

Received February 4.

XVII. *A Letter from Dr. Ducarel, F. R. S. and F. S. A. to Dr. William Watson, M. D. and F. R. S. concerning Chestnut Trees; with two other Letters to Dr. Ducarel, on the same Subject.*

SIR,

Read Mar. 8, <sup>1771.</sup> **I**N a letter addressed to you, on the trees which are supposed to be indigenous in Great Britain, published in the *Philosophical Transactions* \*, the Hon. Mr. Daines Barrington has attacked a prevailing notion among the learned; that chestnut trees are the native production of this kingdom. Mr. Barrington argues that they are not; and his reasonings on this, are now to be considered.

In my Anglo-Norman Antiquities, p. 96. I had observed that “ many of the old houses (in Normandy) when pulled down, are found to have a great deal of chestnut timber about them; as there are not any forests of chestnut trees in Normandy, the inhabitants have a tradition, that this timber was brought from England: and there are some circumstances, which, when rightly considered, will

\* Vol. LIX. p. 23.

“ add strength to this tradition ; for many of the old  
 “ houses in England are found to contain a great  
 “ deal of this kind of timber : several of the houses  
 “ in Old Palace Yard, Westminster, and in that neigh-  
 “ bourhood, which were taken down in order to  
 “ build Parliament and Bridge-streets, appeared to  
 “ have been built with chefnut ; and the same was  
 “ observed with regard to the Black Swan Inn, in  
 “ Holborn, and many other old buildings lately  
 “ pulled down in different parts of England.” And  
 to this I had subjoined the following account in a  
 note. “ Chefnut timber being at present rarely to be  
 “ found growing in the woods and forests of Eng-  
 “ land, many persons are induced to think that the  
 “ sweet chefnut was never an indigenous tree of this  
 “ island : but a little consideration will plainly evince,  
 “ that it always was, and is to this day, a native of  
 “ England. It is generally allowed, that all the  
 “ ancient houses in the city of London were built of  
 “ this timber. Certainly it did not grow far off ;  
 “ and most probably it came from some forests near  
 “ the town ; for Fitz Stephens, in his description of  
 “ London, written in the reign of king Henry the  
 “ Second, speaks of a large and very noble forest,  
 “ which grew on the North side of it. Rudhall,  
 “ near Ross, in Herefordshire, an ancient seat of the  
 “ family of Rudhall, is built with chefnut, which  
 “ probably grew on that estate ; for although no tree  
 “ of the kind is now to be found growing wild in  
 “ that part of the country, yet there can be no  
 “ doubt, but that formerly chefnuts trees were the  
 “ natural growth of the neighbouring wood lands,  
 “ since we find that Roger earl of Hereford, founder  
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“ of the abbey of Flaxley, in Gloucestershire,  
 “ by his charter, printed in Dugdale’s monasticon,  
 “ tom. i. p. 884. gave the monks there, the tythe  
 “ of the chefnuts in the forest of Deane, which is  
 “ not above seven or eight miles from Rudhall.  
 “ The words, are *Singulis annis totam decimam casta-*  
 “ *nearum de Dena.* In the court before the honse  
 “ at Hagley Hall, in Worcestershire, the feat of  
 “ Lord Lyttelton, are two vast sweet chefnut trees,  
 “ which seem to be at least two, if not three hun-  
 “ dred years old; and Mr. Evelyn, in his Sylva, p.  
 “ 232. mentions one, of an enormous size, at Tortf-  
 “ worth, in Gloucestershire, which hath continued  
 “ a signal boundary to that manor, from King Ste-  
 “ phen’s time, as it stands upon record; and which  
 “ tree is still living, and surrounded by many young  
 “ ones, that have come up from the nuts dropped  
 “ by the parent tree. Mr. Evelyn also assures us,  
 “ that he had a barn framed intirely of chefnut tim-  
 “ ber, which had been cut down in its neighbour-  
 “ hood. In the forest of Kent, adjoining to Suffex,  
 “ there still remains several large old chefnut stubbs,  
 “ which were left by the woodmen as termini, or  
 “ boundaries, either of parishes, or private property.  
 “ Besides this, there are to this day, in the North  
 “ East part of Kent, several large woods, consisting  
 “ principally of chefnut trees and stubs. In the  
 “ parish of Milton, near Sittingborne, is a manor  
 “ called Norwood Casteney, otherwise Chesteney,  
 “ from its sitnation among chefnut woods, which  
 “ reach to the highway from London to Dover, and  
 “ give name to a hill between Newington and Sit-  
 “ tingborne, it being called Chefnut Hill, the chef-  
 “ nut

“ nut trees growing plentifully on each side of it,  
 “ and in woods round it for many miles. And  
 “ by the particulars for leases of crown lands in  
 “ Kent, temp. Eliz. Roll III. N<sup>o</sup> 8. now in the  
 “ Augmentation office, it appears that there is,  
 “ in the same parish of Milton, a wood containing  
 “ two hundred and seventy eight acres and a half,  
 “ called Cheston, otherwise Chesnut wood. To  
 “ conclude, my worthy friend, Edward Hasted, esq;  
 “ of Sutton at Hone, near Dartford in Kent, F.R.S.  
 “ and F.S.A. assures me that one of his tenants at  
 “ Newington, a few years since grubbed up forty  
 “ acres of wood, which were intirely chesnut.”

In the very out-set of the argument, Mr. Barrington imposes upon himself, by changing the terms of the question. “ Since you sent me, says he to Dr. Watson, the specimen of supposed chesnut, which was taken from the old hall of Clifford’s Inn, I have been at some pains to examine the authority for the prevailing notion, with regard to this being an indigenous tree” (p. 23.)—but in p. 24. he says, “ I shall begin by considering the proofs, which are commonly relied upon to the *Spanish* or *sweet* chesnut being indigenous in Great Britain.”—though not one word has preceded, though not one word follows, of the Spanish and the common chesnut being the same. He then alledges, “ that the very name of Spanish, seems strongly to indicate the country from which it was originally introduced here” (p. 24.) This is surely a striking instance of an inaccuracy of language; the whole controversy between us turns only upon that which is commonly called the chesnut tree, and which is therefore de-

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ominated

nominated *Castanea Vulgaris*, by all the ancient Botanists. It is so called by Dr. Johnson in his *Mercurius Botanicus*: by the same author, in his *Iter Cantianum*; and by Blackstone, in his *Specimen Botanicum*; and in this true view of the controversy, let us examine the principal parts of it.

I have, Sir, in the abovementioned quotation, particularly noticed a large tract of chestnut woods, to continue to this day near Sittingborne, in Kent; in opposition to this, Mr. Barrington says, that he has taken a very minute inspection of these woods; and that, "finding them planted in rows, and without any scattering trees to introduce them, he is convinced that they are not natives." (p. 27 and 28) Such is the argument by which my assertion is endeavoured to be set aside.

I shall not here enter into an examination of the four general rules laid down by Mr. Barrington, "from which it may be decided, whether a tree is indigenous or not in any country," p. 23. That I leave to the consideration of two of my particular friends, who have entered into the Botanical reasons produced by Mr. Barrington, and whose letters to me on this subject are hereunto annexed. I confine myself to the fact. "Remember, says Dr. Plot "in his MS. *Collectanea of Kent* (in the library of "Edward Jacob, Esq; of Feversham) the iron oar "smelted in Chestnut wood, in the confines of Borden "and Newington." Dr. Johnson, in his *Iter Cantianum*, 1632, speaks of the *Castanea Vulgaris inter Sittingbourne et Rochester*. And this Chestnut wood is equally mentioned as early as the 22d of Elizabeth, under the title of *Quædam Sylva, vocata Chestenwode*,  
in

in a conveyance, which the reader may see below (1). This wood then is not very modern; and if ever it was planted by any human hand, must have been planted two or three ages ago; but it was certainly never planted by any human hand; the whole wood

(1) Ex. Orig. penes Edw. Jacob Arm. de Feversham, S.A.S. Nov. 22, 1770. Sciunt p'sent. et futur. q'd ego Georgius Clyfforde, p'ochie de Bobbynge in com. Kanc. ar. p' quadam pecunie summa michi p'fato Georgio p' Georgium Ffylmer p' manibus solut. unde fateor me fore solut. et content. dictumq; Georgium Ffylmer hered. et exec. et admynystr. suos fore exonerat. et acquietat. p' p'sent. dedi concessi vendidi et hac p'sent. carta mea confyrmavi eidem Georgio Ffylmer quinque acr. ter. et bosc. sive majus sive minus scituat. jacen. et existen. in pochia de Borden in com. p'dicto videl't ad quandam silvam ib'm, voc. Chesten woode versus West ad tex. \* Garret, gen'; versus Southe ad ter. hered. Alexandr. Cottye; versus Est ad boscū hered. Henrici Droumfylde; versus Northe; Est et West ad boscū Thome Pettenden, versus North; H'end. et Tenend. predict. quinque acr. ter. et bosc. cum omnibus et syngulis suis p'tin. p'fat. Georgio Ffylmer hered. et assign. suis ad opus et usum ipsius Georgii Ffylmer hered. et assign. suor. imp'petū Caplitib. d'no feodi p' servis inde eis prius debet. et de jur. consuet. Et ego p'dict. Georgius Clyfford et hered. mei p'dict. quinque acr. ter. et bosci cum omnibus et singulis suis p'tin. p'fat. Georgio Ffylmer hered. et assign. suis contra omnes gentes warrantizabimus et imp'petū defendemus p' p'sentes. In cujus rei testimonium ego p'dictus Georgius Clyfford huic p'sent. cart. mee sigillum meum apposui; dat. vicesimo octavo die Maii anno regni dñe nre Elizabeth dei gra' Angl. Frauncie, et Hib. Regine fidei defensoris, &c. vicesimo secundo.

Georgius Clyfforde, (L. S.)

Sealed and delivered  
in the presence of

German Wake, &  
Henry Whithead.

\* Sic Orig.

covers

covers more than three hundred acres of land. In one part of Chesnut wood, upon the hanging banks of Chesnut-street, and in the way from Kay-street to Stockbury, are now the remains of large chesnut trees and pollards, which were plainly planted by the bold irregular hand of nature.

I had also mentioned a grant (or rather a confirmation of a grant) made to the abbey of Flexeley, which was the tithe of chesnuts in the forest of Dean; "*totam Decimam Castanearum de Denâ.*" But Mr. Barrington objects to the supposition "of "Dena, in the record, meaning the forest of Dean, "as there are so many places of the name of Dean "in the kingdom." This however is surely an objection of no weight. The Cistercian abbey of Flexeley, or Dene, was actually situated in the forest of Dean (2), and was anciently called Flaxlyn abbey of St. Mary de Dean (3). This abbey, together with Dean Magna (alias Mitchell Dean), and Dean Parva, all lie in the same hundred with the forest (the hundred of Saint Briannell), and are included in the ecclesiastical deanery, called Forest: where, therefore can the Dene of Flexely be placed, but at the forest in which it was situated, and from which it derived half of its appellation? And what pretence can a Dene in Hampshire, or a Dean in Lancashire, have to a place in a record, which relates only to the abbey of Saint Mary de Dene, in the forest of Dean? But all such reasonings are unnecessary: the point is ascertained beyond the possibility of a doubt, by Henry the Second's confirmation of the original

(2) Tanner's Notitia, p. 147.

(3) Atkin's Gloucestershire, p. 288. Edit. 1768.

grant,

grant, which may be seen below (4). The king, by this record, confirms to the monks, *locum qui dicitur Flexleia*

- (4) Flexleyensis Abbatia, in agro Gloucestrensi. Carta Henrici Normannorum Ducis, Donatorum concessionem recitans et confirmans.

H. Dux Normanniæ et comes Andegaviæ archiepiscopus, &c. Salutem. Sciatis me concessisse et confirmasse Deo et Sanctæ Mariæ, et monachis ordinis Cisterciensis, pro salute antecessorum meorum, et mea propria, in elemosinam perpetuam, omnes illas donationes quas Rogerus Comes Herefordiæ eisdem monachis in elemosinam dedit, juxta testimonium cartarum suarum, scilicet, locum quendam in valle Castiart, quæ dicitur Flexleia, ad construendam abbatiam, et totam terram illam quæ dicitur Wastadene, quæ fuit Wulfrici, et quandam fabricam ferrariam apud Edlandam, et totam terram sub veteri Castello de Dena ad sartandam, et illam quæ est assartata, et quandam piscariam apud Redliam, quæ dicitur Newerra, et quoddam pratum in Pulmede, et omnia assiamenta sua in foresta de Dena, et dominicum totum de Dimmoc, et terram illam quæ fuit Uthrediclerici, et terram Ernaldi, et terram Wulfrici, ita scilicet, quod ipse Uthredus clericus remaneat in manu abbatis, cum escambio suo, scilicet duabus virgatis terræ quod nemini inde respondeat nisi abbati; et dimidium nemus apud Dimmoc; et singulis annis *totam decimam Castaneorum de Dena*, et terram illam quam adquietavit ipse Comes Herefordiæ de Gaufrido filio predicti Wulfrici, et aliam quam ipse Comes adquietavit de Lefrico, de Strattra. Quare volo, &c. Nos autem has prædictas donationes non tantum eis confirmo, sed etiam omnes alias quas idem Rogerus Comes Herefordiæ illis in elemosinam daturus est. Testibus Rogero Comite Herefordiæ, Willielmo de Crivecuer, Ricardo de Humet, Constab. Philippo de Columbariis, Roberto de Ivigum, Willielmo de Angervill, Willielmo Cumin, apud Evesham.

Cart. Antiq. X. Num. 4.

Carta regis Henrici Secundi.

Henricus, Dei gratia, Rex Angliæ, et Dux Normanniæ et Aquitanniæ, et Comes Andegaviæ, Archiepiscopis, &c. et omnibus fidelibus suis Anglis et Normannis, tam præsentibus, quam



*Flexleia ubi abbatia fundata est, by the title of Locum quendam in foresta de Lená.* He afterwards goes on, to

quam futuris, salutem. Sciatis me dedisse et confirmasse Deo et Beatæ Mariæ et Monachis meis de Dena, quos in propria protectione suscepi, pro salute mea et antecessorum meorum, in elemosinam perpetuam, locum quendam in foresta de Dena, videlicet, totam vallem de Castiard, et locum qui dicitur Flexleia, ubi abbatia fundata est de ordine Cisterciensi, in honore beatæ virginis Mariæ, pro amore Dei, et pro anima regis Henrici avi mei, et Comitis Gaufridi Andegaviæ patris mei, et Matildis imperatricis matris meæ, et aliorum parentum et antecessorum meorum, et pro salute mea, et hæredum meorum, et pro stabilitate et pace regni Angliæ. Concessi etiam eis et confirmavi omnes illas donationes quas Rogerus comes Herefordiæ eisdem in elemosinam dedit sicut cartæ ejus testantur. Præterea dedi eis et confirmavi omnia aïfamenta in eadem foresta mea de Dena, scilicet pasturam juvencis suis et porcis suis, et omnibus aliis pecoribus suis, et ligna et materiem ad domos suas et ad ædificia sua facienda, et ad alias res usui suo necessarias, sine vasto in eadem foresta mea. Et de eadem foresta dedi eis *decimam castanearum mearum*, et grangeam quæ dicitur Wastedena, et unam forgeam ferrariam, ita liberam et quietam et operantem, per omnia, sicut meæ dominicæ forgeæ. Et totam terram sub veteri castello de Dene ad sartandam, et illam quæ est affartata; videlicet, centum acras, et quandam piscariam apud Reidleiam, que dicitur Nolwera, et quoddam pratum apud Reidleiam, quod vocatur Pulmede; scilicet quatuor acras, et terram quam illis dedit in elemosinam Leuvericus de Staura, et grangiam quam eis dedi apud Wallemere, de affartis meis; videlicet, ducentas acras, cum pratis et pascuis, et omnibus aliis aïfamentis, et quatuor acras de Northwoda, et totam dominicatum meum de Dimmoch, et quinque virgatas terræ et dimidiam, præter dominicatum, et dimidium nemus meum de Dimmoch, et dimidium retium in manu mea, propter aïfamenta hominum meorum, ea scilicet de causa, ut monachi mei habeant suam partem nemoris in bene et in pace, et sine omni communione aliorum hominum; et firmiter præcipio, ut nullus eos super hoc inquietet. Præterea dedi eis effartum quoddam subtus Castiard, quod vocatur Terra Vincentii. Hæc omnia dedi

to give them *omnia afiamenta in eadem foreſta mea de Denā*; and then he particularly ſubjoins, *et de eadem foreſta dedi eis Decimam Caſtanearum mearum*. Can any words poſſibly be more explicit than theſe? And can Mr. Barrington aver againſt the teſtimony of an authentic record? But, though the Dena of the record does mean the foreſt of Dean, Mr. Barrington has ſtill an objection in reſerve; and aſſerts that “there are not the leaſt veſtiges of any ſuch trees in “this foreſt at preſent.” (p. 29.) But is Mr. Barrington ſure there are no veſtiges of cheſnut trees in the foreſt? Did Mr. Barrington inſpect into every part of this ample area? And did no trees, no ſtumps, no ſtools, eſcape his eye in this wide unbounded range? But the fact appears otherwiſe. There are not merely ſtumps, not merely ſtools, of cheſnut trees; but actual and abſolute trees of cheſnut exiſting at this day, in the foreſt of Dean.

In a letter to me, dated Dec. 10, 1770, from the Rev. Mr. William Crawley, reſident at, and miniſter of Flaxley (uncle to Thomas Crawley Bovey, Eſq; the preſent owner of Flaxley abbey); is the following account:—“In this very foreſt and “near Flaxley is a parcel of land, about three or

*dedi Deo et beatæ Mariæ et monachis meis Deo devote ſervientibus, habenda et tenenda imperpetuum, ſoluta et quieta ab omni reguardo et exactione ſeculari. Quare volo, &c. Teſte Ricardo de Humet, Willielmo de Creveca, Philippo de Columbariis, Willielmo de Angervill, apud Eveſham. (Monastiicon Anglicanum, Tom. I. p. 884).*

Pat. 22 R. II. part 3. m. 16. per Inſpex. Vide Cart. antiq. N. N. 30. Et pat. 27 H. VI. par. I. m. 9.

“ four hundred acres, which is still denominated  
 “ *chesnut* : though neither chesnut, nor any other  
 “ kind of tree is to be seen there, excepting what  
 “ we call underwood or coppice, mostly hazel. In-  
 “ deed in many places of the forest, I find chesnut  
 “ trees are (sparingly) to be met with ; but within  
 “ a few yards of the above spot, in a wood of my  
 “ nephew, are many of remarkable fine growth.”  
 But, even if the fact had been as Mr. Barrington hath  
 stated it, the faith of a record attesting the existence  
 of chesnut trees formerly, in the forest of Dean, was  
 surely not to be superseded by the non-existence of  
 such trees at present ; they might have existed former-  
 ly, though they do not exist at present. And the  
 record explicitly assures us that they did exist, and  
 as early at least as the reign of Henry the Second.

The chesnut tree, therefore, may still claim a nat-  
 ural relation to this island, notwithstanding the two  
 arguments of Mr. Barrington against it : and if we  
 look into this kingdom, we see the chesnut tree, not  
 confined to Sittingbourne woods, or to Dean forest ;  
 but scattered with a free hand, through many parts  
 thereof ; shooting up with all the healthy vigour of  
 genuine natives, and giving denomination to several  
 places amongst us. Thus the chesnut wood of Sit-  
 tingbourne, has given the name of Chesnut-street,  
 to the neighbouring road ; and the old Saxon half  
 of the name, Street, strongly intimates the other half  
 to be very ancient. The appellation occurs in the  
 first map, that notices the names of the roads, the  
 map of Kent by Morden. In Hertfordshire is a  
 town, called in old writings, Cheston, Chesthunte,  
 Shesterhunte, and Cestrehunt ; and Norden (in his  
 description

discription of Hertfordshire, p. 15,) says, Cur non  
(5) Cher<sup>u</sup>in? Castanetum of Chesse-nut trees?

The Saxons were well acquainted with this tree, and, according to Skinner and Lye, called it Cýrzel and Cýrz-beam; the same word evidently with our present Chef-nut. Dr. Johnson, in his *Mercurius Botanicus*, 1634, remarks the chesnut to have been not unfrequent in the woods, as well as in the plantations, of his own times; *Castanea Vulgaris in sylvis nonnullis et viridariis*;—Mr. Dale, in his *History of Harwich*, mentions various chesnut trees to be growing in Stour wood, within the parish immediately adjoining to Harwich. Blackstone, in his *Specimen Botanicum*, p. 12. speaks of chesnut trees growing in (6) Bulwin woods, between Dartford and Bexley, in Kent, plentifully; not twenty miles distant from London. Mr. Philipot, in his *Villare Cantianum*, which was printed in 1659, says in p. 237. “There  
“ is a manor, called Northwood Chasteners, which  
“ name complies with the situation; for it stands North  
“ from the town, in a wood where chesnut trees  
“ formerly grew in abundance.” “The noble ches-  
“ nut tree, says Morton, (Northamptonshire, p. 397.)  
“ belonging to the Worshipful Thomas Tryst, Esq;  
“ of Marford, is the largest of that kind I have any  
“ where seen: the body of it is no less than fifteen  
“ feet eight inches in circumference; and it extends  
“ its branches proportionably.” “On the outside of  
“ the Roman station at Temple Brough, near Sheffield,  
“ in Yorkshire, says Gibson’s Camden, (Vol. II. p.  
“ 847.) “ is a large bank, upon which are huge trees,  
“ and upon the side of the bank of the highway,

(5) Chestin.

(6) Now Baldwyn Woods.

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“ there

“ there grew a chesnut tree that had scarce any bark  
 “ upon it, but only upon some top branches which  
 “ bore leaves ; it was not tall, but the bole could  
 “ scarcely be fathomed by three men.” “ There was  
 “ standing, says Evelyn (in his *Sylva*, Fol. London,  
 “ 1706, p. 223.) an old and decayed chesnut at  
 “ Fraiting, in Essex, whose very stump did yield  
 “ thirty fizeable loads of logs. I could produce you  
 “ another of the same kind in Gloucestershire, which  
 “ contains within the bowels of it, a pretty wain-  
 “ scotted room, enlightened with windows, and  
 “ furnished with seats, &c.” And to these we may  
 add two great chesnut trees flourishing at Tortworth,  
 in Gloucestershire, and at Writtlepark, in Essex ; the  
 former is allowed, even by Mr. Barrington, “ to be  
 “ the oldest tree that we have any account of, per-  
 “ haps in Europe.” (p. 30.) And the following de-  
 scription of both, was published about twelve or  
 thirteen years ago (7) ; “ At the seat of the Lord  
 “ Ducie, at Tortworth, in Gloucestershire, there is  
 “ now growing an English chesnut, which measures  
 “ fifty one feet about, at the height of six feet above  
 “ the ground. This tree divides itself, at the crown,  
 “ into three limbs, one of which measures twenty  
 “ eight feet and half in the girt, and five feet above  
 “ the crown of the tree. The soil is a soft clay,  
 “ somewhat loomy ; the situation is the North West  
 “ side of a hill ; this tree was stiled, in King John’s  
 “ time, the great and old chesnut tree at Tortworth ;  
 “ so it is supposed to be now above one thousand  
 “ years old.”

(7) London Magazine, 1758, p. 482.

“ There

“ There is another stately chesnut (8), but little inferior to that at Torteworth, in Writtle park, three miles to the left of Ingatestone, in Essex. The late Lord Petre measured this tree, and found it forty five feet girth, five feet from the ground; this vast trunk supports a lofty head, which, at a distance, affords a noble prospect, and well deserves to be surveyed by all that admire such wonderful productions.” At Little Wymondley, near Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, is an old decayed chesnut tree, the trunk whereof (measured within these two years) was found to be forty two feet circumference in one part, and forty eight feet in another, as I am credibly informed.(9) And, to give additional force to an argument which is already decisive of itself, we may observe, that in the New Forest, there are very many chesnuts irregularly scattered among the oaks and other trees; and now to be seen in the road from Limington to Southampton.

In this great abundance of chesnut trees formerly among us, we need not wonder that chesnut timber was frequently used in old houses, preferable to oak; it was then the timber most esteemed by our joiners and carpenters. And, though very lasting, yet it has been justly discredited, in these later ages, for houses, because, when it begins to decay, the consumption commences at the core, and the heart is the first destroyed. And we can produce some

(8) In a News Paper, called The Citizen, or General Advertiser, Sept. 21. 1758.

(9) This tree is situate in the grounds, and near the house of Little Wymondley Bury, late the estate of Lord Grosvenor, but purchased within two or three years by Col. Cracherode.

proofs, additional to the many that have been formerly produced, of chefnut timber actually employed in buildings. "The old houses in the city of Gloucester (as the Reverend Mr. Crawley informs me that he has often been assured) are constructed of chefnut, derived assuredly from the chefnut trees in the forest of Dean." In many of the oldest houses at Feversham is much genuine chefnut, as well as oak, employed. In the nunnery of Davington, near Feversham (now entire), the timber consists of oak intermingled with chefnut. And the great chefnut beam which supported the leads of the church tower at Feversham, when it was lately taken down, was found rotted for many feet at the extremity; and had, as it were, a mere shell of sound timber remaining about it.

Thus have I endeavoured, with all the respect due to genius and truth, to point out some of the mistakes into which, I apprehend, Mr. Barrington has fallen. I might have dwelt more largely upon the antiquarian part of my subject; but the botanical was more immediately my point. And in the examination of this, I have shewn, that the chefnut tree flourishes greatly in this kingdom; that it appears wildly scattered over the face of the country; that it was actually settled among us many centuries ago; and used by our ancestors in buildings; and that it was even familiarly known to the Saxons. All these united evidences strongly co-operate to prove it a native of this island, and must absolutely be allowed to prove it, till Mr. Barrington, or some other person, can produce superior evidence to the contrary.

I beg

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I beg leave to submit these observations to your  
considerations ; and have the honor to remain,

S I R,

Your most faithful

humble servant,

Doctors Commons,  
Jan. 5, 1771.

And. Coltee Ducarel.

XVIII. *Copy*