

it ; but the progress of the country during the last thirty or forty years in every branch of industry, in agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and navigation, has been so rapid and extensive, as to make it no reflection upon the Bank of England to say that *the instrument which by itself* was fully adequate to former transactions, is no longer sufficient without new aids to meet the demands of the present times.

“ We have to a considerable degree, the proof of this position in the very establishment of so many Country Banks.

“ Within the memory of many living, and even of some of those now engaged in public affairs, there were no Country Banks except in a few of the great commercial towns.

“ The money transactions of the country were carried on by supplies of coin and bank-notes from London.

“ The extent of the business of the country and the improvement made from time to time in the mode of conducting our increased commercial transactions, founded on pecuniary credit, rendered such a system no longer adequate, and Country Banks must have arisen, as in fact they did arise, from the increased wealth and *new wants* of the country.

“ The matter of regret is, not that Country Banks have been suffered to exist, but that they have been suffered so long to exist without controul or limitation, or without the adoption of provisions calculated to counteract the evils resulting from their improvidence or excess.

“ It would be vain to suppose that we could now by any act of the Legislature extinguish the existing Country Banks, even if it were desirable, but it may be within our power gradually at least to establish a sound system of banking throughout the country, and if such a system could be formed, there can be little doubt that it would ultimately extinguish and absorb all that is objectionable and dangerous in the present banking establishments.

“ There appear to be two modes of attaining this object.