

of time even America will begin to feel the pressure caused by its operation, as European countries now do.

Of the full exposition of the above law given in Mill's Political Economy we shall avail ourselves by quoting a passage or two in which the principle is stated with remarkable clearness and conciseness; and we have the more satisfaction in doing so, because we may have occasion, before closing, to dissent from more than one of the author's conclusions on points of great importance. Speaking of the law of the increase of production from land, Mill says:\*

After a certain, and not very advanced stage in the progress of agriculture, it is the law of production from the land, that in any given state of agricultural skill and knowledge, by increasing the labor the produce is not increased in an equal degree; doubling the labor does not double the produce; or, to express the same thing in other words, every increase of produce is obtained by a more than proportional increase in the application of labor to the land. †

Again he says in the same part of his work, when speaking of the limit to the increase of production arising from the weakness of the effective desire of accumulation:

In these countries (*i. e.* where neither the spirit of industry nor the desire of accumulation need any encouragement) there would never be any deficiency of capital, if its increase were never checked or brought to a stand by a diminution of its returns. It is the tendency of the returns to a progressive diminution, which causes the increase of production to be often attended with a deterioration in the condition of the producers; and this tendency, which would in time put an end to increase of production altogether, is a result of the necessary and inherent conditions of production from land.

And yet once more in the same connection he remarks:

In all countries which have passed beyond a rather early stage in the progress of agriculture, every increase in the demand for food, occasioned by increased population, will always, unless there is a simultaneous improvement in production, diminish the share which, on a fair division, would fall to each individual. An increased production, in default of unoccupied tracts of fertile

\* "Principles of Political Economy," Bk. I., Ch. 12.

† By "land," Mill means all the powers of nature in conjunction with which human labor is able to produce the means of life: *e. g.*, mines, fisheries, &c., as well as arable land.