

economically than the same class in England: they seldom eat meat, except on Sundays and in harvest; buttermilk and potatoes with brown bread is their daily food. Accordingly they are gradually acquiring capital, and their great ambition is to have land of their own. They eagerly seize every opportunity of purchasing a small farm, and the price is so raised by the competition, that land pays little more than two per cent. interest for the purchase-money. Large properties gradually disappear, and are divided into small portions, which sell at a high rate. But the wealth and industry of the population is continually increasing, being rather diffused through the masses, than accumulated in individuals. An Englishman with a capital of 100*l.* might cultivate such a farm advantageously, and if he is satisfied to live as a labouring man would have the same advantages as the Fleming. His own labour is valued at twelve shillings a-week, his wife's at five shillings, and if she is not always at work his children make up for it. The rent of fifteen acres of land, with a house, cow-house, and small barn, could not be less than 40*l.* a-year, tithe free; and rates and taxes may amount to 5*l.* more; still he would have 38*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* for his risk, capital, and superintendence, or about one-fifth of the gross produce, which is as much as a farmer on a larger scale could expect, without being paid for his personal labour. In Ireland where there are many farms of less than fifteen acres, the Flemish system would soon raise the class of small farmers to competence, if they would only expend the money which now pays for whiskey in forming a urine-tank, and raise artificial grasses and roots for their cows and pigs, instead of trusting to potatoes alone, and over-cropping the land with them. There is some resemblance in the principles of Irish and Flemish cultivation with the spade. The lazy beds for potatoes have the intervals dug out and spread over the beds. The Irish are accustomed to dig and trench ground; they already can live on buttermilk and potatoes; and the cultivation of flax is familiar to many of them. Give them but a taste for cleanliness and comfort in their habitations, and decency in their dress, and they will soon emulate the Flemish peasant in his industry and independence.

The foregoing account of the spade husbandry of Flanders has been obtained by inspecting many small farms, and comparing the practice of the occupiers. The calculations of produce and expenses are partly taken from a Report made to the French Government, in 1812, by M. de Lichtervelde, then adjoint-maire of Ghent