

the "labouring poor." We have heard many plans for the relief of the "labouring poor." This puling jargon is not as innocent as it is foolish. In meddling with great affairs, weakness is never innocuous. Hitherto the name of poor (in the sense in which it is used to excite compassion) has not been used for those who can, but for those who cannot labour—for the sick and infirm, for orphan infancy; for languishing and decrepit age; but when we effect to pity, as poor, those who must labour, or the world cannot exist, we are trifling with the condition of mankind. It is the common doom of man that he must eat his bread by the sweat of his brow—that is, by the sweat of his body or the sweat of his mind. If this toil was inflicted as a curse, it is—as might be expected from the curses of the Father of all blessings—tempered with many alleviations, many comforts. Every attempt to fly from it, and to refuse the very terms of our existence, becomes much more truly a curse, and heavier pains and penalties fall upon those who would elude the tasks which are put upon them by the great Master Workman of the world, who, in his dealings with his creatures, sympathises with their weakness, and speaking of a creation wrought by mere will out of nothing, speaks of six days of labour and one of rest. I do not call a healthy young man, cheerful in his mind, and vigorous in his arms, I cannot call such a man poor; I cannot pity my kind as a kind, merely because they are mer. This affected pity only tends to dissatisfy them with their condition, and to teach them to seek resources where no resources are to be found, in something else than their own industry, and frugality, and sobriety. Whatever may be the intention (which, because I do not know, I cannot dispute) of those who would discontent mankind by this strange pity, they act towards us, in the consequences, as if they were our worst enemies.—*Burke.*

CURIOUS CIRCUMSTANCE.—A curious circumstance in connexion with the habits of cattle occurred a few days ago at Priors Lee Hall, near Shiffnal, the estate of John Horton, Esq., where, on killing a young fat heifer, in a cavity of the stomach forty-four large pebbles were found, varying between the size of a walnut and a small hen's egg, and weighing altogether six pounds. How they got into the stomach is a mystery, Mr. Horton having kept the heifer in a stall a great portion of the six months she was in his possession, and when turned out it was in a piece of meadow land entirely free from stones of any kind. The pebbles resembled those found in brooks, and the only solution of the mystery is, that in drinking at a stream the pebbles were swallowed with the water. The heifer was fat, and in excellent condition, so that the indigestible materials, of which the animal had unconsciously partaken, did not affect either its health or appetite.—*Shropshire Conservative.*

ENCOURAGEMENT TO AGRICULTURE IN FRANCE.

As one means of serving the agricultural interest, it is proposed that the Government shall establish a general system of insurance of growing crops, of sheep, cattle, and horses, and of all other descriptions of farming stock. The immense capital that would be required to cover by insurance all the agricultural stock of this vast kingdom, would, it is believed, be totally beyond the attainment of any private company; and therefore it is proposed that the Government shall take the matter up. It is believed that it might afford insurance to farmers at a most moderate rate; and, whilst protecting them against, or, to speak more correctly, compensating them for all and every injury that might befall their property, realize such large profits as would enable reductions to be made in the taxes that weigh most heavily upon agriculture. It is calculated that every year there is lost in France at least £2,500,000 by the injury done to growing crops by drought, frost, inundations, &c.; and a further sum of £2,500,000 is calculated to be lost in the rearing of poultry, sheep, oxen and horses. And these vast sums do not include the losses of extraordinary visitations from heaven, such as inundations, tempests, &c. A general system of insurance by the Government would prevent this immense loss from falling upon the agricultural interest, and would thereby render it a service, of which the importance cannot be exaggerated. In Belgium the Government is taking measures for the adoption of such a plan.

The cultivation of beet-root for the manufacture of sugar is an important branch of agriculture in France. The vast quantities of beet-root that are required may be guessed at from the fact that from the commencement of the present season to the end of January (a period of about three months) not less than 42,209,034 kilogrammes of sugar were manufactured. The duty paid on the sugar manufactured in the month of January amounted to 2,111,738 francs. The number of sugar establishments in France is 304, of which 296 are in active operation at this moment.

A gentleman residing in the department of Ariège, being at the head of a charitable institution for the education of Protestant orphans, was induced, some years ago, to endeavour to utilise a piece of land by planting on it three crops of potatoes in the course of the year. His experiment succeeded beyond his expectation, and ever since he has made it a rule to plant potatoes every four months; and the consequence is that he has every four months a fine and abundant crop. The plantings for his first crop take place in December, and in May, the potatoes being arrived at maturity, are dug up; the second crop is planted in May, and is ready for digging in August; the third is planted at the latter end of September, and is ripe at the end of December. Three crops a year, and from the same piece of land, too, is a