

to society. The Ministers of Religion may be ranked among that class, to which some political economists have given the name of unproductive labourers. The labour of the farmer, the manufacturer, the mechanic, by producing things necessary to man, or by giving those already existing more useful forms, creates the means of maintaining other manufacturers, farmers or mechanics. The labour of the preacher of Christianity, though highly useful, even viewed merely with relation to its political advantages, as a means of instructing the people, has no immediate tendency to create funds, from whence it may be maintained. "Like the declamation of the actor, the harangue of the orator, or the tune of the musician, his work perishes at the very instant of its production." The maintenance therefore of this class is a tax on the common funds of the Society.—Of these funds, the revenue arising from the rent of land, seems that, of which the abstraction of a part, *least retards the general prosperity.* Without recurring to the theoretical reasonings, which would establish this conclusion, its correctness will be sufficiently shown, by attending to what occurs, where such an arrangement has place. In Scotland for instance, the Clergy are chiefly paid by the proprietors of land. The sum, which is thus collected, may, perhaps, be nearly £150,000. Now the levying of this sum on them, has little other effect than that of taking from them the means of supplying themselves, with so great a share of expensive luxuries. It perhaps reduces to nearly that amount the quantity of rare wines, or of costly silks, or the number of horses or menial servants, which that class afford, and this is the only evil resulting from it. But were this sum levied on the farmer, manufacturer and labourer, it would have the effect to reduce the accumulation of capital by the two former, and hence the general prosperity of the society; and it would tend to make the latter content himself with a small share of comforts or even necessaries and, by thus sinking him in the scale of social life produce a result, the evil of which, will not now a days be disputed. In England again and Ireland, the Clergy are themselves, to a great extent, proprietors of land; but had the property, they thus hold, not been set apart to the Church, it would have been possessed by the gentry, there being no reason to suppose that it would have gone to the common good of the Society. It would therefore merely have supported a class probably more luxurious and less conciliatory in their manners than those, whom it now maintains. The evil which arises from the church establishment of England and Ireland, if any evil does arise, is not that they hold property so extended, but that they hold it for a purpose, to which they do not apply it—they might have held it by some such service as delivering a dozen pepper corns yearly to the King, and then they would hold it as quietly as any of the gentry; but as it was granted them for the service of instructing the people, if they do not instruct them, or if they do not give them that sort of instruction they wish, the people look on them as possessing riches to