

Strictures on the uses and defects of Parish Registers, and Bills of Mortality, in reference to marriages, births, baptisms, diseases, casualties, and burials; to the probabilities of the expectancy of life; and to the ascertaining of the progress of the population: with suggestions for improving and extending the system of parochial registry / By George Man Burrows.

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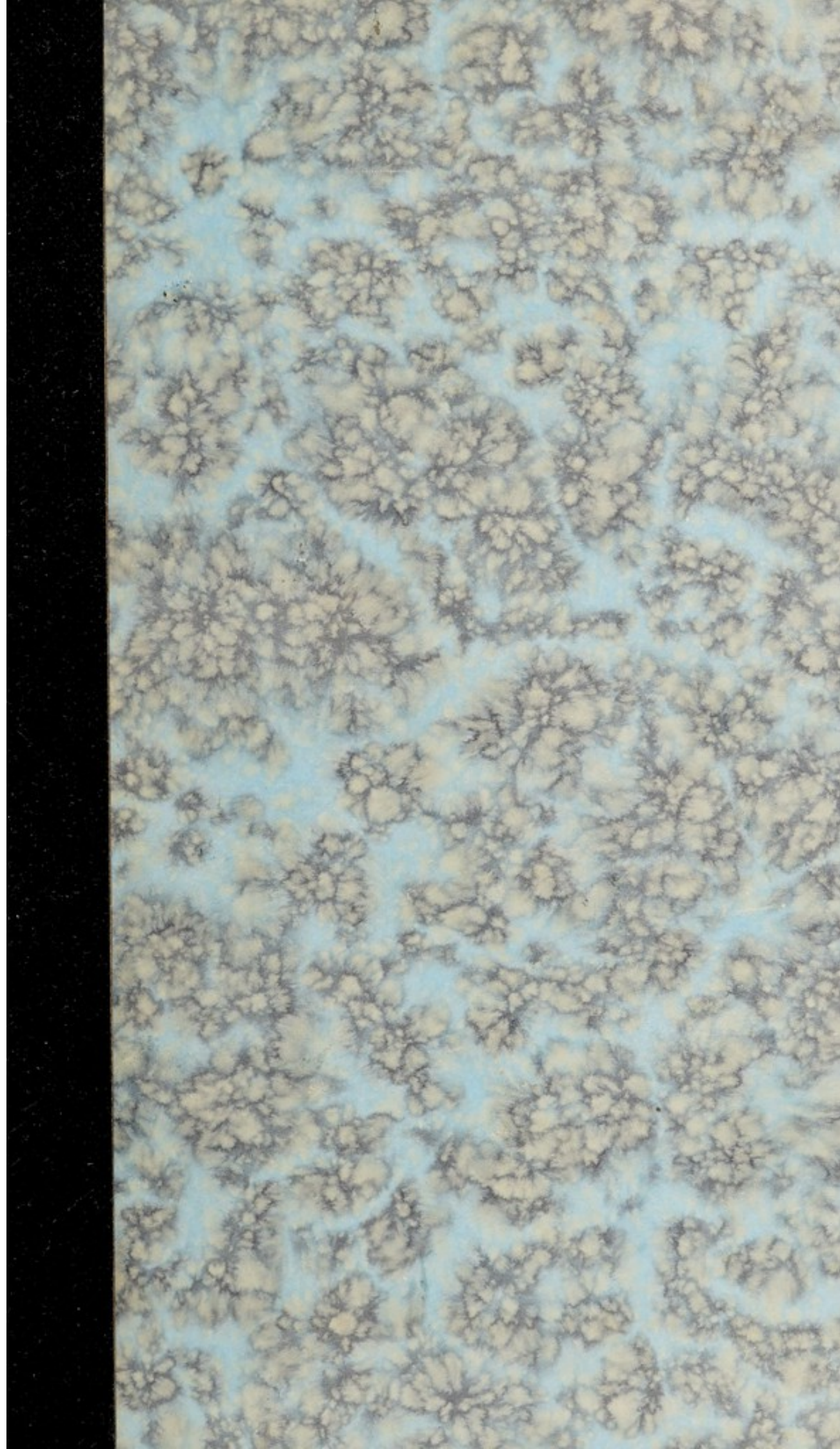
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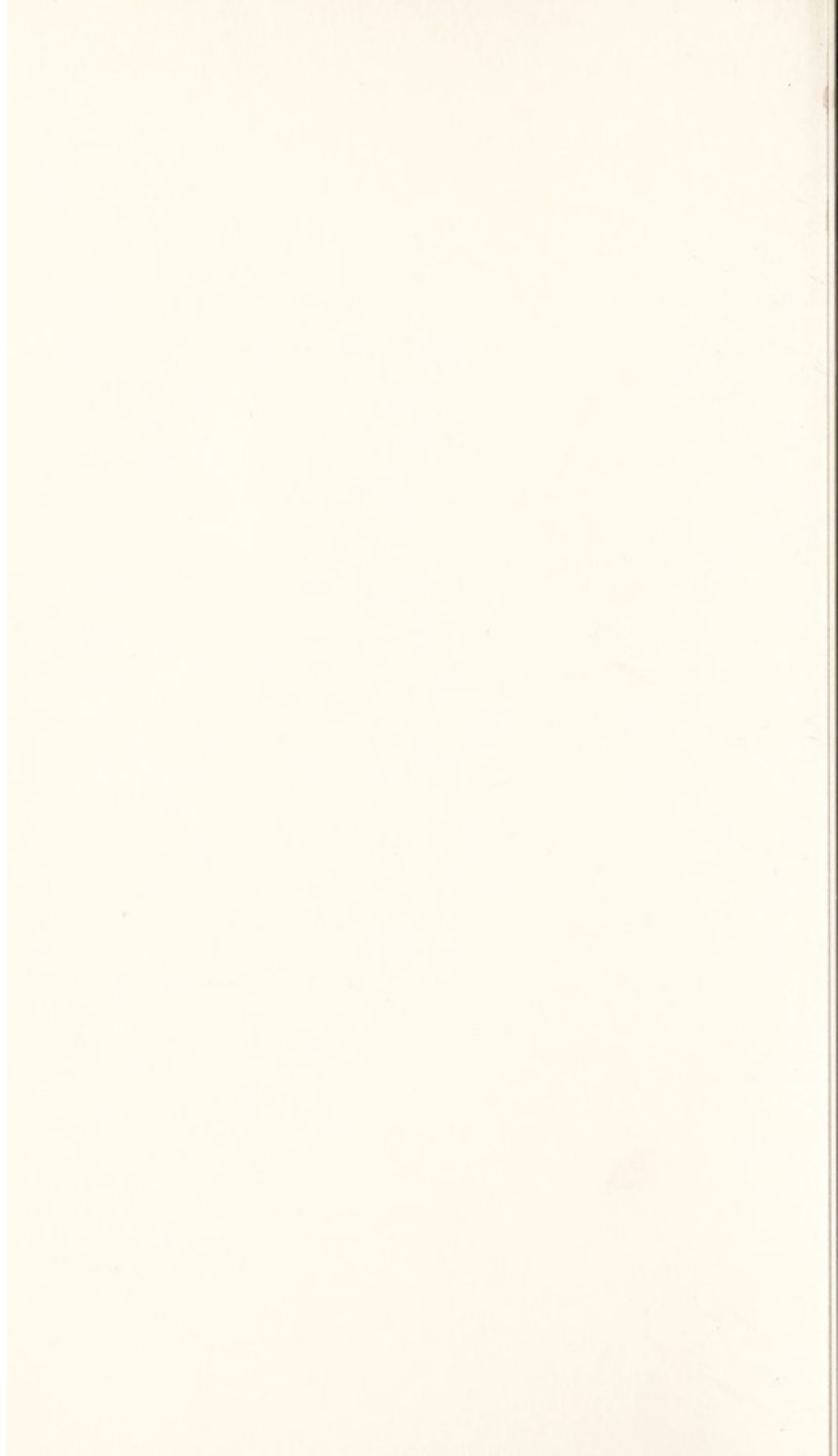


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IN REFERENCE TO
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THE PROGRESS OF POPULATION:
WITH
SUGGESTIONS
FOR IMPROVING AND EXTENDING
THE SYSTEM OF PAROCHIAL REGISTRY.

BY GEORGE MAN BURROWS, M.D. F.L.S.

FELLOW OF THE PHYSICO-MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF ERLANGEN; CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE ROYAL
MEDICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH, OF L'ATHENEE DE
MEDECINE OF PARIS, AND OF THE MINERALOGICAL
SOCIETY OF JENA, &c. &c.

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1818.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH,

Secretary of State for the Home Department, &c. &c.



MY LORD,

Confident that any plan proposed, having for its object the Public Benefit, will receive your notice, and, if deserving, be honoured with your support, I have, with the utmost deference, ventured to submit this Pamphlet to your Lordship's consideration.

I am,

MY LORD,

*With great Respect,
Your Lordship's obedient,*

Humble Servant,

G. M. BURROWS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH.

Secretary of State for the Home Department, &c. &c.

MY LORD,

I am very glad to hear that your plan
proposed, having for its object the Public
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MY LORD,

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your Lordship's obedient

Humble Servant,

G. M. BURROWS.

STRICTURES,

&c. &c.

IF the axiom of the late celebrated Dr. Price, “that the strength of a state consists in the number of the people,” be correct, it is surely highly impolitic to neglect any object that tends to the preservation of health, and the consequent increase of population. None will deny the inference; yet it is certain every state has not availed itself of the important truth it inculcates.

Nations, like individuals, know not the resources they possess till they are wanted and tried. A nation, physically or politically weak, intuitively regards with more attention the nature and extent of its means, than one that is powerful: an individual, possessing nothing but talents, consequently exerts them, to supply what fortune has denied.

Thus Sweden, a country, from position, climate, and population, relatively feeble, yet fertile in genius and enterprize, has assiduously cultivated and improved every resource which nature has so sparingly bestowed. In consequence of this provident forecast, a well digested system of

statistics was early established throughout the Swedish dominions ; and hence that kingdom has been enabled to achieve extraordinary and brilliant actions, to repair immense losses, and to maintain its rank among the nations of Europe.

Even Imperial France, when warring against the world, and trampling upon the neck of subject kingdoms, found in an effective organization of her native resources, the readiest and surest support during her ambitious and amazing career.

Austria and Prussia are rapidly repairing the ravages of war ; and more from a previous attention to statistics, than, perhaps, from any other cause : and Russia steadily pursues that policy, which, under a prescient administration, while it civilizes her semibarbarous subjects, cements the heterogeneous materials of which that vast empire is composed, and gives to the whole—unity, and strength, and power.

With the recollection of what the nations of the Continent have suffered, it appears incomprehensible how they could so rapidly recruit ; and be, as reported, Phoenix-like, rising more vigorous and more splendid from amidst their own ashes. But if we examine, we shall find that the true source of this resuscitation is—the existence of a wise and well-digested system of political œconomy ; the necessity of which they have been taught by dear-bought experience.

Great Britain, enriched by commerce, and prosperous beyond all other states, found in the late conflict, not only the means of defending her honour and upholding her rank, but also of vindicating the cause of oppressed Europe. But that national spirit which is her glory, and that wealth which the enterprize and industry of her people acquired, have voluntarily furnished resources, which it is the duty and the labour of other governments to provide. Great Britain, therefore, feeling the necessity less, has not been, perhaps, so attentive to the details and practice of political œconomy as her contemporaries.

Peace, however, has afforded a respite to the sufferings of the Continental states, and leisure to meliorate and increase their means. But as their means improve, our own possibly are deteriorated : and hence, while nations, before insignificant, rise in the scale of power, the weight of Great Britain is balanced, by the growing prosperity of numerous competitors.

At so critical a juncture, and under such circumstances, therefore, it is politic to inquire into, and develope those untried resources, which we indubitably possess ; and which we are bounden to cherish with all imaginable care, that they may be our refuge and aid in the hour of need.

Adverting then to the number of the people, in

which, it is said, "consists the strength of a state," why is this enlightened nation still in any respect neglectful of a resource so fully acknowledged to be a primary and vital one? It may be replied, that it is not neglected; because a census of the population is established under the authority of the legislature. But the axiom of Dr. Price must not be literally interpreted: he here speaks as a philosopher; and in the spirit of Lord Bacon, one of whose propositions is, "that true greatness consisteth essentially in population and *breed of men**."

There are many moral as well as physical circumstances, indeed, in reference to the people, which, in forming an estimate of their strength, should be fairly viewed, and must be taken into calculation. A country may be populous but the people be defective in moral qualities. It may be so situated, geographically, as to deteriorate both the mental and corporeal energies, and consequently diminish the physical strength of the inhabitants; or it may be governed by such laws and institutions as tend to depress the mind and fetter the free will; and thus affect both the physical and moral faculties. Hence the strength of a state may be as nothing in comparison with the number of the people.

If a state regard the people as a source of

* Of the True Greatness of Great Britain.

prosperity and power, its executive should be intimately acquainted not only with their number, but likewise with every cause, physical or moral, likely to increase or diminish them.

No doubt, a correct census is desirable ; but however accurate, it is, after all, nothing but a simple enumeration.

The only valid and certain mode of obtaining information regarding the increment or decrement of the population and the moral of the people, is through the medium of parochial registers. Not such registers as by the Act of the 52d Geo. III. are appointed for places only in which the rites of the Established Church are performed ; but by substituting for them registers including all religious denominations, and many particulars now wholly overlooked.

Besides, there is another kind of register, which has for a long series of years existed in the metropolis, and has more recently been introduced into a few country towns ; and which, if fairly and regularly kept, would throw much light on the progress of population and on the phenomena of diseases—I mean Bills of Mortality. But unfortunately these also are far from answering the purposes intended. The London bills profess to embrace the parishes to a certain extent round the metropolis, the number of all the christenings and burials of each sex, a catalogue of the diseases and casualties, and the ages,

from two years and upwards, at which the persons buried have died. They are defective, notwithstanding, in all these particulars. Some of the bills for country towns, which will be hereafter noticed, are much more perfect.

However much physicians, political œconomists, and moralists have insisted upon the great advantages to be derived from such registers and bills, if they were sufficiently comprehensive and exact; yet casual observers seem little apprized to what objects they are applicable, or in what manner they can contribute to the benefit of society.

Among some of the advantages in medical, political, and moral science, which would result, were proper parochial registers and bills of mortality established and kept throughout the United Kingdom, the following present—

I. MEDICALLY.—They point out—

1.—The causes of many diseases, and their affinity to one another:

2.—The rise, situation, increase, decrease, and cessation of epidemic and contagious diseases:

3.—The means of guarding against their extension and effects:

4.—The comparative healthiness of different countries and places, climates and seasons:

5.—The influence of particular trades and manufactures on the human constitution:

6.—They elucidate many important and dubious medical points essential to the perfection of the preventive and curative arts :

II. POLITICALLY.—They are a means—

1.—Of ascertaining the increment or decrement of the population in every place, and at any period :

2.—Of accurately ascertaining the population of the country, and at any period :

3.—Of diminishing, if not nearly superseding, the immense expense incurred by a census :

4.—Of obviating the difficulties, great expence, and frequent disappointment in proving marriages, births, baptisms, and burials, to which persons who are desirous of establishing legal proof of their identity, descent, consanguinity, &c. are still exposed.

5.—The present extensive and beneficial system of assurance on lives, reversionary payments, annuities, and legacy duties on the latter species of testamentary property, is founded on calculations deduced from numerous bills of mortality.

6.—The prosperity or decay of commerce, manufactures, or trade of any place, is shewn by comparing bills of mortality of different dates.

III. MORALLY.—They mark—

1.—The prevalence of moral or licentious

habits ; for where there is a proper ratio of marriages to the population of a place, and of persons living to a good old age, there religious, moral, and temperate habits may be supposed to prevail ; but where the contrary is observed in the registers, the reverse must predominate :

2.—The diseases of which the inhabitants of a place die ; and, consequently, those arising from luxury or intemperance :

3.—The effects of the passions on human actions* :

4.—By knowing where they are most required, the means of correcting such effects may be the more effectually applied.

* This is particularly exemplified by those entries in bills of mortality comprehending voluntary death. In a paper published in the LONDON MEDICAL REPOSITORY, vol. iv. p. 441, "*Observations on the Comparative View of the Mortality of Paris and London*," I had occasion to comment on the more frequent commission of suicide in the former than in the latter capital ; and thence to repel the reproach of our Continental neighbours on the English being more addicted to this crime than any other nation. Although this species of insanity be not so common in Paris as in the early period of the revolution, yet the Tables of Mortality of that city, for 1817, evince that it still more often occurs there, in a less numerous population, than in London.—It is admitted, that since 1812, suicides in Paris are again increasing ; and that in the last year they amounted to 335 ! If the half of those found drowned in the Thames, were supposed to have destroyed themselves, and were added to the registered suicides in 1817, the whole in London would be only 153.

Each of the foregoing heads will admit of amplification.

I. MEDICALLY. — If we refer to medical writers, an almost unanimous opinion will be found to obtain among them, on the utility of correct and enlarged registers and bills of mortality. To refer to Drs. Short, Haygarth, Percival, Aiken, Heberden, Black, &c. may appear superfluous, since their observations have long been published. The improvements which Drs. Haygarth, Percival, and Aiken introduced in the bills of mortality of the towns where they resided, and the conclusions they deduced from them, are the best practical illustrations of their advantages.

Dr. William Heberden*, especially, by his lucid arrangement of the diseases recorded for a series of years in the London bills of mortality, has shewn what useful deductions may be drawn from their contents. He demonstrates, that, notwithstanding all their inconsistencies and defects, they throw a considerable light upon the rise, extension, decline, and fatality of various diseases. And it is fair to infer, that if they were more accurate, and their results were compared with the variations of the atmosphere, that much of the

* Observations on the Increase and Decrease of Different Diseases, &c. 1801.

obscurity which now prevails respecting the specific causes of diseases, would be developed ; and their effects, perhaps, be more certainly guarded against. Were we to decide upon the utility of the present bills from the practical good in medicine which has hitherto resulted from them, the question would be negatived. But we must take a more enlarged view of the subject ; and not argue that, because they have not advanced medical science, they are inapplicable to that purpose. When placed under a proper system, their uses will be soon seen, and fully appreciated.

Few subjects having such direct reference to the character of medicine, and the elucidation of the causes of diseases, have been so little regarded as the bills of mortality of this great Metropolis. They have remained stationary ; and in form and language are almost coeval with their origin ; while every thing else connected with science or the arts has advanced with civilization. Why they should have been neglected, when so many able writers have perpetually been referring to, and commenting on them, it would be difficult satisfactorily to explain.

The most obvious, immediate, and important purpose to which bills of mortality can be applied, is the undoubted means they offer of detecting the rise, site, progress, and effect of contagious and malignant diseases in populous towns or districts.

In this point of view—a point so interesting to every Christian, and every philanthropist, they indubitably deserve the first consideration.

Happily, the British Isles have long been free from that dreadful visitation—the plague, with which these bills originated. As the cause has ceased, they may therefore seem to be superfluous. Yet the strict observance of the quarantine laws evinces that the dread of its introduction has not passed away. Nay, within these few years, reports were raised of its appearance in the Metropolis; and doubt and alarm bespread every countenance. Let us suppose that this pestilence, or any other malignant or contagious distemper were to break out. Would not the existence of regular weekly registers or bills of diseases and mortality afford direct intelligence where the danger was to be sought and met? And would not the return of these bills to the magistrates or constituted authorities, at such short periods as a week, suggest the propriety of adopting timely means of prevention, either by insulating the contagious, or removing the sick, &c. and thus probably stop, *in limine*, its further progress? Are we so short-sighted as to slight precaution because Providence has mercifully spared us for so long a time? Must we be smitten before we appreciate the danger, and think of preservation? Had proper bills of mortality been established in any of those cities which have been

infested with the plague, there is great probability, as those awful visitations were generally preceded by a severe malignant fever*, that they might have been averted. Equally probable is it, that, if similar regulations had been regarded in Dublin, Cork, Edinburgh, Newcastle, &c. where a contagious fever has lately so fatally raged, that the magistrates would have been sooner aware of the incipient malady, and have resorted to every necessary preventive care ere their fellow citizens were falling victims to a mortal disease †.

* Dr. Heberden's Observations on the Plague, p. 85.

† During the last two years, in fact, a contagious fever has raged with unwonted violence in many parts of the United Kingdom. In London, although very prevalent, yet, fortunately, it has been marked with less malignity than in almost any other part where it has comparatively extended. Country places have not been exempt from it. But the more populous the town, and the greater the number of persons out of employ, there it has most prevailed. Manufacturing towns have especially experienced its effects. Edinburgh and other places in Scotland, have suffered from it ‡. In Ireland it has been particularly severe: the records of the Dublin Hospitals display a most melancholy catalogue of its effects; and those of Cork exceed all precedent.

From an interesting Report just published by J. M. Barry, M. D. Physician to the House of Recovery and Fever Hospital of Cork, and from the concurrent opinion of the Faculty, it appears that this fever does not differ from the *typhus* or *synochus* of other years, and at all times contagious among the poor of that city; except in the number of cases.

‡ Blackwood's Magazine, September and October, 1817.

II. POLITICALLY.—The subjects offering for consideration when discussing the uses of paro-

The dreadful increase of the fever may be judged of by the following statement: Cases admitted in 1815—717; deaths, 9. 1816—Cases, 1026; deaths, 18. 1817—Cases, 2707; deaths, 100. But this is a small proportion of those who suffered from it in that unfortunate city. From the reports of two physicians who undertook the office of Medical Inspectors, it is certain that not one-fourth of the infected applied to the public institutions for relief. The number ascertained to have been ill with it was 8227. The mortality among those who had not the advantages of being removed to the public hospitals, may be more easily imagined than computed.

Dr. Barry ascribes this affliction principally to want of employment, and consequent want of all the necessaries of life; accumulated filth in the streets and houses of the poor; and also the impossibility of proper ventilation of their dwellings. “In one place, called Hughes’ Lane,” says he, “I am well assured, that from three to five windows in each house have been stopped up to avoid taxation, within the current year; and from this cause, combined with the intolerable filth and distress of the inhabitants, this lane has been infected from one end to the other. Were I to pronounce what cause was most productive of fever among all those which have been adverted to, I would certainly say—the want of a constant supply of fresh air.” To such a degree had the blocking up of windows proceeded, and so bad an effect did the physicians think this had on the health of the poor, that, on application to Government, the Mayor obtained permission to cause such windows and hearths to be re-opened as had been closed within the year to evade the tax, in situations where the exclusion of the air had obviously contributed to the concentration, and of course subsequent diffusion of the contagion. It ought to be known and be ever in remembrance, that

chial registers and bills of mortality in political science, are numerous and weighty. Great Britain, it has been observed, is avowedly behind most civilized nations in the adaptation of this science to the service of the state. But the esta-

fresh air is not a luxury, but a necessary of life; and that whenever it is excluded from the dwellings of the poor, there enter misery and disease and death.

But the lower orders have not been the only sufferers from this fever. For a long time past the Irish newspapers have afforded melancholy records of the deaths of individuals who have fallen sacrifices to it, and who were by their rank and fortune little liable to be exposed to the effluvia of specific contagion. Neither have the members of the faculty escaped. In Cork only, five or six physicians have recently fallen sacrifices to their humane and indefatigable zeal in attending the sick poor. In Scotland, a great many valuable citizens have likewise died under its fatal influence. But the extent of the calamity, and the danger to be apprehended, will be best appreciated by reference to the debates of April 28th ult. in the House of Commons on this subject.

Cold, it is well known, has a powerful effect in stopping the progress of contagion; and if typhus or other fevers of that type are common at the commencement of winter, they are expected to cease with the setting in of severe frost. It is highly probable that this calamity has been occasioned by the succession of two remarkably mild winters. Experience of the past should teach us wisdom in regard to the future, and prepare us against the continuance and extension of this terrible visitant during the present year. Humanity and policy dictate, therefore, that a better and more vigilant medical police should be established, and with as little delay as possible, throughout the United Kingdom.

blishing of a periodical census, it must be acknowledged, displays a disposition to be more attentive to this source of national wealth and power.

The work of numbering the population of a great Empire, is operose, tedious, and expensive, and, generally, after all, incomplete. But, if regular and comprehensive registers of marriages, births, baptisms, and deaths, of persons of all religious denominations, were kept and returned at stated periods, how much easier, less expensive, and more accurate will a census become? May not such registers even supersede the necessity of a census? For the increase or decrease of the people may be clearly ascertained by the totals which the aggregate annual returns will exhibit.

The only practical use, perhaps, since the cessation of the plague, to which bills of mortality have been converted, is, that of calculating the chances of the expectancy of life. For this purpose they have been eminently serviceable. Upon calculations which these data offer, a system of life assurance, equally beneficial to the assurer and assured, has been founded; and its universal adoption demonstrates, that this system is, in a remarkable degree, convenient and acceptable to the public. Numerous Assurance Offices have within these few years, sprung up in the Metropolis, each vying with the other, and all

apparently flourishing. In many populous countries similar offices are established. It is a system indeed become now so general, that a very large proportion of respectable persons are immediately or mediately interested in the stability of it. But that stability, and the benefits accruing, depend entirely on the correctness of the data from which the calculations of the expectancy of lives are deduced. And whence are they deduced? Principally from the various bills of mortality of London and other places in England:—Their exactness and authenticity, therefore, is a subject of national importance.

Circumstances, irrelevant at present, have induced me, for some years, to fix my attention on the contents of the London bills of mortality. In performing this duty, it was impossible not to be struck with their manifold inaccuracies and defects; and, at the same time, with the obvious advantages to be derived were they on a better plan. And in proportion to my conviction of these defects, my admiration of the wonderful edifice of which Dr. Price was the great architect, and which he has founded on such simple materials, was excited. If, however, in examining into the nature of those materials, any change in their elements which endangers the superstructure be discovered or suspected, it will I hope be deemed excusable, nay, perhaps, laudable, to lay them open to investigation.

To enter the lists with such profound arithmeticians as the late Dr. Price, or as Mr. Morgan, were, indeed, to arrogate a knowledge to which I have no pretension; neither do I question that the deductions from the data they have adopted are not mathematically true. I renounce any such intentions. All I contend for, is, that if the data be proved to be materially altered since the period when their calculations were made, it must be conceded, that, however just and applicable to the past, they may lead to fallacy when applied to the present or the future.

Some may object to such an inference, that nothing has yet occurred to impugn the accuracy of their data, or excite a suspicion of any material change; that the prosperity of the Assurance Offices, and the benefits which through them daily accrue, remove all reason for such apprehension; and, therefore, that such a discussion is digressive and unnecessary. But it should not be forgotten, that our object is to shew not only the utility of correct registers and bills of mortality, but also in what manner the present imperfect ones affect the interests of the community. Consequently any inquiry leading to the exposition of error, at the same time it elucidates the purposes to which registers and bills of mortality are applicable, proves also the necessity there is for amending them. This alone

will justify the liberty of offering any facts which appear to throw a light on the subject, as well as such observations as those facts elicit.

That philosophic inquirer and able physician, Dr. William Heberden*, observes, that “the difference of the numbers christened and buried is greater between the years of 1740 and 1750 than at any preceding or subsequent period. This difference diminished afterwards; *but still continued very considerable till about 1770.* Now it was from an average of ten years taken in this interval, namely, from 1759 to 1768, that Dr. Price constructed his tables of the probabilities of life, and from which he deduced the population of London. The excess of the burials above the christenings amounted at that time to nearly one-third of the whole number of burials. At present, it is less than one-twentieth: nay, in the years 1790, 1797, and 1799, the excess was actually on the side of the christenings. *Such a prodigious change ought, one would think, considerably to alter Dr. Price’s conclusions.* Some allowances are, however, to be made; particularly in consequence of an Act of Parliament passed in 1767, by which it is required that all parish infants shall be sent into

* Observations on the Increase and Decrease of particular Diseases, p. 32.

the country in three weeks after their birth, to be nursed there till they are six years old*.”

Here is one very material datum of Dr. Price's considerably affected in the course of thirty years. Let us examine how far the lapse of fifty years, since 1768, to which date his remarks extend, has influenced the relative proportions of christenings and burials; and whether the progress of twenty years, since 1799, - to which Dr. Heberden's refer, has strengthened his inferences or confirmed or shaken those of Dr. Price. This cannot be done more fairly, than by first stating the medium of christenings and burials in the decad of years Dr. Price selected, viz. from 1759 to 1768, and then comparing its results with successive decads.

The medium of christenings in that decad, is—15,710; of burials—22,956: in the next,

* It should be observed, however, that this Act makes provision for the removal of such children only as belong to the seventeen parishes without the walls of London, the twenty-three in Middlesex and Surrey, and the ten within the City and Liberties of Westminster. The ninety-seven parishes within the walls of London, which contain, according to the census of 1811, 55,484 inhabitants, and in which the children perhaps most require it, and those of several populous parishes as Mary-le-bonne, Pancras, &c. forming a part of the metropolis but not within the bills of mortality, are not included in this Act of Parliament.

from 1770 to 1780, the medium of the former s—17,218; of the latter—21,000*. Hence a very material increase of the one and decrease of the other had occurred in ten years. In the successive decads a prodigious increment of christenings and decrement of burials is observable: the last decad is as follows:

Proportions of Christenings and Burials, in London, from 1808 to 1817 inclusive, according to the General Annual Bills of Mortality.

	Christenings.	Burials.
1808	19,906	19,954
1809	19,612	16,680
1810	19,930	19,893
1811	20,645	17,043
1812	20,404	18,295
1813	20,528	17,322
1814	20,170	19,783
1815	23,414	19,560
1816	23,581	20,318
1817	24,129	19,968
	<hr/> 212,319	<hr/> 188,816

Medium of christenings. }	21,231	Medium of burials. }	18,886
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Making the excess of christenings in this decad, 23,503; or one-eighth.

* Dr. Black's Comparative View, p. 422.

But if the *abortive* and *still-born*, which amount in this decad to 6366, be deducted from the burials, to which, as they are not reckoned among the baptisms, they are improperly added, the real excess of *births* in the decad is 29,869 ; or about a sixth and a half.

Thus then it appears, that since the period when Dr. Price formed his calculations of the probabilities of the duration of life in London, the number of burials, instead of being a third *more*, is an eighth *less* than the christenings ; and, that since 1799, where Dr. Heberden's remarks close, and when the burials still exceeded the christenings a twentieth, the christenings are in excess an eighth ! But comparing the decad ending in 1768, with that ending in 1817, the relative proportions of the christenings to the burials is increased to nearly one half ; and comparing the decad ending in 1799, with the last, the difference in favour of christenings is a fifth. This surely shews a very great and important alteration in the physical state of the inhabitants of London.

There is another fact also, which, while perhaps, it proves the greater healthfulness of the metropolis, also affects, at least at one period of age, the accuracy of the calculations of the expectancy of life.

To confirm his deductions of the probabilities of life between eight and sixteen, Dr. Price

refers to the mortality of the boys in Christ's Hospital; and he states, that he had been informed that for thirty years, ending in 1768, $11\frac{1}{2}$ of the 831 boys in that institution, or 1 in 70%, annually died*. Mr. Wales' Inquiry up to 1807, averages their annual mortality, for twenty years only, at $10\frac{1}{2}$, or 1 in 83. There is, however, incontestible evidence of the fallacy of both these computations. Mr. Field, the present respectable and intelligent apothecary of that noble charity, fully impressed with the importance of registers of the diseases and degree of mortality in so large an establishment of boys between the ages of infancy and puberty, commenced, in the *London Medical Repository*, (No. 4, April 1814), with the design of furnishing so great a desideratum, a Quarterly Report and Tabular View of such Diseases as occurred, with cursory remarks on them; and this he has since regularly continued.

In concluding one of his Reports†, Mr. Field observes, "There is in my possession a register of boys admitted into the Infirmary, with the number of deaths which took place during *forty* years; namely, from April 1759 to April 1799. This register was kept by the late Mr. Roberts, who was apothecary to this House, (Christ's Hos-

* Observations on Reversionary Payments, vol. ii. p. 87. Edit. 6.

† *London Medical Repository*, vol. iii. p. 43.

pital) nearly, if not quite, the whole of that time; and in which office he succeeded his father. Of the correctness of this statement, there can be no doubt; and as the total number of boys has not materially varied during the period in question, it must be considered an important document in the general history of mortality."

"The total number of deaths from diseases, according to this register, was 173; making an annual average of *four and one-third*, and being a proportion to the number of boys of about *one in one hundred and fifty*."

This interesting Register ends just at the era when vaccination commenced; and although the mortality, from some infantile disorders, especially from measles, has increased since the introduction of that practice, yet the fatality from others has much diminished. Respecting the mortality of the boys in Christ's Hospital since 1799, where Mr. Roberts' register stops, there can be little doubt, it will be found much below that of the preceding twenty years. But I have very strong reasons for thinking that London, generally, is become infinitely more favourable to human life*.

* Judging from analogy, and favourable opportunities of acquiring information, I am induced to conclude, that this favourable change is not confined to the metropolis; but that the healthiness of the whole country is greatly improved.

Thus far the deductions to be drawn from the bills of mortality of London are principally regarded. But as Dr. Price and Mr. Morgan very justly suppose that a great metropolis is the least favourable to human life, they have extended their observations to several country towns, wherein regular registers have been preserved for a series of years. As Northampton was, in every respect, deemed most eligible, Dr. Price preferred that town. From its registers of mortality from 1735 to 1780, he arranged his table, (No. XVII) of the probabilities of life ; by which the business of the Equitable Assurance Office is chiefly regulated. I have, therefore, also selected that town for inquiry whether any, and what alteration has taken place in its physical state ; and whether, from the present data it offers, different deductions would result.

Antecedently to 1800, when vaccination came into general practice, several circumstances concurred to abate many of the causes which were obnoxious to the health of the poorer and most numerous class of society. Subsequently, vaccination has assuredly contributed largely to the increment of population. For although the mortality from small pox has been reduced less than could be wished, and measles and one or two other diseases have caused a greater destruction of life, yet the mortality from some has declined in a larger proportion than it has been augmented by the increased fatality of the other disorders.

Dr. Price reckoned the population of Northampton to be—5136; and he states, that by a computation of christenings and burials from 1741 to 1780, or forty years, the annual medium of the christenings was—158; of the burials—189½*; and that the mortality in the single parish of All Saints, from 1735 to 1780, or forty-six years, was—4689; the medium of which, is about 102. In 1801, Northampton actually contained, according to the population returns, 7020 inhabitants. The summary of the parish registers from 1791 to 1800 is—baptisms—1630; burials—1607; marriages—737. In 1811, the population was 8427: from 1801 to 1810, the summary of baptisms is—2015; burials—1566; marriages—833; *exclusive* of dissenters.

Through the means of a medical friend at Northampton, who obligingly took the trouble of personally examining them, I obtained a copy of the registers of the four parishes of that town for the last ten years; *inclusive*, with the exceptions hereafter mentioned, of all the dissenters. The following is the result:

* Observations, on Revs. Pay. &c. vol. ii. p. 96.

Account of Baptisms and Burials in Northampton, taken from the yearly Bills of Mortality of that Town, from 1808 to 1817.

	BAPTISMS.			BURIALS.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
1808	134	117	251	92	107	199
1809	116	113	229	79	83	162
1810	137	107	244	93	80	173
1811	127	95	222	84	96	180
1812	132	121	253	94	86	180
1813	117	126	243	97	92	189
1814	151	134	285	78	96	174
1815	148	125	273	95	111	206
1816	142	163	305	100	108	208
1817	145	136	281	152	129	281*
	1349	1237	2586	964	988	1952

Neither the baptisms of the Quakers, nor those of the Baptists are in this table ; nor are the burials of the latter included ; but I have ascertained, that in this decad the latter have amounted to 91, which makes the total of burials 2043. The excess, therefore, of baptisms to burials, in Northampton, appears to be—543, or more than a fifth. But, in fact, it must be still greater ; for if the baptisms as well as the burials among the Society of Friends and Baptists were added, and assuming only that the one is in the same proportion as the other among other denominations inserted in the parish registers,

* It should be noted, that in 1817 there is an extraordinary degree of mortality, in which the burials are equal to the baptisms ; and that the excess of burials, comparatively with any preceding year, is, in the proportion of 281 to 208.

the baptisms would then exceed the burials upwards of 600 in this decad.

The parish of All Saints, in Northampton, contains 4871, out of the whole population of 8427. A yearly bill of mortality of this parish is published, containing the ages, diseases, and sexes of the deceased. The following table contains a summary of the mortality of the last ten years in that parish :

Table exhibiting the Numbers and Ages of those buried in the parish of All Saints, in the town of Northampton, from 1808 to 1817.

	Under 2 Years.	Between 2 & 5	5 & 10	10 & 20	20 & 30	30 & 40	40 & 50	50 & 60	60 & 70	70 & 80	80 & 90	90 & 100	Totals.
1808	26	3	3	0	7	4	2	4	6	8	1	1	71
1809	17	2	2	3	4	4	2	6	9	3	1	1	54
1810	30	6	2	2	2	2	5	2	4	8	2	0	65
1811	27	1	2	5	4	11	2	4	7	5	2	1	71
1812	15	3	1	2	4	5	6	4	6	9	6	0	61
1813	22	10	5	1	5	5	6	5	4	9	4	0	76
1814	19	3	2	4	5	3	6	6	9	6	3	2	68
1815	26	8	4	2	4	6	5	7	6	10	3	1	82
1816	19	5	2	2	5	0	5	1	5	13	3	0	60
1817	54	11	4	4	8	3	7	5	1	5	3	1	106
Total	255	54	27	25	48	43	46	44	57	76	28	7	714

Doubtless these facts will elicit many observations which have escaped me: but I will venture to remark, that, according to Dr. Price, the baptisms in Northampton, inclusive of Dissenters, from 1741 to 1780 (40 years), average annually — 158; and the burials — 189; that, according to the abstract of the parish registers, which embrace only such Dissenters as

baptize and bury according to the rites of the Established Church, from 1791 to 1800 (ten years) the baptisms average—163 ; and the burials—160 ; that, from 1801 to 1810 (ten years) the baptisms average—201 ; and the burials—156 ; and that in the last deced from 1808 to 1817, which comprehends all baptisms, except those of Quakers and Baptists, and the burials of *all* denominations, the annual average of baptisms is—258 ; and of burials—195 : and hence it is indisputable that the medium of baptisms since Dr. Price wrote is increased from 158 to 258, while the medium of burials, although the population is nearly doubled, is increased *six* only. And yet we must take into the account, that the last year of this deced (1817) was one of extraordinary mortality. This, unequivocally, evinces a prodigious change in the physical state of Northampton since 1780. It likewise shews that Mr. Morgan was not correct in supposing, that up to 1803, “ the burials in Northampton have uniformly exceeded the births in a *very considerable proportion** ;” and further, it is evident, that the baptisms have since been progressively exceeding the burials till the former presents an excess of more than a fifth.

Again: it is computed by Dr. Price that 1 in $26\frac{1}{2}$, and by Mr. Morgan that 1 in $25\frac{1}{2}$, die

* Obs. on Revers. Pay. Ed. 6, (1803) Vol. II. p. 96 in note.

annually in Northampton*. Now the population of that place, as it appears by the returns in 1801, was—7020, and in 1811—8427; the medium of which is 7723. The aggregate deaths for those twenty years is—3173; and the annual average—158. The proportion, therefore, of deaths in Northampton in twenty years, ending with 1810, is about 1 in 49, instead of 1 in $25\frac{1}{2}$. It is remarkable, that the peculiarity in the mortality of that town which Mr. Morgan has noticed, viz. that more die between the ages of 20 and 30, than between 30 and 40, still obtains.

Hence, probably, it will be allowed to be a rational inference, that the probabilities of life are actually and generally much improved; and, consequently, that Dr. Price's tables, No. XV. and No. XVI. shewing the probabilities of the duration of human life in London from 1759 to 1768, and from 1771 to 1780, as well as that No. XVII. shewing the probabilities of life at all ages, formed from the Northampton registers of mortality, from 1735 to 1780, are not correspondent with the present probabilities of life either in London or the country. Were Dr. Price now alive to take a retrospect since 1780, he would not affirm, as at that date, "that

* Observations on Reversionary Payments, Vol. II. in note, p. 104.

for the last fifty years there has been no change in the state of London which has greatly affected its influence on the duration of human life*.”

It can no longer be matter of doubt, even with the most sceptical, that the population, both of the metropolis and the country, has been for some years increasing. Whether the proportions of the number dying in the several divisions of life are the same as they were when Mr. Morgan published his last observations†, or whether they bear any relation to that inversed ratio of the christenings to the burials which has been demonstrated, can be decided only by those who have leisure for the investigation. Still, although perhaps I speak like a novice, yet I cannot avoid the conclusion, that fresh calculations ought to be made upon a retrospect of every successive forty or fifty years; and that on every calculation, the chances of the duration of life would always come out so essentially dissimilar, as to affect the fundamental principles by which the previous rate of assurance was regulated.

I have hazarded an opinion, notwithstanding the opposite impressions of Mr. Morgan,

* Observations on Reversionary Payments, Vol. II. p. 308.

† Ibid. in note, p. 99, (Ed. 1803.)

for whose judgment and profound knowledge as a mathematician, and for whose many estimable private qualities I have the highest respect, that the general healthiness of the country is greatly improved. I am aware that the increase of the inhabitants is no positive proof of it ; and that the population of every country is supposed to be regulated by the facility or difficulty of obtaining the means of subsistence. But my conviction of this amelioration flows from a knowledge of the lower classes having acquired more cleanly habits, and a greater degree of regard to the preservation of their health :—benefits, which I verily believe have resulted from a superior degree of intelligence. Yet this is negative evidence, and may be liable to cavil. But we have affirmative evidence, in regard to the metropolis at least, from the Population Returns of 1811. It is there stated, (p. 200), that “the mortality of the metropolis in 1700 was 1 in 25 ; in 1750, 1 in 21 ; in 1801 and the four preceding years, 1 in 35 ; since that, 1 only in 38 : thus shewing a gradual improvement in the health of the metropolis.” And although I do not possess the same positive evidence as adduced in regard to Northampton, yet, from collateral testimony, I am firmly persuaded, that an inspection of the registers of Manchester, Chester, &c. where they are equally exact, would shew a degree of progressive improvement highly satisfactory.

From the data to which I have referred, we can readily appreciate the value, and likewise the necessity of further inquiry. For it is obvious, that if, from any error, the expectancy of life be calculated on too low a scale, the system founded on it must end in disappointment; on the contrary, if it be on too high a scale, what are then the consequences? The premium of assurance paid being equivalent to the supposed risk of life, in process of time there must be an accumulation exceeding all possible demand; and, unless a proportionate division of the surplus be made, a capital accrues, which, like a disproportioned and unwieldy head, by its superincumbency alone, will endanger the safety of the body.

But there are also many other inconveniences and charges supervene to overrating the expectancy of lives; which affect not only those engaged in assurance, but extend to many other pecuniary concerns.

In valuing reversions, annuities, insurances, &c. if the chance of lives be rated beyond the actual risk, the value will be fixed, not by a real but an erroneous standard.

All annuities devised are liable to the legacy duty, the amount of which is fixed by tables calculated on Dr. Price's principles, and annexed to the Act of Parliament imposing and regulating it. If this table be, as appears probable,

founded on data, which existing circumstances invalidate, will not persons, paying according to its rate, sustain an unequitable deduction from their rightful property? In some cases this tax undoubtedly operates very oppressively: it is therefore imperative, that the principles by which it is directed should be radically sound*.

III. MORALLY.—On this part of the subject, I shall not enlarge: observing only, in addition to what was before remarked that correct registers and bills of mortality would shew any marked difference in the marriages, births, christenings, diseases, and burials in a particular parish or district; and give to those so disposed, an opportunity of ascertaining the causes of such difference; and perhaps of applying a corrective ere the mischief be irretrievable.

Having endeavoured to point out some errors

* The following is a case in point: a servant aged 41, had an annuity of £50 left her. This legacy of course was liable to a duty of £10 per cent. It was consequently necessary to ascertain its value; which, according to the table, was near £660; the duty, therefore, amounted to £66: sixteen pounds more than the amount of the first year's annuity. A period of four years, it is true, is allowed in such cases, to pay the duty: But still it is a very heavy tax, and ought, if it be charged on an erroneous expectancy of life, to be corrected.

and discrepancies in the data on which the system of life assurance is founded, and which the establishing of correct registers and bills of mortality will remedy, and having detailed some of the benefits to be derived from improving them ; it will be facilitating the object we propose perhaps, if firstly, we trace their origin ; and secondly, explain those abuses and defects which have so much deteriorated their value.

The parochial registers had origin in England with Cromwell, Earl of Essex, under Henry VIII., in 1538 ; but they were little regarded till 1558, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, when they were ordered to be regularly kept in all churches, &c. ; and, for better preservation, to be written on parchment. But, Mr. Ralph Bigland* remarks, they were, generally, very carelessly kept ; and in many parishes the entries were so irregularly made, illegibly written, or defaced by damp or neglect, as frequently to occasion great expence, disappointment, and loss.

But this exceedingly important subject has lately received some attention from the Legislature. “ *An Act for the better regulating and preserving Parish and other Registers of BIRTHS, Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, in England,*”

* Observations on Marriages, Baptisms, and Burials, as preserved in Parochial Registers.—1764.

passed in 1812; the preamble of which states, that “the amending the manner and form of keeping and of preserving Registers of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, in the several parishes and places in England, will greatly facilitate the proof of pedigrees of persons claiming to be entitled to real or personal estates, and be otherwise of great public benefit and advantage.” This enactment, in principle, is wise; but it is to be lamented, that they who framed it, had not more enlarged and accurate views of the uses for which its very title implies it was intended, and to which it might have been applied. It abounds with objections. Firstly, the act does not enforce registry upon all denominations of religions or sects; which is a grievous defect. Secondly, it does not operate upon hospitals or other asylums, to compel returns of all burials which take place in their burying grounds. Thirdly, and the most capital error is, that although, by the title of the act, it was obviously intended that *births*, as well as baptisms, &c. should have been distinctly returned, (a most essential part of the register,) yet there is no enacting provision in any of the clauses to that effect; nor is there a column for entering births in any schedule annexed to the act.

Unfortunately, and surely most inconsiderately, the words births and baptisms have hitherto been synonymously used. This is a glaring absurdity;

the consequences of which have sometimes been very serious. How often does it happen, from some cause or other, children are not baptized for weeks, months, or years, after they are born? and sometimes the ceremony is never performed at all. Instances are on record where a whole family of children have been christened at once! Sometimes, but not always, the date of the birth is noted as well as that of the baptism; but this should decidedly be an indispensable entry; for if the former be, by design or accident, omitted, and none alive to testify the birth, the date of the baptism is then the only legal evidence of age*. Children born in one parish are sometimes baptized in another: this is a source of confusion. A practice also obtains of naming or half-baptizing a child: Many, there is reason to believe, from neglect or caprice,

* "A person," says the Rev. Mr. Dade†, "leaves £5000 to a distant relation, in case his son should die in his minority. It seems, from the testimony of creditable neighbours, that the child was certainly born a fortnight before baptism; that he married in his minority, and died a week under age, according to the *date of the baptism*; being survived by a wife and infant son. The parents and witnesses of the birth being dead, and no particulars found sufficient to ascertain the precise day of his birth, the *entry* of the baptism is admitted as evidence; and the distant relation possess the fortune, to the great prejudice of the poor relict and a helpless child."

† Percival's Works, vol. i. p. 422.

never proceed beyond this ceremony, and the child remains, in fact, unbaptized, and unregistered*. Therefore it is clear, that in all cases with the date of the baptism, that of the birth should also be registered. In the register of baptism, likewise some particulars respecting the residence and occupation of the parents of the child, and the order of primogeniture, might well be added. Indeed if greater precision in the entries of births and baptisms were observed, it would tend to remove many doubts and disputes which are perpetually occurring respecting settlements of paupers, and occasionally save every parish a burthensome expence. Hence it is evident, that the Register Act is in need of much amendment. Whether the proposed form of entry (*See Appendix*, No. V and No. VI), will remedy these defects, I am scarcely competent to judge.

The bills of mortality of London, it must be observed, are placed under the superintendence of the Company of Parish Clerks of London, in whom is vested an exclusive authority to collect, print, publish, and sell them.

This Corporation is very antient: it was first incorporated by letters patent of the 17th Henry III.

* A young gentleman with whom I was acquainted, had a commission presented to him, and it was necessary for him to produce a certificate of his age. It was found that he had never been baptized: and the ceremony was obliged to be performed although an adult.

in 1233, by the style of the "*Fraternity of St. Nicholas*;" and they were re-incorporated by charter of the 9th of James I. In 1625, they obtained a decree from the Star Chamber, allowing them to keep a press in their hall, for the printing of the weekly and general bills of mortality of the city and liberties of London; and for this purpose, the Archbishop of Canterbury appoints a printer. All which privileges were subsequently confirmed by a charter granted by Charles II. Many irregularities in the bills had been committed, and were much complained of in early times. The Court of Assistants of the Company issued, in consequence, in 1695, some amended orders and rules*;

* With a view of furnishing information which may conduce to amendment, an abstract of these rules is added:—

Orders and Rules to be observed and kept by all and every Parish Clerk, &c. Dated October 14, 1695.

1. That they should make weekly reports of Christenings and Burials; and these are to be sold by the common Beadle to the respective Parish Clerks, at one penny each, "In order to prevent those irregular reports, and the many frequent mistakes in the weekly bills, occasioned thereby."

2. That they should bring or send their reports to the Hall in Wood-street, every Tuesday, so that the Queen's and the Lord Mayor's books may be sent in convenient time†.

4. That they shall place the several diseases in their respective reports alphabetically.

5. When any casualty happens, the return shall be made in the words used in the Coroner's warrant.

† This custom is still adhered to: they are sent every week.

which they enjoined, all parish clerks within their jurisdiction to regard, upon their oaths, or answer any contempt thereof before the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen.

These bills were instituted with the sole, but prudent intention of preventing the diffusion of the plague; and were, at first, only occasionally issued whenever it prevailed. The first bill appeared in 1562; but the first of the series of weekly bills of deaths was not issued till December 1603. In 1606, there were regular returns made of christenings as well as of burials. At this period the bills comprised 109 parishes only, without distinction of *within* and *without* the walls. To these many other parishes were added before 1606; and by the sub-division of large parishes into smaller,

6. If a person be clerk to two parishes, he is to make a distinct report for each.

7. That no parish clerk shall presume to receive or suffer any corpse to be buried in the parish of which he is clerk, unless a certificate be first obtained, under the hand of the parish clerk where the party dieth; testifying that the corpse has been viewed or searched.

8. That in such certificate of the burial of any corpse, he shall therein certify not only the disease of which the person died, but also the christian and surname, place of abode, &c.

10. That no parish clerk, or any one deputed by him, shall sell the bills to any bookseller, &c. to sell again, without the knowledge, and for the common profit of the Company

they nominally increased, till 1746, when they amounted to 144: since which time, I believe, they have been neither partitioned nor augmented. From 1604 these bills took cognizance of all diseases and casualties: but no account of either was published prior to 1629; in which year also a distinction was first made between the sexes. It appears probable, that the first intention of introducing a list of diseases in the bills, was only to distinguish the plague from other distempers. In 1728, the important addition was made of a specification of the ages of all who died, from under two years of age and upwards. Since which, there does not appear to be any material alteration in them; except such as the extinction of one disease, and the rise of a new one dictated.

During the period when the plague was an object of apprehension, and there were few other channels of information, these weekly bills excited considerable interest, and were a source of profit to the Company. The regulated prices of two of the prime necessities of life, bread and salt, were added to them in 1735; which being printed on the same sheet, kept alive that interest in them, which the cessation of the plague would otherwise have quite destroyed. But the knowledge of their deficiencies in regard to christenings and burials, as well as their inaccuracies respecting diseases, gradually sunk their repute; and since

the assize of bread was omitted, there are so few of them sold, that the product does not annually exceed a few shillings.

The causes which render the weekly bills so incorrect, and consequently of so little value, are of a nature which there exists no authority to correct. The power vested in the Company of Parish Clerks is totally inadequate to effect it. They cannot even punish their own members in such a manner as to enforce sufficient obedience to their just and necessary orders. Sometimes a parish clerk is careless in making up his returns, or sends them irregularly to the Hall, or altogether omits them. In 1796, the clerk of St. George, Middlesex, included the whole of the burials for the year, viz. 532, in one return: thus making the excess of deaths 500 above the ordinary returns in a weekly bill. A similar occurrence happened in the bill for the week ending the 16th of December, 1817; by which the burials of that week were rated at 1298! The christenings were in the same disproportion. Thus the number of each appeared to be two-thirds more than they really were.

These are more serious evils than superficial observers would imagine, and might be attended with very alarming consequences. For instance, it is notorious, as has been already noticed (p. 12), that a contagious fever has prevailed to a most deplorable degree in several parts of the kingdom,

during the last and the present year. It is equally notorious, that the public were much agitated with the accounts of its being very rife in this great metropolis. Public meetings were called, and resolutions and subscriptions were entered into for the enlargement and support of a Fever Hospital: thus confirming the necessity of reviving the obsolete establishment of a Pest House. Unquestionably a particular fever did exist to an unusual and distressing extent at that period, and was spreading among the lower orders of people; nor has it yet wholly ceased. Now, had this false bill of mortality, of the 16th of December, when these reports were actually in circulation, caught the attention of the public, at all times prone to take alarm, and exaggerate danger, to what extent might not the mischief have gone?

The Company of Parish Clerks are fully sensible of the errors and defects of these bills, as well as of the benefit to the public that would assuredly ensue, were they on a more efficient plan. Neither have they been wanting in inclination to correct them. Not long ago they had proof of the inadequateness of their powers to punish delinquents in a manner likely to prevent the recurrence of offence: A parish clerk was summoned before the Lord Mayor, upon complaint that he would make no returns; and he was fined 40s. only. Should a weekly bill be omitted, and

the defaulter be summoned, the usual fine is a shilling!

Upon the whole it appears, that at the remote period (1695), when the rules and orders (p. 38) were issued, they were very appropriate; and had they been duly observed, and when neglected could they have been legally enforced, all baptisms and burials, at least within the jurisdiction of the Company, would have been correctly ascertained. But, unfortunately, even these rules have been so relaxed, as to have become inefficient.

However, had they been preserved in full force, still the bills would have been incomplete in regard to numbers; since the parishes of Mary-le-bonne, Pancras, Chelsea, Kensington, and Paddington, now forming a great and integral part of the metropolis, and containing a population of 160,000, are not within the bills of mortality, and therefore make no returns. Neither are there any returns from St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, the Temple Church, the Rolls and Lincoln's-Inn Chapels, the Chapter House, the Tower Church, and various other places of worship of the Established Church. Besides the omission of these, belonging to the Established Church, neither Papists, nor Jews, nor any of the various sects having distinct places of worship or cemeteries, are included in the bills. Many charitable institutions and hospitals for the sick-poor have private burying grounds;

but the burials in them are never brought into the account. Again, some dissenters both christen and bury according to the established forms, and are entered in the bills; but these, I conceive, are comparatively few. Omissions of course must increase as dissenters' chapels and burying grounds multiply; and from this multiplication also, many baptisms and burials are inserted twice. Another source of error is, that some dissenting sects baptize agreeably to their own forms, yet bury in the cemeteries of the Established Church; and thus create a false disproportion between the returns of baptisms and burials. Many of the wealthier classes, also, when they die, are removed for interment, from the parish in which they deceased to one in the country; and these burials never appear in the bills of mortality. Doubtless in a city so populous and wealthy, and where the pomp of woe is so commonly displayed, the omissions of burials, from the gratification of this vanity, are very numerous*. Of course these omissions and irregularities subtract a very large number from the aggregates of baptisms and burials.

* The removal of a corpse for interment into any other town than the one wherein the person died, except in cases of accidental death of poor persons, would form, in my opinion, a very fit object for taxation. It would be an impost affecting few or none but the rich and ostentatious.

Maitland reckoned that in 1729, the omissions of burials amounted to 3038. Dr. Price estimated them at about 6000. In 1811, the omissions of *registered* burials were computed at 7000* ; but these are inclusive only of those buried according to the rites of the Established Church. But both Dr. Price and Mr. Morgan conceived, that the omissions from the dissenters not being included, were rather diminishing†. Notwithstanding such high authority, this appears to me a paradox. Whatever might be the fact, in 1780, or in 1800, to which periods only their observations refer, it cannot be credited that in 1818 the omissions from dissenters are on the decline.

But by way of illustration :—the total population of England and Wales in 1811, is computed to be—10,488,000 ; being an increase since the former census in 1801, of—1,319,000. In the decad from 1800 to 1811, the registered baptisms are—2,868,911 ; the burials—1,950,189 ; making an excess of—918,722 baptisms only. If the baptisms have exceeded the burials in this decad by 918,722 only, as appears according to the registers, how is it possible that the population in that space can have been augmented—

* Parish Register Abstract of Population>Returns, p. 200.

† Observations on Reversionary Payments, vol. ii. p. 30. Ibid, in Note, p. 28.

1,319,000? This difficulty I cannot in any way solve. Added to other testimony, this discrepancy forcibly demonstrates that gross errors do exist in respect to the registers. As a matter of national moment, this subject imperatively demands attention.

As to the catalogue of diseases in the London weekly bills of mortality, it is a national disgrace; and is wholly irreconcilable with our acknowledged pre-eminence in medical science and civilization. Nor can any effective reformation of it take place, while its contents and arrangement depend upon sources so ignorant and venal as the present. The information as to the disease of which a person dies, is collected and verified in the following way: The churchwardens of each parish within the bills of mortality appoint two old women to the office of *Searchers*; who, as soon as they hear the knell for the dead, repair to the sexton of the parish to learn the residence of the deceased. They demand admittance into the house to examine the body, in order that they may see that there is nothing suspicious about it, and *judge* of what disease the person died; and *they* report to the parish clerk. The regular charge for the performance of this office, is *four-pence* to each searcher: but if an extra gratuity be tendered, they seldom pass the threshold or hall of the house, and are content with whatever account is given; or should they actually view

the corpse, it is easy to imagine what credit is due to the judgment they pronounce.

This office is now, in fact, a mere nullity ; and were the parish clerks ever so attentive, or were all sectaries embraced, still the diseases of which those included in the bills have died, while taken from such authority, must ever be incorrect, and of little comparative utility. This evil requires a radical remedy. The office, as at present filled, should be suppressed ; and the attestation of a properly qualified medical practitioner, upon actual knowledge of the disease of which the person died, or upon inquiry and examination of the body, should be substituted. Were fit persons only appointed to report, the nomenclature and classification of diseases, in which there has been little variation since the origin of the bills, would consequently be reformed.

Probably there is not extant in Europe a more marked vestige of the degraded state of medical and chirurgical knowledge in the early part of the seventeenth century, than the language and arrangement of the bills of mortality. Considering too the learning and rank of many of the commentators on them, the improvements which have been repeatedly suggested, and the important uses to which they, with all their faults, have been applied, it appears wonderful that greater reformation has not been accomplished. To account for this neglect, we must conclude

that the whole system was so radically defective, that all political writers and medical philosophers who treated of the subject felt, that unless it could be amended in toto, it were useless to attempt it in detail.

If the weekly bills be faulty and defective, the General Annual Bill of Mortality, which is a summary of their contents, must be consecutively erroneous. It were sufficient for any person to read the catalogue of diseases in it, to be struck with its incongruities; and thence to infer that such bills are little calculated for imparting useful information. Many of the diseases are absolutely unintelligible under their present designation: such, for instance, as *Headmoldshot*, *Horse-Shoe Head*, *Over-Grown Head*, *Rising of the Lights*, &c.; others are barbarous, as *Liver-Grown*, *Twisting of the Guts*, &c.; others again, as *Aged*, *Bed-Ridden*, *Bile*, *Colds*, &c. cannot be classed, or are too indefinitely expressed to be admitted as specific diseases.

“*Fevers of all kinds*” is a title too sweeping and indiscriminate, when we contemplate how prominent a figure *fever* is in the catalogue of human diseases; and that from fever the greatest danger to human life impends. The forms of it, therefore, mostly fatal, should be so distinctly placed, as to challenge the readiest attention; while those of an ephemeral or symptoma-

tic character may, with equal propriety, be expunged. *Ague*, the intermitting species of fever, was once a very fatal disorder in this island: now, although it be endemic in some situations, and the state of the atmosphere sometimes occasions it to be epidemic, yet there certainly are very few persons who die of ague: nevertheless it often leaves consequences terminating fatally, which may be clearly traced to it as the predisposing cause. *Scarlet* and *Malignant Fever* are jumbled together under this general head in the annual bill, although placed separate in the weekly bills. But, in a cursory inspection, I have not detected one entry of a case of the former, for several years; and one only of the latter, in 1812. Yet it is quite clear, that the first is common, and often proves fatal*. *Malignant*, we know, in its usual acceptance, is applied to all disorders which are severe and considered to be of a contagious nature; we might therefore expect the mortality from fevers so characterized to be great. Hence to *Typhus*, *Synochus*, *Puerperal Fever*

* *Scarlet fever* and *malignant sore-throat*, are classed by nosologists as distinct diseases, but would, perhaps, with much more propriety range under one head. They are frequently confounded with *measles* by the ignorant. Many of the deaths returned under the latter, ought properly to be classed under the former: and this may account for the total omission of deaths from scarlet fever, and partly for the great increase of them from measles.

(child-bed), the *Influenza*, (catarrhal fever,) or to *Small-Pox*, *Measles*, &c. when under an aggravated and epidemic form, the term *malignant* equally attaches. It is obvious, that every species of fever which assumes a character so severe as to be a frequent cause of death, ought, in the annual general bill of mortality, and with still more reason in the weekly bill, to have a distinct entry.

Abortive and *Still-born* united, form a large number in the general annual bill; not less, upon an average for the last ten years, than 636. This article particularly requires alteration. It is absurd to place *abortives* and *still-born* among diseases; because, beings born inanimate cannot have had a disease of which they have expired; and, because they are never entered among the births, i. e. christenings, but always among the burials: consequently, when comparing the births with the deaths, with a view to the expectancy of life, false deductions must ensue. *Abortive* and *still-born* should, therefore, if noticed at all, be placed among *Casualties*; but I am decidedly of opinion that they ought not to be received into a mere catalogue of mortality.

Miscarriage applies solely to the mother, as *abortive* and *still-born* do to the offspring. Death from *miscarriage* is very rare, averaging not three annually; and it is not improbable, that all these are referrible to *uterine hæmorrhage*, under which they ought to be placed; or the death imputed to it,

may, as often happens, be the sequel of some acute disorder, to which it should rather be ascribed.

Child-bed is a formidable article in the bill, and is liable to much misinterpretation and error. Besides, as the number of deaths reported under this head is likely, on nervous and delicate females, to produce serious effects, it the more forcibly demands precision. All women dying within the month after delivery, are indiscriminately classed under *child-bed*; whether they die in actual labour, or subsequently of acute fever, consumption, or any other disorder. The disease of which a parturient woman during her month of confinement dies, is usually evident and defineable. If she die of that fever peculiar to the puerperal state, the death should be placed under that head; and this is the more necessary, because there is presumptive proof that this fever, in certain seasons and situations, is contagious and extremely fatal*. If she die of any other disease, it should

* Dr. Heberden, in his *Observations*, &c. p. 40 and 41, exhibits a table of the women delivered and children born, in the British Lying-in Hospital, from 1749 to 1798 inclusive: by which it appears, that, in the first decad, the proportion of women who died to those delivered, was 1 in 42; second decad, 1 in 50; third decad, 1 in 53; fourth decad, 1 in 60; fifth decad, 1 in 288; and, that in the united years 1799 and 1800, the proportion was only 1 in 938! The result of the practice in hospitals, which present so many comforts and

be ranged accordingly. But if death ensue during the progress, or as an immediate consequence of parturition, it should be entered under an appropriate title:—*Parturition* or *Labour* ought therefore to take the place of *Child-Bed*.

It seems a paradox, that *Grief* should be classed among diseases, and *Fright* among casualties. But, probably, neither grief, nor joy, nor fright, although an exciting, was ever the proximate cause of death; and it is pretty certain, that if the body of a person who died from any affection of the passions were examined, it would be found that some violence or disorganization had followed, to which the fatal effect might be strictly attributed. The article *Sudden Death* cannot be dispensed with; since there ever must be instances of sudden death, the causes of which remain concealed: but *Grief* and *Fright* might very well merge into that head. Perhaps to the *scientific* authority of a coroner's jury these and other anomalies are to be imputed. Many other objections, both to the nomenclature and arrangement of the diseases, might be advanced: these, however, strike me as the most conspicuous.

If the catalogue of diseases demand revision,

advantages, must of course be very different to that among persons deficient in every requisite for recovering from a state of sickness. But this document goes far to prove that the number of deaths ranged under *child-bed* in the London bills of mortality is much exaggerated.

equally so does that of *Casualties*. It may be fairly assumed, that no useful point is obtained by placing under distinct heads, *Broken Limbs, Bruised, Fractured, Killed by Falls, Several Other Accidents, &c*: These surely may be classed under the general term "*Accidents.*" The number of *Casualties* may be supposed correct, because the returns are made, under the coroner's warrant, to the clerk of the parish in which the casualty happens; but the words in which the verdict is returned, expressing the nature of the casualty, depend on the sense and direction of the Coroner; and, therefore, however incongruous, they must be copied and retained. The only hint, therefore, I can offer towards amending this division of the bill of mortality, is, that the sexes of those entered among *Casualties* may be distinguished by separate columns for *Males* and for *Females*.

Infants dying before baptism are not returned by the parish clerks in the bills of mortality. In the old bills they were entered under the denomination of *Chrisoms*; but this title has been long disused. Now they are not noticed at all, or they merge into *abortive* and *stillborn*, to which they clearly have no relation. This confusion occasions erroneous conclusions in regard to the progress of population, and the results of infantile diseases. Children, therefore, born alive, but who die unbaptized, ought to be entered in

the parish or other registers separately; and to distinguish them from the baptized, perhaps none better can be devised than the old title of *Chrisom*. It will be necessary also to distinguish the sexes of chrisoms.

Attempts to remedy some of the alleged defects have been alluded to. Of these it is incumbent to take some notice; and those of the Company of Parish Clerks, as the body most immediately interested, should have the precedence.

In 1789, that Company determined on applying for legislative regulation; and, accordingly, drew up a petition* to Parliament. They like-

* *To the Right Honorable the Committee of the House of Commons, in Parliament assembled.*

The humble Petition of the Master, Wardens, Court of Assistants, and Brotherhood of the Company of Parish Clerks of the Cities of London, Westminster, Southwark, and sixteen and twenty-three out-parishes in Middlesex and Surry, within the Bills of Mortality,

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Petitioners were incorporated as a Brotherhood or Company in the reign of King Charles the II., who was graciously pleased to grant his royal charter, empowering them (among other things), from time to time to make weekly reports of all the burials and christenings in their respective parishes; and the sole right of printing, publishing, and vending the same, for the public use, as well as their own profit and advantage. That the said Company have ever since the above period enjoyed that privilege, and

wise circulated the heads of provisions for a Bill: The intention, however, was relinquished, from the want of sufficient funds to defray the expences. In truth, the provisions designed were too local and limited, to meet those great and national objects which any plan for improvement ought necessarily to embrace. Nevertheless, the Company deserve credit for their anxiety, at any reasonable expence, to correct the abuses they continually witness, but which they have not the power of checking.

Looking to the agents, through whom any general and improved system is to be carried into effect, there are none in every way so well fitted as the officiating Parish Clerks. They are always resident, which is not the case with the Minister; and are known to be selected for their religious and superior moral qualifications. They are likewise suited to the office, by their being possessed of

have endeavoured to fulfil with diligence the intention of the royal grant. But the great increase of buildings, as well as private burying grounds, in the metropolis, have of late years rendered their plan so abortive, that it is become impossible to give any accurate account to the inhabitants that would be useful in itself. Your petitioners, therefore, pray this Honourable House, that leave may be given to bring in a Bill for the better regulation of the said Company, and to enable them in future to give a true and perfect weekly account of all deaths, diseases, ages (births and marriages) within their jurisdiction:

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

a requisite degree of education. To impose the duty upon the officiating Ministers, would be perhaps too much ; and would besides be diverting their attention from more serious concerns. The remuneration for the extra trouble it will occasion, although difficult, perhaps, to make equivalent to the Minister's labour ; yet might be provided for the clerk's, without adding to parochial burthens.

Various plans for improving parish registers and bills of mortality, but upon a more comprehensive scale than that of the Company's, have likewise been proposed by learned and ingenious writers ; the most distinguished of whom are, Mr. Corbyn Morris, Dr. Haygarth, Dr. Thomas Percival, the Rev. Mr. Dade, and Dr. Black. Drs. Short, Price, and Heberden, and Mr. Morgan have, in noticing their defects, also pointed out many improvements. But I must confess, that none which have been suggested appear to me sufficiently compendious.

Mr. Morris, in 1750, by his very logical arguments*, much elucidated the subject of the present inquiry. He published a very copious and accurate table, particularly worthy of notice, which specifies the respective ages, from one month to one hundred years, and the diseases of which all died. But after 20, the ages are divided

* Observations on the Past Growth and Present State of the City of London.

by tens only, and the diseases are injudiciously classed. In conclusion, he expresses a natural surprise, that none who have preceded him, and made the bills of mortality the subject of their comments, have suggested any improvements in them. Since he wrote, however, not only the condition of London, but that of the country, is greatly changed; and much useful information has accumulated.

Superior, perhaps, to any, are Dr. Haygarth's tables*, which, under his direction, have been for many years adopted at Chester. But yet these are not free from objections. The first table does not sufficiently divide the ages under one year; an arrangement which is indispensable, and would occasion little additional trouble. So constructed, Registers would have the advantage of shewing the ages at which infants are most liable to certain diseases, and when preventive measures were indicated. Besides, after twenty the ages are rated by periods of ten instead of five years:—a very material defect, as far as regards the calculations on the probabilities of life. The division by five years is observed in the Paris registers; and is particularly recommended by Dr. Price, because, he says, “during every period so short as five years, the decrement of life may, in constructing tables, be safely taken to be uni-

* Philosophical Transactions, ann. 1775.

form. But this cannot be equally depended on in periods so long as ten years." I have not only adopted this hint, but in the periodical Register or Bill of Mortality and Diseases I have constructed, (*See Appendix*, No. I), have introduced a fuller scale from birth to one year, an annual scale from one to five years, and thence preserved similar periods to the age of one hundred.

Dr. Haygarth's second Table contains a list of diseases, and the ages at which they proved fatal. The learned Doctor has aimed at placing the diseases with some regard to the nosological arrangement of Dr. Cullen; but being fully aware of the necessity of retaining the vulgar names, he has ingeniously, by means of figures, made references in a foot note to the appropriate scientific name each disease bears. But as these registers are in the first instance to be kept by the unlearned, at least in medical science, it would be better to use familiar names, and preserve an alphabetical order; except when several diseases naturally class under one title: thus it would be infinitely more convenient for reference, and the diseases be less liable to be confounded and misunderstood, if the varieties of *Fever*, *Inflammation*, *Hæmorrhage*, *Dropsy*, &c., were classed under those respective generic titles, than if they were separated.

In regard to the diseases which ought to form the catalogue of the weekly bill, I have selected

such only as experience proves frequently end in death*. There are, doubtless, many other diseases which terminate fatally, and which are not enumerated: but where the event is rarely mortal, it were useless to insert them in the list. Whenever death occurs from any extraordinary disease, a qualified examiner will always appropriately designate it in his certificate; and the Parish Clerk, being in all cases guided by a judicious examiner's report, will copy it; so that a mistake in a register or bill in this particular, will seldom happen.

* On this point, perhaps, I may be permitted to speak with a greater degree of self-confidence than I would venture upon any other which has been introduced. In the capacity of Editor of a periodical Medical Journal, (the London Medical Repository), I have had, under my superintendence and arrangement, for several years, the most copious Register of Diseases ever published in this or perhaps in any other country. Its contents were collected, promiscuously, from the monthly records of private practice, and from those of several extensive charities. It was a gratuitous collection, and of course might sometimes contain errors. I am, especially, aware that the proportion of deaths to the number of cases of diseases inserted in it, was unavoidably more incorrect than could be wished. Wherever error was suspected, no pains were spared to correct it: and I believe that the Register of that Journal is as true an epitome of the diseases of London, and the general issue of them, as it is possible to form. These Registers, upon an annual average, contain about 25,000 cases. Independently of personal experience, such a source was surely highly favourable for observing what diseases prove most fatal.

To prevent misconception of the disease, I have adopted English names; retaining a few technical ones only, which from long usage have become familiar; and to the common name, is affixed the Latin synonym, by which the disease is generally recognized by medical practitioners and those unacquainted with the idiom of the English language.

To the scientific, who examine these bills with medical views, it will be easy to make such arrangements of the diseases recorded in them, as best suits, not Cullen's only, but any other system of nosology. But any attempt at classing the diseases, or dividing them into acute, chronic, local, &c., would, I think, be futile; and, from the manner of collecting the information respecting them, would indeed be impracticable.

It has ever been an object of interest to learn the diseases to which either sex is most prone, and the relative proportion of mortality of males to females. To obtain this information, it will be requisite only to have one series of columns in the Register Book for "*Males*," on one page, and another for "*Females*" on the opposite page; and the Register or Bill of Mortality and Diseases (No. 1.) may be printed with two sets of columns; one for each sex.

Weekly bills of diseases and mortality have been considered as too frequent; but this objection, although just as far as regards small

towns, yet can never apply to those which are large and populous. The frequency of them should be understood to be regulated by the populousness of a place: for it must be admitted, that the more populous a town is, the greater is the danger of infectious disorders being engendered and propagated; and *è contra*, the smaller the place the less is the danger. Hence the necessity of a more vigilant medical police in a city, than in a small town or a village. Therefore weekly bills should be kept in cities or towns of the greatest population; monthly bills in those of the second rank; and quarterly bills only in such small towns, villages, or hamlets, wherein the population is so limited that infectious diseases must, inevitably, soon become a matter of notoriety. I confess I do not see any utility in weekly returns of marriages, births, and baptisms: these are essential only in political and moral points of view, and may be fully accomplished by the registers. No. II. and No. III, (*See Appendix*).

In the Register of Mortality, (*See Appendix, No. II*), I have distinguished the age of all who die before, as well as after the age of twenty, with the addition of their respective conditions in life. It may be objected to this register, that all persons under the age of twenty are reckoned as children; and that if they enter into marriage, and die before 20, they will neither be rated as married nor as widowed. But when

it is considered how very few men marry before twenty, and how few women who marry younger die under that age, the number omitted must be too small to affect any of the purposes for which these registers are intended. When this Register is required only to shew the rate of mortality, it need not be made up and returned oftener than once a year. The materials which furnish its contents will be obtained from the parish registers; which, as before advised, should embrace a summary of all the deaths occurring within every parish, extra-parochial liberty, chapelry, &c.

Dr. Haygarth's third table is adapted for a general abstract of the contents of Parish Registers, and is divided into seasons; in order to shew the influence of temperature on the human constitution. But there is no place allotted for "*Births*;" which I hold, for reasons before stated, to be so essential to distinguish from "*Baptisms*." I have, therefore, arranged a Register (*See Appendix, No. III.*), more explicit than Dr. Haygarth's. The aggregate of these registers, (*No. III*), will, I conceive, be found exceedingly useful in ascertaining the moral condition, as well as the increase or decrease, of the people.

The application for the interment of a corpse, should contain the averment of a householder or the nearest relative as to the death; of the medical attendant as to the disease; and the parish clerk's

certificate ; and these may be inserted in one schedule, (*See Appendix*, No. IV.)

No. V and No. VI, (*See Appendix*), require no illustration ; they are merely attempted improvements of the schedules (A and C) attached to the Register Act.

But I must reiterate, that it will be a work of supererogation to offer either remarks or proposals for establishing improved registers of marriages, births, baptisms, burials, diseases, &c. or for attaining any of the other objects upon which I have dilated, unless all denominations of religion in the whole of the United Kingdom be included.

On recapitulation, it appears that the principal defects in the present system are :

1. Registers of marriages, births, baptisms, and burials, or bills of mortality are not kept in every place of religious worship ; nor in hospitals and infirmaries having private burying-grounds.

2. Children who die unbaptized are not entered in any register or bill of mortality.

3. Registers of baptism do not set forth the place and date of birth.

4. Registers of burial do not specify where a person died, as well as where he lived, nor his condition, whether single, married, or widowed.

5. There is no certificate provided, shewing in what parish a person died, with other necessary particulars, as to age, the disease, &c.

6. A corpse may be removed from a parish within the bills of mortality of London to one without, and the burial be omitted in the returns.

7. There is no medical authority for ascertaining and certifying the nature of the disease of which a person died, &c.

8. The names of diseases in the bills of mortality are either unintelligible, or so arranged as to confound diseases very distinct in their characters.

9. In respect to ages, the periods are injudiciously divided; so that many of the purposes to which the bills are applicable in medical and political science are defeated.

10. The law enforcing the keeping of Registers is defective; and does not adequately regard political, civil, or medical information.

11. All parishes and places of worship within that circle denominated the Bills of Mortality of London, are not included in the weekly or general annual returns; nor is there any existing authority to enforce their being made, and regularly entered.

In recommending any plan to remedy these defects, I should exceedingly regret, if, inadvertently, I have impinged on either the civil or religious rights of the subject. I believe some prejudice obtains among Quakers in regard to the registering of baptisms; and that the sect of Baptists does not baptize before an

adult age. Some modification, perhaps, might be suggested to meet peculiar opinions. Where scruples of conscience only obstruct the attainment of a national object, calm reasoning and conciliation have gone a great way towards removing them.

Enough has been said upon the advantages to be derived from the improvement and extension of registers, bills of mortality, &c.: but to suppose that amendment on a scale commensurate with their importance to the public will be accomplished by voluntary and individual exertions, or by the revival of obsolete provisions of antient charters, or by any other means than a general conviction, aided by the strong arm of the Legislature, were to betray a total ignorance of human nature and every day's experience. Even conviction does not always insure correspondent efforts. The *argumentum ad hominem* is the best logic: it never fails to secure a cordial and simultaneous co-operation: And happily, in support of my humble endeavours, the views of the statesman, the politician, the economist, the philanthropist, and the philosopher, coalesce.

The plan I have to offer is too undigested; but in the hands of a master, it is susceptible of being shaped into a form more conducive, perhaps, to public good; while to individuals whose prudent care has, through the medium of assurance, &c. provided a maintenance for those

whom, when life shall be extinct, they would otherwise leave destitute, it may contribute additional security.

Presumptuous as it may seem, to arraign what persons so eminently qualified have attempted, and imagine that I shall succeed where they have failed, nevertheless I do not despair nor shrink from the trial. Instructed by the ingenious remarks and labours of many able predecessors, and conscious of my obligations to them, I claim no merit, except that of recalling attention to an important but neglected subject. That my suggestions are still defective in many points, and that what I have to propose is capable of much improvement is already acknowledged. I am sensible the subject requires mature deliberation, and, no doubt, much modification: but if these Strictures produce the effect of bringing it into discussion, my object will be half attained; since, I am persuaded, it requires nothing more, to be appreciated as it deserves.

The corollaries to these premises are:

1.—All places of religious worship belonging to the Church of England, or to those dissenting or differing from it; and all hospitals and infirmaries having the privilege of burying, should be registered.

2.—Registers of marriages, births, baptisms, diseases, and casualties, and burials, (including chrisoms), to be kept in all such registered places of public worship.

3.—All marriages, births, and baptisms, distinguishing the sexes, the baptismal and surnames, the place of residence and condition of the parents, and name of the baptized; likewise the diseases, sexes and ages of all persons dying, with their names, place of residence, condition in life, and date of burial, to be fairly and regularly entered in such registers.

4.—Every place of religious worship to be furnished (as is allowed by the Register Act, Sect. 11.) with register books, properly arranged; and with printed blank certificates, agreeably to the different forms (*See Appendix*).

5.—Entries of marriages, births, baptisms, diseases, casualties, burials, &c. to be made in the Register of every place of worship by the officiating Minister, and all certificates of the registers to be signed by him or by the Minister acting for him; and all burials in private burying-grounds to be entered in like manner by the officiating Minister in a register to be kept for that purpose.

6.—The Guardians of the parish-poor children appointed under an act of the 7th of his present Majesty, intituled “*An Act for the better Regulation of the Parish Poor Children of the several Parishes therein mentioned within the Bills of Mortality,*” to cause entries to be made of all births, baptisms, and deaths, of such children, with the sex of each child, and the disease of which it died; and to return a weekly account of

the same to the clerk of the parish to which the children belong.

7.—All deaths occurring in the army, or on board of British ships, whether his Majesty's or belonging to others, to be registered and returned, so as to form part of the annual aggregate of mortality.

8.—The office of parish searcher, now exercised by females, to be abolished.

9.—The disease of which a person dies, to be attested by the medical practitioner who attended the deceased ; or if none have attended, by some other appointed for that purpose ; who, upon view of the body, should certify the disease, to the best of his knowledge.

10.—Every householder on whose premises a person dies, to apply, or cause application to be made within forty-eight hours, to the officiating clerk of the parish wherein he resides for a printed blank certificate ; which certificate to be filled up, with a statement of the condition (whether single, married, or widowed), occupation or trade, age of the deceased, date of decease, and also the disease of which he or she died, according to the report of the medical attendant.

11.—This certificate to be signed by the said, or some other creditable householder, and the said medical attendant, and be forthwith returned to the said Parish Clerk ; who, on receipt

thereof, should sign the certificate for the burial of the corpse.

12.—No undertaker or other person to move a corpse for interment, or convey it into another parish, until the aforesaid certificate be produced.

13.—If a corpse be intended to be buried in any other church, chapel, or ground, other than that belonging to the parish wherein it lies, the place to which it is to be removed for interment to be signified to the officiating clerk, who shall insert the name of the said church, chapel, or place in the certificate, and enter the same in the register of the church, &c. to which he belongs.

14.—No officiating minister or other person to bury a corpse without first receiving such certificate.

15.—The officiating clerks of all extra parochial places of worship to make weekly returns of all entries in the registers, to the officiating clerk of the parish in which such places are situated or are contiguous to.

16.—All parishes, any part of the boundaries of which are within *eight** miles of the Royal Exchange of London, to be deemed within the Bills of Mortality; and the officiating clerks of

* The department of the *Seine*, of which Paris is the centre, is of this extent, and is included in the enumeration of the population of that capital.

such parishes to make weekly returns to the Company of Parish Clerks, at their Hall, Wood Street, London.

17.—The Company of Parish Clerks of London to make a weekly return of all diseases, casualties, and burials, occurring within the limits of their jurisdiction, with the ages and sexes of the deceased, agreeably to the form of the Register, (*See Appendix No. I.*) one copy of which, as heretofore, to be sent to the King or Secretary of State, and another to the Lord Mayor.

18.—The officiating clerks of all parishes and places of religious worship in a city or town, the inhabitants of which, according to the last population returns, exceed the number of (40,000?) in like manner to make *weekly* returns to the mayor or chief magistrate of such city or town.

19.—The officiating clerks of all parishes and places of religious worship, in a city or town, the inhabitants of which exceed (10,000?) in like manner, to make *monthly* returns to the mayor or chief magistrate of such city or town.

20.—The officiating clerks of all parishes or places of religious worship, in a city, town, or other place, the inhabitants of which are under (10,000?) in like manner, to make *quarterly* returns to the mayor or chief magistrate; or if there be no mayor or chief magistrate, then the returns to be made to the magistrates of the district, in Quarter Sessions assembled.

21.—The several returns of the officiating clerks to be verified by the officiating ministers.

22.—The officiating Parish Clerks to be compensated for their trouble, by being allowed a moderate fee on granting and entering certificates of burial ; the Company of Parish Clerks of London to have the exclusive right of printing and selling the Weekly and Annual Registers or Bills of Mortality returned within their jurisdiction : and all other parish clerks to have the same right in regard to the Bills of Mortality of their respective parishes.

23.—The several mayors and magistrates to whom the returns are addressed, within a certain time, to cause a summary of the same to be made out agreeably to the form of the **REGISTERS** No. I. No. II. and No. III., (*See Appendix*) and transmit true copies thereof every quarter to the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

24.—Whenever, according to the weekly, monthly, or quarterly **REGISTER** or **BILL** of **MORTALITY** and **DISEASES**, No. I. it appears that any epidemic or dangerous distemper prevails in a particular parish or district, or that the mortality greatly exceeds the ordinary returns ; then the magistrates in whose jurisdiction such place lies, to be enjoined instantly to take medical advice as to the causes of such disease or mortality, and be empowered to adopt such measures as may be most advisable to remove the presumed causes, and prevent, if

possible, the spreading of the disease ; and moreover to give such relief as can be afforded to those suffering from it. In all such cases, likewise, the magistrates to be enjoined to give notice thereof, within a specific time, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

25.—The provisions of the Act of the 52d Geo. III. "*for the better regulating and preserving Parish and other Registers of Births, Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, in England,*" to be adhered to ; but the Act to be amended or repealed, in order to introduce the proposed regulations.

26.—An abstract of all the returns made to the Secretary of State to be annually presented to Parliament.

DEATHS.

[illegible]

* This Table may be made to distinguish the Diseases and Deaths of the Sexes, by the opposite pages in the Register Books being headed, the one "*Male*," the other "*Female*."

£? Such CASUALTIES as are entered in the Parish Registers from the Coroner's warrants, may be printed at the foot of this Register, distinguishing *Males* from *Females*.

No. II.

GENERAL REGISTER OF MORTALITY;
Containing the Ages, Sexes, and Condition in Life.

Ages.	CHILDREN.			ADULTS.								
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Ages.	Bachelors	Husbds	Widowers	Total Men.	Maids.	Wives.	Widows.	Total Women.
From Birth to 1 Month.				20—25								
1 to 2				25—30								
2 to 3				30—35								
3 to 4				35—40								
4 to 5				40—45								
5 to 6				45—50								
6 to 9				50—55								
9 to 12				55—60								
1 to 2 Years.				60—65								
2 to 3				65—70								
3 to 4				70—75								
4 to 5				75—80								
5 to 10				80—85								
10 to 15				85—90								
15 to 20				90—95								
Totals under Twenty.				100 & upwds.								
				Totals.								

No. III.

REGISTER OF MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, BAPTISMS, AND BURIALS.

1818.	Marriages.	Births.			Baptisms.			Burials.			
		Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
January.											Winter.
February.											
March.											
Totals.											
April.											Spring.
May.											
June.											
Totals.											
July.											Summer.
August.											
September.											
Totals.											
October.											Autumn.
November.											
December.											
Totals.											
		Births.			Baptisms.			Burials.			
		Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
Aggregate of, 1818.											

CHRISOMS.

1818

Males.....
Females.....

Total

.. This Form is adapted either for Quarterly Returns, or an Annual Aggregate.

No. IV.

FORM OF CERTIFICATE FOR INTERMENT.

I, *A. B.* of the Parish of _____ in the _____ (1), of _____ do certify,
that to the best of my knowledge and belief, *C. D.* (2), of _____ (3),
in the _____ (4), died of the _____ (5), the _____ (6),
of _____ in the year 18 _____ ; aged _____ (7).

Signed, _____ *A. B.*

Dated the _____ of 18 _____ Householder, living at _____ (8).

CERTIFICATE OF DISEASE.

I, *E. F.* do certify, that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the
above-mentioned *C. D.* died of the _____ (9), the _____ of _____ (10),
in the year 18 _____ Dated the _____ of 18 _____ .

Signed, _____ *E. F.* (11).

PARISH CLERK'S CERTIFICATE.

I, *G. H.* Officiating Clerk of the Parish of _____ (12), in the
(13), do certify, that I have received a regular certificate of the
death of *C. D.* (14), of the said parish, aged _____ and that
died of the _____ (15); and that application has been made for the corpse
to be buried in _____ (16), situated in the parish of _____ (17), in the
(18).

Signed _____ *G. H.*

Officiating Clerk of the Parish

Dated the _____ of 18 _____ of _____ in the _____

(1) Insert town, city, or county.

(2) Condition, *i. e.* single, married, or widowed, rank, and profession, trade, or occu-

(3) Street, place, or town.

[pation of the deceased.

(4) Town, parish, city, or county.

(5) Name of the disease.

(6) Date. (7) Age of the person.

(8) The Place of residence.

(9) Name of the disease.

(10) Date.

(11) Whether physician, surgeon, or apothecary, and residence.

(12) Name of parish.

(13) Town, city, or county,

(14) Name, condition, *i. e.* whether single, married, or widowed; rank, profession,
trade, or occupation.

(15) Name of the disease.

(16) Name of the cathedral, church, chapel, or burying ground.

(17) Name of the parish.

(18) Name of the town, city, or county.

No. V.

Form of Entry of Baptisms, instead of Schedule (A) No. I. annexed to the Register Act, p. 1332, cap. 146.

Baptisms solemnized in in the County of						in the Parish of in the Year *		
When born.	Where born	When baptized	Christian Name.	Parents Names.		Abode.	Quality, Profes- sion, or Trade.	By whom baptized.
				Christian	Surname.			
1818. March 20th.	Parish of St. Giles, Middle- sex.	1818. April 25th.	John, First Son of	William and Mary.	Smith.	No. Gt. Russel Street.		
1818. March 26th.	Parish of St. Mary, Lambeth.	1818. April 30th.	Mary, Second Daughter of	Thomas and Sarah.	Brown.	No. High-St. Lambeth.		

No. VI.

Form of Entry of Burials, instead of Schedule (C) No. I.

Burials				in the Parish of in the County of					in the Year		
Name.	Condition.	Quality, Profession or Trade.	Abode.	Where died.	Cause of death.	Date of burial.	Age.	By whom buried.			
William Smith.	Married.		Gt. Russel Street, St. Giles's, Middlesex.	St. Mary, Lambeth.	Typhus Fever.	1818. May 1.					

* Under the heads of Columns, some supposititious entries are made to shew their purport.

