

had taken Holland," it would be no joke at all, but, on the contrary, a piece of most significant news, almost too good to be true. From encroachments of this character the independent spirit of the English people has preserved them. The right of old pathways has been jealously maintained. An Englishman would peril his livelihood, any day, in behalf of a style that had existed in the times of his grandfather. And hence England, in its richest districts, with all its quiet pathways and pleasant green lanes, has been kept open to the English.

There are, however, at least two causes in operation at the present time, that are militating against this independent spirit. One of these is the Whig poor-law; the other, the tenant-at-will system, now become so general in England. Under the old poor-law, the English laborer in the rural districts indulged in a surly, and by no means either amiable or laudable, independence. The man who, when set aside from labor, or who, when employment could not be procured, could compel from his parish an allowance for his support, unclogged by the horrors of the modern workhouse, occupied essentially different ground from the man who, in similar circumstances, can but compel admission into a frightful prison. The exposures of journals such as the "Times" have been less successful in producing an influential reaction against the Union Bastiles, than in inspiring the poor with a thorough dread of them. A modern workhouse in the vista forms but a dreary prospect; and the independence of the English agricultural laborer is sinking under the frequent survey of it which his circumstances compel. Nor has the very general introduction of the tenant-at-will system been less influential in lowering the higher-toned and more manly independency of spirit of a better class of the English people. One of the provisions of the Reform Bill has had the effect of sinking the tenantry of England into a state