Practical œconomy, or, A proposal for enabling the poor to provide for themselves : with remarks on the establishment of soup houses : and an investigation of the real cause of the present extravagant consumption of fine wheaten bread by the people of this country / by a physician.

PRACTICAL ŒCONOMY:

OR

A PROPOSAL

FOR

Enabling the Poor to provide for themselves:

WITH REMARKS ON THE

Establishment of Soup Houses:

AND

AN INVESTIGATION

of the real Cause of the present extravagant Consumption of fine Wheaten Bread by the People of this Country.

—— Utrum populum frumenti copia pascat;
Collectosne bibant imbres, puteosne perennes?
Horat. lib. 1. ep. xv.

BY A PHYSICIAN.

London:
PRINTED FOR J. CALLOW, NO. 10, CROWN COURT, SOHO,
AND J. WALLIS, PATERNOSTER ROW,
BY W. SMITH, NO. 49, KING STREET, SEVEN DIALS.

Price Two Shillings and [redacted]

1801.

Advertisement.

PART of the following observations were written early in the spring of the present year, under the impression of the effects produced by the various establishments for distributing soup on the health and morals of the poor, after they had subsisted for a sufficient length of time to afford an opportunity of forming a just estimate of their probable consequences.

The prospect of an abundant harvest gave rise to a general assurance that there would be no occasion for a renewal of these eleemosynary institutions; and the following remarks on them would probably have been forgotten, had not the rumour, not only of reviving the soup houses, but of levying a permanent rate on the inhabitants of the

metropolis for their support, brought them again to the author's recollection. Experience appears since to have sanctioned his opinion; and they seem to be falling into neglect, from a general conviction that the distribution of soup is not the best mode of alleviating the distresses of the poor.

That the consumption of fine wheaten bread is ultimately connected with the habitual use of TEA, is a truth so obvious, that it is surprising how it has escaped the notice of the many who have of late turned their attention to this subject. The deleterious effects of tea on the health of the common people of this country, are well known to every man whose professional duty renders him acquainted with their diseases. A conviction of its tendency to augment the miseries of the poor, by inducing them to waste that money on a noxious herb, with which they might purchase wholesome food,

has often led the author to join in the wish of the benevolent Tissot, "That this famous leaf had never been introduced into Europe."

The necessity of œconomy being generally admitted, as well as recommended by the highest authority, the last part is intended to detail means by which it may be most effectually carried into execution; by pointing out a mode of preparing food, so that no part of the nutriment contained in it shall be wasted, as at present; and by which the possibility, as well as the necessity of using adulterated grain is precluded. This, which originally constituted the least, has swelled into the largest, as it is indeed the most important part of the design; and yet the means are only generally indicated.

While the following pages were in the press, it was rather gratifying to the author, though the circumstance may appear to de-

tract somewhat from their novelty, to perceive that the mode of relieving the necessities of the poor, pointed out by the committees of the legislature, very nearly coincides with what had occurred to him.

Among the means suggested to obviate the pressure of present distress, it is much however to be regretted, that they should have been induced to sanction the practice of grinding mixed grain, and afterwards making it into bread of undetermined quality. The ſole criterion which the public of the capital at present possess, to judge of the goodness of bread, is its colour; when a certain degree of whiteness ceases to be required by law, bread will become an aggregate of all the impurities which can be forced through the mill. The use of whole grain as here recommended renders the adoption of such a meaſure wholly unnecessary.

London,
Dec. 24, 1800.

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PART I.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOUP-HOUSES.

THAT the present price of corn, and consequently of every other article of provisions, is so high in proportion to the rate of wages commonly paid for labour, as to render it extremely difficult for the most useful class of society, those who create that part of the productive capital of the country which arises from personal labour, to support themselves and families, is a truth generally admitted. Whether this circumstance is to be attributed to a real scarcity of articles of the first necessity, to a superabundance of the circulating medium, to what is termed monopoly, a word more frequently used than understood, or to the war, shall form no part of the present enquiry. The relatively high price of the necessaries of life being acknowledged, it

will hardly be denied that it is of more immediate importance to suggest a remedy, than even to discover the cause of the present distress. The pressure of the evil is instant, but measures of prevention must necessarily be prospective.

To those persons who have occupied themselves in promoting subscriptions, in order to form establishments for the purpose of preparing and distributing soup, at low prices, to such as chuse to apply for it, the most fastidious moralist must concede purity of purpose, and benevolence of intention: Whether they have answered, or are likely to answer, the design of effectually relieving the poor, admits of some doubt. A mixture of evil with good being, perhaps, inseparable from all human institutions, precludes the imputation of any invidious purpose in enquiring whether this modification of charity is not liable to the following objections.

By accustoming the labouring class of people to expect charitable relief on every pressure of calamity; or, in other words, to have the difference between their earnings and the price of provisions, when high, equalized from the pockets of the more

wealthy, prudence is rendered unnecessary. A man is actually thus encouraged constantly to live up to the whole amount of what he earns at the best of times, and on the least pressure of distress, to throw himself and family on charity, or into the workhouse; and self-denial, or the habit of abstaining from present gratification, in order to obtain a future good, is annihilated. Countenanced by multitudes in the same predicament, the principle of shame, which would prevent an ingenuous mind from soliciting charity, or becoming the inhabitant of a workhouse, is obliterated. The chief motives for sobriety and personal exertion are removed, and a spirit of independence, the best pledge for virtuous conduct, and the surest indication of future prosperity, is wholly destroyed.

By facilitating the means of obtaining food ready dressed, all attention to domestic œconomy becomes neglected. With the habitual practice of this virtue, for it deserves no inferior appellation, much of the comfort, and of the real happiness of the middle, and inferior classes of society, is intimately connected. If a hard-working man does not find a comfortable meal at home, he soon

finds his way to the cook-shop, or the beer-house, by which the expence of living is much encreased; the woman contents herself with tea and bread and butter, the bad effects of which will be pointed out in future; and the children, if there be any, are little better than starved.

That the use of soup, as a principle part of diet, so far from saving bread, tends rather to encrease the consumption of it, will, I think appear evident, from the following considerations.

All nations, a considerable part of whose customary diet consists of soup, are in the habit of consuming also a great quantity of bread. The French, who eat much soup, are proverbially known to be great eaters of bread. The Scotch, who eat a deal of broth, accompany it with a large proportion of dry oat cake. And it will be found, on enquiry, that those who obtain soup from the houses, eat along with it a large proportion of bread. The cheap terms on which they procure the soup, enables them to expend a greater proportion of their earnings on bread, and of course tends to augment the consumption of that article. Taking a certain quantity of solid matter along with soup is indeed the

effect of a natural appetite or instinct; which, independently of reasoning, makes us feel that fluids are not digestible in the stomach.

Dr. G. Fordyce, in his truly philosophical Treatise on Digestion, has informed us, in order that the process of digestion may be properly carried on, it is requisite that the food should remain during a certain time in the stomach. To effect this purpose, nature has provided in the stomach of all animals a certain material termed gastric juice; which has the property of coagulating, or rendering solid, every substance capable of affording nourishment. Even milk, or the white of an egg, substances eminently nutritious, when received into the stomach, are immediately converted into solids: but, to use the Doctor's own words—

" It farther appears from experiment, that food dissolved in water, so as to form a solution not capable of being coagulated, and not detained by intermixture with solid matter, gives very little nourishment, in proportion to the same quantity of the same food given in a solid form, or a coagulable one. Thus, for example: if a solid piece of flesh be dissolved in water by simple boiling, or by Papin's digester, and exhibited to an

animal, it is not capable of being coagulated by the coagulating juice of the stomach, and does not give nearly that quantity of nourishment, which it gives if employed in a solid form, without being previously dissolved in water. So, in like manner, the white of an egg exhibited in a fluid state, as it is found in the egg, gives great nourishment, being coagulable, and becoming solid in the stomach. But, if the same white of egg be coagulated by heat, and boiled or digested in Papin's digester, and so dissolved in water and exhibited, it does not now coagulate from the coagulating juice of the stomach, and does not yield nearly the same quantity of nourishment."

Hence we learn that it is absolutely requisite to eat a certain quantity of bread along with soup, in order to obtain any degree of nourishment from it.

But the general use of soup will be found in another point of view, not only to augment the consumption of bread, but to diminish its production. The basis of all soup is animal matter, commonly beef. It has been ascertained, by calculation, that four times the quantity of ground is required to support an ox that is necessary to maintain a

man; or, in other words, if an acre of ground, or its farinaceous production, be sufficient to support a man during a year, which is near the truth, four are necessary to afford pasture for an ox. In the same proportion as the consumption of animal food encreases, whether in form of soup or otherwise, the production of the farinaceous food of man must necessarily diminish. The diminution of the production of corn, is farther augmented, by the greater expence, trouble, and risk, connected with agriculture, compared with what appertains to pasturage, as well as by the direct operation of tythes.

If the great quantity of vegetable food that must be condensed into the body of an ox, before he become fit for the food of man, be duly considered, it will be evident, that nothing can be gained in point of œconomy, by eating even the coarsest pieces of meat made into soup, of such strength as to afford any nourishment, compared with farinaceous food. The poorest countries always consume the least animal food; the lower classes of the Scotch and Irish hardly ever taste it: but were any preparation of it cheaper than oatmeal, or potatoes, the articles on which

they subsist, no doubt they would eat it in preference.

The constant demand for the coarser pieces of meat, in order to make soup, has tended very considerably likewise to raise the price of them in the market; it has been not less than double. These were formerly bought, and eaten by the lower classes of people, and furnished them with a diet not less wholesome, though perhaps somewhat less delicate, than that of the rich. The butcher being now certain of disposing of all his refuse at a fixed price, as it is generally contracted for, does not care for the custom of the lower orders of people; and they, finding themselves unable to obtain, what formerly constituted their support, are constrained to throw themselves on public charity. A great and constant demand has always the effect of raising the market more than the fluctuating wants of individuals. This effect was strongly exemplified towards the end of last winter, when the soup mania was at its height. The price of peas, barley, and the various ingredients used in preparing them became so extravagantly high in the metropolis, that the expence of the soup prepared at some of the establishments

did not amount to less than five-pence per quart. Whether individuals could not have procured themselves a more wholesome diet at less expence, and how much this enhanced price of these articles must have distressed that class of people, who were placed, either by circumstances, or a very laudable pride, just above the necessity of applying for charitable relief, does not require to be pointed out.

Soup is not only a bad article of diet, especially for labouring people, as affording a scanty, and poor nourishment, but as distributed last winter, was rendered peculiarly unwholesome, by being very improperly seasoned. All seasoning is to be considered as something stimulating the nerves of the palate and stomach, but not in any degree tending to nourish. Every inordinate stimulus is followed by an adequate degree of debility. Salt is a fossil destitute of nutritious properties, the only one indeed that man takes into his stomach. It is a powerful stimulant, and is by some men of high eminence in medicine reckoned very prejudicial to health. The soup distributed last winter, tasted in general as if made with sea water. Whether this was intended to cover a bad

taste, or to give some flavour to what was otherwise insipid, it was a most injudicious measure. The consequence of eating such soup was intense thirst, which it became necessary to allay by beer, or some more unwholesome liquor; the effects of the pepper, or ginger, though perhaps less in degree, were the same in kind.

That the immediate result of this highly stimulant, but in-nutritious diet, was an encrease of various complaints of the organs of digestion, may be proved by inspecting the books of any dispensary within the bills of mortality. To this cause, in conjunction with the exhausting effects of the great heat of the past summer, must be attributed the present prevalence of typhus, or low nervous fever. Though this disease be at present confined to the lower orders of society, it is not easy to say how far it may spread its influence when the vital powers are farther debilitated by the cold of approaching winter.

In corroboration of this opinion, the testimony of Dr. Mitchill, of America, may be adduced. The lean parts of meat, of which alone, with a most perverted diligence, the eleemosynary soup has generally been prepared, he considers as peculiarly unwhole-

some as containing azote, the basis of nitric, or as he terms it septic acid, and which does not exist in the fat. This septic acid he considers as the matter of contagion itself. Whatever degree of credit may be due to this theory; that those, who live much on lean animal food and its decoctions, are more liable to pestilential diseases, than such as draw the principal part of their sustenance from vegetable and fatty substances, is matter of fact founded on general observation*.

It being impossible to distribute to each individual applying for soup, their distinct portion at the same moment of time, it becomes necessary to deliver it in succession, or by turns. The very wish not to be long detained would induce many to go at an early time of the day; still, however, they must wait their turn, which very frequently did not arrive for hours after they had repaired to the place of distribution. The time lost in procuring the soup, must, on an average, be estimated at three hours. Whether by any industrious occupation, however poorly rewarded, more money might not have been

* See Mitchill's Theory of Pestilential Fluids and contagion, as detailed in the Appendix to Dr. Trotter's Medicina Nautica, Vol. II.

earned in the same space of time, than was saved by procuring this soup, even at a penny per quart, may be easily determined. A chairwoman, one of the most laborious and worst paid occupations in this town, for whom the author had last year procured a soup ticket, came after a few days to return it; observing, that she lost much more by waste of time, than the soup was worth to her.

Though it may, perhaps, be considered as rather out of my sphere, it is not altogether irrelative to the subject, to consider, for a moment, the effects which these multitudinous assemblies, must have on the morals of those who compose them. If there be any principle established, with respect to the general condition of mankind; it is, that they are improved by separation, and deteriorated by being collected together in numbers. If the inhabitants of the country be at all more virtuous than those of the town, it is because they live more apart. Men aggregated together corrupt, and moral disease, as well as physical, is the certain consequence. Every unnecessary occasion of congregating them should therefore be avoided. These observations are not theoritical. The

writer has occasionally mixed with the crouds in waiting for soup—He has seen, with feelings which it is unnecessary to express here, the just abhorrence that some, who, perhaps, had seen better days, appeared to feel at being obliged to associate with the common beggar. And next to that, his ears have been shocked at the wrangling, the swearing, the obscenity, and the uproar of the croud arround him. In such assemblies, people do not fail to compare their grievances; and by comparing aggravate them.

If the establishments for the distribution of soup are liable to these objections, surely they ought not to be rendered permanent. If they be, they will convert the majority of the labouring class of people of this metropolis into paupers, who will expect their winter provision of victuals, as regularly as the populace of Rome did their monthly distribution of corn; and they will, like them too, become clamorous and seditious if it be withheld. Want is the result of idleness, and idleness is fostered by misapplied charity. A tax to support the eleemosynary distribution of soup will become, as has been admirably said of the poor laws,—"a bounty "on idleness, and a duty upon industry."

PART II.

A PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF THE CONSUMPTION OF FINE WHEATEN BREAD PROVED TO BE THE USE OF TEA.

WHATEVER may be the real cause of the present high prce of bread corn, it is generally admitted that there are only two ways of obviating the evil—By bringing a greater quantity of the material to market; or by diminishing the consumption to lessen the demand. To encrease our stock, by means calculated to induce other nations to part with such portion of theirs as they can spare, is the proper business of the legislature, and will no doubt be attended to.—To œconomize what we possess is perhaps a more difficult, but certainly a more effectual plan, and entirely dependent on the efforts of individuals. In order, however, to practice it with efficacy, it is necessary to be aware of the mode in which the greatest quantity of bread is at present consumed.

Among the various means which have been proposed to œconomize the consumption of bread, it is truly surprizing that the intimate connection between the encreased consumption of it, and the very prevalent use of tea as a part of diet, has attracted so small a share of attention. By all classes of people tea is used twice a day; and, by too many of our sedentary artificers, even three times. Its perpetual concomitant is bread, with the addition of butter, if it can be procured. The momentary hilarity of spirits produced by this fascinating beverage, is one cause of its being so generally agreeable. Another is, that the facility with which a meal of this kind is procured coincides powerfully with that spirit of indolence to which human nature in all situations is but too prone. To procure a meal of tea and its appendages, the sole active exertion required, is to make the kettle boil. The tea, the sugar, the bread and butter, and the milk, are all to be found ready prepared, for money or credit. The distribution of ready made soup tends to foster this spirit of idleness, while at the same time it enables the poor to expend a greater portion of their earnings on this dear and darling luxury.

That Tea is an expensive diet, will not, probably, be denied. At the present price of the necessaries of life, it can hardly be estimated at less than six-pence per head each time it is taken; and none but those whose professional duty leads them to visit the abodes of the working classes of people inhabiting this town, can imagine how frequently it is substituted for dinner, by those whose circumstances could well afford a better meal, merely from the facility with which it is procured.

However custom may have habituated every class of people in this country to the use of tea, within this last half century, it will hardly be seriously contended, that it deserves to be considered as a necessary of life. The infusion of tea alone, affords no nourishment. Considered medicinally, as a slightly aromatic bitter, it must be allowed rather to encrease the digestive action of the stomach, and augment appetite, than to satisfy hunger. With this view indeed it is made use of, by those who overload their stomachs with too much victuals. But this property of encreasing appetite, must render it an article of diet highly improper for those, who can with difficulty obtain food.

All the nutritive qualities of a meal of tea, remain then to be extracted from its concomitants, sugar, milk, butter, and bread. Although the quantity of milk used is small, it is an article that from its mode of production must always be comparatively dear; butter, a concentration of the richest parts of the milk, must necessarily be still dearer; sugar, the product of slavery, the dearest species of labour, and, besides the expence of importation, loaded with taxes to enable us to retain the distant colonies that produce it, although certainly nutritious, must ever be an article of diet expensive in proportion to the nourishment it affords. The only thing that remains then to make up this costly meal, is BREAD, the present high price of which is the very point in question; and nothing but the finest bread will satisfy the tea-drinker. The aroma, the heat, and the bitter of tea, like all other stimuli, tend so much to injure the tone of the stomach, that it becomes unable to digest brown, or second, bread; which, in place of going through the digestive process, runs into a state of fermentation, producing what is termed heart-burn, and flatulence. It is not therefore without just cause that the inhabitants of London

complain that brown bread will not agree with them: but they do not advert to the real reason, which is, that they have injured their digestive faculties by improper food, and intemperance. Tea then is not only an expensive, but to the poor an unwholesome diet; and the money expended on it is worse than wasted.

The faintness and sinking that in a few hours succeed to the temporary irritation produced by tea, too frequently lead to the use of ardent spirits, in order to alleviate the uneasy sense of depression. The thirst and feverishness consequent on dram-drinking, again call for the diluent powers of tea; and thus do such unthinking victims pursue this fatal round of stimulating the vital powers into inordinate action, till the fatal course terminates in palsy, dropsy, or general imbecillity; from which, after lingering a few months in a work-house, they drop unheeded into the grave.

To shew that the Author is not singular in his sentiments respecting the pernicious effects of tea on the health of the common people of this country, he takes the liberty of quoting the following passage from a work of the celebrated Dr. CURRIE, of Liverpool, in support of his opinion:

" The want of a diet sufficiently nutritious, is doubtless one of the causes that promote typhus and other diseases among our poor. This does not seem in general to arise from the price of their labour being inadequate to furnish such a diet, but from their ignorance in the most advantageous modes of cookery, and still more from their indulging in articles that consume their means, without adding to their sustenance. In the eighteen hundred cellars in Liverpool, there are many in which animal food is not tasted more than once a week, but there are few in which TEA is not drunk daily; it is often indeed drank twice a day. The money spent on tea is more than wasted. It is not only diverted to an article that furnishes no nourishment, but to one that debilitates the empty stomach, and incapacitates for labour. Hence the vast number of dyspeptic complaints among the patients of public charities, which are almost all to be traced to the use of tea or spirits, often indeed assisted by depression of mind."

In a very sensible little anonymous pamphlet, published twenty years ago *, the

* Entitled an Essay on Tea, Sugar, White Bread, and Butter, Country Ale-Houses, Strong Beer, and Geneva, and other MODERN LUXURIES. *Sævior armis Luxuria.*—Salisbury, 1778.

author of which is inclined to attribute the distresses of the poor at that period, to their adopting the use of fine bread, butter, and other delicacies unknown to their ancestors, the effects of tea on the constitution of the people of this country, are detailed in a style that may make a stronger impression on the minds of some people, than more solid reasoning. The publication itself having now become extremely scarce, is a sufficient apology for the following quotation.

" It most certainly disposes the drinkers of this bitter herb to peevishness, moroseness, and ill-nature; it creates ill blood; it enervates the constitution; it unstrings the nerves, disables nature, and destroys the Englishman. If then we compute the expence, the loss of time consumed in breaking and washing the dishes, sweetening the tea, spreading the bread and butter, the necessary pause which defamation, and malicious tea-table chit-chat afford; they will largely account for half a day in winter, spent in doing worse, very much worse, than nothing.

Where are now the pleasing smiles, the dimpled damask cheek, which were accustomed to dance on and adorn the jocund

face of the artless, chearful, innocent country girl? Instead of these, behold the haggard, yellow, meagre visage, no more the delight of the honest jolly swain, no more the blooming blessing of the healthful loving husband. The goodly countenance becomes a sacrifice to Indian melancholy, and her sprightly gaiety to pensive languor; loss of appetite, sickness, and a puny race of children, are the wretched consequences of this pernicious liquor; and these at last bring the man and his family to the parish, and fix them a dead weight on the landed interest for life." This picture, though not touched with the most delicate pencil, is but too faithful a delineation of the truth.

As the opinions of various individuals, respecting the effects of this fascinating beverage, may have more effect in convincing the public mind of its unwholesome consequences, than the mere assertion of an individual, the following opinion is taken from Dr. Lettsom's Natural History of the Tea Tree, and Observations on Tea-drinking:

" I have known several miserable families, thus infatuated, throw away their earnings upon this fashionable herb, their emaciated children labouring under various ailments

depending upon indigestion, debility, and relaxation: Some, at length, have been so enfeebled, that their limbs have become distorted, their countenance pale, and a marasmus has closed the tragedy.

"These effects are not so much to be attributed to the peculiar properties of this costly vegetable, as to the want of proper food, which the expence of the former deprived these people from procuring. I know a family of this stamp, consisting of a mother and several children, whose fondness for tea was so great, and their earnings so small, that three times a day, as often as their meals, they regularly sent for tea and sugar, with a morsel of bread and butter, to support nature; by which practice they daily grew more enfeebled; their emaciated habits and weak constitutions characterized this distressed family, till some of the children were removed from this baneful nursery, who afterwards acquired tolerable health."

Of the present situation of how many families in this great town is this a faithful description! The doctor calculates that three millions of pounds of tea were at that time annually consumed in this country. The consumption now amounts to nearer thirty

millions, the evil must therefore have encreased in the proportion of ten to one.*

Dr. Millman, in his work on Scurvy, mentions the case of two ancient ladies who, from a combination of poverty and pride, lived on tea and bread alone for several months, till at length they became affected with every symptom of the scurvy, spongy bleeding gums, petechiæ on the limbs, with extreme emaciation, and were rescued from the jaws of death only by an immediate change of diet.

The obvious alteration in the constitution of the inhabitants of this country, principally indicated by the increase of what are termed nervous complaints, has, by many accurate observers, been attributed to the prevailing use of this beverage among all ranks of people. The pernicious habit of swallowing ardent spirits has no doubt some share in producing these disorders. About fifty years ago, however, before the present high duties were imposed on malt spirits,

* In the year 1795, 29,311,010 pounds of Tea were exported from China, most of which is consumed in this country; the calculated average of home consumption is twenty-three millions of pounds annually.

Vide Sir George Staunton's Voyage to China.

much larger quantities of them were drunk than at present; but since that period these disorders have increased in an alarming degree. Their origin must therefore be sought elsewhere. And in the general habits of living in this country no other apparent alteration has taken place, to which they can be referred. With the greatest share of truth, they may, perhaps, be attributed to their joint operation. As the sedative properties of Tea produce an inclination for spirits, so by weakening the nerves their irritating impressions become more deleterious.

Of nervous diseases, Palsy may be considered as the aggregate representative, or type. This monster appears of late years to have swallowed up all minor degrees of the evils of which it is the chief. The shaking head, and the trembling hand, formerly the concomitants of advanced life, are rarely now to be met with. But in their stead, the eyes are shocked, in every street of the metropolis, by the appearance of some unhappy being, exhibiting an example of the torture of Mezentius, *dragging along a living body, joined to a dead one.* If to these be added the numbers who do not expose their

infirmities to public view, the giant strides of this deplorable malady, the more dreadful as it does not instantly destroy its victim, but leaves him a wretched burden to himself and to others, must indeed appal us.

Although the Author's personal knowledge of several individuals affected with paralytic complaints, who have been inordinate tea-drinkers, leaves little doubt in his own mind concerning their true cause; he can adduce documents in support of his opinion commanding more general assent than the sentiments of any individual are entitled to.

The following is a statement of the numbers dying annually of palsy within the bills of mortality, in different periods consisting of equal numbers of years, since the commencement of the present century:

From the year	1701	to 1717	died of the palsy	332*
	1717	1732	- - - - -	550
	1732	1747	- - - - -	621
	1747	1762	- - - - -	1021
	1762	1777	- - - - -	1020
	1777	1792	- - - - -	1062

* This statement, till the year 1777, is copied from Black's Tables of Mortality (8vo. Dilly, 1789) who adopts fifteen years, as periods of comparison, for rea-

At the beginning of the present century tea was but little known in this country. At that time the annual import did not exceed a hundred thousand pounds. Nor can it be considered as a general article of diet till after the middle of it, when the quantity annually imported exceeded two millions of pounds. In the year 1777, the importation was upwards of sixteen millions; and, from the most authentic documents, the present annual importation is supposed not to be less than thirty millions! Can it be doubted that a new article of diet could be adopted to such an astonishing extent, without producing some adequate change on the constitutions of the consumers of it?

In a period of thirty years, reckoning from 1717 when the use of tea was yet uncommon, palsy encreased nearly in the ratio of two to one. In the next fifteen years, when tea-drinking was generally diffused, especially in the capital, the ratio of this disease augments as three to one, and continues nearly the same during the forty-five

sons not necessary to detail here. Since that time, it i taken from the annual bills of mortality, and a period of equal length compared.

succeeding years: And, if the average of the last seven years from 1792 be taken, palsy appears again on the encrease, in a proportion of about four to one.

It would not, indeed, be a very difficult task to prove that the use of this infatuating beverage has produced a remarkable change not only in the health, but in the moral as well as the political character of the inhabitants of this country. This change is so admirably described in the following lines, that it would be injustice not to quote them.

" On mighty beef, bedew'd with potent ale,
Our Saxons rous'd at early dawn regale;
And hence a sturdy, bold, rebellious race,
Strength in the frame, and spirit in the face:
Not so their sons, of manners more polite;
How would they sicken at the very sight!
O'er chocolate's rich froth, or coffee's fume,
Or tea's hot tide, their noons shall they consume.
But chief; all sexes, every rank, and age,
Scandal and tea, more grateful, shall engage;
In gilded roofs, beside some hedge or none,
On polish'd tables, or the casual stone,
To *palsy* half our isle; till wan and weak,
Each nerve unstrung, and bloodless every cheek,
The destin'd change of Britons is complete:
Things without will, like India's feeble brood,
Or China's shaking Mandarines of wood."

Criticisms on the Rolliad.

Enough has been surely said to demonstrate the insalubrity of tea, as a common article of diet. In no point of view then is it to be considered as a necessary of life: To be convinced that its daily use is a principal source of the consumption of fine wheaten bread, it is only requisite to reflect that nothing else is eaten along with tea; bread therefore constitutes the chief part, the sole nutritious portion of each such meal. Were it possible then to persuade the people of this country in general to adopt another mode of diet, they would not only have all the money, now squandered on this pernicious luxury, to expend on articles of food affording substantial nourishment; but, by adopting a judicious mode of preparing them, their nutritious properties might be considerably augmented; at least not, as by the present system, much diminished: The demand being by these means lessened, the price must necessarily fall, and scarcity be converted into abundance.

To any proposal to abstain from tea, even when its use is evidently prejudicial to health, the immediate objection is, what can be substituted in its stead? This question may be readily answered by another; what

did our ancestors subsist on, before tea was heard of?

The writer is acquainted with a lady, equally respectable for her age and her virtues, who distinctly recollects the introduction of tea, as a novelty, into her father's family in Kent; the leaves were then boiled in a kettle, and the liquor drunk as an afternoon's regale. At that time the general breakfast in the neighbourhood was furmenty, and something of a similar kind was used in other parts of the country. Animal food was then, as it is at present, and from its comparatively high price, must necessarily always be, out of the reach of the bulk of the common people. Is there any reason to suppose that the inhabitants of this country were less healthy and vigorous at that time, when they lived on boiled grain, than now that they eat it baked? Surely not; but rather the contrary.

To propose any chimerical, or impracticable, plans for encreasing the quantity of food, forms no part of the intention of the present writer; still less is it his wish to abstract from the necessary sustenance of the most useful class of the community. The real purpose of these remarks being to rescue

the labouring order of people from the degraded situation of being objects of charity, dependent on the precarious bounty of others; to give them a sense of independence; to teach them how much they have it in their power to assist themselves by a prudent attention to domestic œconomy, even in the hardest times. With this view, it becomes necessary to request their attention; as he must address, not their imagination, which it is easy to inflame, but their common sense, which it is rather more difficult to convince; and to enter into some detail of the principles, by a due application of which they may be enabled to obtain a comparatively cheap, abundant, salubrious, and palatable aliment for themselves and families.

PART III.

MEANS, BY WHICH THE POOR MAY OBTAIN ABUNDANCE OF CHEAP AND HEALTHY FOOD, WITH THEIR PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

THE price of every commodity must be encreased in proportion to the number of hands it passes through between the individual who produces, and the person who consumes it. With respect to corn; the farmer, the corn-factor, the miller, and the baker, must each receive a profit adequate to the support of themselves and families, on the grain while in their temporary possession; the aggregate of which remains to be paid by the individual who consumes it in the form of bread. Were it possible to approximate the act of consumption to that of production; could grain be used as food, in any of the intermediate stages between that in which it is taken off the ground by the farmer, and that in which it is taken out of the oven by the baker; it is evident that all

the expence, attached to any of the other stages of preparation through which it passes, would be saved to the consumer. Were it possible, for example, to use wheat as a part of diet, immediately after being deprived of its external husk, either by being passed through a mill, or by the method formerly in universal use in this country, of beating it in a stone mortar with a wooden pestle, it is evident that all the labour of grinding, all the diminution of quantity caused by separating the bran, all the expence of carrying it to the oven, and all the profit now belonging to the baker, would be saved; and, what is of more consequence, all the tricks played during the process of reducing the corn into flour; for it is in this stage of the process that the heterogeneous, and, too frequently, unwholesome substances are mingled with it, would be avoided. All these advantages any person may obtain, who will eat grain boiled instead of baked.

So strong, however, are the prejudices of the vulgar of this country in favour of eating the farinaceous part of their diet, made into the shape of a loaf, rendered indeed in some measure necessary by the custom of tea-drinking, that not only every other mode of

preparing the farinacea for food have fallen into disuse, but efforts are incessantly making to convert rice, potatoes, barley, &c. into this favourite form, by the expence of which the price of these articles of food is not only considerably encreased, but their nutritious properties very much diminished. Prejudices must however yield to necessity; and if it be demonstrated that the nutritive properties of wheat and other farinaceous substances may be considerably augmented by proper modes of preparation, the person who will starve rather than eat any thing else than a quartern loaf, is not much to be pitied.

To explain the mode in which the nourishment contained in farinaceous substances is diminished by the operation of baking, it becomes necessary to enter into some detail concerning the principles on which their nutritious faculties depend.

If a small stream of cold water be made to percolate slowly through some fine wheaten flour contained in a hair sieve, while at the same time it is worked with the hand as if endeavouring to form it into a paste, in a short time nothing will be found to remain but a gelatinous substance; the other con-

stituent parts of the flower being carried away with the water. From its adhesiveness and tenacity this matter has been termed Gluten, and it is possessed of several peculiar properties. When burned it smells like horn or leather; and when exposed to moisture it runs into the putrid, not the acetous fermentation; in both these respects participating of the nature of animal, rather than vegetable matter. Of this Gluten wheat contains a much larger proportion than any other species of grain produced in this country: the quantity and quality of which in proportion to the other constituent parts, is the best test of its goodness. In sound wheat it abounds, and may be drawn out into thin laminæ, or long strings, eminently elastic; and in proportion as the grain has been heated, or spoiled, the gluten is more friable, as well as more difficult to obtain in a separate state. In this material all the principal nutritious properties of wheat are contained; for the nutritive powers of the amylaceous part or starch are comparatively trifling. From the peculiar abundance in which this gluten is found in wheat, mankind have adopted that grain as the general basis of vegetable aliment, in preference to all others, in every

country capable of producing it. This nutritious matter resides entirely in the finest part of the flower. In proportion therefore as the flower is more finely sifted or bolted; or, as the millers term it, higher dressed, the greater quantity of this gluten does it contain. But this matter is of too adhesive and tenaceous a nature, to undergo the process of digestion with facility, when taken into the stomach alone. For this reason, fine flower when eaten after being merely boiled, as in the form of dumplins, in many people produces the sensation of heaviness, or indigestion, and partly also because the stomach is oppressed by too great a quantity of nutritious matter. With a view to counteract these effects, fine flower is made to undergo the process of baking. This operation consists in the first place in separating the parts of this glutinous matter by fermentation, and then farther destroying its adhesive properties by exposure to a certain degree of heat.

In the same proportion as the operation of baking tends to facilitate the digestion of fine flower, it operates, by destroying the gluten, to diminish the nourishment originally contained it. And though fine, friable, well-baked bread is a very agreeable species

of aliment, and forms a proper part of the diet of such as can afford to accompany it with a sufficient quantity of animal food, or of butter, in so far as it tends to prevent the stomach from being overloaded with nutritious matter, it can by no means be considered as proper food for those who barely earn sufficient to maintain themselves. It becomes their duty, especially in times of scarcity, to waste no part of the nutritious properties of their food by undue preparation.

But, in the operation of making fine bread, not only are the nutritious properties of the gluten greatly diminished, but full a third part of the original corn is previously taken away in the form of bran. To be properly digested, food must possess a certain bulk, in order duly to distend the stomach, as well as merely nutritious properties. Could the essence of a meal be concentrated into the size of a nut, it would not support life. Nature unquestionably intended that man should use the whole of wheat as food. A convincing proof of which is, that although fine flower simply boiled lies heavy on the stomach; whole wheat cooked in the same manner, usually termed frumenty, or coarse

flower made into dumplins or unfermented cakes, can be eaten by the most delicate stomachs without inconvenience. This difference depends on the bran being mixed with the flower, by means of which the glutinous part is more divided, as well as on account of its being in a smaller proportion to the whole. A knowledge of these facts explains the real foundation of the complaint of the labouring class of people of the metropolis, that bread made of coarse flower does not support their strength so well as that made of fine. In so far as a smaller proportion of gluten is contained in coarse flower, and particularly where that coarseness depends on the mixture of other ingredients besides bran, it is liable to be more completely spoiled by the heat of the oven; such bread in fact contains little or no nutriment: A chief purpose of the baker thus appears to be, to counteract the mischief done by the miller, in depriving the flower of wheat of its due proportion of bran: By their united operations, it is manifest that the capability of any given quantity of grain to support a certain number of people is considerably diminished.

That the nature of this gluten or eminently nutritious part of flower, is destroyed by a

degree of heat much inferior to what bread is exposed to in the oven, may be satisfactorily proved by attending to the common process of making paste. If a table spoonful of fine flour be carefully mixed with half a pint of cold water, and brought to a degree of heat a little under that of boiling water, and kept at the same for about ten minutes, being careful that it does not quite boil, it will be converted into a tenacious adhesive paste: But, if suffered to boil briskly for the same length of time, its adhesive properties will be destroyed; and, on cooling, the flower will separate from the water, and subside. Those who are in the habits of using paste know that it is tenacious in proportion to the goodness of the flower from which it is prepared; and that to inferior kinds alum must be added, with the same intention that the baker mixes this ingredient with bad flower, to augment its tenacity, by which the sponge rises the better, not as is commonly supposed, to render it more white.

A knowledge of this fact, that the gluten of wheat is destroyed by exposure to any degree of heat superior to that of boiling water, is subservient to other important purposes in the œconomy of grain. It teache

that flower duly tempered with water, and exposed to a degree of heat not exceeding the boiling point, not only coagulates itself, but will impart its coagulating property to other species of farinacea not themselves possessed of it, in some measure answering the purpose that eggs do in puddings, and by imparting a degree of solidity to a mass of heterogeneous materials, will render substances susceptible of the digestive action of the stomach which would otherwise not be so.

It is on the principle of instructing people in general how to œconomize the nutritive principles of the farinaceous part of their aliment, that the whole merit of the plan, if it possesses any, for enabling them to obtain a more cheap and wholesome diet, rests. It is on the farinacea that mankind always have, and always must depend for the chief source of their food. Man can live in perfect health on vegetable diet without animal food, but not the contrary. The happiness and prosperity of nations, as well as the health and strength of individuals, appear to be connected by nature with the cultivation of grain. The bodily strength of the ploughman far exceeds that of the sedentary

artificer, and the agricultural nation must always eventually subdue that which subsists by hunting, or by trade; as Cain, the first farmer, overcame the shepherd Abel.

That a smaller quantity of unfermented farinaceous food will enable a man to support hard labour than of fine bread is not matter of opinion, but of experiment: What description of men undergo more fatigue than the British sailors? and the chief part of their diet consists of unfermented biscuit, made of coarse flower, pease pudding, boiled oatmeal, and the like. It was an observation of Brindley, the celebrated canal engineer, that, in various works in which he had been engaged; where, the workmen being paid by the piece, each exerted himself to earn as much as possible; the north countrymen from Lancashire and Yorkshire, who adhered to their customary diet of oat-cake and hasty-pudding, sustained more labour, and got more money, than such as lived on bread, cheese, bacon and beer, the general diet of the labourers of the south: Moreover, that those individuals who ate their food cold, were capable of more exertion than those who used it hot. The northern countries are proverbially known to pro-

duce the tallest and stoutest men of which England can boast: a strong proof that their habitual diet of unfermented farinacea, must be wholesome and natural.

The great bulk of mankind always have subsisted and at present do subsist on unfermented grain. The Romans were unacquainted with the art of making fermented bread till the year 585 A. U. C. when the Roman armies, on their return from the conquest of Macedonia, brought Grecian bakers into Italy. Previously to that period they prepared their flower in no other way than by making it into pap or soft pudding, to which they were so attached, as, according to Pliny, to be characterized by their fondness for it. * If the authority of the ancients be allowed to have any weight, the opinion of Celsus may be quoted, who says decidedly that unfermented bread affords most nourishment. "Scire igitur oportet omnia legumina, quæque ex frumentis panificia sunt, generis valentissimi esse; valentissimum, voco in quo plurimum alimenti est": Among those things

* Pulte autem non pane vixisse longo tempore Romanos manifestum, quoniam inde et Pulmentaria hodieque dicuntur.

Plin. Hist. Nat. Lib. xviii. Cap. viii.

which are good for the stomach, " quæ stomacho idonea sunt"; he reckons " panis sine fermento" and " panis fermentatus" among those things which are injurious to the stomach. The inhabitants of all Asia live on unfermented rice; the Chinese are unacquainted with the art of baking bread; at least we are informed by late travellers that they prepare the farinaceous part of their food by boiling in water, or in steam. The natives of America simply boil their maize; and, as far as we know, the art of making fermented bread is unknown throughout all the continent of Africa. But to come nearer home, the common diet of our neighbours, the Dutch, who are a very healthy people, is boiled barley; and the hardy and enterprising Scots, it is well known, live on oatmeal simply boiled, and unfermented cakes made of the same kind of grain, or of pease, or barley meal.

To accumulate more proofs that the various kinds of farinaceous matters constituting the food of mankind are at least equally wholesome, and considerably more nutritious when eaten in an unfermented state, than after having undergone that process, would be nugatory. To be convinced

that by adopting a similar mode of cookery the inhabitants of this country might obtain a much cheaper diet than they at present use, it is only requisite to compare the expence of a meal prepared according to these principles, with the present price of fermented bread. That it would be more salubrious is evident, because all the adulteration of wheat practised in the process of reducing it to flower, would be avoided. These premises being admitted, it necessarily follows that the present duty of every individual is to practise this mode of œconomising grain: in the first place, in obedience to the dictates of prudence; and secondly, to those of the legislature of the country.

The most plain and easy illustration of these principles is a well known dish prepared thus:

Let equal parts of milk and water, suppose a pint of each, with a little salt, be brought to boil gently; stir gradually into it two table spoonfuls of flower, previously well mixed with half a pint of cold water; keep this over the fire for ten minutes, hardly boiling; and it will produce about a quart of very pleasant pudding, which will satisfy two people for breakfast. It may be

rendered palatable by a little sugar, and ginger, or nutmeg. The nutritious properties of sugar, taken in a solid form, are now universally acknowledged. As dissolved in tea they are lost. It is worthy of observation also, that sugar taken into the stomach in substance never disagrees, whereas in a diluted solution, as in tea, it frequently produces heart-burn. Besides a much smaller quantity suffices to impart an agreeable sweetness to a solid, than is requisite to conceal the acrid bitter of an infusion of tea.

A similar dish may be prepared of fine oatmeal, about the double the quantity of which is required to render the milk and water equally thick.

Half a pint of hulled, or as it is called, scotch barley, boiled slowly in a proper quantity of water, will produce nearly a quart of very nutritious food, which eaten with coarse sugar, treacle, or melted butter and salt, is very palatable. In this process a quantity of water seems changed into a solid, converted into nourishment.

Rice may be prepared and eaten in the like manner. The crispness peculiar to rice cooked as in India, is produced by throwing the grain, as soon as boiled sufficiently soft,

into a sieve or cullendar, and permitting a stream of cold water to run through it. It may be warmed when eaten, by setting the dish containing it within another with hot water. Cut groats prepared in the same manner are very wholesome, and afford a most substantial food.

Wheat deprived of the external husk and afterwards boiled, called in some parts of this country, creed Wheat, is a very nourishing food; a small quantity of which will enable a man to sustain the hardest labour.

By using such food, besides the advantage of eating genuine and unadulterated grain, along with all its bran, it is evident that the money usually paid to the miller and the baker remains in the pocket of the consumer. If there be any children, what is left by the parents, will afford them an excellent diet, which cannot be said of the drainings of a tea pot, with a little dry bread, or rancid butter. Nor does the preparation of such dishes require any more fuel than is necessary to boil a common tea kettle. Those made of the whole grain may advantageously be prepared over night and warmed at the time of eating; they are intended for breakfast, or for the food of children. Their ex-

pence allowing three-pence for the grain, and as much for the seasoning; or where flower or meal is used, two-pence, and one-penny for milk, which will produce more food than any two people can eat at breakfast, does not exceed six-pence; which compared with that with a breakfast of tea for two people,

Tea - -	2d.
Sugar -	2
Milk - -	½
Bread - -	4 at 18d. the quartern
Butter - -	3
	11½

may fairly be considered as double, without any thing remaining for children.

Although the basis of the food of mankind in general must always be derived from farinaceous substances, a certain portion of animal matter certainly tends to maintain bodily vigour, and to encrease the capacity for sustaining laborious exertions.

Man seems to attain the highest state of health on a mixture of animal and vegetable food; and from the structure of his body it was probable intended that he should live on both. Much however depends on custom, for contrary to the common opinion, man certainly has no natural food. In the more

early stages of society he supports himself by the laborious exertions of hunting. As men multiply in proportion to the extent of country which they occupy, they are under the necessity of practising agriculture, by which they create their food; an art which on account of its great utility, has always been regarded with a species of veneration. But, it is to be observed that whatever man subsists on, must still undergo a farther preparation, in order to render it fit for digestion. Man does not eat the flesh of animals raw, nor potatoes as they are dug out of the soil: This process is termed cookery; an art, in so far as it is absolutely necessary to render animal and vegetable substances fit for the food of man, is certainly, little inferior in real importance to agriculture by which they are produced: yet while the former has always been respected, the latter has been generally held in contempt.

The perfection of cookery consists in augmenting the nutritious properties of food. So far however is this from constituting the chief intention of the cook at present, that in many instances the quantity of nourishment is diminished, by the actual waste of that part of animal and vegetable food in which it chiefly resides.

As the principal nutritious properties of wheat have been stated to reside in the gluten, which is frequenty destroyed by the action of fire, the nutrimental part of animal food is chiefly contained in the fat, which on the present system of preparing food, is too often thrown away. The experiments of Dr. Stark on the nourishing powers of different substances, completely prove that three ounces of the fat of boiled beef are as adequate to satisfy the appetite, and support the strength of a man during a day, as a pound of the lean. The following curious observation of the celebrated traveller de Pages, farther confirms the same opinion. "Being obliged at one time," says he, "during the journey from North to South America by land, to live solely on animal food, I experienced the truth of what is observed by hunters, who live entirely on animal food, but which I used to find it difficult to believe, viz. that besides their deriving little nourishment from the leaner parts of it, it soon becomes offensive to the taste, whereas the fat is both more nutritive, and continues to be agreeable to the palate."

To many stomachs, fat in its pure state, especially when converted into oil by heat, is unpleasant and indigestible. These effect

may be completely obviated by the simple process of combining the fat completely with water, by the intervention of the glutinous, or mucilaginous part of flower. This is termed making an emulsion in the language of pharmacy, and is frequently practised with a view to render oily medicines pleasant to the stomach, which are combined with water by the medium of gum arabic. It is well exemplified in the common process of melting butter; in which, by means of flower, the butter and water are united into a homogenous substance, resembling cream, provided the mixture has not been exposed to too great a degree of heat.

But, to exemplify what is here intended; let some rice, or barley, or pease, or what is much preferable, a mixture of the two last,* in the proportion of two thirds of the former to one of the latter, be boiled till they are sufficiently soft; then add some meat of any kind, of which less is necessary, in proportion as it is more fat; bacon or tripe answer

* In some parts of Scotland, where the peasants live on barley bread, the superior nutritious properties of pease are so well known, that a servant will not hire himself without he be allowed a certain portion of pease or bean meal, in his diet.

as well as any other sort of meat, and are cheaper: Let the fat be taken off as it rises to the surface and carefully preserved: When the whole is sufficiently cooked, the fat that has been skimmed off, should be melted and carefully mixed with some flower and cold water, and returned to the whole, keeping it on the fire about ten minutes longer, but not permitting it to boil: If this be properly managed the whole fat will be combined with the other ingredients, and not a particle of oil be seen floating on the surface. The whole will have a certain degree of consistence, more resembling a *potage* than soup, and will be found eminently nutritious; it may be seasoned with any kind of herbs, or with onions; and dripping, melted and mixed with the flower, will be found to answer almost every purpose of meat.

To multiply examples is needless. The present publication not being intended to detail a system of cookery, but to explain the principles on which people may obtain a diet, cheaper than what is at present in use, by being careful not to waste those parts of vegetable or animal food in which their nutritious faculties are chiefly contained; productive indeed of some slight change in thei

usual mode of living, but a change neither difficult of execution nor injurious to health: Dishes prepared in this manner will be found to afford a cheap, wholesome, nutritious diet, fully adequate to support strength and spirits to undergo any kind of labour that man is employed in. People employed in labour stand much less in need of high seasoned meat, and stimulating liquors, than the indolent. Exercise produces an appetite for plain and simple food, which in return imparts health and vigour to sustain fatigue. Were a man accustomed to work hard compelled to use the animal food, the spices, and the wines of the rich, a fever would in all probability soon put a period to his existence. The food of the labourer should be plentiful, but plain. The diet now proposed, as it does not create thirst, supersedes in great measure the necessity of strong beer, a considerable quantity of which is really requisite for such as live on bread and cheese, on bacon, or on herrings. Tea and spirituous liquors must surely be considered as superfluous luxuries to those who cannot afford them; and what is of very great importance to the poor, it is a diet no less wholesome for children than for adults; very

different from the runnings of a teapot, or the dregs of beer, which constitute their present portion. It is also of consequence to note that this mode of preparing food requires no more fuel than is necessary to warm a room; only the pan, with the barley, or other grain, should be placed on the fire immediately after breakfast.

It is far from being the intention of the present writer to restrain the liberal hand of charity; and never did that virtue shine with more splendour than it does in this country at the present moment. The rich are indeed the stewards of the poor, to whom they ultimately owe all their wealth; and the higher classes of society appear to be actuated by one general impulse to share their wealth with the inferior, and to relieve by every possible means the necessities of the poor: The only difficulty appears to be, how to apply their bounty to the greatest possible advantage.

In conformity with the principles now advanced, the following would be suggested by the author:

To form by subscription, or otherwise, in convenient situations, depots of sound grain, as whole wheat, barley, rice, groats, pease,

oatmeal, and coarse flower. These being bought at the first hand, and sold with just so much profit as to defray the expence of the institution, would tend to regulate the price of the market; for to sell them lower would injure the fair trader, as well as tend to encourage waste. Subscribers to be entitled to give tickets to such individuals as they may deem fit objects of charity, entitling them to such quantities and articles of provision as are marked upon them, to the amount of their subscription. From the nature of the provisions it is obvious, that not even a weekly, far less a daily application for them would be required, as for soup. Perhaps it might be proper that the poor should only be entitled to this species of relief, on condition of their admitting of occasional visits to see that they did not barter the necessaries of life for its luxuries; their eleemosynary grain for tea and gin, a practice too common.

To furnish the poor with such articles of provision, would be fruitless without they were instructed how to prepare them for food. A short and explicit system of œconomical cookery, which might be easily drawn up, should be distributed gratis, at the

places were provisions are sold.* At the same places coals might be vended at a small profit, artificial heat being in this country an indispensible necessary of life.

It is almost needless to add, that if this mode of preparing food be œconomical and wholesome, it should be adopted in all hospitals, and workhouses. Those who subsist on the bounty of others, surely are not entitled to select their diet, but ought to be supported in the most frugal manner consistent with health.

It might also perhaps be attended with considerable advantages, were soldiers in garrisons, or barracks, supplied with grain instead of bread, and accustomed to dress it for themselves. In actual service, the operations of an army are frequently impeded by the difficulty of supplying them with baked bread. Grain is more easily procured, conveyed and distributed than bread, and its preparation for food in the manner now

* An œconomical and new method of Cookery, by Eliza Melroe, contains much useful information on this subject; were the directions more precise, and the reasoning, which tends only to bewilder the uninformed mind, omitted; nothing could be better adapted for the purpose.

recommended requires no other apparatus than a common camp kettle. Among the armies of the Romans no mention is made of bread; and, what is more remarkable, no military enterprize appears to have been defeated by disease.

Fully aware of the difficulty of changing modes of living, established by custom, especially where the change is to be made from a stimulating but innutritious, to a more plain and nourishing diet, the Author is not very sanguine in the expectation of his plan being generally adopted. He is conscious however of having on the present occasion discharged his duty as a member of society, by inculcating the principle of enabling the poor to provide for themselves; by encouraging among them, an attention to domestic œconomy, the best security for domestic happiness; and by cherishing a spirit of self-dependence, the sole basis of virtuous conduct: convinced "That the day, which makes man a *beggar*, takes half his worth away."

FINIS.

Printed by W. Smith,
King Street, Seven Dials.