



CHAPTER II.

*THE ENGLISH OPEN FIELD SYSTEM TRACED BACK
TO THE DOMESDAY SURVEY—IT IS THE SHELL
OF SERFDOM—THE MANOR WITH A VILLAGE COM-
MUNITY IN VILLENAGE UPON IT.*

I. THE IDENTITY OF THE SYSTEM WITH THAT OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

THAT this open field system, the remains of which have now been examined, was identical with that which existed in the Middle Ages might easily be proved by a continuous chain of examples. But it will be enough for the present purpose to pick out a few typical instances, using them as stepping-stones.

It would be easy to quote Tusser's description of 'Champion Farming' in the sixteenth century. In his 'Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry' he describes the respective merits of 'several,' and 'champion' or open field farming. But as he describes the latter as a system already out of date in his time, and as rapidly giving way to the more economical system of 'several' or enclosed fields, we may pass on at once to evidence another couple of centuries earlier in date.

CHAP. II.

Tusser.