

REPORT
ON THE
STATE OF IRELAND

IN
1874.

BY
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REPORT
ON
STATE OF IRELAND
IN
1874.

64, Upper Gardiner-street, Dublin,
7th August, 1874.

SIR,

In pursuance of the commands of His Grace the Lord Lieutenant, I have prepared the following Report on the state of Ireland in 1874 :—

ALLEGED WANT OF PROSPERITY IN IRELAND CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THE LATEST STATISTICS OF PROGRESS.

I.—*Mr. Mitchell Henry's argument that "Ireland is of all nations in the world the one that has progressed least" considered.*

In the recent debate in Parliament upon Mr. Butt's Home Rule motion, Mr. Mitchell Henry, M.P. for Galway, is reported to have said—

"If it can be shown that Ireland has greatly prospered under the auspices of the English Government, there are those who will say that as the happiness of a nation is the end of all government, changes founded upon sentiment ought not to be made ; but if, on

the other hand, it can be shown that *Ireland is of all nations in the world the least progressed*, nay, that which has really retrograded, every one will admit that its mode of government deserves the consideration of thoughtful men."

The simplest measure of the relative positions of different countries as to the abundance of capital and confidence in Government is the rate of interest at which Governments and large public companies can borrow, in other words, which investors require to induce them to lend.

To show this, I have constructed the following table showing the rate of interest at which the largest railway company in Ireland (the Great Southern and Western) can borrow, and compared this rate with the lowest rate at which any English railway company can borrow. I have added the lowest rate of any American railway company I find quoted in the London market, and the only case of Belgian railway obligations I find quoted there.

I have added for comparison with this the rate at which the Governments of the United Kingdom, of the principal British Colonies, and of the United States of America can borrow, and have added for comparison the rates at which the following Governments have to borrow, those of Belgium, Sweden, Russia, France, Portugal, Hungary, Turkey, Spain and Greece.

[TABLE.]

TABLE measuring the abundance of Capital and Confidence in Government by the rate of interest which Investors require to induce them to lend.

	Railway Loans.	Government Loans
	Rate of Interest yielded by investment at price of day, 6th July, 1874.	Rate of Interest yielded by investment at price of day, 6th July, 1874.
	Per cent. per annum. £ s. d.	Per cent. per annum. £ s. d.
Government.—United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.	—	3 4 9
Railways.—English Debenture Stock (lowest rate in the market), London and North-Western.	3 17 10	—
Railways.—Irish Debenture Stock (lowest rate in the market), Great Southern and Western.	4 1 3	—
Government of Belgium,	—	4 2 2
Railways.—Belgian Obligations—Great Luxembourg,	4 11 9	—
Government.—British Colonies—		
Victoria,	—	4 12 4
New South Wales,	—	4 13 3
Canada,	—	4 14 3
Government.—Russia,	—	4 14 3
United States of America,	—	4 16 6
Sweden,	—	4 16 7
France,	—	5 0 10
Railways.—Canada (Great Western),	5 4 9	—
United States—New York Central, Gold Bonds.	5 16 6	—
Government.—Portugal,	—	6 7 4
Railways.—Swedish Central (Limited),	6 12 8	—
Government.—Hungary,	—	7 5 2
Turkey,	—	9 4 8
Spain,	—	16 18 11
Greece,	—	33 6 8

It appears from this table that a well-managed railway company in Ireland can borrow money at a lower rate of interest than the Government of any country in the world, except Great Britain, and can borrow within 3s. 5d. per cent. of the rate at which the most prosperous railway company in England can borrow.

Without referring to such countries as Greece and Spain, where the rate of borrowing is £33 6s. 8d. and £16 18s. 11d. per cent., if we take the Federal States whose constitutions have been suggested as models for Ireland, we get the following comparisons. I have estimated Hungary, which has no railway bonds on the London Stock and Share List, by the addition to its Government rate of the lowest difference between Railway Companies and Government borrowing—that of Belgium, 9s. 7d.

DIFFERENCE between Rate of Borrowing in Countries under Federal Government and Ireland.

—	Estimated Lowest Rate, other than Government Borrowing.	Deduct Irish Lowest Railway Companies' Rate.			Degree of Irish Rate below that of other Countries.		
		Per cent.			Per cent.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Hungary, . . .	7 14 9	4	1	3	3	13	6
Sweden, . . .	6 12 8	4	1	3	2	11	5
United States, . . .	5 16 6	4	1	3	1	15	3
Canada, . . .	5 4 9	4	1	3	1	3	6

From these figures it appears at a glance that the statement “that Ireland is of all nations in the world the least progressed,” is completely refuted by the best evidence of the abundance of capital and confidence in the stability of Government.

II.—*How far Low Rate of Interest in Ireland arises from Abundance of Irish Capital.*

It may be urged that it is the proximity to England and the quantity of English capital in Ireland that produces this highly satisfactory result, and that money was consequently always obtainable in Ireland at a rate very little above the Government rate of borrowing, which was as low as 3 per cent. in 1844.

But the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, which can now borrow at a fraction above 4 per cent., was very glad in 1847, 1848 and 1849 to obtain

loans from Government at 5 per cent. to the extent of £495,000.

At that time, too, owing to the effects of the famine, Irish capital was so scarce that it was chiefly English capital with which the railway was originally made.

Such progress has Ireland made, however, in the last quarter of a century, that the whole of the capital employed in extending the railway and paying off the Government loan I have referred to, has been supplied from Ireland, and Irishmen have further bought out one-half of the English shareholders, as is shown by the following table :—

TABLE showing, as between Residents in Great Britain and in Ireland, how Stock in the Great Southern and Western Railway of Ireland has been held at decennial periods stated :—

Years.	Total Stock.	Held by Residents in Great Britain.		Held by Residents in Ireland.	
		Amount.	Per cent.	Amount.	Per cent.
	£	£		£	
1851	2,788,000	1,812,000	65	976,000	35
1861	4,866,000	1,189,000	24	3,677,000	76
1871	5,610,000	971,000	17	4,639,000	83

This table demonstrates that the low rate of interest at which the Great Southern and Western Railway Company of Ireland can now borrow—£4 1s. 3d. per cent.—compared with its position twenty-five years ago, when it was glad to get £500,000 from the Government at 5 per cent., has arisen entirely from the extraordinary growth of capital in Ireland within the past quarter of a century.

III.—*Growth of Capital in Ireland since the Famine of 1846.*

In order to arrive at some tangible way of measuring the aggregate amount of the growth of capital made manifest by the striking instance of the Great Southern

and Western Railway, I will take the statistics of the valuation of property for Probate duty in each year in Ireland, and to secure a more perfect measure, take the average of each five years.

TABLE showing Estimated Capital of Ireland, founded upon the Value of Property passing, in the years mentioned, under Probates of Wills and Letters of Administration, on which duty was paid.

YEARS.	Value.	Yearly Average.	Total Capital Indicated.	Increase in Total Capital Indicated.
	£	£	£	£
1846, .	2,312,008	} 2,534,611	95,286,000	—
1847, .	2,363,573			
1848, .	3,114,036			
1849, .	2,478,949			
1850, .	2,404,491			
1856, .	4,031,860	} 4,220,395	158,661,000	63,375,000
1857, .	3,948,506			
1858-59,*.	4,611,911			
1859-60,*.	4,333,903			
1860-61,*.	4,175,799			
1869, .	5,641,843	} 5,793,285	217,792,000	59,131,000
1870, .	5,014,796			
1871, .	4,129,096			
1872, .	6,879,079			
1873, .	7,301,614			

The value of property passing under Probate is diminished by the extinction of mortgages by the sale of land in fee, as freehold land is not subject to Probate duty, while mortgages are; on the other hand, it is likely to be increased by the extinction of the old freehold leases in land. Setting off one of these changes against the other, the plan suggested by the late Mr. G. R. Porter, the eminent statistician, which I have adopted, of taking the property passing under Probate as (on an average) 2·66 per cent. of the whole capital, affords one of the best available measures of the growth of

* These amounts are from 31st March to 31st March.

capital in the country. When we thus ascertain that the capital of the country has doubled in a quarter of a century, we see at once the fallacy of Mr. Mitchell Henry's statement—"That Ireland is of all nations that which has really retrograded." In this comparison I have taken the years since the famine, because they were suggested by the growth of capital indicated by the rate of borrowing of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company in 1847 and 1874.

But, if we carry the statistics of the value of property passing under Probate back to an earlier period, and compare it with the population in the country, we get the facts shown in the following table:—

TABLE showing the Amount of Capital per head of Population as indicated by the Probate and Letters of Administration Test, for averages of Five Years at different periods.

Centre Year of the Five Years taken for Average.	Estimated Population.	Estimated Amount of Capital.	Estimated Amount of Capital per head of Population.
		£	£
1823,	6,985,000	110,582,000	16
1828,	7,464,000	129,639,000	17
1838,	8,068,000	141,194,000	17
1848,	7,640,000	95,286,000	12
1858,	5,891,000	158,661,000	27
1871,	5,395,000	217,792,000	40

This table indicates that the capital (taking the years stated as the centre of a five years' average) was, in 1823, £16 per head of population; in 1828, £17; in 1838, £17; and in 1848, from the effects of the famine, it fell to £12. It rose in 1858 to £27, and in 1871 to £40.

Thus, whether we go back for a quarter of a century to 1848, or for half a century to 1823, we come at the same result, a wonderful growth of capital in proportion to population in Ireland.

IV.—*Growth of Capital in Ireland as indicated by the amount of Government Stock on which dividends paid at the Bank of Ireland.*

As the above inference is founded on an estimate which was, as I have shown, most accurately corroborated by the rate of interest at which the Great Southern and Western Railway Company could borrow in 1847 and 1873, it becomes of importance to see if there are any statistics to test the estimate for the earlier period. Going back to 1818, five years before 1823, we have on this point the statistics of Government Stock on which dividends paid at the Bank of Ireland.

TABLE showing Amount of Investments in Government Funds* on which Dividends paid at the Bank of Ireland per head of Population in 1818 and in 1873.

YEAR.	Estimated Population.	Amount of Government Stock* on which Dividends paid at Bank of Ireland.	Amount per head of Population.
		£	£
1818,	6,536,000	21,004,000	3
1873,	5,337,000	33,781,000	6

From the greatly increased opportunities of investing money which railways afford, it was not to be expected that the amount which people would lend to the Government at $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. would increase as rapidly as the total amount of capital; bearing this circumstance in mind, the increase from £21,000,000 in 1818, to £34,000,000 in 1873, in the money invested at $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., is a most distinct corroboration of the estimate of the increase of capital in general, as indicated by the estimate founded on the valuation for Probate from £111,000 in 1823, to £218,000 in 1871.

We have it, therefore, established beyond the possibility of a doubt, that Ireland is progressing in capital for the past half century.

* Exclusive of Indian Stock, which is at a higher rate than $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

V.—*Progress of Iron Mines in Ireland.*

The Statistics for 1872 have been supplied by the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade as the latest which can be given, these, added to the published figures on the subject,* give the following results:—

TABLE showing the Amount of Irish Iron Ore used in Great Britain in the Production of Pig Iron.

	Tons.
1866,	25,225
1871,	107,734
1872,	176,550

Mr. Watson, Mining Engineer, in his article in the Dublin University Magazine for January last, has estimated that the figures for 1873 will show a large increase.

The evidence given before the Committee of the House of Lords on the Ballymena and Larne Junction Railway Bill in April last, contains an estimate that the export from the already opened mines of the Antrim district will reach, in three or four years, to from 500,000 to 600,000 tons.

This estimate is given by Mr. Alderman Curtis, of Manchester, Chairman of the Ebbw Vale Company (one of the largest mining companies in England); and also Chairman of the Mountcashel Iron Ore Company, expressly formed for working some of the Antrim mines.

The published value of the ore in 1864 is £5,313, and in 1871, £66,043. Taking the same price, 12s. 3d. per ton, in 1872, the value would be £108,228.

Mr. Watson's estimate indicates a still higher price in 1873. He estimates the Irish price to the Company at the English price less freight, and on this basis estimates it as to from 14s. 6d. to 18s. 6d. Taking the average of this, 16s. 6d. per ton, and to allow for unopened mines, if we take Alderman Curtis's higher estimate of produce of opened mines, we get a reasonable prospect of the Iron

* Thom's Statistics of Ireland, 1874, p. 780.

mines in Ireland producing to the Companies that work them by 1878, at least £510,000 a year.

VALUE of Iron Ore produced, and likely to be produced, in Ireland.

	£
1866, actual produce,	5,313
1871, „	66,043
1872, „	108,228
1878, estimate of what may be produced,	510,000

The reality of the progress already made, and the confidence in the estimates, is shown by the Ballymena, Cushendall, and Red Bay Railway, sanctioned in 1873, and the Ballymena and Larne Railway, promoted in the present Session.

The benefit to proprietors who assist in developing the mineral resources of their estates, is shown by Alderman Curtis's evidence on the Ballymena and Larne Junction Railway Bill. He stated—

“That the Mountcashel Iron Ore Company, of which he was Chairman, had taken a lease from Lord O'Neill for between 23,000 and 25,000 acres, and the dead rent we pay is £3,000 per annum, the royalty being 1s. per ton, so that if we raise 100,000 tons (£5,000 royalty), or 200,000 tons (£10,000 royalty), of course it will increase the rent receivable.”

The history of this sudden and rapid development of Iron mining in Antrim, from 1866 to the present time, shows how impossible it is to judge of the future of the mineral resources of Ireland from the past.

VI.—*Statistics of Progress as to Coal, Copper, and other mineral resources of Ireland.*

The statistics of other mineral resources of Ireland are not of the same satisfactory character as those of Iron ore.

TABLE showing the quantity of Coal and Metals produced in Ireland (*other than Iron Ore*).

YEAR.	Coal.	Fine Copper.	Metallic Lead.	Zinc.	Iron Pyrites.	Total Measured in Tons.	Silver.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Ounces.
1861, . .	123,070	1,474	1,592	no return.	91,803	217,939	12,398
1871, . .	165,750	698	835	270	38,945	206,498	7,280
1872, . .	103,463	687	726	588	42,950	148,414	6,500

It will be seen from this table that the total in tons produced in Ireland of Coal, Fine Copper, Metallic Lead, Zinc, and Iron Pyrites, decreased from 217,939 tons in 1861, to 206,498 tons in 1871, and to 148,414 tons in 1872; and Silver decreased from 12,398 ounces in 1861, to 6,500 in 1872.

It will be observed too, that in every single item there was a decrease since 1861, except Zinc, as to which there was no return in 1861.

In the following tables the values of the Irish mineral produce are divided into three classes; first, all but Coal and Iron Ore; secondly, Iron Ore; and lastly, Coal. The corresponding values of British minerals are given for comparison as to relative progress from year to year, and also to relative wealth of the two countries.

VALUE of Copper, Lead, Tin, Zinc, Silver, and Iron Pyrites produced in Ireland and in Great Britain.

YEAR.	IN IRELAND.		IN GREAT BRITAIN.	
	*Market Value.	Decrease from 1861.	*Market Value.	Decrease from 1861.
	£	£	£	£
1861, .	242,000	—	3,797,000	—
1871, .	94,000	148,000	3,482,000	315,000
1872, ..	122,000	120,000	3,446,000	351,000

This table indicates a serious falling-off in all mining in Ireland, except Iron Ore and Coal, the decrease from 1861 to 1872 being from £242,000 to £122,000. In Great Britain there has been a similar falling-off in this class of mining enterprise from £3,797,000 in 1861 to £3,446,000 in 1872.

* Board of Trade Returns.

VII.—*Comparative positions of Great Britain and Ireland as to Iron, as affecting the relative growth of Wealth in the two Countries.*

VALUE of Iron Ore produced in Ireland and Value of Pig Iron produced in Great Britain, deducting the value of the Iron Ore from Ireland worked up in Pig Iron in Great Britain.

YEAR.	IN IRELAND.		IN GREAT BRITAIN.	
	Value of Iron Ore.	Increase from 1861.	Value of Pig Iron.	Increase from 1861.
	£	£	£	£
1861, .	—	—	9,281,000	—
1871, .	66,000	66,000	16,602,000	7,321,000
1872, .	108,000	108,000	18,432,000	9,151,000

It appears from this table that the increase in Iron Ore in Ireland from 1861 up to 1872, £108,000,* with the £8,000 increase in value of Coal,† making up £116,000, did not make up for the falling-off in other minerals of £120,000, appearing in the table next before this one.

Should, however, the reasonable prospect of Iron Ore in Ireland being worth £510,000* in 1878, be realized, it will become double the value of all the other mineral wealth in Ireland at the high figure of £242,000‡ in 1861.

Even this high figure, however, will go a short way to put us on a par with the Iron interest of Great Britain, which has risen from £9,000,000 to £18,000,000 in 11 years, from 1861 to 1872.

The conversion of Iron Ore into Pig Iron turns on the facility of obtaining Coal, as in the old process it took about 5 tons of Coal to convert 3 tons of Iron Ore into 1 ton of Pig Iron.

For this reason, in adding up the mineral wealth of Great Britain, the value of coal and of Pig Iron should not be added together, as the value of Pig Iron represents to such a large extent the value of Coal consumed in its production.

* Already referred to in Section V., p. 14. † See table in p. 18.

‡ See table in preceding page.

VIII. — *Argument that Ireland is not progressing as rapidly as Great Britain, considered in connexion with the Statistics of Coal.*

Mr. A. M. Sullivan, M.P., raised this question, by the following observations, in the Home Rule Debate—

“They had been asked to compare the Ireland of 1874 with the Ireland of 1782. It was perfectly true that there had been progress, but there had not been the progress that there ought to have been in that period. England in that time had been moving grandly forward; and the question for the House to consider was, whether Ireland had made the progress she ought to have made.”

The progress of England has arisen to a large extent from her manufactures, and these again have arisen to a very large extent from the abundance of coal and iron.

One of the best illustrations of the extent to which the progress of English manufacture is connected with the abundance of coal, is the transfer of the woollen manufacture from the county of Norfolk to Yorkshire from this cause, as described by Mr. M'Culloch in his “Statistics of the British Empire.”

“The county of Norfolk was long the principal seat of the stuff or worsted manufacture. The name ‘worsted’ is said, as previously mentioned, to be derived from Worsted, a parish in this county, where woollen twists and stuffs were first made. But the manufacture was early transferred to Norwich, whence it extended to other towns. . . . On the whole, however, the manufactures of Norwich appear to have declined considerably during the present century, and those of the other towns in the county are of trifling importance. The *falling-off*, we believe, is *principally ascribable to the want of coal* and to the consequent disadvantage under which the businesses are carried on here as compared with those established in the district where this mineral abounds; in fact, the greater part of the yarn now made use of in the Norwich fabrics is made at Bradford, and, as already stated, the worsted manufacture of the West Riding is become of vastly greater extent and value than that of Norfolk.”

Now, how is Ireland circumstanced, as compared with Great Britain, with regard to coal, on which the success of the woollen manufactures depends?

The coal produced in the United Kingdom in 1871 is returned at 117,000,000 tons. By a recent Parliamentary

Return (1874), No. 194, it appears that the declared value of this at the ports of exportation is upwards of £1 a ton. In 1873 Ireland imported 2,583,000 tons of coal, and exported to all parts 1,575 tons; so that Ireland paid Great Britain for coals, in 1873, £2,581,425 beyond what she received.

Of all this wealth of £117,000,000 a year (either in value of coals to export, or if used at a cheaper rate near the pit, in benefit to the British manufacturer and consumer), Ireland (but a fifth of the population of Great Britain) enjoyed in 1870 only the 827th part, or £141,470 a year.

This wonderful preponderance of wealth in coal, when added to the gigantic start that Great Britain has over Ireland in iron, goes a long way to account for "the grand progress of Great Britain," to which Mr. Sullivan refers. Irishmen have no ground to complain of a relatively greater progress, so far as it is founded on natural advantages in coal and iron, and the numerous manufactures dependent upon them, which Great Britain is fortunate enough to possess to such a much greater extent than Ireland.

IX.—*Comparative positions of Great Britain and Ireland as to progress in Wealth from Coal.*

VALUE of Coal Produce in Ireland and in Great Britain.

YEAR.	IN IRELAND.		IN GREAT BRITAIN.	
	*Market Value.	Increase from 1861.	*Market Value.	Increase from 1861.
	£	£	£	£
1861, .	31,000	—	21,003,000	—
1871, .	50,000	19,000	35,156,000	14,153,000
1872, .	39,000	8,000	46,273,000	25,270,000

This table shows the small progress of Irish Coal

* Board of Trade Returns.

enterprise up to 1872. The Argina Coal Mines from which so much was expected, have, I am informed, turned out unprofitable, so the figures for 1873 are not likely to differ much from those presented in the table for 1871 and 1872; and in this table we have revealed at a glance the extraordinary advantage that Great Britain has over Ireland in the matter of Coal.

Whilst the value of Coal produced in Ireland increased in 11 years by £8,000, the value of Coal produced in Great Britain at the low standard of price of the Board of Trade Returns (7s. 6d. per ton), increased by £25,270,000.

If the declared value for exportation in 1873, in the Return to the House of Commons, 1874, No. 194, of about £1 a ton, be taken as a better estimate of the whole benefit of Coal to Great Britain, to use or sell, as compared with Ireland, whose inhabitants paid Great Britain for Coals, at the rate of £1 a ton, a subsidy of £2,581,425 in 1873, then we get this remarkable result, that the wealth of Great Britain increased, in the matter of Coal alone, from about £42,000,000 in 1861 (double the Board of Trade local value for that year) to £123,000,000*; whilst Ireland increased in the same time from £62,000 (double the Board of Trade local value for Irish Coal in 1861) to £103,000†.

In other words, British wealth increased, in the matter of Coal, by £81,000,000 a year in the eleven years in which Irish wealth in Coal increased by £41,000 a year.

Here we have at a glance an answer to the common argument of foreigners, referred to by Mr. Butt in the recent Home Rule debate—

“Ireland has been united to Great Britain for 70 years; Great Britain is rich, Ireland is poor, there must be some injustice to account for the difference.”

* 123,394,000 tons produced in Great Britain in 1872, at £1 as exportation value.

† 103,463 tons produced in Ireland in 1872, at £1 as exportation value.

The statistics of Coal supply the answer. The Irish Parliament encouraged the making of canals from Dublin to the centre of the Irish Turf bogs; the trade in making and selling Turf, and the trade of making and selling Coal are all perfectly free, nevertheless the inhabitants of Dublin, and parts of Ireland adjoining the coast opposite England and Scotland, burn Coal and not Turf; they paid a subsidy to Great Britain of £2,581,000 in 1873 for Coal. British wealth in Coals increased in eleven years by £81,000,000 a year, while Irish wealth increased by only £41,000 a year; yet in all this there is no evidence of injustice, it is simply the possession of a natural advantage which has enabled Great Britain to surpass not only Ireland, but every country in the world, in wealth; and which makes her fortunate inhabitants, through foreign State Loans and Bonds, foreign Railway Shares and Securities, the largest mortgagees and the greatest bankers of the world.

Through the intimate union between the countries, the Irish labourers get their share of all this wealth by the simple process of migrating to the mining and manufacturing districts, and hence the Irish quarters in all the large English and Scotch towns. The statistics of the birthplaces of the inhabitants, at the Censuses of 1861 and 1871, proves that 200,000 Irish people must have migrated to Great Britain in the ten years. From these and the harvest labourers came the remittances from Great Britain to Ireland, estimated in Section X. as amounting in the past year to £876,796.

A Home Rule movement, if successful, might make it difficult for the Irish immigrants to remain in Great Britain; but it could not move the Coal mines or the manufactures dependent upon proximity to Coal mines, or the wealth which these advantages create, and so would not move the natural resources or the capital by which these industrious labourers are now supported.

*X.—Alleged want of Prosperity founded on the
Statistics of Out-door Relief.*

In the Home Rule debate Mr. Mitchell Henry, M.P., referred to the statistics of out-door relief as showing a want of progress in prosperity. He said :—

“There has been a very large increase in the amount of out-door pauperism, as will be seen by referring to the Tables of the Poor Law Board, but at the same time a decrease in the in-door pauperism. The explanation of this is, that there is amongst that class who are just able to keep out of the workhouse a very large increase in the numbers.”

The statistics of out-door relief to which Mr. Henry refers are these up to 1873. I have added the figures for 1874, supplied by the courtesy of the Local Government Board. Both in this and subsequent tables, I have taken the week of maximum pressure on Workhouse relief in each winter, for comparison—

TABLE showing the number receiving Out-door Relief in Ireland at Three Periods, Ten Years apart, and in 1874.

For Week ending date as below.	Number receiving Out-door Relief under the Poor Law.	Increase from 1853.	Number in each 10,000 of Population.	Increase from 1853.
		In number.		Per 10,000 population.
1853 (19th February),	3,482	—	5	—
1863 (14th February),	8,758	5,276	15	10
1873 (15th February),	32,936	29,456	62	57
1874 (28th February),	32,398	28,916	61	56

Part of the increase since 1863 was in orphans and deserted children placed out at nurse, under an Act passed in 1862 (25 & 26 Vic., c. 83). The number increased from 77 in 1863 to 1,526 in 1873. Some of this increase is only apparent and not real ; it was caused by the abolition, in 1864, of Vestry Cess, under which deserted children were in some places boarded out before

1863 (27 Vic., c. 17), and by the extension of the Poor Law Acts to all destitute deserted children, whether relieved or relievable by Vestries or Grand Juries.

As these deserted children when relieved before 1864 otherwise than under the Poor Law were not included in the earlier figures, which are confined to Poor Law relief only, so far there is only an apparent and not a real increase in the number receiving out-door relief.

The large increase, however, between 1863 and 1873, is in those relieved under Section 1 of the Poor Law Act of 1847 (10 Vic., c. 31)—22,000 in number.

The Local Government Board in another table in their Report of 1873 explain the classes in which this increase arose, and, neglecting figures less than 1,000, the numbers are as follows :—

Number receiving Out-door Relief under Section 1 of Act of 1847, greater in February, 1873, than in Corresponding Period in 1863.

Persons permanently disabled from labour by reason of old age, infirmity, or bodily or mental defects, .	10,000
Persons disabled from labour by reason of severe sickness or serious accident,	6,000
Widows having two or more children dependent upon them, viz. :—	
Widows,	1,200
Children,	4,800
	<hr/>
	6,000
	<hr/>
Total increase,	22,000

It is plain that such increases in out-door relief indicate only increased liberality and charity on the part of the Guardians, and do not necessarily indicate any increase of pressure of destitution.

The fallacy of bringing forward an increase of out-door relief from 5 in the 10,000 of population in 1853 to 62 in the 10,000 of population in 1873, as a proof of an unsatisfactory state of the labouring population in Ireland, is shown at once by the simple statement that the out-door relief in England and Wales at the beginning of 1873

was 324* in the 10,000 of population; yet it is plain that the English labouring classes are better off than the Irish. It is the Irish labourers who migrate to England and Wales, and not the English who migrate to Ireland. The persons born in England who were enumerated in the Irish Census were only 67,599, whilst the persons born in Ireland enumerated in the Census of England and Wales were 566,540 in number.

The Irish in England, and Irish harvest labourers who go over for only temporary work, send and bring large sums of money; some measure of a part of this may be obtained from the balance of the Post Office Orders drawn in Great Britain and paid in Ireland, as compared with those drawn in Ireland and paid in Great Britain.

From the Post Office Orders an estimate has been made on the assumption that the small remittances on account of trade, in private payments from Great Britain to Ireland, are not likely to be more than half those from Ireland to Great Britain, and that the balance may be taken as the remittances of Irish labourers in Great Britain, and the result is shown in the following table:—

Six Months.	A. Amount of Money Orders issued in Great Bri- tain and paid in Ireland.	B. Amount of Money Orders issued in Ireland and paid in Great Britain.	Estimated remittances of Irish labourers in Great Britain. (Column A—half Column B.)		
			Half-year ended 30th June.	Half-year ended 31st December.	Year ended 30th June.
	£	£	£	£	£
30th June, 1872, .	377,108	247,820	253,198	—	—
31st Dec., 1872, .	542,730	276,125	—	404,668	} 747,563
30th June, 1872, .	470,866	255,943	342,895	—	
31st Dec., 1873, .	638,524	280,490	—	498,179	} 876,796
30th June, 1874, .	505,524	253,814	378,617	—	

It appears from this table that the remittances from Great Britain each half-year rose from £253,198 in first half

* 726,201 in population for 647 Unions of 22,701,137.—*Statistical Abstract*, 1873, c. 833, p. 116.

of 1872 to £378,617 in the first half of 1874. The second half of each year exceeds the first by about £150,000, owing, no doubt, to the remittance of harvest wages being larger after than before the 30th of June. The whole year's remittances have now reached the estimated amount of £876,796.

With such figures indicating the benefit which the labouring classes in Ireland derive from the intimate union between the two countries, it is vain to try and prove that the Irish labouring classes are badly off because 61 in the 10,000 receive out-door relief, when 324 in the 10,000 receive out-door relief in England and Wales.

XI.—*Real Progress in the welfare of the Labouring Classes indicated by the Irish Poor Law Statistics.*

The alarming feature in Ireland, when the population was so dense before the famine and for some years after the famine, was the number of persons willing to work but unable to get employment, in short, it was the destitution of the able-bodied that was the cause of anxiety.

Now, the Poor Law Statistics, indicate the most satisfactory results on this point, as shown in the following Tables, I. as to men and II. as to women:—

TABLE showing number of Able-bodied Males above 15 years of age in Workhouses in Ireland, in weeks ending at the dates stated, ten years apart, and in 1874.

Able-bodied *males* above 15 years.

In Week ending date as below.	Number in Workhouse.	Decrease from 1853.	Number in each 10,000 of Male Population.	Decrease from 1853.
		In number.		per 10,000 population.
1853 (19th February),	14,635	—	49	—
1863 (14th February),	4,309	10,656	15	34
1873 (15th February),	2,510	12,195	9	40
1874 (28th February),	2,247	12,448	8	41

This table indicates steady progress since the very unfavourable year of 1863, the number of able-bodied males in receipt of relief being reduced from 4,309 to 2,247, or from 15 in the 10,000 of male population to 8. It indicates still greater progress if we go back to 1853, the number being reduced in twenty-one years from 14,695 to 2,247, or from 49 in the 10,000 of male population to 8. In the winter of 1873-74, at the week of greatest pressure on the workhouse, the number of able-bodied males relieved was lower than in the winter of 1859-60—the most favourable since the famine—when the number reached 2,373, and, making allowance for change of population, was in the same proportion as in that year,—8 in the 10,000 of male population.

The statistics with regard to able-bodied women are equally satisfactory.

TABLE showing number of Able-bodied Females above 15 years of age in Workhouses in Ireland, and Able-bodied Widows receiving Out-door Relief, in weeks ending at the dates stated, ten years apart, and in 1874.

Able-bodied females above 15 years.

In Week ending date as below.	Number in Workhouse.	Number of Widows getting Out-door Relief.	Total Able-bodied Women relieved.	Decrease from 1853.	Number in 10,000 of Female Population.	Decrease from 1853.
				In number.		In 10,000 population.
1853(19th Feb.)	38,309	333	38,642	—	122	—
1863(14th Feb.)	10,941	414*	11,355	27,287	39	83
1873(15th Feb.)	5,900	1,684*	7,584	31,058	27	95
1874(28th Feb.)	5,474	1,626	7,100	31,542	26	96

In this table I have added the widows with two or more children, who got out-door relief as such, to the able-bodied women within the workhouse, to get at a fair measure of the able-bodied women in receipt of relief, and it appears

* Number of widows on last Saturday in February.

that since the very unfavourable year 1863, the reduction has been from 11,355 able-bodied women relieved to 7,100 or from 39 in the 10,000 of female population to 26. In 21 years the reduction has been from 38,642, and from 122 in the 10,000 population. The number 7,100 in the winter of 1873-74, of able-bodied females relieved, at the week of greatest pressure, is lower than 7,563,* the number reached in the very favourable winter of 1859-60.

The Poor Law Statistics, affording such conclusive proof of great improvement in the condition of able-bodied men and women on the verge of destitution in the past 20 years, completely refutes Mr. Mitchell Henry's explanation of the increase of out-door relief—

“That there is amongst that class who are just able to keep out of the workhouse a very large increase of numbers.”

XII.—*Alleged Want of Prosperity as indicated by the Diminution of the Population of Ireland.*

Mr. Mitchell Henry, M.P., in the recent debate, referred to the diminution of population in these terms :—

“Since the famine, Ireland has lost 3,000,000 of her population, and at the present moment emigration is going on at the rate of 100,000 a year. The question then arises—What, then, is the normal population of Ireland? When is this hemorrhage to cease?”

In this argument, the effect of the increase of births over deaths, as counteracting the diminution of population from emigration, is entirely overlooked. Thus, whilst the number of persons permanently leaving Ireland in 10 years, from the 1st of January, 1861, was 849,000, of this number it may be estimated that 200,000 settled in Great Britain, and 649,000 went abroad. The diminution of the population between the two Censuses was not, however, 849,000, but only 390,000, or less than half.

* 87 widows on last Saturday in February added to 7,476 able-bodied women on 3rd of March.

The real question is, therefore, in which year since the famine did the diminution of the population take place, and is the rate of diminution, on an average of years, increasing or decreasing? Now, it is 28 years since the great failure of the potato in 1846, and dividing the intervening period into four periods of 7 years each, we get the following table:—

TABLE showing the decrease in the population of Ireland in each 7 years, since 1846.

Years.	Estimated Population.	Decrease in each 7 Years.
1846	8,288,000	—
1853	6,199,000	2,089,000
1860	5,821,000	378,000
1867	5,486,000	335,000
1874	5,300,000	186,000

It appears from this table that 2,000,000 of the 3,000,000 of decrease took place in the first 7 years, and in each subsequent 7 years there has been a decline in the amount of the decrease, indicating a marked tendency towards a stoppage of the decrease.

It is right to notice that the difference between the amount of emigration and the reduction of population, is not a matter of chance or accident.

In 1851, the Imperial Parliament adopted the most effectual means to guard against any undue reduction of the population. The system of charitable dispensaries supported by local taxes only in proportion to subscriptions, was superseded in 1851, and the complete system of medical relief out of local rates, in every part of Ireland, with dispensaries, hospitals, and a complete staff of medical officers, was constituted, forming the most complete system of State care for the health of the poor existing in any country.

The stimulus to emigration has come, not from the

slight assistance given to it out of local rates, but from the remittances from the settlers in North America to their friends in the United Kingdom, reported by the Emigration Commissioners to be almost entirely from the Irish settlers in America.

TABLE showing Expenditure on Emigration out of Irish Local Taxes, and Remittances from Settlers in North America to their Friends in the United Kingdom.

Period.	Paid from Irish Local Rates.	*Remittances from North America.
	£	£
Average of 5 years,† 1851-55, .	17,000	1,287,000
" " 1856-60, .	3,000	614,000
" " 1861-65, .	2,000	386,000
" " 1866-70, .	2,000	587,000
" 2 years, 1871-72, .	2,000	726,000
Single year, 1873,† .	1,500	724,000

From this table will be seen the wonderful temptation to emigration held out by the voluntary remittances of prosperous settlers and the trifling amount of State encouragement. The settlers in America give their relations here little choice in the matter, for of the £724,000 sent over in 1873 no less than £341,772 came in the form of prepaid passages.

The voluntary nature of the emigration is shown by the impartiality of the result. All races and all religions in Ireland are affected nearly alike, although the Roman Catholics, as the poorest, suffered most from the actual mortality at the famine, and from the misery consequent upon it, the proportion of Roman Catholics to the total population of Ireland is very little changed at the end of 40 years. They were 809 in every 1,000 of the population in 1834; in 1871 they were 767.

* Thirty-third Report of Emigration Commissioners, 1873, c. 768, p. 78.

† Ended 25th March.

XIII.—*Emigration Statistics for First Six Months of 1874, compared with preceding years.*

The Registrar General's Returns up to 30th June, 1874, show a falling-off in the emigration in the half-year of 14,359.

In order to see how satisfactory a figure this is, an estimate has been made from it of the probable decrease for the whole year, and it amounts to 21,000.

A comparison has been made with the total emigration for the past 20 years, in periods of 5 years, with a correction for the decrease of population.

TOTAL EMIGRATION FROM IRELAND.

	Number of Emigrants.
First six months of 1873,	60,140
" " 1874,	45,781
Decrease in half-year,	14,359
The whole of year 1873,	90,149
Estimate for 1874,	68,671
Estimated decrease in year,	21,478

YEAR.	Number of Emigrants.	Increase.	Decrease.
1869,	66,568	—	—
1870,	74,885	8,317	—
1871,	71,240	—	3,645
1872,	78,102	6,862	—
1873,	90,149	12,047	—
1874 (estimated as above), .	68,671	—	21,478

This table shows that we have to go back to 1869 to get as low a figure as in 1874.

The slow but progressive nature of the decrease in emigration in twenty years is shown by the following figures, in which I have made allowance for the diminution of population by taking the proportion of emigration that may be taken as amongst the part of the population

of the earlier years equal to the estimated population for 1874.

TABLE showing Average Annual Amount of Emigration from a portion of the Population of Ireland equal to that in 1874, in each of Five-Year periods since 1854.

—	Estimated Amount of Emigration.	Increase.	Decrease.
1854-1858, average of 5 years, .	84,274	—	—
1859-1863, " " .	76,704	—	7,570
1864-1868, " " .	72,190	—	4,514
1869-1873, " " .	72,847	657	—
1874, estimated from return for 6 months,	68,671	—	4,176

XIV.—*Statistics of Crime.*

The progress of the country in wealth depends on the conduct of individuals and classes, and on such large measures of legislation as providing complete education—first, of the labouring classes, and, secondly, of the capitalists. But all efforts of individuals, or effects of the wisest legislation, are checked and paralysed if Crime be not suppressed. For the suppression of Crime the Executive Government is responsible, especially in a country like Ireland, where, in addition to the English institutions, of Judges, Magistrates, and Coroners, for the suppression of Crime, we have in every county the Scotch system of Public Prosecutors under the Chief Law Officer. We have, in addition, the Irish system of Official Magistrates, the entire Police (double the number of the English in proportion to population) under the control of the Executive, and special powers under the Peace Preservation Act for general restraint on the use of arms and special powers for stopping Crime.

Now, whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the necessity of all these means of suppressing crime—whether, for instance, it is necessary to have both

Coroners and Public Prosecutors, seeing that Scotland has no Coroners and England no local Public Prosecutors—it is important to know that nothing can well be more complete than the success of the Executive Government in diminishing crime in Ireland.

(a.) CRIME IN 1873 COMPARED WITH AVERAGES OF PREVIOUS YEARS SINCE 1864.

TABLE showing the Number of Indictable Offences not disposed of summarily in 1873, compared with preceding Nine Years.

YEAR.	Number of Offences.	Average of Four and Five Years compared with 1873.	Decrease.
1864, .	10,865	9,743	—
1865, .	9,766		
1866, .	9,082		
1867, .	9,260		
1868, .	9,090		
1869, .	9,178	8,731	1,012
1870, .	9,517		
1871, .	8,155		
1872, .	7,716	6,942	1,789
1873, .	6,942		

It appears from this table that serious crime has fallen to a very low figure—6,942; that this is 1,789 below the average of the preceding 5 years, and 2,801 below the average of 4 years ending 1867, and 3,923 below the amount so recently as 10 years ago, in 1864.

(b.) CRIME IN IRELAND, OUTSIDE DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT, IN FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1874.

The satisfactory result attained at the end of 1873 has been borne out by the confidential reports of the Royal Irish Constabulary, up to 30th of June last :—

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES, specially reported by the Royal Irish Constabulary.

	Number.
First six months of 1873, . . .	133
First six months of 1874, . . .	118
Decrease in 1874, . . .	15

OUTRAGES of all kinds, specially reported by the Royal Irish Constabulary.

	Number.
First six months of 1873, . . .	1,205
First six months of 1874, . . .	1,108
	<hr/>
Decrease in 1874, . . .	97

(c.) CRIME IN DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT, IN THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF 1874.

The figures in the previous sub-section relate to all Ireland, except the Dublin Metropolitan Police District. The confidential returns as to it are not made for both years in the same form as those of the Royal Irish Constabulary, so as to admit of being added to them.

Comparing some other figures for the first *five* months of 1874 with 1873, the Dublin Metropolitan Police District presents an unfavourable contrast to the rest of Ireland.

PERSONS Committed for Trial in the Dublin Metropolitan Police District.

	Number.
First <i>five</i> months of 1873, . . .	306
First <i>five</i> months of 1874, . . .	345
	<hr/>
Increase in 1874, . . .	39

ARRESTS for all classes of Offences, whether indictable or otherwise, in the Dublin Metropolitan Police District.

	Number.
First <i>five</i> months of 1873, . . .	9,377
First <i>five</i> months of 1874, . . .	10,936
	<hr/>
Increase in 1874, . . .	1,559

I have had occasion to point out in the Reports on Irish Criminal Statistics, the great preponderance of town crime, especially in the Dublin Metropolitan Police District. It arises largely from moral causes, such as drunkenness, with the direct crimes of violence, and indirect crimes consequent on the bad rearing of young persons which it leads to.

As the powers of the law for dealing on modern reformatory principles with the cases and consequences of habitual drunkenness are wholly inadequate, the increase of town crime, so far as it arises from such causes, is no test of the effectiveness of the police and of the executive machinery for the suppression of crime.

(d.) CRIME IN PROCLAIMED DISTRICTS.

If we take the counties which were specially proclaimed in 1870, and as to which the special proclamations are kept still in force, we get the results stated in the following table:—

TABLE showing the Number of Indictable Offences not disposed of summarily, in Counties wholly or partially specially Proclaimed in 1870, and still subject to Special Proclamation.

COUNTIES.	Number of Crimes in 1869.	Number of Crimes in 1873.	Decrease.
Cavan,	136	69	67
King's County,	114	44	70
Mayo,	168	130	38
Meath,	205	51	154
Westmeath,	216	74	142
Total,	839	368	471

It appears from this table that in the counties of Cavan, King's County, Mayo, Meath, and Westmeath, the indictable offences not disposed of summarily were, in 1869, the year before the counties were specially proclaimed, 839; in 1873 they had fallen to 368, and four of these counties are now below half the average of crime in Ireland in proportion to population.

In September, 1873, it was found possible to revoke the special proclamations of parts of Longford, Roscommon, Sligo, and Tipperary, which had been so proclaimed in 1870. On the other hand, on account of the occurrence of serious crimes, it was found necessary to issue

special proclamations as to parts of Clare, Limerick, Roscommon, and Tipperary. In these counties there has been a marked diminution of outrages in the first six months of 1874, as compared with the first six months of 1873.

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES in Clare, Limerick, Roscommon, and
Tipperary.

	Number.
First six months of 1873,	45
First six months of 1874,	18
Decrease in 1874,	27

OUTRAGES of all kinds in Clare, Limerick, Roscommon, and
Tipperary.

	Number.
First six months of 1873,	242
First six months of 1874,	180
Decrease in 1874,	62

(e.) CONNEXION BETWEEN SUPPRESSION OF CRIME AND GROWTH
OF WEALTH.

To the perfect supremacy of the law which is now secured in Ireland, is owing, in no small degree, the growth of capital and the extremely low rate of interest at which it is lent in Ireland, which I had occasion to notice in the first Section.

The contrast between an Irish Company borrowing at £4 1s. 3d. per cent., and the Government of Spain at £16 18s. 11d. per cent., and that of Greece (where there is no civil war) at £33 6s. 8d. per cent., indicates, in the simplest and the most conclusive manner, the difference in the first elements for the growth of wealth and property, between a country like Ireland, where the supremacy of law is complete, and a state of society such as was indicated a short time since in Greece, where the authorities had to negotiate with Brigands for the ransom of foreign visitors to their shores.

XV.—*Alleged want of Prosperity from excess of Local Taxation in Ireland.*

Mr. Mitchell Henry, M.P., in the recent Home Rule debate, submitted the following calculations and statements :—

“Twenty years ago the soil of Ireland produced £20,000,000 worth more of crops than it does now. . . . The increased annual produce of the soil devoted to the rearing of cattle was only £11,000,000, leaving a permanent loss of £9,000,000 a year.

“In this calculation nothing has been left . . . for the frightful load of local taxation, which is at least double what is paid in England, and, owing to the decline of population, is becoming heavier.”

The latter part of Mr. Henry's calculation admits of an easy check. The rates on real property in Ireland for local taxation were in 1872*, £2,344,446, on a valuation of £13,329,354, or 3s. 6d. in the £1; the rates on real property in England and Wales in 1871 were £17,400,000, on a valuation of £107,866,000, or 3s. 3d. in the £1.

The tolls and other receipts, exclusive of receipts from loans and from Imperial taxes, were in Ireland £560,804, or equal to 10d. in the £1 on the Irish valuation, and making the total of local taxes equal to a charge of 4s. 4d. in the £1. The corresponding items of English local taxation were £7,430,000, or 1s. 4d. in the £1 on the English valuation, making the total of the local taxes there equal to a charge of 4s. 7d. in the £1.

If Mr. Henry, in using the phrase “load of local taxation,” means the actual rates on land, they are, at the present valuation in Ireland, 3s. 6d. in the £1, or only 3d. more than the English figure, 3s. 3d. If he means the whole of the local taxes, they are in Ireland equivalent to 4s. 4d. in the £1, or 3d. in the £1 less than the English figure, 4s. 7d.

* Local Taxation (Ireland) Report, Par. Pap., 1873, c. 848, p. 18.

If the element of population to which he refers be introduced, the local taxes were in 1872 in Ireland* 10s. 9d. per head of population, in England and Wales £1 1s. 10d. per head of population.

So that the statement that the burden of local taxation is frightful, or double what it is in England, is unsupported by the most recent facts.

XVI.—*Relief to Local Taxation from proposal of Mr. Disraeli's Administration to grant £74,000 a year to Ireland for the Cost of Lunatics, and from Sir Michael Beach's proposal as to Union Rating.*

As to the special pressure of local taxation on such places as the city of Dublin, or of Cork, where Mr. Henry states the taxes to be 10s. in the £1, and 8s. 6d.—Part of city taxation, to provide water and secure the discharge of sewerage, are matters that people in the country have to do for themselves, and, when economically executed, are in the nature of productive expenditure, and not, properly speaking, of taxation represented as a burden.

Again, towns suffer from two admitted grievances—they have more than their fair share of lunatics and of the destitute to support. Mr. Disraeli's Administration have met both these grievances of towns.

Sir Stafford Northcote proposed a grant from the Imperial taxes of £74,000† a year for the cost of lunatics in Ireland, in ease of local rates. The city of Dublin and the counties joined in the support of the Richmond Lunatic Asylum will be thus relieved of £10,000 a year, and the city and county of Cork of £6,800 a year.

Sir Michael Beach has promised a favourable consideration to a settlement of the union rating question.

It is the towns in the county Wexford—New Ross especially—which have suffered most from this question

* Local Taxation (Ireland) Report, Par. Pap., 1873, c. 848, p. 22.

† (7,107 daily average number in 1872 at 4s. a week—£10 8s.)

remaining so long unsettled after the principle was established in England.

In 1866 it was shown that the town of New Ross paid 4s. $4\frac{3}{4}d.$ in the £1, and would have to pay only 1s. $8\frac{1}{2}d.$ if complete union rating was carried out, or 2s. $8\frac{1}{4}d.$ less. It is plain, however, that when union rating was established in England in 1865, and when the Chief Secretaries of both the late and present Administrations are in favour of its extension to Ireland, it is not necessary to have Home Rule to so far secure the relief of Irish towns, and the amount of taxation of Irish towns should not be referred to as an argument for Home Rule without some reference to the steps proposed for relieving it.

If union rating be extended to Ireland, and borrowing powers conferred on town and harbour authorities,* similar to those of the London Metropolitan Board, 32 & 33 Vic., c. 102, to enable them to borrow at as low a rate as the Irish Railway Companies, the ascertained fiscal grievances of Irish towns would be removed.

XVII.—*Mr. Mitchell Henry's Calculation of a Loss of £9,000,000 in the Produce of the Soil of Ireland in 1872 as compared with 1852.*

Mr. Mitchell Henry's calculation, referred to in the preceding section, admits of an equally general answer. If the agriculturalists of Ireland have been undergoing losses, from the mode of carrying on their business for the last twenty years, which have been progressively increasing so as to amount at present to £9,000,000 a year (a very large sum, when it is considered that the entire agricultural holdings of Ireland were in 1867† valued at only £10,190,822) we might expect to find that the selling value of land had fallen.

* Report on Irish Local Taxation, Par. Pap., 1873, c. 848, p. 15.

† Par. Pap., 1867, No. 144.

On this subject we have the net rental and produce of sales of the Incumbered and Landed Estates Court given by Mr. Thom from February, 1850, to November, 1852, and in the Judicial Statistics for each year from 1863 to 1873.

The estimate of average years' purchase indicated by these figures, and shown in the following table, affords a sufficiently good standard of changes in value, to test the accuracy of Mr. Henry's theory of agricultural depreciation.

TABLE showing the Amount of Purchase-money and Rate by Years' Purchase of Land sold in the Incumbered and Landed Estates Court.

YEAR.	PURCHASE-MONEY.		NUMBER OF YEARS' PURCHASE.	
	In each year.	Average of years compared with 1873.	In each year.	Average compared with 1873.
	£	£		
2 $\frac{2}{3}$ years ended 4th November, 1852,*	—	3,000,000*	—	17 $\frac{3}{4}$
1863,	1,278,000	} 1,289,000 {	18 $\frac{1}{2}$	} 17 $\frac{1}{2}$
1864,	1,343,000		13 $\frac{3}{4}$	
1865,	1,052,000		18 $\frac{1}{4}$	
1866,	1,258,000		19 $\frac{1}{4}$	
1867,	1,518,000		17	
1868,	1,332,000	} 1,116,000 {	18 $\frac{1}{3}$	} 18
1869,	1,168,000		17 $\frac{1}{4}$	
1870,	757,000		16 $\frac{1}{2}$	
1871,	1,109,000		18 $\frac{3}{4}$	
1872,	1,452,000		19	
1873,	1,713,000	1,713,000	20	20

It appears from this table that in only four years—1864 (after the very unfavourable season of 1863), 1867 (when the Fenian outrages prevailed), 1869 (the year before the Land Act was introduced), and 1870 (the year in which

* Mr. Thom's Statistics of Ireland, 1853, p. 277. From 24th February, 1850, to 2nd November, 1852, net rental of £450,000 produced £8,000,067.

it actually passed)—was the average price of land below what it was in the years 1850–52. It appears, too, that the general tendency of the price is towards a progressive increase, especially marked in the years 1871, 1872, and 1873.

The average of the five years ending 1872, is 18 years' purchase, while in 1852 it was only $17\frac{3}{4}$ years. In 1871 it rose to $18\frac{3}{4}$, in 1872 to 19 years, and in 1873 to 20 years' purchase.

This large general result demonstrates that there cannot have been a progressive decline in the value of the produce of agriculture in crops and cattle for the past 20 years, amounting in 1872 to £9,000,000 a year, as calculated by Mr. Mitchell Henry.

I may observe, that this high price of land, accompanied by a low rate of interest of money, as indicated by the statistics of Railway loans, referred to in Section I., has enabled landed proprietors to obtain the loan of money to pay family charges, or for estate improvements, on much easier terms than in 1852.

The rate of interest that used to range from 6 to 5 per cent., now ranges from 5 to $4\frac{1}{2}$, and for very large sums to $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

XVIII.—*Comparison of the Progress of Irish and Scotch Agriculture for 17 Years from 1855 to 1872.*

The true way of testing whether there is anything unnatural in the great growth of cattle farming in Ireland in the 20 years referred to by Mr. Mitchell Henry, and whether the falling-off of tillage is an inevitable consequence of such development, is to compare the Irish and Scotch Agricultural Statistics.

I find that shortly after the commencement of the 20 years, Mr. Thom, in his *Statistics of Ireland*,* made such a comparison from figures obtained from the Statistics

* Thom's *Statistics of Ireland*, 1856, p. 492 ; Thom's *Statistics of the United Kingdom*, 1874, p. 762.

for 1855 collected by the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, which body he states "had been intrusted with the collection of information respecting the crops, stock, and produce of Scotland."

Mr. Thom gives a similar comparison for the year 1872, from the Board of Trade Returns. From these sources I have compiled the following tables as to cattle and crops:—

TABLE showing increase of Cattle, Sheep and Pigs in Ireland and in Scotland in *Seventeen* years, from 1855 to 1872.

	1872.	1855.	INCREASE		Estimated Value of each Animal.	INCREASE
	Number.	Number.	In number.	Per cent.		In amount.
<i>Ireland.</i>					£ s.	£
Cattle, .	4,057,153	3,556,616	501,537	14.1	8 15	4,388,448
Sheep, .	4,262,117	3,598,471	663,646	18	1 17	1,227,745
Pigs, .	1,385,383	1,174,224	211,159	18	2 18	612,369
						6,228,562
<i>Scotland.</i>						
Cattle, .	1,120,593	974,728	145,865	14.9	8 15	1,276,318
Sheep, .	7,141,459	5,694,737	1,446,722	25	1 17	2,676,435
Pigs, .	185,920	134,349	51,571	38	2 18	149,555
						4,102,308

It will be seen by this table that there is nothing unnatural in the increase of cattle, sheep, and pigs in Ireland from 1855 to 1872. There has been in Scotland a similar proportional increase in cattle, and a larger proportional increase in sheep, 25 to 18 per cent., and a larger proportional increase in pigs, 38 to 18 per cent.

From the much greater number of the more valuable animals (cattle and pigs) than of sheep in Ireland, as compared with the number in Scotland, the increase in number (in the 17 years), estimated in money, at the prices adopted by Mr. Thom in his *Statistics of the United Kingdom*, 1874, p. 764, amounts to, in Ireland, £6,228,562, whilst in Scotland, at the same prices, it is only £4,102,308.

Whilst the Irish and Scotch Statistics present these points of identity, the contrast in the growth of grain, green crops, and flax is very remarkable, as shown in the following table :—

TABLE showing progress of growth of Grain, Green Crops and Flax in Ireland and in Scotland, from 1855 to 1872.

	1872.	1855.	INCREASE IN 1872.		DECREASE IN 1872.	
			Amount.	Per cent.*	Amount.	Per cent.
<i>Ireland.</i>	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.		Acres.	
Corn crops, .	2,090,673	2,831,029	—	—	740,356	26
Green crops, .	1,473,916	1,443,120	30,796	2	—	—
Flax, .	122,003	97,106	24,897	20	—	—
<i>Scotland.</i>						
Corn crops, .	1,434,937	1,374,691	60,246	4	—	—
Green crops, .	701,393	618,294	83,099	12	—	—
Flax, .	1,262	3,461	—	—	2,199	63

It appears from this table that the Scotch in the 17 years have managed to increase their cattle, sheep, and pigs to the extent above indicated, and have, at the same time, increased their corn crops by 60,246 acres, or 4 per cent., and their green crops by 83,099 acres, so that the number in 1855 is less than in 1872 by 12 per cent. ; whilst in Ireland the green crops have increased only 30,796, acres, or 2 per cent., and the corn crops have fallen off in 17 years no less than 740,356 acres, or 26 per cent.

The increase of 25,097 acres in flax in Ireland, and the falling-off of 2,199 acres in flax in Scotland, are too small in amount to account in any appreciable degree for the remarkable contrast presented by the corn and green crops.

The account of the difference thus noticed, is not far to seek. Those who have written on Scotch agriculture ascribe its wonderful development to five events which all

* The per-centage of increase, for more perfect comparison with decrease, is calculated by per-centage on increased amount.

took place before the present century. The establishment of Parochial schoolmasters in 1695 ; the formation of the Society of Improvers of Agriculture, by Mr. Cockburn of Ormiston, in 1723 ; the establishment of the Scotch County Courts (called Sheriffs' Courts), with complete local jurisdiction, in 1746 ; the Act for protection of improvements against entails, called the Montgomery Act, in 1770 ; and the foundation, by Sir John Sinclair, of the Highland and Agricultural Society, in 1793.

The Irish National Schools were not established till 1830 (135 years after the Scotch system). The Irish County Courts were not commenced till 1796—50 years after the Scotch Courts—their jurisdiction in the simple matter of title to interests in land in general, is only being granted in the present Session of Parliament, and further extensions of jurisdiction, far short of what was established in Scotland a century and a quarter ago, are announced as to be proposed by a private member for the consideration of Parliament in next Session. The general protection of improvements from the effect of entails, was not dealt with in Ireland till Mr. Cardwell's Land Improvement Act of 1860—90 years after its prototype, the Montgomery Act of Scotland. And lastly, the Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland was not founded till 1843—50 years after its prototype, the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland.

When Ireland is so far behind Scotland on so many essential elements of agricultural progress, it is not surprising that they were not equally able to cope with the competition introduced by free trade, and equally able to combine tillage with cattle farming.

Successful farming of that character turns upon farm buildings, thorough drainage, and other improvements of a lasting character, requiring perfect security for investment, which the bulk of Irish tenants had not till 1870. Such farming requires, too, that the labouring classes

should be in a settled and contented position, without having the erection of suitable dwellings stopped by fears of over-population, or their relation to the State kept undetermined by such questions as union rating continuing so long unsettled.

A singular illustration of the start which the Scotch had over, not only the Irish but the English agriculturists, so far back as 1847, was afforded by what took place on the first issue on account of the £1,000,000 loan for drainage, granted by Sir Robert Peel as one of the compensations to the landed interest for free trade, which I had occasion to notice in 1851.*

“Of the first issue of this loan, the Scotch proprietors received so large a share in consequence of the numerous applications from Scotland, and the large amounts applied for, that in the second issue it was found necessary to divide the sum into two parts, and to have one part confined to England, so that no Scotch applications should be received for it.”

The Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland, in the 30 years of its existence, has achieved much in improving the breed and increasing the value of cattle, sheep, and pigs reared in Ireland, and has contributed, in no small degree, to that development of cattle farming which has enabled Ireland to surpass Scotland in the total value of the animals reared; but the example of Scotland indicates that the problem of the future for Ireland is, how to combine cattle farming and tillage farming in the manner it has been so successfully combined in Scotland.

When the falling-off of tillage in Ireland is used as an argument for Home Rule, it is satisfactory to reflect that we need not go to another form of Government, or outside the United Kingdom, for the examples of combined tillage and cattle farming being as successfully carried out, as in any part of the world, by a contented Celtic population.

* “What are the Causes of the prosperous Agriculture of the Lothians of Scotland?—a paper read before the Belfast Social Inquiry Society, December, 1851.”

XIX.—*Progress in Developing the Resources of the Country.*

(a.) ARTERIAL DRAINAGE.

In reporting on the agriculture of England in 1850-51, to show how it was to be improved to meet the competition of Free Trade, Mr. Caird, in describing one of the systems of rotation of crops in use, remarked on the importance of keeping the land "*dry, clean, and rich.*"

This is a short way of stating the importance of thorough drainage; but in all the flat districts of Ireland thorough drainage depends on arterial drainage.

Arterial drainage does not depend on the efforts of individuals alone, there must be a combination of proprietors interested in the matter.

Some discouragement was thrown on arterial drainage by the great expense of the works of this character undertaken at the time of the famine to a large extent as relief operations; but the new system introduced in 1863 by the Act assimilating the Irish and English law, and placing the management under local Boards, has been slowly but steadily making way.

The Public Works Commissioners report thirteen arterial drainage works completed under the Act, by which 18,457 acres of flooded land have been drained, and £94,263 advanced to meet the expenditure.

They report twelve districts in progress, three of which were commenced within the year, on which £68,613 have been advanced, making a total of £162,876 advanced since 1863; the expenditure estimated to complete the districts in operation is £62,715, making a total of £225,591, or nearly a quarter of a million sanctioned to be advanced for these undertakings in eleven years.

The Commissioners report that this sum will be largely increased if a due proportion of the cases now going through the different stages of inquiry are finally sanc-

tioned, and they estimate the total area to be improved at 154,800 acres, and the estimated cost £582,000.

Since their Report was presented to Parliament, their engineer has reported in favour of the Lough Erne drainage—the second largest lake in Ireland.

This work has, however, been thrown into the shade by the still more important work of regulating the waters of the Lower Shannon so that arterial drainage shall not be sacrificed unnecessarily to navigation, in which Major Trench's exertions have been successful.

As the navigation is in the hands of the Commissioners of Public Works, and there was a claim for assistance from the general taxes, this work could not be executed without a special Act of Parliament; but a liberal grant has been sanctioned, and the works will be promptly proceeded with.

Arterial drainage undertakings require the co-operation of a number of proprietors, and, with the single exception of the Shannon (where there was a claim on account of the way in which the navigation works had been executed), have been undertaken by charges created on the land. They thus indicate a hopeful view of the future of the country in the minds of the proprietors, and a willingness to co-operate for the public good.

(b.) LAND IMPROVEMENT.

The Commissioners report that the Board's operations under the several Land Improvement Acts, in the year ended 31st March, 1874, exceed those of any year since 1852, and show a marked progress over that of 1872-73.

The following table places the progress referred to by the Commissioners in a clear point of view:—

Amount ISSUED by Public
Works Commissioners for
Land Improvement.

	£
1853—1857, average annual amount, .	40,822
1858—1862, " " .	37,958
1863—1867, " " .	45,790
1868—69—1872—73, " " .	77,114
1873—1874, year ended 31st March, 1874, .	99,572

This shows only the amount issued; but the amount sanctioned on works proceeded with in 1873-74 reaches a much larger figure—£128,350, and the way it is distributed shows the classes of works to which it is to be applied:—

1873-1874.	Amount sanctioned by Commissioners of Public Works.
	£
Drainage and other land works, . . .	52,135
Farm buildings,	57,970
Labourers' dwellings,	18,245
	<hr/> £128,350

Amongst the improvements sanctioned within the year was a small sum of £1,155 for three loans for planting for shelter. The entire number of these loans reported by the Commissioners is only 20, and the entire sum only £7,765.

The small extent to which this important class of improvement has been adopted is a matter worthy of observation, and it suggests the inquiry whether the old Irish Timber Acts, the defects of which were pointed out by Messrs. Ferguson and Vance, in the treatise they wrote, at the suggestion of Sir Joseph Napier, on the tenure and improvement of land, in 1851 (p. 121), might not be amended so that this code of legislation might correspond more closely with the principles laid down in 1860 as to the improvements of limited owners, and in 1870 as to improvements of tenants.

(c.) LOANS TO ASSIST TENANTS TO PURCHASE.

The Commissioners of Public Works report—

“That the applications by tenant-farmers for loans to aid in the purchase of their holdings show a considerable falling-off, the number being 106 against 260, the amount authorized to be advanced being only £49,130 against £105,128 in the previous year.

“Since the passing of the Act in 1870, 338 tenant-farmers have purchased their farms, embracing an acreage of 22,116 acres at a gross cost of £319,582, aided by advances made by us amounting to £192,066.

“The annual rent paid in respect of these holdings was £13,141,

against which the future rent-charge payable to this Board during 35 years, from the respective advances, will be £9,603."

In connexion with these figures, it is right to notice that it appears from a table in the Report of the Commissioners, p. 16, that of the 338 tenant-farmers who purchased, 163 were in the county of Londonderry alone.

These tenants were chiefly on one estate, that of the Marquess of Waterford, where there were a number of tenants in a good position, with very large tenants' interests, so that the figures of the two years being disturbed by this exceptional sale effecting the earlier period, do not present, in the falling-off in the second year, as unfavourable a conclusion as they otherwise would.

These small tenant purchasers are those who will benefit most in their future dealings with their property by the principles now approved of by the highest legal authorities in England, Lord Selborne and Lord Cairns, of cheapening the transfer of land.

Lord Cairns's Bill carries these principles farther than they have hitherto been carried in Ireland. So that Ireland, which was hitherto in advance of England as to the transfer of land, will, in some important respects, be thrown behind in the progress of improvement.

XX.—*Statistics of Agriculture in 1874, compared with averages of Five Years ended 1873 and 1868.*

(a.)—CATTLE, SHEEP, AND PIGS, IN 1874, AND IN PRECEDING TEN YEARS.

The statistics of 1874, issued by the Registrar-General, are in the following table arranged on a plan to compare with the other statistics of progress :—

[TABLE.]

TABLE showing the number of Cattle, Sheep, and Pigs, in 1874, compared with averages of five years, ended 1873 and 1868.

Year.	CATTLE.		SHEEP.		PIGS.		Value of Total compared with 1874.
	Number.	Average of Five Years compared with 1874.	Number.	Average of Five Years compared with 1874.	Number.	Average of Five Years compared with 1874.	
1864	3,262,000	} 3,572,000	3,367,000	} 4,214,000	1,058,000	} 1,193,000	£ 42,511,000
1865	3,498,000		3,694,000		1,306,000		
1866	3,746,000		4,274,000		1,497,000		
1867	3,708,000		4,836,000		1,235,000		
1868	3,647,000		4,901,000		870,000		
1869	3,734,000	} 3,943,000	4,651,000	} 4,384,000	1,082,000	} 1,319,000	£ 46,437,000
1870	3,800,000		4,337,000		1,461,000		
1871	3,976,000		4,233,000		1,621,000		
1872	4,059,000		4,263,000		1,389,000		
1873	4,147,000		4,485,000		1,044,000		
1874	4,118,000	4,118,000	4,438,000	4,438,000	1,096,000	1,096,000	£ 47,441,000

This table shows progress in 1874, as compared with the averages of the periods of 5 years ended 1873 and 1868, in cattle and sheep, but a falling-off in pigs.

Using the scale of values* adopted by Mr. Thom for the purpose of comparison, and to measure in an approximate manner how much of the increase of cattle and sheep is to be set off against the falling-off in pigs, we get the following result:—

VALUE of Cattle, Sheep, and Pigs in Ireland.

	£
1864–1868, average of 5 years, . . .	42,511,000
1869–1873, „ „ . . .	46,437,000
1874, „ „ . . .	47,441,000

It will be observed that the increase in 1874, from the average of five years ended 1873, is only £1,004,000, whilst the increase from the average of five years ended 1868 to the average of five years ended 1873 is £3,926,000. This slower progress was caused by the actual falling-off in 1874, as compared with 1873, of 29,000 cattle and 47,000 sheep, in part compensated by the increase of 52,000 pigs, leading to a falling-off in aggregate value of

* Those already used in the comparison of Irish and Scotch agriculture in Section XVIII.

cattle, sheep, and pigs of £191,520 in 1874, as compared with 1873.

A very similar change took place in 1860, after the hay famine of 1859, but to a much greater extent; in 1860, the falling-off in cattle was 209,000, and in sheep, 51,000, and the increase in pigs was only 5,000. So the falling-off in 1860 was, therefore, at the same scale of prices, £1,949,000.

The falling-off in 1874, as compared with 1873, is only about one-tenth of this amount (£191,520), and therefore too small to create any anxiety or require any explanation beyond what the statistics of the Director-General of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council in Ireland will supply. It is not a greater fluctuation than in the vicissitudes of the seasons cattle farming must be inevitably subject to.

(b.) FLAX IN 1874 AND IN PRECEDING TEN YEARS.

The figures in the published Abstract of the Registrar-General, for 1874, are shown in the following table:—

TABLE showing Acreage under Flax in Ireland in 1874 and in preceding ten years.

YEAR.	Number.	Average of Periods of Five Years compared with 1874.
	Acres.	Acres.
1864, . . .	302,000	} 255,000
1865, . . .	251,000	
1866, . . .	264,000	
1867, . . .	253,000	
1868, . . .	206,000	
1869, . . .	229,000	} 166,000
1870, . . .	195,000	
1871, . . .	157,000	
1872, . . .	122,000	
1873, . . .	129,000	
1874, . . .	107,000	107,000

As there is a very influential Flax Extension (now called Flax Supply) Association in Belfast, in existence for some years, actively engaged in trying to promote the extension of the growth of flax in Ireland, and as Parliament was induced to apply a grant for some years to promote the extension of the growth of flax in the south and west of Ireland, the result of the above table showing the acreage under flax to be less in 1874 than in any year since 1863, and showing a falling-off of 59,000 acres below the average of 5 years ended 1873, and 148,000 acres below the average of 5 years ended 1868, indicates some defect in the method hitherto pursued to promote the growth of this important crop.

It appears from the Registrar-General's returns that the acreage is now within 1,000 acres of being as low as the acreage of the five lowest years in succession since 1851, 106,000—average of years 1855–1859.

In order to form some conception of the extent of the change indicated by the falling-off in the acreage under flax in Ireland in ten years, I compare, in the following table, the acreage under flax in 1864 and 1874 with the estimate of the Irish Flax Supply Association of the acreage under flax in some of the principal States in Europe:—

TABLE comparing acreage under Flax, in Ireland, in 1864 and 1874, with that of some of the principal European States.

	Acres.
Prussia,	312,000
<i>Ireland in 1864</i> , . .	302,000
Austria,	282,000
France,	161,000
Belgium,	143,000
Bavaria,	112,000
<i>Ireland in 1874</i> , . .	107,000

It appears from this table that the acreage in Ireland in 1864 was 302,000 acres, nearly equal to the recent acreage in Prussia, and was greater than that of Austria,

France, Belgium, or Bavaria ; but that the acreage in Ireland in 1874 is below that of all these countries, according to recent statistics published by the Flax Supply Association.

How far there may have been a change in these countries in the acreage under flax between 1864 and 1874, I have not the means of determining, but the figures give a means of measuring the extent of change in Ireland by a foreign standard, and suggest further inquiry as to the causes of the change in Ireland.

The instructions of the Flax Supply Association, for the culture and preparation of flax in Ireland, point out that it should be grown only *once in nine years on the same land, and as part of regular rotations of crops.*

The instructions further point out to the Irish farmer the example of Belgium in the growth of flax :—

“To the care with which agricultural pursuits are carried on in Belgium, and the industry of those engaged in the occupation, the large production [of flax] which is obtained from the soil in that country is to be attributed. On attention to rotation, superior tillage, and substantial manuring of the land, depends that success in husbandry for which the Belgian farmer has acquired a world-wide reputation.”

It appears, at once, from these statements, that it is impossible to consider the falling-off in the growth of flax apart from the more general question of the falling off in tillage in Ireland, noticed in Section XVIII., where Irish and Scotch agriculture are compared. Again, it is obvious that in order to promote the growth of flax the whole question of the general causes affecting all tillage crops must be considered. It is vain to attempt, artificially, to stimulate the growth of one crop in a rotation, without studying the causes affecting all.

The real importance of the figures as to flax arises, however, from the extent to which the linen trade of Ulster is dependent upon the growth of flax there.

The existence of a Flax Supply Association in Belfast,

so influentially supported as it is, is a sufficient indication of what the flax manufacturers of the North think on the subject. But in their opposition to the bill for restricting the hours of labour of women and children the Irish manufacturers urged that longer hours than in England were necessary to enable them to hold their ground.

Now, if the manufacturers of Belfast have to import coal and iron from England and Scotland, and if the hours of labour are assimilated, as they have been by the Act of the present Session, and if the wages rise to the English level, as migration of the labourers now going on from Belfast is calculated in the long run to raise them, it is difficult to see what advantage the manufacturers of Belfast will have to enable them to retain the linen trade there should the supply of home-grown flax fall off at the rate it has been doing for the past 10 years, for this change has been concurrent with an increase in the value of raw materials of flax imported.

TABLE showing the Import of Raw Materials of Textile Manufactures (Flax) in first eight months 1868-1873.

YEAR.	Amount.	Average Amount as (first eight months of five years) compared with corresponding period of 1873.
	£	£
1868, . . .	3,079,000	} 3,249,000
1869, . . .	2,650,000	
1870, . . .	3,825,000	
1871, . . .	3,275,000	
1872, . . .	3,418,000	
1873, . . .	3,881,000	3,881,000

Whilst the flax grown in Ireland has fallen off at the rate we have seen, there is a payment of £632,000 in the first eight months of one year for foreign flax in 1873 above the average of 5 years ended 1872.

It appears from these figures as to flax, that upon the question raised in Section XVIII., "How to secure

a due and adequate amount of tillage in Ireland?" depends not only the agricultural, but—as to its chief industry—the manufacturing welfare of Ireland.

(c.) ACREAGE UNDER CORN CROPS, GREEN CROPS AND FLAX IN 1874 AND IN PRECEDING TEN YEARS.

The Statistics of 1874, issued by the Registrar-General, are, in the following table, arranged on a plan to compare with the other statistics of progress :—

TABLE showing the total acreage under Tillage in Ireland in 1874, compared with averages of five years, ended 1868 and 1873.

Year.	CORN CROPS.		GREEN CROPS.		FLAX.		TOTAL TILLAGE.	
	Amount.	Averages of Five Years ended 1868 and 1873, compared with 1874.	Amount.	Averages of Five Years ended 1868 and 1873, compared with 1874.	Amount.	Averages of Five Years ended 1868 and 1873, compared with 1874.	Amount.	Averages of Five Years ended 1868 and 1873, compared with 1874.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
1864	2,289,000	} 2,197,000	1,476,000	} 1,470,000	302,000	} 255,000	4,067,000	} 3,922,000
1865	2,216,000		1,502,000		251,000		3,969,000	
1866	2,174,000		1,482,000		264,000		3,920,000	
1867	2,115,000		1,432,000		253,000		3,800,000	
1868	2,193,000		1,456,000		206,000		3,855,000	
1869	2,209,000	} 2,126,000	1,469,000	} 1,465,000	229,000	} 166,000	3,907,000	} 3,757,000
1870	2,174,000		1,499,000		195,000		3,868,000	
1871	2,224,000		1,512,000		157,000		3,893,000	
1872	2,091,000		1,474,000		122,000		3,687,000	
1873	1,931,000		1,372,000		129,000		3,432,000	
1874	1,902,000	1,902,000	1,353,000	1,353,000	107,000	107,000	3,362,000	3,362,000

It appears from this table that the total acreage under tillage in 1874 is 70,000 acres below that in 1873 ; is 395,000 acres below the average of 5 years ended 1873 ; and is 560,000 acres below the average of 5 years ended 1868.

It is to be observed, too, that the rate of decrease is greater in the later period than at the earlier. Thus the rate of decrease between 1866 (the middle of the average ended 1868) and 1871 (the middle of the average ended 1873) was only about 5,000 acres a year. In 1872 the decrease amounted to 206,000 acres, and in 1873 to

255,000 acres. Compared with such figures, a decrease of only 70,000 acres in 1874 marks a turn of the tide.

The Land Act of 1870 was a measure of that nature that it required to have judicial decisions upon some of the leading points before it would be acted upon by tenants with small capital with the confidence it was intended to create.

In the falling-off of tillage in Ireland as compared with Scotland, noticed in Section XVIII., the statistics of Ireland were only brought up to 1872, as the latest available statistics of Scotland were of that date.

If, however, we compare the acreage under corn crops, green crops and flax in Ireland in 1855 and in 1874, we get the following results:—

TABLE showing acreage under Corn Crops, Green Crops and Flax in Ireland in 1855 and 1874.

	Acres.
In 1855,	4,371,000
In 1874,	3,362,000
	<hr/>
Decrease in 19 years,	1,009,000

Now, considering that the Scotch statistics up to 1872 showed that this decrease was apparently wholly unnecessary, the above short table indicates at a glance the importance of what I have ventured to submit in connexion with the comparative statistics of Ireland and of Scotland, and in connexion with the statistics of flax as the most important and pressing questions in connexion with Irish agriculture at the present time, viz.—How is a decrease of the tillage of corn crops, green crops and flax, at the rate of 70,000 acres in 1874, to be checked? and how are 1,000,000 of acres that have gone out of tillage since 1855 to be restored or replaced by reclaimed land in the tillage of the country?

I have indicated in Section XIX. how the statute sanctioning Major Trench's plan for the regulation of the Shannon; how the proprietors co-operating for the regulation of Lough Erne, and the other works for arterial drainage, are important steps towards the restoration of tillage;

how works of thorough drainage, farm buildings, labourers' dwellings, and planting for shelter, loans to tenants to purchase, the high price land realizes in the Landed Estates Court, are all of a hopeful tendency.

But the falling-off in tillage has been so great and has gone on at such a rate, notwithstanding that some of the favourable circumstances I have referred to have been in operation for some years, that the urgency of considering the question is only partially affected by these hopeful considerations.

The prosperity of Scotch agriculture is ascribed, not alone to the prompt adoption of the latest mechanical inventions, but to the progressive improvements in the laws that affect the education of the labourer and the capitalist, and the economic conditions for the application of both labour and capital to land.

The reforms proposed for facilitating the transfer of land in England, by Lord Cairns and Lord Selborne, and sanctioned by the House of Lords, contain principles of improvements as urgently required in Ireland as in England.

In my evidence before the Municipal Privileges Committee, I ventured to point out the urgency of the reform of our local Courts, to give them the same jurisdiction for determining questions of title, and equitable questions for small capitalists and owners and occupiers of land, as the corresponding Courts have in England and Scotland.

Since that evidence was given, Mr. Justice Fitzgerald in sentencing a prisoner at the Armagh Assizes, found guilty of the manslaughter of his brother, said—

"This is one of the cases which my experience has taught me—and I have had a good many of them before me—that homicides often result from a great defect in the law; that defect in the law which prevents local tribunals, Chairmen and others from determining questions—such as existed between this man and his father—questions of right. The hands of the Chairmen are tied, and they can pronounce no decision."

The particular defect in the law in this case has been to a large extent met by Sir Colman O'Loughlen's Civil

Bill Act, passed since the Armagh Assizes ; but the larger question of want of complete equitable jurisdiction like what prevails in England and Scotland has not yet been met. For this reason the provisions of the Irish Judicature Bill, if passed, would have had a much more limited operation than the corresponding English Act.

As to labourers, the principle of union rating which was sanctioned some years ago for England is urgently required in Ireland to prevent labourers being forced to live too far from their work to have them profitably employed in tillage.

The prompt concession of all improvements in legislation adopted in either England or Scotland is not alone a matter of political wisdom, in the active competition of the present day, it is an economic necessity.

To meet the demand for Home Rule Imperial legislation should be presented to the Irish people in its best and most improved form, with no delay or reluctance in extending the improvements.

The promptness of the concession has, however, another bearing commonly overlooked ; it is an economic necessity if Ireland is not to be beat in the competition that Free Trade has introduced.

Every defective arrangement in Ireland, from a concession admitted in principle but delayed, is not only an immediate loss of wealth, but may, as in the case of the growth of flax, involve a serious risk of a permanent loss of a valuable manufacture.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your obedient servant,

W. NEILSON HANCOCK.

HON. LUKE GERALD DILLON,

Private Secretary to His Grace
the Lord Lieutenant.