

ever, loose no time—every day lost in preparing for, and guarding against the evil might prove fatal to hundreds of thousands of their fellow-creatures. What was to be done when the pestilence—the vegetable gangrene might come and seize upon man and beast? He used the term “gangrene” advisedly, for they might see in the samples of potatoes which he then held in his hand, evident gangrene, and the term had been applied by the physicians and scientific men of France to the disease. The great question now to be considered was, could they apply any remedy to the evil which existed. He believed they could; and he would at once say, first of all they must remove the potatoes from the ground, store them where, ever they might—barns, warehouses, and every place that could be made available for holding them, must be used. Infected potatoes must not be allowed to touch the sound ones, for there was contagion in them; and so long as sound potatoes were kept dry, there was no danger of them. The diseased part of the potatoe is innocuous to man or beast if mascerated or steeped 12 hours in clean cold water, and then changed and washed again in other water, before they are boiled. The starch then in the most decayed and putrid portion of the potato was perfectly good. After the first 12 hours’ steeping, the rind was to be taken off. The diseased part must be pared, and the parings washed twice in cold water, there being 12 hours, as he had said between each washing; then they were to be dried and set by for the use of cattle. He would therefore impress upon all concerned in the care of potatoes the absolute necessity of keeping them dry. Instruments are now being made in Paris and London by means of which the starch could be separated from the potato; but where the vegetable fibre remained, let it be washed and preserved. He would again impress upon those who had buried their potatoes the necessity of removing them at once. They ought to be put into straw, and every means taken to preserve them and keep them dry. He regretted to state that one-third of the potato crop in Ireland was lost, and with them the food of 2,000,000 of the people of that country had perished. Not one moment was to be lost. The government must interpose, science must interpose between the dead and the living, and by the goodness and mercy of God the plague may yet be stayed. At all events he would say, when God’s plague was on the earth, let men leave of their unrighteousness.”

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

At the monthly meeting of the North Cornwall Experimental Club, held at the Tree Inn, Stratton, G. Gurney, Esq., presiding, after the various topics connected with the “operations of the month” had been discussed, Mr. Rowe read a paper on “The Importance of Statistics to Agriculture.” He began by observing, that the subject might be thought by some as of too little practical value to merit attention; and that this opinion had very generally prevailed might be inferred, or Great Britain would be the only country in Europe, with the exception of the Netherlands, devoid of correct statistical information relating to the science of agriculture, founded upon official inquiry. If a consciousness of having excelled incited to exertion, would it not be well, as far as practicable, by a compendious system of statistics, to settle the question, “How far does agriculture progress?” To each member of the club it should occur that the object of their associating together was “the advancement of the art and science of agriculture” but without correct data, without statistics, were they not in a great manner at a loss to say, how far they were aiding in such advancement, or whether, in fact, any “advancement” was with them being made? These were questions of deep import, and deserving, if possible, a solution. In political economy generally, the science of statistics was now fully recognized, and its importance appreciated. In 1832, a department of the Board of Trade was created, for the special purpose of collecting and arranging statistical information, with a view to its presentation to Parliament, and much valuable material had, from time to time, been thus brought together; but the attention of that board had

been mainly occupied in matters relating to our commerce, manufactures, and intercourse with foreign countries. Again, those engaged in almost every art and manufacture had been strikingly alive to the most trifling minutiae bearing upon the process, result and expense of each department in their several pursuits, whilst the agriculturists as a body had proved themselves indifferent in such matters, and the consequence was, that it was scarcely possible to obtain from two individuals a like opinion, either as to the expense of preparation for a single crop the average quantity of any given crop in a series of years, or the value of such crop when produced. Indeed this vagueness seemed to run throughout the whole operations and results connected with agriculture, and hence the difficulties which their society had met in arranging a scale of labour. In proof that British agriculturists had been as inattentive as he had stated, and more so than the other European states, Mr. Rowe adduced the example of France, where the quantity of land sown with each description of grain, the produce, and the quantity of live stock for the whole kingdom were annually ascertained, and accurately known. In Belgium, similar information had been periodically collected. In the United States, also, at the decennial census, much interesting and valuable information was obtained, as to the live stock, the produce of various crops, and the quantity of dairy, orchard, and garden produce, &c. In England, in 1793, a Board of Agriculture was established, assisted annually by a grant from parliament, and was continued until 1816; but the attention of that board he apprehended, was directed to modes of agricultural improvements, rather than simply collecting and arranging information. Our neighbours north of the Tweed possessed statistical accounts of each parish in the kingdom, collected by the ministers of the respective parishes, and lately published with the authority of their names. These accounts generally include the extent and boundaries of the several parishes, the topographical appearances, the rivers, the geology, with short historical notices, the population, the number of acres, the number cultivated as arable or otherwise, the system of cropping, general holdings, and annual value of agricultural produce distinguishing that of grain, green crops, &c. Within the last few years, he believed, a series of questions had been issued by government, and addressed to the several parishes in England, but whether returns had been generally made was doubtful, as the result had not been published, and hence the average produce of the kingdom stated to be in years of fair crops, 28 bushels per acre, must be regarded as a matter of conjecture rather than of evidence. This question was now, however, forcing itself on the attention of government, and had been brought before parliament for several years past. By a well arranged plan, as in other countries, the quantity of grain annually produced might be ascertained, and the important and practical question settled, as to how far the produce of the country kept pace with the increase of population? a question which must be looked fairly in the face, as one becoming every day of greater moment; for it should be borne in mind that our population did not simply augment in a uniform ratio, the increase in the 20 years from 1821 to 1841 being 2,733,669—more than the increase of 180 years preceding 1750 (which was but 2,230,000), and greater than the increase in the 500 years succeeding the conquest. Objections might be urged to the adoption of a plan of statistics; one—“that it would be a prying into the private affairs of individuals,” was certainly entitled to much consideration; but after having been injured to the ordeal of the income tax, we might well suffer the investigation that might be necessary for such a purpose, a restoration to vigour being oft-times secured only by an unpalatable draught or a painful operation. The lecturer then urged the great importance which would have been given to this part of the county had such a plan existed; its capabilities and fertility would have been definitely shown, and would have given it a claim to consideration and accommodation in any scheme of local improvement professing to be directed to the welfare of the county generally; a remark forcibly applicable at the present moment, when