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about the same and the
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represent

人文社科经典名著选读

**Selections from Classics of
Western Economics**
西方经济学经典名著选读

杨瑞龙 宋利芳 选编/导读

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前 言

顾名思义，经济学旨在经邦济世，同时它又与人们的生活息息相关。要学好经济学，步入经济学的殿堂，必须具备扎实的经济学基础，而阅读经济学经典名著则是奠定经济学基础的必由之路。但是，经济学学科广泛，各门学科的名著又很多，并且一个人的时间和精力总是有限的，因此想要把经济学名著全部读完往往显得不太现实。

同时，我们常常可以听到或看到这样的情况，我们国内有不少学生在本科或研究生毕业后出国去英美等国学习经济学，攻读硕士或博士学位的年限往往要比正常的年限多出一两年或三四年，究其原因，主要是专业语言方面难以适应，而这与学生们在国内时阅读和接触经济学英文原著不足、缺乏专业英语方面的训练有着很大关系。

因此，若有一本书能使读者在有限的时间里，既能掌握经济学大师的理论精髓，领略其宏篇巨制中精辟的语言、严密的逻辑和深邃的思想，又能提高自身的专业英语水平，从而加强英语工具和经济学专业知识的有机结合，那势必是读者所希冀的事情。

我们有幸受中国人民大学出版社的委托，编写了这本《西方经济学经典名著选读》。我们编写此书的初衷或目的，便是基于上述考虑，以期能使读者有所裨益。

迄今为止，西方主流经济学的发展，大体分为四个主要阶段：第一阶段是前古典经济学，包括希腊和罗马的经济思想、中世纪封建社会的经济思想以及原始积累时期的重商主义。第二阶段是古典经济学，包括从18世纪下半期亚当·斯密的经济学，经过19世纪初期李嘉图和萨伊等人的经济学，直到19世纪中期约翰·穆勒的经济学，它们代表了产业革命前夕到第一次产业革命完成和初期发展阶段自由竞争资本主义的经济学说。第三阶段是新古典经济学，包括始于19世纪70年代初期的边际革命，到19世纪90年代出现的马歇尔经济学，这种经济学的支配地位一直延续到20世纪30年代末期。第四阶段是当代经济学，它以凯恩斯主义经济学的出现为开端，在当代经济学的发展过程中，又形成了各种流派和理论，包括新古典综合派、新剑桥学派、新福利经济学、货币主义、供给学派、弗莱堡学派、新自由主义学说、公共选择学派、新制度学派，等等。

本书以理论经济学作为筛选对象，精选了10部经济学经典名著，它们涵盖的则是后三个阶段的西方经济学理论及流派，并鉴于版权方面的考虑，选择了自古典经济学产

生到 20 世纪 40 年代末这一期间对西方经济理论产生重大影响的经济学大师的传世之作。这 10 部著作分别是：被誉为“政治经济学之父”的亚当·斯密的《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》（1776 年）；英国古典政治经济学完成者大卫·李嘉图的《政治经济学及赋税原理》（1817 年）；均衡价格理论创立者马歇尔的《经济学原理》（1890 年）；发展经济学的先驱和创新理论的首创者熊彼特的《经济发展理论——对于利润、资本、信贷、利息和经济周期的考察》（1912 年）；“福利经济学之父”庇古的《福利经济学》（1920 年）；当代国际贸易理论的奠基者、1977 年诺贝尔经济学奖获得者俄林的《区际贸易与国际贸易》（1933 年）；制度经济学派代表人物康芒斯的《制度经济学》（1934 年）；宏观经济学奠基人凯恩斯的《就业、利息和货币通论》（1936 年）；1970 年诺贝尔经济学奖获得者萨缪尔森的《经济分析基础》（1947 年）；以及新自由主义经济学代表人物、1974 年诺贝尔经济学奖获得者哈耶克的《个人主义与经济秩序》（1948 年）。

本书对精选的 10 部著作分别做了介绍和论述。为了帮助读者更好地阅读和理解所选著作的英文篇章内容，各导读部分都扼要介绍了作者的生平简历、主要思想、学术贡献以及主要著作，并就所选代表作做了导读性的说明，内容包括该著作的写作背景、框架结构及理论体系、主要内容及观点、简要评述等。本书所摘选的英文篇章均选自英文原版著作，所选篇章基本上反映了每部著作的重点内容、核心思想或主要学术贡献。同时，还对文中的一些疑难术语或词汇做了简要的注释。

本书由中国人民大学经济学院院长杨瑞龙教授和宋利芳副教授主持选编，中国人民大学经济学院的教师和博士生合作编写。具体分工如下：杨瑞龙拟定总体思路和写作提纲、撰写前言；陈海威撰写亚当·斯密、俄林、凯恩斯部分；张广兴撰写大卫·李嘉图部分；王艳萍撰写马歇尔部分；张雁撰写熊彼特、康芒斯部分；宋利芳撰写庇古部分；李强撰写萨缪尔森、哈耶克部分。此外，张海蔚、王磊和王全春也参与了部分内容的编写工作。全书由杨瑞龙和宋利芳负责修改定稿。

本书在编写过程中，参阅和引用了国内已有的许多研究成果和国外的英文文献，谨向有关作者表示感谢。

本书可作为高等院校财经类专业的专业英语课程教材或参考书，也可供具有一定英语和经济学基础的广大读者自学和阅读。由于本书所选的 10 部著作在国内基本上都有相应的中文译著，因此，读者在阅读时若有困难，还可参阅相关中文译著。

编 者

2003 年 10 月于中国人民大学

目 录

亚当·斯密《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》导读	1
Selections from Adam Smith's <i>An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations</i>	5
大卫·李嘉图《政治经济学及赋税原理》导读	51
Selections from David Ricardo's <i>Principles of Political Economy and Taxation</i>	56
马歇尔《经济学原理》导读	103
Selections from Alfred Marshall's <i>Principles of Economics</i>	107
熊彼特《经济发展理论——对于利润、资本、信贷、利息和经济周期的考察》导读 ...	150
Selections from Joseph Alois Schumpeter's <i>The Theory of Economic Development—An Inquiry into Profits, Capital, Credit, Interest, and the Business Cycle</i>	154
庇古《福利经济学》导读	214
Selections from Arthur Cecil Pigou's <i>The Economics of Welfare</i>	218
俄林《区际贸易与国际贸易》导读	266
Selections from Bertil Ohlin's <i>Interregional and International Trade</i>	270

康芒斯《制度经济学》导读	313
Selections from John Rogers Commons' <i>Institutional Economics</i>	318
凯恩斯《就业、利息和货币通论》导读	353
Selections from John Maynard Keynes' <i>The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money</i>	357
萨缪尔森《经济分析基础》导读	398
Selections from Paul Anthony Samuelson's <i>Foundations of Economic Analysis</i>	402
哈耶克《个人主义与经济秩序》导读	444
Selections from Friedrich August von Hayek's <i>Individualism and Economic Order</i>	448

亚当·斯密《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》导读



亚当·斯密(Adam Smith, 1723—1790),出生于英国苏格兰爱丁堡附近的卡柯尔迪市(Kirkcaldy),父亲是一个海关职员,但在斯密出生前已去世。斯密由母亲养大成人。他的母亲出身于一个受人尊敬的富裕家庭,斯密一生孝敬其母,终身未婚。1737年斯密在14岁的时候进入格拉斯哥大学,先后学习了道德哲学、伦理学、数学、自然法学和政治经济学等。1740年斯密获斯内尔奖学金去了牛津大学的巴利奥尔学院。在牛津大学藏书极其丰富的图书馆里,他刻苦攻读,奠定了博大精深的思想体系的基础。1746年他离开牛津,回到家乡,并于1748年在爱丁堡大学开设系列讲座,一时盛名远扬,显露头角。1751年,斯密回到格拉斯哥大学母校,应聘为逻辑修辞学教授,几年后担任道德哲学讲座教授,又转为伦理学教授。在格拉斯哥的10多年,被斯密认为是他最为有益也是最为幸福和名誉的时期,在此期间他出版了《道德情感论》(1759年),从此跻身英国第一流学者之列。1767年斯密回到故乡,着手巨著《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》(简称《国富论》)的写作。《国富论》于1776年完成,这一巨著使他成为公认的经济学的鼻祖。

在斯密的故乡卡柯尔迪市的市政厅的墙壁上,斯密是作为“伟大的社会哲学家和政治经济学家”而被列为该市杰出人物的。该市博物馆有一幅加尔布雷斯的题词,他把《国富论》、《圣经》和《资本论》并列为人类三大智慧宝库。单纯把斯密看成经济自由主义的首创者,是没有全面理解亚当·斯密的19世纪的旧识。当代的世界经济学说史学界对他的研究已经不限于把他看做经济自由主义首创者,而是把他看做一位伟大的社会科学家。

《国富论》与《道德情感论》是斯密道德哲学体系统一的组成部分,而后者更是斯密费尽毕生心血所完成的巨著。除了这两部书外,斯密生前只发表了少量的有关文学的论述。他关于哲学的论文集是在他去世后出版的(1795年)。1895年他的法学讲座的笔记被发现,经E.坎南(E. Cannan)整理以《正义、警察、岁入及军备的演讲》出版。

1976 年纪念《国富论》出版 200 周年时,格拉斯哥大学主持出版了《亚当·斯密著作与通信集》,其中有不同于坎南版的《法学讲义》,还有未发表的研究斯密的论文 30 篇。其中,第一卷为《道德情感论》,第二卷为《国富论》,第三卷为《哲学论集》,第四卷为《修辞学与文学讲义》,第五卷为《法学讲义》,第六卷为《通信集》;还附有两本著作,一本是《亚当·斯密研究文集》,另一本是《亚当·斯密生平》,全部由牛津大学出版社于 1976 年出版。格拉斯哥版《亚当·斯密著作和通信集》全六卷的出版,对斯密的“道德哲学思想”体系亦即社会科学体系的研究提供了最完整的依据。自从该书问世以来,广义的对作为社会科学家的亚当·斯密的研究出现了空前的发展。

《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》是一部具有划时代意义的不朽巨著,200 多年来,亚当·斯密一直被尊为政治经济学之父。当时的英国处于资本主义工场手工业时期,产业革命已是大势所趋。但是英国产业的发展还受到封建残余和重商主义落伍的政策限制。斯密作为新兴工业资产阶级的代表,在其著作《国富论》中主张自由竞争和自由贸易,全力清除资本主义前进道路上的障碍,集中反映了当时资产阶级的要求。这本书总结了近代初期各国资本主义发展的经验,在批判的吸收当时有关的经济理论的基础上,就整个国民经济运动过程做了系统描述。可以说,此书的问世对于世界资本主义的发展起到了重大作用,其他经济学著作无出其右者。

斯密的这部巨著被看作是关于资于资本主义商品生产和市场经济的一部经典著作。研究国民财富的性质和原因是《国富论》的主题,也是展开全书的切入点和基本立足点。《国富论》共有五篇,每一篇都有确定的主题,每一主题都与市场经济制度密切相关。第一篇和第二篇是理论分析,在这里奠定了基本理论和原理的基础,是全书的重心。第一篇有 11 章,题目是“论劳动力增进的原因并论劳动生产物自然而然地分配给各阶级人民的顺序”。在此,主要论述了三个方面的内容:首先是分工的利益、原因及其限制;其次是具有二元性的价值理论,即除了劳动创造价值外,工资、利润与地租也决定价值(被称为收入价值论);最后一个方面的内容是斯密的分配论。在第一篇,斯密分析了提高劳动生产率的途径和原因,建立了资本主义市场经济的理论基础,为现在的微观经济学构筑了理论框架。第二篇有 5 章,论述资财的性质及其蓄积和用途,在这一篇中,斯密提出了他的资本学说与社会资本再生产理论。第三篇有 4 章,论述不同国家财富的不同发展,考察了促进和阻碍国民财富发展的因素。第四篇共有 9 章,论述了政治经济学体系。在这里他提出了“看不见的手”的著名论断。他批判了重商主义者认为财富是由货币或者金银构成的思想,还批判了重商主义的贸易保护的理论知识,树立了自由贸易的理论旗帜。斯密还吸收重农主义的自由放任政策主张,扬弃了重农主义者认为农业是财富的惟一来源,而把工匠、制造业者和商人列为生产阶级。正如斯密所说,前 4 篇的目的在于说明国民收入如何构成以及各时代各国国民每年消费的资源有什么性质。第五篇分为 3 章,斯密在此论述了君主或者国家的收入,他提出赋税四原则和国家的作用,至今还有重要的理论和现实意义。

下面从六个方面论述斯密的主要观点和理论体系,并简要评论。

1. 国民财富、分工与斯密定理

什么是国民财富呢?斯密开宗明义指出:“一国国民每年的劳动,本来就是供给他

们每年消费的一切生活必需品和便利品的源泉。构成这种必需品和便利品的，或是本国劳动的直接产物，或是用这类产物从外国购进来的物品”。^① 斯密的这段话可以说是现代国家得以生存发展的至理名言。分工是斯密分析的出发点。在第一章“论分工”里，斯密明确指出分工是提高劳动生产率的原因。斯密认为分工是人类互通有无、物物交换、互相交易的倾向缓慢造成的结果。斯密推理道，分工起因于交换，那么分工的程度就要受交换能力限制，换言之，要受市场范围的限制，这一思想被后人尊称为“斯密定理”。

2. 价值理论：二元性的观点

斯密在研究货币交换货物所遵循的法则时，介入了整个古典经济学纠缠不清而最终由马克思完成的价值理论。价值和价格理论在《国富论》中占有极其重要的地位，他在这里论证了商品交换的基本原理，还论证了市场机制的作用，为后人的研究奠定了基础。斯密认为商品交换价值的尺度有两种：劳动与货币。劳动是“真实尺度”或“真实价格”，货币是“名义尺度”或“名义价格”^②。斯密认为做此区分有助于消除长久以来人们在铸币及地租价值等问题上的模糊观念，尤其有助于消除沿袭两百多年的重商主义对货币性质和作用的严重误解。

关于商品价值的源泉，斯密提出了富有历史感但实质却迥然不同的两种答案，即劳动价值论和收入价值论。斯密的“二元观点”虽然没能正确解决问题，但他指出价值或价格的决定会随历史条件的变化而变化，是他富有历史感的表现和历史功绩。

3. 市场机制

论证“自然自由制度”即市场机制自发调节作用是斯密最重大的理论贡献，也是闪烁斯密思想光辉的地方。斯密认为每一个社会一定时期内各种用途的劳动工资、资本利润、土地地租都有一种普通率或平均率或曰自然率。所谓自然工资（利润、地租）率，指当时当地所通行的普通（平均）工资（利润、地租）率，它们是市场自由竞争的结果。斯密指出，商品的市场价格即商品通常出卖的实际价格，有时高于它的自然价格，有时低于它的市场价格，有时和它相同。造成这种偏离的原因是供给与需求的变动；供不应求则价格上升，供过于求则价格下降。价格变动的幅度依竞争的激烈程度而定。如果供求相等，则市场价格和自然价格相等。斯密对市场价格机制的经典论述相当完整和深入，为后人的研究奠定了丰厚的基础。

4. 对重商主义的批判和对法国重农主义的扬弃

对重商主义和法国重农主义的批判集中于第四篇“论政治经济学体系”。通过对当时流行的两大政策体系的批判，斯密进一步阐发了经济自由主义和自由贸易的思想。重商主义是一种在欧洲各国影响极深的学说和政策体系，斯密给予系统的深入的剖析，成功地完成了历史赋予斯密的任务。对重商主义的批判占全书篇幅约四分之一。对重商主义的批判倾注了斯密对封建专制主义阻碍生产力发展的反感和敌视；在对重农主义的批评中，则指出其中不足，同时也肯定了他们的成就和功绩。斯密的著作被认为是对重商

^① 亚当·斯密：《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》上卷，中译本，1页，北京：商务印书馆，1981年。

^② 同上书，26页。

主义全面彻底的清算，它标志着产业资本的观念最终克服了商业资本的局限。

5. 自由贸易理论：绝对优势论

在对重商主义的批判中，斯密提出了自己的自由贸易理论，后人概括为绝对优势论（Absolute Advantage Theory）。自由贸易的思想在重农学派的著作中已经提出，但只有在斯密的著作中才有明确完整的论述。国际贸易是斯密关于国内市场与分工的延续和发展，是他整个学说体系的一个组成部分。后人对斯密的自由贸易论非常赞赏。1876年，R. 劳（Robert Law）在《国富论》出版100周年纪念大会上，公开赞扬自由贸易论是“这位单纯的格拉斯哥大学教授”所写著作中最重要的成果。简单地说，斯密认为每个国家只生产与其他国家相比成本最低的产品，用以交换其他国家同样也是成本最低的产品。这样交换的结果，既可以买来最便宜的产品，又可得到本国没有的产品。

6. 经济自由主义与看不见的手

在论述自由贸易和自由经营的主张时，斯密提出了人们熟知的“看不见的手”的著名论断，这是对经济自由主义深层次的说明。斯密指出：“由于每个个人都努力把他的资本尽可能用来支持国内产业，都努力管理国内产业，使其生产物的价值能达到最高程序，他就必然竭力使社会的年收入尽量增大起来。确定，他通常既不算促进公共的利益，也不知道他自己是在什么程度上促进那种利益……，他通常只是盘算他自己的安全，由于他管理产业的方式目的在于使其生产物的价值能达到最大限度，他所盘算的也只是他自己的利益。在这场合，像在其他许多场合一样，他受着一只看不见的手的指导，去尽力达到一个并非他本意想要达到的目的。也并不因为事非出于本意就对社会有害，他追求自己的利益，往往使他能比在真正出于本意的情况下更有效地促进社会的利益。”^①

这段著名的论断成为对经济自由主义实现公私利益协调的经典论述。其实类似的提法在《道德情感论》中已经出现，说的是“看不见的手”会引导社会产品的分配达到公平。斯密所谓的“手”指的是私有制条件下自由竞争的自发作用及其后果，后来的追随者们将这一原理引向了极致，他们宣称，在完全竞争条件下，如能满足一定的条件，就可得出一种“帕累托最优状态”的竞争的均衡。

经济自由主义的核心思想就是论证自由竞争市场经济模式是资源最佳配置的惟一方式，说明该模式在推进社会生产力、提高经济效益和增进社会福利等方面具有巨大的优越性。所谓自由竞争的市场经济模式，指的是在完全竞争条件下，生产、交换、分配和消费在内的全部社会生活，都受市场的供给和需求的自发调节和支配，无需国家（政府）的计划和调控。斯密意义上的国家的作用仅在于：（1）保护社会不受其他独立社会侵犯；（2）严正的司法机关保护公民合法权利；（3）建设并维持公共事业和某些公共设施。^② 换句话说，充当私人资本的警察和守夜人。

本书节选了英文原著第一篇的第1~7章。其中，第1~4章是论述分工的主要部分，第5~7章阐述了斯密的劳动价值论和他对于市场机制的观点。

① 亚当·斯密：《国民财富的性质和原因的研究》下卷，中译本，27页，北京：商务印书馆，1981年。

② 同上书，252~253页。

Selections from Adam Smith's
An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of
the Wealth of Nations

Book I

Chapter I

Of the Division of Labour

The greatest improvement in the productive powers of labour, and the greater part of the skill, dexterity, and judgment with which it is anywhere directed, or applied, seem to have been the effects of the division of labour.

The effects of the division of labour, in the general business of society, will be more easily understood by considering in what manner it operates in some particular manufactures^①. It is commonly supposed to be carried furthest in some very trifling ones; not perhaps that it really is carried further in them than in others of more importance; but in those trifling manufactures which are destined to supply the small wants of but a small number of people, the whole number of workmen must necessarily be small; and those employed in every different branch of the work can often be collected into the same workhouse, and placed at once under the view of the spectator. In those great manufactures, on the contrary, which are destined to supply the great wants of the great body of the people, every different branch of the work employs so great a number of workmen that it is impossible to collect them all into the same

^① manufacture:制造业,是指当时的手工制造业,和今天的意思有所不同。下文的 manufacturer,意思是“制造者”,和今天的“制造商”或者“工厂主”的含义也不相同

workhouse. We can seldom see more, at one time, than those employed in one single branch. Though in such manufactures, therefore, the work may really be divided into a much greater number of parts than in those of a more trifling nature, the division is not near so obvious, and has accordingly been much less observed.

To take an example, therefore, from a very trifling manufacture, but one in which the division of labour has been very often taken notice of, the trade of the pin-maker^①; a workman not educated to this business (which the division of labour has rendered a distinct trade), nor acquainted with the use of the machinery employed in it (to the invention of which the same division of labour has probably given occasion), could scarce, perhaps, with his utmost industry, make one pin in a day, and certainly could not make twenty. But in the way in which this business is now carried on, not only the whole work is a peculiar trade, but it is divided into a number of branches, of which the greater part are likewise peculiar trades. One man draws out the wire, another straightens it, a third cuts it, a fourth points it, a fifth grinds it at the top for receiving the head; to make the head requires two or three distinct operations; to put it on is a peculiar business, to whiten the pins is another; it is even a trade by itself to put them into the paper; and the important business of making a pin is, in this manner, divided into about eighteen distinct operations, which, in some manufactories, are all performed by distinct hands, though in others the same man will sometimes perform two or three of them. I have seen a small manufactory of this kind where ten men only were employed, and where some of them consequently performed two or three distinct operations. But though they were very poor, and therefore but indifferently accommodated with the necessary machinery, they could, when they exerted themselves, make among them about twelve pounds of pins in a day. There are in a pound upwards of four thousand pins of a middling size. Those ten persons, therefore, could make among them upwards of forty-eight thousand pins in a day. Each person, therefore, making a tenth part of forty-eight thousand pins, might be considered as making four thousand eight hundred pins in a day. But if they had all wrought separately and independently, and without any of them having been educated to this peculiar business, they certainly could not each of them have made twenty, perhaps not one pin in a day; that is, certainly, not the two hundred and fortieth, perhaps not the four thousand eight hundredth part of what they are at present capable of performing, in consequence of a proper division and combination of their different operations.

In every other art and manufacture, the effects of the division of labour are similar to what they are in this very trifling one; though, in many of them, the labour can

① trade of the pin-maker: 意思是“扣针制造业”。斯密用此例解释了分工提高生产率的好处,在经济学说史上占有重要地位

neither be so much subdivided, nor reduced to so great a simplicity of operation. The division of labour, however, so far as it can be introduced, occasions, in every art, a proportionable increase of the productive powers of labour. The separation of different trades and employments from one another seems to have taken place in consequence of this advantage. The separation, too, is generally carried furthest in those countries which enjoy the highest degree of industry and improvement; what is the work of one man in a rude state of society, being generally that of several in an improved one. In every improved society, the farmer is generally nothing but a farmer; the manufacturer, nothing but a manufacturer. The labour, too, which is necessary to produce any one complete manufacture, is almost always divided among a great number of hands. How many different trades are employed in each branch of the linen and woollen manufactures, from the growers of the flax and the wool, to the bleachers and smoothers of the linen, or to the dyers and dressers of the cloth! The nature of agriculture, indeed, does not admit of so many subdivisions of labour, nor of so complete a separation of one business from another, as manufactures. It is impossible to separate so entirely the business of the grazier from that of the corn-farmer, as the trade of the carpenter is commonly separated from that of the smith. The spinner is almost always a distinct person from the weaver; but the ploughman, the harrower, the sower of the seed, and the reaper of the corn, are often the same. The occasions for those different sorts of labour returning with the different seasons of the year, it is impossible that one man should be constantly employed in any one of them. This impossibility of making so complete and entire a separation of all the different branches of labour employed in agriculture, is perhaps the reason why the improvement of the productive powers of labour in this art does not always keep pace with their improvement in manufactures. The most opulent nations, indeed, generally excel all their neighbours in agriculture as well as in manufactures; but they are commonly more distinguished by their superiority in the latter than in the former. Their lands are in general better cultivated, and having more labour and expense bestowed upon them, produce more in proportion to the extent and natural fertility of the ground. But this superiority of produce is seldom much more than in proportion to the superiority of labour and expense. In agriculture, the labour of the rich country is not always much more productive than that of the poor; or, at least, it is never so much more productive, as it commonly is in manufactures. The corn of the rich country, therefore, will not always, in the same degree of goodness, come cheaper to market than that of the poor. The corn of Poland, in the same degree of goodness, is as cheap as that of France, notwithstanding the superior opulence and improvement of the latter country. The corn of France is, in the corn provinces, fully as good, and in most years nearly about the same price with the corn of England, though, in opulence and improvement, France is

perhaps inferior to England. The corn-lands of England, however, are better cultivated than those of France, and the corn-lands of France are said to be much better cultivated than those of Poland. But though the poor country, notwithstanding the inferiority of its cultivation, can, in some measure, rival the rich in the cheapness and goodness of its corn, it can pretend to no such competition in its manufactures; at least if those manufactures suit the soil, climate, and situation of the rich country. The silks of France are better and cheaper than those of England, because the silk manufacture, at least under the present high duties upon the importation of raw silk, does not so well suit the climate of England as that of France. But the hard-ware and the coarse woollens of England are beyond all comparison superior to those of France, and much cheaper too in the same degree of goodness. In Poland there are said to be scarce any manufactures of any kind, a few of those coarser household manufactures excepted, without which no country can well subsist.

This great increase of the quantity of work, which, in consequence of the division of labour, the same number of people are capable of performing, is owing to three different circumstances; first, to the increase of dexterity in every particular workman; secondly, to the saving of the time which is commonly lost in passing from one species of work to another; and lastly, to the invention of a great number of machines which facilitate and abridge labour, and enable one man to do the work of many.

First, the improvement of the dexterity of the workman necessarily increases the quantity of the work he can perform; and the division of labour, by reducing every man's business to some one simple operation, and by making this operation the sole employment of his life, necessarily increases very much the dexterity of the workman. A common smith, who, though accustomed to handle the hammer, has never been used to make nails, if upon some particular occasion he is obliged to attempt it, will scarce, I am assured, be able to make above two or three hundred nails in a day, and those too very bad ones. A smith who has been accustomed to make nails, but whose sole or principal business has not been that of a nailer, can seldom with his utmost diligence make more than eight hundred or a thousand nails in a day. I have seen several boys under twenty years of age who had never exercised any other trade but that of making nails, and who, when they exerted themselves, could make, each of them, upwards of two thousand three hundred nails in a day. The making of a nail, however, is by no means one of the simplest operations. The same person blows the bellows, stirs or mends the fire as there is occasion, heats the iron, and forges every part of the nail; in forging the head too he is obliged to change his tools. The different operations into which the making of a pin, or of a metal button, is subdivided, are all of them much more simple, and the dexterity of the person, of whose life it has been the sole business to perform them, is usually much greater. The rapidity with which some of the

operations of those manufacturers are performed, exceeds what the human hand could, by those who had never seen them, be supposed capable of acquiring.

Secondly, the advantage which is gained by saving the time commonly lost in passing from one sort of work to another, is much greater than we should at first view be apt to imagine it. It is impossible to pass very quickly from one kind of work to another, that is carried on in a different place, and with quite different tools. A country weaver, who cultivates a small farm, must lose a good deal of time in passing from his loom to the field, and from the field to his loom. When the two trades can be carried on in the same workhouse, the loss of time is no doubt much less. It is even in this case, however, very considerable. A man commonly saunters a little in turning his hand from one sort of employment to another. When he first begins the new work he is seldom very keen and hearty; his mind, as they say, does not go to it, and for some time he rather trifles than applies to good purpose. The habit of sauntering and of indolent careless application, which is naturally, or rather necessarily, acquired by every country workman who is obliged to change his work and his tools every half hour, and to apply his hand in twenty different ways almost every day of his life, renders him almost always slothful and lazy, and incapable of any vigorous application even on the most pressing occasions. Independent, therefore, of his deficiency in point of dexterity, this cause alone must always reduce considerably the quantity of work which he is capable of performing.

Thirdly, and lastly, everybody must be sensible how much labour is facilitated and abridged by the application of proper machinery. It is unnecessary to give any example. I shall only observe, therefore, that the invention of all those machines by which labour is so much facilitated and abridged, seems to have been originally owing to the division of labour. Men are much more likely to discover easier and readier methods of attaining any object, when the whole attention of their minds is directed towards that single object, than when it is dissipated among a great variety of things. But in consequence of the division of labour, the whole of every man's attention comes naturally to be directed towards some one very simple object. It is naturally to be expected, therefore, that some one or other of those who are employed in each particular branch of labour should soon find out easier and readier methods of performing their own particular work, wherever the nature of it admits of such improvement. A great part of the machines made use of in those manufactures in which labour is most subdivided, were originally the inventions of common workmen, who, being each of them employed in some very simple operation, naturally turned their thoughts towards finding out easier and readier methods of performing it. Whoever has been much accustomed to visit such manufactures, must frequently have been shown very pretty machines, which were the inventions of such workmen, in order to facilitate and quicken their own particular part

of the work. In the first fire-engines, a boy was constantly employed to open and shut alternately the communication between the boiler and the cylinder, according as the piston either ascended or descended. One of those boys, who loved to play with his companions, observed that, by tying a string from the handle of the valve which opened this communication to another part of the machine, the valve would open and shut without his assistance, and leave him at liberty to divert himself with his play-fellows. One of the greatest improvements that has been made upon this machine, since it was first invented, was in this manner the discovery of a boy who wanted to save his own labour.

All the improvements in machinery, however, have by no means been the inventions of those who had occasion to use the machines. Many improvements have been made by the ingenuity of the makers of the machines, when to make them became the business of a peculiar trade; and some by that of those who are called philosophers or men of speculation, whose trade is not to do anything, but to observe everything; and who, upon that account, are often capable of combining together the powers of the most distant and dissimilar objects. In the progress of society, philosophy or speculation becomes, like every other employment, the principal or sole trade and occupation of a particular class of citizens. Like every other employment too, it is subdivided into a great number of different branches, each of which affords occupation to a peculiar tribe or class of philosophers; and this subdivision of employment in philosophy, as well as in every other business, improves dexterity, and saves time. Each individual becomes more expert in his own peculiar branch, more work is done upon the whole, and the quantity of science is considerably increased by it.

It is the great multiplication of the productions of all the different arts, in consequence of the division of labour, which occasions, in a well-governed society, that universal opulence which extends itself to the lowest ranks of the people. Every workman has a great quantity of his own work to dispose of beyond what he himself has occasion for; and every other workman being exactly in the same situation, he is enabled to exchange a great quantity of his own goods for a great quantity, or, what comes to the same thing, for the price of a great quantity of theirs. He supplies them abundantly with what they have occasion for, and they accommodate him as amply with what he has occasion for, and a general plenty diffuses itself through all the different ranks of the society.

Observe the accommodation of the most common artificer or day-labourer in a civilised and thriving country, and you will perceive that the number of people of whose industry a part, though but a small part, has been employed in procuring him this accommodation exceeds all computation. The woollen coat, for example, which covers the day-labourer, as coarse and rough as it may appear, is the produce of the joint