

Sir Harry Verney's was passed over without even the compliment of a 'commendation,' because he carried on his carcass too much offal and more threepenny than ninepenny beef.

But the fattening qualities and early maturity of the improved stock would have been of little value beyond the few rich grazing districts of the Midland counties, without an addition to the supply of food. The best arable land of the kingdom had been exhausted by long years of cultivation, and the barren fallow, which annually absorbed one-third of the soil, failed to restore its fertility. A new source of agricultural wealth was discovered in turnips, which, as their important qualities became known, excited in many of their early cultivators much the same sort of enthusiasm as they did in Lord Monboddo, who on returning home from a circuit went to look at a field of them by candle-light. Turnips answered the purpose of a fallow crop which cleaned and rested old arable land; turnips were food for fattening cattle in winter; turnips, grown on light land and afterwards eaten down by sheep which consolidated it by their feet, prepared the way for corn-crops on wastes that had previously been given up to the rabbits. By this means the heaths and wolds of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, with the help of marling in certain districts, the blowing sands of Norfolk, Nottinghamshire and Bedfordshire, were gradually reclaimed and colonized by the race of farmers who have been foremost to adopt all the great improvements in English Agriculture for the last century. This new system required a capital on the part of both landlord and tenant. It required from the landlord barns and yards and houses fit for first-class farmers. Mr. Coke of Holkham laid out above a hundred thousand pounds in 20 years on dwellings and offices. It required the tenant to expend a considerable sum on flocks and herds, and, above all, in labour for the years before the wild lands began to yield a profit. Mr. Rodwell, in Suffolk, sunk £5000 in merely marling 820 acres, with a lease of only 28 years. Such spirited proceedings demanded no mean amount of intelligence to conduct them with discretion and profit. The value of Mr. Rodwell's produce during the 28 years of his occupancy was £30,000 greater than in the 28 years which preceded his improvements. No needy race of peasant cultivators, no rack-rent absentee line of landowners, could have achieved this conquest over the English wilderness, then far from ports, manufacturing towns, and markets.

This great advance in arable farming took its rise in Norfolk. The king of Brobdingnag gave it as his opinion, 'that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together.' This passage might have been written upon Lord Townsend, who retired in 1730 from public affairs, which went on none the worse without him, and devoted the remaining eight years of his life to improving his estate. He originated practices which increased the produce not only two, but a hundred fold, and of which the world continues to reap the benefit at this hour. To marl and clay farms was an old practice in England; for Harrison in his 'Description of Britaine,' in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, says, 'Besides the compost that is carried out of the husbandman's yards, ditches, and dove-houses, or out of great towns, we have with us a kind of white marl, which is of so great force, that, if it be cast over a piece of land but once in three-score years, it shall not need of any further composting.' The usage seems, however, to have died away, and its advantages were rediscovered by Lord Townshend and a Mr. Allen, who applied it to the sands of Norfolk, and converted boundless wilds of rabbit-warrens and sheep-walks into rich, grain bearing soil. Young estimated that before the close of the century 'three or four hundred thousand acres of wastes had been turned into gardens,' and rents