

## AGRICULTURAL REPORT.

The weather for the last four weeks has been moderate, and encouraged the occupiers of land to continue sowing wheat to a much later period than usual, which will probably increase the quantity at market this season beyond the average of many preceding years.

The practice of sowing oats in autumn has been lately fallen into in some of the low mossy districts, and found to answer so well, that it seems to gain ground in other quarters. In open seasons like the present one, and in dry free soils, there is reason to think it may succeed; the writer of this report has seen several crops, that have a fine healthy appearance; if the produce turns out equal to the spring corn, the advantages of coming in earlier in harvest, and lessening the labour at the usual season of sowing, which often proves too heavy for the farmer to accomplish in proper time, are considerations of sufficient consequence to induce him to give it a fair trial.

Among the many improvements in agriculture introduced into this country, that of substituting iron for wooden ploughs, seems deserving of notice. Some time in the year 1811, a blacksmith in the parish of Maralin, conceived the idea of making iron ploughs, and being encouraged by one or two farmers in his own neighbourhood, has succeeded in producing those implements in such a state of perfection, as to occasion a great demand for them, and induce an opinion that they will entirely supersede the wooden ones. Ought not the friends of agriculture to step forward with their usual liberality, and promote a subscription for the poor mechanic, as a reward for his ingenuity.

Grain has experienced some reduction in price since last report, and oat-meal and potatoes are rather lower than they were: whether that reduction will be permanent or not, seems difficult to determine, as opinions are various on the subject.

## COMMERCIAL REPORT.

Under the present circumstances of our foreign relations, trade is peculiarly fluctuating, and attended with great and perplexing uncertainties. Arrivals from America under British licences, and the mask of neutral flags, have been expected, but as yet it is uncertain what policy the United States will finally adopt, whether their commercial avidity, or their hostility to Britain will prevail, in allowing their produce to supply the wants of these countries, and to contribute to feed the armies in the Peninsula: and yet on this decision, whatever they are pleased to make it, so much are we, after all our boasting, at the mercy of American councils, depends whether we shall have flax-seed in abundance for next spring's sowing, or whether the prices of grain may be expected to be moderate from our having, or not having to supply the demands of the armies in Spain and Portugal.

In Britain some branches of trade have revived a little, from the hopes of affairs returning to their usual course in the north of Europe, but the hopes which have been suddenly raised, may be as suddenly disappointed, by the subsequent events of the war, and the sanguine expectations so generally entertained, may not be realized by the spring's campaign. It is the error of the present day to be too easily elated by temporary successes, and like desperate gamblers, to be too ready to rejoice in an accidental turn of the die in our favour. True wisdom is more cautious and circumspective.

The attention of commercial men is now turned to an affair of much importance, the throwing open of the trade to India. Each party exclusively seeks its own advantage. The East India Company, try every means of argumentation, and even intimidation, to uphold their monopoly. On the former renewal of their charter, a certain proportion of private trade was allowed to be carried on in their ships. These apparent concessions were so hampered by harassing conditions, that few ventured, and the few who did, were frequently unsuccessful. The company now allege this failure as a reason, against the allowing private trade, although the disappointments principally arose from their own restrictive measures. The Americans of the United States have had a

free trade to China for many years, and it has been profitable, not only to the direct adventurers, but also to the country, by enabling them to have tea on much lower terms, than we have it through the medium of the company's monopoly. The cost exclusive of the duties payable in the respective countries is far less to them than to us.

In London, the commercial interest is divided. Part adhere to the company, and part are desirous that London should exclusively share in the monopoly with the Company. The out-ports with much more justice assert their claims. Monopoly is almost in all cases injurious to the interests of trade, which left to itself unshackled by legislative restrictions best finds its own level. But even in the proposed extension of the trade, exclusion is still maintained, and only a few ports are proposed to be allowed the privilege.

Belfast, not being mentioned in the arrangement, our merchants, with great propriety, set forward their claims, in which if sound policy and justice prevail, they may hope for success. It is difficult to see on what good principle, such ports as Belfast, and many others, of those omitted, should be passed over, except from the fondness of the men now in power for half measures, and for that feeble vacillating policy, which characterizes little minds, delighting in the employment of temporary expedients. In one point of view, the abolition of the monopoly of the company would be important, as tending to diminish the corrupt influence of the crown, in its divided authority and influence with East India Directors. Lords Castlereagh and Cloucarty know how a writership can be made to influence parliamentary tactics.

The present scarcity of silver change is a great inconvenience to people in retail trade. When the national bank of Ireland in 1804 were preparing to issue their debased currency, they obtained an act to prevent the issue of tokens or notes, under the sum of 20s. Now such has been the progress of depreciation of paper currency, and the consequent rise on metallic money, that these tokens are become an object of value, and they gradually disappear, probably to make way for a fresh bank coinage, of still less intrinsic value. In the mean time, the country is left without a sufficient supply of silver and with no means to remedy the inconvenience by issuing tokens without incurring a great risque from the act of the 45, George III. of which an extract is given in a note.\* Tokens guarded against being transferable can only be issued as orders for certain

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\* The act of 45th of George III. Chap. 41, entitled "An act for restraining the negotiation of certain promissory notes, and inland bills of exchange in Ireland," after repealing all former acts on this subject, proceeds to enact, "That all promissory notes or undertakings in writing, being negotiable or transferrable for any sum or sums of money less than twenty shillings Irish currency, or on which any sum less than twenty shillings Irish currency shall remain undischarged which shall bear date, or shall have been issued in Ireland, at any time after the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and five, shall be, and the same are hereby declared to be absolutely null and void, and not to be negotiable or transferrable; any thing in any act or acts in force in Ireland at the time of the passing of this act, or any usage to the contrary notwithstanding; and the person or persons who shall have issued, or shall issue the same, shall forfeit the sum of ten pounds Irish currency for every such note or undertaking so issued; and the person or persons who shall have given or taken, or shall give or take the same in payment, after the said first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and five, shall forfeit double the amount of each such note or undertaking, to any person who shall sue for the same, and such penalties shall be recovered before any one Justice of the peace in Ireland, upon the oath of one credible witness, or the confession of such offender; and in case the penalties and forfeitures shall not be paid and satisfied upon such conviction being made, it shall be lawful for such Justice of the peace, by warrant under his hand and seal, to cause the same to be levied by distress and sale of the goods of the offender, together with all costs and charges attending such conviction and sale, returning the overplus (if any) to the owner; and if such offenders shall not have sufficient goods and chattels to satisfy such penalties every such offender shall be committed to the common gaol or house of correction, by warrant of such Justice,

quantities of goods to be received from the issuer, but they cannot be made negotiable, by agreeing to pay the amount in cash. The sale of guineas notwithstanding the vain attempts to prohibit a profitable trade by legislative restrictions, is still carried on. It is only transacted secretly, and buyers and sellers make the best bargains they can, clandestinely, at from 5s. to 8s. or 9s. premium on a guinea, as circumstances enable them. Exchange on London has latterly lowered a little, and may now be taken at the average of  $6\frac{1}{4}$  per cent.

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### NATURALIST'S REPORT.

*From the 20th November, 1812, to the 20th January, 1813.*

“ While jarring interests wake the world to arms,  
 And fright the peaceful vale with dire alarms ;  
 While Ocean hears vindictive thunders roll  
 Along his trembling wave from pole to pole ;  
 Sick of the scene, where war, with ruthless hand,  
 Spreads desolation o'er the bleeding land ;  
 Sick of the tumult, where the trumpets breath,  
 Bids ruin smile, and drowns the groan of death !  
 'Tis mine, retir'd.....”

SHIPWRECK.

To view the deep repose which now marks the wintry scene. The mildness of the season has prevented those rare birds, which sometimes visit us during severe winters, from quitting their native regions ; nothing awakes the attention, and scarcely any of the surrounding objects inspire transient observers with hopes of returning spring. The eye of the naturalist, however, perceives, even in the inmost solitudes of the forest, and on the blasted heath, signs of reviving nature. The Mosses, those humble handmaids who protect the tender seedlings from the piercing cold, the withering drought, and spread with mould the hardest rocks, now flourish and present their beautiful and highly interesting forms, with which even the grand vegetable productions of the tropical regions can scarcely be brought into competition. In these humble productions of our frozen zone, the traveller may recognize a strong resemblance to the Beanana and Plantain (*Musa*), Sapiaientia and Paridisiaca of the tropics, and that extraordinary production, the Yellow Gum (*Zanthorhea hastile*), of New Holland.

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### METEOROLOGICAL REPORT.

*From the 20th November, 1812, to the 20th January, 1813.*

Nov. 21—22,...Frosty, fine days.  
 23,.....Wet afternoon.  
 24—26,...Wet days.  
 27,..... Showery, dark day.

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for any time not less than one month, nor more than three months, unless such penalty or forfeiture shall be sooner paid.

“ And be it further enacted, that any memorandum, ticket, token, draft, certificate, or engagement, written, printed or engraved on paper, card, vellum, or parchment, being negotiable or transferrable, or which shall have been or shall be given, negotiated, or transferred with intent to imply or to make a promise or engagement to pay money or value of any kind, in goods or otherwise, under the sum of twenty shillings Irish currency, or on which a less sum than twenty shillings Irish currency shall remain undischarged, shall be deemed an undertaking in writing to all intents and purposes whatsoever.”