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ON

MANKIND AND POLITICAL
ARITHMETIC.

BY

SIR WILLIAM PETTY.



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INTRODUCTION.

WILLIAM PETTY, born on the 26th of May, 1623, was the son of a clothier at Romsey in Hampshire. After education at the Romsey Grammar School, he continued his studies at Caen in Normandy. There he supported himself by a little trade while learning French, and advancing his knowledge of Greek, Latin, Mathematics, and much else that belonged to his idea of a liberal education. His idea was large. He came back to England, and had for a short time a place in the Navy; but at the age of twenty he went abroad again, and was away three years, studying actively at Utrecht, Leyden, and Amsterdam, and also in Paris. In Paris he assisted Thomas Hobbes in drawing diagrams for his treatise on optics. At the age of twenty-four Petty took out a patent for the invention of a copying machine. It was described in a folio pamphlet "On Double Writing." That was in 1647, in Civil War time, and although Petty followed Hobbes in his studies, he did not share