

**THOUGHTS ON POPULATION AND THE
MEANS OF COMFORTABLE SUBSISTENCE:
WITH SUGGESTIONS REGARDING AN
INCREASED SUPPLY AND LESSENERD COST
OF FOOD FOR CHILDHOOD AND THE
INDUSTRIAL CLASSES**

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Thoughts on population and the means of comfortable subsistence: with suggestions regarding an increased supply and lessened cost of food for childhood and the industrial classes by Agrestis

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WITH

Suggestions

REGARDING AN INCREASED SUPPLY AND LESSENERD
COST OF FOOD FOR CHILDHOOD AND THE
INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

BY

AGRESTIS. (*Pseud.*)

"Food constitutes not only the greatest part of the riches of the world; but it is the abundance of food which gives the principal value to many other sorts of riches."

SMITH'S WEALTH OF NATIONS.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, ROBERTS, & GREEN.

1863.

37419
74/3/96

LONDON:
RICHARD BARRETT, PRINTER.
MARK LANE.

To the Memory

OF A

REVERED AND MUCH LOVED PARENT,

AN ISRAELITE INDEED, IN WHOM WAS NO GUILF ;

AND WHO

WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HIS MASTER,

WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED.

P R E F A C E .

THE branch of Economical Science which forms the subject of the following suggestions, is one on which the members of the Upper Classes are but little accustomed to reflect. It may, indeed, be readily conceded, that, in comparison with mental and moral improvement, the supply of physical wants should occupy a subordinate place ; it has, however, its own peculiar value and importance, and is entitled to more attention than is generally bestowed on it.

In public usefulness, two excellent noblemen of the present day—Lord Brougham and the Earl of Shaftesbury—occupy the foremost rank. Their efforts, in somewhat different roads, but all tending to the same goal—the promotion of knowledge consecrated to the pursuit of virtue and happiness—have been directed with unwearied zeal, and produced blessed results in much diminished ignorance and crime.

The laborious and splendid efforts of Lord Brougham, for the mental improvement of our middle-class youths in particular, have naturally placed him at the head of our Educational Societies. They were beautifully foreshadowed in his justly-celebrated "Discourse on the Objects, Advantages, and Pleasures of Science."

The devotedness of Lord Shaftesbury would seem to require almost a religious zeal—such as he elsewhere evinces—to induce the earnest application of his energies and time to our Reformatories, Industrial, and Ragged Schools. There can be no doubt that such stooping to win is calculated to exercise a more powerful influence over the obdurate, and yet controllable, mind, and the almost lost, but recoverable, soul of the youthful outcast, than can be expected from the unsupported zeal of teachers from the ranks. How many of the hundreds of thousands who have passed through these schools have been saved themselves; how many of them have become Home Missionaries destined to reclaim their vicious parents!

Most thankful is the writer, then, in common with

an admiring world, that such devoted philanthropists are found as Lord Brougham, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Frederic Auguste Demetz of Mettrai, Matthew Davenport Hill, Recorder of Birmingham, Mary Carpenter, of Bristol, and other excellent persons following in their steps, and constituting a noble army of ardent lovers of their kind. How can we sufficiently admire — or adequately praise — those efforts of her entire soul, employed by the amiable lady just named, in one particular branch of philanthropy, and which have given her an insight unsurpassed into this portion of human nature !

The present writer's age, his habits, and capacity, render him unequal to such efforts. His individual aspirations are restricted to the object of increasing the home comforts of the labouring class, and invigorating the often sickly and under-fed corporeal frames of our youthful population in particular ; believing, indeed, that a sound body is, in a measure, the condition of the prompt and enduring growth of the sound mind.

Happy would he be, if thought to labour in the

same field with such Exemplars, by the simple preparation of the material soil for the reception of the moral seed ; imbued as he is with a sense of the truth and beauty of Lord Shaftesbury's own sentiment :—
“ The greatest honour to which a man can aspire is that of being the instrument, under God, of conferring benefit on his fellow-man.”