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T. R. MALTHUS
AN ESSAY ON
THE PRINCIPLE OF POPULATION
VOLUME I

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AN ESSAY ON THE PRINCIPLE OF POPULATION;

or

A View of its past and present Effects on Human Happiness;

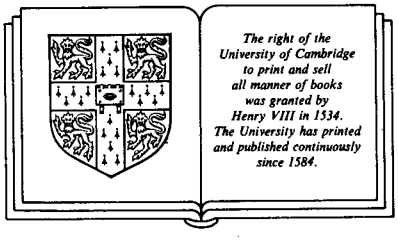
With an Inquiry into our Prospects respecting the future Removal or Mitigation of the Evils which it occasions

The version published in 1803,
with the variora of 1806, 1807, 1817 and 1826

EDITED BY

PATRICIA JAMES

VOLUME I



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FOR THE ROYAL ECONOMIC SOCIETY

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Thomas Robert Malthus was born on 13 February 1766, with a hare-lip and a cleft palate, at a small country house in Surrey called The Rookery. He was the sixth child and second son of Daniel Malthus and his wife Henrietta Catherine, formerly Graham; another daughter was born some five years later. The family connections were with medicine and the law, but Daniel Malthus had inherited enough money to live comfortably in various parts of the Home Counties as a cultivated gentleman, with sufficient means to travel abroad, and to make the acquaintance of Rousseau, whom he idolised. The education of his son Robert (he was never called Thomas) was entrusted to a well-known pedagogue, the Rev. Richard Graves, at Claverton Rectory, near Bath; then, when he was 16, he was sent to a Unitarian tutor, Gilbert Wakefield, first at the Warrington Dissenting Academy, and then at the Wakefields' home near Nottingham.

Gilbert Wakefield had been a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, and there Malthus took up residence as a student in November 1784. In 1788 he graduated as Ninth Wrangler, which meant that he was the University's ninth best mathematician of his year, and in 1793 his college gave him a Fellowship. While Malthus was an undergraduate at Cambridge, his family settled permanently in Surrey, in the neighbourhood of Albury and Shere; they had been 'wandering about' for the previous 18 years. Here, in his first settled home, Robert lived quietly with his parents and two unmarried sisters for a whole decade after leaving college.

Malthus's only known occupation at this time was that of a country curate: on 8 June 1789 he was licensed by the Bishop of Winchester to serve 'Oakwood, *alias* Ockwood, in the County of Surrey'.[1] Okewood (as it usually spelt) was a little chapel of ease in a remote woodland area, too isolated to be licensed for marriages; the remarkable thing about its late eighteenth-century register was the small list of burials and the prodigious number of baptisms, all children of 'the poor'. It is impossible to tell from the records for how long the young Robert Malthus actively served this curacy, but he

[1] The actual date has only recently come to light, and the editor is grateful to Dr John Pullen for drawing her attention to it.

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obtained the title in 1824, and held it until his death: this occurred at his father-in-law's house in Bath on 29 December 1834.

As is well known, at some time in 1797 Daniel Malthus had an argument with his younger son about the perfectibility of mankind: Robert maintained that the utopian schemes of William Godwin could never be realised, on account of the excessive population which would result from them. On the advice of his father, Robert dashed off *An Essay on the Principle of Population as it affects the future Improvement of Society, with Remarks on the Speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet, and other Writers*. This octavo volume was published anonymously, by Joseph Johnson, in 1798, and aroused much attention.

Anonymous books and pamphlets were common at the time, but Robert Malthus appears to have made no attempt to conceal his authorship. He immediately set about compiling a very heterogeneous reading list to reinforce his sombre thesis that population tended perpetually to press upon subsistence, held in check only by vice and misery. In 1799 he travelled with friends by way of Hamburg to Scandinavia and St Petersburg, and in 1802 a large family party took advantage of the Peace of Amiens to visit France and Switzerland.

Both these foreign tours are mentioned in the great quarto of 1803, on which are based all subsequent editions of the *Essay on Population*, including this one. Malthus himself called his monumental work 'the second edition' of the anonymous first *Essay* of 1798, and on the title-page was printed 'A New Edition, Very Much Enlarged'. Much of the first *Essay* was incorporated verbatim in the quarto, and these passages are indicated in the present variorum edition; the pagination used here is that of the original first *Essay*, reprinted by Macmillans in 1966.

On the title-page of the quarto the author was given as 'T. R. Malthus, A.M.' – the Latin form of M.A. – 'Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge'. By the time Joseph Johnson brought out 'the third edition' in two octavo volumes in 1806, Malthus had to be described as 'Late Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge'. He had forfeited his Fellowship, as the rules then were, by ceasing to be a bachelor; his marriage, to his first cousin once removed, Harriet Eckersall, took place in April 1804. This wedding was made possible by the death in 1803 of the Rector of Walesby in Lincolnshire, which enabled the patron of the living, Henry Dalton of Knaith, to present it to his love-sick cousin Robert. As was customary at this period, Malthus drew the income from the rectory of Walesby for the rest of his life, while a poor curate did all the work for a small salary.

Following the advice of friends, Malthus set about revising the two main statistical chapters of Book II almost immediately after the publication of the quarto, and these re-written versions were printed in 1806. Also in 1806 Malthus added an *Appendix* to the *Essay*, which was entitled *A Reply to the Chief*

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Objections which have been urged against the Essay on the Principle of Population: he wrote

> I should feel greatly obliged to those who have not had leisure to read the whole work, if they would cast their eyes over the few following pages, that they may not, from the partial and incorrect statements which they have heard, mistake the import of some of my opinions, and attribute to me others which I never held.

This Appendix was also printed separately on quarto sheets – it occupies 35 such pages – and sold as a sort of pamphlet, so that people who already possessed the 1803 edition could have it bound in with the earlier volume if they wished.

As may be seen from Malthus's *Advertisements*, the 1806 edition of the *Essay* was a very botched affair. The 1807 edition, also in two octavo volumes, was a great improvement, being evenly divided, with Books I and II in the first volume, Books III and IV with the *Appendix* and index in the second. The title-page in 1807 describes Malthus as 'Late Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, and Professor of History and Political Economy in the East India College, Hertfordshire'. At this time the Company's college for training its civil servants was inconveniently housed in temporary quarters in Hertford Castle; the Malthuses with their little children, a son and two daughters, lived in a Company house somewhere in the town.

In 1809 the four-year-old East India College moved to what would now be designated its own campus at Haileybury. It is important to remember that the College at no time had more than one hundred students, so that Malthus should not be regarded as a professor in the modern sense of the word. But he lectured; he contributed to the current discussion on the Poor Laws; he wrote articles for the *Edinburgh Review* on the problems of Ireland, and what is now called inflation; he defended the East India College when it was attacked in Parliament; and he published three significant pamphlets on the Corn Laws and *The Nature and Progress of Rent*; these last subjects were a seething political issue and the occasion of smashed windows and general rioting in 1815.

What Malthus called 'the fifth edition' of *Population*, 'with important Additions', was published by John Murray in three octavo volumes in 1817. This is the first version of the *Essay* to have a modern look, as Murray did not use the long S. Yet one is still conscious of the economical habits of the eighteenth century, for a separate volume was published at the same time, entitled *Additions to the Fourth and Former Editions of an Essay on Population &c. &c.* Thus readers who already possessed one of the three previous versions of the greatly enlarged *Essay* had only to buy a single new volume to bring themselves up to date.

The most conspicuous changes are what one might expect, at a time when the relationship between the price of food and the wages of labour –

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especially manufacturing labour – was the subject of serious discussion as well as mob violence. Malthus re-wrote four chapters in Book III:

Of increasing Wealth, as it affects the Condition of the Poor.
Of the Definitions of Wealth. Agricultural and Commercial Systems.
Different Effects of the Agricultural and Commercial Systems.
Of Bounties on the Exportation of Corn.

It is perhaps typical of Malthus that six new chapters replaced the four old ones (these are chapters A–F of Book III in Volume II of this edition) and that he himself was well aware of how his critics would react.

In a letter to Ricardo dated 28 December 1815 Malthus wrote:

> If I complete the subject, and say what I meant to say with respect to Restrictions on the importation of foreign corn, and the effects of high prices on foreign commerce, I fear I shall be led into too great length, and yet if I shorten it I shall probably be thought obscure. It would have been better perhaps in many respects to leave out the whole of the practical question relating to Bounties and Restrictions.[2]

On 9 March 1816 Ricardo wrote to his friend Hutches Trower:

> Mr Malthus has been staying a few days with me .... He is yet doubtful whether he shall add an additional volume to his Essay on Population, or whether he shall publish a separate and independent work, containing his present views on the interesting subjects of Agriculture and Manufactures, and the encouragement which is afforded them by natural and artificial causes.[3]

As late as 9 September 1816 Malthus had still not made up his mind, and was writing to Ricardo: 'I have nearly determined to leave out the questions about bounties and restrictions, or only allude to them very shortly, as far as they are concerned with population.'[4] But he finally decided otherwise.

In 1817 Malthus also inserted additional chapters on the checks to population in France and in England, on the Poor Laws, on the Effects of the Knowledge of the Principal Cause of Poverty on Civil Liberty, and on the Different Plans of Improving the Condition of the Poor. He excised the chapter on a pamphlet which Godwin had written in 1802, and replaced it with one about Robert Owen, an idealist who was not only more financially successful than Godwin, but also some 15 years younger. This substitution probably gave rise to Godwin's own book on population, bitterly attacking Malthus, which was published in 1820.

---

[2] *The Works and Correspondence of David Ricardo*, edited by Piero Sraffa with the collaboration of M. H. Dobb, Cambridge University Press for the Royal Economic Society, 11 vols, 1951–1972, vol. VI, p. 346.
[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, pp. 26–27.
[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, p. 68.

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Malthus himself castigated two contemporary writers, John Weyland and James Grahame, in a supplement to the original *Appendix* of 1806. In this occurs the crucial sentence overlooked by the nineteenth-century pioneers of birth control who called themselves Malthusians: 'If it were possible for each married couple to limit by a wish the number of their children, there is certainly reason to fear that the indolence of the human race would be very greatly increased; and that neither the population of individual countries, nor of the whole earth, would ever reach its natural and proper extent.'

With the 1817 edition of *Population* finally published, Malthus devoted his whole attention to his *Principles of Political Economy*, which came out in 1820. He wrote the article on Population in the 1824 *Supplement to the Encyclopaedia Britannica*, most of which was reprinted by Murray in 1830 as *A Summary View of the Principle of Population*.

In 1826 there appeared the last edition of the *Essay on Population* to be published during Malthus's life-time, neatly arranged by Murray in two octavo volumes. There were a few statistical additions, and the author could be styled on the title-page as the Rev. T. R. Malthus, A.M., F.R.S., he having been elected to the Royal Society in 1819. On this 1826 edition were based the Victorian one-volume octavo versions of 1872 and 1890; these both included Malthus's very important *Appendices* of 1806 and 1817. When the Everyman Edition was first printed in 1914 (in two volumes) these *Appendices* were omitted, so that about 22 000 words of Malthus's views on population have been virtually suppressed, at least as far as most twentieth-century readers are concerned.

Suppression of an author's opinion, contrary to his published intentions, is one kind of sin; it might be argued that those responsible for the present edition are guilty of a worse one, in bringing before the public passages which Malthus himself had cancelled. Our editorial defence must rest on Malthus's continuing fame and influence, especially outside his own country, which makes everything he wrote, and all his changes of mind, of permanent significance. The patchwork nature of the *Essay* is in itself a lesson in that sort of humility which is essential for any scientific pursuit of the truth.

More specifically, it was the *Essay* of 1803 which made the greatest impact on contemporary thought, and the effect of some of the more famous passages, cancelled as early as 1806, extends even now – almost like shock waves – over discussions on demography and economics. To give but two instances: first, Malthus is still condemned for the paragraph about there being no room at nature's mighty feast for those whose labour society does not want; to this day students search in vain, in modern editions, for this quotation, unaware that it was expunged three years after it was written.

Again, Malthus is labelled a doctrinaire physiocrat because he wrote in 1803: 'Manufactures, strictly speaking, are no new production, no new

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creation, but merely a modification of an old one, and when sold must be paid for out of a revenue already in existence, and consequently the gain of the seller is the loss of the buyer. A revenue is transferred but not created.' All this Malthus struck out in 1806, but it is still half-remembered against him in the nineteen-eighties.

To argue the need for a variorum edition of the *Essay on the Principle of Population* is easier than trying to make one. After much thought, it was decided that all the eight re-written chapters (two of 1806 and six of 1817), with their subsequent emendations, should be printed together in the second volume; thus readers who wish to make comparisons may do so by using the two volumes side by side. Where detailed comparison is irrelevant, the completely new 'additional' chapters are printed immediately after the earlier ones, as was done in 1817. In the case of the substituted chapter iii of Book III, the same applies, and it is inserted after the original chapter which it replaced. This arrangement means that the numbering of the chapters in this edition, of Books II and III, will be different from that of any other, which may cause some inconvenience; it appeared to be the least of a wide choice of evils.

It was not considered necessary to record changes in paragraphing, the use of capital letters, and small verbal alterations made merely for the sake of euphony or correct grammar: they indicate the care with which Malthus revised his work, but would be distracting to readers who are rightly more concerned with his subject-matter. As Malthus himself wrote in his *Errata*, printed at the beginning of the quarto: 'Obvious typographical errors and omissions are not noticed': we hope that they have all been unobtrusively rectified. Nor did it seem important to comment on when 'valleys' replaced *vallies*, 'chase' was substituted for *chace*, or even when Dr Smith became Adam Smith, which was not until 1817. On the other hand we have deliberately retained the archaic spelling of peoples and places, because nobody can control their unconscious word-associations: a modern oil-sheikh has little in common with Malthus's chaik, and Tahiti today is nothing like the Otaheite which Malthus read about.

In short, our main dilemma was to make the *Essay on Population* pleasantly readable, while at the same time bearing in mind the fact that Malthus wrote with his goose-quill pen a long time ago, and that much has changed since, including our attitude towards such minor matters as consistency in notes and references. Finally we agreed that the peculiarities of Malthus's footnotes should be left as they are (they may be followed up quite easily) but that it was essential to modernise his eighteenth-century punctuation, and this the editor has done.

Equally essential was the provision of a new index; Malthus's, however, are not without interest, and a short note on them has been printed immediately before the index to the present edition.

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Editor's Introduction

One of Malthus's characteristics is that his long footnotes were sometimes more important than his text, and it seemed right to stick to his own arrangement – or the lack of it. All footnotes in this edition are numbered consecutively by chapter, not page by page, as in the author's day. Following the usual practice, Malthus's footnotes are given in their original form, while explanatory notes by the editor are enclosed in square brackets. Where there is an alternative in the text, the note relating to this begins with a square bracket, to indicate an editorial interruption of Malthus's prose; but since the content of these variora are the author's own words, there is no square bracket at the conclusion of the note. Straightforward permanent additions to the text are inserted in the appropriate places without note numbers. Where passages have been excised or re-written, note numbers and a large black dot have been used at the beginning as well as the end of the passage concerned (thus [15]● ... ●[15]) so that the reader may be forewarned of a lengthy alteration. The same method has been adopted to draw the reader's attention to passages taken from the *Essay* of 1798, only in these cases an asterisk has been used to mark the beginning and end of the paragraphs or sentences closely following those of the first *Essay*. Notes to notes and notes to inserted matter are indicated by superscript letters.

To avoid overcrowded pages and excessive editorial intrusion Malthus's authorities, and information about them, are listed alphabetically at the end of the Volume II. It is hoped that this Alphabetical List will be of interest in itself, for the light it throws on an Englishman's literary heritage and social environment at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Malthus assumed that his readers had a working knowledge of French, as well as a background of Greek and Latin, Shakespeare and Milton, Pope and *The Tatler* and, of course, the Authorised Bible of 1611; he also took it for granted that they kept up with all the serious publications and political events of their own day. That day is long past, but some knowledge of it should help a modern student to appreciate the lasting contribution which Malthus has made to the scientific investigation of the nature and causes of poverty.

Apart from the conventional tasks performed by the editor, the present two volumes are the result of the team-work and technical expertise of the Cambridge University Press, especially Francis Brooke, Sheila Shepherd, and John Trevitt. We have all tried to meet our different challenges with as much ingenuity and professional dedication as we could muster; we are aware that we cannot hope to please all Malthus's readers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, all over the world, utterly diverse in religion and race, tradition and experience; in the language of his period, we can only crave the indulgence of the public.

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PATRICIA JAMES, 1917–1987

Patricia James died in March, 1987, after delivering the typescript of these volumes, but before the proofs were available for her expert attention. In undertaking the final stages of preparing this variorum edition for publication, I would like to thank John Pullen for taking the time from his companion edition of Malthus's *Principles of Political Economy* to compile the index: and R. D. Collison Black for lending another pair of eyes to an exacting task. All those who were fortunate to know Patricia James would like to think that this edition will serve as a fitting monument to a remarkable scholar, the culmination of her long labour of love on behalf of Robert Malthus.

DONALD WINCH

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PREFACE

The Essay on the Principle of Population, which I published in 1798, was suggested, as is expressed in the preface, by a paper in Mr. Godwin's Inquirer. It was written on the spur of the occasion, and from the few materials which were within my reach in a country situation.[1] The only authors from whose writings I had deduced the principle, which formed the main argument of the essay, were Hume, Wallace, Dr. Adam Smith, and Dr. Price; and my object was to apply it to try the truth of those speculations on the perfectibility of man and society, which at that time excited a considerable portion of the public attention.

In the course of the discussion, I was naturally led into some examination of the effects of this principle on the existing state of society. It appeared to account for much of that poverty and misery observable among the lower classes of people in every nation, and for those reiterated failures in the efforts of the higher classes to relieve them. The more I considered the subject in this point of view, the more importance it seemed to acquire; and this consideration, joined to the degree of public attention which the essay excited, determined me to turn my leisure reading towards an historical examination of the effects of the principle of population on the past and present state of society; that, by illustrating the subject more generally, and drawing those inferences from it, in application to the actual state of things which experience seemed to warrant, I might give it a more practical and permanent interest.

In the course of this inquiry I found that much more had been done than I had been aware of, when I first published the essay. The poverty and misery arising from a too rapid increase of population had been distinctly seen, and the most violent remedies proposed, so long ago as the times of Plato and Aristotle. And of late years the subject had been treated in such a manner by some of the French Economists, occasionally by Montesquieu, and, among our own writers, by Dr. Franklin, Sir James Steuart, Mr. Arthur Young, and

[1] [This PREFACE of 1803 was reprinted in all subsequent editions, but from 1806 onwards the word *spur* was replaced by 'impulse', and Malthus wrote of
... the few materials which were then within my reach ...

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Mr. Townsend, as to create a natural surprise that it had not excited more of the public attention.

Much, however, remained yet to be done. Independently of the comparison between the increase of population and food, which had not perhaps been stated with sufficient force and precision, some of the most curious and interesting parts of the subject had been either wholly omitted or treated very slightly. Though it had been stated distinctly, that population must always be kept down to the level of the means of subsistence; yet few inquiries had been made into the various modes by which this level is effected; and the principle had never been sufficiently pursued to its consequences, and those practical inferences drawn from it, which a strict examination of its effects on society appears to suggest.

These are therefore the points which I have treated most in detail in the following essay. In its present shape it may be considered as a new work, and I should probably have published it as such, omitting the few parts of the former which I have retained, but that I wished it to form a whole of itself, and not to need a continual reference to the other. On this account, I trust that no apology is necessary to the purchasers of the first edition. [2]●I should hope that there are some parts of it, not reprinted in this, which may still have their use; as they were rejected, not because I thought them all of less value than what has been inserted, but because they did not suit the different plan of treating the subject which I had adopted.●[2]

To those who either understood the subject before, or saw it distinctly on the perusal of the first edition, I am fearful that I shall appear to have treated some parts of it too much in detail, and to have been guilty of unnecessary repetitions. These faults have arisen partly from want of skill, and partly from intention. In drawing similar inferences from the state of society in a number of different countries, I found it very difficult to avoid some repetitions; and in those parts of the inquiry which led to conclusions different from our usual habits of thinking, it appeared to me that, with the slightest hope of producing conviction, it was necessary to present them to the reader's mind at different times and on different occasions. I was willing to sacrifice all pretensions to merit of composition to the chance of making an impression on a larger class of readers.

The main principle advanced is so incontrovertible that, if I had confined myself merely to general views, I could have entrenched myself in an impregnable fortress; and the work, in this form, would probably have had a much more masterly air. But such general views, though they may advance the cause of abstract truth, rarely tend to promote any practical good; and I thought that I should not do justice to the subject, and bring it fairly under

[2] [This sentence was omitted in 1806 (Vol. I, p. xi) and all subsequent editions.]

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discussion, if I refused to consider any of the consequences which appeared necessarily to flow from it, whatever these consequences might be. By pursuing this plan, however, I am aware that I have opened a door to many objections and, probably, to much severity of criticism: but I console myself with the reflection that even the errors into which I may have fallen, by affording a handle to argument, and an additional excitement to examination, may be subservient to the important end, of bringing a subject so nearly connected with the happiness of society into more general notice.

Throughout the whole of the present work, I have so far differed in principle from the former, as to suppose another check to population possible, which does not strictly come under the head either of vice or misery;[3] and, in the latter part, I have endeavoured to soften some of the harshest conclusions of the first essay. In doing this, I hope that I have not violated the principles of just reasoning, nor expressed any opinion respecting the probable improvement of society in which I am not borne out by the experience of the past. To those who shall still think that any check to population whatever would be worse than the evils which it would relieve, the conclusions of the former essay will remain in full force; and if we adopt this opinion, we shall be compelled to acknowledge that the poverty and misery which prevail among the lower classes of society are absolutely irremediable.

I have taken as much pains as I could to avoid any errors in the facts and calculations which have been produced in the course of the work. Should any of them nevertheless turn out to be false, the reader will see that they will not materially affect the general tenour of the reasoning.

From the crowd of materials which presented themselves in illustration of the first branch of the subject, I dare not flatter myself that I have selected the best, or arranged them in the most perspicuous method. To those who take an interest in moral and political questions, I hope that the novelty and importance of the subject will compensate the imperfections of its execution.

London, June 8th, 1803

[3] [In 1817 (Vol. I, p. ix) this was altered:
. . . as to suppose the action of another check to population which does not come under the head either of vice or misery . . .

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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE THIRD EDITION[1]

The principal alterations in the present edition are the following:

The chapters which were the fourth and sixth of the second book are nearly rewritten, on account of an error into which the author had fallen in an attempt to estimate the fruitfulness of marriages and the number of the born living to be married, from the data in registers; and as the chapters, in their present state, are not suggested by those which immediately preceded them in the same manner as they were before, they are transferred to the latter part of the book, and now form the ninth and tenth chapters.[2]

In the chapter of the same book, which treats of the Checks to Population in England, a remark has been added to show the incorrectness of considering the proportion of births as nearly uniform throughout the last century, and consequently of founding an estimate of the population at different periods on such grounds.[3]

In the fifth chapter of the third book an observation has been inserted on the policy as well as duty of assisting the poor through temporary seasons of distress;[4] and in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters of the same book, some passages have been omitted and others added, particularly in the tenth, which treats of bounties on the exportation of corn, on account of the present importance of the subject, and the discussion which it has lately received.[5]

In the sixth chapter of the fourth book, one passage has been omitted,[6] and a passage has been added on the effect of good government in diminishing poverty.[7]

In the seventh chapter of the same book a passage has been omitted;[8] and

[1] [This ADVERTISEMENT TO THE THIRD EDITION was placed immediately after the title-page in 1806, before the reprinted 1803 PREFACE. In 1807 it followed the PREFACE; it was still headed ADVERTISEMENT TO THE THIRD EDITION.]

[2] [Chapters iv(b) and vi(b) of Book II in this edition, Vol. II, pp. 1–22.]

[3] [Vol. I, p. 263 of this edition.]

[4] [See Vol. I, p. 357 of this edition.]

[5] [These changes are noted where they occur, in chapters viii, ix, x and xi of Book III in this edition.]

[6] [This was the paragraph about 'nature's mighty feast', Vol. II, pp. 127–8 of this edition.]

[7] [Vol. II, pp. 130–31 of this edition.]

[8] [This deleted passage shows Malthus's understanding of the attitude of the poor towards 'them', Vol. II, pp. 139–40 of this edition.]

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in the eighth chapter a passage of some length, relating to a comparison of the married and unmarried,[9] has been omitted, and an observation added on the propriety of not underrating the desirableness of marriage, while we are inculcating the duties of moral restraint.

These are the most prominent alterations. The rest consist merely of a few verbal corrections, and here and there a short passage or explanatory note, to prevent misconceptions. These minor corrections occur principally in the two first chapters.

The reader will see that the alterations here mentioned do not affect the principles of the work, and therefore do not essentially lessen the value of the quarto edition.

In an appendix, an answer is given to the principal objections which have been urged against the Essay; and for the accommodation of the purchasers of the former edition it is printed in quarto, and may be had separately. Those who have not leisure or inclination to read the entire work, will find in the appendix such a notice of its most prominent arguments, as will give them a good general idea of the aim and bent of the whole.

[10]●For the sake of making the volumes more equal, the printer has placed the Index to both at the end of the first. It was not at first foreseen that the Appendix and Index would be so long; or a preferable division of the volumes would have been adopted.●[10]

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[9] [These deleted pages contain an appeal for more courtesy to unmarried women, Vol. II, pp. 148–50 of this edition.]

[10] [This paragraph was omitted in 1807 (Vol. I, p. xiii), when the first two Books of the *Essay* were printed in Vol. I, the remaining contents in Vol. II. In 1806 the text of Vol. I ended at p. 505, at the conclusion of the chapter on Scotland and Ireland; this was followed by the index to both volumes; Vol. II began with the remaining three chapters of Book II, and finished on p. 559 with the end of the Appendix.]

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PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION[1]

This Essay was first published at a period of extensive warfare, combined, from peculiar circumstances, with a most prosperous foreign commerce.

It came before the public, therefore, at a time when there would be an extraordinary demand for men, and very little disposition to suppose the possibility of any evil arising from the redundancy of population. Its success, under these disadvantages, was greater than could have been reasonably expected; and it may be presumed that it will not lose its interest after a period of a different description has succeeded, which has in the most marked manner illustrated its principles, and confirmed its conclusions.

On account therefore of the nature of the subject, which it must be allowed is one of permanent interest, as well as of the attention likely to be directed to it in future, I am bound to correct those errors of my work, of which subsequent experience and information may have convinced me, and to make such additions and alterations as appear calculated to improve it and promote its utility.

It would have been easy to have added many further historical illustrations of the first part of the subject; but as I was unable to supply the want I once alluded to, of accounts of sufficient accuracy to ascertain what part of the natural power of increase each particular check destroys, it appeared to me that the conclusion, which I had before drawn from very ample evidence of the only kind that could be obtained, would hardly receive much additional force by the accumulation of more, precisely of the same description.

In the two first books, therefore, the only additions are a new chapter on France, and one on England, chiefly in reference to facts which have occurred since the publication of the last edition.[2]

In the third book I have given an additional chapter on the Poor-Laws;[3] and as it appeared to me that the chapters on the Agricultural and Commercial Systems, and the Effects of increasing Wealth on the Poor, were not either so well arranged, or so immediately applicable to the main subject,

[1] [In 1817 this PREFACE was printed immediately after that of 1803, the ADVERTISEMENTS of 1806 and 1807 being omitted.]

[2] [Chapters ix and xi of Book II in this edition.]

[3] [Chapter vii of Book III in this edition.]

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as they ought to be; and as I further wished to make some alterations in the chapter on Bounties upon Exportation, and add something on the subject of Restrictions upon Importation, I have recast and rewritten the chapters which stand the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, in the present edition;[4] and given a new title, and added two or three passages to the 14th, and last chapter of the same book.[5]

In the fourth book, I have added a new chapter to the one entitled *Effects of the Knowledge of the principal Cause of Poverty on Civil Liberty*; and another to the chapter on *the different Plans of employing the Poor*; and I have made a considerable addition to the Appendix, in reply to some writers on the Principles of Population whose works have appeared since the last edition.

These are the principal additions and alterations made in the present edition. They consist in a considerable degree of the application of the general principles of the Essay to the present state of things.

For the accommodation of the purchasers of the former editions, these additions and alterations will be published in a separate volume.[6]

East-India College, June 7th, 1817

[4] [Chapters A–F of Book III in this edition.] [5] [Chapter xiii of Book III in this edition.]
[6] [This paragraph was still included in this PREFACE when it was reprinted in 1826.]

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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SIXTH EDITION
Jan. 2d, 1826[1]

The additions to the present edition chiefly consist of some further documents and inferences relating to the state of the population in those countries, in which fresh enumerations, and registers of births, deaths and marriages, have appeared since the publication of my last edition in 1817. They refer principally to England, France, Sweden, Russia, Prussia, and America,[2] and will be found in the chapters which treat of the population of these countries. In the chapter on the Fruitfulness of Marriages an additional table has been given, (vol. i. p. 498.)[3] which, from the per centage increase of population in the interval between those decennial enumerations which are now taking place in some countries, shews the period of their doubling, or the rate at which they are increasing. At the end of the Appendix my reasons for not replying to the late publication of Mr. Godwin are shortly stated. In other parts of the work some inconsiderable alterations and corrections have been made, which it is unnecessary to specify; and a few notes have been added, the principal of which is one on the variations in the price of corn in Holland under a free trade, and the error of supposing that the scarcity of one country is generally counterbalanced by the plenty of some other – Vol. ii. p. 207.[4]

[1] [This ADVERTISEMENT was printed after the PREFACES of 1803 and 1817.]
[2] [There is no chapter on America as distinct from the 'American Indians', but readers of this edition may refer to the index for information about the United States.]
[3] [Vol. II, p. 17 in this edition.] [4] [Vol. II, pp. 74–6 in this edition.]

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