

to restrain the excessive use of malt, and justices were empowered in quarter sessions to suppress the making of malt and the number of maltsters. Farm-houses that had decayed were to be rebuilt compulsorily, and 20 to 40 acres attached to them. Roast beef at Christmas appears to have been a luxury of modern times—thanks to turnips, mangel, cake, clover, and other winter food; formerly, as soon as the depasturing season was ended, the fat animals were killed and salted, to prevent their becoming lean again—the hay being required for cows and young growing animals. Bullocks and sheep, too, were then a long while growing to perfection for the butcher, much as it is now in many foreign countries, whose agriculturists—when they visit England—express surprise that our live-stock should be so large and so fat at so early an age.

Roads, Canals, and Railroads.—One hundred years ago we were without either, and in winter the country was impassable. Arthur Young, in his tours, execrated the ruts four feet deep on what were called roads in his time. I wish time would permit me to transcribe his graphic description of the difficulties of locomotion and intercommunication. After carriages were invented the nobility and gentry had their "footmen," who ran by the sides of the carriage, and with their long sticks, which are now used for ornament, propped up the carriage when in danger of turning over.

The Government Drainage Loans.—If evidence were wanting of the necessity for aggregating capital in the hands of great companies, for the purpose of agricultural improvement, we should find it in the eagerness with which the first Government loan of two millions sterling was taken up and made use of. Our keen Scotch friends were so alive to its advantages that they took the whole, and our less "cute Southerners" were too late in their application. So in the second loan of a million, a portion, was reserved for the tardy Englishmen. A noble duke, a great and acute improver, who had an immense estate in Scotland, told me that he had a large slice of the first loan, and would have taken much more had he been permitted to do so.

The Establishment of the General Board of Health has had a most beneficial influence on the sanitary condition of the nation, but, oddly and inconsistently enough, the tendency of its operation is to deprive the British people of their food; for the only means by which the national food can be permanently produced is by means of those very excrements which the Board of Health Act does not direct to be applied to the soil, but which are wasted in polluting our rivers. The calamitous national effects which must ultimately result from this suicidal system have been already fully commented upon, in the paper I had the honour to read before you, "On the Sewage of Towns as it affects British Agriculture"; I

will, therefore, only say that, if the Legislature does not interfere to compel a different application of the sewage, I trust that the landholders and farmers of this kingdom will exert themselves to prevent so fatal and so palpable a waste of their substance.

The New Poor-Law of 1834 saved this country from desolation and agriculture from destruction; it taught the landholder and his tenant that property had its duties as well as its rights, and that agriculture was never in greater peril than when it hoped to save itself by the non-employment of human labour. It also proved that to pauperize the labourer by paying his wages as alms, was to destroy his self-dependence and demoralize his character.

The Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 opened the flood-gates for investment and improvement, where they would not otherwise have entered. It has, also, removed an element of embitterment between the clergy and their flocks, and has greatly promoted the cause of religion and civil feeling. It caused the conversion of many woods and wastes into food-producing soil. Tithes were first imposed upon the Mercians in the latter part of the eighth century, by their King Offa, and the tax was extended over all England by King Ethelwolf in 855. Owing to the great extent of forest and waste, the total must have been small. Tithes were applied to the repair of churches, the expenses of worship, and the relief of the poor, as well as to the maintenance of the clergy. Pious individuals, however, contributed lavishly with lands, &c., and so enriched the church. This is now prevented by the law of mortmain.

Richard Cobden and Sir Robert Peel.—It is not venture to give an opinion on the much-reared political question involved by their names, for that is very properly forbidden by the rules of our Club; but, practically, free-trade has done for our country an enormous good. It has awakened the slumbering and heretofore unsuspected powers of the British agricultural lion. We must well remember that the anticipation of a ruinous and impossible competition sorrowed the minds and angered the feelings of those who thought they saw in free-trade the loss of their capital and ruin of their families. But fear and despair gave way to reflection, and to the comprehension of his exact comparative position. The British farmer, like the British manufacturer, faced the difficulty, and has sustained the competitive race by rapid improvement. The great race, although sustained, will be more than won by unheard of and future progress, and half a century hence our agricultural grandchildren will look back upon the condition of their progenitors much as we do on ours of the past age.

The Act for the Enfranchisement of Copyholds will gradually sweep away the old feudal responsibilities, and give security to improvement. A copyhold farm of my own is subject to a fine