathcote.] You consider one proper use of the sub-soil plough as a permanent improvement?—Yes.

Chairman.] What is the cost per acre of the sub-soil ploughing?—About 30*s.* an acre.

Mr. Heathcote.] How do you calculate the cost?—I reckon that the farmer, in estimating his work, ought to charge his horses at what they cost him to keep during the year, and I charge a day's work.

And you suppose that he is in possession of the plough?—Yes; the cost of a plough upon a farm forms but a very small item; you get a good plough for 7*l.* or 8*l.*

Mr. Handley.] What is the weight of your plough?—The weight of the plough which I use is 400 pounds.

Have not you decreased the weight lately?—I have not myself; many experiments have been tried in our part of the country; we had several ploughs of various weights brought forward, and it was perfectly clear, upon a comparative trial, that the heavier plough was the best.

That is the description of plough which you apply to all lands, whether they be stony or pure clay?---Yes.

In working six horses or more you place them three and three?—Yes.

Mr. Loch.] What was the nature of that soil which you said was covered with bent before you ploughed it up?---A great part of it I did not think worth more than 5*s.* an acre.

In consequence of what you have done to it, what is it worth now? --I consider that it is worth 2*l.* an acre to any farmer.

What was the course of cropping that you adopted in the improvement of land?---At first I was rather undecided with regard to the rotation I should follow, till from observation I formed a judgment what was the best course. The mode of rotation I generally followed was this: I drain always, if possible, in the lay

or grass, because by draining in the lay the work is more neatly done; then having completed the drains, I take a crop of oats the next year. Upon the greater part of that farm I have been obliged to plough very shallow furrows for the first crop, because there was not more than three or four inches of soil that I dared turn up; then I took a crop of oats, and upon some of the fields I had not more than from 24 to 30 bushels of oats. After the separation of that first crop from the ground, I applied the sub-soil plough. Then I gave it another ploughing, and had a green crop; potatoes upon some parts, and turnips upon others.

Could you have attempted any of those crops previous to the sub-soil ploughing?—Not to advantage.

How long had it been in grass before you turned it up?—Some of it 15 years.

What is the next crop after the turnips and potatoes?—I then lay down what I have had in potatoes with wheat; I sow wheat in the end of the season, as soon as I can get the potatoes up; what I have had in turnips I grow barley upon in the spring, and I sow grass seeds upon both.

You could not have attempted barley upon that soil before?---Not with any success, and not wheat, because the land was so full of moisture that it honey-combed by frost, and so threw out the plants. There was one field especially, after a very severe winter, and with a frost, there was sometimes a space of 20 or 30 square yards from which every plant or vegetable had been thrown, not a bit of grass remaining upon it.

After the wheat what do you take?—I sow grass and barley.

Do you cut the grass for hay?—Some; the other is pastured from the beginning.

What is the nature of the grass it produces?—Very good, and very heavy crops of hay; I have generally about 300 stone, which is about three tons per acre.

What sort of seeds do you lay it down with?—Rye-grass and clover; about a bushel of rye-grass, about four pounds of red clover, and about ten pounds of white clover; then I put a few pounds weight of Timothy grass, and also of cocksfoot.

Does the grass you cut, after you have improved the soil in this manner, at all resemble the grass that existed previous to the ploughing up?---Not at all; it is of a very deep verdure and very luxuriant growth, and before there was a great deal of star grass and other coarse herbage.

How do you stock the grass land?—I find that I can keep a good Ayrshire cow to the Scotch acre on the pasture.

What other sort of stock do you put upon it?—I put sheep upon my young grass all winter.

What sort of sheep?—Leicestershire; I generally keep them upon the young grass till about the 1st of May.

Mr. Handley.] At what time do you turn stock upon the young

seeds in autumn the first year?—Immediately after the separation of the crop, if it is dry weather.

What description of sheep, and how many per acre?—Leicester sheep, generally ewes, and sometimes young sheep, both wedders and young ewes.

You do not find if you graze down the young seeds close, and a frost ensues, that it poaches the land?—No.

When you take the stock off in May, do you let it grow for mowing?—Part of it.

And then mow once only?—Once only.

And then again in the autumn you stock your land with what?—With sheep; I never allow any heavy cattle to go after the 1st of November.

That portion which you do not mow, when do you turn the cattle upon it?—About the 1st of May; from the 1st to the 15th.

That being when the grass is a twelvemonth old?—Yes.

And from the 1st of May until the time when you take them off, that land will carry an Ayrshire cow per Scotch acre?—It will.

What is the quantity of stock that you can keep the second year?—Not so many the second year, but more the third year.

Do you find that the third year seeds will produce more than the second?---I do; the grass has had time to extend its roots, and grows more closely and with more vigour.

Whether you grazed it the first year or mowed it?—Yes.

After being down three years, you take it up with what?---With oats.

Mr. Heathcote.] It is merely grass in the rotation of crops, and it is not a permanent laying down in pasture?—Yes.

Mr. Loch.] When you break up for oats, how deep do you plough it?---I tried some experiments in this way, and I thought I should succeed by deep ploughing, but I found that it did not do so well. I ploughed one field from the grass twelve inches deep, but there came a dry summer, and I found the ground too loose and too open, and I now follow the usual practice of the country, namely, a six-inch furrow.

What crop of oats had you?—A very excellent crop.

How was it compared with the oats you got when you first broke it up?—It was very superior in quality, and nearly three times the quantity.

Have you gone further in your rotation on some of the land?—I have just come to it now; I am in the second rotation, and I have better crops.

Do you conceive you have paid yourself for all the outlay in your improvements up to the present time?---I think I should have paid myself for all my outlay if I had improved the land and farmed it just as a farmer would do; but I improved it more expensively, more so than a farmer would do; I made roads, new fences, &c.

But as far as regards mere cultivation of the land, do you think you have paid yourself?—I think I have.

You have improved the value of the land to what extent?—Taking the average of the farm, I should say that it was worth before 15*s.* an acre the whole farm; there was one field that I have laid down to permanent pasture, which was pretty good land before, but I have thoroughly drained what part required it, and taking the whole together, I should say that 15*s.* an acre would have been a fair rent in its former state; now it is worth 2*l.*

Has your example been very much copied in your district?—It has, and in districts at a distance.

Can you describe to what extent it has been followed in any part of the country you are acquainted with?—There is not perhaps any place where a whole farm has been thoroughly done as I have done mine, but there are many places in my own neighbourhood, and in other parts of Scotland, and in England and Ireland, where it has been partially introduced, and I find every day that it is extending more and more, and I find the operative farmers of my own neighbourhood are more and more taking to the principles I have followed.

Is there an improved condition of the farms in consequence of following that system?---There is.

What is the state of the agricultural interest in your neighbourhood generally?---I think upon the whole they are pretty comfortable; they have made great improvements within the last ten years, and they seem to be in a great spirit for improvement at present.

At whose expense is the improvement carried on?—Chiefly at the expense of the tenant; several landlords give money or materials for draining.

Has there been any arrangement of rent between landlord and tenant?—In some cases.

Are corn-rents common in your district?---They are becoming more common, some estates are let entirely upon corn-rents.

Has the improvement began in consequence of lowering of the rent, or did it precede it?---In some cases it has been in consequence of it, but in other cases it has preceded.

But at present there are considerable improvements going on?—There are.

Are there any considerable districts of country which in your recollection produced no wheat which are now producing good crops of wheat?—There are several districts.

Mr. Handley.] What is the expense of your draining?---It depends very much upon the nature of the land, and the facility of getting material for filling the drain.

Upon your own farm, where the stone is near at hand, what is the expense?—I have here a table of the expense of executing drains under various circumstances. Upon my farm, including

the main drains and the sub-drains, the whole matter of draining costs me about 6*l.* the Scotch acre.

The sub-soil plough is not the only implement that the agriculturists have derived from your invention; did you not invent a reaping machine also?—I did, about twenty years ago.

Have you it in operation?—I had it in operation last year; it was laid aside in consequence of my having no farm of my own at that period, and the farmers were not at all open to receive it in consequence of the price of labour becoming cheap after the peace, and they found that they got on with their harvest work quietly; they are not given to change, and more especially to take anything like a new machine, and on that account the thing was laid aside; but I have been very much urged for some years past by some of my farming neighbours to resume the use of the machine again; and as soon as I could get sufficient leisure to enable me to set properly about it, I had the machine re-constructed, and last harvest I was very successful in operating upon the crop.

What was the result in the quantity of acres mown per day, and the cost per acre?—The machine will cut about an English acre in the hour, of either oats, or wheat, or barley, with two horses and one man.

How near the ground?—You may go as near the ground as you can safely go for the cutters, say three inches.

Did it do its work clean?—Very well; the farmers are generally so well satisfied with it, that this year there are orders for several reaping machines.

How many binders attended to tie up the corn?—It depends upon the weight of the crop, about eight people will take up the cut grain.

What is the cost of the machine?—It is difficult to say; it will be much cheaper after some time but I should now say about 40*l.*

What do you consider would be the average saving between employing that machine and reaping in the usual way?—I think it can be done at about one-third of the expense.

Have you turned your attention to any other improvements or any other inventions for cheapening the cost of production?—I have in some degree; I have turned my attention a little to the application of steam to ploughing land.

Have you made any progress in that?—Not further than making a model.

Are you of opinion that it might be advantageously applied to the cultivation of land?—I think it may.

Are you of opinion that the best mode of contending against the depression of the time is by cheapening the cost of production?—Yes

You think that as the manufacturers have by the application of machinery been enabled to compete with low prices, so, to a great extent, may the agriculturists?—Certainly.

Are you of opinion that the application of inanimate power will be one main mode of cheapening production?—I think it will be one of the auxiliaries, but I think the furrow-draining and the sub-soil ploughing will be the great means of cheapening the production.

You have never yet seen a steam plough in operation?—Never.

You are aware that there is one invented by Mr. Heathcoat?—I have heard of it.

Have you turned your attention to the reclamation of bog and waste lands and mosses?—I have not myself, but I have observed what has been done by others.

Do you conceive that there is a wide field for the employment of capital in the reclamation of such land?—I do, a very profitable one, and one that will give a great deal of employment to the working classes.

Is there a considerable quantity of moss land in Scotland capable of cultivation, that is at present waste?—There is a great deal.

Are there any attempts making by proprietors or by capitalists to improve it?—Yes; there is one very successful attempt upon a small scale by an uncle of mine, Mr. Buchanan, of Catrine Bank, in Ayrshire; he proceeded first by putting in a great many drains, and making them a considerable depth, about three and a half feet to four feet; the first season he cut them about half the depth, and allowed the bog above to dry and subside. Then he next season dug them out to the full depth, and made the bottom of the drain a sort of V form, so that it might have a narrow channel for the water to run, because it is of great moment to have the bottom of the drain narrow, so that nothing may lodge, because when the water is allowed to spread out, it makes a deposit. Then he left shoulders upon the drains, and he took the turf from the adjoining bog and laid it upon it, then he trenched it over with the spade to the depth of about eighteen inches.

Do you know the expense of cutting the surface?—I think he paid about 50*s.* an acre.

If that could be done by steam machinery at 3*s.* per acre, would not it make a very great difference in the profit of the operation?—No doubt of it.

How long is it before he gets any return from the land?—He gets an immediate return; he takes a crop of oats, and perhaps the first crop is but scanty; it is irregular, in some places it is very strong, and in other places none.

Does he in the first instance apply limestone or marl, or any manure?—Yes, sometimes he uses a little lime mixed with clay, a sort of compost, but generally he uses dung.

What does he consider the cost per acre of the reclamation up to the period of its bearing crop?—I think somewhere about 5*l.* altogether.

What would be the value of it to let it in that reclaimed state?—In ordinary situations it would be worth 1*l.* per acre at least.

Has it been the practice to burn the surface?—They generally retain 10 or 12 miles of the moss to burn upon the surface.

Mr. Loch.] Are these improvements still going on?—They are.

Are they going on upon other estates?—They are; there is a gentleman that erected a steam-engine, and pumped up water from the Forth, and cleared 200 acres in five years.

Have you any objection to state his name?—None whatever, Major Graham, of Micklewood.

Has that turned out very successful?—Very successful; it cost him a great deal, for he was unfortunate in his engine; it cost him 46*l.* an acre, but he can now get for it about 50*s.* He lets it to the adjoining farmer; his own farmers are quite eager to take it.

Mr. Denison.] Do you know how deep the peat was that was taken off the soil?—In some places 14 feet deep, from 6 to 14.

Mr. Handley.] How was the portion of turf cut that was left for burning; was it dug?—They dug it up. The alluvial clay is so soft, when the moss is first removed, that horses cannot go upon it.

How long is it before it will bear horses?—Generally after one summer's drying.

What cost per acre does it require to cut it with the spade?—From 18*l.* to 20*l.* was paid to the contractor for cutting and floating away altogether.

Mr. Loch.] Has the low price of wheat of late years checked those improvements?—No; I think it has rather led to greater exertion on the part of the farmers in order to meet the difficulties arising from the low prices; they are perfectly satisfied that, without improving their land and raising more corn, they cannot get on.

Have the low prices in some degree, in your opinion, been owing to the great supply in the market?—Almost altogether, I should say.

Have the productiveness of the seasons had any effect?—There can be no doubt it has; we have had three very productive seasons, but there has been a great improvement in the cultivation.

Viewing these various experiments that are in hand, do you think that any improvement is likely to be so valuable for general purposes as frequent draining and sub-soil ploughing for strong land?—None.

That, you think, is the most important thing for the general purposes of farming that you are acquainted with?—Decidedly.

And applicable to more qualities of soil than any thing else?—Applicable, I should say, to all qualities of sub-soil.

Mr. Loch.] And equally applicable to England as to Scotland?—Equally so, and very much wanted.

Do you know any thing of the clay lands of England?—From

merely passing along; but I have a friend who has made an experiment under my directions in Cheshire, upon very stiff land, Mr. Barton; it is the most thorough brick clay I ever saw; an extremely sterile farm in its original state. I visited the farm the other day, and was very happy to see that Mr. Barton had been completely successful; he has thoroughly drained the ground and sub-soil ploughed, and it is now laid down without furrows, and I there saw a large field of this extremely stiff clay with a beautiful seed surface upon it.

Mr. Denison.] When you say that it is applicable to all sorts of soils, do you think that it is applicable to a soil where there is a bad gravelly sub-stratum?—I think so; I think any sub-stratum, if it is exposed to the atmosphere for a sufficient length of time, will become fertile. In the most barren country, if you see where a ditch has been dug, on the soil which has been thrown up you will generally find a richer verdure and strong weeds growing.

Mr. Handley.] The gentleman whose farm you have been alluding to, how many horses did he require?—He was obliged to employ eight horses; he allowed it to get into the summer before he began.

Do you know how much it cost him per acre?---I do not know; I have no doubt it would be very expensive.

Mr. Denison.] What do you conceive to be the months within which, in ordinary seasons, you can work the sub-soil plough to most advantage?—In November and December, January and February, perhaps in October, when the crop is removed early.

In speaking of the second course crop, beginning with breaking up the land from oats, you have not mentioned in what year you apply manure?—I apply manure to the green crop.

You manure it heavily then, and that is the year in which you mix the two soils together?—Yes.

Then you have wheat, and to that you have no manure?—No manure to wheat, and no manure to the grass; I am now beginning a system of top-dressing the grass after the first season.

With what?—With night-soil, which I get from a factory where we have about a thousand people.

Otherwise in your seven-shift system you would only have one heavy manuring?—Yes.

When you break up from the grass again, and plough with the six-inch furrow, you would not put any manure then?—Not at all.

Then manure again for the green crop that is to follow?---Yes, I would recommend two grain crops after grass; it is a thing in Scotland very much objected to, and which the tenants are tied down not to do, but I would take either two crops of oats, or take a crop of barley for the second.

Mr. Evans.] Why would you advise two successive white crops?—Because in the first year when it is ploughed up from the grass, the corn derives very little nourishment from the decayed vegetable matter, and in the second year this is all available.

Mr. Heathcote.] You would object to a crop of oats and a crop of wheat?---Yes; I do not recommend growing wheat except after a green crop.

Mr. Miles.] Have you used your sub-soil plough without any auxiliary permanent drains?---I have, *and it is the worst thing possible to deep plough land without having it first drained,* and it is upon that ground that in England the shallow ploughing is so much resorted to; the deeper stiff clay is ploughed the worse; it is because there is thereby a greater reservoir formed to hold water.

Supposing the instance of a marsh where you have no fall for the water, and you have about eight or nine inches of soil upon the surface that is marl, and underneath you come to a stiff substratum of clay, and it is almost impossible to get the water off, the fields are separated by drains, and scarcely any fall for the water, would you there recommend your sub-soil plough?—Certainly not; I think it would just make a reservoir for more water to lodge.

Chairman.] Would this sub-soil ploughing be applicable to dry land?---Most decidedly; I have done it in gravel and sand to great advantage.

After a few years you can plough it up and make a greater depth of soil?---Yes, it is a great advantage to get a great depth of soil, even if it is gravel.

Would you drain in dry land?---I have seen very little land that I would not drain, because, even in gravel and in sand, there is a dilatory subsidence of water, which is injurious to crops in some seasons.

And that description of soil is liable to spring water?---It is.

What is the extent of the farm in Cheshire of which you have spoken?---I think it must be about 500 acres.

Have your experiments been applied to the whole of the 500 acres?---No; he has only got two fields done, but he is going on with the rest.

Can you state any experiments upon any other farm within your knowledge?—I can state many, and one especially, that I saw the other day upon Admiral Fleming's property; he has been very partial to this mode of draining for some years, but his overseer did not so soon come to see the propriety of it, but he began two years ago, and he has made very considerable progress, and with great success; he showed me one field where he had it thoroughly drained and sub-soil ploughed, and after a crop of potatoes he had it sown down in grass; it had been in grass about 20 years before, and let for 1*l.* an acre; he has now let it for three years in grass, at 56*s.*

Mr. Denison.] After you have used your sub-soil plough, when you come to plough 16 inches deep, with what sort of plough are you able to plough the land 16 inches deep?—Always in breaking

up for a fallow I take a 16-inch furrow, but after the 16-inch furrow has been done, and the ground allowed to lie in that state during the winter, then in the spring I cross-plough it a depth of 12 inches.

When you have to plough for your fallow 16 inches deep, what sort of plough do you use for that purpose?—I use a plough of the form of the old Scotch plough, but double the size.

How many horses?—Six horses.

Mr. Handley.] What is the width of the sole?—It is rather narrow, the Scotch plough has a very narrow sole.

Do you find after having got the 16 inches for your fallow, that you stir your fallows less frequently than in the old system?—It saves a ploughing.

How many ploughings do you give to the fallow?—I give it one ploughing with a 16-inch furrow, and then another with 12, and then I drill it.

Do you conceive that the plough you are now describing of 16 inches deep, is preferable to ploughing with two ploughs, one following the other?—I do not know that it is.

What is the width of the furrow?—About 12 inches in width.

Is that the width of the sole?—The sole is narrow, but there is a projecting bar of wood, which throws off the furrow; and the great thing that we want to do in these furrows is, not to turn them over, but to set them on edge, by which the atmosphere is allowed to get more freely into the furrow.

When you plough 12 inches, how many horses do you use?—Three horses abreast, and that is becoming very general in my neighbourhood.

Mr. Denison.] With your own horses, which are well trained to the sub-soil plough, when you work it with four horses, how much can you do in a day?—About three quarters of an acre.

The gentleman you spoke of in Cheshire would do considerably less?—He must have done less. I may observe, that I have invariably found that when any person has had a sub-soil plough for the first time, he generally got defeated in consequence of the restiveness of the horses, being yoked in a manner different from what they had been accustomed to, and that the ploughmen were awkward in the management of the implement. When I first began the sub-soil plough upon my own farm, I had a much lighter plough, but I found that it was apt to be thrown out of the ground when it came in contact with a large stone. I have had a heavier plough constructed, of the weight of 400 pounds; the ploughman objected at first very much to using this plough, and said that it was so heavy that he could not manage it in turning. I persuaded him to try it for one day; he complained very much that he was greatly fatigued. I then said that he might throw it aside, and use the lighter one if he chose. He did so, but I found very soon after that he was using the heavy plough, and that the

lighter plough was laid aside. I asked him the reason why; he said that the light plough was more apt to get out of order, and more apt to be thrown from the ground, and that now he had got into the mode of balancing the heavy plough at the turnings; he found it much easier to manage than the lighter one; that he did not think it more heavy for the horses.

Mr. Handley.] In yoking the horses three abreast, one goes in the furrow and the other two on the left?—Yes.

Mr. Denison.] Are you obliged to have a driver when you work three horses?—No; that is the advantage of the three horses, that the ploughman is able to manage them.

Mr. Handley.] Does not going in line upon strong clay land prevent a considerable degree of poaching?—It prevents you from seeing the poaching, but it is doing more harm below the surface; it is an absolute injury to the soil.

The question refers to land not sub-soiled?—I understood it so.

Generally speaking, is not the land under the furrow much firmer than that upon the surface?—It is.

Do not you think that the horse treads it less going upon the furrow than if he went upon the land?—He certainly does; but as he goes upon the land that is afterwards to be turned over, there is no harm done. Mr. Sterling, of Glenburn, a proprietor in Stirlingshire, has contrived a mode of making three horses go upon the unmoved ground, keeping out of the furrow altogether, which is a very good thing; of course it will take more power.

Do not you find that the effect of ploughing three abreast is to make more land with the plough?—It makes more land.

Mr. Denison.] What is your reason for thinking, when land has been properly drained, and the sub-soil moved, that there ought to be no furrows, but that it ought to be laid quite flat?—The reason for having a field laid down without furrows is to prevent the water from accumulating in any quantity, so as to run with force. When the ground is laid down perfectly flat, being previously thoroughly drained, the rain that falls upon the surface perforates through the soil; but if furrows were made, there would be a collection of a body of water, which would accumulate, and carry the soil along with it.

Mr. Handley.] Do you find it quite unnecessary, after your system of drainage, to cut surface drains?—Quite unnecessary; I carefully avoid all furrows.

Have you ditches round your fields?—No ditches.

Where do your drains go to?—I have large main drains down the main hollows of my farm, and I bring all my water into those drains.

Sir Charles Burrell.] How do you get into the drains?—I get into the drains under the fences.

That land which is against the fence, or which has underwood upon it, and which is not moved like the rest, how is it done

there?—I make a catch drain, and conduct this catch drain round the underwood.

Mr. Handley.] In the event of one of your drains becoming stopped, what is your guide in order to ascertain the evil?—I have executed about 70 miles of drains, and I have never yet had a stopped drain upon the whole 70 miles.

All the drains were stone?—All the drains were stone, excepting the sub-mains, which are of tiles. I have opened them in many parts to see how they were getting on, and I found them invariably open.

Did your friend in Cheshire drain with tiles?—He drains with tiles; he has done some with stone, but he found it so expensive, from the distance he had to carry the material, that he has taken to tiles.

Do you know the depth at which he lays his tiles?—Two feet and a half; I prefer laying even tiles two feet and a half deep.

Does he fill up with anything?—In some cases he has filled up with gravel, in some cases he has put straw.

Is not it running a great risk to take the sub-soil plough over tile-draining?—Not if the tiles are sufficiently deep.

Within what distance of the tile would you think it safe for the plough to go?—I should like to have six inches over the tile.

Mr. Loch.] Your great object is not to let the water get in by the top of the drain?—No, all to get in by filtration through the fissures in the sub-soil.

Chairman.] Have you anything else that you wish to suggest to the Committee with a view to the improvement of agriculture?—A spirit of improvement has been very much excited in our country by the establishment of an agricultural museum, which was done by three very enterprising brothers, seedsmen, in Stirling, of the name of Drummond.

What is the plan of that museum?—It is to have large apartments, in which are exhibited all the different implements of husbandry; and they take great pains to get specimens of all implements known to be used in this country and in other countries; and they exhibit also produce, such as turnips, potatoes, grain, grasses, an arrangement of the grasses; and they have also specimens of soils and manures, and every thing that is interesting to the agriculturist.

Is it connected with any agricultural society?—It is now connected, but it was originally instituted by these men of themselves. An agricultural association has been since formed in Stirling, and they have attached this museum to the association.

Do you consider that great benefit has been derived from it?—Very great benefit; it has excited a great desire for inquiry, both among the gentlemen and farmers in the district, and also among the operatives, the ploughmen, and even the little herd-boys come in a moonlight evening to see the museum.

Mr. Denison.] What capital do you suppose was embarked in establishing this museum?—It cost about 400*l.*; and it costs about 100*l.* annually to keep it up.

Where do those persons obtain remuneration for this capital, if it is done by seedsmen in the way you have stated?—It was first attempted to get a remuneration by charging so much for admission, but it was found that that was not adequate, and the gentlemen of the district have now come forward with an annual subscription.

Does that 400*l.* include the expense of the building?—Not the expense of the building. They get a great many implements sent to them, but still they are obliged to purchase a great many.

Mr. Loch.] Are the agricultural operatives generally intelligent?—Many of them so, and the farmers are a particularly intelligent class; they are not men of letters, but they are intelligent, acute men in their own profession, and they have an extreme desire to improve.

Do they ever go abroad to see the practice of other districts?—They do, but not so much as they ought to do.

Do you reckon that a great object, with a view to the improvement of the agriculturists?—A very great object; and I think that the money that is given by societies as premiums would often be much better spent if it were devoted to paying the expenses of farmers to go round to visit different districts in the country where agriculture is followed.

EVIDENCE OF CORN FACTORS, LAND AGENTS, &c.

Evidence of Mr. James Fison.

Resides at Thetford, in Norfolk—Is a Maltster, Corn, Seed, and Wool Merchant—On light Soils Farmers are doing as well as in 1833; not on the Clay Lands—High Rent is the Cause of Distress—The Land is consequently over-cropped—Distress is a Question between Landlord and Tenant—Mr. Coke's Tenants could pay some Rent, with Wheat at 5*s*. a Bushel—The Poor Law has operated very favourably—It has improved the Moral as well as the Physical Condition of Labourers—The Experiment has had every Advantage—There would be more Difficulty in carrying it into Operation with an Interruption to Manufacturing Prosperity—Farmers are very wanting in Intelligence—Beer Bill benefited the Farmer by raising the Price of Malt—Is opposed to the present Corn Laws; they have operated very injuriously.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Thetford, in Norfolk.

What is your occupation?—I am a partner in the firm of James Fison and Sons; we are maltsters, and corn, seed, and wool-merchants.

Are you acquainted with the state of agriculture in a considerable district of country in the neighbourhood of Thetford?—Yes, I am.

To what counties does your experience extend?—Suffolk, Norfolk, and some parts of Essex and Cambridgeshire.

You deal with the farmers in those districts?—Yes, for corn, seeds, and wool.

Comparing the condition of the farmers at the present time with their condition in 1833, it is better or worse than it was then?—With respect to our light soils I am inclined to think that they are quite in as good a state as they were at that time, probably in some parts of the heavier country they are not in so good a state.

What causes have there been to depress the state of the farmers of stiff land?—High rents; it is my opinion, founded on the testimony of farmers themselves, that many of them are farming under war rents, while they are selling their corn at peace prices.

Mr. Loch.] The consequence of the rents being kept up too high has been that the land has been over cropped?—Yes; when I have conversed with farmers this appears to be the conclusion they have come to, that they have paid their landlords what they ought to have paid to the labourers; if they had paid it to labourers, they would have had value for the money, whereas they paid it to the landlord, and of course received nothing back, and they had so much less to lay out upon their farms.

On the light soils have the tenants been met by the landlords with a reduction of rent?—They have not needed so much reduction as they have upon the heavier soils.

And upon the heavier soils the landlords have not reduced the rent as you think they ought to have done for their own interest as well as for the interest of the tenants?---I should think so, for their own interest as well as for the interest of the tenants.

And having delayed making those reductions their estate is in a worse condition now than it would have been if the reductions had taken place at an earlier period?—Yes.

It appears, from your evidence, therefore, that it is a question very much between landlord and tenant, as to the present condition of the farming interest; that is to say, that the landlord has more in his power than can be done by the Legislature?---Decidedly; I do not see what the Legislature can do, except with respect to the poor law, to benefit the agriculturist effectually.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Looking at Mr. Coke's estate in Norfolk, could any number of his tenantry afford to give him any rent whatever with wheat at 5*s.* a bushel?---Yes, I think with a good crop they could.

Do you think taking the average of years that Mr. Coke has a single tenant upon his estate that could afford to give him any rent at 5*s.* a bushel?—Yes, some rent; not the rent that is now paid.

Would you say that any material portion of his estate is such that the tenant could afford to pay any rent whatever with wheat at 5*s.* a bushel?—I am, perhaps, not sufficiently acquainted with the quality of the soil to answer; but, looking to great improvements in agriculture, and to the advantage that will be derived from the poor laws, the farmer will grow his wheat cheaper.

Chairman.] What is the amount of poor-rate in your neighbourhood?—It varies so much that I cannot give an answer to the question.

Has there been any reduction in it lately?—Yes, in many parishes, through the operation of the new Poor Law.

It has been brought into operation there?—Yes, partially; indeed the very idea of its coming into operation has operated very favourably, and produced a lowering in the rates.

Has the operation of the new Poor Law had any effect upon the character of the labourers?—Decidedly; a very excellent effect.

Has it improved the moral condition of the labourer, as well as his physical condition?—I have no doubt of it; I have a great deal to do with the lower orders.

Mr. Wodehouse.] You have expressed a strong opinion respecting the advantages of the new Poor Law Bill, are you not of opinion that the experiment of the new measure has been attended with every possible advantage, both with respect to the means of employing the population in manufacturing labour, and also with respect to the low rate of prices of provisions?—Yes, I think the results have been more gratifying than its best friends could have anticipated.

Would not the difficulty of carrying it into quiet operation have

been materially increased, under a different state of things, either as to finding employment for the manufacturing population, or any rise in the price of provisions?—It would have been certainly more difficult at once to have embraced all those results, if the manufacturing interest had not been in such a prosperous state.

If, in the course of two or three years, there should be an extensive interruption in the present manufacturing prosperity, attended with a rise in the price of grain, must not in that case a large proportion of the population, now employed in manufacturing industry, fall back upon their natural supporters, the agricultural interest, to maintain them in their distress?—Yes, unless there is the alteration introduced in the law of settlement.

Chairman.] Has any improvement taken place in the mode of management of farms?—There is a partial improvement in some cases, but I am inclined to think that one, and perhaps the great cause of agricultural depression, as it is called, is the want of intelligence among the bulk of the farmers; the majority of them keep few or no accounts; one who farms upwards of two hundred acres of his own told me, a few days since, that it was all bother keeping a ledger; "I know," said he, "when I have done well at the end of the year by the state of my banking account, and in the same way I know when I have done ill."

Then you think that the want of intelligence and the want of skill has gone a great way toward producing the depressed state of the farmers?—According to my view of it, such is the state of society in this country that for a person to do well in any branch, whether in agriculture, manufacture, or in commerce, there must be a combination of intelligence, practical skill, capital, and industry, and if any of those be wanting, whether it is in agriculture or in mercantile affairs, a person is almost sure now to go wrong, and I have traced a great number of cases of individual distress among farmers to that cause, one of those has been wanting.

Can you suggest any remedy for the state of the farmers?—I think that almost all the legislature can do has already been done by the alteration of the poor law, which, according to my view of it, is the very best measure that ever was devised for the effectual relief of the agricultural interest.

During the time that wheat has been at such a low price, the price of barley has not been so low?—No; barley has borne a price more than its usual proportion to wheat.

How do you account for that?—Principally from the passing of the law taking off the tax upon beer, which has been the occasion of 2,000,000 of quarters of malt more being made and consumed.

There is a great quantity of barley grown in that district of country with which you are acquainted?—Yes.

Barley is grown there for malting?—Yes.

What have been the three crops the last three years upon good barley soil?—From three quarters to five quarters an acre.

What do you consider an average crop of barley?—Upon light soils, I should say three quarters an acre, and four quarters upon better soils.

Has the average the last three or four years been greater than the ordinary average?—Not of barley but fully an average; may I be permitted to add, that the Beer Bill, as it is called, has benefited the farmer in raising the price of barley in a way which does not appear at first sight.

Supposing the malt duty was reduced, do you think no greater quantity of barley could be grown in this kingdom?—Yes, I think a greater quantity might be grown, because those that have grown so much wheat would probably change and grow barley upon part of the land.

You are a great corn merchant?—Yes.

What is your opinion of the effect of the present corn laws upon the agricultural interest?—I am a decided enemy to the present corn laws, with respect to the occupier of the soil in particular, I think they operate very unfavourably.

What are your reasons for thinking so?—In the first place they give a complete monopoly of the market, promising, as it were, in consequence of that monopoly, high prices, which promise they cannot realize, that is very evident. Notwithstanding the agriculturists have had, through the present corn laws, a monopoly of the home market, yet prices have not kept up.

What system of corn laws would you substitute which would afford a protection to the farmer from the effects of foreign competition?—I should be for a fixed duty, beginning with a high duty, and going down annually a shilling a quarter, and I should be disposed to go down as low as 5*s.* a quarter on wheat ultimately.

Do you think that the farmers, with a protection of 5*s.* a quarter, could grow wheat in competition with the growers of corn on the Continent?—Yes; with the increased intelligence that is going abroad, and with the impulse that will be given to agriculture in consequence of the Poor Law Bill.

Do you import corn from abroad?—I have occasionally, but not lately.

Can you state what is the freight now for a quarter of corn from any of the Baltic ports;—Yes; the freight is about 4*s.* a quarter.

Does that include all expenses?—Freight and insurance.

Supposing you had a fixed duty of 5*s.*, in fact you would only have a protection of 9*s.* against the grower of foreign corn?—No.

That you think would be sufficient?—It might not be sufficient to keep our corn up to a high price; but we must look at the subject in a variety of points of view.

At what average price would it keep corn up?—I think it would keep wheat up to 40*s.* a quarter, or more.

Do you think it would be possible, with wheat at 40*s.* a quarter, for the farmers to grow wheat to any extent?—Yes, I do.

Have you ever occupied land yourself?—No.

What reason have you for supposing that the farmer, supposing his rent to be fixed at a proper level, could cultivate wheat at 40*s.* a quarter?—Rent I consider only the residue. It is necessary to determine what is the proper level, before that question can be answered. I know farmers, young enterprising skilful men, who say they can grow wheat at 40*s.* a quarter, and who are doing very well now, having a part of their crop at 40*s.* a quarter: but those are young men of skill and intelligence; and the fact is, that they make their rent, or nearly so, by stock. The great error, in my opinion, of the old race of farmers is, that they go, as it is called, to the barn-door for everything.

Mr. Sanford.] What do you conceive to be the effect of the present corn laws upon the consumer?—I think they have a very unfavourable effect. They operate as a very great hindrance to the extension of trade to the manufacturing and commercial interests, because under the present system of corn laws, we can receive nothing in return from those countries which would take our manufactured goods if they could send us their corn in return. For instance, Prussia; our trade would be immense with Prussia if we could take their corn in return.

Would not it be to the detriment of our home market of consumption?—I do not think it would.

Are you aware of the expense of internal conveyance?—I have seen it stated that much of the corn that comes to Hamburgh comes at an expense of 5*s.*, 6*s.*, and 7*s.* per quarter, and the same to Dantzic. I know that when barley was exceedingly high we imported barley which had come 400 miles down to Hamburgh.

Do you know the present price of wheat at Dantzic?—About 32*s.* to 33*s.* for the best wheat. In regard to the prices approximating, I do not see why there should not be the same result with respect to corn in general as there has been with respect to rape-seed and wool. They are not protected, and there is an immense quantity of land on the Continent that might be appropriated to the growth of rape-seed; rape-seed is now bearing a good price in England, I suppose from 60*s.* to 64*s.* a quarter, which is fully as high as the average price when there was 20*s.* a quarter protecting duty upon it.

Has the demand for rape-seed been as certain as the demand for corn would be?—Yes, I decidedly think so. It is used in very large quantities indeed for making oil for the manufacturers and cake for manure.

Is the growth of rape generally introduced into our system of cultivation in England?—No, I think it is not in general.

Is it not of very partial growth?—Yes, it is.

With reference to wool, is there a great extent of land on the Continent of that nature as to be able to produce a very large supply?—Yes.

In what districts?—In Bohemia, and in Prussia, and in Saxony, millions of acres I should say.

Of what description of wool is it particularly that you speak?—My observation with respect to the land in Germany applies to what is called German wool, chiefly clothing wool, but some of that is of a very superior quality for combing.

Is there any considerable quantity of combing wool introduced from Germany?—Yes, fine combing wool.

Suppose that the effect which you anticipate, of the price of corn averaging 40*s.* in consequence of a fixed duty, were to take place, and that from the experience of practical farmers, it should appear that an average price of 40*s.* would have the effect of throwing out of cultivation a vast quantity of the wheat-growing land in England, do you think that would be a beneficial effect to the country?—That is a question that I do not feel myself competent to answer.

What do you think is the average price which may be fairly calculated upon by the farmer under the existing corn law?—Under 50*s.* a quarter for wheat.

For barley?—I think nearly 30*s.*, about 28*s*

For oats?—I do not feel competent to give an opinion.

Putting out of consideration the effect which a change in the corn law would have upon the manufacturer, by producing an extraneous consumption of his manufactures, do you think that the consumer in this country has any reason to complain of a corn law, which will give an average price of 48*s.*?—Yes, I think he has.

Chairman.] Although 50*s.* may be the average price of corn, corn has been considerably lower than 50*s.*, for instance, immediately before last Christmas?—Yes, it has.

Therefore there has been a considerable fluctuation in price under the present corn law?—Yes.

Do not you apprehend that there always must be a fluctuation of price under the present Corn Law, unless in years of import?—That is very certain; there must be great fluctuations under the present system.

To what do you attribute the high price of wool?—To the very flourishing state of the manufactures, and the great demand there is from all quarters.

Do you think that the present high price of wool can in any way be attributed to the rot which took place in sheep some few years back?—I think it may have had some influence, but I am not inclined to think it has any particular influence upon the markets now.

Do you think those flocks have been replaced which suffered from the rot?—Yes, I think they have.

As a wool-stapler of course you make inquiries upon that subject?—Yes, we are led to make inquiries of course.

And to get the most accurate information upon that subject?—

Yes; I have no hesitation in saying, I am certain that with respect to our district the flocks have been replaced.

Mr. Loch.] Are you inclined to think that the price of wool will be maintained?—Yes, I think it will.

And that the price of wheat will be maintained and go up?—I do not think the price of wheat will be lower.

Mr. Wodehouse.] What would you quote it at now?—48*s.* to 50*s.* with us.

Mr. Sanford.] Red or white?—Red about 48*s.* and white at 50*s.*

Mr. Wodehouse.] You have stated that you are an enemy to the present corn law, and you think the establishment of a fixed duty would be preferable. Do you think that a fixed duty of any kind could be maintained under the pressure of scarcity?—I do not know that it could.

Could a duty even of 5*s.* have been maintained properly under such a year as the scarcity of 1795, or the year 1816? Do you think it would have been right in the Government or the Legislature to continue even such a low rate as 5*s.* under these circumstances?—Perhaps not.

If any great portion of the manufacturing population is out of employment, do you think that then it would be right in the Legislature to maintain any hindrance to the import of grain to any extent whatever?—Certainly not.

In fact, the ground upon which you principally rely for relief to the farmer depends upon the successful operation of the new Poor Law?—With respect to legislative enactment certainly, and ultimately upon a change of the corn law, so far as regards the occupiers of the soil.

Evidence of Mr. Joseph Cook Arnall.

Resides at Boston—Is a Corn Inspector—Present System of taking the Averages does not admit of any practical Improvement—There have been Frauds—They were detected and have not been repeated—The Buyers make the Returns—The Sellers could not do it, they are too illiterate—The same Wheat is sometimes returned more than once—But there is no impropriety in that if the Sales are bona fide.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Boston, in Lincolnshire.

You are the corn inspector there?—I am.

Do you consider that under the present system of striking the averages, it is possible that any fraud can creep in?—I am not aware of any practical improvement that could be made in the present mode of striking the averages, although I apprehend in certain cases it would be possible for frauds to creep in.

To your knowledge, since the year 1828, since the last corn law passed, have there been any frauds committed, with the view of raising the price of corn, so as to reduce the amount of duty?—I think there have.

To any great extent?—There have been one or two attempts made to influence the averages by making false returns, but the attempt was such as immediately to attract my notice, and to convince me that something wrong was intended on the part of the parties making the returns; that I immediately communicated to Mr. Jacob, and some correspondence took place between Mr. Jacob and myself on that subject; the result was, that the returns were struck out, and not admitted into the general average; but since that period I do not think that any attempts have been made to influence the average by false returns, inasmuch as the parties saw that, in order to influence the returns, they must have recourse to some out-and-out sort of measure, which it was impossible should elude the observation of the inspector if he did his duty.

You make the returns now upon the evidence of the buyers?—The buyers make the returns.

Do you think it would be of any advantage if the sellers were called upon to make returns as well as the buyers?—I do not think it would; the greater part of the farmers in our neighbourhood are very illiterate, many of them cannot even write their own names, and are altogether unacquainted with figures; I am sure that if the law required the sellers to make the returns, the returns never would be obtained from them at all, or at least in so imperfect a state that they never could be acted upon.

There is no motive for those fictitious sales, as long as the price of corn is low?—I apprehend not.

Then for the last two years you do not consider that there have been any sales of that description?—I do not believe there have; I always take care to acquaint myself with the going price of the market, and if the going price for wheat was about 40*s.*, and I perceived a return either at 45*s.* or 35*s.*, my attention would be immediately called to the thing, and I should investigate it: and if on investigation I found that my suspicions were well grounded, I should represent the circumstance to the Board of Trade, and cause it to be struck out; that has been the case, and I have done it.

Does it sometimes happen that the same wheat is returned more than once?—Yes, it happens occasionally.

Is that to any extent?—Yes, at times I think it is rather considerable.

That is a defect then, in the working of the law?—I cannot see that it is a defect myself.

Supposing that the same wheat of good quality and of high price is returned frequently, will not that tend to raise the average price?—Certainly; but I see no impropriety in that, so long as the sales returned are *bonâ fide* sales.

Does not it hold forth the belief, that a greater quantity of wheat is sold than is actually sold?—Certainly, it multiplies the quantity sold, without the produce being equal to it.

Evidence of John Langhorne, Esq.

Resides at Berwick—Has the management of large Estates—A great Portion of Land in Northumberland should not be cultivated—Farmers in Scotland not better off than those in England.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—I am a banker at Berwick, and I have the management of a large estate.

Then you can state to the Committee what the state of the farmer is in that district?—It is very bad indeed.

You state that the farmers are very badly off; are there not some upland districts?—I am sure that there is a great portion of land in Northumberland that should not be cultivated.

Sir R. Peel.] Has there not been some change in the mode of doing business by drawing drafts, which has dispensed with the necessity of having so large a note circulation?—Yes, the drawing of cheques has increased from the greater knowledge that persons get of the practice of business every day.

Do you think that the farmers in Scotland are better off than those in England?—Not in the least.

You do not think that the circulation makes any difference in their condition?—No.

Mr. Cayley.] Would not the farmers be worse off if they had no 1*l.* notes?—No; for this plain reason, that the Scotch banks would give them the same accommodation, whether they have 1*l.* notes, or not.

Evidence of Mr. Thomas Bennett.

Is Steward to the Duke of Bedford at Woburn—Farmers in Bedfordshire better off than they were in 1833, arising from the reduced Poor Rates—Poor better off than in 1833—Few Farms in Bedfordshire untenanted—Land improved by Draining—The Duke of Bedford's Tenants will be able to pay their Rent with Wheat at 5*s.* a Bushel—Can keep larger Flocks since Land was drained—Tenantry has improved.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Woburn; I am steward to the Duke of Bedford.

Comparing the condition of the farmers at the present time with their condition in 1833, should you say it was better or worse?—I think so far as we are concerned in Bedfordshire, we are decidedly better now than we were in 1833, that is, our prospects are better.

Has the cost of cultivation been reduced within that period?—No; the improvement is entirely from the decreased amount of poor-rates.

What should you state to be the condition of the poor at present?---Better than it was three years ago.

What has been the moral effect of the new poor laws; do you find the labourers make better workmen?---The masters generally say that their servants are much better satisfied than they were

formerly, and that they now come and ask them for a job, instead of refusing it when it was offered.

There is a better understanding between the master and his servant in consequence?---I think there is.

You have no farms at present unoccupied?—On the very large estate which I manage, we have nothing unoccupied, and there are very few farms in Bedfordshire not tenanted.

Has there been much spent in draining?—Yes.

Has the effect of these improvements been to increase the produce of wheat?—I have no doubt it has very materially.

Do you think with that reduction of rent and the reduction of prices, the farmer can cultivate his land at a profit?---Looking to the seven years back, and having taken those farms under very low prices, I have not a question that some may do it profitably, and I have no doubt some will.

Sir James Graham.] At what price do you estimate wheat for the next seven years?—If I was going to take a farm myself, I should not expect, nor would I calculate, for the next seven years, to have wheat above 5*s.* to 6*s.* a bushel.

Will the Duke of Bedford's tenants, who have retaken those farms, be able to pay the rent for which they have just agreed with wheat at 5*s.* a bushel?—I think they will; I think the majority do not expect to see it at much more.

Mr. Cayley.] Wool and mutton have kept up very well during the last four years?---It has; where a farmer has not a flock of sheep I cannot tell how he lives.

If it did not happen to be sheep-land, and he depended for his rent on the usual course of a wheat farm, do you think he could make his rent?—We must take all circumstances into consideration; a great deal of capital has been expended on this cold wet land, and it does not rot the sheep as it used to do, therefore he can keep a larger flock of sheep.

Do you think that if a farmer depended on his wheat alone at 5*s.* a bushel, he could make his rent?---It must then be a very low rent.

You depend on the sheep to pay for the cultivation of wheat?—Not entirely. I consider that the quantity of sheep a man may keep on his land after it is drained, though not turnip land, is a very material assistance to the farmer in cultivating his land, and also paying his rent.

Sir James Graham.] Looking at a large district cultivated by numerous tenantry, so far from its having retrograded it has improved?—To my knowledge it has been improved within the last five years.

Should you say that the tenantry upon the whole are poorer, or have less capital than they had five years ago?—I have no means of getting at their actual state, but I can say that their rents are very well paid, and there never was so small an arrear.

What is the condition of the labourers now in Bedfordshire, what wages do they receive?—Nine shillings is the rate of wages; a great many earn a great deal more than that by task-work.

Evidence of Mr. James Scott.

Importation of Wheat from Ireland has decreased—Statement of other Imports—Great Consumption of Flour for sizing and dressing the Web in Cotton Manufactures—Want of Speculation the cause of decline in Prices—Farmers cannot get Accommodation as formerly—Agriculture is not retrograding, except with poor Tenants.

Chairman.] Where do you reside?—At Liverpool.

What is your occupation?—I am a corn merchant and corn factor.

Can you state whether the supply of corn for the last three years has increased, as compared with the three preceding years?—As far as regards the district of Liverpool it has rather diminished, I think.

Do you mean that there has been no increase in the supply of wheat from Ireland?—It has decreased the last three years.

Will you state the quantity in each year, beginning with the year 1833?—From October 1832 to October 1833, the quantity imported was 421,000 quarters of wheat from Ireland; in the same period ending 1834, it was 344,000; in the same period ending 1835, 254,000.

Has there been a greater or smaller supply of barley from Ireland?—The barley has increased, but not much, the last three years: in 1833, 18,000; in 1834, 22,000; in 1835, 25,000.

What has been the supply of flour in the same period?—In 1833, 293,000 sacks; in 1834, 274,000; in 1835, 304,000.

Has there been much malt imported from Ireland?—Very little; that has also increased the last year very much, but it never amounts to much; the three years are, in 1833, 5000 quarters; in 1834, 1500; and in 1835, 9000 quarters.

What has been the supply of oats?—In 1833, 331,000; in 1834, 282,000; and in 1835, 230,000.

Then there is a decrease of 50,000 quarters?—Yes.

With respect to flour, are you aware what quantity of flour is consumed in the manufacture of starch?—I have no means of estimating the quantity consumed in starch and sizing; but it is very great indeed; I should think nearly one-fourth part of the consumption of bread: the consumption is enormous.

Is there any other mode of manufacture in which flour has been extensively employed?—The sour flour is used for sizing manufactured goods to a very great extent.

Is it used in the manufacture of cotton, in dressing the web, to a great extent?—I believe it is very much used in that way.

Mr. Cayley.] Taking the crops all together, have they been more

than an average?—No. I should not estimate them to be more than an average; as to the product per acre; but perhaps there has been an increase of land under cultivation.

What has been the cause of the gradual declension in the price of wheat?—I think the poverty and the want of accommodation to the farmer, and the absence of speculation, because speculation has been always a great help to prices.

Cannot a farmer of good character get accommodation as well as he used to do?—No, I think not, unless it is from his landlord; I think bankers are unwilling to trust farmers.

Sir R. Peel.] You said you thought there was some increase in the production of wheat per acre, but not sufficient to account for the increased produce, but that you thought there was a greater quantity of land under cultivation of wheat. Then you would not infer that agriculture was retrograding, so far as the cultivation of the soil was concerned?—No.

You think the soil is as well cultivated as you ever recollect it to have been?—Fully so.

And as many agricultural improvements taking place?—Yes, every year.

Which partly accounts for the increased produce?—It certainly does.

Mr. Cayley.] Is the land better cultivated by the tenants who are so poor?—No, I should fear that it is going backwards with the poorer tenants.

Then there is a greater quantity of land retrograding than improving?—I fear so; I had some conversation the day I came away with the steward of a great landed proprietor in Cheshire, he described the farmers as being exceedingly reduced in their circumstances, so much so that he could hardly collect the rents.

Evidence of David Hodgson, Esq.

Resides at Liverpool—Is engaged in the Corn Trade—The Produce of 1833 was above an Average, 1834 greatly above, and 1835 fully an Average—The Import of Foreign Flour the two last Years trifling—The Supply is still sufficiently abundant to account for the general Depression in Price—Corn Laws not advantageous to Farmers—An unvarying Duty would be better than the present Plan—It would be an Adantage to allow bonded Corn to be made into Flour for Exportation—The present Corn Laws encourage a gambling Spirit—Is in favour of Free Trade—Thinks it of no importance to the Farmer whether Wheat is 28*s.* or 88*s.* a Quarter—Uniformity of Price is the important Thing with him; the Landowner may have a different Interest—Any Measure reversing the Operation of Peel's Bill would produce a fresh Dislocation—An yearly Statement might be furnished to Government of all the Land in the Kingdom under Cultivation—Special Protection unfair to either Farmer or Manufacturer.

Chairman.] You reside at Liverpool?—I do.

And are extensively engaged in the corn trade?—Frequently.

You were examined before the Committee in 1833?—I was.

You are in the habit of causing a survey to be made of a large tract of country, with a view to estimate the produce of each harvest?—We are.

Now, with regard to the year 1833?—Eighteen hundred and thirty-three was above an average; 1834 was very greatly above, and 1835 was fully an average. In these observations I mean as respects the acreable produce.

It is presumed that there has been no importation of any consequence of foreign corn, or foreign flour, within the last two years?—There cannot have been any for home use, except from Canada, and which has been trifling.

Then do you consider that the supplies afforded by the harvests of the last three years have been so large, that notwithstanding there has been this unusual consumption of wheat by the farmers in fattening their cattle, and in the manufacturing districts there is still a sufficiently abundant supply to account for the great depression in the price?—I have no doubt of it.

Do you consider that the present corn laws have had any effect in diminishing the speculation in British corn?—Yes, I do.

From your evidence of 1833 your impression appears to be that the present corn laws, although better than the corn laws of 1815, are still not very advantageous to the agriculturist?—I think they are not.

You speak there of a duty of 8*s.* a quarter, which you think would produce a less fluctuation in the price of corn?—I think it would; any unvarying plan that would admit such quantities as might be wanted from time to time upon a fixed duty, I think would tend to render the price more certain and steady at home.

What would have been the effect of a fixed duty of 8*s.* a quarter, which you recommended, upon the prices of the last five or six years?—I think the effect would be to produce a small and regular supply from the Baltic, and entirely to exclude, except in extreme cases, an importation from the United States.

A petition has been referred to this committee from the town of Plymouth, in which they pray that a certain quantity of wheat which is now in bond, may be allowed to be ground into flour for exportation. What is your opinion of that, would it be a disadvantage to the agriculturists or not?—Undoubtedly an advantage.

Do you consider that it would be possible by any fraud to introduce a quantity of flour, free of duty, upon the market, if that were permitted?—Quite impossible, to any extent affecting the question of the propriety or advantage of the plan.

What security would you provide, or by what plan do you think it could be effected?—Simply the plan adopted upon a former occasion; to require for every quantity of wheat taken out of bond, an export in flour of its equivalent; hence insuring that as much shall be taken out of the country as is admitted to its consumption.

Lord Howick.] You said a short time ago that the effect of the

present system of duties had been very much to diminish the speculation in English corn; do you think it has had the same effect upon foreign corn?—I think not; the present system is rather a favourite with the speculator, though unfavourable to the country, because it has a tendency to increase the alternations in price.

In short, you think the tendency of this system is to encourage a gambling spirit in foreign corn?—I think it has that tendency.

Then you conceive the effect of the present system of fluctuating duties is to lower the price in times of plenty, and unnaturally to increase the price in times of dearth?—I think so.

Mr. Cayley.] You would rather be without any corn law at all, would not you?—I would certainly.

You are in favour of free trade?—Entirely.

Mr. C. P. Thomson.] You have detailed to the committee the plan by which you would purpose to allow the export of foreign corn turned into flour in this country in bond, subject to debentures; would not that plan be equally applicable supposing there were a fixed duty?—Quite so.

Supposing your plan was acted upon with a fixed duty of 8*s.*, when the price of corn was low in this country, would not the grower of corn here, who exported his corn ground into flour to the colonies under your system receive a payment in the shape of a drawback of 8*s.*?—He would.

Supposing the duty were a fixed one of 8*s.*, the foreigner could not bring his corn in here without paying 8*s.* duty, whilst under your system, the British grower, who exported his corn, would receive a bounty of 8*s.*?—It would be so. I did not see it before.

Supposing the same system had been in operation the last three years, during which time the price of corn has been low in this country, would not that have tended to raise the price of corn in this country by that difference, namely, 8*s.*?—It would have had that tendency no doubt.

Has not one of the great arguments against a fixed duty been the difficulty of giving a drawback or bounty to the home grower?—Yes, I have understood it so.

Under your system, as it is now explained, that would be provided for, would it not?—Yes, certainly, without payment of money; it is merely giving a certificate that should be available for the release of wheat fixed upon a scale of duty, and current at the period of export.

But the effect would be in times of low prices of British corn to raise the price by that difference, namely, the 8*s.*?—Yes, it would.

You have stated, that by a fixed duty there would probably be less fluctuation in price than under the present system?—I think so.

Is not it a great advantage to the producer of any commodity to have as little fluctuation in price as possible?—Distinctly, I should say so.

Is not the farmer, or rather the producer of corn, peculiarly liable, from the very nature of the article that he produces, to fluctuations, such as difference of seasons?—Certainly.

Is it not therefore a great advantage to the farmer to get rid of an additional element of fluctuation?—Certainly.

The committee understand you therefore to say, that with a fixed duty you contemplate a great advantage arising to the farmer, or the producer of corn, from his having greater certainty than he could otherwise possess, with regard to the price which is likely to be obtained for it?—Certainly.

Sir J. Graham.] If corn could be landed in England year by year under a fixed duty of 8*s.*, at 28*s.* a quarter, and the average price therefore should be steady at 36*s.*, or some such mark, would the drawback of 8*s.* on exportation be any consolation to the English grower?—I think it is immaterial to the English grower what his price is, if it is a fixed price; it may make a material difference to the owner of land. The farmer is not, in my opinion, interested in the question; the farmer is interested in knowing what shall be the constant position that he shall hold, that he may make his agreement accordingly; but the landowner may possibly have a different interest from the farmer. I do not think it is of importance to the farmer whether the price of his wheat be 28*s.* or 88*s.*; the important thing to him is the uniformity of price, so that he may have something upon which to rely in the course of his lease.

What is the price of wheat at Dantzic now?—Twenty-five shillings or twenty-six a quarter.

You said that the currency question was a by-gone question, that it had created great dislocation, and that you think the bill of Mr. Peel, changing the currency, was passed, the effects not being clearly foreseen?—I think so.

If now that measure were to be reversed, and the subject be now well understood, do you think there would be the excuse of ignorance in passing a measure reversing it?—Certainly not.

What would be that effect; would it be a fresh dislocation?—Entirely.

Do you think it would create less ravages on the productive industry and manufacturing industry than the change which has already taken place?—I think not; I think it would just be a repetition of the same thing over again; the money prices of commodities, I think, are no longer affected by that bill; but I have no doubt that particular classes of property remain to be seriously affected by it; but there is, I fear, no adjusting that now; I think the time has gone by; all properties having fixed charges placed upon them, particularly between the years 1807 and 1815 or 1816, are placed in a very awkward predicament; but all prices regulating the interchangeable value of commodities have long since been adjusted, and ceased to be under any particular operation from the bill.

Considering the time that that law has been in operation, even with regard to fixed engagements of land, are not the great portion of them now adapted to the new standard and the new value of money?—From the lapse of time there has been a great change, no doubt, even in such fixed engagements.

Have you any opinion with regard to the importance of accurate statistical information, year by year, to be furnished to the government, with regard to the quantity of land, upon some such plan as that you have taken for your own information, under cultivation in various crops for the supply of food?—I think it would be of the utmost importance, and remove much uncertainty that is continually perplexing the country; I did venture to suggest it, more than once, years ago, to Mr. Huskisson, and he thought very favourably of it, but circumstances prevented his entering upon it. I think it might easily be accomplished through returns to be made by the parish overseers, of the land in each parish, with its appropriation; and by publication of these returns in the Gazette once a year, perhaps in June, all interests concerned, the merchant, the farmer, and the foreign exporter of wheat, in fact every person connected in the supply of food to this country, would have data upon which to found calculation.

With regard to the Plymouth plan which has been spoken of to-day, if the quantity exported were free from all risk of fraud, exactly equal to the quantity taken out of bond, could the landed interest suffer in the least?—Not the least.

Mr. Clay.] You have been asked whether the effect of a large stock of corn in bond be not to deaden the market for British grain; do not you think that, under our present system, there will always be heavier stocks, at least upon the average of years, than under a system which should permit the grain to be entered for home consumption at all times?—Certainly; there would not, in the latter case, be almost any stock on hand.

Mr. Morrison.] Supposing that an alteration was made in the corn laws, and that a fixed duty was substituted in lieu of the present system, do you not think the manufacturers in the country would be satisfied with the same amount of protection being given to corn which they have under the present laws, for their own manufactures?—I am not aware that they have any protection.

Are you aware that upon foreign manufactured goods there are duties varying from 15 to 30 per cent.?—I think the manufacturers have rather a nominal than a real protection; if they have a protection I hope it will be done away with.

Sir James Graham.] Are you not aware that in the silk trade, the protection originally given of 25 per cent. *ad valorem*, was found insufficient, and was raised in some cases to 30, by Mr. Huskisson?—I believe it was so.

Mr. Morrison.] Supposing the manufacturers should still insist upon a protection equal to 20 per cent., do not you think it would

be fair to give the agriculturist the same protection?—I think it unfair to give either any especial protection.

But, if one has it, do you think the other ought to have it also; or would you distinguish between the manufacturer of food and of other articles?—I would protest against either having it.

Evidence of Mr. George Calthorp.

Is a Corn Merchant at Spalding—Farmers of arable Land in a bad Condition—The Quality of Corn the last three Years is very good—Prefers the movable to a fixed Duty—Rents too high.

Mr. Handley.] Where do you reside?—At Spalding, in Lincolnshire.

What is your occupation?—A general merchant; more particularly a corn merchant.

What should you say is the condition of the farmers in the district of the Lincolnshire fens?—Those farmers that trust purely to the plough are certainly in a lamentable condition; those farmers that have capital, and a large amount of stock have not been so badly off.

Even upon superior ploughed lands, yielding 34 bushels an acre, the last two years the condition of the farmer is lamentably bad?—If he trusts entirely to his plough, decidedly.

Do you conceive that the capital of the farmer has been greatly diminished since 1833?—The capital of those farmers that trust purely to the plough has diminished.

What has been the quality of the corn in the last three years?—Extremely good.

What is your opinion of the operation of the present corn laws?—I think the operation of the present corn laws is beneficial.

Do you think the sliding scale is the best description of corn law?—I prefer it infinitely to a fixed duty.

Do you conceive that rents of lands are high in your part of the country?—I think the rents are rather too high; but not much. I take the average rental at about 35*s.* per acre of those lands that are tithe free; taking the whole district, I think that is about the average rental.

Evidence of Joseph Sanders, Esq.

Resides at Liverpool—Is a Corn Merchant—Importation from Ireland less than the Average of the preceding seven or eight Years—The three last Years produced fine Grain—Improvement of Land has been going on for the last ten Years, and is now telling on the Land—Low Price of Wheat caused by superior Land being brought into Cultivation—Grinding Corn in Bond could not injure the Farmer, but the Permission to do so would be a great Advantage to Trade—The Legislature cannot relieve the Farmer—Could not expect to maintain War Prices after the Peace—Imports from Ireland tend greatly to lower Prices—Poor Farmers are always complaining—Fictitious Encouragement useless—Protection given to Corn not greater than is given to some other articles—Large Tracts of Land in Ireland not yet cultivated—The Government could not maintain a fixed Duty if Wheat rose to 80*s.*—Agriculture generally improving in Scotland—Improvements from Steam Conveyance, &c. have had ten Times the Effect of the Currency.

Chairman.] You reside at Liverpool?—I do.

You are extensively engaged in the corn trade?—Yes.

You are principally connected with the Irish trade?—Principally with Ireland.

It has been stated to the Committee, that the importation from Ireland into Liverpool was less during the last year than during the preceding years?—I think it is about the same; taking the flour into account, there is very little difference.

Has there been an increased importation to London and Bristol within the last few years?—I think not at all; not in the last two years.

Should you consider that the importation of corn from Ireland is greater during the last year than upon the average of the preceding years, taking the kingdom through?—No, it is less than the average of the preceding seven or eight years.

Have the three last harvests in England of 1833, 1834, and 1835, produced above an average crop of wheat?—I should think much above an average.

How much per cent. above?—Perhaps 10, 15, or 20 per cent.

In consequence of the dry seasons, has the quality of the wheat improved?—I never knew three seasons which gave such fine and heavy wheat as the last three years; wheat has been heavier by two, if not three pounds a bushel, than it was ever known to be, for such a length of time.

Then its capabilities of producing flour are increased in a greater proportion than the actual increase of the wheat?—Yes.

How do you account for the low price of wheat?—I think in the evidence I gave before, I stated that I was convinced that, so far from the price of 1833 putting land out of cultivation, I felt no doubt that it would cause fresh land to be put under cultivation, and that we should have more wheat grown in this country, and prices lower than ever; but I confess that the three last crops have so far exceeded all probability, that they have gone 8*s.* or 10*s.* a quarter lower than I ventured to give an opinion that I thought it would fall to with good crops.

Are there any other parts of England with which you are acquainted, where great agricultural improvement has been carried on in the last three years?—Not so much the last three years. Improvements have been going on to a very important extent in the last ten years; and I think it is these improvements that are now telling upon the bad lands of the country.

And the demand for wheat has not increased in anything like the same proportion as the quantity produced?—Not in proportion to the quantity produced there.

What should you say is the principal cause of the distress suffered in different parts of England among the agriculturists, taking first the cultivators of the clay soils?—They are depressed in consequence of the low prices of wheat. I believe the main cause of that is, that there are lands of superior quality brought into cultivation, and that there is a fierce but silent contest carrying on between the productive lands of England and the unproductive.

The clay lands must, therefore, go out of cultivation, unless some cheaper mode of cultivating them is discovered?—Many of the clay lands must go out of wheat tillage.

You are aware that a petition has been presented to Parliament, which has been referred to this Committee, with reference to grinding corn in bond: are you prepared to state what your opinion of that is with reference to the interests of the agriculturist; do you think they would be prejudiced by the adoption of the plan?—I cannot see in what way they could be prejudiced at all by the debenture scheme. There is no question that it will supply the main defect of the present corn law; that is a bounty upon exportation when the prices are extremely low; I have no doubt that if that had been the law we never should have had wheat at 36*s.* a quarter.

You think there is no apprehension of too large a quantity of corn being thrown in upon the market when the rate of duty was low in consequence of those debentures being granted?—No, I think not; I cannot see why there should be an increased quantity, because it would put the holders of those debentures nearly upon the same footing as the holders of foreign corn. According to the present law they can take it out at any duty they like.

It would be a considerable advantage to the exporter of flour, as he would have an opportunity of sending it to the West Indies?—We are now, for want of that permission, depriving ourselves of a very important branch of commerce; the Americans now have the whole flour trade of the western world, which we could take from them in a great degree if we had permission to grind wheat in bond. The prices of wheat and flour in America are generally considerably higher than they are in Europe, and yet we are deprived of the privilege of that trade, a trade which we could carry on with immense advantages over the Americans beyond the difference in the cost of wheat.

Then the effect of this exportation of flour to America and to the West Indies would be probably to raise the price of wheat, and to bring that wheat into the market, which is now consumed in fattening cattle?—I think it would; I have no doubt that large quantities would have been exported to the West Indies and to South America, if permission to grind wheat, and export it upon the debenture system, had been given.

And you do not think that, under any circumstances, it could prejudice the farmers?—I do not conceive it is possible; on the contrary, I think it is the best security the farmers could have against extremely low prices.

You are aware that there has been another plan suggested that is merely to return a certain portion of flour into bond; do you consider that that would be equally advantageous?—No, it would not be equally advantageous to the English farmer, certainly; that would be a mere mercantile speculation between the English merchants and the persons resident abroad. I do not think the farmer would feel any effect from it whatever; it is strictly a mercantile affair.

Do you believe that it is within the power of the Legislature to afford any relief to the farmer?—Quite impossible.

You consider that there is nothing in the state of the currency to cause a low price of wheat?—Nothing at all.

Sir R. Peel.] Have you had opportunities of comparing the present state of agriculture in England and Wales with its state at former periods?—I am satisfied that the land of England is now producing more than it ever produced before at any period.

Do you think that agriculture is improving, speaking generally?—Perhaps, speaking generally, it may be nearly stationary at the present time; but I have no doubt that a great improvement is taking place in all the good lands, and that there is a falling off in the inferior lands, and I believe also that there will be a greater falling off in this description of land.

What do you think will be the application that will be made of the poorer lands?—They must go to grass, and be cultivated at the least possible expense.

Do not you think that the expense of cultivation is diminishing materially in many respects?—It is diminishing, but very slowly.

Do you recollect the predictions of those who said, that, unless wheat should bring 80*s.* a quarter, a great quantity of land would be thrown out of cultivation?—Yes, I recollect that very well; there has never been an Agricultural Committee sitting from 1814 down to the present time in which you would not hear the same thing. They began in 1814, saying they must have 90*s.* a quarter for the wheat. Then, in 1822, Mr. Ellman and some others said they could not possibly grow wheat for less than 80*s.*, and they have gone on from that day to this, they have come here and made out a case, declaring that they could not grow wheat for a certain

sum, which has been generally 15*s.* or 20*s.* a quarter higher than what it proved they could grow it for; and I dare say there will be plenty of witnesses before this Committee to prove that they cannot grow it under 60*s.* I am convinced, however, that in a little time they may grow it very well under 50*s.*, and grow more than they ever did.

Have you any doubt that there has been more wheat produced in England and Wales, within the last three years, than has been produced in any other three years within the memory of man?—Infinitely more.

Putting aside for a moment the effect produced by a series of particularly good seasons, do you still think that, supposing the seasons had been average seasons within the last three years, there would have been a greater production of wheat than in any former three years?—I certainly do, and for this reason, that since the year 1819, we have only had three years of importation, and those were three years of bad crops; there is no country that is not subject to bad crops, even Russia. I have known wheat at Odessa 12*s.* a quarter, and yet that country is subject to bad crops, and they have had what they call a famine, with wheat 20*s.* to 25*s.* per quarter within the last two years; but here we have gone on from 1819 up to the present time, and we have only three years of importation, and this with the immense increase of population proves incontestably, that the agriculture of this country has gone on increasing its produce in a most extraordinary degree.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Are you of opinion that the growth of wheat in this country would not be very materially contracted, if the average price be calculated not to exceed 50*s.* per quarter?—I think it would not.

Marquis of Chandos.] Is there much difference between the large extensive farmers and the men that hold a small quantity of land?—I think there is.

Do you consider that the small farmer is in a worse condition than he was in 1833?—I think he is.

Does that extend to the large farmer?—No, I think the farmer is better off where land is cultivated upon a large scale, adopting the general principle that it is worked at less expense.

Sir J. Graham.] Do you think there are large tracts of land in Ireland not yet cultivated for the purpose of producing corn, which could produce wheat to a profit at 50*s.* a quarter?—No doubt of it; very large tracts indeed.

Sir R. Peel.] And, as agricultural skill and improvements are applied to that country, do not you think that the competition with the land of this country will continue to be formidable?—Provided the present system of corn laws be continued, I am convinced that the competition will be found exceedingly onerous indeed.

Sir J. Graham.] The present system of corn laws being maintained, and the cultivation of wheat in Ireland extending, do you

think the increased produce of the British Islands, Ireland included, will keep pace with the increase of the population, so as to supply, in a series of years, the whole population at a steady and moderate price?—I cannot have a doubt of it; but I wish to explain, that by the present system of corn laws, I mean the average system, if a fixed duty were adopted, the result would be very different indeed; but with the present system, I have no doubt that Ireland will continue to increase in her growth rapidly. I have a strong impression that, what with the increase of Ireland and the increased productiveness of good soils, this country will grow wheat at somewhere finally nearer 40*s.* a quarter than 50*s.*

Sir R. Peel.] Do you think that if wheat were to rise to 80*s.*, in consequence of scarcity, it would be possible for the Government or Legislature to maintain a fixed duty on foreign corn?—They could not maintain it; but if such a state of things arose, that the Government felt it imperative upon them to declare that the duty should be abolished, the country would never submit to its being recurred to again.

Sir James Graham.] You think the principle, therefore, of the vanishing scale almost invaluable?—Certainly; I am convinced that if that scale is abandoned, the best interests of agriculture in this country will be abandoned also.

You have no doubt that the culture of Scotland is progressively improving?—I have no doubt of it; and I am sure that the committee, if they thought proper, could get evidence of the state of agriculture in Scotland that would surprise some of the clay land farmers in England.

Has not steam opened up the Western Highlands?—Certainly, and it is producing a great change.

Have you not now a constant communication from the south-west of Scotland into Liverpool?—Yes; in 1829, there came from Scotland to Liverpool 1860 head of cows; in 1835, 5000; in the year 1829, there were 17,893 sheep; and in 1835, there were 75,200, and the same of all other things.

Has not the English farmer now not only to compete with the Irish farmer who pays no poor rate and low wages, but to compete with the Scotch farmer, who also pays no poor rate, and pays lower wages than the English farmer?—Certainly.

Has not that competition necessarily an effect upon the prices in England?—No doubt.

And one which the communication between the different parts of the United Kingdom renders inevitable?—It cannot be prevented.

Sir R. Peel.] Considering the effect which steam navigation, and the improvement in steam conveyance generally has had, by bringing into competition with the lands of this country the good lands of remote districts which before were uncultivated, do you think it would be an extravagant estimate to say that the effect of it upon the bad land of this country had been ten times as great as

the effect of the currency, speaking of the last ten years?—It would be almost impossible to say how much the effect is; ten times I have no doubt.

LETTER FROM MR. SANDERS, OF LIVERPOOL, ON THE CORN LAWS.

Liverpool, May 16th, 1836.

DEAR SIR,

You have kindly expressed a wish that I should explain my sentiments more fully touching the present Corn Laws, than the questions put to me by the different Members of the Agricultural Committee afforded me an opportunity of doing.

I have been greatly misapprehended if I am considered an advocate for the present *degree* of protection. In my humble opinion, the pivot price of wheat should be reduced 10*s.* per quarter, and, as a friend to both landlord and tenants, I should rejoice to see public expectation promptly and fairly met. If no anticipatory measure be adopted, and a period of excitement and high prices should arrive, there will be hasty and, probably, bad legislation on the subject.

It cannot be denied, that the owners of the land, by the influence which they possessed over the House of Commons, had the power and measure of protection in their own hands, but that power was in a great degree surrendered by the Reform Bill to those who do not own the land, and who have no interest but in reducing or destroying that protection.

Protection, to be maintained, must, therefore, have something reasonable in its nature. It must not have reference to war prices, nor war habits. Such times have passed away, and any scheme which has reference to them can only tend to give a factitious value to land, and to involve both landlord and tenant in disappointment and ruin. I admit that it is very difficult to show the precise degree of protection to which the land is entitled. It pays some few charges which other property does not. The owners of it have to pay the price of the protection given to many of the staple manufactures of the kingdom, on all such protected articles as they consume; and therefore, it appears to me, that even on this ground, they are entitled to a reciprocating duty. But, besides this, the great advantage of being independent of foreign supply, excepting in periods of scarcity, ought not to be lightly estimated. Whatever gives political power and independence is not a matter to be frittered away by any temptation to present and temporary savings. I think therefore, that on all these grounds, concession should be made both by the landowners and the consumers, and that neither of them should push their claims too far.

The main defect of the present law is, that though it gives moderately high, and at the same time steady prices, under import, it does not prevent them going ruinously low in periods of abundance.

It therefore appears to me to deserve consideration, whether at any time the duty on wheat should ever be permitted to go below 4*s.* or 5*s.* per quarter. The amount of this duty might be kept as a reserved fund for a bounty on export, when prices fell to a given low rate. If the holder of bonded wheat have the option of a shilling duty, it is manifest that, when the wants of the country are imperative, he will never pay 5*s.* A minimum duty of 5*s.*, therefore, would be no tax on the public, but a reduction of his profits.

The objection to the average system on the ground of frauds said to be practised, would be removed by striking out London, Liverpool, and Wakefield from the list of towns now making returns, and substituting a larger number of others. It is only in those three large markets that fraud has the slightest chance of being practised with impunity and success.

I feel quite ashamed to have again occupied your attention.

I remain, dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

JOS. SANDERS.

Charles Shaw Lefevre, Esq., M.P.,
Chairman of the Agricultural Committee.

EVIDENCE ON THE LAND-TAX.

EVIDENCE OF JOHN WOOD, ESQ. AND WILLIAM GARNETT, ESQ.

Chairman to Mr. Wood.] You are Chairman of the Board of Stamps and Taxes?—I am.

To Mr. Garnett.] You are Registrar of the Land-Tax?—I am.

In what manner was the land-tax imposed by the act of William & Mary, and at what rate?—*Mr. Wood.*] The 4th of William & Mary, c. 1, imposed a rate of 4*s.* in the pound on the full yearly value of lands, tenements, and hereditaments, offices and pensions, and on personal estates 24*s.* per 100*l.*

For what period was the assessment made, and how long was it continued?—It was originally made for one year, and was continued by subsequent annual acts.

How were the quotas of land-tax fixed in the year 1798?—By virtue of the act 38 Geo. 3, cap. 5, certain quotas were imposed on each county, city, and borough, and the commissioners for executing the act were directed at general meetings, to be held for

that purpose in their respective counties, to charge the several hundreds or divisions therein, in proportion to the sums which were assessed thereon by the act of William & Mary. The commissioners to be appointed for the several hundreds or other divisions, were required to cause the proportions charged thereon to be equally taxed and assessed within such hundreds or divisions, and every parish or place therein, according to the best of their judgment and discretion. The quotas thus set upon the respective divisions and places were made perpetual, subject to redemption and purchase by the act 38 Geo. 3, c. 60.

Does the act extend to Scotland and Ireland?—It extends to Scotland, but not to Ireland.

What proportions of the sum directed to be raised by the act of 1798 were charged in England and Wales and Scotland respectively?—In England and Wales, 1,989,673*l.* 7*s.* 10¼*d.*; and in Scotland, 47,954*l.* 1*s.* 2*d.* The proportions to be paid by each county, riding, city, or borough, in England and Wales, and by each sheriffdom, city or burgh in Scotland, are set forth in the act.

What was the amount assessed on lands and tenements or other property chargeable under the act?—On lands and tenements and other property or profits 1,190,000*l.* On pensions, offices, and personal estates 150,000*l.* The charge on pensions and offices is now reduced to about 11,000*l.*, and the duty on personal estate has been repealed.

What is the amount of land-tax redeemed?—About 725,000*l.*, a little more than one-third.

What is the expense of the collection?—It is about 26,000*l.*, which on 1,193,000*l.* unredeemed, is at the rate of about 2¼ per cent.

The quotas being made perpetual, is the assessment on the several properties liable to any variation?—Yes; the quotas are directed by the act to be raised by a new assessment yearly, and from year to year, by an equal rate, according to the annual value; consequently the sums charged on the respective properties are subject to alteration according to the fluctuations in the value.

Are the assessments in practice made annually?—They are renewed annually, but are generally copied from those of the preceding year, unless in consequence of appeals against them, on the ground of inequality, it is found absolutely necessary to make a new rate.

Are the assessments made on an uniform principle?—They are made in various modes in different parts of the country. In some places on a mere nominal value at the full rate of 4*s.* in the pound. In others on the rack-rent, or on the poor-rate valuation, at such a pound rate as may be necessary to raise the quota.

Is any part of the land-tax redeemed, liable to be varied by new assessments?—Yes; that part thereof which is not exonerated, and which amounts at present to 4678*l.*

Explain under what circumstances this part of the land-tax redeemed continues in charge?—By reason of the contractors having declared their option under the provisions of the act of 1798, to be considered on the footing of persons not interested in the estates, in which cases the lands continue subject to new assessments; and the parties are placed precisely in the situation of the crown as regards the receipt of the land-tax.

What amount of revenue would be produced by an equalized rate of 1*s.* in the pound on the unredeemed property, assuming that one-third has been redeemed?—Taking the valuation at 47,400,000*l.*, and allowing for the portion redeemed a land-tax of 1*s.* in the pound, would produce about 1,580,000*l.*, which would exceed the present produce by about 400,000*l.*

Does the act include canals, and houses and lands, and personal estate?—Yes; the words are very comprehensive, but we have not been able to discover that personal estates have ever been taxed to the extent of more than 5000*l.* or 6000*l.* a year, and that duty has been repealed.

Supposing an equalized rate to be determined on, would it be most advisable to establish a fixed rate on the annual value generally, or should the equalization be effected by a new apportionment of the present tax, but preserving the principle of fixed quotas?—The assessment would be most conveniently raised by a general fixed rate; it might be made annually according to the valuation for the poor-rate, or it might be subject to revision only at stated periods, say once in three years. The principle of a fixed and permanent rate on the annual value would be far preferable to that of continuing fixed quotas.

What objections do you anticipate to an equalization of the tax?—It may probably be urged, that, by the act rendering the quotas perpetual, as fixed in the year 1798, subject to redemption, an implied pledge was given that no alteration should ever be made in the apportionment of the tax on the several districts and parishes; there is nothing, however, in the law which bears this construction. Indeed, it has been held that the commissioners have power under the 8th section of the Act 38 Geo. III., c. 5, to vary the amount of the quotas to be assessed in the parishes or smaller districts within their divisions, which power has been recognized by the Court of Exchequer. Supposing a county is divided into 10 districts, and that there are 10 quotas levyable on the county, the Barons of the Exchequer held, some years ago, that if the quotas were wrongly apportioned upon the parishes, that is, between the several parishes in the districts, the apportionment might be altered by the commissioners. If the land-tax were to be equalized, the whole of England should be considered as one district, taxed, not by different quotas, but by an assessment of 1*s.* in the pound all over the country. The law only affords protection from future assessments, so far as regards the estates redeemed and

exonerated; the parties could not in these cases be equitably made liable to contribute to the new assessment. There does not appear any substantial reason why the land-tax should not be subject to the same alteration, according to the fluctuation in the value of property, as the house-tax and property-tax were liable to, under which persons rated below the actual value of their property were liable to a new assessment. The measure might create some dissatisfaction on the part of those who have redeemed their land-tax at a higher rate of assessment than that of the equalized rate, as those who have not redeemed would, by a reduction of the rate, be placed in a better situation than themselves. The principal objection, however, to be apprehended is, that the equalization may in effect impose an additional burthen on the inhabitants of populous towns and places nearly as oppressive as a revival of the house-tax. The land-tax, however, being a landlord's tax, and the tenants being authorized by law to deduct it out of the rent, this objection would apply only where the tenants are bound, under a special covenant in their leases, to pay the tax.

Could the objection to the equalization as imposing a house-tax be obviated by any, and what means?—It might be obviated by a protecting clause, enacting that tenants who may have covenanted to pay the land-tax under any existing leases or agreements, shall not during the continuance thereof be subject to pay a greater amount of tax than that which is now charged on the premises in their occupation, and that the excess of the equalized rate beyond the present assessment shall be borne and paid by the landlord, giving to the tenants the power of deducting the excess out of the rent. This seems only equitable, as under the existing law the tenants could not, in making their agreement have anticipated or expected any material alteration in the assessment. Of course any future agreements would be adjusted with reference to the then existing circumstances.

To Mr. Wood.] Would it not very much facilitate the equalization of the land-tax, if property were rated at its actual value?—Very much indeed; if property were rated according to its actual value, or even on any uniform principle, then we should have the machinery at once for assessing a land-tax on the same uniform principle, and all inequalities would be avoided. There is one great objection to the altering of the land-tax at present and equalizing it, that is the great expense which it is apprehended might be thrown on districts by taking new valuations. If, for other purposes, such as the poor-rates and county-rates, all districts were obliged to be rated according to the uniform principle of valuation, such valuation would be equally applicable to the land-tax.

No person redeems now except for a particular object affecting his own estate?—No; the redemption is chiefly on small slips of land about to be covered with buildings in the neighbourhood of great manufacturing towns, and waste lands about to be enclosed, or

a portion of glebe lend, probably to set at rest some question as to tithes. The amount of 705*l.* redeemed in 1834, shews that it is only on small portions. The late Mr. Sayer, who was many years registrar of the land-tax, had turned his attention to the subject; and probably the committee will wish to hear what he wrote to me so late as March 1834, in consequence of a proposition of Mr. Tooke's to Lord Althorp, for a Select Committee to inquire into the state of the land-tax. The passages from Mr. Tooke's letter, on which Mr. Sayer observed, are cited.

"By an Act of 1798, land-tax only can be redeemed by the "transfer of so much stock of the three per cents., as shall yield "a dividend equivalent to the land-tax intended to be redeemed "and one-tenth more; the subsequent rise in the price of stock "thereof precluded all operations under the Act, which has been "a dead letter for years.

"It appears to me desirable that the Acts should be amended by "enabling parties to purchase their land-tax at a fixed money "price of a certain number of years' purchase, as was done with "Crown rents in Ireland, and is still partially practised as to the "fee-farm rents in England; owners to have liberty of pre-emp-"tion during a period, after which the tax in parcels or districts "might be sold to the public, and possibly by auction; such ad-"cantages by security and rate of interest might be offered to pur-"chasers as to the effect an actual clearance of the entire tax, "leaving land open to future and equal charge in commutation for "malt or other financial operations."

"The excess of one-tenth in the consideration for redemption was originally imposed with a view to defray the expense of the measure; but it has, in the aggregate amount of it from 1798 to 1834, far exceeded the total amount of expense during that period. As the excess is a loss of so much income to those who redeem, and is one of the discouragements to the redemption, it has long since been proposed to waive it, and to render the consideration for redemption exactly equivalent to the land-tax redeemed.

"The number of years' purchase at the present price of the funds (89-90) is 33. If the one-tenth excess be taken off, the number of years' purchase would be 30. To reduce the rate of purchase to any number less than 30 years, and to make that number fixed and permanent, might not be expedient."

Sir Robert Peel.] To make the encouragement to redeem equal, at the present rate of the funds, to what it was when the power of redemption was originally given, what alteration ought to be made in the existing law: the price of the funds then was about 50, at present it may be taken at 91?—There is not only 91, but 10 per cent. in addition to that; for the terms are the market price of the funds, and 10 per cent. upon that. At present the price is about 33 years' purchase.

What was the price at the time when the power of redemption

was originally given?—About 50*l.*; being equivalent to 19 years' purchase.

Suppose parties were allowed to redeem at 25 years' purchase, and that every one availed himself of that permission, what would be the total loss to the public?—I think that the total loss to the public would be 200,000*l.* a year; but when the funds were at such a price as to enable the public to redeem at 25 years' purchase, they did not avail themselves of it; and that is the answer I have given to proposals that better terms should be given to the public.

In case of non-payment of the land-tax the remedy is against the occupying tenant, is it not?—It is.

Is there any remedy against the landlord?—The landlord is liable to the payment; but we proceed by distraint as to whatever is found on the premises; we could also proceed in the Exchequer against the landlord.

In case of non-payment by the tenant, can you proceed against the landlord?—Yes, if his name is on the assessment.

Suppose the landlord let his land to a tenant, with an engagement on the part of the tenant to pay the land-tax, would the landlord in that case be applied to for the default of the occupying tenant?—No, the proceedings would be against the occupier; and there is a clause in the Act of Parliament which protects the landlord by providing that nothing in the Act shall extend to affect any agreement between landlord and tenant.

Marquis of Chandos.] The act, in fact, has not been complied with; a great deal of property has escaped?—The act of 1798 fixes quotas to be levied from each county; the levying of those quotas lies with the commissioners. It is of no consequence at all to us in what manner they raise the quota; it is a matter of local arrangement with which the government never interferes.

Would not some instructions be given to the local commissioners as to the species of property on which they were to levy?—The commissioners undoubtedly ought to regulate themselves by the act of William and Mary, and the subsequent acts; but we have never been able to discover why their practice deviated therefrom.

Does it come within your own knowledge to know that it was ever levied on any other species of property?—To a certain degree it was levied on personal property, and also on offices; but the amount latterly was very inconsiderable. The personal estates have been relieved of the tax from 1833. The produce was under 6000*l.* a year latterly.

Mr. Cayley.] Can you make an estimate of the saving to any person who paid 4*s.* land-tax, who redeemed at 22 years' purchase?—*Mr. Wood.*] That would depend upon the price of the funds at the time, and what was the interest of money at the time.

Sir Robert Peel.] Suppose a person had to pay 4*l.* to the government as land-tax, which he redeemed at 25 years' purchase,

he would have to pay 100*l.*; what would be the loss upon that transaction to the government; how must the government apply the 100*l.* by the act?—In the present state of the law of redemption, the government not only require 100*l.*, but they put 10*l.* upon that, making it 110*l.*

Suppose a person were to redeem his land-tax, amounting to 4*l.* per annum, what amount must he pay?—*Mr. Garnett.*] At the present price, it would be 134*l.* 7*s.* 8*d.*

On what principle do you calculate that?—It is calculated by what sum is capable of producing, when in the three per cents., at 91 5-8ths., a dividend exceeding 4*l.* by one-tenth.

How much must he have paid to redeem the payment of 4*l.* annual land-tax at the time the land-tax was made perpetual, and it was attached as a condition of its being made perpetual, that the power of redemption should be given to the subject?—74*l.* 5*s.*

So that the difference in point of encouragement to redeem is the difference between 74*l.* 5*s.* and 134*l.* 7*s.* 8*d.*?—Just so.

The discouragement to redeem now as compared with the year 1798, is not very far from double?—No; as the difference between 74 and 134.

The difference of years purchase is from 18½ to 33?—Yes.

The land-tax was originally imposed in the year 1692?—Yes.

Was not the title of that act "An Act for granting to their Majesties an Aid of 4*s.* in the pound for one year, for carrying on a vigorous war against France"?—It was.

Is not the effect of the act to make what is commonly called personal property of all descriptions, even debts due from foreigners, after deducting bad debts, and after deducting the debts of the party upon whom the claim of land-tax was due, all personal property equally subject with what is called land?—*Mr. Wood.*] I entertain no doubt that was the intention of the act.

Is there any record of the mode in which the contribution on personal property was originally levied?—None, as far as we have made the discovery.

Do you believe that immediately after the passing that act personal property was made chargeable in the same proportion as land?—I think it was made chargeable, but my conjecture is that practical difficulties arose, and the commissioners were very soon satisfied with laying a rate on the more tangible property, the land.

Do you think that the land not only paid its own contributions but also for the default of those who had personal property?—It is very possible that it might.

Sir James Graham.] From the reign of Queen Anne downwards, has the Duke of Marlborough's pension been regularly charged with 4*s.* in the pound?—I believe it has; I was directed by the Treasury to inquire as to the fact.

Are there any other pensions, besides the Duke of Marlborough's, extant at that time, on which it was charged?—Yes, several extant on the Post-office; the Duke of Schomberg's is one.

Unless a special exemption in the grant of a pension was introduced, it had been liable to 4*s.* in the pound under the land-tax act?—Undoubtedly.

Sir Robert Peel.] The act of 1798, assigned to particular parts of the country, particular boroughs and particular places, a certain specific sum to be raised on each of them; the 3d clause of the act 38 Geo. 3, c. 5, provides "That towards raising the said several and respective sums of money hereby charged on the respective counties, cities, boroughs, towns and other places, in that part of Great Britain called England, Wales and Berwick as aforesaid, all and every person and persons, bodies politic and corporate, guilds and fraternities, within the same respectively, having any estate in ready money or in any debts whatsoever owing to them, within Great Britain or without, or having any estate in goods, wares, and merchandizes, or other chattels or personal estate whatsoever, within Great Britain or without, belonging to or in trust for them, shall yield and pay unto his Majesty the sum of 4*s.* in the pound, according to the true yearly value thereof, for one year; that is to say, for every 100*l.* of such ready money and debts, and for every 100*l.* worth of such goods, wares, and merchandizes, or other chattels, or personal estate, the sum of 20*s.*", and so on. What is the exact meaning of that; the 4*s.* in the pound appear to be identical with raising 20*s.* for every 100*l.*?—*Mr. Garnett.*] I am not prepared to explain this; there is the same apparent discrepancy in the first act.

The county of Rutland is bound to pay 5,525*l.* by the 38 Geo. 3, c. 5; the next act provides, "That towards raising the sum of money hereby charged in the county of Rutland any person shall for every 100*l.* of ready money pay the sum of 20*s.*" Suppose a person in the county of Rutland possessing no land, but receiving a legacy of 10,000*l.* from some near relative, and therefore liable to contribute towards raising the sum for which the county of Rutland was chargeable, at the rate of 20*s.* in the 100*l.*, would that person, on account of that personal property, have paid any thing? —In practice I believe not.

On what principle was it in respect of the enactment so recent as that of 1797, where the clauses seem so express, that the personal property should be answerable for a certain amount, that that was not carried into effect?—The working of the act depends entirely upon the local commissioners, and we know nothing of the assessments which they make, or the description of property they choose to assess. We find that in most districts there was a small charge made for the duty on personal estates, but it was very small indeed. I think latterly it was only between 5,000*l* and 6,000*l.* a year; and an act passed in the year 1833, doing away with that duty on personal estates hereafter.

Mr. Cayley.] Will you endeavour to reconcile the discrepancy in the wording of the act with the practice; the wording of the act

being 20*s.* in 100*l.*, and the practice being in many cases 4*s.* in the pound?—I believe the 20*s.* refers to personal estate, and the 4*s.* to real estate. The taxes are imposed by two clauses, one enumerating personal property liable to 20*s.* in the 100*l.*; the other real property, manors, hereditaments, fisheries, tithe and so on, and offices and pensions; the 4*s.* tax applies only to those. But taking the legal interest at five per cent., which interest is in fact the annual value of 100*l.*, the tax of 20*s.* per 100*l.* is at the rate of 4*s.* in the pound; and when the legal interest was six per cent., we accordingly find this tax was 24*s.* in the pound on the annual value.

Sir Robert Peel.] In the county of Essex and in the county of Devon, the land-tax presses with particular severity, does it not; in the county of Devon, the sum raised by the land-tax is 77,875*l.*, and in the county of Essex, 85,563*l.*; are those the sums now raised upon those counties respectively?—In the county of Devon, 82,583*l.*, and in Essex, 89,397*l.*

Taking the case of Essex, for instance, which is liable to the sum of nearly 90,000*l.*, notwithstanding that express enactment made personal property subject to this contribution, the land in the county of Essex has borne it practically?—Not solely, I believe; there was in most counties, before the passing of the Repeal Act, an assessment, but a small one, on personal estate.

If any person possessing land had been called on to contribute more than his share towards raising this 90,000*l.*, might he have appealed against that decision of the commissioners, and referred to this Act of Parliament, which states that personal property shall be rated?—I apprehend he might, if he had discovered that any personal property, liable under the act, was omitted.

Would not a bequest of 100,000*l.*, under the act, have been chargeable, and would not the person receiving that have been liable to contribute rateably towards the raising that 90,000*l.*, as much as if he had received an estate of 100,000*l.*?—I should have thought so under the act, but that has not been so in practice.

Sir James Graham.] Can you produce a return, showing what proportion of the 90,000*l.* was levied on real estate, and what proportion on personal, in the county of Essex?—Yes.

Sir Robert Peel.] Will you refer to the county of Middlesex, in which the sum of 107,602*l.* occurs; of the 107,602*l.*, the county of Middlesex raises annually, do you find part to be personal property?—A part was charged on personal estate, but the sum that was actually assessed cannot be stated, as the assessment probably amounted to a larger sum than is returned into the Exchequer; indeed we know the fact to be so, that there was a surplus which did not come into the accounts returned into the Exchequer.

EVIDENCE ON THE CURRENCY.

Evidence of Mr. William Debonnaire Haggard.

Is Chief Clerk in the Bullion Office of the Bank of England—Prefers Silver to Gold as the Basis of our Currency—Price is regulated by Supply and Demand of Goods, &c., and of Currency—Is no Advocate for depreciating the Currency—Would have a Seignorage upon Gold, such a Standard would render disturbances in the Currency less frequent—The Bank is exposed to great Risk at present—Silver is not Liable to Fluctuation—There are very few Sources for supplying Gold—The Stock of Bullion in the Bank was very large in 1824—There is no other Country where Gold is the single Standard of Value—Our Coinage is more exposed to Fluctuation than that of other Countries—£1. Notes would drive Gold out of Circulation, still they are desirable—Gold has advanced since 1601, nearly 30 per Cent.

Mr. Cayley.] You are the chief clerk of the bullion office of the Bank of England?—I am.

Have you paid much attention to the question of currency?—I have paid a great deal of attention to it.

Has your occupation as principal clerk of the bullion office given you facilities for carrying on investigations upon that subject?—I think it has. I have made up my mind entirely upon practical observation.

How long have you been connected with the Bank of England?—About thirty-one years.

How long have you been connected with the bullion office?—About eighteen years.

Should you say, taking the question of the security of the Bank of England into your consideration, that gold or silver was the most advisable basis for the circulation and the standard of value?—I should conceive silver to be the safest considerably.

Will you state why you prefer silver to gold?—Because, if the gold currency were left to find its value in the market, the standard of value in the country would not be so frequently disturbed as it is.

Do you conceive that it is a great disadvantage to the bank, when there is a drain of gold from it, which is exported to foreign countries?—I think it a greater disadvantage to the country.

Will you state why you think it a greater disadvantage to the country than to the bank?—Because, whenever there is a demand for gold, the issues are lessened; and if that continues for any length of time, the prices of every thing are so affected by the want of circulation, that it is a very serious thing to many people.

Do you conceive that one of the main causes of price is the amount of the circulating medium?—I certainly do; but of course any very large production of an article would affect its price likewise.

Do you conceive that the gold standard which at present prevails, in fact leads to frequent tamperings with the currency?—I think it is constantly tampering with itself, because you cannot keep the relative values between the two metals, gold and silver; one or the other will be in demand more or less, and by making gold the standard, and fixing the price both for the purchase and sale of gold, you are in a cleft stick, you lose both ways, because they will never let you have gold if a higher price is to be got any where else, therefore when gold is low abroad they are sure to bring it here. Then, on the other hand, by fixing it at 3*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d* whenever it is above that price abroad they take it away; at that price, therefore, both ways you must lose.

You have stated what you conceive to be the disastrous effects of the present gold standard. Will you state what you consider would be a better standard of value?—I should conceive that silver would be a good standard of value, with a proper seignorage, merely to allow for the fluctuation of price in the markets, that the bullion and the coin may not leave the country together, for I conceive the standard of value to mean this, that it shall be a given quantity of fine silver of a given weight, that every man in the country may settle his accounts at that standard; it has nothing to do with the foreigner any further than that he may know of that standard, and he acts upon that standard with his exchanges.

You are no advocate for the depreciation of the currency?—A fit and proper seignorage only, which is sufficient to allow for a difference of price between bullion and coin, and to pay for the expense of the coinage.

Is the present seignorage too great or too little in your opinion?—It is too great upon silver, and it is nothing upon gold.

Would you throw gold out of the question altogether as a standard?—Gold may be used as coin; but instead of giving the people the privilege of claiming gold, which is no privilege where it does not exist, let it be on the other hand payable but not demandable.

You would give the bank the privilege of paying either in gold or silver, but give the people the privilege of demanding only silver?—Yes, because you must have some standard of value with the rest of the world.

Would you have an agio upon the gold?—I would allow gold to find its value in the market; it may be taken in at 20*s.*, but let it have a fair seignorage upon it.

Is it your notion that the protection to the bank would be this, that if there was a great demand for gold the gold would rise in value, and that would deter people from applying for gold?—It would do away with the demand in time, because you may get up the gold to such a price that it reaches the silver standard of the country; if you get it beyond that, and beyond the expense of transmitting the silver to foreign countries, they will take the silver in preference to the gold.

Then, in fact, you would have, as the standard of value, silver with a proper seignorage, a less seignorage than at present exists, and the privilege to the bank of paying in gold at the market price?—Yes, I would.

How would you measure the market price?—That is always done by the exchange.

Do you suppose that the standard you recommend would render the disturbances in our currency less frequent?—I have not the least doubt of it; in fact France tells you plainly, that they have not had their standard of value disturbed since the French Revolution; it is entirely from their having a steady silver standard, and allowing gold to fetch its value in the market.

Do you think that the security which the silver standard would give to the bank would dispose them to be more liberal in the circulation of their notes?—You would have a more steady circulation, and less variation of prices.

Do you think the bank of England would have more confidence in circulating their notes?—There can be no doubt of it, they would be in a safer position.

Would that rather dispose them to issue more or less of their notes?—If more notes are issued than are really wanted for the purposes of legitimate trade and business, you get the prices of things up beyond the prices that the foreigners can buy at, and then you immediately find it out by the exchanges getting against you, for they will not buy your goods, and if you buy of them you must pay in cash.

The bank is exposed to great risk from a run in consequence of the present standard?—There is no doubt of that.

Can you have any accurate test of the amount of gold in circulation?—No, it is not possible.

Do you suppose that, under any emergency which might arise, there would be a greater facility for the bank to obtain silver than to obtain gold?—You would not want any great deal of silver in circulation if you had a representative; it would not require anything like the stock that you have at present.

You think that, whereas ten millions may be supposed to be the treasure of the bank, in ordinary cases of gold, they would not require ten millions of silver?—Nothing like it.

Do the bank deal in silver now?—Yes, they buy and sell.

For what purpose?—I have no doubt that they keep the silver to counteract the exchange, in case of any large demand for gold.

Have you ever known any great losses take place in any of those dealings?—There was one in the Bank Report, a very large melting of silver shillings, sixpences, and half-crowns, an immense loss.

What loss was that to the bank?—It was about 98,000*l.*, but I think there was about 35,000*l.* returned in shillings.

Sir R. Price.] It is your opinion that the whole panic in 1825

arose from a want of accommodation?—I think it entirely arose from the inter-national demand for gold, that it was wanted abroad, for whenever there are any discrepancies in trade, gold always goes to equalize it.

Do you think that the persons brought their notes to the country bankers merely on account of the want of accommodation?—Whenever there is a large demand for gold, and a profit upon it, by fixing the Mint price at 3*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.*, they will run for the sake of that profit.

Your belief is, that that was the reason why the people ran to the country banks for gold?—I have no doubt that that was the cause, and at last they had not the means of changing the 5*l.* notes, because the law did not allow them to pay more than 2*l.* in silver.

The great reason that you give against gold being a proper standard of value is, that it is a commodity liable to change in value?—It is a marketable commodity, and so is silver, but by leaving the gold to find its value it will equalize the thing. It ought to depend on the demand and supply; if there is a great demand for it, and a small supply, it is but reasonable that it should get up in price, and if there is a great quantity brought into this country, and not wanted, it is not reasonable that people should give a high price for it.

What is the great distinction between silver and gold, both being not marketable articles, and both being liable to fluctuation?—Silver is liable to fluctuation. If you will let the gold as a representative meet the fluctuation, gold will get up in price, and it will take less gold to counteract the exchanges, and the price getting up will prevent the profit.

Are you not aware that within the last six months there has been a want of silver, and some doubt whether silver may not even become a more difficult article to procure than gold?—It is not a legal tender, and therefore, no man will take silver in any quantity, because there is 10 per cent. loss upon it.

As a marketable commodity?—That has nothing to do with coin.

Are you aware that it has become scarcer, comparatively, than gold?—There is never any great quantity of gold found.

Mr. Wodehouse.] Are there not a variety of sources from which you may expect silver, and comparatively very few from whence you may expect gold?—Very few; I do not suppose that the mines produce more than is used in Birmingham for plating goods.

Mr. Attwood.] Do you recollect what the market price of silver is at present?—Fifty-nine pence; 4*s.* 11*d.* per ounce.

Is the standard of this coin 5*s.* 2*d.* per ounce?—No, 5*s.* 6*d.*

What is the old silver coin?—In one part of Queen Elizabeth's reign it was 60*s.* and then 62*s.*

You said that you could easily foresee the panic when it was coming on?—It was constantly talked of at the time by those

about me; I had no doubt that it was coming from the great foreign demand for gold. There is one curious fact connected with that panic, that in 1824 and 1825 there were a greater quantity of sovereigns coined than at any other time. There were more sovereigns in existence a few months before the panic than ever before.

The bank had a great store of bullion at different times in 1824?—In the early part of the year there was a very large stock.

Are you able to state during what period that accumulation of bullion took place in the bank's possession in the beginning of 1824?—In 1824 they coined 4,751,219 sovereigns.

And in the middle of 1824 the stock of bullion in the bank was very large?—It was.

Can you state during what period the bank collected that stock of bullion?—I have no account of the sovereigns, because it does not come under my department, it is nothing but foreign coin and bullion.

Mr. Cayley.] Do you remember a very low state of prices from 1819 to 1822?—I do not at this moment.

You do not remember whether during these years there was a considerable accession of bullion to the treasury of the bank?—No.

You would recommend silver should be a legal tender, and that gold should be left to find its value in the market?—Yes, I think that the country would derive great benefit from that change.

Is that the French monetary system?—It is, and silver is the standard of value in every country but this.

There is no country in which gold is the single standard of value?—I do not believe there is any.

Are you aware that in America, where the standard is both gold and silver, they have recently altered the value of their gold coin?—I believe they have assimilated our sovereign, and made it of more value there to circulate among themselves.

They have made our sovereign pass for more money than it does here?—Yes, they must do it if they mean to keep it.

They have done that for the purpose of drawing sovereigns into circulation?—Yes, they have done that, because we coined sovereigns with no seignorage, and therefore we save them the expense of coining, and I believe they do the same thing in Portugal.

Mr. Cayley.] Is it your opinion that our currency is more liable to disturbance than the currency of other countries, in consequence of our having a gold standard?—I never recollect any quantity of French silver coin coming to this country; we never have it in any quantity, nor do I know that we have the standards of any other country come in any large quantities here, what I call their standard of value, which is the thing they work upon.

Then the fact is, that in your opinion gold as a circulating medium is more liable to be taken away from the country than silver is?—Undoubtedly; the small bulk compared with the value, and

the little expense of transmission, make it very desirable as a marketable commodity.

When there is a demand for the balance of trade, or for correcting the exchanges, or for war purposes, that generally is done in gold rather than in silver?—Certainly.

And by gold forming the basis of the circulation, under those circumstances the currency is very much deranged?—Undoubtedly, because instead of having it among ourselves it is sent away.

And that derangement of the circulating medium produces a great fall in prices, and that very much deranges the operations of trade and commerce?—The fact is, that prices must meet the quantity of money in circulation.

If silver was the basis of the circulation, do you conceive that in consequence of it our commercial transactions would be upon a more equitable and stable foundation?—It would not cause the circulating medium to be so often disturbed according to circumstances.

Mr. Attwood.] When the precious metals flow into this country from the continent, in what form do they come?—Generally in bars; from Paris they bring large quantities when we do not want it, but when we do, we do not get it; I consider that all the gold and silver that we get from the different countries, with the exception of South America, is generally either for profit, because we give too high a price for it, or in exchange for goods that we have over-traded in.

When the bank stock of bullion is lower than is desirable, Mr. Rothschild does not bring it in?—No, if he can get more for it any where else, but you are almost overwhelmed with it at times; I find that the prices are almost always 3*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.* buying, and 3*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.* selling alternately.

Sir R. Price.] Your notion is not to have any depreciation of standard?—No, merely a fair seignorage. If you do not have a seignorage, it will go with the bullion, which is a great inconvenience.

Do you contemplate any large addition to the circulating medium?—That depends upon whether you have a representative in gold.

Do you think it would be desirable to have 1*l.* notes?—I do not see why they should not exist; I have no doubt they would drive gold out of circulation directly.

Mr. Cayley.] If you had a silver basis, would you want the gold?—It is a very useful thing to have as a marketable commodity, and the bank ought to have the power of paying in that coin which is least in demand.

Sir R. Price.] Is not it the effect of an universal issue of paper to drive coin out of circulation?—Yes, it is more convenient.

Mr. Miles.] From your experience, which metal has fluctuated

most in value, gold or silver?—Gold with us, cannot fluctuate more than from 3*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.* to 3*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.*, because it is fixed at those prices; but in other countries I should say that gold fluctuates and not silver.

Does not the relative value of any precious metal depend upon the supply; first of all the supply from the mines, and then upon the general demand?—Yes, just the same as any other commodity.

And silver is the basis of the currency of other countries?—Yes, all other countries.

So that if there was a deficient supply from the silver mines, of course as there is a great demand for silver, silver must be greatly enhanced in price?—It would if it alone were wanted, and there was no supply, but gold would act as a representative of silver.

Which metal, silver or gold, is easiest of alloy, and will pass current so alloyed?—If you take the present coins, I should say shillings, because there is ten per cent. profit upon the silver, and there is none upon the gold.

Mr. Evans.] You mentioned that you would allow the bank to pay its demands either in gold or in silver; would not that be a great advantage to the bank and an injury to the country?—No; a sovereign would always represent twenty shillings.

If the bank had the option, they would pay it in the coin of the least value?—Any country having a metallic currency must have some inconvenience in it, but the object is to have the least evil.

Would it be a great advantage to the bank to have the option?—It would only make them safe, and that safety I consider is very desirable for the public.

Mr. Wodehouse.] It was stated in evidence before the Bank Committee in 1819, that from the first discovery of the mines in South America, the relative value between gold and silver has experienced a regular progressive alteration constantly in favour of gold; that is, that gold has progressively increased in value; should you not be disposed to infer from that, that silver is a preferable measure of value for the present state of society throughout the world?—No doubt of it; and that very circumstance of its variation is a proof that it is a bad standard.

Mr. Attwood.] Are you aware how long silver at 5*s.* 2*d.* was the invariable standard?—Yes; there is one very curious circumstance in history that from William the Conqueror to 1334, there was no disturbance whatever in the standard of value, but the moment that gold came in with silver, immediately there took place great fluctuation in the weight of the standard price of the country.

Was the silver coin depreciated between those two periods?—Very much indeed; in 1334 the weight of the penny was 22 grains and a 9th; in that same year he changed it to 20 grains and a quarter. From 1346 to 1353 he changed it to 20 grains. In 1354

he altered it again to 18 grains. In Richard the Second's reign it was 18 grains. In the early part of Henry the Fourth's reign it was 18 grains; and in 1413 he changed it to 15 grains. Henry the Fifth continued it at 15; and Henry the Sixth, the early part, was 15 grains, and in 1460 he reduced it to 12 grains; and then Edward the Fourth changed it again to 15 grains; and again, in 1465, to 12 grains; so that there has been no end to the tampering with the currency, from the difficulty of keeping the relative value of the two metals, but one would counteract the other if you let gold find its value. It was 12 grains from Edward the Fourth to Henry the Seventh, in1509; then Henry the Eighth played all sorts of tricks; there were great changes made. Henry changed the pound Tower for the pound Troy. Then, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, 60*s.* were coined from the pound Troy, till 1602, and then she altered it to 62*s.*; and then gold was to silver as 11 to 1; and after James the First it was 13 to 1.

Mr. Attwood.] Did silver continue at 62*s.* from Queen Elizabeth's reign down to the Act of 1816?—It was 62*s.* down to 1816; there is no variation till 1816, when it jumped to 66*s.*

Was gold coin at the first of those periods in the proportion of 11 to 1, when silver was 5*s.* 2*d.* to the ounce?—It was 11 to 1.

Since 1601 there has been no alteration in silver down to 1816?—No.

During all that time great alterations took place in the gold coin?—Yes; particularly in William the Third's time, but none in the silver.

Gold was coined at 11 to 1 in 1601, and what is it now?—It is about 15.

The gold has advanced during this whole period in the proportion of 11 to 15?—It appears so.

Is that about 30 per cent.?—Very nearly.

The proportion of gold and silver in the market keeps gold at a higher price than silver, with reference to our mint regulations?—Yes, because one is without a seignorage, and the other with. Gold is more valuable; no foreigner will take our shillings.

Evidence of the Earl of Radnor,

(Attending by Permission of the House of Lords.)

Prices have been lower since the War—Low Prices attributable to Peel's Bill—Prices rose with the Issue of £1. Notes, and then came the Panic—Causes of the Panic—Peel's Bill was an unjust Measure—It has produced a fall in Prices of Cent. per Cent.—There may have been a nominal Reduction of Taxation since the Bill but really an Increase—A Silver Standard would be preferable—A Change of Prices from a Change of Currency would not relieve Agriculture—The fall in Prices did not affect Agriculture more than other Interests—Farmers think a Rise in Prices would be beneficial to them—This Opinion in the long Run unfounded—Agriculture is now in a flourishing Condition—The Contract entered into by the National Debt should be adjusted if it be practicable—If the Revision were attempted with that Part of the Debt incurred, under a depreciated Standard, it must be applied to that Part which was paid in a depreciated Standard—It would be utterly impracticable—Every one agreed in the Return to cash Payments in 1819—The natural Bias of Tenants is in Favour of a Rise in Prices—The Landlord would soon increase the Rents in Proportion to it—The Hope of Advantage from such a Rise fallacious to the Tenant—It would be injurious to the Labourer—It is not easy now to obtain Land—Agricultural Labourers are very well off—Distress of the Tenant is generally a Question of Rent—Would see with Apprehension any Alteration in the Standard—It might have been done at the Time of Mr. Peel's Bill, but not now—If there is any Inconvenience from that Bill, it must be adjusted by other Means, not by altering the Standard—A forced Issue of Paper would produce a Panic—Agriculture requires no Change—Had at one Time doubted if the Country could thrive under the Debt, but now is disposed to think it can—Would prefer a Reduction of the Debt to an Alteration of the Standard.

Mr. Cayley.] Has your lordship given much attention to the subject of the manner in which money operates upon prices?—A good many years ago I thought a good deal about it.

When you were Lord Folkestone, in the other house of Parliament, you took a considerable share in the debates upon that subject?—Yes, I did.

You are aware that a great change took place in prices about the commencement of the late war, not long after the commencement of the French revolutionary war?—That is undoubted I apprehend. I am not old enough to have taken a particular notice of prices at that time; but I believe that is an historical fact.

Since the war a lower range of prices has prevailed?—Certainly.

To what do you attribute that lower range of prices?—I attribute the general fall of prices, not speaking of wheat only, but of wheat and of other articles, to the contraction of the currency, which was owing to the Act generally called Peel's Act, and the return to cash payments.

Prices began to fall before 1819, immediately after the end of the war?—I believe that fall was owing to the contraction of the currency in anticipation of the return to cash payments.

In your lordship's opinion, the great cause of the general fall in prices was the contraction of the paper currency consequent upon Mr. Peel's Bill in 1819?—I have no doubt of that.

Subsequently to 1832 were any measures promoted by Government, in reference to the currency with a view of relieving the dis-

tress?—I think it was in the summer of 1823 an Act was passed allowing the issue of 1*l.* notes. If I recollect right, I opposed that in the House.

In consequence of the re-issue of 1*l.* notes and other means which were used to stimulate the issue of paper, what was the effect upon the country?—Prices rose, and then came that state which was described by the present Lord Ripon, when he was Mr. Robinson and Chancellor of the Exchequer, as a state of extraordinary prosperity, which was followed by what is generally called the panic, in the winter of 1825, 1826.

To what cause, in your lordship's opinion, is the panic of 1825 fairly to be attributed?—I should say generally the issue of 1*l.* notes gave a great stimulus to speculation. Speculations were embarked in to a great extent. Gold was exported from the country. In consequence of some check which originated, I know not where, there was a demand for gold, and then a panic seized the people; there was a universal rush for gold, the panic became universal, and the distress was very great. It was declared by Mr. Huskisson that we were within twenty-four hours of national bankruptcy.

Would you state it as an unquestionable consequence of a larger issue of paper than the standard can sustain, that it must be followed by a drain of gold?—I apprehend that if there is a larger issue of paper than is called for by the necessity of the case, more than the operations of the country will naturally absorb, together with the gold that is in the country, that it must be followed by the exportation of gold.

If there be any operation, such as is now going on with the joint stock banks, and if we act for a time independently of the Bank of England, may not the tendency of that be to raise prices and so to diminish exports?—I apprehend that if the joint stock banks issue a great quantity of paper, the tendency at all times of the issue of paper is to raise prices; that may be counteracted for a certain time by the export of bullion to the same extent as the surplus of paper that is issued; the moment there is an excess of currency, taking gold and paper together, beyond the demand, of course prices will rise.

When there is a check of the exports, in consequence of the higher price in this country making it less profitable to foreign countries to buy, will there not at the same time be a tendency for the imports to increase, which, if they are not paid for by the exports, must be paid for in gold?—I presume so.

If the prices, therefore, are raised by paper above the standard price of gold, the necessary consequence will be, that a large issue of paper, more than is consistent with the standard, will drive the gold abroad?—I have no doubt of that.

Could you conceive a state of things whereby the standard should be made conformable to a higher range of prices than the present standard is?—I can conceive an alteration of the standard.

Have you heard of any increase in the issue of joint stock banks of late?—I was told by one gentleman that he knew that it was so, and that he knew of one case where a joint stock company in the north have issued a million of paper; but I have no knowledge of any facts that I can speak to myself.

If between March 1835 and December 1835, there was an increase of 28 per cent. in the issues of the joint stock banks, would you state that that probably would have considerable effect in promoting a rise of price?—Beyond all doubt it would, if there was no corresponding diminution of currency from another quarter; if the same quantity of coin circulated and the same quantity of Bank of England paper, of course it would occasion an increase of price; I cannot state at all to what extent the rise would be.

If from the returns it appear that their issues have increased in that proportion and other sources of issues have not diminished, then that would in your mind account for a little of the late prosperity?—It would account for the increase, in my mind.

In your lordship's estimation was the Bill which is commonly called Peel's Bill a just measure?—I do not think that it was a just measure unaccompanied with other measures; I myself proposed in the House of Commons that it should be accompanied with another measure, namely, an alteration of the standard.

Upon the whole, what should you say, after all the experience we have had, was the full effect of the bill of 1819 upon prices, generally, and what was the fall that it occasioned?—I cannot estimate, but I apprehend very considerable indeed, and from a rough guess I should say cent. per cent., or nearly so.

Do you think that the prices have fallen half in consequence?—I should say very nearly so.

Would not that have a great effect upon the means of parties to pay a fixed taxation or fixed engagements?—Beyond a doubt.

If there has been a nominal reduction in the taxation since that time, you think it is rather nominal than real?—It is very possible there may have been a nominal reduction and a real increase, owing to the fall in price; that is possible.

In consequence of the change in the value of money from the bill of 1819, the taxation may have increased, even under a nominal reduction?—It is possible.

Do you think it would be an advantage to have a silver standard or a double standard at the present time?—I really do not understand the advantage that would arise from the double standard. I should prefer a silver standard for this sole reason,—as every other country in the world has adopted the silver standard, and this country alone a gold standard, as I believe is the case, in all probability the others are right and we are wrong; and it is a matter of great convenience to all commercial people that the standard should be in the same coin in all countries. There may be some advantages, I should think, in having a silver standard

over a gold standard, that the silver bullion is less valuable, consequently more bulky and less easy to be transported.

Would not that afford some facility and some protection to the Bank, in case of any run upon it?—I should conceive so.

Would they not issue their paper with greater security if they had that protection?—I should think the advantage of that sort would be very small indeed.

If the effect of greater security and protection to the Bank be to promote a larger issue of paper, and if, as you say, a larger issue of paper tends to raise prices, might not that tend to relieve the agricultural or any other interests which were suffering from the want of remunerating prices?—I do not know that a rise of prices from a change of currency would relieve agriculture; for, if the prices at which they sell rose in consequence of the alteration of currency, every thing that they bought would rise in consequence of the same alteration; it would be as broad as it is long.

Do you conceive that all prices have fallen in the same proportion?—As far as the currency is concerned, I have no doubt that they have fallen in the same proportion. I do not see that the question of currency is an agricultural question at all; the change of price, owing to the alteration of currency, cannot effect the price of corn more than the price of cottons, or hardware, or woollens, or more than any other article.

Do you conceive that the same fall has taken place in retail prices as in wholesale?—I have no means of knowing that.

The blacksmith's bill and the carpenter's bill, have they fallen in the same proportion?—I think it is very possible that they may not; but that I think may be accounted for from other circumstances; people have got into a habit of charging higher prices, and thus have got into a habit of paying higher prices, and do not expect lower.

Then a change of currency may be slow in operating upon articles of that nature?—Yes.

Mr. Attwood.] You calculate, as a rough conjecture, that the fall of prices amounted to cent. per cent.?—I give that as a rough guess.

And that would be the increase of taxation?—Yes, and of every payment, such as the payment of a jointure.

Therefore if that calculation should be any thing like accurate, then it follows that there has been no virtual relief from taxation effected at all?—I presume so; I do not know the amount of nominal relief from taxation.

Would you think that there is a general impression among the farmers at large, that a rise in the prices would not be beneficial to them?—I think the impression of the farmers is the other way, that the rise of prices would be beneficial to them.

The farmers think that if they could get 60*s.* a quarter for their corn, there would not be so much distress?—They do, and labourers too think so; it is a very odd thing.

Does your lordship think that opinion altogether unfounded?—As long as the present leases last, it would be well founded, as far as relates to the payment of the landlord. As long as the price of labour did not rise, and the price of agricultural labour does not rise so rapidly as the increase of the price of agricultural produce, so long the farmer would be benefited; but in the long run, I apprehend that every thing would rise in proportion, and that the farmer would not be benefited: and with respect to the talk of the great depression of agriculture and the high prices, my belief is, that agriculture is thriving as much now as in the time of the high prices; that there is as much progress made in the improvement of cultivation, as there was at any time during the high prices generally speaking.

Do you consider the agricultural interest in a flourishing condition?—I do not believe that it is otherwise, except in those respects where long leases are running, fixed at high prices, which occasion distress; but generally speaking, I do not believe agriculture to be distressed.

Is that the general opinion of the farmers?—No, certainly not.

Is it in contradiction to the general opinion?—Yes, the general opinion is the other way I fully admit.

Are there generally complaints of a severe state of distress?—Much less than there was a short time ago.

There were very severe complaints a short time ago?—I cannot exactly state the period, but within these two or three years there have been universal complaints on the part of the farmers.

Do you think those complaints are well founded?—They were well founded in consequence of the circumstances that I have stated, the general rate of the leases and the rents having risen prodigiously during the high price, and having never fallen adequately to the fall of prices.

Are there fewer complaints now than there were two or three years ago?—Much fewer complaints at present I believe; that is owing partly to the rise of prices, and I believe a great deal owing to the new Poor Law bill.

And principally to the rise of prices?—Yes.

Is your lordship aware that with regard to weights and measures, it is now in the power of any person possessing a contract expressed in weights and measures and dated before the law which altered the size of the bushel, to require an inquisition to be held before whom he could bring his contract, and require it to be rectified in the degree in which the Act of Parliament has altered the weights and measures?—I was not aware of it.

Supposing that to be the remedy which a person having a contract expressed in weights and measures has now the power to resort to, would it not be equally just and equally practicable that a person having a contract expressed in money, that he should get it rectified in a similar manner?—I conceive it to be equally just,

and with respect to any other particular contract equally easy; when I spoke of the impracticability, I referred to the Act which was to meet all contracts generally.

Does it not follow that it ought to be applied to all contracts to which it can practically be applied?—Yes, I should think it ought; I am speaking off-hand as of a thing which I have not thought of before; but it appears to me just, if there is a possibility of rectifying contracts, that it should be done.

Is the whole of the national debt a contract which exists under such circumstances?—Yes, it is under such circumstances, but one part of it is under very different degrees of such circumstances from the other, and there is the great difficulty I apprehend.

All founded in a standard as low as the present and sometimes on a standard lower?—The interest is paid according to a standard as low or lower than the present, but it was contracted in different parts under very different circumstances.

If it should be established that the present standard is a higher standard than that which existed even before the war, then the national debt would be a contract to which some rectification would apply to the whole of it?—To the whole of that debt that was incurred under a different standard certainly.

The question supposes that the present standard is different from that which existed prior to the Bank Restriction Act, and is a standard more in favour of the creditor than the standard which existed prior to the Bank Restriction Act; if that were established then the whole of the national debt would fall under that description of contracts which now justly require rectification if practicable?—It would apply to all except that which has been contracted for under the present standard.

Sir Robert Peel.] Suppose the nation were to undertake this revision, would it not be also just to inquire into the extent of loss which had been sustained during the war by all those parties who having advanced the money to the State at the old standard of value, received their interest in a depreciated currency?—Certainly, injustice was done in that sense during the depreciation.

And the nation was *pro tanto* a gainer?—Yes, and every debtor was a gainer to that extent.

The man who advanced money to the public before the year 1797, and has received interest in the currency which existed during the Bank restriction, would have a fair right to claim a review of those transactions, and to insist that compensation should be made to him for the loss he had sustained during the depreciation?—Precisely so; I think he would.

Supposing that the present holders of the national debt are not the persons who originally advanced the money; supposing they have bought into the funds under the present standard, and on the assurance that Parliament meant to adhere to that standard, would it not be very unjust to visit them with any reduction?—Certainly.

So that it would be necessary not to apply the reduction to the present holders of the national debt, not to those who have within the last fifteen years acquired their shares in the three per cents. or three-and-a-half per cents., but to trace back every individual transaction to the person who may have originallyadvanced the money to Government between the years 1797 and 1819?—They must have their remedy againstthe person from whom they bought their stock, and it would be such a complication that it would be utterly impossible.

But the engagement on the part of the public was not that the payment should be made according to the price of corn, but the engagement, as it appears on the face of the Acts of Parliament, was that the Bank restriction should cease two years after the war, and that payment in coin should be restored; was not that the law?—I believe it was so.

Was not that the legal engagement under which parties advanced money to the Government?—Beyond a doubt that is so in the letter of the law, but it was done by both parties in utter ignorance, or both parties pretended to be in utter ignorance, and utterly denying that there was any depreciation; because I recollect over and over again debates in the House of Commons where the parties have always denied that there was any depreciation; I am sure that every gentleman here must remember the celebrated resolution that was passed upon Lord Bexley's motion.

Would it be just on the part of the public to say, we promised, it is true, to pay you in coin, but we find we were in error in certain political calculations, and cannot redeem our promise, but must make a reduction from the amount we owe you?—No, they might plead the letter of the statute, no doubt.

What was the proposition you made in 1819?—It was for what was called an equitable adjustment.

Do you recollect the exact terms?—No, I do not; I believe the exact terms were not specified.

You say you did not propose a reduction of the standard at all equivalent to that which afterwards proved to be the depreciation of the currency?—I did not; that was from not being at all alive to the extent of the depreciation it was meant to meet.

Supposing the legislature had actually adopted your view in 1819, and that subsequent experience had shown that view to have been erroneous; even in that case, on the principles assumed in foregoing questions, would it not now be necessary to revise all contracts made previously to the adoption of your plan?—Just the same.

And upon the same principle on which it would be just to do it now?—It would have been more incumbent, because they would have admitted the principle, and they would not have gone up to it in practice.

You think that prices have been reduced to the amount of 100

per cent. by the operation of the bill of 1819?—At a rough guess, I should say that the depreciation was cent. per cent.; that is quite a rough guess.

Supposing that I should find that in the three years before 1819, in 1815, 1816, and 1817, meat upon the average was 3*s.* 9*d.* per stone; and that in 1830, 1831, and 1832, it was exactly the same price; would that warrant the conclusion that prices have been reduced cent. per cent.?—There was a very great reduction of prices in the years 1815, 1816, and 1817, as I have understood, in consequence of the Bank having diminished their issue of paper in expectation of the return to cash payments.

Then you do not date the effects on price from 1819, but from some previous period?—Then afterwards there was a further issue; the stopping of cash payments was continued by several Acts of Parliament after 1815, and they issued sometimes more, and then prices were raised, and at other times they contracted their issues when they thought that cash payments would be resumed, and prices fell; and if I recollect rightly it was the inconvenience which was felt by these alternate rises and falls of prices owing to the increase of issues and diminution of issues from the Bank that very much brought the public to the feeling which was very universal at the time, of the necessity of coming to some close of that system, and return to cash payments; it was the universal feeling at that time, and the inconvenience that was felt from this extraordinary change of prices which was owing to the sending forth to the public at one time a great quantity of paper, and then withdrawing it when they expected a resumption of cash payments; the inconvenience was felt so greatly that there was an universal cry for putting an end to that state of things, if I am not mistaken in my memory.

So that there was no question as to whether cash payments should be resumed or not?—The cry was for return to cash payments, to have gold.

Do you consider that the return to cash payments has permanently affected the state of agriculture in this country; do you think that agriculture is less prosperous on that account; I do not mean that particular classes of agriculturists may not have suffered; but do you think that the return to cash payments has prejudiced the cause of agriculture generally?—Not at all; my belief is that the science of agriculture has never ceased to go on progressively flourishing ever since I can remember, and it is progressing now as much as ever. I rather think that there has been a great start within this year or two particularly; there has been greater activity in draining, which is one great symptom of improvement in agriculture.

Combining the importations from Ireland with the general advance of agriculture as a science, and the increased produce of the soil, you would admit that the combined operation of these circum-

stances must have a tendency to reduce the price of agricultural produce?—Beyond a doubt.

And therefore in comparing the present price of agricultural produce with its price at former periods, before you can estimate the extent of the effect on price produced by the change of currency, must you not make allowance for that other effect, namely, that caused by the increase of produce and diminished cost of production on account of agricultural improvement?—Yes.

After you have made that deduction, do you think it would be possible to maintain that the price of agricultural produce had been effected to the extent of 100 per cent. by the change of currency. Compare the present price of meat, or of barley, or of oats, or of any other species of agricultural produce, with its price at a former period, and allow for the effect on price produced by increased skill and increased produce, what are the data from which you infer that the effect upon prices produced by a change of currency has been 100 per cent.?—What I stated about 100 per cent. was a very rough guess, and that was that the depreciation which took place in the existence of high prices, was 100 per cent.

What then ought to be the price now, supposing the old currency had continued; do you think that meat now would have been 16*d.* per pound?—If the old currency had continued, that is, if the bank restriction and the issues of unconvertible paper had continued, there would have been no reason why the price of meat should not have been 16*d.* or 16*s.* or 16*l.* per lb.

It is quite clear that where there is a fixed engagement, and where by that engagement the rent is not to be raised for a certain period, a rise of price must in that case be a benefit to the tenant?—Certainly.

Even where there is no engagement, a rise of price will be at first to the advantage of the tenant, because he will gain an immediate profit, and the landlord will not have on the instant an opportunity of making a corresponding increase in the rent?—In all probability not for a year or two.

And the natural impression of all tenants is at first in favour of an increase of prices?—Yes.

But supposing the increase to be maintained for seven or eight years, do not you think that the necessary consequence would be that the landlord would claim his share of the advantage, and make a corresponding increase in the amount of rent?—Beyond a doubt.

So far as currency enters as an element in the price of articles of consumption, would not all such articles be increased in price by the same cause which had increased the price of agricultural produce?—I have already stated to-day that that is my opinion.

Therefore the continuance of high prices must lead to the increase of the rent of the occupying tenant, and also to the increase of the price of all articles of consumption?—Certainly.

Then though the present impression of the agriculturist may be that a rise of price is a good thing for him (he judging from his present experience), yet would not the opinion that a permanent increase of price, caused by legislative interference with the currency be for his advantage, be altogether a fallacious one?—Quite so, in my opinion.

Could such an increase of price benefit any man, except him who might be under a fixed engagement?—I apprehend not; that is my opinion, and always has been my opinion. During the change people are benefited, because prices do not always rise exactly with the value of produce, but permanently, fixed engagements are only benefited.

Should you say at present that there was a fair average demand for the labour of the agricultural labourers throughout the country?—In my part of the country that has been very much altered in the last few months by the Poor Law Bill. Now there is a fair demand.

At present, can a man of good character, in possession of his health and strength, get constant employment throughout the year?—I cannot say of my own knowledge that he can get constant employment throughout the year; if he can, it is very much owing to the operation of the Poor Law Bill. I have heard within a short time of some farmers in the west who have been engaging their labourers for three years, knowing them to be good men, for fear they should not have them when they wanted them.

Do you think that a mere rise of price, caused by interference with the currency, would give any stimulus to agriculture?—Not a permanent stimulus; it would give it a fillip just in the first instance.

But it would not cause any permanent increase in the demand either for agricultural produce or labour?—No; it would produce no permanent effect one way or the other I apprehend, and my belief is, that agriculture has been flourishing as much under low prices as it did in the high price periods, and been going on as equally.

Do you think the invention of mechanical improvements applied to agriculture has had any considerable effect in diminishing the demand for manual labour?—There is very little mechanical labour; mechanics are very little employed in the diminution of manual labour; in some cases it may be, but I apprehend that the benefit of the application of machinery to agriculture is the same as in manufacture.

You have said that the rise in wages does not for a time bear any corresponding proportion to the rise in the price of articles of subsistence?—I apprehend that is generally the fact, that a farmer is much slower to raise the price of his labourers' wages than he is to receive the increased prices of the market to which he goes to sell his corn.

Then the effect of any action upon the currency would be to raise the price of bread, but not the price of labour?—Yes, though labourers I know in my part of the country were crying out for a rise of the price of bread, it was very absurd; but that was their feeling upon the subject.

If an action upon the currency increase the price of wheat, and do not increase the price of labour, and if it do not give any permanent stimulus to agriculture, is it not quite clear that the condition of the labourer must be deteriorated by interference with the currency, for the purpose of depreciation?—Most undoubtedly.

In case a kind and considerate landlord has a farm out of lease at present in your part of the country, is there any difficulty in getting a good tenant to take it?—I have never had any difficulty myself in getting tenants, and I have generally understood that there has been no difficulty on the part of any one.

Have you had any occasion to buy land in your neighbourhood?—A very small extent.

Is it easy to get land?—No, not just about me.

What number of years' purchase should you say was a fair price?—I have lately understood that 28 years was the fair price. I have lately bought some at Folkestone under particular circumstances of locality; the quantity too was small. In that case I gave about 32½ years' purchase.

Sir James Graham.] Considering the present price of articles of necessity, and the present rate of wages, should you say, in your memory, that the agricultural labourer was better off at any period than he is now?—The agricultural labourer is now better off than at any time since I have been living; at least he was a year ago.

Taking the rate of wages and the price of articles of necessity into account?—Yes.

Sir Robert Peel.] Do you think that the slight deterioration that there is in his condition is mainly owing to the rise of price in the last year?—I only speak of deterioration, knowing that rise of price; because corn has risen I make that inference.

Sir James Graham.] Should you say that rents were either adjusted or were in a rapid progress of being adjusted, in conformity with the present rate of wages?—I can speak only of my own; I presume that other people must adjust their rents with their tenants; my own are principally upon corn rents.

Where such adjustment has taken place, is the tenant suffering?—Where it has taken place he is not suffering; where it has not taken place he is suffering.

Then, as relates to the tenant, it is a question of rent more than any thing else?—Yes, except that the price of articles is a great expense to the tenant.

Taking the rate of wages and the rents adjusted to the price of corn, where those two operations have concurrently taken place, should you say that the tenantry was suffering?—The tenantry in

general complain; I do not know whether they are suffering or not; they are very apt to complain.

Whether justly or unjustly, you have no fixed opinion?—I cannot speak, I am sure.

Mr. Attwood.] You mentioned that you think the farming interest would not be benefited by higher prices?—No, in the long run I do not think they would.

Nor the labourers?—No, in the long run I do not think that any body would be.

But both labourers and farmers themselves entertain an opposite opinion?—Certainly they are of an opposite opinion.

You stated that agricultural labourers cannot, at present, depend upon permanent employment throughout the year?—A great change has taken place with respect to the situations of the agricultural labourers under the operation of the Poor Law Bill.

That has improved their situation?—That has improved their situation very rapidly indeed; before that time there was great scarcity of work, but wherever that bill has come into operation within my observation there has been rather an outcry for labourers than a deficiency of labour.

Does your lordship remember whether there was ever any scarcity of work during the time of the high prices of agricultural produce?—I rather think not; but it was at that time that the administration of the poor-laws became so injurious that it was necessary to correct it by a bill two years ago.

Do you think the farmer, during high prices, was always ready to give permanent employment to the whole number of labourers that presented themselves?—I believe not; and it was in consequence of their not being so ready that the paupers went to the magistrates, and that system of bread-allowance grew to the height that it was at last.

Sir James Graham.] After your experience of the effects of the variation of money which took place in 1797, and considering the efflux of time since the establishment of the present standard, and the condition of the working population, should you see with apprehension or with satisfaction any alteration of the standard of value now?—I should see with apprehension any attempt to alter the standard.

Whatever the evils may have been of the past changes, you would contemplate with apprehension the certain and inevitable evil of a further change?—I conceive that the change of standard at any time is productive of great evil, and particularly if it is not done in the most open and avowed manner; I can conceive a state of things when it may be necessary to effect a change of standard in an open and avowed manner; and I think at the time of the passing of Mr. Peel's bill, it ought to have been done; but it is a very different thing to do it now.

That opportunity having been lost, and the present standard

having now existed for 17 years, you would not think it desirable to make the change which in 1818 you thought desirable?—Certainly not; if any inconvenience arises from the alteration that has taken place in the value of the currency by Mr. Peel's bill, I conceive that it should be remedied by other measures than by an alteration of the standard.

Can your lordship contemplate any mode of artificially raising prices other than by increasing the amount of issues or changing the standard of value?—No.

It must be in one of those two modes?—I apprehend so.

What would be the effect in your lordship's judgment of a forced issue of paper without any alteration of the standard of value; could such an increase of price arising from that source be maintained?—I apprehend that it would in the first instance occasion an exportation of gold, and that if the issues continued beyond a certain point, we should have all the evils over again of a depreciation of currency, and then there would come a panic or some calamity of that sort.

Does your lordship think that in the present state of agriculture, with reference to that particular interest, any such risk or any such changes are at this moment necessary?—I do not think that agriculture requires any change of the sort.

The difficulty of the tenant you can well imagine to be great where prices have fallen rapidly to the extent which they have done for the last seven years, and rents have not fallen to a corresponding degree?—Yes.

In those cases you can very well understand the distress of the tenant?—Yes.

Mr. Attwood.] When you state that if any measure were now necessary, you would prefer other measures to an alteration of the standard or an increased issue of paper money, will you be so good as to state what those measures are as being preferable?—The state of things to which I alluded would be that which I confess for some years has been a mooted point with me, whether the country could in the long run thrive at all under such an enormous debt us that which we have in this country; but my opinions have lately been somewhat shaken on this point, both by the great prosperity of the country at the present time, and particularly by the improved state of the agricultural labourers, the persons who appeared to me to suffer most from the consequence of that enormous debt.

Then the measure to which you referred was to some reduction of the debt?—Yes, I prefer that infinitely to an alteration of the standard or to an issue of paper, which would have the effect of diminishing the debt in point of payment of interest in a secret, covert, and underhand manner.

You state that your opinion was somewhat shaken as to the necessity of that?—It never amounted to an opinion of the abso-

lute necessity; I think that there is less difficulty than there was some months ago.

Is your lordship understood to express a confident opinion that some measure, such as that, will not be necessary?—I do not mean to say that.

Evidence of the Right Hon. Lord Ashburton.

Has paid Attention to the Nature of Money—A Silver Standard, or a conjoint Standard of Silver and Gold, would be better than Gold—The Standard up to 1793 was Silver and Gold—Would not advise any Revision of existing Contracts or equitable Adjustment—There should be no Depreciation of the Standard—Nobody could honestly desire a Depreciation—Gold was practically the Standard up to 1797—Whatever might be the Law, forty-nine out of fifty Contracts referred to a Gold Standard—Gold has practically become the Standard in America—A Gold Standard may fail in Time of War or Difficulty, it nearly did so in 1825 and may do so entirely—Was never more confident of any Thing than that the Agriculturist is no more affected by the Currency than other Classes of the Community—Parliament can do nothing for Agriculturists but tell them plainly that no Parliamentary Relief is possible.

Mr. Cayley.] Your Lordship has made extensive enquiries into the nature and operation of money?---It is a subject I have considered a good deal.

Would the currency be on a safer footing generally, if we had to depend for its convertibility on a silver standard, or on a conjoint silver and gold standard, than resting only on a gold standard?—I have always thought that it would, and the more I have considered the subject the more decided my opinion is that it would.

Was the ancient standard of the country to which we were supposed to revert in 1819, a standard of gold or a standard of gold and silver conjoined?—The old standard was gold and silver conjoined, and was so up to the year 1798.

Sir Robert Peel.] Is it the result of your examination that you do not now advise the revision of pre-existing contracts, or any arrangement of the kind which is familiarly known by the name of equitable adjustment?—Surely, not by any means.

Although you consider that a silver standard or a joint standard might abstractedly be preferable to one of gold, should you advise in case a new arrangement were made with respect to the metals constituting the standard of value that there should be any depreciation of the existing standard?—Surely not.

Do you think that the agriculturist has any special interest in the depreciation of the standard?---I think he cannot possibly; I do not see any interest that any person can have in the depreciation of the standard, excepting that a debtor may be said to have an interest in defrauding his creditor. *Nobody can honestly* have any interest in the depreciation of the standard.

Was not gold practically, up to the year 1797, the standard of value in this country?—Practically it was.

Do not you think that, whatever might have been the letter of the law, forty-nine contracts out of fifty were practically settled with reference to the value of gold?—Undoubtedly.

Therefore, supposing that there has been an alteration in the relative value of silver and gold, and that it would now be an advantage to the debtor to pay his debt in silver instead of gold, yet is not that an advantage which has arisen subsequently, and which could not have been foreseen or calculated upon in the year 1797? —I think not.

Although the law permitted a debt to the amount of 25*l.* to be discharged in silver coin for a certain period after the expiration of the temporary Act that passed in 1774, yet is not it very possible that the silver currency, though greatly depreciated in intrinsic value, might have had a fictitious value as a token or medium of exchange on account of its limited amount; may it not have been more for the interest of a debtor to pay in gold, although a more valuable coin intrinsically, rather than have the trouble and expense of collecting the depreciated silver coin?—Undoubtedly; the silver being out in a limited quantity, that quantity not exceeding what was wanted for small change, it would have acquired a value as small change in the same manner as we see our present tokens acquire an artificial value, because at the present moment you have ten millions of silver out of depreciated coin, and yet it is held out in circulation upon a par with its nominal value by the mere fact of its being used as a token, and its being limited in its amount. This is the case with the present silver, though it is not payable to the extent of 25*l.* as formerly, but only 40*s.*

Do you think that persons did practically avail themselves of that advantage which they appear to have had legally, of paying a debt of 24*l.*, or any less sum than 25*l.*, by collecting the depreciated silver and paying it?—Certainly not: on the contrary, I should rather think that there was a want of small silver.

This advantage, therefore, was merely a nominal advantage, and not a practical one?—As far as concerns the power of paying in the depreciated silver, it was quite nominal; the debtor could not have got wherewith to pay it.

Before 1797, whenever the price of silver did exceed 5*s.* 2*d.* the ounce, this choice of paying in silver, either by tale or by weight, conferred a nominal rather than a substantial advantage on the debtor, inasmuch as by tale the debtor could not pay for it; it was not worth his while to collect the coin, and by weight he could not pay, because silver was, relatively to gold, of greater value in the market?—Surely that is quite true. In 1798 the change of price took place, and in 1798 the first appearance showed itself, of people bringing silver to the mint, and therefore, of course, silver must then have been under the 62*s.*

The advantage, then, which the debtor would now have, of making his choice, and paying either in silver or gold, is an advantage which has subsequently arisen from a change in the relation of silver to gold, and is not an advantage which he had in contemplation, when he contracted his debt before 1797?—Surely, it cannot be said that people, when they contract debts, have much in contemplation, as to the construction of money in which they pay; they very seldom contemplate any alteration one way or the other. It is undoubtedly true, that if the contract remained, and no alteration had been made in the law, that he might now pay it so much cheaper, but that certainly was not in the contemplation of any body, either when the contract was made, or when Parliament made the alteration in the standard.

If the price of silver is 60*s.* the pound, the advantage he would now have would amount to something between three and three-and-a-half per cent.?—At present.

It has been assumed, that if a man made a contract for 100*l.* before 1797, and that if that contract remains still unfulfilled, he has a right, in point of strict equity, to claim the advantage of paying in either one or other of the metals; may not a principle that is theoretically just, and that may also be practicable with respect to one individual case, taken abstractedly, be perfectly impracticable, if applied to the whole concerns of a nation, and to the aggregate of contracts?—Surely.

Would not the man who had actually discharged his contract have just as good a claim to the advantage of revision and re-adjustment as he whose contract remained accidentally unfulfilled?—Undoubtedly.

Supposing a man made a contract before 1797, and relying on the repeated assurances of the Legislature, that they meant to adhere to the present standard of value, had paid his money and discharged his debt in the present currency, would not his claim for equitable adjustment be equally cogent with the claim of him whose contract remained unfulfilled?—If, when he discharged the contract, he might, but for the alterations of the law, have discharged it with a smaller amount, he is certainly injured. At present we say that the price of silver is 60*s.* I have read, from the returns before me, that the price of silver was, instead of being 60*s.*, so low as 57*s.* at one period; so that while he was discharging his debt in gold, he might possibly have discharged it even with the difference of six or seven per cent., and then of course he would be injured to a still greater extent; further it should be considered, than when the standard was established, supposing the standard to be a right and equitable standard at the time, the person who happens to have been injured took his chance of the variation of prices having been the other way. You never can alter from the one standard to the other, from a gold standard to a silver standard, or the reverse, without leaving those possible variations at different

periods; and if you were to attempt a practical adjustment, you must have the current price of gold and silver brought into the courts of justice to determine what is due to one another in every subsequent transaction.

If the Parliament should say to all those who lent money to the public since 1797, we are now paying you more than we contracted to pay, we will deduct five per cent. from the debt due to you, would not Parliament be bound upon the same principle to say to all those public creditors who lent their money at par, but whose dividends were paid subsequently to 1798 in the depreciated paper currency, we now are ready to make a re-adjustment with you, and to give you the difference between the sum which we contracted to pay you, and that which we did actually pay you in depreciated paper currency?—Surely.

What proportion do you think the contracts made since 1816 and now remaining unsettled, bear to the unsettled contracts made before 1797?—I should think the proportion must be very small indeed of contracts of the earlier date.

Supposing the Government was to institute an inquiry as to that portion of the public debt which was contracted between the year 1797 and the resumption of cash payments, and that Mr. Rothschild, or any other public creditor, was to observe, I am the holder of stock created since 1797, but I gave 92*l.* in good sovereigns for my 100*l.* share of that stock, relying upon your declaration that you meant to adhere to the present standard of value, would it be just to make any deduction from the future dividend due to a public creditor so circumstanced?—Certainly not.

In the case, therefore, of all the transfers in the public funds that have been made since 1819, the present holders, who paid for their stock an equivalent in the improved currency, would clearly be entitled to be exempt from the revision?—Yes.

It would be necessary to inquire into each individual sale of stock, and trace it back to the party who made the original advance to the Government?—Certainly.

Would it be possible to conduct practically any such inquiry and revision?—Quite impossible. The truth is, that the moment the public made up their mind that one standard was the right thing, and that standard was gold, the next thing to do was to see that the adjustment was just at the time it was made, and then whether the result, by after variations, were upon the one side or the other, it would have been quite impossible to have made any compensation.

Supposing this country were inclined to adhere to a single standard, but to adopt one of silver instead of gold, with the view of making some relaxation of the standard of value in favour of the debtor, would not it be very important to inquire whether there is not a probability that silver may increase in value rather than gold?—I am not aware of any necessity of that consideration.

Supposing that silver should become relatively more scarce than gold, suppose that the relative value of silver to gold should become fourteen to one instead of fifteen to one, is it not quite clear that by taking silver exclusively as the standard of value, we should be screwing up the standard and not relaxing it?—Yes.

You are aware that there are persons that hold the opinion that there is a chance that the relative supply of gold with respect to silver will increase?—I have heard both opinions. The subject was variously discussed when the Spanish colonies were opened. I remember Lord Liverpool saying that some persons were then of opinion that silver might become as abundant as lead. It was thought that the application of steam to the working of the mines in Mexico would produce an immense increase of silver, and I believe that that opinion weighed very much in making him think that there was more certainty in a gold standard than in silver. Then, at other times, some people entertained the opposite opinion; but I think the general expectation had been rather of an increased quantity of silver than an increased quantity of gold.

You say you do not think a 1*l.* note circulation would be consistent with a silver standard?—I do not think with a metallic standard of any sort.

Then supposing we adopted a silver standard exclusively, in what mode would you provide for all the small payments of the country, for all payments below 5*l.*?—I would leave the small payments of the country just as they are now. You might do one of two things, you might either leave the silver token out or make the whole coinage of standard value. For small payments the silver token would be in no danger if you did not issue it in excess, still less, if you established the principle, that the bank should always take it in, and that the mint should take it back of the bank, as is, I believe, now practised, that principle would secure the token from depreciation. When I was examined before the Privy Council, my proposition was to leave the token coinage out as it is, and to call in nothing but crowns for your larger payments.

Would not it be necessary in this country to have some currency besides silver for payment of sums below 5*l.*; do you think we could conduct the operations of this country with a silver currency only, and 5*l.* notes?—Undoubtedly: it would be cumbrous rather: carrying silver to the extent of 5*l.* would be rather troublesome, and for this reason a concurrent metal would be of use, in the same manner as it is in France. They have no bank-notes in Paris under 20*l.*, but nobody encumbers himself with a quantity of silver coin. They have a gold coin, used for the ordinary purposes of life, and there is no want of it. I think the difficulty is a considerable one. If you were to abolish the gold coin altogether, it would be very inconvenient to have nothing between 5*s.* and a 5*l.* note.

There would be an intermediate course; you might make a silver standard, and permit the gold to circulate as a token?—You might do that.

But supposing gold were not the standard of value, and that there was no obligation on the part of the bank to issue gold coin, and that, when issued, it was allowed merely to take its chance in circulation, is it not the probability that the gold currency of this country would leave it?—I do not know that it would. The example of a country where the two metals exist together is worth all theory of speculation. In France, the gold lives in harmony with the silver, with occasionally a difference of value.

In the course of a former answer you used this expression, that America has taken a gold standard; did you not rather mean that she has so altered the proportions, that gold now circulates in America in preference to silver, there being in point of fact a joint standard, it being optional to pay in either metal?—Yes.

But practically in most of the States, on account of the value of the metal, gold is the standard?—Gold has become the standard within the last few years.

And that by the deliberate act of the American Government?—A deliberate act of Congress, upon a report, which has been printed.

Was not it with a desire to encourage the use of gold as a standard?—I believe so.

Therefore they who have made the most recent alteration in their currency, and who appear to have given much attention to the subject, must have seen some advantage in adopting a gold standard in preference to silver?—It is possible that they did.

Is it possible that their proximity to the mines entered into the consideration of the question?—I should think not; they are nearer to the silver than to the gold.

But may they not have thought that on that account they should have a greater fixedness of standard by taking gold instead of silver as the practical standard of value?—I rather believe that the object of the Government was to get rid of small paper, and probably they might have been influenced by the very consideration mentioned, that it was difficult to do without small paper without having practically a gold standard, because it is a measure of the present Government, of General Jackson's government, who is very adverse to the circulation of bank paper. He may have thought the circulation of gold was likely to tend to a diminution of paper. I believe the change was made in opposition to the opinions of the best informed persons in the country, and was in some way connected with party politics.

So far as the special interests of agriculture are concerned, do you think this Committee can give any better advice to the Legislature than to leave agriculture alone?—I should say not only as it respects agriculture, but as it respects all classes, I feel so strongly the danger myself of the gold standard, that I do not know, if the public were ready for it, and that there was no opposition any where, that I should not like still to see it restored; notwithstanding my reluctance to a change, and the dangers which attend

change, I think I should like to see silver established as a standard, because my apprehension is, that the gold standard is a system of fair weather, and that you will be deceived by it, under the first difficulties; that we ultimately cannot be able to maintain it; and it is my apprehension of insecurity with respect to the standard that makes me fearful of the gold standard; but at the same time, if any notion were entertained at the time that you were going essentially to lower the value of the standard, that you were not going to take a full equivalent in silver at the time you made the change, as you did when you established the gold standard, if there was any apprehension of that sort, or if it was in any degree to unsettle men's minds upon the subject, I should conceive the danger of that very great; and I confess that my opinion fluctuates a little, between my aversion to any change upon the subject and the apprehension which I entertain, that we cannot rely upon maintaining our present system. In any time of war or trouble, the gold standard will leave you in the lurch; you may then at last be forced into paper, and if you once again adopt irredeemable paper, you will not so easily recover from it. But with respect to the immediate question of agriculture, it is quite clear that whatever distress there may have been in agriculture, the state of the currency and circulation has nothing material to do with it. First of all, if the state of money and the state of the circulation had been in fault, it must have shown itself in other articles. You have general prosperity in other branches, and a rise of prices almost universally, and therefore I cannot understand by what process of reasoning any person can suppose that any portion of agricultural distress can arise from the state of money. If you come to the immediate interests of the agriculturist, you find that in certain branches, in his wool and his meat, for instance, the prices are high; and there is the single article of wheat, which is low; how is it possible that by any reasoning you can suppose the state of the circulation to select, first, one single class of society, the farmer, and secondly, one single article of that farmer's produce, wheat, and to leave all the others alone, is to me quite inconceivable. But to return to the general question of our altered standard, I confess that I have a strong apprehension that you have made a mistake, and that the gold standard will fail you in times of difficulty. I cannot say, since the period that it has been established, that it has not generally worked well; but you have had but one great storm, and that was the year 1825, and then we know, that though the bank did not positively stop payment, it was so near it that the difference is hardly worth boasting of; that in fact your standard may be said to have failed you in that difficulty. I much fear that it will do so again. My apprehension is, that by the attempt to maintain a gold instead of a silver, or a mixed standard, you will some day or other come to the lamentable condition of an irredeemable paper.

But when you gave an opinion in favour of a different standard from the present, you gave it for the purpose of preventing a contingent danger, which will equally affect all classes and all interests, mercantile, commercial, and agricultural, and not from the belief that the agriculturists, as a particular class, have the slightest separate or special interest in the adoption of a different standard of value?—I am quite sure they have not; I never felt more confident upon any question.

Mr. Clive.] What answer can be given to a farmer who seeks the Scotch system of banking, why that system should be allowed in Scotland and not admitted in England?—The only answer that I aware can be given is, that the Scotch farmers were too much for us in Parliament, and we could not beat them. The danger is in proportion to the extent; no person can say that there would be any great positive danger in giving Kent or Sussex, or any other county in England, the same privilege, provided you could exclude their small notes from general circulation. The existence of the small notes in Scotland and England has its danger, in proportion to the relative extent.

Does not the confined system of banking in Scotland give a facility to Scotland which does not exist in England?—I am not sufficiently acquainted with Scotland to speak confidently upon that subject, but if it is supposed to work well there, it probably works well because of its confined extent. Nobody doubts the facility arising from the small notes, but against that is to be set the danger of being caught and not being able to maintain the metallic standard.

Mr. Cayley.] In the answers that have been given lately with respect to the difference between silver and gold, and that it amounted to $3\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 per cent., are those answers confined entirely to the difference between the value of gold and of silver, and not all in reference to the great change that took place in 1819, between the value of the paper and the value of the present standard?—The statements of the difference of the standard in old times, as compared with the present, have turned entirely upon the variation between the gold and the silver, without reference to the depreciation of paper.

Chairman.] Can your lordship suggest any legislative measure, unconnected with currency, by which the interests of the agriculturists can be relieved, without prejudice to the other interests of the community?—I really do not know any thing you can do for the agriculturists, but to tell them honestly that no parliamentary relief is possible. I am not aware of any thing that can be done for agriculture by Parliament.

Evidence of Joseph Sanders, Esq.

The Currency has nothing to do with the Depression—The Land in England is producing more than ever it did—Believes Wheat will be grown under 50*s.*—An Action upon the Currency cannot raise the Price of Agricultural Produce, as there would be a corresponding advance in every thing else—A double Standard of Value gives every Man an Opportunity of cheating his Creditors—Impossible to return to a Paper Currency.

Do you think it would be wise in the Legislature to attempt to raise the prices of agricultural produce by an action upon the currency?—They cannot raise them.

They might raise them nominally, might they not?—But not in point of fact; if they were to debase the currency ten per cent., it is manifest that influence would be felt upon gold as well as upon bread and all other things, and as a contest is now going on between the good land and the bad land, I do not see what could be the possible advantage of it. The owner of the bad land and the owner of the good land would be placed in precisely a parallel situation; debasing the currency could not be confined in its effects to bad land.

Would not there be a corresponding increase of rent?—To be sure there would, and, therefore, it is impossible to raise [prices beneficially by any action of that sort.

Would not there be a corresponding increase in the prices of all the articles of luxury or necessity which the agriculturist consumes?—No doubt there would.

Your advice then is, that there should be no interference with the present state of the currency?—Certainly not.

You believe that no alteration in it would be of the slightest advantage to agriculture, considered abstractedly from all other interests?—It is quite impossible.

Mr. Cayley.] You state that an action upon the currency would not help the farmer; do you remember the time when the currency was in a different state?—Yes.

Do you remember the bill passing in 1819, commonly called Mr. Peel's Bill?—Yes.

What were your anticipations with respect to that measure?—That it would produce great injustice, because it compelled debtors to discharge their engagements in a currency of higher value than that in which they had contracted them.

Did Mr. Peel's bill produce a great fall in produce?—It produced a fall, but it did not produce all the fall.

Taking wheat at 80*s.* at the end of the war, and supposing that to have been the average price for twenty years preceding, how much of the fall down to 36*s.* would you say had been occasioned by Mr. Peel's bill?—When you take 80*s.* as the average price during the war, before you can come to any thing like an opinion as to the effect of that bill, you must ascertain what portion of that

80*s*. consisted of war charges; I am convinced that you will find a very large proportion consisted of war charges.

How much of that fall from 80*s*. to 36*s*. would you say had been occasioned by Mr. Peel's bill of 1819?—I should think the effect of that bill upon prices had exhausted itself somewhere about 1821 or 1822.

Then, you give the price of wheat in 1822 as the test of the proportion of fall?—No, certainly not, because it fell extremely low then from causes totally independent of the bill.

Was there any action upon the currency at that time?—I am not sure whether I am right; but I think it was in 1822 that Lord Castlereagh brought forward his motion respecting the one-pound notes; but there was no immediate rise in prices from that measure, indeed a great fall took place afterwards. I know that in the October of the spring when Lord Castlereagh brought forward his motion, there was a prodigious fall in the price of corn, and the price of corn never began to rise till the spring of 1823.

The one-pound notes were put an end to by the law of 1826; did that in your opinion tend to diminish the prices after 1825?—No, prices rose after 1825.

But, if you found from the returns that the fact was the reverse, then you would alter your belief as to that circumstance?—I am, certainly, very liable to error; I speak but from memory, but I think I am right. If there was any fall it was trifling, because I know that in 1826 there were riots in Lancashire, and the price of wheat was so high, that Mr. Canning was induced to let it out of bond, in deference to public opinion.

In 1831 did you think that wheat had fallen as low as it must necessarily come to, in consequence of Mr. Peel's bill?—No; I should not think that Mr. Peel's bill had much, if any thing, to do with prices at that time; the high prices of 1829, 1830, and 1831 were clearly traceable to very deficient crops.

And the lower prices preceding 1829, you say, followed the diminished circulation of the banks?—No; I think I must be right in my impression, that after the suppression of the one-pound notes in 1826, wheat at least maintained itself, or at least there could be very little difference; it was at comparatively the same rate.

You say, you think the farmers do not require 60*s*. now, and that they would do with 50*s*. or under; did you ever try the experiment yourself to grow wheat at 50*s*.?—I never did; but I am persuaded that upon the good soils of this country, with fair crops, wheat can be grown at 50*s*. a quarter.

Is that an opinion founded upon experience?—It is not founded upon experience, but it is founded upon the best information I can obtain.

What do you mean by good soils?—I mean such soils as are not heavy impracticable clays, the best soils of Norfolk and Suffolk, Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire.

Producing what?—They will produce with good crops from 30 to 32 bushels an acre, and some even more.

And those you think must go out of cultivation?—Some of them.

Then there would be an additional security in having a silver standard?—A temporary security; just the same sort of security that they had in 1745, when they paid in sixpences, which gave time.

What are those considerations?—If you have a double standard, you give every man a chance of cheating his creditors; if silver were to fall greatly in value, no man would discharge his debt in gold. Suppose that silver were to fall in value 10 per cent., a man would discharge his debt in silver, and put 10 per cent. in his pocket.

Sir Robert Peel.] With respect to the bill of 1819, do you think it was possible to return from an inconvertible paper currency to a convertible one, without causing some restraint and pressure in commercial transactions?—Quite impossible.

Whatever might have been the standard adopted, the mere circumstance of returning from a paper currency that was practically inconvertible, to one that was convertible, at the will of the holder, into the precious metals, must have caused restraint and pressure?—No doubt, it necessarily must do so.

Under an inconvertible paper currency, were not many habits of speculation and of expense formed which it would be difficult to maintain, when a convertible paper currency was established?—Certainly; but I conceive those expensive habits did not arise entirely from a depreciated currency, but from a combination of that cause with the high prices generated by monopoly and a state of war.

Will there not be facilities of giving accommodation to commerce during the existence of an inconvertible paper currency, which it is impossible to maintain with a convertible paper currency?—Quite impossible.

Is there any sort of necessary connexion between the bill of 1819 and the present system of joint stock banking?—Certainly not.

Is it not the tendency of the bill of 1819, if it has any effect upon the system of joint stock banking, to throw impediments in the way of too extensive a circulation?—No doubt.

Do you think if paper was inconvertible there would be less apprehension of the abuse of paper by joint stock companies than there is at present?—No, much more.

Were there not many concurrent causes that came into operation simultaneously with the Act of 1819, which would have caused a depression in the price of agricultural produce, even if there had been no alteration in the currency?—No doubt.

Considering the character of the war, in which this country was engaged from 1793 to 1815, considering the extent of commercial monopoly which it enjoyed at that time, and considering also the

state of many of the countries on the continent of Europe, in respect to the interruption of industry, do you think it possible that war prices could have been maintained in this country after peace was re-established?—Certainly not.

The loss of the monopoly which we enjoyed, and the restoration of manufacturing industry in other countries, must necessarily have led to a considerable depression of prices?—No doubt inevitably so.

In 1817 and 1818 was not there a very large importation of foreign corn?—Very large.

Had not that a tendency to depress the price of home produce?—It would have had that effect ultimately, but not immediately. Whenever an import of corn takes place, for the first year the country bears it tolerably well; but in the second year it does not bear it. In the second year the gold begins to go from the bank, and it is then that the misfortune of a deficient crop begins to be visible in the country, by reduced prices of produce generally.

If you have an undue import of corn in any one year, an import larger than the country requires, must not the necessary consequence be a considerable depreciation on that account in the prices of the domestic corn?—No doubt.

Will not that effect tell with an intensity which is much greater than could be expected from the actual amount of corn imported? If you overload a market that is already rather full, will not the effect in reducing prices be more than you might infer from the actual quantity of corn superadded?—The effect of the surplus is extremely difficult to define, but it is prodigious.

Do you think there is anything in the state of the currency now which in the slightest degree affects the agriculturist, unless he be under some engagements contracted before the year 1819?—No.

With reference to all voluntary engagements entered into within the last 15 or 16 years, or within the last 10 or 12 years, do you see anything in the state of the currency which of itself could account for the depressed state of agriculture?—Certainly not; but I must qualify that observation. When one pound notes were suppressed, it produced a sort of dislocation of engagements and connexions between the farmers, the landlords, and the country bankers that was injurious. In fact, it produced a derangement that was attended with very great inconvenience to those parties.

And which had not been taken into account by persons that entered into those engagements?—No, they had not.

The price of wheat at present is very low. Is the price of other agricultural produce, of barley, for instance, or of meat, or of wool, or of oats, or of any other description of agricultural produce proportionably low?—By no means.

Then must not there be some other cause besides the action of the currency which shall account for this state of things, in which

one single article of agricultural produce is very low, and others have not sustained any corresponding depression?—The action of the currency has nothing to do with it; the low price of wheat has arisen from the excessive quantity.

Supposing that the gold currency had not been restored, and that paper still remained inconvertible, would not there be now many causes in operation which would make the cultivation of the worst class of clay soils of this country very unprofitable?—No doubt of it.

Do not you think the increased imports of corn and flour from Ireland, taking them upon the average of late years, must have had a very material effect, apart from all considerations of currency, upon the clay lands of this country?—Unquestionably.

And therefore, though those clay lands may be the ancient clay lands of the country, which, under other circumstances, might have been profitably cultivated, yet that circumstance does not enable them to compete with the new and more productive land which has been recently brought into cultivation?—Certainly not; those ancient clay lands would never have maintained one-half the population we have now.

Have there not been great improvements in agricultural skill of late?—Very great.

Has not the light land of this country been much more employed for the production of wheat than it used to be?—Certainly; I know districts in Nottinghamshire which, but for the application of bone manure, would have been nearly a barren waste, and they are now productive, even at the present prices of barley, oats, meat, and wool, and the farmers are doing well.

Are not the light lands cultivated at less expense than the ancient clay lands?—Very much.

Would not that consequently tend to diminish the profit of those clay lands?—It is the case.

Do you think it is fair to draw any general inference as to the condition of the agriculturists throughout the United Kingdom, from producing the occupiers of bad clay lands to give evidence that they are in a state of distress?—I should say that such an inquiry was an ex-parte inquiry, and that, consequently, it could be of no possible benefit to any body. If the cultivators of better soils were called, you would have a very different account of the state of agriculture.

Do not we always hear the worst of agriculture?—Always.

Those people that are making money are not very willing to come forward and state their gains; an occupying tenant who has a very good holding, and who could bear to pay a considerable addition of rent, will not volunteer to come forward and state that?—Of course not.

The volunteers are more likely to come from those that are dis-

tressed than from those that are prosperous?—Certainly; there are plenty of prosperous people now who might be summoned before the committee, but who will not be volunteers.

Is not an occupying tenant naturally more likely to tell you of his distress than to tell you of his prosperity?—I should think he would have the fear of his landlord before his eyes if he spoke of his prosperity.

Do not you think there is a very great difference in the skill employed in different parts of this country in agriculture?—Very great, indeed.

Do not you think there are parts of Scotland and parts of the north of England in which by the application of skill and ingenuity, great reductions are effected in the costs of produce?—I have a very strong impression upon that subject that it is so.

Take the case of the man that is a cultivator of clay land, and who continues the system which his forefathers pursued, being either unwilling or unable to profit by recent improvements, must not that man, apart from all considerations of the standard of money and of currency, cultivate his land to great disadvantage?—Certainly; I believe the fact will be found to be generally this, that the owners of poor clay lands are poor landlords, and the owners of poor clay lands always must, I think, necessarily have poor tenants.

Do you think it would be of public advantage, supposing it were possible, to devise any scheme by which the cultivation of bad clay land should be made a profitable speculation?—I think it could not.

Do not you think that a fictitious encouragement to the production of wheat upon certain descriptions of clay land is just as useless as to attempt to force the production of wine from the soil of this country?—It is a thing quite as useless.

And whatever be the state of the currency or any thing else it is not to be done?—Certainly not; it would be a waste of means.

Do not you think that there are so many causes bearing upon the price of wheat and agricultural produce, that nothing can be so unsafe as to infer from the low price of corn at one period, or the high price at another, that such variation is materially owing to the state of the currency?—There is nothing more fallacious.

Does not the state of speculation and still more the state of the produce, on account of the seasons, enter much more materially as an element into the price of wheat than any thing connected with the currency?—Certainly; I will give a remarkable instance of that; in 1812, the average price of wheat was 125*s.*, and the currency was depreciated 20 per cent. In 1814, the average price of wheat was 64*s.* 4*d.*, and the currency was depreciated 25 per cent.; the latter was a good crop, and the former a bad one.

You think that on account of the seasons the crops of wheat in England, in the last three years, have exceeded the produce in any

other former three years that ever you knew, and that, concurrently with this increase, there have been in some parts of the country, and particularly in Ireland and Scotland, considerable improvements in agriculture, and that on the whole, without reference to seasons, there has been much more wheat produced than at any former period?—I have no doubt whatever of it.

Have you any reason to think that there is any diminution in the consumption of wheat on account of the growth of potatoes?—I feel very strongly convinced that there is more wheaten flour eaten now than ever there was, and I believe there are more potatoes eaten than ever, and perhaps less of other vegetables. I remember the time when, in the midland and southern counties, people would hardly touch them.

Do not you conceive that there are physical causes in operation which must satisfactorily account for the present low prices of wheat as compared with the price of other articles of agricultural produce?—Clearly so.

You do not think that the present state of the currency has any connexion with the present low price of wheat as compared with the price of other articles of agricultural produce?—Not the slightest.

Do you think that there would be the slightest advantage even to the agricultural interest from any alteration either of the currency or of the standard?—Certainly none; it is quite impossible that there could be any.

Sir James Graham.] You were asked with regard to the measures of 1822, do you think that those measures at all arrested the first effect of the measure of 1819?—No; I think that a very considerable fall would have taken place after 1819, if there had not been that bill passed in 1819.

After all your experience of the effects of an inconvertible paper currency and alterations in the value of money, would you think it consistent with the good of the community that there should be a return to an inconvertible paper currency or any lowering of the standard of value?—I have no doubt whatever that it would be productive of the most serious consequences; and people are becoming generally so sensible of the mischief of an inconvertible currency, they have seen so much suffering under it, that I am persuaded no minister could be found at the present day that durst propose such a measure.

You were not favourable to the measure of 1819 at the time of its passing, did you not petition against it?—I did.

You have been asked whether creditors complained when there was a double standard, or whether they complained during the period up to 1816, when payments might be made in silver; what would you think creditors would say now who have advanced money since the suppression of the one pound notes, if silver were

made the standard at 5*s.* 6*d.* when the market price is 4*s.* 10*d.*?—I am persuaded that it would be impossible to get such a measure through Parliament. I know the people would never permit it.

You foresaw danger from the change made by the measure of 1819, and from your subsequent experience you would think the danger at least as great now from any change in the opposite direction?—Certainly.

Is the protection given to corn in your opinion greater in this country than the protection given to other staple manufactures, generally speaking?—No, I do not think it is, materially. You will find a very large proportion of the staple manufactures of this country protected to the extent of 25, 30, and 40 per cent.

THE END.

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