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REPORT

ON THE

STATE OF IRELAND

IN

MIDSUMMER, 1875.

BY

W. NEILSON HANCOCK, LL.D.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY ALEXANDER THOM, 87 & 88, ABBEY-STREET.

1875.

Houses of the Oireachtas

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REPORT

ON

STATE OF IRELAND.

MIDSUMMER, 1875.

64, Upper Gardiner-street,
Dublin, 30th July, 1875.

SIR,

In pursuance of the commands of His Grace the Lord Lieutenant I have prepared the following Report on the state of Ireland in June, 1875.

I.—*Origin of References to Statistics as to State of Ireland in Lord Lieutenant's Speeches.*

The time honoured usage of giving the sentiment "Prosperity to Ireland," in connexion with the toast of the Lord Lieutenant, has held its ground, while the practice of adding appropriate sentiments has been dropped in the case of most other toasts. Under these circumstances there must be some feeling of appropriateness in the association of the sentiment with the head of the Irish Executive Government or the usage would have lost its force.

This appropriateness rests in part, no doubt, on the extreme care taken that the Irish Executive should be well informed on all matters that affect the welfare of the Irish people. This has been peculiarly the case in the quarter of century which has elapsed since the famine of 1846, and distress consequent upon it which prevailed from 1846 to 1850.

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Each week returns are made from every union in Ireland of the number of persons in the workhouses, and the number receiving outdoor relief. Each month the number of crimes specially reported by the Constabulary and Police are compiled; each half-year the statistics of savings invested are collected, and each year the whole agriculture of the country is brought under review in the Reports of the Registrar-General.

In this way the Executive Government of Ireland is possessed of the most minute and accurate information of all that can affect the welfare and prosperity of the people. In short no private person engaged in wide-spread business; no public company with many branches is better informed of the matters upon which the success of their business depends than the Irish Executive is of the facts necessary to guide the actions of the Executive or the Legislature in all that the public authority or power of the State can effect for the welfare of the people.

It is the prestige for completeness in the sort of information which an Executive Government should possess that has in some degree maintained the feeling that the prosperity of Ireland may be appropriately associated with the Lord Lieutenant as the head of executive government.

II.—*Condition of Irish Labouring Population in Mid-summer,* 1875, *and in* 1874, *tested by total numbers in receipt of relief.*

Of all the information thus collected the statistics which contain the largest results in the fewest figures are the weekly records of the total number of persons in the workhouses in Ireland, and the total number receiving out-door relief. These results for each week compared with the corresponding week of the preceding year afford conclusions as to the welfare and suffering of the large mass that forms the lower strata of society just above

those who have sunk into permanent destitution as certain as the observations of the thermometer do of the changes of temperature, and those of the barometer of changes in the atmosphere.

In order to use this test of pressure on the poor, it is best to take in each year not an arbitrary week but to take one connected with the seasons, and for this reason the Saturday next before the longest day or midsummer affords a good test.

NUMBER receiving relief in Workhouses in IRELAND.

Week ended Saturday, 19th June, 1875, .	44,053
„ „ 20th June, 1874, .	45,871
Decrease in 1875, .	1,818

NUMBER receiving out-door relief in IRELAND.

Week ended Saturday, 19th June, 1875, .	30,982
„ „ 20th June, 1874, .	31,765
Decrease in 1875, .	783

We have thus a clear indication that the pressure on the poor at Midsummer, 1875, was less than at Midsummer, 1874; the diminished number in the workhouses, accompanied by a simultaneous decrease in the number receiving out-door relief, place this beyond doubt.

III.—*Condition of Irish Labouring population in Midsummer,* 1875, *and in five years since* 1870, *compared with fifteen years ended* 1870, *as tested by ablebodied men and women respectively in receipt of relief.*

In comparing the result with earlier years, when the diminution of the numbers in the workhouse was accompanied by an increase of those in receipt of out-door relief, the most satisfactory figures to take are the class of ablebodied men of 15 years and upwards, a class not entitled to outdoor relief.

The necessary statistics to enable this and the subsequent analysis to be made have been supplied through the courtesy of the Irish Local Government Board.

In the following table the number of these for each year back to 1856 is given, in the second column a correction is made for the diminution of population, and the number is given for a portion of the population in each year equal to the estimated population for 1875, then the figures are in a third grouped in periods of five years for comparison.

TABLE showing *Ablebodied Men* of 15 years and upwards relieved under the Poor Law.

Saturday before Midsummer in	In Ireland.	Number in a portion of the Population equal to that in 1875.	Averages of years compared with 1875.	Excess of averages above 1875.
1856,	3,204	2,743		
1857,	2,585	2,242	2,085	633
1858,	2,176	1,905		
1859,	1,648	1,451		
1860,	1,844	1,638		
1861,	2,058	1,840		
1862,	2,980	2,662	2,243	791
1863,	3,142	2,850		
1864,	2,414	2,226		
1865,	2,088	1,939		
1866,	1,872	1,771		
1867,	2,103	2,006	1,919	467
1868,	2,138	2,057		
1869,	1,887	1,826		
1870,	1,779	1,726		
1871,	1,464	1,437		
1872,	1,460	1,427	1,531	79
1873,	1,520	1,505		
1874,	1,565	1,560		
1875,	1,452	1,452	1,452	—

It will be perceived from this table that the number (1,452) of ablebodied males in workhouses in Ireland on Saturday before Midsummer, 1875, was 108 less than the number in 1874, 79 less than the average of 5 years ended 1874, 467 less than the average of 5 years ended 1869, 791 less than the average of 5 years ended 1864, and 633 less than the average of 5 years ended 1859. For the

whole 20 years there were, making allowance for changes in population, only three lower years, 1859 was 1 lower, 1871 was 15 lower, and 1872 was 25 lower. The 5 years since the passing of the Land Act of 1870 present the very low average of 1,476 able-bodied males above 15 years of age in receipt of relief, whilst the numbers in the 5 years ended 1869 were 1,919, and the numbers in 5 years ended 1864, 2,243.

These figures show the weakness of Mr. Butt's general impeachment of the Land Act as having failed to secure the welfare of the small tenant class and the labouring class with which they are so closely connected.

Next to able-bodied men, the able-bodied women who are dependent on themselves for support, present a class that afford a perfect test as to the state of the poor apart from all question of the administration of out-door relief. This class consists of able-bodied women in workhouses, and widows with two or more children, the only class of able-bodied women allowed to get out-door relief. In the following table the number of able-bodied women in workhouses on the Saturday before midsummer in each year is given in the first column. In the second column an estimate is added for the number of widows receiving out-door relief from the published number of widows receiving out-door relief on the last Saturday in February in each year, brought up to this year by the Irish Local Government Board. The third column contains the total estimated number of able-bodied women in receipt of relief. In the fourth column a correction is made for population, and the number is given for each year for a portion of the population equal to the estimated population of Ireland in 1875.

TABLE showing *Ablebodied Women* of 15 years and upwards relieved under the Poor Law.

Saturday before Midsummer in	In Work-houses.	Widows, Out-door.	Total Ablebodied Women Relieved in Ireland.	Number in portion of Population of Ireland, equal to that in 1875.	Average of years, compared with 1875.	Excesses of averages above 1875.
1856, .	9,727	–	9,727	8,618		
1857, .	7,281	33	7,314	6,546	6,556	903
1858, .	6,726	77	6,803	6,123		
1859, .	5,409	51	5,460	4,936		
1860, .	6,165	84	6,249	5,699		
1861, .	6,664	170	6,834	6,280		
1862, .	8,224	175	8,399	7,744	7,037	1,384
1863, .	8,557	402	8,959	8,323		
1864, .	7,070	470	7,540	7,140		
1865, .	5,968	588	6,556	6,268		
1866, .	5,443	675	6,118	5,916		
1867, .	6,018	892	6,910	6,730	6,421	768
1868, .	5,862	1,043	6,905	6,746		
1869, .	5,451	1,122	6,573	6,443		
1870, .	4,731	1,148	5,879	5,785		
1871, .	4,063	1,319	5,382	5,313		
1872, .	4,207	1,419	5,626	5,565	5,759	106
1873, .	4,552	1,634	6,186	6,143		
1874, .	4,431	1,577	6,008	5,990		
1875, .	4,137	1,516	5,653	5,653	5,653	–

These figures exhibit results in all respects similar to those of able-bodied men. Notwithstanding the greatly extended liberality of the Guardians in increasing the number of widows with two or more legitimate children dependent upon them receiving out-door relief from 33 in 1857 to 1,516 in 1875 (column No. 3, above), the total number of able-bodied women relieved (5,653) in 1875 is lower than any of the averages and lower than any single years except 1859, 1871, and 1872. The average of the 5 years (1871–1875) (5,733) is also very low compared with any of the averages of preceding years.

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The general welfare of the labouring classes in Ireland in 1875, and in the last 5 years on an average, as compared with 15 years ending 1870, as measured by the most comprehensive and general test the pressure upon the able-bodied, whether men or women, seeking Poor Law relief, may be taken as placed beyond doubt.

IV.—*Statistics of Crime.*

The state of Ireland as to crime was so fully considered in the debates on the "Peace Preservation Act" that it is only necessary to append a few figures as to the state of crime in the first six months of 1875 compared with the preceding year, and a single table showing the position that year occupied in the general series as to crime.

(*a.*) *Agrarian Outrages specially reported by the Royal Irish Constabulary.*

First six months of 1875, . . .	75
First six months of 1874, . . .	118
Decrease in 1875, . . .	43

(*b.*) *Outrages and other Offences specially reported by the Royal Irish Constabulary.*

First six months of 1875, . . .	1,039
First six months of 1874, . . .	1,108
Decrease in 1875, . . .	69

(*c.*) *Outrages and other Offences specially reported by Dublin Metropolitan Police.*

First six months of 1875, . . .	3,625
First six months of 1874, . . .	3,824
Decrease in 1875, . . .	199

These figures all indicate that the progressive diminution of serious crime which has taken place in Ireland during the past ten years, is likely to be followed by a further decrease in 1875.

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(*d.*) *Crime in* 1874, *compared with averages of previous years since* 1864.

In the following table the crime of 1874 is measured by indictable offences not disposed of summarily, the test of serious crime adopted in the Irish and English criminal statistics.

TABLE showing the Number of Indictable Offences not disposed of summarily in 1874, compared with preceding Ten Years.

YEAR.	Number of Offences.	Averages of Five Years compared with 1873.	Excess of averages above 1874.
1864,	10,865		
1865,	9,766		
1866,	9,082	9,613	2,951
1867,	9,260		
1868,	9,090		
1869,	9,178		
1870,	9,517		
1871,	8,155	8,302	1,640
1872,	7,716		
1873,	6,942		
1874,	6,662	6,662	—

It appears from this table that serious crime has fallen to a very low figure—6,662; that this is 1,640 below the average of the preceding 5 years, and 2,951 below the average of 5 years ending 1868, and 4,203 below the amount so recently as 11 years ago, in 1864. The differences are so large that it has not been thought necessary to complicate the table by a column allowing for the changes of population.

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V. *Statistics of Savings invested in Ireland.*

(*a.*) Total Savings invested, of which Returns can be readily obtained.

The usual statistics showing the aggregate investments in Government and India Stock, in Deposits and Cash Balances in Irish Joint Stock Banks and in Trustee and Post Office Savings Banks, on the 30th of June last, have been collected through the courtesy of the Bank officials and the officials of the National Debt Office and Post Office, and the results compared with those of the preceding ten years in the following table :—

Aggregate Investments in Government and India Stock, in Deposits and Cash Balances in Irish Joint Stock Banks and in Trustee and Post Office Savings Banks, on 30th June, 1875, compared with ten preceding years.

Year.	Amount.	Average of Five Years compared with 1874.	Increase.
	£	£	£
1865, December 31st,	58,113,000		
1866, „ . .	59,676,000		
1867, „ . .	60,815,000	60,387,000	—
1868, „ . .	61,356,000		
1869, „ . .	61,977,000		
1870, „ . .	63,553,000		
1871, June 30th, .	65,770,000		
1872, „ . .	66,947,000	65,932,000	5,545,000
1873, „ . .	66,027,000		
1874, „ . .	67,362,000		
1875, „ . .	68,306,000	68,306,000	2,374,000

This table shows a progressive increase in the aggregate of these investments in every year since 1865, except in the year 1873; in that year there was a falling-off of £920,000, explained in the Report of Midsummer, 1873, to have arisen from the very severe winter of 1872–73.

The aggregate on the 30th June last presents the satisfactory contrast of an increase of £944,000, following an increase of £1,335,000 in 1874.

The aggregate now reached of £68,306,000 is £2,374,000

above the average of the preceding 5 years (£65,932,000) is £7,919,000 above the average of the 5 years ended 1869 (£60,387,000); and is £10,193,000 above the amount in 1865 (£58,113,000), only 11 years ago.

(*b.*) Deposits and Cash Balances in Irish Joint Stock Banks.

The statistics on this subject have been compiled from the returns furnished by the Bank officials for the information of the Irish Government, on the understanding that the returns, so far as the affairs of each Bank were concerned, were to be strictly confidential, and that the aggregate amount alone should be published.

Deposits and Cash Balances in Irish Joint Stock Banks.

Year.	Amount.	Average of Five Years compared with 1875.	Increase.
	£	£	£
1865, December 31st,	18,619,000		
1866, „ . .	20,957,000		
1867, „ . .	21,974,000	21,277,000	—
1868, „ . .	22,164,000		
1869, „ . .	22,673,000		
1870, „ . .	24,366,000		
1871, June 30th, .	26,049,000		
1872, „ . .	27,214,000	27,136,000	5,859,000
1873, „ . .	28,194,000		
1874, „ . .	29,859,000		
1875, „ . .	31,815,000	31,815,000	4,679,000

It appears from this table that the Deposits and Cash Balances in the nine Joint Stock Banks of Ireland, have reached on 30th June last, the amount of £31,815,000, which is £4,629,000 more than the average of the preceding five years (£27,136,000), and £10,544,000 above the average of five years ended 1869 (£21,277,000), and £13,196,000 above the amount on the 31st December, 1865 (£18,619,000).

(*c.*) INVESTMENTS IN GOVERNMENT FUNDS AND INDIA STOCK, ON WHICH DIVIDENDS ARE PAID AT THE BANK OF IRELAND.

The statistics on this subject are shown in the following table :—

YEAR.	Amount.	Average of Five Years compared with 1875.	*Decrease.*
	£	£	£
1865, December 31st,	37,450,000		
1866, ,, .	36,958,000		
1867, ,, .	37,128,000	37,086,000	—
1868, ,, .	37,023,000		
1869, ,, .	36,871,000		
1870, ,, .	36,549,000		
1871, June 30th, .	36,927,000		
1872, ,, .	36,756,000	35,985,000	1,101,000
1873, ,, .	34,953,000		
1874, ,, .	34,739,000		
1875, ,, .	33,640,000	33,640,000	2,345,000

This table presents an opposite result to the preceding, by showing the amount invested in Government and India Stock, on which dividends are paid at the Bank of Ireland, on 30th June last to be £33,640,000, or £2,345,000 less than the average of the preceding five years (£35,985,000), and £3,446,000 less than the average of five years ended 1869 (£37,086,000.)

As the rate of interest for investments in the Funds, $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., is higher than the usual rate of interest on Deposit Receipts and Cash Balances, it is obvious that the sum withdrawn from this class of investments has not been transferred to Deposits in the Joint Stock Banks, and so forms no part of the increase of a much larger amount already noticed in the Bank investments.

The transfer has really taken place to Railway Debenture Stock, and to American and Russian and other Foreign Bonds, which bear a higher interest than the Funds. An effort was made to obtain, through the Stock-brokers, statistics as to the Securities to which the Funds have been thus transferred, but it was unsuccessful.

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(*d.*) Deposits in Post Office Savings Banks.

The usual statistics on this subject are shown in the following table :—

Year.	Amount.	Average of Five Years compared with 1875.	Increase.
	£	£	£
1865, December 31st,	207,000		
1866, „ .	221,000		
1867, „ .	260,000	300,000	—
1868, „ .	356,000		
1869, „ .	458,000		
1870, „ .	583,000		
1871, June 30th, .	643,000		
1872, „ .	727,000	698,000	398,000
1873, „ .	750,000		
1874, „ .	788,000		
1875, „ .	845,000	845,000	147,000

The Post Office Savings Banks have had an uninterrupted progress since 1864. They were first established in Ireland in 1862. The progress thus shown indicates great confidence in Government management and security.

(*e*). Deposits in Trustee Savings Banks.

Trustee Savings Banks are in the process of being superseded by the Post Office Savings Banks. Again, there was a serious run on the Dublin Savings Bank in the spring of 1874, and although confidence appears to have been completely restored, the law prevents savings drawn out being replaced at a greater rate than £30 in the year. In a recent debate in Parliament the imperfect nature of the security of Depositors in Trustee Savings Banks was pointed out by an eminent financial statesman, as the Government are responsible only for what is invested by the Trustees, and not to each Depositor, as in the case of Post Office Savings Banks. From all these causes the statistics of Trustee Savings Banks, taken by themselves, are a very imperfect test of the condition of the classes who deposit in them. As the money with-

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drawn from them is, to some extent, invested either in Joint Stock Banks or Post Office Savings Banks, in a comparison extending over a series of years, it is essential to include them in the aggregate of investments.

DEPOSITS in Trustee Savings Banks.

YEAR.	Amount.	Average of Five Years compared with 1875.	Increase. or Decrease.
	£	£	£
1865, December 31st,	1,837,000		
1866, „ .	1,541,000		
1867, „ .	1,633,000	1,760,000	—
1868, „ .	1,814,000		
1869, „ .	1,975,000		
1870, „ .	2,055,000		
1871, June 30th, .	2,151,000		*Increase*
1872, „ .	2,250,000	2,113,000	353,000
1873, „ .	2,131,000		
1874, „ .	1,976,000		*Decrease*
1875, „ .	2,005,000	2,005,000	108,000

It appears from this table that the Deposits in Trustee Savings Banks on the 30th of June, 1875, were £2,005,000, and showed a decrease below the average of the previous five years of £108,000. There was, however, an increase on the single year of £29,000.

As that average, however (£2,113,000) had been £353,000 above the average of the five years ended 1869 (£1,760,000), it follows that Deposits in these Banks on the 30th of June last (£2,005,000) was £245,000 above the average of five years ended 1869 (£1,760,000.)

(*f.*) AGGREGATE DEPOSITS IN SAVINGS BANKS, BOTH POST OFFICE AND TRUSTEE.

From the transfers that go on from Trustee Savings Banks to the Post Office Savings Banks, and from the Post Office Savings Banks (with better security, a larger number of offices and more convenient hours) attracting new business, the aggregate of the Deposits in both classes of Savings Banks affords a better standard of comparison

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for a series of years than the Deposits in either, taken alone, and the result is shown in the following table :—

AGGREGATE DEPOSITS in Savings Banks, both Post Office and Trustee.

YEAR.	Amount.	Average of Five Years compared with 1875.	Increase.
	£	£	£
1865, December 31st,	2,044,000		
1866, „ . .	1,761,000		
1867, „ . .	1,893,000	2,060,000	—
1868, „ . .	2,170,000		
1869, „ . .	2,433,000		
1870, „ . .	2,638,000		
1871, June 30th, .	2,794,000		
1872, „ . .	2,977,000	2,811,000	751,000
1873, „ . .	2,881,000		
1874, „ . .	2,764,000		
1875, „ . .	2,851,000	2,851,000	40,000

The aggregate of Deposits in Savings Banks on 30th June, 1875 (£2,851,000) is only £40,000 above the average of the five preceding years (£2,811,000), but is £791,000 above the average of five years ended 1869.

This table indicates continuous progress from 1866 to 1872, when a maximum of £2,977,000 was reached; there was a falling-off for two years (one of them—1873—a very unfavourable one for the poor, as noticed in the Report for that year). In the past year there has been an increase in the aggregate of £87,000, raising the aggregate savings to a higher figure than in any years except 1867, 1872, and 1873.

(*g*) STATISTICS of SAVINGS INVESTED in IRELAND in 1840 AND in 1875 COMPARED.

In connexion with the figures showing the extraordinary growth of wealth in live stock since the Census of 1841, to be noticed in Part III., it is important to compare the growth of Invested Savings in the same period.

Taking the earliest Returns of Deposits in Joint Stock Banks in 1840, £5,568,000, and adding 10 per cent. for

Cash Balances in other Banks than the Bank of Ireland, not then included, in the Returns, we get £6,125,000.

SAVINGS INVESTED in IRELAND.

	1840. £	1875. £	Increase in 1875. £
Bank Deposits and Cash Balances, . . .	6,125,000	31,815,000	25,690,000
Government Funds and India Stock, . .	31,237,000	33,640,000	2,403,000
In Savings Banks, . .	2,153,000	2,851,000	698,000
Total, . . .	£39,515,000	£68,306,000	£28,791,000

This table indicates an extraordinary growth in Savings invested of £28,791,000 from £39,515,000 in 1840 to £68,306,000 in 1875.

Of this growth of Savings the increase of Deposits and Cash Balances in the Irish Joint Stock Banks from £6,125,000 in 1840 to £31,815,000 in 1875, or of £25,690,000, is the most important figure.

Making every allowance for the effect of the extension of branches and the increased facilities of intercourse in bringing to the Banks money that was hoarded or kept in cash boxes and shop-tills, this increase of £25,690,000 must represent a very large and substantial increase of wealth.

VI. *Comparison of the Condition of the Labourers in Londonderry Now and 40 years ago (date of the Ordnance Memoir*, 1836).

ANY reference to statistics in the city of Londonderry naturally suggests a comparison with the information published in 1836 in the celebrated Ordnance Memoir of Londonderry, in the preparation of which the first public indication was given of the great statistical talent afterwards displayed by Sir Thomas Larcom, so long Under Secretary of Ireland. To enable this comparison to be made, statistics of wages and prices corresponding to those for the years included in the Ordnance Memoir, have been by his Grace's directions obtained through the

Irish Local Government Board, the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and the Commissioner of Valuation.

In connexion with what has been already stated in the first part as to the result of poor law statistics, the most important subject to consider first is the change that has taken place in the earnings of the labouring classes.

As to the state of the labouring population in the city and north-west liberties of Londonderry in 1836 the Ordnance Memoir contains the following account :—

> Among the labourers of Derry great poverty prevails from the want of steady employment,"—"together with the total absence of employment for their children."—"A great number of the labourers are from the mountains of Donegal. The majority are employed in serving masons, &c., from May to November—the rest in provision yards, &c., and in casual works during the export season, from November to May. Their only resources when unemployed are the pawnbrokers, and in some instances small potato patches. When enfeebled by age or disease their condition is such as it would be painful to describe."

This description was written two years before the present system of poor law relief was introduced into Ireland by the Act of 1838, and the very classes most humanely treated under the Poor Law are those enfeebled by age or disease; so that the Imperial Parliament has effectually guarded against the Irish labouring classes ever again being in "a state which it would be painful to describe."

The improvement in the condition of the labourers with respect to continuity of employment is no less remarkable.

Mr. R. Hamilton, Poor Law Inspector, in his report on agricultural wages in 1870, speaking of his district, comprising the county of Donegal (from which the poorest labourers had come in 1836), and comprising the city of Londonderry, says :—

> "Twenty years ago the condition of the labourers was wretched in consequence of the deficiency of employment, but since then it has greatly improved. *There is now ample employment with good wages for all who are willing to work.*"

VII. *Yearly Earnings of Workmen in Londonderry in 1834–1836, and in 1875 compared.*

In 1836 the majority of the common labourers were employed for half the year only as above noticed; this makes their yearly earnings at 7*s.* 10*d.* a week, for half a year only £10. The rest of the common labourers appear to have been fully employed for half a year, and for casual work only during the other half; assuming this casual work to be equal to one-third time, the earnings of this class at the same weekly rate of 7*s.* 10*d.* a week would be £13 a year. Of tailors, one-third were returned in 1836 as unemployed in winter; this makes their average wages of 16*s.* 1*d.* a week produce only £35 a year on an average. The earnings of other classes in 1836, are calculated on the assumption of constant employment as are the earnings of all classes in 1875, in accordance with the report of Mr. Hamilton above quoted.

TABLE showing Yearly Earnings of Workmen in Londonderry and Suburbs.

Classes of Workmen.	Average of Three Years, 1834, 1835, 1836.	1875.*	Increase in 1875.	Increase per Cent.
	£	£	£	Per Cent.
Shipwrights, . .	55	93†	38	69
Shoemakers, . .	32	65‡	33	100
Tailors, . . .	35	73‡	38	108
Labourers (Class I.),	13	30	17	131
Labourers (Class II.),	10	30	20	200

It appears from this table that the largest improvement has taken place in the earnings of the poorest class of labourers, the increase, making allowance for the greater continuity of employment now secured to them, being 200 per cent.

* Based on Returns for first week in June.

† Returned by Local Government Board and Royal Irish Constabulary only.

‡ The Return of the Commissioner of Valuation does not distinguish tailors from shoemakers, but gives a scale of 24*s.* to 30*s.* per week for time engagements, equal for constant employment to £62 8*s.* to £78 a year.

This is, in addition to the protection this class has obtained under the Poor Law against the extreme vicissitudes of broken health or infirm old age already referred to, and also in addition to the increased employment for young persons in such establishments as shirt factories.

VIII. *Prices of Articles of Food in Londonderry in June, 1875, and 40 years previously, compared.*

As there has been a great change of prices in many articles it is necessary before relying on the aggregate increase of wages as an evidence of the improved condition of the working classes, to compare that increase with the rise in prices of commodities consumed by the labourers. Accordingly, the statistics of prices of articles of food given in the Ordnance Memoir have been collected for the first week in June, 1875, and the result of the comparison of the two sets of statistics is shown in the following Table.

TABLE showing Wholesale Prices of Articles of Food in Londonderry, *per Hundred Weight.*

Articles of Food.	Average of Three Years, 1834, 1835, and 1836.	First Week in June, 1875.	Decrease in 1875.	Decrease per Cent.	Increase in 1875.	Increase per Cent.
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*	*s.* *d.*		*s.* *d.*	
Flour, .	16 10	13 4	3 6	21 per cent.	—	—
Wheat, .	10 1	9 5	0 8	7 „	—	—
Oats, . .	7 2	8 7	—	—	1 5	20 per cent.
Oatmeal, .	12 4	14 5	—	—	2 1	17 „
Barley, .	6 3	9 3	—	—	3 0	48 „
Butter, .	68 8	122 5	—	—	53 9	78 „
Beef, . .	33 4	70 10	—	—	37 6	112 „
Pork, . .	22 6	55 3	—	—	32 9	145 „

It appears from this Table that the price of no article in it has increased in 40 years at anything like the rate of the aggregate earnings of the lowest class of labourers.

The price of flour has fallen 21 per cent., and of wheat 7 per cent.

If we take the articles not included in the above Table

in 1836, but given in the Table of retail prices the result is similar—

TABLE showing Retail Prices in Londonderry.

Food sold by retail.	Average of Three Years, 1834, 1835, 1836.	First Week of June, 1875.	Increase in 1875.	Increase per Cent.
	Pence.	Pence.	Pence.	Per Cent.
Mutton, per lb., .	$5\frac{1}{6}$	9	$3\frac{5}{6}$	74
Potatoes, per stone, .	$3\frac{1}{3}$	6	$2\frac{2}{3}$	80

The price of potatoes in the first week of June, 1875, is an average price for different qualities in the same week, but it approximates to a maximum for the year; however, at this maximum it falls far short of the increase on wages, being only 80 per cent. as compared with 200 per cent. The increase in the retail price of mutton is only 74 per cent., being less than the increases in the wholesale prices of beef, 112 per cent., or pork, 145 per cent.

There are some other important articles not included in the Tables at p. 199 of the Ordnance Memoir, but as to which for part of the period from 1850 to 1870, the statistics of Mr. O'Brien, Local Government Board Inspector, may be referred to.

He shows that in one of his unions the contract prices of tea for workhouse consumption fell from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 10*d.* in that period, and that soft sugar fell from 5*d.* to $4\frac{1}{2}d.$

The results so plainly indicated by the figures are placed beyond doubt by a passage in Mr. Hamilton's report on agricultural wages in 1870 as to the Londonderry and Donegal district. He says :—

> "The diet of the peasantry is much improved in the last twenty years, *more tea, bread, and animal food are consumed than formerly.*"

And he adds, speaking of the district I have referred to :—

> "So far as I can learn I believe the labouring classes are generally speaking contented."

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It is very obvious that if wages have increased 200 per cent. in 40 years, and mutton only 74 per cent., if tea and flour have fallen in price the natural effect would be exactly what Mr. Hamilton has stated, more tea, bread and animal food would be consumed.

It ought to be a matter of contentment with the labouring classes in Ireland that for the fall in tea and bread they are indebted to the imperial policy of the last quarter of a century. The predictions as to the results of free trade and low import duties upon the condition of the working class have been realized.

Again we see that the living on potatoes almost exclusively, which was supposed by some theorists to be a cause of Irish poverty, turns out to have been an effect of poverty.

When wages increase meat and bread are consumed just as in other places.

IX. *Changes in Prices of Building Materials in Londonderry in 40 years.*

Next to food, the welfare of the working classes depends largely on the prices of building materials. These have also been collected by the Irish Local Government Board, the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and the Commissioner of Valuation, and averages of the respective averages shown in the reports are given in the following Table.

TABLE showing Prices of Building Materials in Londonderry.

Kind of Materials.	Average of 3 years: 1834, 1835, and 1836.	First Week of June, 1875.	Decrease in 1875.	Decrease per cent.	Increase in 1875.	Increase per cent.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	
Memel Pine, per ton, . .	4 17 6	3 15 10	1 1 8	22 per cent.	–	–
Lime, slaked, per barrel, .	0 1 0	0 0 11½	0 0 0⅔	6 per cent.	–	–
Lime, in roche state, per brl.	0 1 8	0 2 4	–	–	0 0 8	40 per cent.
American Pine, per ton, .	2 15 0	4 0 10	–	–	1 5 10	47 per cent.
Welch Queen's Slates, per ton, ...	2 17 6	4 10 0	–	–	1 12 6	57 per cent.
Building Stone, per ton, .	0 1 4	0 2 2	–	–	0 0 10	62 per cent.
Bricks, per 1,000, . .	0 17 3	1 14 4	–	–	0 17 1	99 per cent.

This table gives a result as satisfactory as that shown by the statistics of prices of agricultural produce.

There has been a decrease in Memel pine, which, as described in the Ordnance Memoir, "was preferred for important structures."

For this decrease the labouring classes are indebted to the reduction of the duties on foreign timber.

The other articles have not increased at anything like the same rate as wages. The largest increase has been in bricks, the rise being caused by the increase in local wages. Even here, however, the increase has been only 99 per cent. as compared with 200 per cent. in the aggregate earnings of the lowest classes of labourers.

X.—*Progress of Buildings, Population, and Trade in Londonderry.*

In connexion with the prices of building materials and rate of wages in Londonderry the following statistics supplied by Mr. Greene, the Commissioner of Valuation, are interesting :—

Progress of Londonderry.

New houses built in 10 years ended 1875,	730
Valuation of City in 1865,	£57,570
„ in 1875,	66,884
Increase in 10 years,	9,314
Increase per cent.,	16 per cent.

Population in 1865,	22,000
„ in 1875,	26,800
Increase in 10 years,	4,800
Increase per cent.,	22 per cent.

Tonnage (including transatlantic vessels), trading to Port :

	Tons.
In 1840,	84,178
In 1864,	218,762
In 1874,	619,442

	Tons.
Increase in 10 years,	400,680
Increase per cent.,	183 per cent.
Increase in 34 years,	535,264 tons.
Increase per cent.,	636 per cent.

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XI. *Increase in the Value of Live Stock in Ireland in* 1875 *as compared with* 1841.

As the greatest rise in the case of building materials was in bricks, in which the labouring classes are most interested, so the rise in the price of meat is intimately connected with the growth of agricultural wealth in Ireland.

The growth of agricultural wealth under this head arises from several causes—1st, an increase in the number of live stock reared and kept; 2nd, an increase in size and weight of the animals; 3rd, the rearing of improved breeds that came to maturity at an earlier age, and so are more valuable; and lastly, the rearing of improved breeds that bring a higher price in the English market.

The result of all these causes is comprehended in the increase of prices of live stock between 1841 and 1875, as shown in the following table:—

TABLE showing Prices of Live Stock in 1875 and in 1841.

Classes of Live Stock.	1875. At Londonderry in First Week of June (Average of the Averages Returned.)*			1841. As estimated by Sir Thomas Larcom for Census of that year.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Sheep under 1 year,	1	7	6	1	2	0
„ 1 year old and upwards,	2	6	8			
Pigs under 1 year,	2	7	2	1	5	0
„ 1 year old and upwards,	5	5	5			
Cattle under 1 year,	6	13	4	6	10	0
„ 1 year old and under 2 years,	9	3	4			
„ 2 years old and upwards,	18	13	4			
Horses under 1 year,	15	0	0	8	0	0
„ 1 year old and under 2 years,	21	16	8			
„ 2 years old and upwards,	37	3	4			

The effect of the prices thus ascertained upon the aggregate value of live stock in Ireland is shown in the following table.

* By the Local Government Board Inspector, County Inspector of Royal Irish Constabulary, and Commissioner of Valuation.

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TABLE showing Aggregate Value of Live Stock in Ireland in 1875 and in 1841.

Live Stock.	In 1875.	In 1841.	Increase in 1875.	Increase per cent.
	£	£	£	
Cattle, . .	58,376,000	12,110,000	46,266,000	382 per cent.
Horses, . .	17,624,000	4,609,000	13,015,000	282 „
Sheep, . .	8,839,000	2,317,000	6,522,000	281 „
Pigs, . .	3,032,000	1,766,000	1,266,000	71 „
Total Live Stock,	87,871,000	20,802,000	67,069,000	321 per cent.

From this table it appears that the value of live stock in Ireland rose from £20,802,000 in 1841 to £87,871,000 in 1875, being an increase of £67,069,000, or 321 per cent. Of this large increase only £16,424,000 has arisen from increase of numbers, whilst the increase which has arisen from the improved size and breed of live stock and increased price of meat has been no less than £50,645,000.

This great growth of wealth has arisen largely from the intimate union with Great Britain developing free trade, steam-boats, and railways. This has given the large demand, and raised the price of meat in Ireland. For the part of it which has arisen from the increased size and improved breed of live stock, the Royal Agricultural Society may claim its share of credit.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. NEILSON HANCOCK.

Hon. LUKE GERALD DILLON,
Private Secretary &c.

Houses of the Oireachtas

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