



"Agriculture not only gives Riches to a Nation, but the only Riches she can call her own."

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AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION.

WE again revert to this subject, being apprehensive that not a few of our readers are alarmed at the great reduction which has taken place of late in the value of wheat and flour, owing to the passage of Sir Robert Peel's free trade measure.—The reduction is much greater than we anticipated, which may be attributed in a great degree to the immense quantities of foreign wheat and flour that were locked up in British bonded warehouses. Every one acquainted with the facilities for producing bread-stuffs on the continent of Europe, must be aware that high prices are not to be expected under the operation of free trade principles. If those excellent principles be carried out by the nations of the earth, one great source of war and discontent would be removed, and both agriculture and commerce would put on a more healthy appearance. England has nothing to fear from the operations of free trade principles; but under the old system, pauperism and discontent prevailed to such an alarming degree, that the government could no longer provide bread for the half-starving millions. They found out the antidote, and we have not the slightest doubt but that the productive interests of Britain will assume a more than usual healthy appearance under the operations of free trade. The falsely so-called protection has had the influence of bringing about a degree of destitution among the labouring classes that quite defies des-

cription; it has placed the land of England in the hands of a few, and indeed matters came to such a pass, that an English peasant could not rent sufficient land for a garden, nor would he be allowed to keep a cow, pig, or poultry. Happily this state of things will no longer exist; the large farmers will gladly give up a large share of their high-rented lands, and the industrious poor peasant, and the small capitalist will be able to procure a piece of land, to devote their time and energies in earning a comfortable livelihood for themselves and their families. The rage for large farms will thus be checked, and the half-starving families who have the past few years been locked up in the parish poor-house, or been turned adrift to work upon the roads, will be able to get any quantity of ground they can well cultivate upon long lease, from which they can earn a comfortable living, pay their rent, an equitable share of the general revenue, and relieve the poor law commissioners of the whole of their official duties.

If the poorer classes of England could have a fair opportunity of exhibiting their ability of acquiring property, the result would obviously be that poor laws would no longer be required to maintain such as are capable of earning their own livelihood, and poor laws and poor rates would be handed down to posterity as a matter of history—as being one of the absurdities of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Mankind