

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Agricultural condition of the South Western Counties.—Wiltshire.—Dorsetshire.—Devonshire.—Somersetshire.—Cornwall.—Wales.—The West Midland Counties.—The North Midland.—Yorkshire.—Improvers of the Moors.—James Croft, an agricultural collier.—Northern Counties.—Durham.—Northumberland.—Westmorland.—The Lake District.—Agricultural condition of Scotland.—The Lothians.—Sheep flocks.—Ayrshire.—Burns.—Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire.—North-western parts.—Agricultural condition of Ireland.—The potato cultivation.

CONFINING, for the present, our general view of the remaining moiety of England to its pastoral and agricultural condition before the end of the eighteenth century, we proceed to the South Western, the West Midland, the North Western, and the North counties; also including Wales. Those divisions of the country contained a population of about two millions and a half at the end of the seventeenth century; of four millions and a half at the end of the eighteenth century; and of ten millions and a half at the end of the first half of the nineteenth century. Such quadrupling of the population in the course of a hundred and fifty years is an evidence of the direction of productive labour to manufacturing and commercial industry, in particular districts having an extraordinary command of raw material. We have indicated the partial growth of such employments in the reign of Anne and of George I.\* We shall have to show their greater expansion in the first half of the reign of George III. But we desire first to exhibit, during the latter period, how the rapid growth of a trading population was stimulating the employment of capital in the rural districts; and above all, what a vast field existed for its employment in the direction of science and labour to the neglected tracts and imperfect cultivation of a country capable of a wonderful enlargement of its fertility. In this rapid sketch we shall add an equally brief glance at Scotland and Ireland.

William Cobbett, who had an intense enjoyment of rural life, and a power of expressing his pleasure which almost rises into poetry, says he would rather live and farm amongst the Wiltshire Downs, "than on the banks of the Wye in Herefordshire, in the vale of Gloucester, of Worcester, or of Evesham, or even in what

\* *Ante*, vol. iv. chap. xix. and xx.

the Kentish men call their garden of Eden." He looks with rapture upon the "smooth and verdant downs in hills and vallies of endless variety as to height and depth and shape;" he rejoices in beholding, as he rides along on a bright October morning, the immense flocks of sheep, going out from their several folds to the downs for the day, each having its shepherd and each shepherd his dog. He saw two hundred thousand South-down sheep at Weyhill-fair, brought from the down-farms of Wiltshire and Hampshire.\* But upon these down-farms he was surprised to see very large pieces of Swedish and white turnips. The pastoral district was then, some thirty years ago, becoming agricultural. At the present time "the rapid extension of tillage over these high plains threatens before long to leave but little of their original sheep-walks." † When the mallard was the chief tenant of the fens, and the bittern of the marshes, large flocks of great bustards ranged over the Wiltshire downs, running with exceeding swiftness, and using their ostrich-like wings to accelerate their speed. They usually fled before the sportsman and the traveller; but they have been known to resent intrusion upon their coverts of charlock or thistles, attacking even a horseman. Wesley, in his "Account of John Haine," one of his enthusiastic followers, relates what was supposed to be a supernatural appearance to reprove the poor man for a paroxysm of religious frenzy. "He saw, in the clear sky, a creature like a swan, but much larger, part black, part brown, which flew at him, went just over his head, and lighting on the ground, at about forty yards' distance, stood staring upon him." ‡ The apparition is explained by the author of the "Life of Wesley," to have been a bustard; and he quotes a relation by sir Richard Hoare, of two instances, in 1805, of the bustard attacking a man, and a horse. The author of "Ancient Wiltshire" says, that a report of these incidents in the Gentleman's Magazine of 1805, "is probably the last record we shall find of the existence of this bird upon our downs." † The bustard has now utterly disappeared. He stalks no longer where the furrow has been drawn.

Wiltshire is said not to be remarkable in our time for a very high standard of farming. Aubrey says, of England generally, before the year 1649, when experimental philosophy was first cultivated by a club at Oxford, that it was thought not to be good manners for a man to be more knowing than his neighbours and forefathers. "Even to attempt an improvement in husbandry,

\* "Rural Rides."

† "Quarterly Review," vol. ciii. p. 135.

‡ Southey—"Life of Wesley," vol. ii. p. 124 and p. 192.



though it succeeded with profit, was looked upon with an ill eye.\* He applies this character more particularly to Wiltshire. "I will only say of our husbandmen, as sir Thomas Overbury does of the Oxford scholars, that they go *after* the fashion; that is, when the fashion is almost out they take it up: so our countrymen are very late and very unwilling to learn or to be brought to new improvements." The late Mr. Britton, a Wiltshire man, who edited Aubrey's "Natural History," and wrote a memoir of him, says, "In the days of my own boyhood, nearly seventy years ago, I spent some time at a solitary farmhouse in North Wiltshire, with a grandfather and his family, and can remember the various occupations and practices of the persons employed in the dairy, and on the grazing and corn lands. I never saw either a book or newspaper in the house; nor were any accounts of the farming kept. †

Dorsetshire, the great county of quarries and of fossil remains—of the Portland stone of which St. Paul's was built, and of the Purbeck marble whose sculptured columns adorn the Temple Church and Salisbury Cathedral—Dorsetshire was eighty years ago a district where agricultural improvements had made little progress. Arthur Young describes its bleak commons, quite waste, but consisting of excellent land; its downs, where sheep were fed without turnip culture; its three courses of corn-crop, and then long seasons of weeds. The Dorsetshire farmers, he replies, held his lessons in contempt, as the warreners and shepherds of Norfolk would have held them half a century before; and would have "smiled at being told of another race arising who should pay ten times their rent, and at the same time make fortunes by so doing." ‡ The downs were not broken up, to any extent, until our own days. The foxes and rabbits have at last been banished from the wastes where a few sheep used to feed amidst the furze and fern. Where one shepherd's boy was kept, five men are now employed. From 1734 to 1769, there had been about five thousand acres inclosed; from 1772 to 1800, about seven thousand acres. During the first half of the eighteenth century, more than fifty thousand acres had been inclosed. § Cranborne Chase, where twelve thousand deer ranged over the lands, and the labourers were systematically poachers, was not inclosed till 1828. The condition of the Dorsetshire peasantry, which was a public reproach, appears to have been essentially connected with "very large tracts of foul land," and with "downs that occupied a large portion of the county." The "mud-

\* "Natural History of Wiltshire," Preface, edit. 1847.

† *Ibid.*, p. 103.

‡ "Eastern Tour," vol. iii. p. 409.

§ "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. iii. p. 440.

walled cottages, composed of road-scrapings and chalk and straw, made the Dorsetshire gentlemen take shame to themselves in 1843; and many set about remedying the evil, in the conviction that agricultural prosperity and a wretched and demoralized population could not exist together.

Aubrey has an interesting story of the agriculture of the middle of the seventeenth century. "The Devonshire men were the earliest improvers. I heard Oliver Cromwell, Protector, at dinner at Hampton Court, 1657 or 8, tell the lord Arundell of Wardour, and the lord Fitzwilliam, that he had been in all the counties of England, and that the Devonshire husbandry was the best."\* In 1848, it is written, "It cannot be denied that the farming of Devon is at the present time inferior to that of most of the counties of England." † And yet a large proportion of the Devonshire population are, as they always have been, agricultural. The quantity of waste land is very great. Dartmoor contains a quarter of a million of acres, about one half of the wastes of Devonshire. The severity of the climate of Dartmoor is attributed as much to the want of drainage as to its great elevation. ‡ Any attempts at cultivating these sterile regions would have been commercially useless in the eighteenth century, when so many fertile districts remained uncultivated. The absolute necessity of supplying the great mining and metal-working population of South Wales with the farm produce that cannot be raised in their own boundaries, may eventually clothe even the barrens of North Devon with fertility. §

Somersetshire presented to Arthur Young a signal instance of neglect in its vast ranges of waste. High land and low land were equally unimproved. Leaving Bridgewater on his road to Bath, he passed "within sight of a very remarkable tract of country called King's Sedgemoor." He described this as a flat black peat bog, so rich that its eleven thousand acres wanted nothing but draining to be capable of the highest cultivation. "At present," he says, "it is so encompassed by higher lands that the water has no way to get off but by evaporation. In winter it is a sea, and yields scarce any food, except in very dry summers." || King's Sedgemoor had probably been little changed from 1685, when Monmouth looked from the top of Bridgewater Church on the royal army encamped in the morass, amidst ditches and causeways, and speculated upon a night march by which he should surprise his enemy. ¶ Much of this

\* "Natural History of Wiltshire," p. 103, Britton's edit.

† "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. ix. p. 495.

‡ See an interesting paper in "Journal of Bath and West of England Society," vol. xiii. 1860.

§ "Eastern Tour," vol. iv. p. 13.

¶ *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 312.



moorland is now under arable cultivation, and contains some of the richest grazing-land of the country.\* The Quantock Hills are described by Young as wholly waste; as eighteen thousand acres yielding nothing. This range is now smiling with farms and gentlemen's residences, with woods and plantations. Exmoor, consisting of twenty thousand acres, was crown land, yielding a scanty picking to a few hundred ponies, and summer feed to sheep from neighbouring farms. Even from the time of its inclosure, improvements have been very slowly curtailing the range of the black-cock. The wild stag has not disappeared. A dwindled breed of sheep, kept chiefly for their wool, still occupy the sheep walks. "Sometimes," says Mr. Pusey, "you find a large piece of the best land inclosed with a high fence, and you hope that the owner is about to begin tilling his freehold. On the contrary, the object of this improvement is to keep out the only sign of farming, the sheep, and to preserve the best of the land (because where the land is best the covert is highest) an undisturbed realm of the black-cock." And yet Mr. Pusey saw that Exmoor consisted in great part of sound land; and a farmer said to him, "here is land enough idle to employ the surplus population of England." Every black-cock, in Mr. Pusey's opinion, had cost more than a full-fed ox.† In Somersetshire the disproportion between the population and the amount of agricultural employment is very great. For every 100 acres in this county there were 41 persons returned in the census of 1841; in Norfolk there were 32 persons, and in Lincoln 22, taking the average of the several counties.‡

Of Cornwall, it need only be remarked that its agriculture, at the end of the last century, was a very secondary object. Fishers and miners constituted the great body of the population. At the present time not more than 7 per cent. are agricultural. The farms were small, as they still are, chiefly cultivated by the occupier and his family. Corn crop formerly followed corn crop till the soil would yield no more. The turnip-culture was unknown till 1815. But improvement is making its way against old prejudices; and the Cornish cultivator may in time be as remarkable for intelligence as the Cornish miner.

South Wales, before the war of the French Revolution, grew little corn, and pasturage was the main occupation. The peasantry lived chiefly upon oatmeal and barley-meal. The war came, and corn was grown for export to England. The iron works and copper works multiplied; and then South Wales in time became an

\* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. xi. p. 698.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 309.

*Ibid.*, vol. xi. p. 547.

importing district. North Wales was almost exclusively pastoral. The small sheep ran upon the mountains for three or four years till they were sold to drovers. The lean black cattle could not be fattened where they grew, but were drafted off to the border fairs. A little tillage gradually mingled with the pasturage; but all the modern system of economizing manures for cereal crops, and of feeding stock with green crops, was utterly unknown. Like the cultivators of most mountainous districts, remote from towns, the farmers and the labourers were equally prejudiced and obstinate in their adherence to old practices. Much of this conceit still abides, with the hard diet, and the coarse home-made frieze, of former days.

The West Midland counties present few, if any, remarkable agricultural features which it may be proper to notice, with the view to mark the contrast between the past and the present. In Gloucestershire the sheep farms upon the Cotswolds, and the dairies in the valley of the Severn, are not peculiar to recent times. Cider and Perry are produced, as of yore. The Gloucestershire farmer planted his beans, and sometimes his wheat, in drills, before drilling-machines were invented. The Gloucestershire labourer, slowly as he moves, has kept that slow movement with his team, like others of the west, from time immemorial. Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Worcestershire, have not started into good cultivation in the course of half a century, but have gone on steadily improving.

One singular example of the slowness with which novel cultivation was extended, and new products were used, has been recorded, by an octogenarian, of his native county of Worcester. The late Mr. Thomas Wright Hill—a man most deservedly venerated in his own day, and whose sons have done service to their country which will not speedily be forgotten—says in an autobiographical fragment, "My uncle had heard of potatoes"—this was about 1750—"perhaps tasted that root. In any case, however, he procured some seed potatoes from a gentleman's gardener near Bewdley, and planted them in his garden. The plants came up and gave every promise of an excellent crop; but when the time of potatoe harvest arrived, and the tops were well ripened, my uncle gathered a few of their balls, and to his utter disappointment found them anything but good potatoes." The stems withered during the winter. The spring came: and when the good man dug up his supposed unproductive patch, he found that the plant which Raleigh gave to Devonshire, and which was the common food of Lancashire, was worth cultivating.\*

\* "Remains of T. W. Hill," privately printed, 1859.



In Warwickshire, the system of under-drainage was discovered accidentally by Joseph Elkington, of Princethorpe, in 1764. His fields were so wet as to rot his sheep. He endeavoured in vain to drain them by a deep trench, but could not effect any real remedy. He was meditating by the side of his drain, when a man passing with a crow-bar, the inquiring farmer took the tool, and forced it three or four feet below the bottom of his trench, with a view of discovering the nature of the sub-soil. Water burst up when he removed the crow-bar, and ran plentifully into the drain. He acted upon the hint, by boring; rendered his own land fertile; and received a reward of a thousand pounds from Parliament for the improvements consequent upon his discovery.\* Staffordshire, the country of potteries and collieries, was too rapidly advancing at the end of the last century in manufactures to exhibit great changes in cultivation. Its wastes, in some parts, are still uncultivated. Cannock Chase, a low ridge of thirteen thousand acres, with the Potteries and the fires of Dudley within view, is described by Mr. Pusey as a fertile wilderness, feeding only a few starving sheep, but capable of being brought under the plow.†

To speak of Lancashire in connection with agriculture may appear like an attempt to "give to Zembla fruits, to Barca flowers." Yet Lancashire was an agricultural county at the period we profess to describe; and its slowly developing manufactures were intimately blended with the occupations of an agricultural population. We shall have to trace the association of the spinning-wheel in the village and the loom in the town, in our next chapter. Meanwhile, before the cotton æra arrived, Southern Lancashire was very imperfectly cultivating the surface of its great coal-fields. The farms were small; the implements rude; the cultivators poor and prejudiced. Chat-Moss was, of course, left to its primeval state of desolation, man scarcely daring to tread where the railway now bears its thundering burthens. The middle district, with the exception of Preston, is wholly agricultural, as it was in the last century. On the north of the Ribble, the hill-farmers are a primitive race, differing little from their grandfathers and great grandfathers. Pasturing their black-faced sheep upon the moors, they care little for the quality of the land. They have no green crops, and no farm-yards for their cows in the winter. Turf is their only fuel, and their chief food is the oat-cake baked on the hot hearth. What these cultivators are now may show what they were eighty years ago. We descend into the district called the Fylde, to the

\* Sinclair's "Code of Agriculture."

† "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. iv. p. 310.

north of the Wyre, and we look upon operations which are now as much a modern triumph for Lancashire as the wealth of her factories. The mosses of this district amount to twenty thousand acres. "From a state of perfect sterility, producing nothing but moor-fowl and snipes, they are now being gradually converted into the most productive land of the kingdom."\*

Cheshire, like Lancashire, was, for a large portion of the county, in the transition state from agriculture to manufactures, in the middle of the reign of George III. Its rich pastures and its dairy-farms have only been improved in degree, but not in kind. Its arable was imperfectly cultivated, without green crops. One mode of raising the productiveness, both of arable and pasture, was forbidden by a barbarous fiscal policy. The foul or dirtied salt, produced in hundreds of tons by the salt-works of Cheshire, was utterly lost; the heavy duty laid upon refuse salt preventing its use as manure.†

To attempt any minute description of the rural condition of Yorkshire, eighty or ninety years ago, divided as that great county is into three ridings, each having many peculiar characteristics of soil and climate, is far beyond the scope of our imperfect sketch of national progress in this department of industry. The great landed proprietors of the time led the way to that course of improvement which has made Yorkshire as remarkable in agriculture as in manufactures. The marquis of Rockingham, the leader of the Whig party, was more successful as a cultivator than as a politician. But, even around Wentworth House, he had to contend with those obstinate prejudices which beset the rich and noble, as well as the poor and lowly, improver. The marquis had to deal with "a set of men of contracted ideas, used to a stated road, with deviations neither to the right nor left." Arthur Young is not describing legislators, but farmers. "His lordship finding that discourse and reasoning could not prevail over the obstinacy of their understandings, determined to convince their eyes." He showed the agriculturists of the West Riding, in the management of two thousand acres of his own lands, what would be the result of draining, of cultivating turnips properly, of using better implements. "Well convinced that argument and persuasion would have little effect with the John Trot geniuses of farming, he determined to set the example of good husbandry as the only probable means of being successful."‡

\* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. x. p.

† Aikin's "Manchester," p. 45.

‡ "Northern Tour," vol. i. pp. 307 to 353.



In the East Riding we may trace, in the pages of Arthur Young, the beginnings of that extension of the area of cultivation, which has converted a quarter of a million of acres of almost barren hills—the chalk district of the Wolds—into a country of luxuriant harvests, and of pasture and green crops for innumerable herds and flocks. There was a great improver at work upon these wild moors in 1770. Sir Digby Legard, who resided at Ganton, on the edge of the Wolds, experimented upon five thousand acres of uninclosed wold-land near his house. About five hundred acres were in tillage. The land was let at a shilling an acre. The annual value of the corn and wool of the five thousand acres was under 1000*l.*, and they maintained a hundred inhabitants. He was sanguine enough to believe that the same land might, at no great expense, be so cultivated as in a few years to produce a five-fold increase of corn, support twice the number of cattle, and be let at eight times its then rent. Mr. George Legard, in his Prize Essay on the farming of the East Riding, says, "It can be proved that in the very district to which sir Digby Legard refers, the produce of wheat has been doubled, that of oats has been increased five-fold; of barley six-fold; and that wherever skill and capital have been applied to these uncultivated hills, rent has been advanced even as much as twenty-fold."\*

Arthur Young rides on, during his Tour, amidst the waste places and the cultivated grounds of Yorkshire, with alternate feelings of regret and of exultation. He passes from Newton by the road "across Hambleton, a tract of country which has not the epithet black given it for nothing; for it is a continued range of black moors, eleven or twelve miles long, and from four to eight broad. It is melancholy to travel through such desolate land, when it is so palpably capable of improvement."† After traversing a vast range of dreary waste, he looks down "upon an immense plain, comprehending almost all Cleveland, finely cultivated, the verdure beautiful."‡ About Newbigill he sees "many improvements of moors, by that spirited cultivator, the earl of Darlington." On the road from Bowes to Brough, he deplores that, of a line of twelve miles, through a country exhibiting a fine deep red loam not more than nine miles are cultivated. "It is extremely melancholy to view such tracts of land, that are indisputably capable of yielding many beneficial crops, lie totally waste; while in many parts of the kingdom farms are so scarce and difficult to be procured, that one is no sooner vacant than twenty applications are immediately made

\* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. ix. p. 95.

† "Northern Tour," vol. ii. p. 98.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

for it."\* At Swinton, near Masham, where Mr. Danby had a colliery, upon the edge of his vast moorlands which did not yield him a farthing an acre, Arthur Young saw an example of improvement which showed him of what the land was capable. The proprietor had allowed some of the more industrious of his colliers each to inclose a field out of the moors. Upon one of these humble improvers the agricultural tourist has conferred a fame as truly deserved as that of the Cokes and Bedfords of that age. James Croft, one of the colliers, thirteen years before Young visited the district, began his husbandry by taking an acre of moor. By indefatigable labour he soon raised oats and barley, and obtained fine grass land. He next took eight acres which he could not cultivate all at once, for the land was full of large stones. But he finally succeeded. When his eulogist saw him he was at work upon eight acres more, attacking the most enormous stones, cutting them in pieces, carrying them away, and then bringing mould to fill the holes up. He had thus brought nine acres into excellent cultivation. He was clearing eight more acres of fresh land, paring and burning, confident of deriving from them an additional support for his family. Had James Croft assistance either of money or labour? He had done everything with his own hands. He had worked in the mine from twelve o'clock at night to the noon of the next day. "From the time of leaving off work in the mine, till that of sleeping, he regularly spent in unremitting labour on his farm." The enthusiasm of Arthur Young on beholding this marvel of industry becomes eloquent: "Such a conduct required a genius of a peculiar cast. Daring in his courage, and spirited in his ideas, the most extensive plans are neither too vast nor too complicated to be embraced with facility by his bold and comprehensive imagination. . . . The greatest, and indeed the only, object of his thoughts is the improvement of the wilds that surround him, over which he casts an anxious but magnanimous eye, wishing for the freedom to attack, with his own hands, an enemy, the conquest of whom would yield laurels to a man of ample fortune."† Out of such stuff as James Croft was made of, has arisen that wondrous race of enterprising men of the North who—some from beginnings as humble as this cultivator of the moors—have largely contributed to build up the material prosperity of their country; have contended with prejudice, with jealousy, with dishonesty; have been ridiculed as projectors under the once popular nickname of "conjurors;"—the daring men who, whether as creators of canals and railways, inventors of machines, organizers of factories, adventu-

\* "Northern Tour," vol. ii. p. 206.

† *Ibid.*, p. 298.



rous merchants, or spirited cultivators, have brought to their tasks the same qualities as James Croft brought—"a penetration that sees the remotest difficulty; a prudence and firmness of mind that removes every one, the moment it is foreseen."\*

Young says of his agricultural collier, "his ideas are clear and shining; and though his language is totally unrefined and provincial, insomuch that some attention is necessary to comprehend the plainest of his meaning, yet whoever will take the pains to examine him will find him a genius in husbandry." Considerable attention would certainly have been necessary, if the intelligent Yorkshireman had expressed himself, as to the troubles of a Craven cultivator, in what is represented to have been the language of the country at the beginning of the present century. To the question of farmer Giles, "Whear's yawer Tom?" neighbour Bridget thus replies: "He's gaan aboon two howers sin weet fadder to git eldin, nabody knaws how far; an th' gaitte fray th' moor is seea dree, unbane, and parlous; Lang Rig brow is seea brant, at they're foarced to stang th' cart; an th' wham, boon t' gill heead, is seea mortal sumpy an soft, at it taks cart up tot knaff ommost iv'ry yerd. Gangin ower some heealdin grund, they welted cart ower yesterday, and brack th' barkum, haams, and two felks."† The author of "The Craven Dialect" says that the inhabitants of this district, pent up by their native mountains, and principally engaged in agricultural pursuits, "had no opportunity of corrupting the purity of their language by the adoption of foreign idioms." He expresses a regret, with which few will sympathize, that, "since the introduction of commerce, and in consequence of that a greater intercourse, the simplicity of the language has, of late years, been much corrupted." The dialect of Craven has taken its departure with the herds of wild white cattle, whose cows hid their young in the ferns and underwood of the wastes of Craven, and whose bulls were hunted by large assemblages of horsemen and their followers on foot, with something of the grandeur of the chase of the middle ages.‡

The four Northern Counties have many points of interest, especially in the character of their population. Durham was a

\* "Northern Tour," vol. ii. p. 299.

† From "The Craven Dialect," 1824, p. 6. The following are from the "Glossary" of this curious volume: *eldin*, fuel; *gaitte*, road; *dree*, tedious; *unbane*; distant; *parlous*, perilous; *brant*, steep; *stang*, to put a lever on the wheel; *wham*, bog; *boon*, or *bane*, near; *gill*, glen; *sumpy*, wet; *tot*, the whole; *knaff*, nave; *heealdin*, sloping; *weltd*, overturned; *barkum*, collar made of bark; *felks*, fellows of a wheel.

‡ Culley, in Bewick's "Quadrupeds."

very neglected agricultural district in the second half of the last century. "Within a comparatively recent period, a large portion of this county was uninclosed and uncultivated, and lay either in wide tracts of desolate moor, or in more sheltered, though equally neglected, 'stinted pastures.'"\* The land under cultivation was universally in want of draining. The farm-yard manures were insufficient, for little stock was kept. The county was indeed famous for a breed of cattle known as the Durham short-horns—animals which were fattened into wonderful size, and were sold at fabulous prices. This breed has been improved into the most esteemed stock of England.

Arthur Young is indignant at the wretched breed of sheep that ranged over the Northumberland moors, in flocks as large as forty thousand, which did not pay for their keep more than a shilling or two per head. The millions of acres of improveable moors he holds to be "as waste as when ravaged by the fury of the Scottish borderers."† Northumberland contained "large districts, which even within the last eighty years were in a state of nature covered with broom, furze, or rushes."‡ It was long after the Union that the inhabitants of this border land acquired settled and industrious habits. But the fertile vales of the northern parts of the county attracted settlers, who soon introduced better cultivation than that of the small crofts which surrounded the miserable farm hovels. The famous agriculturists known everywhere by the name of Culley settled in the district of Glendale in 1767. Their example, and that of other cultivators and breeders, "gave a stimulus to the surrounding district; and in a few years the inexpert operations and languid system of husbandry which had previously prevailed, gave place to others of extraordinary expedition and efficacy."§

When Gray entered Westmorland from Yorkshire, in 1769, he saw a pleasing display of a rural population: "A mile and a half from Brough, on a hill, lay a great army encamped." It was the Brough cattle fair, held on the 29th and 30th of September. "On a nearer approach, appeared myriads of horses and cattle on the road itself; and in all the fields round me, a brisk stream hurrying cross the way;—thousands of clean healthy people in their best parti-coloured apparel, farmers and their families, esquires and their daughters, hastening up from the dales and down the fells on every side, glittering in the sun, and pressing forward to join the

\* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. xvii. p. 93.

† "Northern Tour," vol. iv. p. 337.

‡ "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. ii. p. 151.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 153.