FURTHER OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
CULTIVATION
OF THE
SCARLET TREFOIL;
WITH A
HINTS TO THE PROPRIETORS AND OCCUPIERS
OF THE SOIL.

BY
J. FOAKER, ESQ.,
OF SWEATING HALL, KIRBY, NEAR COLCHESTER, ESSEX.

IPKIN AND MARSHALL, LONDON; J. TAYLOR, JUN.,
COLCHESTER; GUY, CHELMSFORD; DECK,
IPSWICH; FULCHER, SUDBURY.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.
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1835.
FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

CULTIVATION OF SCARLET TREFOIL.

In renewing my observations on the cultivation of the Scarlet Trefoil, I am now fully aware that some apology is necessary (although the pamphlet passed through a second edition) for the scanty materials before sent forth. In fact, until letters came to me from most of the northern and western counties, requesting further information on many principal points, I was not aware of the defective state of my humble protegé. Further, I regarded it as principally intended for the hundred in which I reside, or should it pass the boundary line of the county, its travels must there quickly end. Reflection since on the subject, with further experience, has pointed it out a national object of the first importance, as regards the agricultural state of the country; how far these ardent hopes and expectations may be realized, this pamphlet may tend to give some idea; time only can prove.
Although last, not the least among the causes for this my second appearance, is the flattering and gentlemanly letters I have received from many of the clergy. After roughing it for seven years against wind and tide, to receive in a few weeks a reinforcement of educated, unprejudiced gentlemen as allies, gives me confidence in advancing.

Should that invisible Almighty power, which has conducted me thus far with honour and success on my journey, deign to guide me to the end, it is but a short time ere the Scarlet Trefoil will be planted in every parish in England where the plough draws a furrow.

The question of "what land suits it best?" cannot be directly answered; because it is clear much must depend on the season, like corn and grasses: in very dry summers it will be most productive on heavy lands, and probably in wet summers on tender soils.

I should think the land in the fens of Lincolnshire and Cambridge well calculated for it, and the tract of land from Downham in Norfolk, to Holbeach, Spalding and Boston, and branching off to the left to Crowland and Peterborough: great part of this I know is grass; but much still is under the plough. I have no doubt that many of the poor soils, whether light or heavy, would produce the seed in greater abundance than the bulk of the straw would give reason to suppose, and I judge from this circumstance; I have an Island detached about a quarter of a mile from the main land, the soil is naturally poor, and from the difficulty of getting on, (it can only be approached at ebb tide,) it has not, that I know of, had
a load of manure these twenty years. I had some of
the Scarlet Trefoil upon it, but the bulk was not
more than one third of that grown on better land;
I had it cut for stover, and the men who cut it, were
convinced from the length and size of the blossom,
there would have been an equal quantity or more seed
than I have grown on much better land.

It must not be hazarded near large game preserves,
as not only hares and rabbits, but partridges and
pheasants also, will constantly be upon it.

I began sowing this year on the 22d of August;
part of the field I ploughed twice, the other part only
once, and I can see but little if any difference, except
on about seven stitches, where the harrows passed
over it an extra time, there clearly it is much better.
Where the land is tender, and breaks up well and
fine before the plough the first time, it will be im-
proper to give a second ploughing; the few failures
last autumn, I am convinced were caused wholly by
this;—the land was ploughed twice in dry weather,
nearly all the moisture had evaporated, then followed
one of the driest autumns ever remembered; this left
the land in a frothy state, that when walked over, it
was like stepping on a feather bed: parts of fields thus
became deficient in plant only from want of moisture,
and I am inclined to think had they been rolled down
after sowing, the plants would have been preserved.
Mine, and all in the parish where I reside, never looked
better.

One of the many prophecies against it has been,
that clover sown with the barley or oats the following
spring, would not plant well. In my last pamphlet I made mention of a field of eleven acres, of which five acres were the long fallow, five turnips, and one acre of the Scarlet Trefoil for seed; this year the same field is clover, and I have a better plant where the Scarlet Trefoil was saved for seed, than there is in any other part of the field; and this gives me another opportunity of mentioning where it may be used with great advantage.

In those partial plants of clover which perplex a farmer to know what to do with, the Scarlet Trefoil will remove all doubt. In the field I have mentioned, where the clover was deficient, I scattered some of the seed last autumn, ran a roll over it, and I believe nearly every seed took root; but I had not sufficient to do the work effectually: Mr. Blyth, of Thorpe, did the same, and harrowed it in, which he was right in doing, and has a perfect full plant.

I am happy to say the little prejudices and jealousies, that at first existed against it, are fast wearing away; in fact the appeal has been so strong to the pocket, that it was irresistible: perhaps a few qualms may yet exist, to follow in the footsteps of one who has not been regularly initiated into the mysteries of the craft.

I will now further detail my sentiments, how far the cultivation of the Scarlet Trefoil is likely to affect the proprietors and occupiers of the soil, and the general interests of the country.

As many of the terms used in agriculture are arbitrary and local, many used in one county unknown
in another, or a different meaning applied to them, I will explain the meaning I attach to them; then, however circumscribed their usage may be, it will be of no consequence: furthermore, this pamphlet may chance to fall into the hands of some but little acquainted with agriculture, they will have less difficulty in comprehending its details.

The term of years in which land runs through its rotation crops, is called four course or five course husbandry. We will commence with the fallow, 1st year fallow, 2nd, barley or oats, 3rd, clover, 4th, wheat; this is the four course. If beans are taken after the wheat, it is then in five courses, and the beans are termed an after crop, that is, a crop taken after the land has gone its four courses: consequently in 100 acres of land, there will be, if in fourths, 25 acres of each the above mentioned crops, if in fifths, 20 acres of each. I am aware there are many deviations from these rules, arising from caprice, or the necessities of the farmer; but it is impossible to go into all these variations, and it is unnecessary, as all system is broken up.

Now first as to the beans as an after crop:—

By the best information I can obtain from old workmen, as well as those who farmed five-and-twenty years ago and upwards, a fair average crop of beans at that time was from nine to ten sacks per acre; now from my own experience and from information obtained from respectable men that I can depend upon, the crop of beans for the last seven years and more, has not averaged five sacks; it must be remem-
bered I am speaking of the after crop, because beans are sometimes taken in place of the clover; even in these the defect has been in about the same proportion.

For the time I have mentioned, (the last seven years,) some of the farmers have calculated the loss on their bean crop as high as twenty shillings per acre; however, that there has been a loss is sufficient to know;—of that there can be no doubt.

Perhaps to enquire or speculate on the causes of this change is useless; nevertheless there is one circumstance, which will be satisfactory to most of my readers to learn:—that it is not from the deterioration of the land; from whatever cause it may be, whether from leases being more strictly drawn and enforced, or a better mode of cultivation adopted, (it cannot be from a more prosperous state of the agriculturists,) whatever may be the cause, I have no doubt of the fact, that nine farms out of ten, aye nineteen out of twenty, are in a better state of cultivation at this time than they were thirty years ago.

Well do I remember, as a young sportsman, the lovely fields of may-weed, chick-weed, black grass, spear grass, and thistles of every species, all neatly combined together, from which the partridges used to be brushed up one by one, or, what not unfrequently happened, they got entangled in the weeds, and Linco boned them before they could rise. This brings thee fresh to my remembrance thou old and faithful servant! many is the partridge thy sagacity alone hath provided for the table, which I have been base enough
to rob thee of the honour of, and take credit to myself for killing; thou darling of the West Essex regiment! I ne’er shall meet thy like again: if friends have risen in the world and forgotten me, thou never didst; peace to thy ashes, thou prince of pointers; thou hadst a soldier’s grave beneath the ramparts of Fort Moncton, when thy master was writhing on a bed of sickness.

To return from this short mental excursion, which I could not avoid; for as friends become scant in life we retain a keener remembrance of those which have passed away.

Whatever change may have taken place in the soil as regards beans, it is not poverty.

There can be no doubt from what I have mentioned, that the beans as an after-crop must go out of cultivation; this will bring the land into fourths, and give twenty-five acres of fallow to every hundred.

I now more particularly address myself to the cultivators of strong heavy land; therefore when I portion out the twenty-five acres in the following manner, I shall not be very incorrect: first, five acres for tares, quite enough I am certain; for even in dry summers they are but slip slop food, and in wet summers, one half is muck and two thirds of the other half water; five for turnips, say Swedes; this will be ample, except for one fresh and hot from the light lands of Suffolk; this will leave fifteen acres for what is termed the long fallow; that is, land which remains without a blade or a kernel upon it for eighteen months; eighteen months bare and barren and naked, to be washed by the storms of winter, and exhausted
by the summer's sun. Now to this fifteen acres the Scarlet Trefoil must and will come, not only on our heavy lands, but also in nearly the same proportion on light lands; for as I will presently prove, twelve acres of the Scarlet Trefoil will be clear off the land in sufficient time to prepare it for the white turnip.

I will now take a field of four acres, or, no matter, two; half shall be Scarlet Trefoil and half long fallow; I will place them side by side, and they shall run their course together. Those who are wilfully blind I cannot answer for, but those who are inclined to see, I will place it so clearly before them, that the fault shall be with themselves if they fail.

To begin with the Scarlet Trefoil:—the last week of August after having the stubble removed, plough once and sow the seed with good harrowing and rolling: if you can get your land fine by these means, it will be better than twice ploughing, as this exhausts the land too much by its moisture, especially if the autumn is dry. We may now leave this and go to the fallow part. Except during such an extraordinary dry autumn as the last, this is seldom touched till after wheat seed is over in the months of November or December, it is then ploughed once and left for the winter. After the spring sowing is over in the following year, about the latter part of April or beginning of May, this fallow is again ploughed. On the first ploughing in the spring, up it comes like a composition of pitch and bird lime; then on go the rolls and harrows, and it breaks into squares, and triangles, and rhomboids, and parallelograms, into all the diver-
sity of forms and figures that can gladden the heart of a geometrician; then comes another ploughing, followed again by harrows and rolls, and by this time these various figures have become nearly spherical, and about the size of 18-pound shot, and then they bowl along before the harrows and under the harrows half the length of the field, whilst the harrows themselves, are dancing and leaping like dollars on a drum head. If you are fortunate in hitting exactly on the weather, you may get it to pieces with five or six ploughings, and a dozen or two of harrowings and rollings, by the middle of July; but evil betide the unhappy man who first ploughs it up when wet, and then has a dry summer follow on it.

Now turn to the Scarlet Trefoil:—whether cut green for the horses or cut for stover, it may be clear from the land the first or second week in June; then the first time the plough goes into the earth it turns up like the finest garden mould, it is like ploughing an ash heap, or diving into a barrel of flour. In the same field, one part of the land is all powder, with only one ploughing, before the harrows have even touched it; and by or before the first of August it will be in a better state than the fallow, where the farmer has been rending and tearing to pieces his implements of husbandry, and wearing his horses to skeletons. The benefit will not end here, for where the Scarlet Trefoil has grown, the succession crops will be better than on the fallow; I have invariably seen it.

It is impossible to know and contemplate these circumstancies without being led into further reflections
upon them; in hinting at causes that may produce these effects, it is solely done to ask for information, trusting that this pamphlet may stray into the hands of the scientific, as well as the agriculturist.

When we consider the living wonders contained in a drop of water, which the microscope has lately brought to view, have we not reason to suppose that a grain of earth may be equally teeming with animal life; and when sheltered and protected from the sun’s scorching rays by the Scarlet Trefoil, may they not have produced the effects I have mentioned, and which absolutely hold up the boasted arts and labour of man to derision?

It is well known to every farmer, that when he has a field of clover, part of which shall be a perfect full plant, and part without a leaf upon it, and this last shall be kept free from weeds the whole summer, the other part mown twice, and all the produce carried off the land and nothing returned, yet where this land has been thus robbed without rest or manure, the farmer well knows that the following year this very land will produce him from seven to eight sacks of wheat per acre, and the part that has had perfect rest will not produce three. Ask a farmer the cause of this, and he will tell you because the earth has been exhausted by the sun: ask, exhausted of what? And after being posed for a time, he will say—moisture: the farmer may be right; I think exhausted of animal life. The farmer well knows if this land is broken up by the plough—the harrows and rolls set to work upon it until it is reduced to powder, the moisture will
be still further exhausted, yet it will be equally fertile with the other for his crops in due season.

Have not agents, unseen, been doing this work beneath the shelter of the clover, which the farmer knows he must do with his ploughs and teams, to make his land productive? I could mention numerous other circumstances which appear to point the same way.

There is a phenomenon frequently occurring in our fine autumnal days, which creates a moment of pleasure and surprize to the traveller. In less than two hours after the plough has turned up the furrows of a field, it will be completely covered, as if a sheet of gauze or lawn had been cast over it; this is known to be the work of countless millions of a small species of spider, which are never seen till the plough turns them up to the light. We cannot believe that the Almighty Creator of the universe can have formed these little artizans solely that the mind of man may receive a moment's pleasure from viewing their floating gossamer.

The information I seek comes as a question into a small compass: To what extent animal life exists in the earth, and how far vegetation depends upon it?

Now to the produce and profit arising from these fifteen acres of Scarlet Trefoil, and which without this would be fallow and dead loss to the farmer—

First, two acres may be cut green for the cattle by the beginning of May, worth £3 per acre.

Second, twelve acres may be cut for stover the end of May, and be off the land the first week in June;
two tons and a half per acre at £4 per ton (it is worth £5 at this time).

Thirdly, one acre for seed—fifteen bushels and a half have been grown: I will, however, only reckon twelve. It has been as high as £5: I will only calculate what it may come down to in three or four years, therefore say £2.

Fourth, three loads of threshed straw per acre, at thirty shillings per load, £4.10.0.

The account will be as under:

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<th>Description</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tr>
<td>Two acres of green food at £3 per acre</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twelve ditto of stover, 2½ tons, at £4 per acre</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>One ditto seed, 12 bushels, at £2 per bushel</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three loads of threshed straw, at 30s.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total produce of 15 acres</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deduct seed and labour</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>146</td>
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I cannot help repeating, that this sum of £146 arises from what otherwise would be the long fallow; and in the state that I have before mentioned, it will turn up, after the green crop is removed, ample time will be given, if desired, to prepare fourteen acres out of the fifteen for turnips.

I firmly believe the calculations given are below the real value, still rather than there should be any cavilling on this head, I will cast off twenty-one pounds. I do not want this sum; I can hold the ground I have chosen without it.
This will leave £125 profit for the fifteen acres, or 25s. per acre for the hundred to which the fifteen acres appertain.

Taking the poorest lands under tillage to give a profit of ten shillings per acre, this would probably give an average to the whole kingdom of fifteen or sixteen shillings per acre. Granting that on light lands fifteen acres of the fallow are taken for tares and Swedes, and only ten left for the Scarlet Trefoil and white turnips; granting all this, with the chance of seasons into the bargain, yet I am convinced that I am below the mark when I state, that the Scarlet Trefoil will average an entire new profit of ten shillings per acre to all the arable land in England.

There is one question that will naturally arise from this statement: What will be the effect of so large a quantity of new herbaceous food being thrown on the country? as soon as it has its full swing, the price of meat and hay, and the produce of the dairy must be affected by it. On the slightest reflection, any person must feel surprized at the great discrepancy in the fall of the price of corn, and these articles, equally the produce of the land.

I have not regular market returns to refer to, but from careful inquiries I have made, the following statement will come near enough to answer every purpose:—

When wheat was 180 shillings the quarter, mutton was 9d. per pound; hay, £8 per ton; and butter, 2s. per pound.

Wheat has now fallen from 180 to 40 shillings per
quarter; hay has, only fallen from £8 to £4 per ton; mutton from 9d. to 7d., and butter from about 2s. to 1s. 2d. per pound.

Thus where the produce of corn land has fallen more than three fourths, the produce of grass lands has only fallen one half, and meat not one fourth.

At the period when wheat was 180 shillings the quarter, the temptation for turning grass land into arable was irresistible; immense tracts of land, where a few shepherds only wandered with their flocks, were broken up for corn. The cultivation of the soil in tillage brought upon it all the trades usually engaged in agriculture—blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carpenters, &c.; and husbandmen of course. These were followed by numerous small tradesmen, to administer to their humble wants; thus the desert became peopled.

The same system was going on with the heath of five thousand acres, and the small common of twenty, where flocks and herds were reared. Even the village green, where the rural sports once were held, has had the awful prophecy pronounced against the holy city visited upon it—"For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side."

Even the strip of green-sward, by the road side, on which a few geese were nursed up to pay the cottage rent is gone; power and avarice went hand in hand together, and all have been swallowed up for corn.

All that now remains to aid the labour of the poor man's hands are his hives of bees; these little marauding vagabonds bid defiance alike to inclosures, pounds,
and cages, magistrates' warrants and high constables' precepts. Long may they enjoy their freedom; for I love liberty!

When peace came, corn quickly went down two-thirds in price; but the commons and heaths could not be turned into pasture, they had become colonized—a people had taken firm root in the soil; and as an Irish drive would not answer in this country, there they must continue.

Thus all balance and equality of prices, in the different products of the soil, were destroyed; and this balance the Scarlet Trefoil, if I do not greatly mistake, will in a few years restore.

I trust I may now be permitted to give a few hints to my agricultural brethren, which I hope will be received with the same Christian feeling in which they are offered: Let them never despise a rival or a foe; let them not turn their backs on a friend; above all, let them not despair of better times.

In regard to the first, I well remember the time when the very name of weaver was synonymous, in the mind of a farmer, with all that was low, and mean, and base, and poverty-smitten; let the farmer beware, or the time may quickly come when the artisan will retort it all back with biting scorn. When conductors of power-looms and spinning-jennies attend lectures on chemistry and natural philosophy, on mathematics and mechanics, and the farmer continues to move on in the same beaten path his forefathers have trodden for centuries, it is no difficult task for a calm looker-on to see which way the game is going. Let
the farmer remember, that knowledge is power; and that power must, and inevitably will, change hands under such circumstances.

On the second subject, whenever a friendly hand is held out towards them, never ask whether it comes from the east or west, from north or south, accept it freely as it is frankly offered; this may be of some use to them in days to come, when their memorials and petitions will be chaff on the whirlwind.

On the third point, I have too often heard and received as reply—"I will run no risks." "I will wait and see first." Now if every one acted on this principal, what must be the consequence?

We know what we are at this day as a nation and a people, and it is easy to foresee what we must become. It is not thus with the merchants, manufacturers, and artizans; theirs is a race of intellect; their ambition, who shall lead? and whilst the paddles of their steamers are surging on every sea, the works of their hands are finding markets in every land—their names are written on every shore; and the great Disposer of the fate of nations and the destinies of men, hath set them up as beacons for the world, whilst their own industry and exertions have made them beneficial to their country: they stand forth the benefactors of nearly all mankind.

You may say you have not so wide a field for your industry and exertions. I grant it; they have the world for their hunting ground, you have but your country; still the last stave of the ladder which leads to agricultural fame and knowledge, is not yet gained.
You have many fields yet unbeaten, many preserves yet untouched by the battu; and it would be a heart-rending circumstance to many if a poacher like myself should first brush them out.

If in any of the observations I have been drawn into in this small pamphlet, I have in the slightest degree hurt the feelings of any individual, I can truly say, from my heart's core, I regret it; this, to my own open gallant-hearted countrymen, I know is enough.

I had offered a few remarks on the relative political influence of the mercantile and agricultural classes on the Government of the country, the Corn Laws, and the Malt Tax. I have, however, found it difficult to touch on these subjects fairly, without grating on the feelings of many, whom at all times, more particularly at the present, it is my wish to conciliate. Besides the object I have at present in view, like Aaron's rod, swallows up every other. If the flattering hopes I have cherished are doomed to fade away, be it so, "not my will but Thine be done." Should, however, Heaven aid my cause to its completion, it will influence the prosperity of my country from the Naze of Walton to the Lizard, from the South Foreland to the Frith of Forth.

It is absolutely necessary to make some arrangement, to lay down some plan, to prevent damaged or spurious seed of the Scarlet Trefoil being palmed on the public. I have no wish whatever to do injury to the fair trader; but when I have just cause to believe that little short of one hundred tons of seed were sold, under the name of Scarlet Trefoil seed, last autumn,
within a circle of twenty-two miles of Colchester, by persons, the greater part of whom never sold a handful before in their lives, or ever saw the seed before, without attaching the least blame to these persons, we have fair reason to think, all may not be right: moreover every one knows whenever any article of commerce rises to an exorbitant price, there is always some trickery going on. These observations apply solely to the foreign seed. It is my wish to sell the whole, or nearly so, of all the seed I grow, to merchants; and I will endeavour to obtain from them a promise, that they will buy none of this seed except I certify my belief of its being genuine. I will, about the last week of July, and the first week in August next, advertise twice in the "Mark-Lane Express" (which Paper many of my correspondents have referred to) in what manner a genuine supply may be obtained: if any of my friends can point out a better plan, I shall be ready to adopt it.

If any one thinks selfish objects are here my guide, let them; to me it is not the consequence of a straw. From the moment that I had this task forced upon me, I have had my eye fixed on one point in the horizon, which nothing shall tempt me to diverge from—I will promote the cultivation of the Scarlet Trefoil by every honourable means in my power, till my task is completely finished.

It gives me pleasure to know, that by the Scarlet Trefoil I have already put some hundreds of pounds in the pockets of others; and it gives me still greater pleasure to state for myself, that I am not one shilling the better for it.
It has been said that I have arrogated too much to myself in representing that I was the first to bring it into farm-cultivation in this country; now I have done no such thing; and I will here quote the words used in my last pamphlet.

"I have already said, that in the month of October, 1826, I first gave the Scarlet Trefoil root in our soil. Whether this will entitle me to the honour of being the first to cultivate it in the fields of England, I know not; I am, however, certain, that I have been the first to introduce its cultivation in the district where I reside, and where I have no doubt it will flourish after I shall have passed away."

I do now believe I may claim the honour of both; for in the greater number by far of the counties of England, it is to this day unknown; however, the honour I did claim is indisputably mine, and, I trust, will remain mine while I live; and when I go to "that bourn from whence no traveller returns," it is all I wish for my monument and epitaph; and the husbandman, as he yearly scattereth the seed on the soil, will serve the office of another "Old Mortality," to chisel it afresh on my tomb.
NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The letter from the Rev. W. Williams I answered immediately, and directed to Exeter, Devon. After several weeks it came back, no such person being known.

To my correspondent at Bilbro', near Tadcaster, I hope this pamphlet will be sufficient. I, however, beg respectfully to suggest that it will be necessary to give references to some Bank or mercantile house in London. Should any difficulty occur, and another letter is sent to me, I will endeavour to see all things set right.

To my worthy correspondent at Wem Brockhurst, Shropshire, I beg to state, as soon as his letter was unbagged, out bolted a half sovereign, and began perambulating the hall at the rate of ten miles an hour, apparently delighted at having once more an opportunity of stretching its legs after so long a journey. I recommend the next time he forwards a visitor in a letter, to pin him in, or stitch him round with a needle and thread; these half sovereigns are slippery chaps. If ever I break into the borders of Shropshire, I will find out Wem Brockhurst, and whatever my friend's beverage may be, will drain off a stirrup cup with him from the brim to the bottom,

"I beg leave to hint, in the genteelest and most delicate manner possible," that five shillings a-day for letters, with wheat at five shillings the bushel, is close clipping.

It is probable my readers may hear from me again about next May.

JOHN TAYLOR, JUN., PRINTER, COLCHESTER.
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