

A  
TREATISE  
ON THE  
PRACTICAL MEANS  
OF  
EMPLOYING THE POOR,  
IN  
CULTIVATING AND MANUFACTURING ARTICLES  
OF  
**British Growth,**  
IN LIEU OF  
FOREIGN MATERIALS,  
AS PRACTISED IN THE  
ROYAL SCHOOL OF ECONOMY IN LONDON.  
ALSO,  
A PLAN  
FOR FORMING  
COUNTY ASYLUMS FOR THE INDUSTRIOUS,  
AS COMMUNICATED TO THE AUTHOR,  
BY HIS LATE ROYAL HIGHNESS  
**Edward Duke of Kent and Strattherne.**  

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BY WILLIAM SALISBURY.

"If according to Christian Doctrine, every labourer is worthy his hire; it is no less true—No Labor, no Pay."

"Thousands in England receive Poor's Rates, and give no Labor in return."

*Manuscript Letter from Mons. Gellat to His Royal Highness.*



TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF SUSSEX, the  
Right Honorable LORDS REBEDSALE, HARD-  
WICKE, WHITWORTH, KENYON, the LORD BI-  
SHOP OF DURHAM, and other Nobles and Gentle-  
men who have patronized the School of Economy.

SIRS,

*The liberal manner in which you first viewed and supported my efforts, to form this Institution, has impelled on me a duty at this time, to lay before you the following account of the result of my labours therein.*

*That Prince, whose death this country now deplores, and whose memory will live in the hearts of a Benevolent Public while national blessings demonstrated in Public Charities shall survive, was pleased to visit this Establishment several times before he last left London, when His Royal Highness expressed his opinion, that therein was laid the foundation of an efficient Plan for the general relief of the Poor, which had long engaged the attention of himself and friends; on which account I was by him favoured with many original communications on the subject. This I shall now endeavour to put in a clear point of view, by extending the Practice thereof as far as my means shall be found to admit; but, Alas! without that assistance its Royal Projector was pleased to promise, and which I looked forward to, with so much anxiety.*

*I am, with profound respect,*

SIRS,

*Your most dutiful,*

*and much obliged Servant,*

*W. SALISBURY.*

**Patrons**  
TO THE  
**SCHOOL OF ECONOMY.**

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**HIS LATE ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE  
OF KENT.**

**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF  
SUSSEX**

**RIGHT HON. EARL HARDWICKE.  
EARL OF CHICHESTER.  
LORD REDESDALE.  
LORD WHITWORTH.  
LORD KENYON.  
LORD TEIGNMOUTH.**

**LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.  
BISHOP OF CHICHESTER.  
BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.**

**THE HON. GEO. VERNON.**

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**REV. J. WILLIAMS, OXFORD.**

**MONTAGU BURGOYNE, Esq.**

## PREFACE.

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“ THERE is not a more certain maxim in the frame and constitution of society, than that every individual must contribute his share; and it is held as a principle, that if there is a man in the empire who does not work, or a woman who is idle, some one must in consequence suffer cold and hunger.”—*Blackstone*.

The necessary articles of life are all directly or indirectly drawn from the soil and surrounding elements; and these will be yielded more or less abundantly, according to a due proportion and proper application of manual labour thereto; hence, philosophers have considered *the agriculture of a country* to constitute its *most permanent wealth*, and *the strength of a nation* to consist in a *numerous and healthy population*.

To find beneficial occupation for the surplus of our labourers, is now become a subject of necessary research; and by thus turning our attention to the above remarks, we are indicated to the perusal of our former and present system of husbandry. Many articles that once formed a part of the usual produce

of our farms were given up years since, when labour was either too high in price, or too scarce to admit of their culture. Those who may wish to make enquiries of this nature, may read the history of husbandry, as it applies to *Madder, Liquorice, Saffron, &c. &c.*: and also to examine the Price Current list, and they will observe articles **therein** which form a portion of the culture of our soil, whereby a greater number of persons will be employed, and more land brought into cultivation, the poor's rates reduced, and vice and misery among the lower orders receive thereby a most salutary check. To describe such in a clear point of view, and to shew with what comparative ease a number of comparatively new employments have already been introduced and taught to the pogg, **is the object** of the following pages. As they will **therefor** contain little more than the recital of incontrovertible facts, the writer trusts he shall be looked on with a favourable eye by those who may have the faculty of reciting such in better language, or with more perspicuity.

*School of Economy,  
Duke Street, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields,  
Feb. 12, 1820.*

# A TREATISE,

&c. &c.

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**I**N a small tract published some time since, I enumerated many means through which the poor could be employed, in producing substitutes for more expensive materials used in the arts and manufactures, which are daily brought from foreign countries; hence new systems of labour might be established, and the country at large rendered more independent of other nations.

I also mentioned that the knowledge of such things, as well as the most eligible modes of preparing them, could be readily taught, if *a School was established, in which a number of those preparations were carried on, and pupils taken from places wherever it should be thought desirable to introduce such labours.*

I have now a more pleasing task to perform, having been honoured in my design with the patronage of persons capable of appreciating

the value of such a work; it is my duty to lay before them and the public an abstracted account of all such rural occupations as I have reduced to practice; in doing which I am happy to remark that the success which attended my first efforts, will still induce me to proceed with such other parts of my system as opportunity and means shall present themselves.

The objects that I have hitherto introduced are as follows:—1. The collecting seeds of our best meadow and pasture grasses, a department in rural economy that will be found of the first consequence in many places in England; and although there are but few places near London that would afford an opportunity of proceeding to that extent which a ready sale and ample profit would warrant, I am nevertheless much obliged to, the Honourable Commissioners of His Majesty's Woods, and also to the Noble Ranger of Hyde Park, who by granting me leave on their several domains, I have been enabled to prove how readily such agricultural riches may be heaped, when proper means are applied to this purpose, and which, I trust, cannot fail to induce similar attempts in those places, (and many such there are,) where these plants present themselves in great abundance.



The nature of this small Work will not admit of speaking to all the particular advantages that may be hoped to result wherever such systems of employment may be introduced as the means of benefitting the poor. I shall, nevertheless, in this instance state, that many of our best meadow and pasture grasses are found on waste places in various parts of this kingdom, where they produce seeds in very great abundance, which if gathered, would find a ready demand for the purposes of laying down and improving grass lands, both by British farmers and foreign agriculturists.

The following kinds are the most useful.—Meadow Fescue, Meadow Foxtail, Sweet-scented Vernal, Dog's Tail, Rough and Smooth Stalked Meadow Grasses, and a few others; which constitute the best herbage for Pasture and Hay. There are few proprietors of meadow land but know what a difference there is in the nature of these plants, as regards their nutritious qualities; and whenever it happens that land is intended to be laid down to grass, the sorts most suitable to the land forms the first consideration. It is, however, a well known fact, that after all our endeavours at improvement in agriculture, this still remains a desideratum, as there

is scarcely any quantity of seeds to be procured beyond common Rye-grass and the Clovers. Therefore there is no other resource for the farmer, if he wants to improve his grazing-land, than to make use of the sweepings of hay-lofts, where there is a mixture of *good* and *bad*, with *Docks*, *Thistles*, and a large tribe of plants known in such places, only as *noxious weeds*.

I have had **seeds of the best kinds** of grasses, gathered by poor people many years ago, and I have used them to lay down land which formed very superior pastures, which to this time continue their fertility and fattening quality; and I often view with great interest their very superior appearance in the Spring season, as well as the abundance at hay harvest. A piece of upland pasture was upwards of fourteen years since laid down with **Fescue Grass**, in **Stanmer Park**, near Lewis; and the **Noble Owner** informs me that to this day the sheep are **found** to prefer that spot to the surrounding pasture, and that they thrive better on it by far; yet this is on part of the best South-Down Pasture.

I some years since noticed the Sweet Vernal and the Fescue with a small portion of Foxtail-grasses growing on a piece of land that had slipt from the cliff near Knighton, in the Isle of Wight, from whence I had some

seeds gathered and sent to London. This circumstance induced a gentleman to purchase the land, and although it is so extremely uneven, that it cannot be mowed, yet he says it is become such good pasture that more milk and better butter is made from cows grazing there than in any adjoining land.

Those who would require further information on this head, may refer to *Mr. Curtis's Treatise on British Grasses*; *Mr. Magendie, in Young's Annals of Agriculture*; and *my own Letters* in the 27th volume of the *Transactions of the Society of Arts*, 1808. It only requires for these plants to be known to afford an opportunity of thus employing the poor people and children who may benefit themselves in the summer season, by supplying the markets with those seeds.

The plant called Reed-mace, growing on swampy lands, and also the Bulrushes, which grow in abundance on the banks of the Thames, and many other places; when properly harvested and prepared, are equal to the best Bulrushes, for which large sums are annually paid to Holland. Matting, Baskets, Chair-bottoms, &c. of very superior kinds, have been made therefrom. A piece of Matting is now lying as a trial at the room of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi, to compare with some

superior Dutch matting, and after two years it has proved equally sound and good. An eminent upholsterer in Soho Square (Mr. Marshall) has laid great quantities of this down in halls and passages, and he has stated to me that it is for all such purposes equal to the best imported matting he has ever met with. There are so many places in the country where these plants abound, that they would afford occupation for a large portion of the poor, and the art of preparing and manufacturing these things is very simple, and easily acquired.

It is a curious fact that last autumn I saw a barge loaded with Dutch bulrushes resting aground, near Battersea, on a bank covered with the same article growing in the finest luxuriance, and in great abundance. A large quantity of the same I have had collected, and I find them for any purpose equally good with those imported. Such are cut by the poor people in Holland out of similar places, by which they earn a livelihood. The paupers of the parishes situated near the Thames, and other places, may be thus employed.

The manufacturing a cheap and effective covering for fruit-trees, is another object on which I have employed the poor in the school

of œconomy. This partakes in some measure of the nature of bunting, and the price is little more than that of Russia bass-matting, but has the advantage of being more durable, and when worn out will sell for one-third its cost price to the paper-mills. The different manufactures required in this article have given work to persons of different capacities. It is made from a material of very little value in its raw state, and which may be obtained to any extent.

Among the immense variety of vegetables which every where abound, there are few without their essential uses, but some more particularly so, as applicable to the service of man. We have many drugs produced spontaneously, both of use in medicine and the arts, as well, as a variety found growing wild that are known as excellent food, but which my limits will not afford room for description. Neither can I enter into the history of all such as may with similar benefits be brought into cultivation.

The following very important object of domestic œconomy, requiring great labour in culture and preparation, and affording thereby a wide field for the philanthropist, is that of a newly discovered method of treating flax

and hemp, of which the annual importation into Great Britain has often amounted to three millions sterling.

Great objections were formerly opposed to the cultivation of these plants in this country, namely, " They were considered crops of such exhausting nature, that nothing could be grown to advantage on the same land for a length of time."

" The noxious ~~effluvia~~ which arose to the surrounding neighbourhood wherever these plants were under preparation after harvest, rendering it dangerously unhealthy."

The first of these objections is now entirely exploded, as will be seen by the following quotation; and the other is most fully and most happily obviated by the mode now in practice at the school.

" That these plants impoverish the soil is a mere vulgar notion devoid of all truth. The best historical ~~relations~~ and the verbal accounts of honest ingenious farmers, ~~unanimous~~ in declaring it to be a vain prejudice, unsupported by any authority, and that those crops really ameliorate the soil."

*Bath Agricultural Papers, vol. ii.*

" The immense sums which have been drawn annually from this country for these articles of necessity, have aroused the attention of the Government of Rio de Janeiro, it having been observed by the ambassador of

that Court ; that the attention of the Brazilians has been particularly directed to these objects, in the hope of diverting from Russia that most valuable branch of commerce."

*Ibid.*

The culture and preparation of both these plants, are now managed in a more easy and economical plan than formerly, and I presume I shall prove to actual demonstration, that the first is most completely within the means of the British farmers ; and the preparation, once so much the subject of complaint and detestation can be *managed by an easy, simple, and perfectly wholesome method*, which may be fully accomplished in any part of this country, by the *poor of all ages and capacities*, whereby greater quantities of land will be brought into cultivation, the expense of parishes reduced, and the rising offspring of the poor rescued thereby from the contamination of idleness and its kindred vices.

This is not all, a *better material will be rendered to our markets than is now commonly produced*, thereby enabling us to supply these articles of uniform strength and texture for which our forefathers were once so much celebrated, but which in consequence of haste in the getting up, and chemical means ap-