

Husbandry, affords the best food for cattle in winter, and furnishes the most abundant supply of good manure.

The high price of flax-seed has considerably lessened the quantity sown this year, and as that particular distemper known by the name of firing made its appearance on the flax crops at an early period, it was necessary to pull it in a green state, and consequently very little, if any, seed will be saved this season, whilst the produce will be less than if the flax had attained a greater degree of ripeness.

These are circumstances extremely unfavourable to this country at this particular period, and threaten a scarcity for the succeeding year of the raw material of our staple manufacture, and if the Americans continue the embargo on their shipping for another season, our linen trade must be totally at a stand for want of seed to furnish a supply of flax... The possibility of so disastrous an event ought to excite the inhabitants of Ireland to render themselves less dependent on other countries, by allotting every year a certain portion of their flax crop for seed.... experience has proved that it can be done without injuring the quality of the flax in any considerable degree.

As the season has been favourable for grass there is reason to expect that cattle intended for beef will be in prime condition; the price of beef has already experienced a great reduction in the several markets.

MONTHLY COMMERCIAL REPORT.

In procuring materials for making out this Monthly Report, it is probable that difficulties will occur, from an unwillingness on the part of many Merchants and Traders to give the necessary information. Some are too busy, and literary undertakings in so low estimation, that they would count it mispent time to aid a work of this kind.... Others wish to hold their exclusive knowledge for their own advantage, and to profit by the comparative ignorance of others. Trade has its mysteries, which the initiated are desirous to turn to their own emolument.... While this disposition is deservedly censured, it is but justice to remark, that other professions have their secrets, and their attempts to monopolize knowledge. The chemist who conceals his discoveries, the botanist who refuses to tell the name of a plant, and the lawyer who wraps himself up in the phraseology of technical expressions, are equally acting on the narrow and selfish plan. Few have arrived at such pre-eminence over their fellows, that they do not suffer by not communicating with others.... In most cases the knowledge communicated from their stores might be amply repaid by the resources drawn from their neighbour's stock. If it will be allowed, to introduce the sentence of a poet into a portion of this work, dedicated to the purposes of trade, and by so doing attempt to naturalize it as a maxim of commerce, it may be justly remarked that "true self-love, and social are the same"—In the manner in which the linen trade is carried on in this country very little mystery or reserve exists.

Trade must necessarily suffer considerably from the new mode of warfare practised at present... Decrees of blockade, embargoes, and orders of council, are now the means of annoyance, which nations use against each other; it is happy for the world, that, owing to a kind and benevolent law of our nature, we are incapable often of doing as much injury to our neighbours, as our passions in the paroxysms of irritation would lead us to desire. Bonaparte probably expected to silence our looms and to render useless the other implements of manufacture by his prohibitory decrees; America hoped to distress us greatly by refusing us supplies of flaxseed, and cotton, those articles of prime importance in our manufactures, and the British orders of council were founded on equally vindictive and impotent principles—But there is an elasticity in commerce which enables it to adapt itself to present situation, and it is extremely probable that not any of the countries suffer as much real injury as the advocates for these hostile measures, are induced to hope may befall their antagonists. What a lesson of instruction to statesmen, as well as to the private citizen, to find that their boasted means of annoyance are not so powerful as they hoped!

Yet in some branches, trade must suffer. From the high price of timber, building is generally at a stand... The great advance of many articles used in our manufactures must increase their price to the consumer, and high prices operate against the speedy sale of manufactures—or at least prevent more being purchased, than immediate consumption demands.

The last linen market in Dublin, was a brisk one for coarse linens...The failure of a supply of coarse linen into England from the Continent of Europe, probably more than compensates for the temporary loss of the American market. A general idea prevailed throughout England, that linens had been bought in very cheap at the beginning of this year, and on this supposition commissions for buying might be more generally given before the last market...but similar ideas may not prevail at the ensuing one, and the demand may be already generally supplied...After the market, as might be expected, brown linens, especially the coarse kinds, advanced considerably. Latterly a small fall has taken place...They, who remember the unsettled and disagreeable state of the linen trade after the high prices given in 1799, and from the effects of which it did not recover for several years, will dread a too rapid advance on brown linens. If Spain and Portugal succeed in establishing their governments independent of France, they and their American dependencies may probably occasion a considerable demand for fine linens.

It will be proper here to notice a discussion which has taken place this month, concerning the disuse of guineas as a medium of payment in the few places, and in the few articles of trade in which they are still employed—The Reporter does not pretend to neutrality on the subject, having already fixed his mind in favour of their disuse under the present circumstances of this country; yet in stating the matter, in the point of view in which he beholds it; principally, however, confining himself to facts, he conceives there is not a departure from impartiality. The pages of this work will be open to the discussion of this subject on both sides.

It is unnecessary to enter into the discussion of the point; which is preferable, gold or paper, as the circulating medium of a country. Few would not prefer the former, if it were attainable in sufficient quantity...but at present it remains not a matter of choice. ...Gold cannot be procured in sufficient quantities to allow the trade of this province to be exclusively carried on in it—The small quantity we possess, would afford us very little security, if a season of alarm should come on...Few are holders of gold to such an amount as would give them any real security in such a crisis—The question to be considered is, whether we shall continue the two mediums—bank notes, which are now become the chief medium of bargaining, or gold which partially prevails, and may now be considered as an exception to the general rule.—We have latterly been reduced to a system of money-broking, or dealing in money as an article of trade, and in this trafficking the knowing ones have a decided advantage over the less knowing. A linen-draper goes on the Change of Belfast, passes his bill for guineas, perhaps received by some merchant that morning out of the Discount-office—and before he leaves Change, he finds it necessary for the purpose of his trade, as all his coarser linens are bought in bank notes, to sell two-thirds of these guineas perhaps to some person who has to pay them into the discount office that very evening...Such often is the history for a day of a guinea! What security does the holder receive by his temporary possession?...If all transactions were paid in gold the premium on guineas would probably rise to eight, nine, or ten per cent...as it did before bank notes came into so general circulation....In England where guineas and bank notes are taken in payment without distinction there is no premium on gold.

That we may examine this matter more closely, let us fix our attention on one branch of our trade...and judge of the effects of simplifying our payments for linens...Gold is the general currency for payment of linens in the markets of Belfast, Downpatrick, Ballymena, Coleraine, and the markets, for seven-eighth-wides in the county of Antrim, and Lisburn for fine linens, as well as for the coarser kinds bought for exportation in a brown state, while by a strange anomaly the lawns bought in that market have been paid for in bank notes for many years without any inconvenience being experienced from this practice, either by buyers or sellers...In the markets of the county of Derry, payment in silver is a general mode...In the counties of Armagh, Tyrone, Monaghan, Cavan, and most of Down, bank notes form the uniform medium of payment.

From this diversified practice great difficulties arose in calculating the profits on linens bought with monies of different value...Lisburn and Banbridge are contiguous markets...in the former, gold, in the latter bank notes prevailed...and yet accurate judges assert that on the sorting table the linens bought in Banbridge fully held an equality with those bought in Lisburn, at the same prices, though the latter were purchased for gold, which bore a higher value by two or three and a half per cent...As a further corroboration, linens bought by jobbers in Banbridge for bank notes were sold on the succeeding day in Lisburn for gold at as high a rate, and frequently even higher...From these facts it is

fair to draw the conclusion, that the procuring of gold was a heavy tax on such part of the linen trade as was carried on in it. Nor is there room for wonder that linens purchased for gold were not bought on lower terms...for the seller in almost every case did not gain what the purchaser lost. A few of the sellers had learned the trade of money-jobbing, and sold their guineas, but generally for much less than they cost the drapers... Others made little or no advantage of possessing guineas but parted with them to shopkeepers and others, without a full, and frequently without any equivalent...if the manufacturer parted with his guineas for yarn, it only removed these circumstances one step farther back...To show how little gold is wanted by the weaver to pay his rent, if demanded in that form by his landlord, let us suppose a weaver, who has a piece of linen, on an average once a week; estimating his piece at three guineas, he receives one hundred and fifty six guineas per annum, while the rent payable by a man in such a situation in life, will probably not exceed twenty, or at most thirty guineas per annum...With what propriety can he require to receive one hundred and fifty six guineas procured at a great expense by the purchaser, to provide for an annual payment of twenty or thirty?... Besides, if bank notes come into general circulation, guineas will bear no premium, or at most a very trifling one, and as the premium on them is lowered, they consequently become of less value to the landlord, and will be less eagerly sought for by him.

It is readily admitted that if bank notes are issued too largely, great disadvantages will arise to trade, as an extravagant issue, and a consequent extension of paper credit will injure trade by raising the prices of manufactures, and increase the expences of living by enhancing the price of the necessaries of life. But if the Bank of Ireland act prudently in their issues, they must necessarily check the inordinate issue of private banks as the notes of the latter are payable in Dublin in national bank notes.

In fine, the question is considerably narrowed...We have not guineas sufficient for general circulation, and cannot procure enough of them on any terms for the general purposes of trade...Let us consider then, whether under present circumstances we would not act wisely by simplifying our business, and bringing our payments to one standard...It has been tried in the greater part of this province, without producing disadvantages...and some of those who formerly held out longest against the introduction of bank notes for the payment of linens in the markets into which they have been introduced, are now strenuous for the adoption of them in those markets which yet hold out in a contrary practice.

Although in the foregoing view, the subject is considered mostly with reference to linens, yet many of the facts will apply to trade in general. The cotton trade is entirely carried on in a bank note medium.

MEDICAL REPORT.

INTRODUCTION.

In making a report of the diseases most prevalent in any country or town, it must be at least desirable to the philosopher, as well as the physician, to be informed what probable influence its situation, considered both geographically and geologically, together with the prevailing manners of its inhabitants, and the manufacturers most commonly exercised by them, may have, in giving origin to morbid actions in the human frame...Meteorology should lend its aid also, and as far as an accurate register of the barometer and thermometer can be useful in elucidating this intricate subject, it shall not be wanting. The quantity of rain together with the prevalency of particular winds, have not been determined with sufficient accuracy to enable the Reporter to take advantage of them.

The town of Belfast, containing upwards of 26,000 inhabitants, is situated in a fertile valley, where the river Lagan disembogues itself into Carrickfergus-bay, or Belfast-lough, and nearly on a level with the water...In digging foundations, various marine organic remains, viz. shells, &c. have been found near the surface...It is in Lat. 54° 46' north. Long. 5° 46' west, and is bounded on the north and east by Belfast-lough... To the westward, at about the distance of two or three miles, runs a ridge of bold, imposing mountains, composed of irregular basalt and limestone, whose elevation above the level of the sea, is, in some places nearly 1300 feet...On the south, the valley through which the river Lagan runs, extends to Lisburn, a distance of about seven miles in a direct line. From this valley, copious exhalations arise, in the spring, summer and autumn, which are so far innocent in themselves, as to be unproductive (as far as the Reporter's observation or information enables him to judge) of agues or many other dis-