the cleansing of woollen cloths from oil, and for whitening silk and freeing it from the resinous varnish with which it is naturally covered. Pure alkaline lixiviums being capa­ble of dissolving oils more effectually than soap, might be employed for the same purposes; but when this activity is not mitigated by oil, as it is in soap, they are capable of al­tering, and even of destroying entirely, by their causticity, most substances, especially animal matters, as silk, wool, and others; whereas soap cleanses from oil almost as effectually as pure alkali, without danger of altering or destroying; a circumstance which renders it very useful.

Soap was imperfectly known to the ancients. It is men­tioned by Pliny as made of fat and ashes, and as an inven­tion of the Gauls. Aretæus and others inform us, that the Greeks obtained their knowledge of its medical use from the Romans.

*The following Table shows the quantity of Soap charged with the duties of Excise in the United Kingdom during the years* 1835, 1836, *and* 1837, *and the number of Soap-makers during the same period, with the duties paid by them.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Quantities Charged. | | | Amount of Duty. | | |
| 1835. | 1836. | 1837. | 1835. | 1836. | 1837. |
| Hard Soap, lbs. | 148,806,207 | 146,539,210 | 140,822,611 | £930,038 15 8 | £915,860 18 41/2 | £880,141 6 3 |
| Soft Soap | 12,103,109 | 13,358,894 | 11,794,834 | 50,429 12 5 | 55,662 1 2 | 49,145 2 10 |
| Soap-makers.... | 450 | 432 | 402 | 1,800 0 0 | 1,728 0 0 | 1,608 0 0 |

The direct duty charged on hard soap is 11/2d. per lb., and on soft soap 1d. per lb. Previously to June 1833, the duty on hard soap was 3d. per lb. The exorbitant amount of the tax, which was fully 100 per cent. on the cost, gave occa­sion to a great deal of smuggling, which is still carried on to some extent, and is facilitated by the injudicious regulation of taxing this commodity in one part of the kingdom, and leaving it untaxed in another; no duty being charged on soap manufactured in Ireland, and the duty being drawn back from such quantities as are imported into Ireland from Britain.

SOCAGE, in its most general and extensive significa­tion, seems to denote a tenure by any certain and determi­nate service. And in this sense it is by our ancient writers constantly put in opposition to chivalry or knight-service, where the tenure was precarious and uncertain. The ser­vice must therefore be certain, in order to denominate it socage; as to hold by fealty and twenty shillings rent; or, by homage, fealty, and twenty shillings rent; or, by homage and fealty without rent; or, by fealty and certain corporal service, as ploughing the lord’s land for three days; or, by fealty only without any other service; for all these are te­nures in socage.

Socage is of two sorts: *free*-socage, where the services are not only certain but honourable; and *villein* socage, where the services, though certain, are of a baser nature. Such as hold by the former tenure are called, in Glanville and other subsequent authors, by the name of *liberi sohe- manni,* or tenants in free-socage. The word is derived from the Saxon appellation *soc,* which signifies liberty or privi­lege, and, being joined to an usual termination, it forms *socage,* in Latin *socagium,* signifying a free or privileged tenure.

It seems probable that the socage-tenures were the relics of Saxon liberty; retained by such persons as had neither forfeited them to the king, nor been obliged to exchange their tenure for the more honourable, as it was called, but at the same time more burthensome, tenure of knight-ser­vice. This is peculiarly remarkable in the tenure which prevails in Kent, called *gavelkind,* which is generally ac­knowledged to be a species of socage-tenure; and its pre­servation from the innovations of the Norman conqueror is a fact universally known. And those who thus pre­served their liberties were said to hold in free and common socage.

SOCIETY, a number of rational and moral beings, unit­ed for their common preservation and happiness. There are shoals of fishes, herds of quadrupeds, and flocks of birds. We call crows and beavers, and several other species of animals, *gregarious ;* but it is hardly good English to say that they are *social.* It is only human society that can be regarded in this light, and the phenomena which it presents are highly worthy of our notice.

Such are the advantages which each individual evidently derives from living in a social state; and so helpless does any human being appear in a solitary state, that we are na­turally led to conclude, that if there ever was a period at which mankind were solitary beings, that period could not be of long duration ; for their aversion to solitude and love of society would soon induce them to enter into social union. Such is the opinion which we are led to conceive when we compare our own condition as members of civilised and en­lightened society with that of the brutes around us, or with that of savages in the earlier and ruder periods of social life. When we hear of Indians wandering naked through the woods, destitute of arts, unskilled in agriculture, scarcely ca­pable of moral distinctions, void of all religious sentiments, or possessed with the most absurd notions concerning su­perior powers, and procuring means of subsistence in a man­ner equally precarious with that of the beasts of prey, we look down with pity on their condition, or turn from it with horror. When we view the order of cultivated society, and consider our institutions, arts, and manners, we rejoice over our superior wisdom and happiness. Man in a civilized state appears a being of a superior order to man in a savage state ; yet some philosophers tell us, that it is only he who, having been educated in society, has been taught to depend upon others, that can be helpless or miserable when placed in a solitary state. They view the savage who exerts himself with intrepidity to supply his wants, or bears them with fortitude, as the greatest hero, and possessing the greatest happiness.

Whatever be the supposed advantages of a solitary state, certain it is that mankind, at the earliest periods, were unit­ed in society. Various theories have been formed concern­ing the circumstances and principles which gave rise to this union ; but it has been sufficiently proved, that the greater part of them are founded in error; that they suppose the ori­ginal state of man to have been that of savages; and that such a supposition is contradicted by the most authentic records of antiquity. For though the records of the earlier ages are generally obscure, fabulous, and imperfect, yet happily there is *one* free from the imperfections of the rest, and of un­doubted authenticity, to which we may safely have recourse. This record is the Pentateuch of Moses, which presents us with a genuine account of the origin of man and of society.