

CAUSE AND EFFECT.

Houses of the Oireachtas

CLARE AND BILFOLK

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BY

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HAVING presided at a social meeting, at which some of the members of the Royal Agricultural Society's Club were present, I beg to call their attention to the following pages. For, though differing in political feelings and opinion, we seemed cordially to unite in one—"That every effort should be made to raise and improve the condition of our common country."

In claiming a right to form an opinion from experience of the difficulties which surround "the question of high or stock farming in Ireland, and of the rights and duties of our landlords, tenants, and labourers," I must call attention to the following quotations from an article in the "Edinburgh Review" of *January*, 1866, which observes that—

“ Lord Leicester’s estate was sure to furnish some notable instances of high stock farming, in the rise of the rental of the estate itself, from 5s. to 25s. per acre, within fifty years, within which time £400,000 are said to have been expended by Mr. Coke and his successor in *permanent improvements*. To this spirited conduct his tenantry responded by expenditure for artificial food and manures in the same time, of not less than £500,000.

“ Mr. Hudson’s farm at Castleacre has long been quoted as a model of successful management on a large scale. This farm of 1400 acres consisted of 1200 acres cropped on the four-course system, and 200 acres in pasture.

“ To pursue such a system an annual expenditure of £1000 was incurred for salt, superphosphate, and guano, while the home-made manure was increased and enriched by an expenditure for cattle food to the value of £2000 annually. Thirty-seven years ago, we are told, the stock annually kept on this farm was 400 sheep and 30 bullocks; it now averages 2500 sheep, and 150 bullocks. The wheat and barley crops then did not exceed $22\frac{1}{2}$ bushels per acre; that average is now nearly doubled; every crop is drilled, and the land perfectly clean. The roads and fences are all maintained in the best order.”

It is sixty years ago that, as a boy, I rode with Lord Leicester, then Mr. Coke, to see the first water meadow on his estate of Castleacre. This extensive farm, and the account the Reviewer gives of the Holkham estate, I propose to make use of as a test of high and low farming, and of the proper exercise of the rights and duties of property.

Instead of fifty years, as stated in the "Review," it was fully eighty years since the first Lord Leicester and the first Lord Sherborne came to their property. Now, the conclusion that I wish to draw is, that without a due expenditure of capital on the part of the landlord, as well as on that of the tenant, no landed property can flourish; and that the residence of the landlord alone is of little value, whilst the non-residence of the middleman tenant has been utter destruction, who, taking a rent of more than double that of the landlord in fee, expends none of it on the property.

The case and example of the Holkham estates in Norfolk, under the Coke family, and those of their Gloucester and Irish estates, under the Dutton and Naper, I now venture to bring forward.

The Reviewer considers the Holkham property to have been, at the death of the late Lord Leicester's father, held at a rental of 5s. per acre. I have heard Lord Leicester say, it was about £16,000, or £17,000 per annum, at the time of his father's death. At that time Mr. Dutton's property (the English and Irish), which he divided amongst his

three sons, was probably of the same extent, and let at much the same value. Mr. Dutton, a few years before his death, leased the greatest part of his Irish property for lives and years. The consequence was, that his younger sons were mere annuitants; and had they lived in Ireland, which they did not, they had little or no power over their estates.

Mr. William Naper died in 1792, having held the property only fifteen years, the tenants being all leaseholders. The same was the case on the death of Mr. Ralph. Mr. William's son, after a minority of twenty years, came into (in 1812) actual possession, when he found that more than two-thirds of the farms, let under these long leases, had been sublet, and were covered with a pauper tenantry. The few that had fallen out of lease in the period of thirty-five years were relet during his minority, on condition of the land being held by the immediate tenant. The Gloucestershire property was held by the first Lord Sherborne, who died in 1820, having held the property forty-four years, during which time no great expenditure of capital was made; but the second lord, during the last forty years, expended large sums on the estate.

In the late debate on the state of Ireland, The O'Donoghue is reported to have said that the agricultural class had repeatedly implored of the legislature, which had voluntarily undertaken the responsibility of their government, to give them some law which would save them from "*the cupidity and still worse passions of their landlords.*"

Surely the landlords of Ireland are bound, in self-defence, to require of the Government, whether called Liberal or Conservative, such a searching investigation as to the causes which have produced so serious a charge from one of their own class, as will clearly prove if their conduct as a body is the real cause of the general discontent of the people on their properties, and by a direct and local examination as to their agricultural condition, as well as that individually of The O'Donoghue's, be able to set it forward as an example of the exemplary conduct of an Irish proprietor. Unfortunately for Ireland, those who undertake its local government are seldom its landed proprietors, and have little or no practical knowledge or connexion with individual property. The perpetual division of our townlands, and the subletting and jobbing of the land without

the expenditure of capital either on the part of the landowner or the landholder, has, in such instances, deprived them of any interest but that of making the most of its natural fertility, or of its nominal rental. It is not by contests at law for the benefit of our legal advisers, but by a liberal expenditure of capital, that justice can be done to the agricultural class. The instance put forward by the Reviewer from Cambridgeshire, upon a farm of 3000 acres, by Mr. S. Jones, with an assumed capital of £30,000, is a proof of its astonishing capabilities when applied to land.

Here we have a case of *high farming* being as much in advance of our Irish necessities as our *no farming* under the middleman and conacre system (the original cause and foundation of the misery and degradation of our people) is below them, and which it has been the interest of political agitators to make use of to sunder that union of labour and capital, without which remunerative industry is impossible. Although in the case of the Cambridgeshire farm we appear to be looking at a fact through a magnifying glass, we are only the better able to trace the cause and the effect which have so long

kept back the agricultural prosperity of Ireland. Whether the 3000 acres are held in fee or by lease, the lesson is equally instructive. If fee property, Mr. Jones has only to charge himself with the rent, say from £2000 to £3000 per annum, and take credit for the remainder of the increased produce, either by corn or cattle. If he pays such a rent, he has only to be satisfied with the increased value of the produce and productive qualities of the land after such payment.

So much at present for the side of capital; let us turn to that of labour. He pays for corn, which is probably his own, and oil cake purchased for feeding, £4000; and for guano and manufactured manures, £1700; all these to a certain extent are the produce of well-paid labour; and add an amount to the labour side, besides that already set down as the labour of 100 men and boys, at an average of £20 each, amounting to £2000. The labour of seventy-six horses we may consider as paying its own value.

In putting forward an extreme case of capital and labour, we are able to draw a comparison between the improved systems which have met in both coun-

tries with considerable success, and are founded upon the same practice as that of the use of artificial feeding and manures. The Norfolk farm of Castleacre appears to have 1200 acres, under a four-course system, and only 200 acres of pasture, with an expenditure of £3000 in various manures, or nearly the same amount of capital required for the same amount of acres. Now, we know of nearly the same amount of acres held in Ireland under grass and tillage, where it is nearly the reverse—200 under the latter, and 12 under the former. In these cases the expenditure of capital bears a like proportion to the extent of land under scientific cultivation.

Again, if we go below that class, we shall find many farms in Ireland which may be placed in that of *low farming*, and in which, without lessening the productive qualities by taking off the land its produce in corn, potatoes and turnips, it is not increased by the use either in the stalls of artificial food, or on the land of artificial manures, and where the proportion of tillage in 1000 acres is frequently not more than 100. The excuse often made by many of the extensive Irish landholders for the employment of so few labourers is, that the labour given is not remune-

rative in proportion to the capital expended. The consequence is, that the condition of the land, when valued either for the purpose of public taxation or letting or sale, makes Irish property on the part of the landlord of a less proportional value when compared with its natural fertility, than that of either Scotland or England. We will now endeavour to ascertain how far the conacre or sub-letting system is conducive to the degradation of the labourer, injurious to the productive qualities of the soil, and keeps up a class of landholders who may be denominated as holders of land under the *no farming system*.

In giving an opinion on Lord Clanricarde's Act to consolidate and amend the Law of Tenure in Ireland, the real difficulty is not in being able to agree as to its leading principles, but in being well assured that any law on the subject can be brought equally and mutually to bind the landed interests of Ireland.

What was the practical defect of the Act of 1860? It expected, not too little, but too much, as regarded the social system, and the capital at the command of our landlords, tenants, and labourers, and consequently has been almost a dead letter. So

lately as July last, a pamphlet has appeared under the title of "A Plea for the Celtic Race," from the pen of Mr. Butt, and which concludes 117 pages thus:—

"Big clouds are gathering now upon all quarters of the horizon. In the coming struggle of all nations, which only fools cannot foresee, the greatness and power of England may depend upon the part towards her that is taken by the Irish race. There is time yet to win them back. The true friend of English greatness—the true friend of the landed interests of Ireland—the true conservative Statesman, by whatever name he may be called, or to whatever party he may belong, will be the Minister who will conciliate the attachment of the Irish people to proprietary rights, by bringing proprietary rights into harmony with the rights of that people to exist; who will promptly and generously adjust in some peaceful compromise those relations of owner and occupier which have hitherto been one long, and wild, and wasting civil war; and *who, by a new plantation of Ireland, will effect the object which centuries of conquest, and confiscations, and military rule, and civil oppression have failed to obtain—that of placing upon the soil of the country a free, and industrious, and contented population.*

"This can be done only by the measure that will confer upon the occupiers '*fixity of tenure*;' most assuredly it can be done *by nothing else.*"

Having long been of opinion that our English governors have expected far too much from Acts of

Parliament, and far too little from acts of industry, and have too frequently preferred submitting to the guidance and direction of political lawyers, rather than gaining such information as would have led to acts of common justice and common sense, I will now endeavour so far to follow the example of Mr. Butt as to pass over for the present the instances he has brought forward of landlords' misconduct and agents' deficiencies, and, turning to his 89th page, call attention to the following words:—

“ In 1852 a Conservative Ministry was in office. Mr. Napier, as Attorney-General for Ireland, with Lord Naas as Chief Secretary, and Mr. Whiteside as Solicitor-General, introduced a Bill to provide compensation for tenants in this country. Charged by the responsibilities of office with the duty of consulting for the good of the community at large, but bound at the same time to maintain the *rights of property*, they did not permit *any superstition as to the inviolability of contracts*, or the indefeasible sacredness of vested rights, to stand in the way of *justice*.

“ When I say, of *justice*, I refer to the great provision of the Bill by which both existing rights and existing contracts were distinctly interfered with—by which, indeed, fixity of tenure was in some degree secured to every tenant then in possession of land; the provision that for improvements effected before the passing of the Act, compensation should be paid to the tenant, and that he should not be turned out of his holding until that compensation was paid.

“The clause contained in Mr. Napier’s Bill will be found at the foot of the last page.”

Here we cannot but admire the singular coolness with which a special pleader varnishes over the case which, though honestly stating it to be a violation of contract, he concludes with the word *justice*; and, at page 91, gives the following specimen of mutual injustice:—

“And accordingly this Bill proposes directly and without evasion or disguise, by an act of *righteous violence*, to transfer the property of the landlord to the tenant, and to compel the landlord to pay for that which by law and by the very terms of an express contract was his own. Nay, more, it enabled the tenant—again in express defiance of his contract—to hold the landlord’s farm until the landlord paid him that £200.

“I have not exaggerated or coloured the meaning or effect of the provision so well known as the retrospective clause. How could it be justified? Only on the principle that there are great rules of national justice and equity, which control and even supersede all legal rights; and that, when all other remedy fails, it is the duty of the supreme power in the State to interfere *against law and property*, and in favour of *natural justice and right*.

“It is on this very principle all the jurisdiction of our courts of equity depends. The rules and maxims on which the courts now interfere with legal rights have become a settled portion of the law; but their origin was in an ap-

peal made to the Sovereign to compel men not to use *legal rights unconscientiously*; and all Chancery jurisdiction rested on the right of the Sovereign, in his High Court of Chancery, to compel men *to do justice even against law.*"

Unfortunately for the justice of "Fixity of Tenure," it has been handled by its advocates under a one-sided view of the case; they have mistaken *cause* for *effect*. If we go back to more ancient times—not as that great master of political agitation has done in his volume on "Ireland and the Irish," and which, after quoting a work printed in 1647, ends 406 pages with the following:—

"There is no person who will read this work but must exclaim with me, that no people on the face of the earth were ever treated with such cruelty as the Irish.

"The pamphlet I have last quoted [says Mr. O'Connell] contains, in fact, a short development of the spirit which animated the conduct of the English Government towards the people of Ireland."

It is not by thus playing with the feelings of the present generation, and raking up the religious and political superstition of a bygone age, but by following out practical results, that we can do away with that second-class system of legislation that would do wrong that right might follow; nor can

we expect that a case of mutual injustice can be blotted out from all human transactions by the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery. Let us, then, examine that period of time and Irish history when the causes can be separated from the effects—effects which Irish agitators are so fond of dwelling upon as alone produced by the present landlords of Ireland.

From the returns of the population of Ireland in 1672, we find it did not exceed 1,100,000, or at most 1,223,000, or in 1695 1,340,000, at the least. Let us, then, investigate the cause which, in not more than 150 years, raised in the year 1841 this population to 8,175,124. Mr. Butt, in the first five or six pages of his work, arrives at the following conclusion (without such investigation), mistaking the effects which he sees taking place in the last fifty years for the causes which have had their origin for more than two hundred years, and thus observes :—

“The events of the last two years have forced upon me, as probably they have upon many others, a fuller and more careful inquiry into the real position of the occupier of the Irish soil in relation to the land which he cultivates, and

the lord from whom he rents that land. No one can see a batch of emigrants taking their places in the train that is to convey them to the nearest seaport without asking himself why these people are leaving their native land. Throngs of well-dressed and stalwart peasants pause to take a last farewell of the relatives from whom they are about to part on their way to the other side of the Atlantic.

“ Endeavouring in my own mind to approach the question in this spirit—to emancipate myself from prejudices from which no Irishman is altogether free—I came to conclusions which are forced upon my reason *as clear and distinct convictions*.

“ The present position of the occupiers of the soil of Ireland is at present generally that of serfs, without any security either for their tenure or the fruits of their industry. They are dependent for their means of existence on the will of their landlord, while the amount of that which is called rent is regulated, not by any economic law, but by the disposition of the landlord to extort, and their own ability to pay.

“ This state of things has originated remotely, perhaps not very remotely, in the fact that English power confiscated the whole property of our island, and placed over the inhabitants hostile and alien proprietors, without making any provision to secure or protect the rights of the old inhabitants to live upon the soil.

“ The evil effects of the original injustice were increased by the influence of the laws, which for a long period after the confiscations reduced a great proportion of those occupying the soil to the condition of slaves, in the religious and political disabilities to which they were subjected.

“ They have been, up to the present hour, aggravated and continued by the antagonism of religion, of habits, and

of race which exist between the class that constitute the owners and that which supplies the tillers of the soil.

“The events of the last fifty years have brought these evils to a climax, which is now rapidly completing the extermination of the old Irish race.

“The only remedy that can be applied to this lamentable and miserable state of things is to elevate the occupier from his position of serfdom, by giving him an interest in the soil—to do so at any price—to do so by giving him that without which every other remedy is but a miserable palliative, by giving him fixity of tenure, while we leave the owner of the soil every right and every power except those which he cannot continue to exercise without the waste and destruction of human life, and without bringing ruin both upon himself and the entire community

“Let no one think that I am sheltering myself under any vague and obscure generality in thus speaking of fixity of tenure. In these pages I mean to make a definite and specific proposal, of the extent and nature of which every one can judge. At present I content myself with thus stating the conclusion to which I believe a patient and careful study of the social condition of Ireland must lead.

“I know that the propositions I have laid down will appear to many to be extravagant statements. I have endeavoured to put them into temperate and measured, but at the same time clear and distinct language; and whatever may be the prejudices of any Irishman, of any creed or class, upon the subject, I invite his earnest and solemn consideration to the one and only question which is of importance, Are they true?”

Although perfectly agreeing with Mr. Butt that

the events of the last fifty years have brought the evils of Ireland to a climax, I cannot but consider that it was owing to the events prior to the Elizabethan and Cromwellian confiscations that the old Celtic race, as lords of the soil, suffered extermination, and that nothing less than a long, and wild, and wasting civil war can produce a new plantation of Ireland. Nevertheless, I have elsewhere frequently endeavoured to point out the paramount necessity of establishing on our soil a free, industrious, and contented population.

I have, from family documents, a satisfactory proof that most of the social evils so ably pointed out by Arthur Young were produced by that fixity of tenure afforded by the leases so universally prevalent on the properties of the landlords a century ago in the province of Leinster, and which, five-and-twenty years since, the potato famine brought to a climax, exposing the heartless improvidence of the middleman landlords. If we consult that statesman-like work of the late Sir George Lewis, on "Irish Disturbances," we shall find him stating that

"The remedy wanted for this state of things is to alter the mode of subsistence of the Irish peasant; to change

him from a cottier living upon land to a labourer living upon wages; to support him by employment for hire, instead of the potato ground."

In the years 1864 and 1865 I endeavoured, by practical suggestions, to uphold the remedy proposed by Sir G. Lewis for the helpless state of our tenant labourers, in three short pamphlets, under the heads of "The Irish Question;" "The Draining of the Land, and the Training of the People;" and "An Address to the Ratepayers of the Co. Meath." Mr. Butt, like Sir Francis Head in his "Fortnight's Tour in Ireland," endeavours to throw the whole weight of his charge upon one class of persons—the former on the priesthood; the latter on the landlords in fee. Fortunately for testing the truth of this, the directions lately given by the Poor Law Commissioners to the Relieving Officers of our Workhouse Boards, if properly carried out, should clearly prove whether the miserable holdings they expose to view are occupied under the lords of the soil or their under-tenantry. If the names of the owners and occupiers of such habitations in each townland and electoral division are so placed before the Guardians, we shall be able in our Poor Law Unions to lay the foundation of mea-

asures which would strike at the root of the present inability of the landlords in fee to perform those duties which the middleman and conacre system have too frequently prevented such landlords as the Earls of Derby and Russell from equally carrying out on their Irish as well as English properties.

Objecting to general conclusions being derived from a few individual cases, I am equally prepared to allow that it is for want of such cases being fully and generally investigated, that not only has Lord Kimberley left Ireland in ignorance of the extent of that root from which Irish discontent receives its most natural and strongest nourishment, but that such was also the case of the late Lord Carlisle, although for so many years officially connected with the country. These noble Lords, like all Englishmen who undertake Irish affairs without personal experience and a long family connexion with Irish properties, have mistaken the nature, and consequently the means of removing, those of our exceptional habits and customs ; or rather substituting such measures as will counteract the present derangement of our social system, which has placed the duties of landlord in the hands of those amongst the tenantry

“ who (as Mr. Butt observes) without any economic law, or any view to agricultural improvement, have exacted a rent according to their disposition to extort, and the ability of their tenantry to pay.”

I have before me a census of the families and population, amounting to 6000, made in 1841 for the use of four soup kitchens established in some of the parishes connected with the Union of Oldcastle. Since that period more than half of these have been removed by emigration; but, should the cattle plague appear, or the cholera be extended, the condition of that class to which Lord Derby has referred would be found but little amended. The origin of that condition, and the cause of its continuance, has been but little understood by our English Governments, and too generally overlooked by their supporters in Ireland. On the best regulated properties in England, and on those carrying out the most approved methods of cultivation, we find that increased employment is going hand in hand with improved agriculture, and that it is the increased amount of scientific labour which gives landed property its increased value. As a fact, this holds equally good in England, Scotland, and Ireland; but

how different is its result in giving security to capital, or social comfort for the wages received by Labour! Allowing the number of labourers set to work on 100 acres as no bad means of judging of its increased produce, yet these men can expect little permanent benefit if their employers take all they can out of them, with little or no regard to their future welfare; being too like the sample Lord Derby produced of some of his tenantry, who, taking all the meat, leave the bones for their landlord. Now, it is to such employers that I wish to call public attention; well aware that, with every wish to the contrary, I am one of them; and was never more fully convinced of the fact than when, as a Poor Law Guardian, I looked at the very imperfect returns given to the Board by the Relieving Officer of that part of the Oldcastle Union situated in the county of Meath; whilst, as a landed proprietor, I was equally satisfied that the forms and notices put forward pursuant to the provisions of the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act, like many of those under our Irish Acts of Parliament, although undertaking to do a great deal, would accomplish very little, inasmuch as a few barrels of lime, and the removal of a few spades-

ful of filth, under the direction of the medical or Relieving officers, would add little to the real comfort or order of such dwellings.

Mr. C. Barry, on the second reading of the Bill to effect an alteration in the Poor Law system in Ireland, by substituting "Union Rating," for the present mode of assessment by electoral divisions, is met by Mr. Gregory, who observes:—"The Honourable Gentleman has appealed to the authority of Sir George Nichols, who originally intended Union Rating, and quotes the authority of all the officials who had no direct interest in the matter, as in favour of a small area in Ireland." No doubt, the Boundary Commission of 1849 was of great advantage, at the time, to those properties that were of such sufficient extent as to enable them to be placed in such electoral divisions as would consist in a Union of Townlands belonging to one proprietor. In these drainage, roadmaking, and improved cottages accommodation could be carried out, thus making the contrast between these and the properties joining belonging to many individuals most apparent; at the same time pointing out that a united exertion of the many individuals might be made to produce the same desirable results.

Knowing that such results can only be obtained by a proper inquiry through the means of our Public Boards, I would suggest that those assertions so confidently put forward by Mr. Butt be fairly and clearly set forth; so that, should it appear that they have been made without any satisfactory proof of their general correctness, and still more of their proper application, they should undergo a Government investigation; confining my observations to two cases, which I propose to bring forward as examples of one of the principal roots of the evils which Mr. Butt's fixity of tenure proposes to remedy, being in themselves a strong illustration of the result of fixity of tenure, when granted to a tenantry without either industry or capital.

As the first example, I give the case of a lane in the market town of Oldcastle, such as may be found in every considerable village or market town in Ireland. The landlord in fee, having let about two acres of land, in the expectation that they would be made use of as gardens, at a rent of five pounds per acre, for houses already built, finds them occupied by a set of miserable dwellings, in which are not less than twenty families, and their under-tenants,

paying a profit rent of about thirty pounds a year. The next is the case of a single townland, containing about 240 acres, being the only property in the electoral division belonging to the landlord in fee. This property was leased to one tenant, at a moderate rent, who, getting into difficulties, let it to various tenants, and they again let small portions amongst themselves. The condition of these tenants is thus reported by the relieving officer:—

“I went to the townland, and there found thirty-three cabins in need of being cleaned and whitewashed; I noticed the occupiers to do so; I went again, and found fourteen of the cabins had been whitewashed, although, in some cases, the lime had very little effect, in consequence of the walls being built of bog sods; I found nineteen not done; several of these cabins were unfit for any human being to live in.”

Fortunately for the cause of the tenant labourers and working farmers, the returns required from the relieving officers of Poor Law Unions, though far from perfect, show that the probe has at last touched upon what has so long been both a neglected and a festering sore. Lord Derby's tenant, who leaves his neglected and exhausted farm to his eldest son, and all his property that may remain to his widow and the rest of the family, is by no means

a singular instance of such a social practice. Sitting as a Magistrate at Petty Sessions, a case came before the Bench from one of the townlands in the electoral divisions I am about to mention, and at that time in the hands of the middleman, who had let forty acres to one tenant at the moderate rent of 35s. the Irish acre. The case was one of trespass. The tenant had died, and left his four sons ten acres each : the widow died, and left, by a will made by the parish priest, one acre in the middle of the forty to a daughter who had married and brought in a stranger. The case was dismissed, the daughter and her husband having no legal right to the acre in question. A still more common practice is that of giving a daughter a marriage portion, not as in England of ready money, but by raising a sum on the conacre system, by letting the land at six or eight pounds per acre, or else selling the standing crops, to be taken away by a neighbouring landholder, at a price which is generally found to give more profit than if produced by labour on his own land ; thus reducing the land under cultivation, and the profits of the resident labourers. Returning to the principal object I have in view—that of supporting Sir George Lewis's truly statesman-

like opinion, that you must first sharpen your tools before you go to work at an honest attempt to regenerate Ireland, namely, that you must give the Irish labourer remunerative wages; whilst Arthur Young's equally just conclusion will alone give to those wages their proper value and security, when he says, "The landlords-in-fee should let their estates to none but occupying tenants;" or, in other words, that the tenant labourer should be, equally with the tenant farmer, the occupier, either directly under the lord of the soil or (if holding under the tenant farmer), paying for his land at the same rate, and under the same superintendence, and with the same security.

Again, our sanitary returns will assist in giving a more correct view of the question of "Union Rating," and of the great injustice that must be done to those landowners and landholders who have lately expended considerable sums in the improvement of their properties, when others in the same electoral divisions, not having done so, have their properties placed at a much lower valuation. It is now fully a quarter of a century since, as one of the Poor Law Commissioners, it became my duty

to assist in inquiring "into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, and into the various institutions then established by law for their relief." I have now before me our instructions, issued for such an inquiry. From this it appears, as well as from our Report, that such was the poverty and confusion of all classes connected with the social system of the Irish people, that the English Government, as well as that part of it undertaking the administration of Irish affairs, arrived at the conclusion, that nothing more than the iron rule of our present workhouse system was at that time practicable—a system which twenty-five years' experience has proved that, with a great expenditure of pounds, shillings, and pence, as well as of brick and mortar, the least direct advance has been made towards an improvement in the feelings, the condition, and the habits of our countrymen. From a calculation which may be sufficiently reliable for our purpose, it appears that the average amount of population in the English Unions is 35,000, whilst in those of Ireland it is 30,000; of rateable property in those of England, £170,000; in those of Ireland, £70,000: thus less than a fivepenny rate will raise in the former what a shilling rate will do in the latter.

From a return of the paupers relieved in the Union of Oldcastle for one year, ending 29th September, 1865, I will take the case of those electoral divisions which I have already brought forward as examples of our present difficulty in the just administration of their rates. From this return I find in the electoral divisions of Oldcastle, Moylough, Crosskeys, and Crossakeil, the following results:—

Oldcastle, the town in which the Union Workhouse is situated, relieved 45 paupers, at a cost of £496 16s., or £11 1s. per head; Moylough, at a cost of £111 7s. 4d., four in the house, for the same period, at £27 17s.; Crosskeys, 7 at £117 14s. 8d., or £16 16s. 4d. per head; Crossakeil, half a pauper, at a cost of £135 17s. 11d., or £67 18s. 11d. per head. I am not prepared to say that, with the present house establishment, and medical charities, that any of these or of the other divisions could be worked at a lower sum, which in round numbers amounts to £859, which the former at present pay. It is hardly possible to conceive a system by which so few paupers obtain relief, amounting to $56\frac{1}{2}$ at a cost of about £15 per head—the wages of many a poor labourer and his family for the year. The

union rating which I would put forward for consideration should be one for the purpose of remunerative labour, not the dead weight of a rate to support perfect idleness — a rate to repay the amount of capital raised for the purpose of paying off the principal and interest of a sum to be gradually and properly expended in drainage, road-making, and boundary fencing. In making this proposition, I am only endeavouring to render general a practice which has been successfully carried out in two of the four electoral divisions I have named, those of Oldcastle and Moylough ; and I have reason to suppose in one of the other two, namely, Crossakeil. I do not state these cases as matters to boast of, but as one of self-defence; seeing that every attempt is being made to deprive of their property those landowners who have done their best to double its value ; and feeling satisfied that a united exertion amongst those who only hold a small part of an electoral division might be made, not only to give them the same advantage as individuals, but to add to our general prosperity and security, and to produce at the same percentage a much larger sum for public expenditure. Our Farming Societies might then find it more to their advantage to

look at home rather than to apply to those who are utter strangers to the real state of Irish property, or to those residents who, upon a fair investigation, would prove to be very ignorant of the state of their own; and in fact applying to every sense but common sense,—that common sense which so strongly marks the character and utility of the statements to be found in the “Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England,” in which, in the Second Series, Vol. ii., under the head of “Farming in Leicestershire,” is an account of the Duke of Rutland’s estate in that county. The estate comprises 39,000 acres; the farms vary from 50 acres to 750; the more general size, from 200 to 400 acres; the portions of grass and arable about equal. The arable land is cropped in the Vale of Belvoir on a six-course system; on the lighter land, on a four-course. The pasture land is of average quality, a considerable portion of good, some very good. Dairying is not a feature of the Belvoir estate; and the greater part of the pasture land is used for fattening cattle and sheep, and for rearing store stock. The greatest improvement that has been effected on the estate within the last thirty years is the effectual drainage of the whole of the strong lands. The

drains put in range from 3 to 4 feet, and about 24 feet apart. Generally the tiles have been given by the Duke, and the labour in putting them in under the supervision of his agents, and in most cases also at his expense, the tenants being charged a moderate interest upon the cost of the labour only: it is but in a few instances that interest has been charged on the cost of the tiles. Much of late years has been done towards improving the farmhouses and premises, and the farms are few which have not sufficient accommodation in the shape of good buildings. There is no formal agreement entered into with the tenantry; but the following memorandum is printed on the back of the rental receipts given when payments are made:—

“ *Take notice*—That the following are the conditions upon which you rent or hold the land and premises in your occupation under His Grace the Duke of Rutland, viz. :—

“ 1st. That the land is to be managed by you in a good and husbandlike manner, and the buildings, fences, and gate posts on the premises kept in good repair, the outfall drains and ditches properly scoured, and tunnels made under the gateways when necessary; and that in the event of your vacating the said land and premises by notice from your landlord, or otherwise, you will be held liable to pay

for any dilapidations occasioned by your fault or neglect in so managing such land, and keeping such buildings, fences, gates, and posts on the premises in good repair, and properly scouring out such outfalls and ditches, and making such tunnels when necessary, as aforesaid.

“ 2. That no part of the premises is to be under-let.

“ 3. That no old pasture will be allowed to be converted into tillage without leave in writing.

“ 4. That no hay or straw is to be sold off the premises, except for His Grace's use, and then manure of equal value must be purchased and used thereon.

“ 5. That no trees growing on the premises will be permitted to be lopped, or in any way injured.

“ 6. That, on your quitting the premises, all the manure will be considered as belonging thereto, and will not be suffered to be removed therefrom or allowed for.

“ 7. That the game and right of sporting over such lands is reserved to His Grace.

“ The tenants are further protected by a liberal schedule of allowances as tenant-right for purchased manures, linseed cake, &c. ; and, moreover, it has become an established fact on the Duke's estates, that the best security for both landlord and tenant is the mutual confidence existing, and which has for generations existed, between them. The cottage accommodation on the estate is very good. The old ones are fast disappearing ; but on their ruins new ones, and in increased numbers, arranged with due regard to modern ideas of comfort, are erected. In several parishes this renovating process has been completed, or nearly so. The greater part of the new cottages contain two rooms on the ground floor, and three bedrooms, and have a hovel, pig-gery, privy, &c., together with a small detached garden. There are 155 acres allotment gardens on the estate for the

poor of the several parishes, each occupant having one-sixth to one-fourth of an acre, exclusive of the garden attached to the cottage. The rent charged to the labourers for the best houses, including about half a rood of land, is 60s. a year. The labourers' wages vary from 12s. to 15s. per week, ordinary men getting from 12s. to 13s. weekly.

“ In every parish there are a number of ‘cow cottages.’ In 1858 there were on the estate

“ 136 cottagers, occupying	5 acres and under.
141 ,, above 5 ,,	and under 10.
88 ,, ,, 10 ,,	and under 20.
49 ,, ,, 20 ,,	and under 50.

“ There were under a rental of

“ £8 per annum,	759 occupiers.
8 ,, and under £10	52 ,,
10 ,, ,, 12	40 ,,
12 ,, ,, 15	49 ,,
15 ,, ,, 20	62 ,,
20 ,, ,, 50	115 ,,
50 ,, ,,	198 ,,
	<hr/>
	1275”

It is impossible not to be struck with the similarity both as to the extent of the grass farms as well as the number of tenants occupying small holdings from 5 to 50 acres, the number of *cow cottages*,* and

* It appears that these cottages do or are supposed to keep a cow, on the principle that, farms not being dairy farms, the labouring classes should be supplied with milk.

the 155 acres of allotment gardens, with many of our properties in the province of Leinster; and, could we but introduce a similarity of cultivation, there seems to be no reason why the interests of both landlord and tenant might not be equally secured. The cause of this security of property in Leicestershire is evidently the result of the mutual expenditure of the capital of the landlord and the well-directed industry of the tenantry, regulated by the controlling influence of a well-considered agreement.

The cause of the ten millions of money, as it is confidently asserted, being sent by the working class of our countrymen in America to assist in removing the superfluous population of Ireland, may be traced to the constant increase of the people without a corresponding increase of capital, the tenantry too often living by their labour, and not on it—the cause of their continued poverty and consequent discontent. If it is a fact, as has been stated, that it would take half a million of money to drain the landed property in the county of Cavan, ten millions of money might safely be raised by the landowners and landholders of Ireland, under the con-

trol and assistance of Government, to retain and employ to advantage the working classes—the bone and sinew of our country. If it is the case that our public offices are too often occupied by discontented officials, the fact may be traced to their want of confidence in the ability of their employers to do justice to Ireland—an inability which the first page in the second volume of the “Life of Archbishop Whately” so forcibly illustrates, when, nearly five-and-twenty years since, he thus addresses Mr. Senior :—

“ DUBLIN, *March* 20, 1842.

“ It is matter of great patience to find people so readily giving credence to any falsehood, however extravagant, relative to Ireland, even such as are the most easy of detection; and the worst of it is, that those who don't think it worth while to ascertain facts are always ready to suggest measures. To feel the patient's pulse and examine his tongue is too much trouble; but they are quite prepared to prescribe.”

THE END.

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It is a matter of great pain to find people so readily
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it worth while to ascertain facts are always ready to say
next morning, "To feel the patient's pulse and examine
his tongue is too much trouble; but I will give you
prescribe."

