

but not the least, I am persuaded, was the abolition, during the reign of Napoleon, of the law of primogeniture, and the adoption of the law of equal partibility of landed estates. Under the operation of the last mentioned law, the great body of the people have become freeholders. It was their interest, therefore, to check and prevent civil war and all disorders which would put their property in jeopardy, as well as to resist the cowardly, faithless, and murderless tyrant who would have reduced them to a dependence upon his arbitrary will. The world beheld their heroic defence of their rights and liberties with admiration; but they beheld them with still greater admiration conducting to the borders of the kingdom in safety, the perfidious, mortified, abject despot, who had deluged the streets of his capital with the blood of his subjects, and their dismissing him with cool contempt. It was a nation of freeholders, who exhibited this unparalleled and glorious example. The law of equal division of intestate real estate, contributed in my opinion, to this extraordinary result. In order to show more clearly how little dependence can be placed on men who are not freeholders, whatever their wealth may be, I will read an extract from the writings of Adam Smith:—

“The capital that is acquired to any country by commerce and manufactures, is all a very precarious and uncertain possession, till some part of it has been secured and realised, in the permanent improvement of its lands. A merchant, it has been said very properly, is not the citizen of any particular country. It is in a great measure indifferent to him, from what place he carries on his trade, and a very trifling disgust will make him remove his capital, and with it all the industry which it supports, from one country to another. No part of it can be said to belong to any particular country, till it has been spread, as it were, over the face of that country, either in buildings or the lasting improvement of lands. No vestige now remains of the great wealth, said to have been possessed by the greater part of the Hanse towns, except in the obscure histories of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is even uncertain where some of them were situated, or to what towns in Europe the Latin names given to some at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, greatly diminished the commerce and manufactures of the cities of Lombardy and Tuscany, those countries still continue to be among the most populous and best cultivated in Europe. The civil wars of Flanders, chased away the great commerce of Antwerp, Ghent and Bruges. But Flanders still continues to be one of the richest, best cultivated and most populous provinces