

AN
INQUIRY
INTO THE
CAUSES AND EFFECTS
OF
EMIGRATION
FROM THE
HIGHLANDS
AND
WESTERN ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND,
WITH OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
MEANS TO BE EMPLOYED FOR PREVENTING IT.

BY
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE motives which induced me to undertake the following Inquiry, and to lay it before the Public, I think it unnecessary to state; they are sufficiently unfolded in the course of the Inquiry itself.

That the performance contains many imperfections I am ready to admit, but I hope that they are not so great as to frustrate the object I had in view.

It may be deemed a fault that I have not been more circumstantial in illustrating the causes of Emigration; but I found this impossible, without entering into a detail of facts totally inconsistent with the brevity which I proposed to myself, and the expedition which the case required. I

have however endeavoured to investigate all the possible causes of Emigration from the Highlands, though these causes do not apply with equal propriety to every place.

To ascertain accurately the number of Emigrants for any length of time, I found would take up too much time, if at all practicable. Satisfying myself, therefore, with general statements, I admitted such calculations as could in a short time be procured from those who had the best means of information; minute accuracy was not necessary to accomplish my purpose.

The Observations on the Means to be Employed for preventing the Emigration of the Highlanders, are offered to the consideration of the Highland proprietors, merely as general suggestions to lead to a fuller investigation.

The interference of Government some way or other is unquestionably in a high degree expedient. Upon this part of the

subject, however, I did not feel myself qualified to speak with precision or confidence. The loose hints which I have ventured to throw out are intended to point out, in what circumstances a person may be allowed to emigrate, rather than to recommend coercive measures, or impose indiscriminate restraint; for restraint or prohibition, in some instances, would be no less cruel than impolitic.

The emigration of the Highlanders being taken notice of by travellers, journalists, surveyors, and others, I first intended to write a short essay, collect into one point of view all that lay scattered in the different authors, and add to this what might have been necessary; but I soon found the essay could not be short. I was then advised to give it the size of a volume, that it might answer, not merely the present emergency, but be a work of general utility.

This plan being disapproved by those

whose judgment I esteemed better than my own, I found it advisable to compress it to its present shape, without intending any injury to its general usefulness.

From this circumstance, however, the connection of the whole may not appear so obvious, and the transitions may be more abrupt.

It may perhaps be prudent to conceal the difficulties which I have encountered, and the time which I have employed in bringing this Inquiry, whatever may be its merits, even to its present state.

My acknowledgments are due to those gentlemen who politely took the trouble of furnishing me with several important local facts, some of which are given as notes.

I feel myself particularly indebted to those who assisted me with their advice and criticisms. My sense of obligation I have no language to express. To reveal their names would be deemed by them no fa-

vour. They need not my praises to establish their merit; but this testimony of gratitude and respect I could not withhold.

If any thing that may be thought offensive or disrespectful to any individual, or any order of men, has through negligence, haste, or warmth, escaped my notice, it was far from my intention; if, however, my regard to truth has led me to state things that are not agreeable, I trust that, for the sake of truth, they shall be judged with candour.

I have no motives of self-interest, no particular view to serve; I am connected with no party; I fear no righteous judgment; I speak as I think. If I gain the approbation of those who are capable of judging with impartiality, I am satisfied.

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FROM THE
HIGHLANDS, &c.

No nation has manifested a stronger attachment to their country, than the Highlanders have shown to their rude mountains, mossy wilds, and deep extending valleys.

Yet it is a fact of public notoriety, that thousands of them every year quit their country, and cross the Atlantic, in quest of other settlements.

Acquainted as I am with the force of their attachments, and delicacy of their

feelings, in any point of national honour, I cannot help being struck with the rapid and formidable progress of emigration, and giving it some share of my attention.

However powerful vanity and other passions may be, they are not sufficient to account for the desertion of such multitudes as evacuate the Highlands.

If those deluded Highlanders were all driven to this necessity by cruel usage, they would really become objects of compassion. But were they placed in such unhappy circumstances, they would learn better to appreciate those advantages they so capriciously forego. For not denying that some of them have no alternative but emigration, I maintain, that by far the greater number emigrate from the prevalence of passion or caprice.

To correct error, remove prejudice, and silence cavils, I shall endeavour, *first*, To investigate the causes of emigration from the Highlands. *Secondly*, To state the effects which it produces upon, or its relation to the prosperity of, the country. *Thirdly*, Inquire what means, if any, should be em-

ployed to prevent it. And, *fourthly*, Whether it should be subjected to any restraint, founded upon national policy, or regulated by any legislative measure.

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SECT. I.

On the Causes of Emigration from the Highlands, &c.

§. I. THE situation of the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland is favourable to emigration. The Highlands are mostly indented by arms of the sea, many of which extend forty or fifty miles into the country; hence many of the people live upon the sea-coast, and derive a great share of their sustenance from marine productions. When the terrors of the main surround them, they cheer themselves with a song, and laugh at the tempest.

The whole Highlands are mountainous, cold, and stormy. The people are often exposed to the inclemencies of the weather. Hence they acquire a firmness, a vigour, and a boldness, which the inhabitants of countries remote from the sea, of fertile plains, and more genial climate, do not possess. When, therefore, a person unaccustomed to such hardships would shrink at

the thought of undertaking a long navigation, the dangers of which he conceives so tremendous, the Highlander deems it as nothing.

And if he is led to consider his situation in an unfavourable light, this adds a double energy to his intentions, and cuts short all his deliberations.

§ 2. The character of the Highlanders is adventurous. They are men of noble spirit, quick discernment, and extensive views. Their curiosity is insatiable. Their intercourse with strangers makes them acquainted with foreign countries, and lessens the terrors of distance. They have a surprising avidity to go abroad, and cut a figure in lands where their ancestors were formerly distinguished, and where they themselves expect to reap the same good fortune.

Their love of poetry and music, gives a refinement to their ideas beyond their situation, fills their heads with imprudent projects, inclines them to credulity, and gives their imagination a romantic cast.

§ 3. Their ideas of government may be mentioned, as conducing to emigration.

From a multiplicity of causes, they have been led to acquiesce in an absolute but lenient aristocracy, not founded upon compulsion or feudal tenures, nor productive of slavery, but approaching that species of authority which we know to have existed in the patriarchal ages.

Government thought proper to subvert this authority, by the abolition of hereditary jurisdictions in 1748.

From that period the power of the chiefs declined, and the attachment of their retainers lost its force. They now maintain only that ascendancy, which prudent policy should be careful to encourage.

The attachment of the clans to their leaders was founded upon a principle which no enemy could vanquish, no temptation impair. Indissoluble, like the ivy which entwines the oak, they had the same fortune, enjoyed the serenity of sunshine, or braved the tempests together. So long as this principle of union retained its energy, the idea of emigration had no room to exist: But being at first undermined, and ultimately extinguished by the progress of society, the

fortunes of the chiefs, and policy of government, the Highlander, released from its influence, conceived a dislike to his country, lost his activity, became disheartened, and felt himself injured, because no longer flattered, caressed, and feasted. Not attracted by the same force, not influenced by the same allurements, he leaves his country with less reluctance, and is in some measure indifferent whether he shall ever return.

§ 4. The next object of investigation is the state of the population.

If the Highlands contain more people than they can subsist or employ, it is evidently necessary that the superfluous numbers should betake themselves to some other place, where they may procure the means of subsistence, and find employment.

In some valleys the population is so excessive, that it is a question with many discerning people, how the one half of the inhabitants could subsist, though they should have the land for nothing*. Those who

* In some spots with which I am acquainted, there may be from ten to twelve inhabitants, in some places

would be tenants are so numerous, and the land fit for cultivation so scanty, that all cannot be satisfied. The disappointed person, feeling himself injured, condemns the landlord, and seeks a happy relief in America. The tradesmen are in the same predicament; they cannot be all equally well employed, because they are not equally deserving, because there are too many of them, and because customers are too few. They curse their country, and make haste to abandon it.

That the Highlands are more populous now than they were a hundred years ago,

more, to an acre of arable land. Most of them have no trade. They apparently live by the produce of the place; and making every allowance for the scantiness of the fare, their patience of hunger, and trifling importation of necessaries, it is to me inexplicable how they subsist. To equipoise population, they spread themselves begging. For instance, the higher parts of Invernesshire in summer pour in upon the counties of Perth and Angus, so that I have seen, in seasons of scarcity, twenty or thirty served at one door, in one day, consisting mostly of women and children. The prevalence of beggary in the Highlands, requires attention, if it be caused by a defect of economy, or arises from excessive population.

and are still rapidly increasing in population, few will deny*.

But while this is admitted, I maintain that they possess resources which might sup-

* Emigration may partly be the cause of this rapid increase. Hume is of opinion, that as numbers are diminished, the remainder being placed in circumstances more favourable to procreation, multiply in proportion to the facility with which food can be procured. Essay XI. Vol. i. p. 400. on Population of Ancient Nations.

In the Highlands, they marry very early, which tends to confirm Hume's remark with regard to them. A gentleman, whose veracity is unquestionable, communicates to me by letter a remarkable instance of multiplication, known to himself, which puts the fact beyond a doubt. "The third cause, (says this gentleman) proceeds from the inconceivable and rapid increase of population in the Highlands, an instance of which I will give you, as consistent with my own knowledge.

"In 1790, a certain place on this west coast contained 1900 souls, of whom 500 emigrated to America that same year. In 1801, a census was taken, and the same spot contained 1967. From this (continues this judicious gentleman), it will plainly appear, that the Highlands cannot support its increase of inhabitants, without trade and manufactures." He adds a N. B. "The place I mentioned above furnished 87 men for the army and navy, and not a single stranger settled in it."

ply the increase, without the absolute necessity of emigration.

Society in the Highlands has greatly changed within the above mentioned period. Manners have become more favourable to the arts of peace; property of all kinds has increased in value, and is better secured; industry more encouraged, and more flourishing; villages are here and there built; manufactures, fisheries, and commerce, have arisen almost entirely within these fifty years; money is at least six times more abundant, and the means of subsistence are more easily procured; though a great deal remains to be done.

The introduction and cultivation of vegetable food *, attention to pasturage, im-

* In the Highlands, before the use of vegetable food to any extent, they often had severe trials. Though they generally took but one meal a-day, and lived with astonishing abstinence in the summer season, they sold their cattle (for they had no money) for meal. Often meal could not be got; then having bled their cattle, they baked their blood into cakes, and eat it with milk, and used many other shifts to prevent downright starvation. If a man were now to do these things, he would either be laughed at or despised.

provement of cattle, and promotion of industry, have completely removed some enormous calamities formerly experienced.

But it is said that the Highlands are not now so full of people as they were in ancient times, perhaps two or three centuries ago. If we go with those who adopt this opinion, then it follows that the population does not require any outlet, because the country has resources to maintain increasing numbers, which it did not possess at any period of its history with which we are acquainted. And if the people did not emigrate then, or die in greater proportion, they should not now be obliged to provide for themselves abroad.

It is generally asserted, that ancient nations were more populous than modern. Be this as it may with regard to other countries, I apprehend it cannot apply to the Highlands; for though we have no authentic records upon which to form a decisive judgment, we may argue from probability.

I cannot conceive, if the people were more numerous than at present, how they could subsist, even admitting the full influ-

ence of their unsettled mode of life, and their perpetual wars and dissensions.

§ 5. The arguments for the ancient population are these * :

“ That more men were brought to the
 “ field in the contests of independence or
 “ retaliation : That prodigious numbers of
 “ clients and followers formed the train of
 “ the chief, in peace and war, by no means
 “ consistent with a paucity of inhabitants :
 “ That it required more than the force of
 “ the King to reduce to submission, one ob-
 “ stinate, rebellious, and turbulent chief :
 “ That the mountaineers and islanders of-
 “ ten repelled the invasions of potent and
 “ disciplined troops, which it is supposed
 “ they could not do now ; and that the
 “ ground was cultivated to a greater extent ;
 “ for that vestiges of houses and tillage may
 “ here and there be discovered, among our
 “ mountains, concerning the date of which
 “ we have hardly any tradition.”

These arguments seem formidable at first sight, but they are only so in appearance.

* See Dr. Smith's Agricultural Survey of Argyllshire, p. 291, 292, 293.

§ 6. In old times, the principal occupation of the people was war, or procuring the means of life. All the males of a certain age were at the disposal of the chief, and attended him, when he chose to demand their service.

But if a chief of the first rank in our days were to revert to former customs, and summon his vassals and kindred to attend him, I think it may be allowed by fair computation, that his court would be more crowded than any recorded in the most splendid era of chivalry.

I dare say more than thirty or forty thousand Highlanders are scattered among our troops, by sea and land, besides four or five thousand volunteers; and yet the business of the country is not materially retarded. But if all the males fit for active service were called out, they would form such an army of Highlanders, as, I am confident, never appeared in the field during the most arduous and luminous periods of Caledonian history.

§ 7. It is no wonder that a king, who had little more than the title, fettered by

forms, encompassed by envious, jealous, and arrogant barons, should not, without difficulty and expence, reduce a turbulent chief, little short of royalty himself, abetted by the factious and discontented; supported by a numerous and faithful clan; intrenched behind his mountains and marshes; isolated in pathless forests, or defended by deep and dreary defiles, and tumultuous torrents, of frightful rapidity, and irresistible violence*.

* The power of the Scottish monarchs was extremely limited before the accession to the throne of England. Till the reign of Malcolm III. they were only military commanders. In peace they exercised little more than nominal authority. About the beginning of the fifteenth century, when society assumed a more regular and civilized form, in imitation of other monarchs, especially the French, they employed every expedient, which a sense of their own insignificance and measures of prudent policy could suggest, to assert the royal prerogative, abridge the power, and humble the insolence of the nobles. Laws had no influence where they could be either evaded by a sum of money, resisted by a force which they could not subdue, or where the execution of them was committed to those most guilty of transgressing them.

Even after the introduction of what is commonly called the feudal system into the low country, the barons still

§ 8. The causes which favoured the chiefs
in maintaining what they considered as their

continued refractory, but as it served their purpose, and were either engaged in hostilities with their sovereign, or with one another. The common expedient employed by the unfortunate Stuarts was to divide and conquer them.

But when the crown of England was added to that of Scotland, the monarchs acquired power and splendour, and distance made them more respected and feared, because more difficult of access.

The throne being the natural fountain of rewards and honours, the Scottish nobility saw the necessity of courting its favour, lest they should be supplanted or excluded by the English, whom they still beheld with a jealous eye.

From this period the nobility of Scotland began to decline in power. What I have said then regarding the difficulty of humbling or conciliating the Highland chiefs, when they chose to dissent, is founded upon fact.

Nor does the power of the Lord of the Isles, the extent of his territories, and the number of his forces, overthrow our argument. The circumstances which contributed to establish his authority and independence are known to those who have turned their attention to the history of the Hebrides during the sovereignty, and subsequent to the expulsion of the Danes. The population of these isles is more than 40,000, and can we suppose, that in an age of poverty, oppression, and incessant warfare, they contained more people than in an age of peace, security, freedom, and affluence?

independence and privileges, in opposition to their sovereigns, co-operated in their defence against foreign invasions. The situation of the Highlands, the native valour, proportioned union and numbers of the inhabitants, sufficiently account for the extent of their enterprises and vigour of their resistance, without proving that they were more populous than at present. A few resolute men, like the heroes of Thermopylæ, could defend some passes in the Highlands against thousands*.

§ 9. Some faint traces of cultivation may be found among our higher grounds. They make nothing for the ancient populousness of the Highlands; they are evidently the rude and simple experiments of agriculture.

The plains were then covered with forests, and inaccessible to the spade. The heights were chosen for defence against sudden incursions or unexpected surprises; retreats for the old men, women, children,

* See Marshall Saxe, *Reveries or Memoirs upon the Art of War*, chap. iii. p. 122. chap. iv. p. 123.

and cattle, in time of danger ; and they were also consecrated to the purposes of religion, as the names of some of them still import. In all Celtic countries, the priests, their wives, and pupils, occupied the lands adjoining the temple, and there resided. It is in general around the ruins of *duns* or fortresses, or the rude circles of idolatry and superstition, any marks of culture can be discovered. The neglected state of the heights, and present cultivation of the low grounds, favour our argument ; for as the people multiplied, and security was obtained, they quitted the eminences, and cleared the ground below.

These arguments have therefore more show than substance ; they destroy themselves. An unsettled state of society is unfriendly to population, as it is subversive of the social affections *.

* “ But who can persuade himself, that those savage times, when they sowed and reaped but little ; when they had no other choice but that of the destructive profession of arms ; of a drowsy indolence, no less destructive ; when every petty nation was torn to pieces either by private revenge and factions within, or by wars with their

The progress of population since the 1755 may be seen from the following statement, extracted out of the Statistical Account of Scotland :

	1755.	1790-98.	Differ- ence.	All Scotland.		
				1755.	1790-98.	Increase.
Argyllshire,	63,291	76,101	12,810			
Inverness,	64,656	74,979	10,323			
Caithness,	22,215	24,802	2,587			
Perth,	118,903	133,274	14,371			
Ross,	42,493	50,146	7,653			
Stirling,	33,813	46,663	12,850			
Sutherland,	20,774	22,961	2,187			
Total.	371,145	428,926	57,781	1,265,380	1,526,492	261,112

neighbours without ; when they had no other subsistence but rapine, and no other ramparts but wide frontiers laid waste ;—who, I say, can believe such a state as this more favourable to the propagation of the human species, than that wherein mens goods and persons are in full security ? wherein the fields are covered with labourers, and their cities, rich and numerous, flourish in tranquillity ; wherein the people are left to breathe during long intervals of peace ; and there is never more than a small part of the inhabitants to which war is destructive ; and lastly, wherein commerce, manufactures, and the arts, offer so many resources, and second so well that national propensity to increase and multiply, which nothing but the fear of indigence can check or restrain ?” See Mallet’s Northern Antiquities, chap. ix. p. 232, 233.

I have taken those counties only which compose most of what we now call the Highlands, and are most affected by emigration. It cannot be supposed that the population of these counties was scrupulously taken, but it cannot be very far from the truth.

§ 10. The emigration of the Highlanders is supposed also to arise from the oppression, exactions, or harsh treatment of superiors.

But I defy any man to point out in the Highlands even a solitary instance of open and avowed violence capable of driving any innocent person from his country.

What may have been done when superiors had supreme authority in their own hands, I am not called upon to state; but they are now too enlightened to attempt any undisguised violation of those laws of which they consider themselves the guardians. The inferiors are too resolute to submit to any encroachment upon those rights which they know as their own, and which they prize too highly to relinquish. The avenues of justice are cleared of that

rubbish, and those obstacles with which notions long ago exploded have choked it. The meanest individual may call the highest to account. A person may be removed, but he will not submit to violence or disgrace, without resenting, complaining, or suing for redress. I have heard some instances long ago, where violence was attempted by superiors, and where perhaps justice found herself clogged or overpowered by partiality, but the injured, instead of flying, kept their ground, boldly entered the lists, appealed to the laws of their country, and though beggared by the law's delay, were proud to come off victorious. Examples of this kind occurred, when old ideas of domination prevailed, and the fathers were provoked by the rebellion of those whom they considered their children, and over whom they thought they had Roman authority; but since the expansion of religious knowledge and of liberal arts, these acts of violence have vanished; and should they still appear, so far, in my opinion, from causing emigration, they would be the means of preventing it; for in a free born mind, of

the Celtic cast, there is some quality that glories to struggle and overcome adversity.

But where oppression prevails for any length of time, it has most extraordinary effects upon human nature; it degrades the mind, deprives it of vigour, enervates its courage, and debilitates every noble and manly quality. The soul makes no effort to assert its freedom, unless moved by some extraordinary impulse. Dignity of sentiment, freedom of expression, and a spirit of enterprise, are annihilated; the very capacity for exertion is much weakened, because the individual is not allowed to act or think for himself, therefore is as little conscious of the operations of his soul as a Prussian foldier or a common musician*.

Poverty and oppression dwell together, though the former is not always a proof of the latter. Where oppression prevails, the people are always ragged, their countenances are dejected and fullen, as in the ecclesiastical states of Germany; their gait serious, and steps slow. Ignorant and mi-

* See Moore's Travels in Germany.

ferable in this life, they are resigned, and commit their faith, their hopes, their whole happiness to the next *. Are people in such circumstances fit for long voyages, for uncertain climates? They would shrink at the thought. They attach themselves more and more to that very country, where they suffer every indignity, where indeed the brutes are far superior to them in point of temporal advantages.

We hear therefore of few emigrations from despotic countries. I remember only the emigration of the Cossacs from Poland in 1637.

It is among the Scythians of ancient, and Tartars † of modern times, that we discover a migrating roving spirit, because they are accustomed to enjoy a freedom of choice that knows few or no restraints.

The inhabitants of the despotic countries of Europe and Asia bear their chains in tranquillity, because despotism has made them afraid to think. It would have been

* This is visible in Popish and Mahometan countries.

† See Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws, on the Invasions of Asia.

a strange phenomenon to hear of colonies emigrating from the despotic provinces of Spain, Italy, or Germany.

The emigration of the Highlanders, then, so far from indicating oppression, in my opinion evinces a large share of civil and religious advantages; and if it does not manifest the leniency, it does not establish the severity of domestic economy.

§ 11. Look to the people of the Highlands, they present the appearance of political happiness. They are daily improving in the arts of life. The ground is tolerably well cultivated, where it admits cultivation. In some places the houses are laying aside their rude and savage form, and beginning to be built of stone and lime. The peasants are better fed and better clad than when there was no emigration, and in finery they rival their masters. Does this arise from oppression? Dancing schools are found in every inn. Urbanity and graceful manners are studied. Upon all public occasions, you behold the face of freedom, the gaiety of competence, and the dignity of independence. Are these the fruits of op-

pression, or of industry and increasing prosperity?

Among the gloomy scenes of Caledonia, one is astonished to meet such an air of cheerfulness, apparently natural. In a country where there is no proportion betwixt the fertile soil and barren rocks, where the climate is so variable and uncertain, the winter so severe, and frosts so deleterious; where importation is so difficult and expensive, and where it requires immense toil to raise crops and procure the necessaries of life, happiness is found.

No country upon the face of the earth has risen so rapidly in the scale of improvement, nor attained eminence through such difficulties. In the space of fifty years, the value of property has arisen to a pitch unexampled in the history of any mountainous country*. The price of labour has

* A gentleman of respectability and extensive local knowledge, of obliging manners and patriotic zeal, was good enough to furnish me with an example of this. The lands of Glencarnock, lying in the parish of Balquhiddy, were bought by the Earl of Moray in 1764 at 3800l. At Whitsunday 1801 they were set at above 800l. of

kept pace with it. Money has increased in proportion, and, comparatively speaking, affluence shines now, where formerly penury and sorrow hung their heads in darkness.

§ 12. The Highlands are singularly favoured by public institutions, calculated to promote their happiness, encourage industry, commerce, and arts, and remove those obstacles which are thrown in the way of improvement.

To gain this end, vast sums of money are yearly expended. The King allots 1000l. every year to reform and enlighten them. A society, of increasing resources and indefatigable perseverance, is instituted to cooperate with the royal bounty, in diffusing

yearly rent, and not a shilling expended by the proprietor upon improvements.

The farm of Invernenty, in the same parish, was feued by the Duke of Athole in 1736 to Donald M'Leran at the agreed price of 300 merks Scots. It was sold at a public sale in 1794 for 3620l. Sterling, and not a shilling laid out upon improvement. Many such instances might be quoted. Let these suffice.

the inestimable blessings of religion. Another society, which well deserves its name, is established, to dispel the darkness of ancient prejudices, to rouse the genius of industry, to encourage, by premiums, medals, and honourable distinctions, every person who excels in any thing which meets their wishes, and comprises their object. Any new discovery or improvement receives a suitable mark of honour.

Besides these, there is a Board of Agriculture, whose object comprehends the Highlands, and a society for improving the fisheries.

A great many of our proprietors are members of those societies, and concerned in those institutions. Can we harbour the thought, that men, who are capable of such patriotic exertions, should act so inconsistently, as the charge of oppression would lead us to believe? Would they drive from their country those very people whose interests they study to promote? Whether the measures adopted in conformity with enlarged ideas, may not have this tendency, will appear in the sequel. When the causes of any

thing are given, let them be fairly tried and compared with the effects ascribed to them, as is usual in physical researches. Let proper discriminations be made, and let not the fault of one fall upon the whole. If you except Swisserland and the Valais before the French revolution, I defy the renowned kingdoms of Europe to adduce one province that competes with the Highlands in point of national felicity. If they have not the luxuries of life, they want their evils. If they have not the refinements of arts, they have the innocence of simplicity, the glory of moral rectitude, and the purity of unaffected piety *.

* O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona nôrint,
Agricolæ ! &c.

O happy, if he knew his happy state,
The swain, who, free from business and debate,
Receives his easy food from nature's hand,
And just returns of cultivated land !
No palace with a lofty gate he wants,
T' admit the tide of early visitants ;
But easy quiet, a secure retreat,
A harmless life, that knows not how to cheat,
With home-bred plenty, the rich owner blest,
And rural pleasures crown his happiness.

§ 13. I believe the prevailing opinion respecting the oppression or grievances of the Highlands, is owing in some measure to those who left them discontented, to those who visited them in the same mood, or to those who are not sufficiently acquainted with their nature and character.

Of the circumstances that may have misled the judgment of the last description of persons, I will speak a few words. It may have been biased by education. If they have been educated very delicately, they were not able to bear the cold and wet, the hunger and fatigue of the Highland wilds. If they have been bred in the south, where in general they know as much of the Highlands as they do of Samoeide, where, however, they conceived them poor, savage, and ignorant, under the influence of such pre-

Unvex'd with quarrels, undisturb'd with noise,
 The country-king his own realm enjoys ;
 Cool grots and living lakes, the flow'ry pride
 Of meads, and streams that through the valley glide,
 And shady groves, that easy sleep invite,
 And after toilsome days, a soft repose at night.

Dryden's Virgil.

judices, they really came to visit the land of novelty like a person hood-winked*.

§ 14. Those accounts of misery and distress may have arisen from inattention to the progress of society in the Highlands. If people have taken it into their heads that the Highlands have continued stationary, what can be expected from such a strange belief but as strange a relation! Let us suppose then that the mistake arises from other sources. The external appearance of the Highlanders may lead strangers to form unfavourable conclusions. They hear a language which they do not understand; they see modes of life they never saw before; every thing around them differs from what

* And hence their accounts resemble Butler's description of Fame:

About her neck a packet mail
 Fraught with advice, some fresh, some stale,
 Of men that walk'd when they were dead,
 And cows of monsters brought to bed;
 Of hailstones big as pullets eggs,
 And puppies whelp'd with twice two legs;
 A blazing star seen in the west
 By six or seven men at least.

they conceive to be freedom and competency.

They meet the dusky hamlet, constructed of rude materials, the light making its way in at one aperture, and the smoke flying out at another, or both contending for the same passage; the rank grass whistles on the roof, and the aged moss covers the unpolished walls.

The line of cultivation is extremely limited. Here a patch of oats, there of barley and potatoes. Rocks of gigantic size, woods, brakes, moss, skirt the whole; and a half-choked rill bubbles by.

A few green pastures; a flock of sheep scattered here and there; a herd of cattle lowing along the vale, gazing at the stranger; a shepherd whistling on the airy precipice, which threatens his cot; these unusual sights strike the wary traveller with astonishment, and make him forget he is in the land of cakes and liberty; he takes out his diary, and writes down, Who can live here? Perhaps he never before saw a mountain higher than the steeple of St. Paul or St. Andrews. His father, his tutor,

or his curiosity, in an evil hour introduced him into the Grampians, which receive him, it seems, with very little courtesy, and he will treat them in return with very little reserve*.

These are scenes calculated to inspire melancholy, and superinduce a belief that nothing but wretchedness would or could reside in regions of such horror and desolation. Yet in these I often heard the voice of melody echoing along the rocks, and labour cheered by a song.

The thinking and philosophic traveller would accordingly console himself, by reflecting that mountainous places are in all ages and countries the seat of freedom; that tyranny and oppression are banished

* An English gentleman taking a tour, came to Crieff; from Crieff, advancing north by Glenalmond, he had the prudence to send his servant before to reconnoitre. The servant returned, and made an unfavourable report. The gentleman, however, drove on, till he arrived at the south end of Glenalmond. "This," says the first person that met him, "is the entrance, the porch of the Highlands." "And what," says he, "must the palace be, if this be the porch?" He stopt, and thought he had seen enough.

from such lofty and barren tracts; and hence a thousand agreeable emotions and associations would arise in his mind.

§ 15. The emigration of the Highlanders is occasioned partly by the progress of society and manners, and partly by the general system of improvement, which is conceived best adapted to the nature of the Highlands.

To keep pace with the progress of improvement in the south, many sacrifices must be made, and many schemes must be devised, which require all the invention of ingenuity, and all the economy of prudence.

Hence it is necessary to deprive some persons of their possessions, to make room for others more industrious or more fortunate.

The landlord, actuated by a principle of benevolence, finds it expedient to discourage every species of idleness, therefore removes the lazy and the indolent, to encourage the active and the industrious. The persons removed may get another situation, intended to call their talents to action, to

try their temper, suit their connections, or discover the source of their misfortune*.

But as all men have a good opinion of their own talents, and censure what they dislike, this judicious conduct excites resentment, is taxed with severity, and loaded with opprobrium.

It is resolved to continue the rupture, and quit the estate.

§ 16. It may be necessary also to make new arrangements corresponding with the nature of the soil, situation, and climate, and conformable to the times.

Novelties are exposed to general observation. The motives which introduced them, and the object they have in view, are seldom construed in a favourable light, unless they arise from our own suggestions, or obviously appear for our own interest.

All improvements are at first new, and are received and appreciated in proportion

* "This, instead of being an injury, is the greatest good that can be done to many a poor tenant, who will rather toil on struggling with adversity, than quit what he cannot enjoy." See Gentleman Farmer, by Lord Kames, chap. xiv. p. 305, 306.

as their utility is perceived, and according to the channels through which they come.

The landlord has these prejudices to encounter, however fatal the consequences. He enlarges his farms, to make way for a mode of agriculture or pasturage, which he conceives more advantageous. He removes the former occupants, and admits a person of more understanding, and more efficient capital; he makes provision for those who may be dispossessed, by offering them a small tenement; but pride and irritation scorn to accept his provision. Emigration is then the sole remedy.

§ 17. Grazing requires the same management, and produces the same effect.

Attention to pasture, judiciously conducted, is one of the happy improvements of our day, and what has contributed to raise the Highlands to that rank which they hold in the Empire; for till this system was adopted, our hills were little better than useless wastes to the owners and the public; they had scarcely any value, as may be seen, by comparing the division of land into

merks, or valued rents, in grazing and agricultural districts.

Our mountains and hills are by nature destined for the reception of the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven. And though our valleys are in general not unfertile, nor unfit for cultivation, their returns would be so inadequate, and, from many causes, so precarious, that the system of raising large crops of corn is in many places wisely abandoned for that of grazing.

This practice redounds to the immediate interest of the proprietor, and ultimately tends to promote the public good. Because, if the valleys and hills are enabled to pay a greater rent, they not only put more money in circulation, but augment the common stock. If, however, the provisions made for those who are dispossessed, displeas'd, or are deem'd inadequate by them, they leave the country, though these provisions better suited their limited capitals, and though they had an opportunity of employing themselves more profitably in the service of their landlords.

This plan of improvement has put the whole Highlands into commotion. They who are deprived of those possessions to which they thought they had a sort of hereditary right, feel a reluctance in settling any where else, conceive a disgust at their country, and therefore prefer leaving it. Or if they do not act with this perversity, they offer for other farms; and in these cases, being seldom masters of prudence, while they are under the dominion of passion, they run the hazard of ruining themselves by their extravagance. This revolution of farms and masters increases ^{the} duration, and like a stone thrown into a pool, one estate moved, moves perhaps hundreds around, and by necessary consequence, obliges many to leave their country; and the connection once broken, they care not where they go.

§ 18. The next object of consideration, is the mode of management, closely connected with, and indeed anticipated, in some respect, in the preceding observations. But it may be considered in another point of view.

In such an extent of country, the management of so many individuals, of different dispositions, educations, and principles, cannot be expected to be faultless. The leniency, not to say the merciful partiality of superiors, has produced some inconveniences, tending to inspire disgust, and of course to desolate the country; for he that is in bad humour, or ill pleased with his neighbour and master, and thinks he has nothing to defend himself and property but lawburrows, sees no beauty around him, feels no attraction, and in this fever of anxiety and irascibility, takes to flight.

§ 19. The mode of setting land by roup directly causes emigration, and is liable to a thousand exceptions.

This practice was adopted in the infancy of experiments, in the first stages of rent-rising, and except where this is still the case, it is wisely left off.

I believe it owed its origin to policy. It was not easy for a proprietor to know the real value of his land, without knowing the opinion entertained of it by the occupiers themselves. This scheme would dis-

close the secret, though not accurately; for I do not look upon rousers of any kind as the best means of ascertaining the value of any thing. They have such a malignant influence upon the people, by fomenting passions, and perpetuating dissensions, that they should be applied to only as the last resource.

The favourite, the opulent, the intelligent, and the audacious, have an opportunity of gratifying any passion that may predominate, at their neighbour's expence.

The poor, timid, ignorant, and unfortunate, are thrown out of their possessions, and exposed to peculiar hardships.

New adventurers have full room to satisfy their speculative spirit, and grasp at leases, at which a poor divided crowd dare not aspire. What can this crowd do, but retire, to seek another settlement?

§ 20. I should also mention secret offers, which, though they increase the rents, lead to emigration; for the same classes of individuals I named before, may have it in their power to offer for as many farms as they please, at any rate they please. The pru-

dent and skilful, the cool and dispassionate, proceed by calculation, not by chance. They send in the offers which they think equivalent to the farm.

Those in distressed or narrow circumstances, if they have boldness enough, may outbid them. They all act in the dark, perfectly ignorant of one another's proceedings, unless some relation, friendship, or combination, prompt them to reveal their secrets.

But it is clear, that by this practice many are surpris'd to be told that their farms are given away to others. In a fit of rage and disappointment, they offer for other farms, and, if successful, perhaps precipitate themselves into misery; but if unsuccessful, they resolve to leave their native country. I must observe, in justice to proprietors, that unless they have some other cause, they generally give the preference to the present possessor, upon equal terms.

Nay, I have known instances, in which they denied themselves considerable advantages, rather than eject an old tenant.

Be that as it may, this clandestine man-

ner of receiving offers, and letting land, by whatever policy directed, has the same tendency as rousing, and is the most exceptionable of the two*.

* A specimen of letting land by rousp may be given, to illustrate its tendency.

I happened to have been present at one of them some years ago, as at a public entertainment, and having no concern, and being under no suspicion, my neutrality gave me an opportunity of observation.

The people assembled on the day appointed by the factor, at an inn which stood by the highway. After waiting some time in anxious suspense, easily observable in their gestures, the factor condescended to show himself to the tenants, who did him as much honour as they do to the Lama of Thibet. He surveyed them some time with a lofty eye, and a strut, mimicking dignity. Then he opened his mouth, and told them the rousp was to begin. The farm of — was got by a thin, lank, black, furly looking old man, at a prodigious rise of rent, after many a tug, and many a frown, and many a spittle.

Next, this man's own farm came on, which he intended to keep too. For some time, he allowed the offers to go on; then he employed a neighbour in his interest. The tenant of —, however, resolved to punish him for depriving him of his farm, and bade smartly. The contest continued beyond reason and common sense, till the farm nearly tripled its rent; when on a sudden, the new tenant of — stops, and the other found himself in possession of — at a rent which, in his sober senses, he would

§ 21. Were it consistent with my inquiry, I would willingly pass over the conduct of factors in silence.

I should premise, that though delicacy obliges me to generalise my observations,

never have thought of, and which indeed he had no intention to offer, but to punish —, who, he thought, would never give up his farm, because he knew his ambition and avarice. One offered for his neighbour's farm, because he was more successful than himself. Another would not keep his own, because the mildews were heavy upon it. A third disliked his farm, because the wind shook his corn. A fourth would have a change of place, because his wife was troubled with headaches. A fifth thought his neighbour too religious; and a sixth was angry, because another's wedders fetched a higher price than his own. A seventh hated his possession, because the factor used to sleep in his neighbour's house, and he must have the house.

In short, the whole estate underwent a total revolution. The factor was now and then forced from his gravity. Sometimes he called them fools, sometimes madmen.

This day, however, was the origin of war :

Ille dies primus Lethi, primusque malorum
Causa fuit.

Vir. Æn. IV.

At the close of the business, the timid, and prudent, and poor, found themselves unfarmed, unroofed. Such exhibitions of pride, folly, affectation, wantonness, covet-

I am far from thinking all of them equally blameable, or unqualified for their duty. Were I allowed, I could adduce living examples of both kinds.

The ignorance, imprudence, or viciousness of some managers prescribes sometimes with peculiar hardships upon those committed to their care. If a person is so unfortunate as to give one of them offence, no matter how, he either privately or publicly uses every artifice to render him odious to his neighbours or his landlord, till in the end he finds it necessary to withdraw.

It would be tedious and irksome to enumerate the various methods by which a factor may get rid of a person whom he hates, or to let in, as it is termed, one whom he loves.

A man of spirit, fatigued, harassed, and disgusted by the neglect or misconduct of a factor, finds a happy asylum for his sorrows

ousness, dissimulation, malice, and ignorance, I never saw.

The influence of the passions, inflamed by this group, never lost its action, till it reached America.

in another country. A person not accustomed to reflect upon such subjects, may be at a loss to comprehend how any servant should be allowed to exercise such authority, or what motives he could have for acting so unworthy a part. This difficulty may be easily surmounted, by observing that they are not always under the eye of their masters, and that they alone have access to their ears. Factors may have an interest to promote, separate from that of their master; they may have connections which require sacrifices, which outweigh candour, and corrupt the heart; they may be unacquainted with the humour, the pursuits, the ability, the nature of the people; they may be of a servile and abject spirit, too easily misled, too delicate to remonstrate, or to recommend salutary measures. Their maxim is, that servants should always obey—or approve*.

* Tradition favours us with an anecdote which illustrates the quality here mentioned. It is ludicrous. "A gentleman had reason to think, and judgment to discern, that his factor would approve and acquiesce in any thing

The study of the seasons, and the situation of the country, and many other circumstances, are below their attention. Fraught with notions founded upon vague unrealised theory, or borrowed from other countries and other men, which can neither suit their present charge, nor advance their master's interest, they rush into new measures with the usual zeal and madness of theo-

which he suggested, however absurd or impracticable ; for whatever his master ordered, he had a custom of saying, He was thinking of that.

“ The matter was one day put to the test. The docile factor was sent for. With a serious air, his constituent opened his business : “ I have,” says he, “ a very important scheme in contemplation, which will not only save me money, but will be of public utility.”—“ I am sure,” interrupted the pliant factor, begging pardon for doing it, “ I am sure it is good.”—“ Well,” resumed the gentleman, “ I was thinking of sowing that field with salt ; it will extirpate those noxious weeds, improve the soil, better than rain, snow, clover, or any vegetable, which all derive their nutritive quality from salt.” The factor, with a shrug of his shoulders, followed by a short interval of silence, immediately turns round, exclaiming, “ Glorious, my Lord ! I was just thinking of that ; for barilla grows in Spain, salt at Rochelle, and why not salt on your estate, as good as any in the world ?”

rists ; and if things do not succeed according to their expectations and representations (for they are excellent declaimers), they wage war with men, beasts, trees, shrubs, grass, every thing. He that could bear the tyranny of such masters might have been born a Mahometan. Emigration happily emancipates the poor Highlander from their power, unless their folly and inexperience become too glaring to escape the notice of their constituents, and an honourable resignation prevent the mischiefs of their conduct.

§ 22. Under the same general head is to be considered the adaptation or selection of improvement, and the limits which prudence assigns to speculation.

The spirit of improvement and speculation, from whatever cause, sometimes precedes the capacities of the people, and may be at variance with the particular circumstances of the country. When more is required of the people and the ground than can be reasonably expected, the desire of improvement may seduce the intellect, so as to terminate in the most ruinous conse-

quences *. A man of this cast overturns every thing. If the people do not pay the rent when he demands it, they are a set of idle vagabonds. If one become insolvent, no matter how, he must be removed. If they have not crops, cows, horses, sheep, every thing in the style of Yorkshire farm-

* "The system of farming, which prevails over almost the whole of the Highlands, necessarily annihilates the population; and this part of the empire seems to be converted into a mere sheep-walk for the rest. I will not pretend to say that this partial evil in modern politics, is not compensated by the prevalence of manufactures and other employments in the more populous parts of the empire, but still it is an evil to the places where it prevails. The love of society is an appetite to the human mind, and we feel a sense of privation when we see whole regions depopulated. This was the feeling of an amiable nobleman, who told his factors, that he would rather see one human being on his estates than a hundred sheep. But the general prevalence of a system supported by pecuniary profit will overcome the exertions of an individual; and if population is to be equalised, it must be by equalising the distribution of employment. Manufactures, perhaps too numerous in the Lowlands, must be introduced into the Highlands; with their aid, agriculture will be enabled to make a more rapid progress." Remarks on the Local Scenery and Manners in Scotland during the years 1799 and 1800, by John Stoddart, LL. B. 2 vols. 8vo, 1801.

ers, the ground must be cleared of such trash.

The object and the heart of this romantic speculatist are good, his judgment is wrong. If he compared the progress of arts, and studied the circumstances of the country where Providence unfortunately gave him birth, he would have more patience, and probably more success.

Some of those gentlemen, by their fanaticism after its kind, sell their estates, because they are not equally well improved with the luxuriant plains of the South, and not only banish the people, but banish themselves. This is a melancholy indiscretion.

Innovations should be gradually introduced. However enlightened one may be, he has some favourite, though trifling prepossession and preference: He should not then declare war against customs endeared by a thousand ties, and sanctioned by a thousand years. No people on earth are more attached to the customs of their fathers than the Highlanders.

A wise man, somewhat acquainted with

human nature, whatever his eagerness may be, proceeds by imperceptible steps, and by precept and example illustrates the utility of his alterations, the spirit which dictates them, and the solidity of the principles, upon which they are founded. If he get into a passion, or if he be naturally choleric, his plans are undone; the people will leave him. By disregarding their prejudices, men have pushed forward with all the precipitation of fresh conviction, with all the bigotry of modern wisdom, and with all the intolerance of ancient usages, till they armed the passions and prejudices of the people against them, rendered themselves unpopular, their measures abortive, and thinned the country of its most useful inhabitants.

§ 23. The mode of farming, the instability and uncertainty of tenure, come under the same general head of discussion.

I know not from what motives it originates, or upon what policy it is founded, but many estates in the Highlands have no leases. I should premise, that some estates, though in this situation, have the same

tenants for many generations ; but a. are not so ; and from the progress of manners, those which are, may soon change their aspect.

This precariousness causes dependence, and cramps improvement. People naturally love security, and soothe their cares with the expectation of reaping the fruit of their labours. Seeing round them such sudden and fatal revolutions, they take the alarm, and apply for a lease. If they do not get it, they are discouraged, at least displeas'd, and the fears of some of them become so restless and uneasy, that they remove themselves, rather than wait to be removed by another, or remain from year to year in this uncertainty.

If leases are granted, they are sometimes so short, or cramped by such vexatious and equivocal clauses, that they are not calculated to remove anxiety.

But what is worse, some of them allow the immediate tenant to sublet, at any rate, and in any manner, he pleases. It does not fall to my plan to trace the various gradations, through which the practice of sublet-

ting has passed. It boasts of antiquity, but no age can justify it. Sensible of the evils of it, some of the most enlightened proprietors have introduced into the leases restrictive clauses to prevent it; and all are beginning to perceive the grievances which it produces.

Let us observe the manner in which subletting is conducted, and we will not be surpris'd that it drives many from their native country, and causes murmurs and discontent.

A farm is let, in the first instance, for a number of years. It is then let again for a certain addition of rent. This second, or subtenant, endeavours to make the best of it. Perhaps, like his master, he lets the whole, or a part, to one or more, as suits his interest. The difficulties still increase.

The under-tenants, seeing no prospect of living, or paying their rents, threatened by a thousand evils, at last, after many unsuccessful efforts, come to the resolution of transporting themselves, while they have it in their power. The farm is unimproved; the interest of the landlord is materially

injured; the country is impoverished; for those poor underlings, at any other employment would earn a comfortable subsistence, and perhaps lay by a provision for their children; whereas, by the love of farming, they contract debts, and ultimately expatriate themselves. In short, in the scale of subsetting, misery descends*. It is a sort of trafficking with land which is ruinous to the people themselves, for it shows their landlords to what advantage the lands may be turned, and to what a pitch the rents may be screwed.

§ 24. Servitudes deserve to be mentioned, as tending to the same point. The servitudes I mean are commonly called rural servitudes; such as foot roads, horse roads, dams, aqueducts, watering of cattle, and pasturage, feal and divot, and thirlage †.

* Many parts of Ireland are woful instances of the hardships arising from subsetting. Accordingly, where it prevails, ignorance, poverty, barbarism, and emigration, are observed to prevail also.

† See Erskine's Principles of the Law of Scotland, p. 205.

All these kinds of servitudes may fall with peculiar hardship upon the tenant. They are in reality a part of his rent, though they may not be considered such by the proprietor. They derange his plans; they discourage his exertions. If he be a man of spirit, they subject him to perpetual mortifications; for whether his immediate superior be dominant, or another, it comes to the same purpose. He cannot, without a sigh, see his grass trodden under foot, or devoured by a foreign bestial; his ground turned up for peat, seal, divot, or turf; besides many other ways of discomposing his mind, and affecting his interest. He therefore resigns what he cannot remedy, and is reluctantly thrown upon the sea of emigration. And accordingly, in the counties where subsetting and servitudes are most prevalent, emigration is so too. The people are now possessed of a sensibility really tender, an obstinacy unconquerable, in points which concern their own interest, and a desire of ease and security, and independence, to the attainment of which they will sacrifice their native country.

Any thing that hurts the laborious and lower classes, or any thing they conceive disagreeable or injurious, leads to emigration.

Having considered the state of society and manners among the more exalted ranks, as productive of emigration, I shall now consider the progress of society and manners, as it regards the subordinate gradations, tending to produce the same effect.

§ 25. Though I might first investigate the state of political and religious opinions in the Highlands, and be able to prove, that they incline the people, in some instances, to leave their country, I avoid it, satisfying myself with remarking, in general, that those who are dissatisfied, either with the civil or religious establishments of one country, commonly fly to another, in order to remedy an evil which originates more in the constitution of their own nature than in political circumstances, and which a change of place is seldom able to eradicate.

§ 26. We discover in the dispositions and temperaments of the people themselves some striking peculiarities. Their discontents

have no small influence in leading them away. These arise from various causes, and assume a variety of forms, but they all concur to render those who indulge them restless and uneasy, and of consequence incline them to look elsewhere for that tranquillity they cannot find at home*.

Accordingly, we find the emigrating Highlanders in this unfortunate condition. Their discontents spring from the perturbation of their own mind. Uneasy and disturbed, they know not why, they find themselves placed amidst those whom they consider enemies to their repose. It is not easy to trace the cause of this mental derangement, but the effects of it are visible, and deserve the serious regard of every true politician; for it has not only produced emigration, but convulsed empires.

* The general remedy, says the profound Johnson, of those who are uneasy, without knowing the cause, is change of place. They are willing to imagine that their pain is the consequence of some local inconvenience, and endeavour to fly from it, as children from their shadows, always hoping for more satisfactory delight from every new scene, and always returning home with disappointment and complaints. *Rambler*, No. 6. Vol. I.

It materially injures the value of those possessions, and those advantages, which the Highlanders have in their power to enjoy.

When one sees another more in the favour of the landlord, more powerful, more opulent, or more prosperous, he is seized with the spirit of emigration, his soul dies within him, he loses sight of every advantage in his own possession*.

He becomes dissatisfied with his residence. His neighbours lose all their good qualities; and the innocent landlord, who knows nothing of this dangerous fever, is to be accused of injustice and cruelty, because, forsooth, he will not comply with all the unreasonable requests which such a temper may be disposed to make. His prudent conduct irritates more and more. Therefore this irritation has no relief but a voyage to the new hemisphere.

I must observe, in justice to my countrymen, that I am far from thinking this un-

* See Dr. Blair's sermons on the Disorder of the Passions, and on the Misfortunes arising from Ourselves.

reasonable kind of dissatisfaction so general, as many are ready to believe.

In the preceding parts of this investigation, I have shown proofs to the contrary. But, as shall appear immediately, from the diffusion of knowledge, and mixture of old and new notions, many of them harbour very inconsistent prejudices, extremely hostile to their own interest, in the first instance, and productive of no good to their country.

§ 27. It is necessary to impose restraints upon them, to secure rights and property.

Some things in the Highlands were not considered by the peasants property till very lately. It was necessary to change their ideas, and teach them to respect the rights of their superiors to game, fish, and wood.

The old notions are yet strongly retained in some districts, and not unfrequently put in practice; for it is not easy to convince a Highlander, that a landlord has a better right to a deer, a moor-fowl, or a salmon, than he has himself, because he considers them the unconfined bounty of Heaven;

he thinks it therefore no crime to stretch his hand and eat.

The state of society required an adjustment of such notions; but it was not so easy to make the people perceive the necessity of, or reconcile themselves to, this change.

But worse than all this, they are not allowed to use wood at pleasure. The Highlander, born in woods, once permitted, nay, applauded and paid for rooting them out, cannot conceive that what was once a virtue can ever become a crime; he looks upon this restriction as a grievous oppression; he therefore sets off for the back settlements of America, where he thinks he may cut down as many trees as he pleases, kill as many deer and birds as he can, or take up the tomahawk with the Indian, and roam at random in quest of unappropriated prey.

§ 28. The ordinary calamities which bad seasons occasion, or flow from other sources, reduce the people to difficulties, who in general would always receive good, but no evil; they must, however, from the pre-

sent order of things, be sometimes tried by adversity.

In such seasons as the two last, many of them are thrown out of employment, and many of them experience the hardships of want. These hardships they could bear with patience, if they did not know how to remove them; but despairing of removing them in their own country, and of enjoying the common conveniencies of life, they see no alternative, but seek relief where they think it may be found.

This is laudable, if they would do it quietly, like good Christians, and not throw the whole blame where it should not wholly lie; but, guided by passion, or deluded by fancy, they ascribe what is only the common lot of humanity, to the administration of the country, to the contests of independent nations, or to the judgment of the Almighty. Unfortunately they can find no region of the globe where human government is exempted from imperfection, where no war prevails, and where sin does not excite the displeasure of the Supreme Being.

No human affair, no human condition is stationary. However flourishing and prosperous any country may be, its commerce, its manufactures, its resources or employments, must be fluctuating. Markets rise and fall, interruptions of human happiness frequently occur, and it is fortunate that they do. The Highlands have their own share of the common lot.

But the spirit of emigration revolts and criminates—whom? Providence, that did not ordain our condition more steadfast, or give us always the desire of our hearts.

The wisdom of Heaven is not directly charged with the fluctuations of life, and consequent pressures of calamity, but the proprietors should do better.

If the crops are bad, the markets low, and money scarce, the masters should prevent it; or, to speak in more awful language, they must be omnipotent.

They must be endued with the spirit of prophecy and divination, to calculate every chance, foresee and obviate every calamity; they must rui the winds and rains, give stability to markets, direct the circula-

tion of money, and regulate the demands of every appetite ; they must have a hundred eyes, a hundred ears, to satisfy capricious whims ; they must, in short, work impossibilities. What absurdity ! what irrationality ! Yet from these circumstances, which are not under the controul of any human power, the emigrants arraign the equity of their conduct, and as if security could be gained by a change of place, transport themselves to foreign countries *.

§ 29. Imagination deludes the poor emigrants. Whenever it is set afloat, reason loses his helm. A thousand gay illusions sport before the eye, and solicit the fancy. Present advantages become insipid, or sink in esteem ; the future gains what the present loses.

The emigrants are not perhaps sensible

* It may be observed, that all that is incumbent upon landed proprietors in fixing a rent, is to regulate it by a just medium of so many years, making due allowances for situation, climate, difficulties to contend with, and nature of the stock. If their calculations fail, they may in prudence grant deductions to prevent insolvency, with all its train of evil consequences.

of the deception, because they do not suspect any such thing. They live by anticipation. Every thing that opposes their desires, their passions, or their pleasures, is banished from the land of imagination.

Every one flatters himself, that if he could get once abroad, he would have all his wants supplied, and wishes gratified in a moment*.

There the evils, which he feels in the land of his nativity, find no place. He figures to his mind that it is owing to the ill nature of his country he is not what he wishes to be. Placing happiness in external things, he doubts not but these things might easily be obtained in foreign lands. "If I got once abroad," says one of these roman-

It should be noticed, that during the currency of a lease, there may be good and bad seasons, years of famine and years of plenty, prices low and high, but always balancing each other. This is the present order of things.

* A puny tailor assures himself, if he got his foot once in America, he would be a laird. A little giddy country lass, of no beauty, puts on a new ribband, buys a calico smock, and assumes airs at the thought of getting a great match in America.

tic projectors, " my merit would soon raise
 " me to notice ; I would be a laird, and
 " then—I would toil in a carriage, sleep on
 " a fine bed, have fine clothes, a grand house,
 " woods, fields, and sports to my wishes."

Thus self-love co-operates with imagination in making fools. Those who are once infected by the fever of emigration, make America every thing they please.

It is amusing to hear their account of it.

The soil is fertile and unfailing, the productions rare and abundant ; the forests contain all manner of fruit ; their tops reach the clouds, and every animal fit for food reclines beneath their shade ; the spring, mild and prolific, clothes the fields and vales with unceasing verdure ; the summer has no scorching heats, no blighting dews ; autumn, in riches and luxuriance, rewards every toil, and realises every hope.

Every thing displeasing or breeding satiety and disgust, every uneasy sensation, every fear of disappointment and loss, all things inimical to present fantastic notions of happiness, are thence excluded.

Some spots of America may answer the

former part of the description, but no part of the world is destined to suit the latter.

As the land which emigration intends to reach thus rises in esteem, the land it is leaving loses every good quality; it is either parched with drought, or deluged with rain; misfortunes, dangers, obstructions, more frequent, menacing, and invincible. Its physical properties seem to alter with our affections *. Thus imagination, aided by misconception, with increasing force impels the vain, the foolish, the thoughtless, the credulous and enterprising, to pursue airy and impracticable schemes of happiness, and rather lose what they really possess, than forego what they imagine they may possess.

To buoy up imagination, and seduce the understanding, superstition acts its part.

* Having formed this unfavourable opinion of their own country, they would be inconsistent to stay in it, when they knew where to find a better. "It is natural," says the learned Montesquieu, "for a people to leave a bad country to seek a better, and not to leave a good country to seek a worse." Spirit of Laws, Vol. I. Book xviii. Chap. 3. p. 287.

There are few or none who have not some expectation of being some time great or affluent. From the dreams of the night, the prediction of a beggar, or signs of the blind and the dumb, many of the Highlanders promise themselves dignities and honours beyond the Atlantic. Fortune-tellers, living by falsehood and imposture, like mendicant friars, fall in with the prevailing prejudices of the people, and succeed in leading them astray*.

§ 30. Avarice, or the love of money, produces emigration. The Highlanders, till within a few generations, were remarkable for their contempt of money. Military glory or fame was their ruling passion. Silver and gold, as objects of affection, they deemed beneath the dignity of human nature exercised in the field, and solicited by immortality.

* The Highlanders, as well as all mankind, in certain circumstances, are famous for the influence of a visionary fancy in deciding their happiness or misery. Thousand instances of this kind, known by the name of the second sight, occur, and are credited in some parts of the Highlands.

But the scene is changed ; they now see the necessity of imitating their neighbours. They love and desire wealth, because it attracts respect and purchases pleasure ; and since they see but a very small prospect of acquiring it at home, they have a sanguine hope of being more fortunate abroad *. To confirm this deception, they see now and then some acquaintance returning home in all the trappings of good fortune ; their soul fires at the sight, and from the impulse of the moment, they resolve to tarry no longer, but to pack up their baggage and set off. Thus, in a wanton frolic or fit of envy, they appropriate to themselves another person's good fortune, as if they had really a title to do so.

They are strongly tempted by the flattering reports transmitted from time to time by former adventurers. If these are in a good situation, they are wonderfully grateful, for they have got the art of am-

* They should recollect, that in every country under the sun there must be rich and poor. This is obvious, yet a vast multitude overlook the necessary distinction.

plification to an amazing degree. They exaggerate their own good fortune, as it is natural they should, and depreciate the advantages of those whom they artfully address.

Whatever may be their fortune, they hide the evil, because they are ashamed to be disappointed, extenuate what they cannot hide, and conclude with an invitation to follow them. Distance, credulity, and affection, give their misrepresentations currency and value.

It is no small encouragement that friends are there before ; this gives more stability to hope, and more boldness to timidity. The relation follows the relation, the father the son, and this association gradually increases till it takes in the whole Highlands ; for I am persuaded, that there is not a family, hardly an individual, who has not a father, brother, sister, cousin, or kinsman, in America, with whom they keep up a regular correspondence.

America, then, is become familiar, and its distance is no longer an object of terror, since a regular intercourse can be kept up

at such an easy rate. Those fears which might have deterred some, are removed by the delusive accounts of those that went before them*.

§ 31. The last cause which occurs to me, arises from the instigation of interested persons, who promote the ferment of the people, and go about recruiting for the plantations with the usual eloquence of crimps. They generally gain belief from the character they assume, their subject, and the dispositions of those whom they address. Their mountebank elocution is wonderfully popular, because suited to every capacity. Their exaggerations and fictions work like a talisman's wand, or an electric shock. The poor and illiterate portion of the com-

* The miseries which those emigrants suffer after landing in America, are pathetically described by Sir John Sinclair, in his second letter upon Emigration, published in an appendix to the Statistical Account of Scotland.

It is said that last year, on board one of the emigrant ships, upwards of fifty persons died during the passage, for want of the necessary accommodations. This is shocking to humanity, and deserves the serious consideration of the administration of the country.

munity have taken it for granted, that all foreign countries are different from their own, and that every traveller must have strange adventures to tell ; this more readily makes them fall a prey to those whose interest it is to deceive them.

Some instigators have lands in America, but they have no people to cultivate them ; they must then try to supply this want, by those measures which interest suggests, by large promises of prosperity, and by gay descriptions of the country. They run no risk of detection till they have gained their object, and then detection is less dangerous. At any rate, they who are willing to be deceived take some time to recover their senses, and when they do recover, they are ashamed to confess their weakness, because it is humiliating.

There is another species of instigators, whose character is more detestable than those above described ; they are those who want long and lucrative leases ; but the difficulty is, how to dispose of those who in consequence must be dispossessed. Proprietors, though tempted by large offers, are

unwilling to drive poor innocent creatures afloat upon the mercy of the world, unless they choose to do it themselves. If they do, no proprietor is warranted, by his own authority, to detain them against their will.

It is not difficult, however, to make these peasants the dupes of their own credulity. To this they fall a sacrifice; and when once the assent of one is gained, or one is removed, the whole is unsettled, or more easily wrought upon. The ground is cleared of small tenants, and the tacksman is profited by his success.

I am told there is another class of prompters or instigators.

They praise emigration from vanity, to show their superior knowledge or power of oratory. They are in no danger of interruption. They probably have tried emigration themselves without success, and finding wood, water, land and rocks, good and bad in America, as well as at home, they returned; but they must have old saws, and sage sentences, and shrewd nods, to please the rabble, who are determined to be pleased with any thing that is new.

Ill success having soured their temper, actuated by malice, or envy, or some vitious motive, they extol the advantages of America, and excite dissatisfaction, uneasiness, and turbulence. Bridled by the restraints of law, or fear of punishment, they dare not agitate seditions and commotions; they therefore wreak their rancour and spleen upon their innocent country in another way, and represent America as the land of liberty and pleasure. Those who listen to them, and are silly enough to be hood-winked, may be said to deserve any punishment.

Miscellaneous Observations upon the State of Society in the Highlands, as connected with this Subject.

DURING a long course of years, the Highlands suffered every indignity which a government, ignorant of the true method of reducing them to compliance with a change of men and measures, could inflict. Dread-

ful examples of military execution, as disgraceful as they were impolitic, were exhibited, to overawe turbulence, or convert prejudice. But these examples had the contrary effect; they inflamed the passions of people tenacious of honour, and strengthened tenets transmitted and consecrated by ancestry; they exposed administration to the character of cruelty, excited opposition to its measures, and fostered a spirit of resentment; they served to render more compact the old confederacies; and, reducing the clans to desperation, or rousing their desire of revenge, made them ready to listen to any intruder who might have influence to sow sedition, or temerity to promise vengeance.

Not only was military despotism established for a time to secure tranquillity, if not compel submission, but laws or acts of council passed to disarm them, to abolish their language, and to deprive them of their dress*. Indignant at such coercion, exas-

* When Cato treated the Celtiberians in the same manner, it is said that some of them actually died of grief. It

erated by such measures, they spurned obedience to a government that neither understood their value, nor respected their dignity; of course the records of the times are replete with complaints and groans expressive of the national feelings.

Thus bereaved of all they held dear, tyrannised over by imprudent administration, they murmured; a few fled to France, Spain, or America; but their numbers bear no proportion to the colonies which are now every year formed in the new hemisphere.

It is not a little remarkable, that while they laboured under such oppressions, they should remain in a country where they had no honour, no liberty, and almost no right. For, while suspected, they were treated like conquered or disguised enemies, and were bereaved of even the pleasure of complaining, as complaints were supposed to indicate rebellion. But it is perfectly consistent with the character of the Highlanders, who bear hardships with a fortitude that only stoics could conceive.

is probable some of the Highlanders died by the same cause.

While this imprudent line of reformation was pursued, the Highlanders were a little crushed, but they in general scorned to retreat.

At length it was discontinued. It was understood, that the best way to tame them was to treat them with mildness. Mutual confidence betwixt them and Government was gradually restored—restraints were taken off—their civilization, that is, their reconciliation with the Protestant succession, was committed to the slow, but sure operation of secondary causes.

The old system of opinions made a last effort in 1745, and then expired. The ideas of indefeasible right, hereditary succession, divine vicegerency, passive obedience and non-resistance, yielded to the more manly dictates of limited authority and reciprocal duties. By this, the sovereign lost nothing he should have, and the subject gained every concession that should be asked, or could be granted.

During the first American war, the Highlanders emerged from obscurity and insignificance, and proved themselves worthy of

public confidence, by deeds of valour, not surpassed by the heroes of Greece or Rome. They have uniformly maintained the same character, and same loyalty.

Accordingly, attention was paid to them, and they answered expectations. The forfeitures of their masters, and the line of conduct pursued by the Managers of the Annexed Estates, contributed not a little to place their importance in a new light. It weakened, and ultimately crushed attachment to chiefs that no longer existed, the force of which was frequently felt in the time of public commotions. Ever since the abolition of jurisdictions, and the participation of common advantages, notions of political happiness, hardly reconcileable with civilized industry, and proportionate competence, have diffused themselves perhaps too far, and embittered those enjoyments which were long wanting, and intended to be secured.

The spirit of independence, impatient of restraint, which did always so much mischief, has not been divorced, though divested of violence, and turned into other

channels. Aided by liberal knowledge, and called to exertion by the congenial wilds, it could not cease to exist, though it has altered its character.

Some circumstances, that serve to prevent the depression of the Highland character into that of an unpolished rustic, should not pass unnoticed, because they serve to elucidate our inquiry.

The first class of society, excepting a few philosophic individuals, seldom visit the family residence above once a-year. They are generally as often seen as the great Mogul or the emperor of China. They converse with their people by their agents, of course they are strangers to one another. Their rank and equipage have hardly any opportunity of gaining respect, nor of supporting that sense of subordination which is so essential to every well governed state. If the factor presumes to mimic his master, he only exposes himself to ridicule.

The next class, learned and liberal as they are, meet in the social circle, eat and drink occasionally with the peasants, and diffuse civility and elegance of manners, by the powerful charm of imitation. From

this intercourse, the peasants are roused to emulation, always gather knowledge, and better understand their own importance.

A third class, rivals of the preceding, consist of tacksmen, very often persons of liberal education. They are however more on a level with the tenants of the inferior ranks, and therefore their example has a commensurate degree of force. They must, almost every day, mix with the vulgar. It is easy to conceive how much this must polish rusticity.

Unfortunately, as in every community, the higher ranks have little jealousies and rivalships, to which they sometimes sacrifice good sense. As if they had crowns to gain, or empires to lose, each aiming at popularity, and the depression of his rival, descends from that eminence which prudence should carefully maintain, and sometimes courts his inferiors, at the expence of dignity and interest. This conduct in every place lessens the force of subordination, and familiarises the lower classes too much, by going beyond the proper distance. It cannot be called prudent, though it may spread knowledge. Few can descend from

their own stations, without hurting their dignity. Some, I grant, have the happy talent, who, like the sun advancing in the east, rise with more effulgence, after being a while in darkness.

To favour the propensity of the Highlanders to fortune-hunting, the younger sons of the nobility and gentry in general go abroad, and of course draw the attention of their countrymen after them, perhaps take many along with them, especially if they serve in the forces by sea or land. The return of soldiers and sailors gives information of distant lands, and excites curiosity, without satisfying it.

He that considers and studies all these causes and circumstances, will not be at a loss to understand how the Highlanders emigrate or colonise; but he may be surprised that more of them do not. But, go or stay, they cannot in this world attain the summit of their wishes:

*Ὁ καλκεὺς ἕρανος ἔπει αἰθέρος αὐτοῖς **.

Heaven is not yet open to receive them.

* Pindar.

SECT. II.

The Effects of Emigration.

THE effects of emigration are felt, not only in the present time, but will be felt for ages to come, whether we consider the Highlands by themselves, or as forming a part of a great, powerful, and rising empire.

In either view, emigration, acting like a great mortality, tends to produce weakness, retard improvement, and paralyze the efficient force of the nation.

§ 1. For, consider the numbers of emigrants: They are said by some to have amounted, since the conclusion of the last American war, to one hundred and fifty thousand persons; by some to two hundred thousand; by others to fifty or sixty thousand. It is said, that from 1773 to 1775, upwards of thirty thousand individuals have left the Highlands*.

* Dr. Garnet's Tour through the Highlands, &c. page 134.

As it would require much time and trouble to obtain a full and faithful statement, perhaps it may be going high enough to calculate their numbers, during the last thirty or forty years, at one hundred thousand persons. I do not pledge myself for the accuracy of any of these statements, because the accounts received are so contradictory, that it is best to attempt neither to confute nor reconcile them.

Some say, that last year upwards of five thousand people emigrated *, and that this

* Last year, sailed from Ullapole, Lochbroom, 130
 ————— from Fort-William about 700

I have not been able to acquire any accurate information how many sailed from Greenock and other ports of the main land, nor from the different ports of the adjacent islands; but, if their numbers bear any proportion to the numbers from Ullapole and Fort-William, the above statement cannot be far from the truth. It is said by a letter from Halifax, that last year one thousand five hundred, mostly Highlanders, arrived at that port. In 1791, some districts are said to have sent out four hundred emigrants; some in the 1793 four hundred and fifty. A single estate, with which I am acquainted, is said to have lost, from 1797 to 1798, about five hundred persons.

year four thousand or more are about to emigrate.

It is manifest, from the state of the Highlands at this moment, and the extent of country occupied by the Highlanders in North America *, that the number of emigrants cannot be small.

There are some parts of the Highlands where population has diminished one-fourth within these ten or twelve years.

§ 2. This continued depopulation is already severely felt. In some districts day-

* By General Haldimand's census in 1784, Canada contained one hundred and twenty-three thousand and twelve inhabitants.

Nova Scotia, 57,000 square miles in extent, from the number of its towns, and other causes, must contain many more. The inhabitants of Shelburne, a town raised since the war, are said to be nine thousand.

New England could furnish, upon an emergency, an army of one hundred and sixty-four thousand six hundred men.

Massachusetts is said to contain three hundred and fifty thousand, Connecticut two hundred and six thousand, New Hampshire eighty-two thousand two hundred, Rhode Island fifty thousand four hundred. See Morse's Amer. Géog. Since 1784, some parts of America have doubled their population.

labourers are become scarce ; in others, they can hardly be got for any price. Hence their wages have increased fourfold within the last 12 years*.

This rise renders it difficult for people of small fortunes to improve their estates, or repair the waste of time.

The farmers and graziers suffer no less †. At the present rate of wages, they cannot pay the rent that may be demanded or expected ; for the produce of the land is actually consumed by the expence of cultivating, or managing it. Hence they are brought sometimes to great embarrassments, and not unfrequently ruined.

It bears no less hard upon the proprietors. The rents are sometimes ill paid, debts are contracted, disorders produced, mort-

* Other circumstances have contributed to do this ; but emigration is certainly one great cause.

† The present high wages of servants is an insurmountable obstacle to the well-being of the tenants, and of course to agricultural improvements. See Dr. Robertson's Agricultural Survey of Perth, Appendix, 524.

gages or anticipations are resorted to, old families are driven to poverty, new ones rise upon their ruins, and thus many estates are either dismembered, or wholly alienated.

§ 3. These emigrants are also composed of tradesmen of all descriptions.

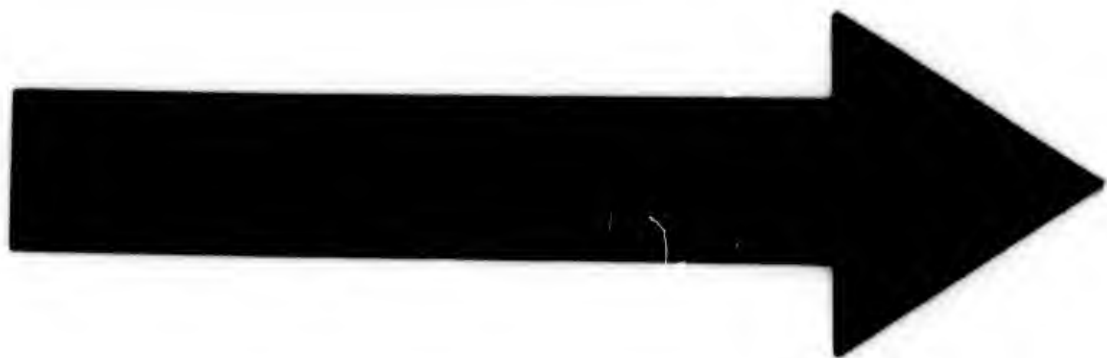
Their secession, when they are capable of profiting the country which was at the expence of instructing them, tends to leave it always ill supplied with proper artificers; for they are not the unskilful that venture abroad, but those who are conscious of inventive powers, and capable of improving their art by new experiments.

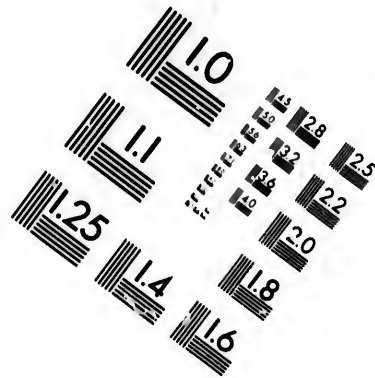
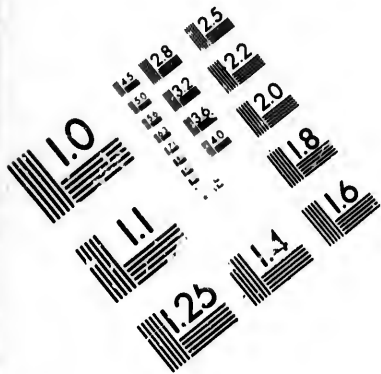
When one of them emigrates, the injury sustained by the community is not in proportion to his individual capacity, but to the influence of that capacity upon others. By one skilful contrivance, one useful discovery, millions are benefited, society gains stability, rises to eminence, procures riches, and blessings are extended over the earth. The least attention to the use of machinery in manufactures, both as it accelerates labour, and cheapens the necessaries of life, fully illustrates our position.

Therefore, as one or more of those possessed of inventive powers is removed, the country sinks into proportioned despondence and inactivity ; and from this very circumstance arises, in some measure at least, the backward state of useful arts in the Highlands, for it is a rare thing to find in them a tradesman who thoroughly understands his business.

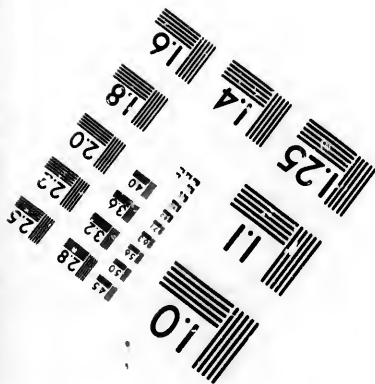
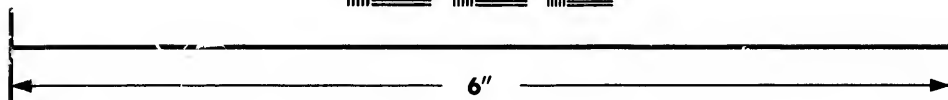
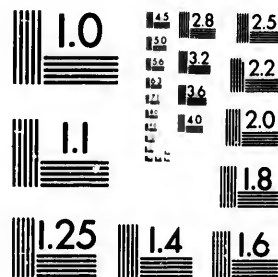
Hence the Highlanders are obliged to send for strangers, when a job of any importance is to be carried on. . Almost every article of dress, and all the implements of husbandry, are either imported from the South, or made by strangers ; while the natives, possessed of superior acuteness, are allowed to remain ignorant, in too great a measure, of the arts that adorn and bless human nature.

§ 4. It is not the poor that emigrate, for obvious reasons, but people in good circumstances ; they carry a great deal of specie along with them. This falls very heavy upon all orders in the country ; it affects the industrious farmer, the assiduous and projecting merchant, and the public-spi-





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rited proprietors. Many of these carry on their business, and rear their families, by the force of their credit; a demand is made upon them perhaps at the very time they are less able to answer it; the emigrants must have their money. They who are unlucky enough to be exposed to their urgency are thrown into pecuniary embarrassment, or reduced perhaps to insolvency. In times of scarcity, or of any calamity, the effects of this are felt with tenfold force. They fall peculiarly hard upon those beginning the career of life; they prevent the execution of many a promising speculation. They also fall with great pressure upon men of large families, and tottering fortunes. They hurt many an estate, tend to reduce the value of land and its produce, and give a general blow to the character of credit.

§ 5. But if those multitudes, of such diversified talents and inclinations, were employed either in the embellishment or improvement of our country, who can estimate the value of their accumulated labours?

If plantations were more generally extended and inclosed ; if roads were made, and bridges erected, where they are wanting, to facilitate and encourage internal communication ; if mosses were drained, and moors cultivated, where it is practicable ; if, in favourable situations, villages were formed, and manufactures established ; if every source of political affluence and political eminence were progressively laid open, supported by the moneyed interest, and directed by the inventive and economical genius of our countrymen, our deserts would blossom as the rose ; the surface of the ground would lay aside its forbidding aspect ; our mosses would produce food for man and beast, in all the luxuriance of prosperous vegetation * ; our rocks themselves would be deprived of their sterility, and be compelled to own the empire of human in-

* In proof of this, let me refer to the account of the moss of Kincardine, affixed to Dr. Robertson's Survey, Appendix, No. 2. ; also to Dr. Smith's Agricultural Survey of Argyllshire, p. 32.

dustry ; the value of property would rise, and so much would be added to the national stock and the national efficiency. These would surely be desirable events. But when I look around me, I find that I have been deluded by fancy ; the gay prospect vanishes ; the people are gone ; dreary and frightful desolation meets me, where once I saw the happiness of competence, and the assemblage of rustic mirth. I look for verdure along the gloomy heath, I see it only frowning more severely.

In some parts of the Highlands, I admit, all these improvements are going on, but not to that extent which the urgency of the case requires ; for though one spirited landlord may exert himself, it does not remove the evil, while hundreds around him, deaf to the voice of interest, sleep in sluggish indolence.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
 Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.
 Princes and lords may flourish or may fade ;
 A breath can make them, as a breath has made ;
 But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
 When once destroy'd, can never be supply'd.

Goldsmith.

But it may be argued, that though every Highlander in Scotland should emigrate, and never return, it would be no great loss; others would soon fill up the vacancy, perhaps of more real and permanent use, and more tractable dispositions.

This objection hardly needs confutation. Those that would fill the empty space should have been employed elsewhere; of course, by translating them to the Highlands, they were taken out of the natural sphere of their exertion. This would only hold good upon the supposition that the kingdom was too crowded with inhabitants, which is not the case, for by bills of naturalisation we give strangers the rights of Britons.

A tree lopt of its uselefs branches, no doubt, acquires additional vigour; but will any man say that the Highlanders are uselefs?

§ 6. Let us now attend to the effects of emigration upon the Highlands in their social capacity, or as connected with the rest of the empire.

It is manifest, that the evils which I have already stated, as arising from emigration,

affect the empire at large ; for the political body resembles in this respect the human ; you cannot injure a part, without an injury to the whole;

It is easy to perceive that the strength and resources of the empire are impaired by emigration.

As already observed, a great deal of money is taken from the circulation of the kingdom to enrich another. If you should only suppose that each of a hundred thousand emigrants carries along with him 7l. *, merely the price of the passage, allowing that some are conveyed in British bottoms, this is an immense sum taken from its natural course. The revenue then loses by it, in proportion to the taxation imposed upon it, and to the profits arising from its proper application.

* Sir William Petty, in his Calculations, supposes, that a man in England is worth what he would sell for at Algiers, *i. e.* 60l. Sterling. This can be true only with respect to England. There are countries where a man is worth nothing ; there are others where he is worth less than nothing. Montefquieu's Spirit of Laws, Book xxiii. chap. xvii. p. 96.

As the quantity of money is diminished in the country, its value is raised. If it continue to be exported with the emigrants, it will tend to reduce us to primitive rudeness; because the articles of commerce having no medium but money to fix their value, or facilitate their circulation and consumption, as this medium is affected, so must they. They would only be valued by comparing one with another, if the whole money of the kingdom were to be withdrawn.

Credit is founded upon the actual quantity of coin in the kingdom. However insensibly, credit must suffer in proportion as this necessary support is withdrawn.

As our country is deprived of this medium of trade, America receives it, acquires proportionate strength, and is enabled to turn the course of exchange in its own favour. In order to prevent this, though a law were enacted to raise the value of money, the expedient would be inefficacious, because none would trust a country liable to such a fluctuation.

There is one way we may gain by send-

ing money out of the kingdom, that is, when it enables the country that receives it to give more for our goods than we give for theirs; but a country like America, in its infancy, having many commodities we have not, will retain the money it receives, and give us these commodities at an exorbitant price*.

§ 7. The labour and services of these multitudes contribute also to promote the national prosperity, for all improvements effected by them are just so much addition to the common stock. An acre of land that formerly paid only 1l. rent, and produced only 4 bolls of corn, being made to yield 9 bolls of corn, and pay 4l. of rent, just contributes so much to the wealth of the country in general †.

§ 8. The consumption of so many articles of life is lessened in proportion to the

* See Montefquieu's Spirit of Laws, Vol. II. Book xiii. Chap. x. p. 63.

† "He that makes two ears of corn to grow," says the celebrated Dean Swift, "where only one grew before, does more good to mankind than the whole race of politicians together."

numbers and circumstances of the emigrants. Every thing a man uses, conduces to the stability, independence, security, or credit of the state, for every thing employs so many hands, and pays so many taxes; the loss of so many hands, then, acts against all these*.

§ 9. The manufactures are also affected, by retarding or diminishing the consumption, and by rendering hands scarcer, and of course more difficult to be had, and their wages higher. Such is the state of our manufactures, that almost every person above six years old may be called to their service; hence, then, they are always affected by any thing that deprives them of sober, diligent, or skilful workmen. They employ this moment thousands of Highlanders, inferior to none in docility, sobriety, industry, and success.

§ 10. The resources of the country are again injured by losing so many people of such virtue, hardiness, and courage, that might assist in carrying on its commerce.

* See Smith's Wealth of Nations.

Emigration from a commercial country acts against its interests, according as its stability and real wealth depend upon this resource, and according as it surpasses surrounding nations in this respect. A ship detained in the harbour six weeks for want of proper hands to navigate her, may ruin the owner, discourage others, and turn the foreign market against us; or if hands are so scarce that the goods cannot bear the expences, or find a market to receive them so high, it comes to the same thing*; the individuals immediately concerned are hurt, and the public at large suffer loss; hence, in time of war, so many failures are observable, because so many hands are pressed to the defence of the country, and the merchant ships are detained in port, or perhaps lost for want of skilful seamen.

It is obvious that the emigration of the Highlanders acts in the same way.

Vast numbers of them are accustomed to the sea from their cradle, either in fishing, or in carrying on the common business of

* See Smith's Wealth of Nations.

the country. When any one of these is lost, the nursery is injured, and the commerce of the country must bear its share of the evil.

§ 11. This leads me to another very important consideration. The strength and respectability of the empire are materially affected by the loss of so many brave defenders. The truth of this fully appears in every war in which we are engaged. The Highlanders have the same character by land and sea. Inured to hardships from their earliest years, possessed of activity and courage, which brave difficulty, and know no fear, they form a part of our bulwarks, assailable indeed, but not yet demolished by any contending power.

It is well known that the Highlanders, scattered through our fleets and armies, arrest the admiration, and excite the astonishment of the world. Patient of hunger and fatigue, ready to obey, and as able to execute, they are selected for the most arduous and desperate enterprises, and uniformly cover themselves with glory, though not always crowned with victory.

Who can read the history of the dissensions regarding the succession of the Queen of Hungary to the Imperial dignity, the war for the admission of the French and Russians into Germany, the contests for the independence of America, the defence of the British settlements in India, and the late struggles with the French Republic, without thanking Providence that he was born a Highlander?

Who can then learn without regret, that those first in assault, and last in retreat, abandon their native country, and abandon its defence?

I know no way of estimating the loss, but by withdrawing all the Highlanders from our forces, or by supposing, that in another country they should turn their arms against us.

If the Highlands were either menaced or actually assaulted by a foreign force, those robust and loyal mountaineers would sooner bury themselves in the ruins of their country than tamely submit. But if they thus remove in thousands, where shall such

defenders be found? Our wealth may invite the plundering foe, but not repel him.

But were I to indulge in a speculation, which I trust shall never be realised, and suppose, that this spirit of secession should extend itself over the empire, to what a degraded state it would reduce us in the scale of independent nations!

These, I admit, are dangers in the womb of futurity; but contingencies are at least possible, and every wise legislature will make a provision for them.

§ 12. Let us now extend our view, and consider the country in which these emigrants settle, and the evil of emigration will be seen in still stronger light. If they retire into our own plantations, I confess the evil does not appear to me so formidable, because they are still a part of the empire; but even in this case, the danger of revolts, the weaknesses produced, and expence contracted by extension of territory, are serious considerations; for who can read the history of Britain or of Rome without perceiving this at once?

But a great many of those emigrants set-

tle in the independent provinces of America. Here, then, the evil accumulates, because by their wealth, by their labour and skill, and by their active numbers, they may soon see themselves superior to us in every point of national advantage.

In some articles the balance of trade is already against us, and in all nearly equi-poised*.

* At an average of three years, the exports from the province of New York were said to amount to 526,000l. and their imports from Great Britain stated at 531,000l.

In the year 1786, the number of vessels entered at the custom-house of Philadelphia was 910. The commodities exported to Great Britain and other markets, consisting of grain, flour, and other animal food only, besides timber, ships built for sale, copper ore, and iron in pigs and bars, at an average of three years, were calculated at 705,500l. The new duty upon imported goods of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. *ad valorem*, produced, from 1st of March to 1st of December 1784, 132,000l. in Philadelphia, corresponding to an importation of 3,168,000l.

About the same time the exports of South Carolina, of native commodities, to Great Britain, at the same average, amounted to more than 395,000l. annual value, and its imports to 365,000l. ; exports of North Carolina about 70,000l., and its imports 18,000l. ; the exports of Georgia about 74,000l., and its imports 49,000l. *Morse's Amer. Geog.*

The Americans, during the very last war, supplied the nations of Europe with many articles I need not name, and we ourselves in some measure depended upon them for daily bread. They may take advantage of our distresses, hurt our credit and our commerce, and increase when we decrease.

In case of another colonial war, they might assist our colonies, or wrest them from us.

But to prognosticate calamities that may never happen, is the character of despondency. Yet a wise man may acquire instruction from the experience of ages, and the ordinary course of human affairs.

SECT. III.

*Observations on the Means to be employed for
Preventing Emigration.*

I do not pretend to have such a full and accurate knowledge of the country, as to be able to decide, without hesitation, what means are best adapted to every particular case.

The gentlemen, whose properties are more immediately affected by emigration, must be better acquainted with the circumstances or motives that induce the people to quit their country, and of course more able to suggest the most practicable steps to counteract so alarming an evil. I intend, therefore, to pursue the plan upon which I set out, and make my observations as general as is consistent with the object I have in view.

I must premise, however, that though the means here proposed be stated in general, I must not be understood as if none

of them had been already employed; or as if they applied, with equal propriety, to every place. There are some districts, where almost every thing I mean to state is already carried on with great effect, but there are others which lie in their primitive rudeness.

The measures I would recommend must apply particularly to the latter, though a great deal remains to be done even in the best cultivated spots in the Highlands.

Every person feels some attachment to the country that gave him birth*. The Highlanders in general, as observed more than once, feel the full force of this attach-

* This is happily illustrated in the character of Harley setting out for London.—“ He shook Peter by the hand, as he passed, smiling, as if he had said, ‘ I will not weep.’ In a few hours he reached the inn, where he proposed breakfasting; but the fulness of his heart would not let him eat a morsel. He walked out on the road, and gaining a little height, stood gazing on that quarter he had left.—He looked for his wonted prospects, his fields, his woods, and his hills. They were lost in the distant clouds. He penciled them on the clouds, and bade them farewell, with a sigh.” *Man of Feeling*, p. 28, 29.

ment. Let this principle then be encouraged by proper applications, and it will act most powerfully.

If the condition of the people be not improved, let it not become worse, and, generally speaking, they will not leave their native soil.

§ 1. To procure the means of subsistence must be the first object of consideration. In vain you offer any terms, if the people see no prospect of a competent livelihood. This is their first care, and therefore, whenever they see it endangered by any thing, they instantly take measures to insure their safety.

Hence, in those districts or counties where population is still increasing, the land should be cultivated, where it admits of cultivation. In Perthshire, Argyleshire, indeed all over the Highlands and Isles, a great deal of land lies waste, that might furnish, at a little expence, food to those who feel the necessity of providing for themselves elsewhere*.

* We meet every where in the Statistical Accounts of the Highland parishes this measure strongly recommend-

This measure recommends itself strongly to those, whose estates lie upon the sea-coast, contiguous to lime-quarries, or other manure. It may be said that our country is so poor and unfertile, the climate so bad, that plans of this kind would not defray the expence of carrying them into execution.

Admitting that our country is in general barren, and seasons variable, improvement of waste land tends to improve the climate.

If our mooses were drained where they can be drained *, if our long and savage

ed. Of the many passages that might be quoted, I shall select one, because it comprehends in a few words almost the whole that can be proposed to prevent emigration, at least from being carried to any dangerous extent. "The establishment of manufactures, the enlargement of farms, so as to enable every farmer to keep a plough for himself; the inclosure of the fields, the divisions of the commons, the straightening of the ridges in ploughing, the giving up the prevailing practice of run-ridges, and the spreading of plantations of larches and Scottish firs over the wild and barren hills, would no doubt contribute greatly to improve the condition, and increase the population of the country."—*Stat. Acc. Vol. V. p. 87. Logierait.*—See also Dr. Robertson's Agricultural Survey of Perthshire.

* In Ranoch a moss was drained by the Managers of the Annexed Estates. The crop of hay which grew on

moors were divided and inclosed, or belted in proper order with forest trees, they would defy the climate, or at least would not miscarry once perhaps in seven years.

I see here and there small farms of from 20 to 50 acres, arable and pasture, within head *dikes*, containing perhaps one or two hundred people, and at the distance of one or two miles from them, a moor in empty desolation, with scarcely a shrub, or a pile of grass*.

It must not be objected that they do not admit improvement, for the mosses and moors bear yet in many places evident traces of former cultivation. And if they were once cultivated, why not again?

Their bad returns perhaps banished tillage; but in this enlightened age of agriculture, lime and other manures, under

it would have sold last year for near 30l. It was not formerly worth 30s. Another of the same kind, near Mingary Castle, was improved by the public spirited Murrays, while they had Ardnamurchan.

* This is disgraceful to the proprietor, in whose family this moor has been for 150 years, and who refused many handsome offers for its cultivation.

proper management, would convert almost any mould to vegetative soil. I have seen on the coasts of Inverness and Argyleshires the finest crops of oats potatoes, and bear, growing in gravel upon the sea shore, or in moss upwards of six feet deep*.

* The mosses have grown since the destruction of the forests; the surface, from various causes, has undergone many revolutions, and in many places has become worse; for by slothfulness or inattention, and from the political circumstances of the country, marshes or swamps have been formed where formerly corn or trees grew. You cannot move a step in the Highlands without meeting with such marshes, which required no more than to let the water off by the stroke of a spade.

By the constant agitation of the water, by the accumulation of soil, and from many other causes, these marshes have, in the course of ages, swelled to a prodigious extent, and produced either mosses or lochs. A detail of the formation of lochs might be given, were this the place. The formation of some of them is extremely singular; they are found on the tops of mountains, or in the middle of solid rocks, where they have no apparent communication. But to account for this is easy, by attending to the motion of a drop of rain falling upon a stone. By the long continuance of this power, by the corrosive quality of snow and water, and perpetual friction of the contiguous particles, little lakes are formed on the tops of mountains and hills, of great use, as they

From the moors in the lowlands of Perthshire, and in different parts of Scotland, now bearing the richest crops of wheat, and in my own memory deemed by some people useless, it is evident to what a condition other moors of better quality might be brought by well directed industry*.

Say that our mosses in the bottom of the valleys would be brought to yield grass, even in this case it is obvious that they would operate, if not in furnishing food for people on the spot, yet in providing for them elsewhere. They would, in this improved state, not only beautify, but enrich the country †.

Where it is found more profitable to lay

water in summer the adjoining space, and prevent the fatal effects of drought. In this place, I will not mention how they become stored with fish. Suffice it to remark, that their formation proves the necessity of attending to the progress of swamps, or stagnation of water.

* Mr. Marshall says, that the soil of the Highland hills is better in general than that of the hills of Yorkshire. See Marshall's *Report*.

† Whoever has travelled the road from Glasgow to Greenock, and observed the moss drained and cultivated by Mr. Alexander, must be sensible of the value of improv-

a district under grass, to the half or two-thirds of its extent, it is obvious, that unless you make a previous provision of some kind, many must leave their country to seek food and employment in some other place. In this case, one of the most improveable farms should be divided into crofts or fields of one or three acres, and a judicious selection should be made of those to whom they should be offered; for some men, who pride themselves upon being men of spirit, would spurn at the thought of descending from the rank of a tenant into the station of a crofter. If a man of this kind, however, refuses any rational accommodation, the country is better without him; he is ripe for emigration. He may be cured by changing his residence. His spirit is not found. This is the touchstone.

§ 2. This parcelling of people forms villages, and under due limitations, instead of injuring the interests of the country, strong-

ed moss. Upon one side of the road the moss is forced to yield a rich sward of grass; on the other it lies in its natural state, forming a striking contrast.

ly promotes it. No doubt all these villages will not equally prosper. This may arise from particular circumstances; either from the character of the people who form them, from the situation in which they are placed, or from the encouragement given them by the landlords.

They are sometimes, indeed, hurtful to the morals of the community; for it is observable, that intemperance, profanity, and other vices, prevail in some of them to a great extent.

Hence there are instances of villages having received opprobrious names, such as Sodom and Gomorrah.

This is an evil of an enormous and threatening nature, which certainly deserves attention.

In the first place, the complaint, though not ill founded, is exaggerated. The evil is spread over the country. In villages it is more striking, because it is more concentrated; the temptation is stronger, opportunity of gratification oftener recurring, and delinquency less shameful, because more frequent.

These evils are unavoidable wherever many people are assembled, without the most severe discipline; and indeed no discipline, however rigid, can prevent immorality altogether. But villages must not be indiscriminately condemned upon this ground, otherwise, for a much stronger reason, you must also banish large towns and cities.

All towns and cities were first villages, or perhaps a motley garrison; yet to their vigour and virtue we owe much of the liberty and many of the blessings this day enjoyed in Europe*.

While I thus contend for the expediency of building villages, as the means of accommodating some of our most active and useful citizens, I must observe, that the mode of huddling houses of all descriptions, dwelling-houses for men and beasts, stables, byres, and barns together, merits reprobation †.

* See Dr. Robertson's Life of Charles V. Vol. I. p. 36, 37, 39, 40, 43.

† Sir John Sinclair, whose zeal for promoting the interests of his country deserves a kingdom, may instruct those who want instruction upon the best plan for building a beautiful and a commodious village.

But it is not enough that the plan of the streets, squares, and houses, should be neat and elegant, but there should be a proper police; there should be a regular magistracy. It is not sufficient that one bailiff or justice of the peace should be at the distance of some miles, to be applied to in cases of emergency; one superior magistrate should reside, and be concerned in the prosperity of the village, who would be always at hand for detecting and punishing lesser offences. And there should be by-laws * for inflicting summary punishments, without the necessity of having recourse to the doubtful and tedious issue of a process. This power should be lodged in discreet hands, superintended by the Lord Paramount.

The minister and eldership should unite their efforts to suppress every disorder, and applaud the virtuous and laborious.

But to collect men together without apparent means of subsistence, without any particular regulation or restraint, is attended, in this profligate age, with a train of the most pernicious consequences. In such

* Or burrow laws.

a state of insubordination and licentiousness, villages deserve the opprobrious titles which they receive.

§ 3. I avoid saying much upon the importation of corn, my object being to rouse the latent powers of the country to exertion. In England active measures to effect this laudable and invaluable purpose have been adopted. Scotland is also following its example. I know that in extraordinary emergencies corn must be imported; we have experienced the necessity of this for the two last years. The expenditure of 15,000,000l. Sterling for food from foreign markets, is the strongest argument that can be used. If two millions laid out in premiums were applied to encourage agriculture, who can calculate the result? The good of it would be permanent. I see no harm in trafficking in corn more than any other merchandise; but why not study the art of raising it at home with the same application as any other, because it is the foundation of all arts, and all sciences, and all happiness? A nation may blaze forth in the art of war, frighten and astonish the world, while the

peasants are crying for bread with all the turbulence of hunger. Our philosophers may trace planets and comets, measure the winds and the seas, and teach us to subdue all the elements; but if famine frowns upon them with haggard looks, they drop the scale and the compass, and remember that they are dust. Our political wisdom may rival that of the celebrated politicians of Greece and Rome, overrule the councils of surrounding empires, and decide the fate of contested dominions; but a wilderness may surround them, and the clamours of the hungry recal them home. Our merchants, in gold and diamonds, may surpass the most renowned of antiquity, may sail round the globe, explore all its secrets, and feed us for a time with foreign luxuries, valuable only because new; but if bread be wanting, we reject them as nauseous, and call for the plough and the spade. Nobody denies this. But I am told that Egypt and Sicily were the granaries of ancient, and Poland and America of modern times; and why not have granaries now? This may be answered by another question at least as strong:

Why not make our own country this granary? I see no good reason against it, but I see one strong reason for it, that it would have been better than buying meal from those who, for want of food in their own country, go to get it in America.

Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough,
 And o'er your hills and long withdrawing vales
 Let autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
 Luxuriant and unbounded! As the sea
 Far through his azure turbulent domain
 Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
 Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports;
 So with superior boon may your rich soil
 Exuberant nature's better blessings pour
 O'er every land, the naked nations clothe,
 And be th' exhaustless granary of a world!

Thomson's Seasons.

§ 4. After finding food and lodging for the people, the next point is to find employment for them; for action is as necessary for their subsistence and morals as daily food.

Upon this I would first remark, that food and employment mutually aid and support one another.

This deserves a complete investigation,

to help the judgment, and give room to those who are disposed (if they knew how) to exercise the finer feelings of the heart ; for I am persuaded that all the Highland proprietors lament the depopulation and consequent degradation of their country.

They are all disposed to augment their fortunes, and support an equipage suited to their liberal ideas, and corresponding to the rank of their southern neighbours.

In order, however, to rival successfully their southern neighbours, they must follow the same steps to attain the same fortune. This is not done by laying heavy rents upon the tenant *, for this disposes him to leave a country where he thinks he is oppressed, and to seek for one where he imagines his situation will be mended.

It is not by introducing precipitately new modes of farming, which neither the soil, climate, situation of the country, nor the genius of the people, will all at once admit.

* See Dr. Smith's Agricultural Survey of Argyleshire, p. 296.

It is not by laying whole valleys under sheep or black cattle, with all the intolerant rashness of a school-boy, without considering what produce they are best fitted by nature to support, and what is most profitable. This is not the way to cope with those in the South. This is the worst possible plan of improvement, unless used discreetly. It is in fact the way to become poor; for population is the wealth, as well as the strength of a country. This, the very men who feel themselves justifiable in acting so inadvertently, know perfectly. But in their hurry to get rich, or, in other words, to improve their estates, they do not observe that they imitate the boy and the goose, or the frog and the ox.

Meanwhile, I will resume the consideration of the second measure, calculated to modify or prevent emigration, at least for some time, until the country shall arrive at the last possible degree of improvement.

Every man should reserve of his income a certain sum proportioned to that income, for carrying on improvements, suited to the situation in which he may be placed.

No man can prescribe rules for ascertaining the sum that should be allotted for this purpose. It should not be according to the extent of the subject to be improved; for then a vast and speculative genius might in a short time contract debts, so as to dispossess, or rather disinherit himself.

Money should not be borrowed for improvement, unless upon sure expectations. The desire of improvement should not be allowed to go too far, nor should a man heedlessly think of rivalling or surpassing a more opulent neighbour, but be always regulated by his own experience or circumstances*.

If there is any particular object to be gained, without loss of time, a greater sacrifice should be made.

In all cases, the safest rule is to lay out money by calculating the returns of the improveable subject, and proceed like an ac-

* Proprietors from 200l. to 300l. a-year, free rental, might well afford $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, and so on in proportion. This, regularly continued, would in a few years operate most powerfully.

countant, in the way of debtor and creditor.

As every one would wish to maintain a rank suited to expectation, he should upon all occasions study rational economy, and apply to useful and ornamental improvement those superfluities that are often wasted in useless or pernicious practices.

A person of superior rank must not abridge every pleasure; he must, for the sake of his family and connections, give a little to the fashions of the times, to avoid the appearance of singularity, austerity of manners, or ridicule and contempt. But the savings of luxury and dissipation might be devoted, with great success, to useful improvements.

Were this to be practised, plans of farming, tillage, or grazing, would go on smoothly.

While you would be improving your estates, and laying a foundation for future eminence and grandeur, you would furnish employment and food for those creatures, whom, by your disregarding this circum-

stance, you drive headlong upon the mercy of the winds and seas, and banish, to improve and enrich another country.

If you would lay out with one hand $2\frac{1}{2}$ or more per cent, you would receive in 15 or more per cent. by the other*.

Thus, then, by improving the surface of the ground, or by building villages, you would find food and employment for the redundant population; which, when properly employed, would cease to be redundant.

§ 5. In many districts of the Highlands and Isles, there are few or no roads, even where they cannot easily have the use of water carriage; and without attending to the excess of people, or providing for those

* This is obvious, from daily experience. In my neighbourhood there are fields, which, in their natural unimproved state, were scarcely worth any thing, but which will now set at 2l. or 3l. an acre. A field of from 4 to 6 acres yields a crop of hay which sells for 30l. or 40l. I have seen these fields mere black mofs, or rocks, stones, and brushwood, like the inaccessible jungles of India or America.

This may be seen at Taymouth, Lord Breadalbane's seat, and at Drumchary, the seat of Mr. Stewart of Garth, and in numberless other places.

removed, the country must for ever remain in this barbarous state.

Any person that travels the coasts and inland parts of Argyle, Inverness, and Ross-shires, I may say Perthshire too, though in general farther advanced in this respect, feels every day this inconvenience*.

* In casting the eye over those Highland countries, a man is astonished to find so few traces of roads or communication. The most inaccessible and mountainous parts of Argyle, Perth, and Invernessshires, I have travelled. I will not presume to point out the lines of road that might be drawn, and where the state of the country evidently requires them*.

There are two highways cutting across the Highlands, but the communication between them is miserable beyond description. I shall mention only one place. Betwixt the Bridge of Tumble in Fife and the King's house at the entrance of Glenco, excepting for a few miles, there is scarcely a path safe enough for foot passengers; yet this is the centre of Scotland, and the course from the east to the west sea. The Braes of Perth and Invernessshires have no communication; hence in winter many lives are lost. The cattle and every thing else must go round either by Fort-William or Pitmain. You would think, that like the ancient barbarians of the north of Europe, the Highlanders delighted in being separated by frightful deserts.

* See Knox's Tour.

Instead of allowing the people to set off in thousands to America or to the South, how

To join Lochaber and Ranoch, a road might be drawn across Lechdchaorin, and from Ranoch to the south, by the Braes of Glenlyon, which would shorten travelling to the south at least 30 miles. But if we examine the western parts of Argyle and Invernessshires, the access is still worse. Except the north-east coast of Mull, there is hardly any path. The parishes of Morven, Ardnamurchan, Glenelg, Kintail, Lochalsh; from Rouanridar, the southern extremity of Morven, to Fort Augustus, to the distance of 30 or 40 miles into the country, there is hardly any thing that deserves the name of a road. A person is astonished to see the natives scrambling with beasts of burden (there are no carts) over precipices that would frighten a stranger. It will require a day to travel over those rugged surfaces, only 12 miles, by any person but a native. The common rate is at a mile an hour. From Inverness to the point of Kintail, or to Caolra, what a road! if it can be called by this name; for it is hardly agreed upon by travellers which is the line, every one making one for himself. If you cross over to the Islands, you are every moment in danger of straying or perishing.

The paths, such as they are, take such oblique, such whimsical, such injudicious directions, not even excepting General Wade's, across the Grampians, that they seem hardly to have been drawn by rational beings. For I could prove, that our sheep follow better lines, and understand the level better; for they tread round the side of the hill, and when they ascend or descend, they select the easiest and safest track with wonderful sagacity. I

many thousands might be employed in making new roads, or repairing old ones, in those very counties where emigration has, for a series of years, been carried to a ruinous extent!

It may perhaps be said, that when the people go away, there is no occasion for roads. Admirable policy!—The advantage of roads in the Highlands cannot be foreseen; they facilitate general intercourse, and open an easy conveyance to the market. You are not to estimate improvement in parts, but in the whole, connected and extended; but the want of them obviously affects the state of the country.

No man will give you the same price for a quantity of wool which he must bring on horseback over rugged rocks, which he would give if he could carry it in a cart or a waggon on a good road, because he must regulate the price by the difficulty

suppose the Highland roads in general have remained in those perplexities and curvations which they had when the boar and the wolf contended with the natives for their possessions, and when each tribe traced the wary maze, to attack, or escape the incursions of, one another.

and expence of bringing it to the market. This holds true of every saleable commodity whatever, whether live or dead stock.

In this case, danger and difficulty operate against the first feller and against the second purchaser, and ultimately fall upon the community at large.

§ 6. Canals come next under consideration. They would produce the same effect as roads; they would employ multitudes, not only in forming them at first, in keeping them in repair, but also by facilitating and increasing internal and external commerce; they would raise the value of the contiguous properties, and that of the produce of the whole country; they would tend also to dispel that cloud of ignorance which yet hangs over some districts remote from the sea*.

The poverty of the country, it is objected, cannot bear the expence of cutting ca-

* The canal by Lochness and Fort-William has been long talked of, and its length and expence calculated. See Knox's Tour through the Highlands, and Smith's Survey of Argyleshire.

nals, especially through such rocks and mosses.

It is not the abstracted resources of the Highlands that we must take into our account; but their relative situation in the commercial world. Cut roads, and people will walk on them; cut canals, and they will provide for themselves in the same manner.

To her canals Russia owes much of her sudden elevation to the distinguished rank which she holds. To the same cause must be attributed the internal resources of France and of Holland.

The riches and population of China, arising from the same source, surpasses all conception.

And what renders England so powerful, and the productions of our country so valuable in her hands, but her canals or water carriage. Bulky articles conveyed by water can be sold 10 per cent. cheaper than carried by the best road in Britain; of course canals encourage trade, employ hands, and promote the consumption of every kind of merchandise.

The relative poverty of the Highlands is an argument in favour of canals. They are poor, and must be poor, so long as their resources are suffered to lie dormant. Upon rocks as barren as ours, upon naked islands, in mud, in the bottom of the sea, human industry has reared bulwarks, acquired territory, and accumulated wealth and power*.

§ 7. Those extensive forests which have for time immemorial covered the face of the Highlands, composed generally of oak, ash, fir, elm, birch, and some other species of timber of lesser value, are fit for every purpose.

Without making roads, or clearing the channel of rivers, some of them cannot be brought to use; and accordingly many of them have been allowed to fall, rot, form mofs, and disgrace the country.

For houses, for ships, for charring, for tanning, and several other useful purposes,

* The two fine provinces of Kianguan and Tchekian in China, Egypt, and Holland, were formed by human industry, and require the same industry to provide for their subsistence. *Spirit of Laws*, Vol. I. p. 289.

they might have been, and may be still applied ; yet if they are not applied, and if the people are allowed to emigrate, they are for ever a nuisance to the country ; a nuisance when they form marshes, to mildew our corn, add severity to the climate, generate diseases, and endanger our own lives and those of our cattle.

They are of some advantage, I confess ; they may accumulate moss for fuel ; but their roots and crops would have done so, though the useful part of the tree were removed. This would furnish a considerable source of industry to the redundancies of the people, and of wealth to the proprietors upon whose lands they grow*.

Our woods of oak and fir employ, during the summer months, thousands of poor people. This is admitted ; but if the country is depopulated, labourers cannot so easily be found. The forests cannot really be

* Unfavourable to population as are the cold and frozen regions of Norway, their numerous forests are converted by toil and industry into means of subsistence and employment, and are comparatively well inhabited.

preserved, for it requires a great number of hands to inclose them and keep the inclosures in repair.

§ 8. The next object is penetrating our mountains. It is well known that the country abounds with lead, copper, iron, and flates, besides other fossils. If these were made objects of general attention, they would be an additional source of wealth and strength to the country. Many of them lie along the coast, or contiguous to roads. It is astonishing how they support the growing population of the country, by drawing it from the places where it is excessive, and by furnishing work, and of course the means of subsistence. The mines of Clifton and Strontian * have been carried on for a long time with tolerable success, and employed frequently from fifty to a hundred and fifty or more men; add to this women and children, and you may calculate at

* These mines are now given up. It is remarkable how the poor people employed in them have improved the barren moors contiguous to them, and still continue to live on them. Clifton, near Tyndrum, is one of the highest, most stormy, and desert situations in Scotland.

Strontian, at least three hundred inhabitants, in its most flourishing state.

Mines carried on in a free country, by free men, would act exactly as other improvements; but conducted by slaves, as in some parts of Germany, in the Spanish dominions, and other parts of the globe, they injure and retard population, and always show a defect in that government, which permits such slavery.

§ 9. Our lakes and rivers are well stored with fish, that might produce incalculable advantages*. Our friths, and what is termed salt water lochs, teem with shoals of herring, cod, ling, lythe, salmon, sals, and myriads of all kinds. All the islands on the west coast are furrounded by them.

* The translation and multiplication of fish as a national resource has been tried in different places. The celebrated Dr. Franklin transplanted the herring from one river in New England into another where they were not before. See the advantages of this measure fully explained by Citizen Nouel, member of the *Jury* of Instruction at Rouen, on the means to be employed for multiplying fish, *Edinburgh Magazine*, September 1801, p. 197, from *Moniteur*, July 17. 1801.

The main land is all along from the Mull of Kintyre to Cape Wrath intersected by the sea.

What use has yet been made of these advantages? The herring fishery in general is left in the hands of strangers, or a few natives, of very narrow capitals.

The proprietors, whose estates are encompassed by luxuries of such value, should grant land to accommodate fishers at an easy rent. The fisheries would be profitable to themselves and to the country; they would feed and employ thousands of the natives*; they would improve the soil conterminous to the sphere of their immediate operation; they would draw a great deal of money to the

* Drs. Hyndman and Dick, who with others in 1760 visited the Highlands for a religious purpose, state, that in the parish of Contin there were near 3000 catechizable persons, and add, "the largeness of their number being occasioned by the people residing here for the sake of the fishery." The adjacent parishes, having the same opportunities, and nearly of equal extent, did not contain half the number, Applecrofs being only stated at 1200 catechizable persons.

country †, which would readily circulate, and make the rents not only higher, but better paid, and of course enrich the proprietors, as well as the community at large. Yet possessing these advantages, admitted on all hands, hardly a man of 1000l. stock at his outset engages in such a lucrative branch of trade.

Some Highlanders about Greenock, and from that to Stornaway, may have some years cleared from one hundred to a thousand pounds Sterling, after having passed all the dangers arising from a distant, stormy, and perilous navigation.

I do not mean that our proprietors should convert themselves to fish-mongers, and have the selfish spirit of commerce; but those who have not done it should at least superintend, and give more than cold approbation. They might engage by their agents, and, as some of them do, encourage the people by small donations of land, or nets, or some trifle,

† A salmon smack arrived at London from Inverness 27th June 1766, and brought 11,000 live lobsters, valued at about 2000l.

till they would be brought to feel their interest, and then no incitement would be necessary. The people already, in many places, draw some share of their subsistence from fish*; but in general this is no advantage; for they who do this, are mostly tenants or tradesmen, therefore withdrawn from their real business. What I mean is, that fishers by profession should be established. Government: The landed proprietors should unite their forces, remove the reflections which have been thrown upon them for their neglect in this matter, and prevent that depopulation which goes on, and threatens still to increase.

But it may be replied, fisheries are already active; why do they not prevent emigration? It is true; but, as already remarked, they are carried on by people, at least two thirds, from other countries, and the Highlanders must leave them, because they have no permanent residence, and be-

* The people of Barra and some other islands pay almost all their rent by this resource; therefore all these islands are amazingly populous, virtuous, and healthy.

cause they are not properly directed. I know that salmon and cod-fishing have in some places been tried, and failed; but the failure was owing to the mode of management, the circumstances of the managers, or the envy of rivals. Proper companies, upon a sufficient foundation, would, as in every other place, remove inconveniencies, and surmount unforeseen obstacles.

§ 10. Manufactures and arts in general are the next object of consideration.

These, in places where fuel, and food, and water, are easily provided, and where proper attention is given to the health and morals of the people, form a prodigious resource to any country. Every body admits that the Highlands of Scotland are as well calculated for obtaining all necessaries as any part of the British dominions.

By their natural canals, by the falls of water, by the abundance of fuel in some places, by their proximity to markets, and by their situation in general *, they might, in

* This is fully shown by the laudable zeal of Newte and Knox.

commercial importance, vie with any kingdom in the world ; yet hardly a ship of any burden is built, a woollen manufacture established, a tannery or distillery founded, though foreign timber passes by them to England, though our wool and raw hides are sold for half their value, and though great sums of money are expended on foreign spirits.

As for cotton mills, iron founderies, or manufactures of foreign productions, it is vain to talk of them, when the productions of the country are allowed to pass into the hands of those who know their value*.

§ 11. Here it may be objected, . . . at some of those fine improvements have been tried, but failed.

Of this objection, in all its force, I have been aware all along, and it may be easily removed.

* A gentleman well acquainted with the Highlanders, in a letter to me, makes an excellent remark, that they are averse in general to settle in the manufactories of the low country, and therefore should be employed where they could.

All the measures recommended here have been recommended a hundred times before, and they are adopted, and successful, in many other parts of the united kingdoms. Why should not they have the same success in a situation full as favourable as any in Europe? Their expediency is admitted; they are not asserted to be impracticable.

It may be observed, in the first place, that arts and commerce in their infancy are liable to numberless obstructions and failures. This is the order of things. It is only by repeated trials, by unwearied industry, that those obstacles are surmounted*.

Those obstacles and failures may arise from the men that conduct the business; for if they are not properly qualified, others that excel them turn the market against them.

If they have not a sufficient capital, their prosperity is endangered by unexpected demands. If they do not agree in their plans, they cannot succeed.

* See a striking description of the progress of arts in the Rambler, No. 9.

If they have not proper connections, correspondence, and established credit, they may be ruined, undermined, or overreached by jealous rivals.

If they have not chosen a fit situation for manufactories, they may find inconveniences in conveying their goods to market, and in providing food for their people.

If they do not make choice of proper subjects, that is, commodities that have the best chance of succeeding or selling, this exposes their imprudence, and prevents their success.

And lastly, If they conduct their business upon an extravagant scale, without keeping regular accounts or strict economy, they cannot expect to succeed. And above all, unless honest as well as skilful overseers and clerks are selected with proper discernment, their business may be thrown into confusion.

In most parts of the Highlands, so far as I know, they should pay particular attention to the above statement, and apply it as they see cause.

I believe most of the disappointments

which have impeded experiments in trade have arisen in general from the want of sufficient funds and credit, and want of skilful workmen.

When people have not patience enough, but would be rich all at once; when the articles are not sufficiently prepared for the market; when there is no zeal nor continued application; when the undertakers and contractors launch out into all the foppery of fashion and profusion of expence, what can be expected but disappointment?

The landholders of rank, credit, and general influence, should not be unconcerned spectators. But if they are willing to lend an active hand, one thing is of essential consequence; they should at stated times appoint competent judges to inspect and examine the state of accounts and progress of the work, to stimulate industry, show their concern, and prevent embezzlement or misconduct.

They should cautiously guard against granting letters of credit, and above all, buying shares without knowing the state of the company.

The Darien and South Sea Companies, the Bank of Ayr, and many other associations, should be a perpetual warning against rash or imprudent interferences.

A man in a fit of public spirit will feel disposed to go any lengths, but fits or momentary impulses are dangerous to the individual and to society.

Upon the whole, the objection has no force farther than that arising from unavoidable circumstances, which by united and repeated efforts might be gradually removed.

If any one argues against the very idea of introducing arts into the Highlands, I would recommend to his consideration the history of commerce to the present day. By a short view it might be shown how it advanced from India, Egypt, Phœnicia, Persia, Tyre, Colchis, Greece, Italy, Portugal, France, Netherlands, for 4000 years, till the commerce of the whole world is almost exclusively engrossed by the British isles.

The Hanse Towns, about the beginning of the fifteenth century, when the spirit of enterprise, freedom and knowledge revived,

enjoyed exclusively the advantages of all the trade then carried on between Europe and Asia. At that time our wool went over to Flanders before it was manufactured.

Henry VII. first observed the advantages of his situation ; Elizabeth pursued his plan ; the result is well known.

The north of England hardly made any figure till the last reign, and now let it be compared with the north of Scotland, and the difference will be manifest.

The same causes always produce the same effects.

Is there any thing in the people of both countries which can account for the pre-eminence of the north of England ?

We complain that the lower orders of the Highlanders are full of prejudices, which no argument can remove ; yet those very people have distinguished themselves in many parts of the world, by assiduity, genius, and success, as their opulent descendents and munificent benefactions testify in many places on the continent of Europe and America :

Show them their interest, and place them

in a favourable situation, and they will pursue it.

Thus I have endeavoured to state the means which the country provides for food and employment, and of consequence for preventing emigration. I do not look upon any of them beyond our reach, for what is done in one place may be done in another.

§ 12. The next object which is suggested by the state of the Highlands, is security.

Leases, adapted to the nature of the particular soil, should be given.

Against this I see no sufficient objection. That it makes the people independent, that is, more their own masters, is indubitable; but without independence no country can improve, and no people can be prosperous. It does not hurt the interest of the landlord. If he give a lease for 19 years, at a rent deemed sufficient, he may not have the continuing rise of things; but from this very circumstance the tenant improves the soil, gathers strength and courage, and will be able, towards the expiration of his lease, if he has been ordinarily diligent and

successful, to give a considerable advance of rent for a new lease; so that the proprietor upon the whole would gain in his individual and social capacity.

The insecurity arising from the defective policy of withholding leases, has the most pernicious consequences; and it is not a little surprising that such enlightened landholders as are in the Highlands have not all seen them.

Leases are becoming more general; for what the majority believe to be good, must in time influence the practice of all. But some of the leases are yet so cramped by clauses, as to render it impossible to fulfil them; and hence it would appear that they are given by way of experiment, because they may be reduced when they disappoint expectation.

Grant leases upon rational and equal terms, as fruit corn and grazing countries, enforce their conditions legally, but not vexatiously, and you at least prevent population from being much reduced.

When the people find that they are respected, that they have time to be be-

nefited by their labours, that they have a fure dwelling, at leaft for a limited time, they will not in general think of emigration. But if they fee themfelves expofed to the spleen, humour, or caprice of a mafter, they become reftlefs and difcontented.

I do not propofe thefe means as containing all that can be faid upon this part of our fubject. Local knowledge no doubt may fuggelt local remedies; active meafures, however, are abfolutely neceffary. Self-intereft recommends them more ftrongly than any thing which can be faid by a perfon, who, though not an indifferent fpectator, yet has only a general concern in the profperity of his country.

§ 13. I fhall not wafte time in ftating the means fitted to remove every particular caufe of emigration.

But fuppoſing it ariſes from latent and ill-founded difcontent, from ſome prejudice, or bad humour, or error, if all prudent and peaceable means are uſed in vain to convince or reclaim, emigration is the beſt remedy. Great caution is however requiſite in judging in matters of this kind;

for the uneasiness of the people is often not ill-founded, therefore rashness might lead to increase the evil. But when discontents of a migratory nature spring from the instigation of others, inimical to our establishments, the police of the country should not hesitate to inflict the punishment best adapted to the emergency, because their persuasions have the most pernicious tendency. And though there be no express statute to comprehend this crime, it nevertheless deserves notice. There is a law against kidnapping, or men-stealing; and what is instigation but a species of kidnapping? leading the poor people on to ruin, disturbing their enjoyments, rendering them ripe for a revolt, deluding them by false hopes, and of course inspiring them with discontents of the most dangerous tendency.

It belongs to the magistracy to watch such characters, whether natives or aliens, and treat them as culprits, hostile to the very vitals of the constitution, and the existence of domestic happiness.

SECT. IV.

*On the Conduct of Government with respect to
Emigration.*

§ I. **W**E next inquire whether the emigration of the Highlanders should be subjected to any restraint, or regulated by any measure of national policy.

I do not feel myself competent to decide on such a question. I am therefore diffident even in stating those cases where it cannot legally take place, and those in which the principle upon which society is founded warrants interference*.

The case in which a man cannot emi-

* By entering largely into the conduct of Government, with respect to colonization, and the restraints which, upon various occasions, it thought proper to impose upon the liberty of the subject, I could adduce copious precedents, both from our own government, and every government in the world; but this would lead to too wide a field of discussion.

grate, is, when he has lost his rights, by violating, or attempting to violate, the laws of the country in which he is born and resides. When this happens, he is justly detained, till he make reparation for the injury. He has lost his liberty of action, till his crime be tried by those laws competent alone to try and determine it. A person is not allowed to quit his native country, and settle in another at variance with it; for this would be an addition to the forces of the enemy. It is not allowable for persons in stations of trust, civil, military, or ecclesiastic, to remove into a foreign country, without sufficient cause or licence from superior authority, without giving an account of their administration or conduct; for while they are in offices of trust, they are responsible for their conduct, and therefore can legally resign them only into the hands of those who by law are constituted either to accept or refuse their resignation; but not desert them without their consent. This is so obvious, that it needs no farther illustration.

Indeed, in any case in which a member of society encroaches upon the rights of his fellow-citizens, or transgresses the law under which he was born, and to which he gave his assent, he cannot emigrate. A debtor cannot legally run away, to defraud his creditors. To fly, in such circumstances, is not looked upon as emigration, and it is needless to insist upon it farther; but it was necessary to make the distinction, because every rebel, traitor, or felon, might wantonly insult and abuse one society, under the conviction that another would protect him.

Many instances have occurred since the year 1793, which show that criminals are, and may be remanded by the government of that country against which they have offended.

§ 2. But when these cases do not occur, and a person can exercise his individual and social rights, may he not go when and where he pleases?

The principle which forms society supposes choice, or liberty of action, and that

which keeps it together is mutual happiness*.

After a person has consented to be a member of society, and to regulate his conduct by the established customs, maxims, or laws of that society; after he has enjoyed its privileges, and realised some fortune under the protection of these laws or privileges, is it not an injury to that society to leave it, and withdraw so much from the common stock, at the time, and in the manner he pleases? Is it warrantable therefore to interfere, since every individual, as well as every body of men, has a right to defend himself from injury, upon the principle of self-preservation? Incorporate bodies often do interfere.

Suppose a number of persons should imagine that they were oppressed by the laws of the country, that they had no liberty,

* This was the case, after men had formed several distinct societies; and though it does not hold exactly in the first formation of society, which was a family, yet persons might even then separate themselves from the rest, and lay the foundation of another nation.

and therefore in one body resolved to leave it, what should be done in such a case? They might, by unreasonable demands, distress their neighbours; they would diminish the revenue, and weaken the general interests of the community. Here the administration might legally impose at least temporary restraints.

Suppose the minority of the people in time of danger, say of invasion, or of any natural or political calamity, should, in a fit of passion or ill humour, or under the impression of groundless fears, determine to quit the scene of danger or difficulty, would not the majority be justifiable in using proper means for detaining them, at least for a limited time?

There may be then some cases in which a person is restrained from exercising his right of choosing his residence, and in which the Legislature may interpose its authority, without violating the principle of social compact.

Some regulations exist to render emigration less dangerous; for the country to

which it tends, may be as much affected by it as that which is deserted. Hence the object of the alien act, and the time necessary to naturalise a foreigner.

During the period fixed by law for naturalising a foreigner, he may be claimed by that government whose dominions he quitted; and the country in which he settles is not justifiable in forcibly detaining him, because it may by an edict expel him its territories.

In short, when emigration endangers the happiness or existence of the country, from whatever cause it may originate, Government may justly interfere, and at least distinguish betwixt those who can be spared, and those who cannot.

For instance, a certain number of persons are just now marked out for serving in the militia of this country; suppose they resolved to emigrate to America, might not they be detained, without any tyranny or oppression? upon this principle, often alluded to and admitted by all, that every one is bound to serve the society under whose laws he lives, and of consequence is prohi-

bited from leaving it when it has need of his service.

When Government interferes in one case, it may interfere in another of a similar nature.

By charters from the Crown, some places cannot be resorted to, excepting by those nominated in the charter, or others permitted or employed by them.

In cases of monopolies, Government thought fit to dispense exclusive or discretionary power to a number of individuals, for an ostensible cause. So long as this grant continues in force, no other person can legally encroach upon the corporate rights of the monopolists.

None, for instance, can go to the East Indies, unless employed by the East India Company; it cannot be therefore the object of emigration. Here, however free, you cannot exercise your natural right or freedom of choice. Government might lay any other country, in similar circumstances, under similar restraints. But as Government has actually prohibited emigration in

some instances, it has encouraged it in others.

It has granted charters to individuals of many parts of America, and of consequence permitted them to people them in any manner they saw fit *. Here was a legal permission to emigrate ; and where there is a power to grant such a liberty, there is a power to impose regulations consistent with the national security.

It is indeed superfluous to consider this question farther, for almost all governments in Europe, as might be shown, exercise their authority by colonization, or by interference, when emigration threatens the national existence. This is founded upon the first principle of union. Indeed if the whole society dissolved partnership like a trading company, by common consent, no injury could be done. But the question being

* Hence knights-baronets were created, called the Knights of Nova Scotia. After this country was confirmed to us by the peace of Utrecht, 3000 families were transported to it 1749, at the charge of Government, and built the town of Halifax, in honour of the earl of that name.

agitated concerning the Highlanders, suppose they all should form a resolution to desert their country at once, is Government justifiable in opposing them? A combination was formed not many years ago in a certain district, and the object of it actually accomplished; was it legal, or should it have been an object of public investigation? It is true, no person is obliged to give my price for my property; but is that person justified in forming a combination to hinder others from buying it?

This seems liable to the same punishment as associations among workmen, journeymen, or any other class of labourers, to raise their wages, with this difference, that the combination in the one case is to raise the price of labour, and in the other to bring down the price of land; both which operate against the public weal, and therefore justly subjected to arbitrary punishment.

When emigration originates in some unreasonable prejudice, it is the duty of magistracy to employ the most salutary measures which the case may suggest. As

it is the duty of any person to employ means to remove a malady which attacks any of his limbs, so it is of the body politic to cure any distemper which may have seized any of its own members.

SECT. V.

Miscellaneous Observations.

IF emigration should be carried to a great extent in the Highlands, officers might be appointed by Government to give it a new shape, to conduct these voluntary exiles, or to inspect their circumstances, and investigate their motives or causes of secession.

This is practicable at the sea-port towns, or before they quit home; and if it be found that they had no alternative but to fly from local hardships, these hardships might consistently come under the view of administration*.

As so much specie is carried over the Atlantic, and operates against our credit, raises the value of money, and lowers the produce of the country, some step might

* Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.

Goldsmith's Deserted Village.

be taken to detain it, either by exchange or credit conveyances, in the usual way of commerce.

Perhaps if the proprietors whose lands are evacuated were to co-operate with the Highland Society, of which many of them are members, examine more minutely the state of the country, and communicate their sentiments freely, they might discover the cause, and devise proper means for preventing such impending calamities.

If emigration proceeds from envy, jealousy, or inordinate passion, it might be useful to advertise, that the gentlemen of the country would furnish vessels to convey all those disposed to emigrate against a certain day, and this might be the means of creating a pause in some classes of people, and of inducing them to act by the spirit of contradiction, as it would lead them to suspect that a design was formed against their liberties, and show them that their services could be wanted*.

* I am indebted for this hint to a friend well versed in rural affairs, and well acquainted with the present character of the Highlanders.

The idea of being sent out of their native country by others would increase their attachment to it, and incline them to consider more soberly the causes of leaving it.

I am not, and never will be an advocate for tyrannical restraints; I argue upon the ground of freedom and right.

If the Highlanders were oppressed and harassed by persecution or despotism, if they were not really exempted from many of the calamities which affect some of the most favoured nations, I would perhaps be the first, by precept and example, to encourage emigration; but while I admit that they have many of the common hardships of human life, I have attempted to prove that they are singularly favoured.

I have little confidence in the loose hints which I have here thrown out, as efficacious for the purpose I had in view. Nay, it may be confidently asserted, that all the measures I have proposed shall not produce any good, unless Government interpose, not by legal or arbitrary restraints, but by expending a part of the public money, in conjunction with the independent gentle-

men of the country, to find employment for the inhabitants *. About 150,000l. has been directed, by successive administrations, to promote the interests of the Protestant religion. Upwards of 200,000l. has been employed by associations to attain the same end. Nay, it may be calculated that more than half a million Sterling has been

* This is the opinion of Colonel Robertson of Struan, in his letter to Dr. Robertson of Callender, regarding Rannoch. After delivering his opinion, that it would be for the immediate advantage of proprietors in the Highlands to remove at least one half of their tenants, he observes, "As many of the proprietors, from unavoidable circumstances, will be under the necessity of having recourse to this expedient, would it not be an object worthy the paternal care of Government to devise some means of enabling them to follow their earnest wishes, to prevent the depopulation of the country? Premiums are very properly allowed for the encouragement of every useful improvement of natural advantage, and none can be of more general utility than keeping the people in their own country. Upon the same principle, why should not the proprietors of estates in the Highlands, who sacrifice their own interest to that of the nation, and to the dictates of humanity, be in some degree indemnified by Government?" *Dr. Robertson's Agricultural Survey of Perthshire*, Appendix, p. 524, 525.

expended, within a hundred years, to consolidate the happiness of the Highlanders. The effects should be manifest. Why not appropriate 50,000*l.*, or some adequate sum, to keep them at home, and enable them by their labours to repay such immense expenditure?

Though every person who can read thinks himself qualified to censure the wisdom of administration, in the distribution of the public money, yet I do not feel myself competent to judge in a matter of such magnitude; being satisfied that it is lodged in safe hands, that no elevation of rank or fortune can secure from fault, that abuses creep into the most prudent management, and that there lives not a man who can put his hand upon his heart, and say, he never misapplied any part of his own property.

For an obscure individual to prescribe or admonish may be considered presumption, and treated with contempt. It matters not; he that feels a concern for the good of his country, has discharged a duty,

when he endeavours to point out what may be done to promote that good.

It is a singular phenomenon in the history of Britain, that so many citizens should leave the most favoured province. It however requires uncommon caution to intermeddle by prevention. Emigration shows clearly either an increase of knowledge, change of manners, impatience of restraint, a revolutionary spirit, or all these together.

The first classes of people inhabiting those districts affected by it, are loudly called upon to consider their ways, and be wise; to extend their view to futurity, and duly appreciate those advantages, of which emigration may bereave their posterity; to watch carefully the progress of moral and political sentiments among the people, whose united labours alone constitute their temporal felicity; and above all, to direct, by precept and example, the diffusion of religious knowledge, without which no condition can be called prosperous, and no government pronounced secure. The country, where their interests are more immediately involved, has been from the earliest ages

remarkable for heathenish and popish superstition, and by abandoning this superstition, may be thrown into confusion, unless a proper substitution be made. Next to the blessings of pure religion, firmly established, and widely diffused, no substitution is better than virtuous industry.

“ There is plenty of wool in the Highlands, to employ the people in spinning ; plenty of land for potatoes, and some grain ; abundance of pasture fitted for producing mutton, to feed *all* the inhabitants, in aid of their grain ; enough of timber to erect houses to lodge them, and inexhaustible funds of moss in different places to be fuel. There is more humanity in rendering mankind happy and comfortable, than in driving them from home, to wander they know not where ; more pleasure, surely, in rendering them convenient, than in reducing them to misery ; more prudence in keeping artists and labourers at hand, for being employed in providing the various necessaries, which the advanced state of the country and the taste of the age require, than in purchasing them at a dear rate, and carrying

them from afar ; and certainly there is more patriotism in contributing to keep the people in their own country, to fight our battles in the time of need, and defend every thing that is dear to Britons, than in chafing away the natural guardians of our privileges and independence, to seek an asylum on a foreign shore. Must Britain be a cruel stepmother to her children ? And shall the Highland gentlemen, whose fathers had a pride in the number of their men, shut up their bowels of compassion against the children of those who fell by their fathers side ?

“ Have the anguish and tears of their kindred, and those of their blood, no effect in melting their hearts to the tender feelings of compassion ? And is the blessing of him who is ready to perish not worthy of being enjoyed ?

“ The voice of truth is sometimes so feeble, that it cannot be heard till it be too late. But it is the business of Government, the natural guardians of the state, to watch with a vigilant eye over the national prosperity, to guard against national evils,

to foresee danger, and prevent it by salutary regulations ; to make its voice to be heard all over the empire, its authority to be regarded in every province, and submitted to by the most remote individual *."

" Bid harbours open, public ways extend,
 Bid temples, worthier of the God, ascend ;
 Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain,
 The mole projected break the roaring main ;
 Back to his bounds their subject sea command,
 And roll obedient rivers through the land.
 These honours peace to happy Britain brings,
 These are imperial works, and worthy kings."

Pope, Epist. IV. 167.

* Dr. Robertson's Agricultural Survey of Perthshire,
 P. 413, 414, 415.

FINIS.

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