

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

STATE OF IRELAND,

WITH REMARKS

ON HER RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES,

AND PLANS FOR CARRYING INTO EFFECT THE REMEDIES
NECESSARY FOR THE COMMISSIONERS' REPORT UNDER
THE LATE LAND COMMISSION.

DEDICATED TO THE RT. HON. SIR R. PEEL, BART.,
ETC., ETC., ETC.

BY JOHN HENCHY,

AUTHOR OF POOR LAWS FOR IRELAND, AND GENERAL
OBSERVATIONS THEREON, ETC.

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PREFACE.

SIR,

When the magnitude of the subject I have undertaken is considered, and its importance as to the welfare of the greater portion of her Majesty's subjects in this country, I may claim a reasonable indulgence from a generous public in my humble efforts to promote the happiness of my fellow-countrymen; and grapple with a subject so complex and beset with difficulties; and if the plans I have laid down for that purpose, and my suggestions attended to, or even a portion of them carried into effect, I seek for no other reward than the innate feeling of happiness which the improvement of the condition of my countrymen should give me.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN HENCHY.

Dublin, March 17, 1845.

PREFACE

When the subject of the subject I have undertaken to consider, and its importance to the welfare of the greater portion of my Majesty's subjects in this country, I may claim a reasonable indulgence from a generous public in my humble efforts to promote the happiness of my fellow-countrymen; and to do so with a respect to economy and least with difficulties; and if the task I have laid down for that purpose, and my suggestions attended to, or even a portion of them carried into effect, I seek for no other reward than the inner feeling of happiness which the improvement of the condition of my countrymen should give me.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN HENRY.

London, March 17, 1810.

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OBSERVATIONS, ETC.

When we consider the present state of this country and contrast it with what it was about thirty years past, we must weigh well the different circumstances which have tended to advance its prosperity at that period, and prior thereto, and in the next place, the causes which have led to the present state of the manufacturing classes and the community at large.

It was a natural consequence attendant on the late continental war, that landed property should increase in value, inasmuch, as the produce thereof, compared with the present period, was in some cases double the present value ; trade and commerce flourished, the extensive circulation of money, and the middle and upper classes being enabled by the high prices of every consumable article to purchase the necessaries of life, thereby giving an impetus to trade. The conclusion of the war with France, in 1815, as might be anticipated, caused such a sudden change, detrimental to the prices of the necessaries of life, that trade began progressively to decline, the circulation of money not being in the proportion of one to two, as it was previous to the termination of the war—this was a state of things that could not be guarded against by any human foresight, the greater portion of the landed property of the country continuing to be held at the rents paid during the war, which must have pressed heavily on the tenants having no capital—and the consequence was, that the greater portion of the small farms were not half tilled, thereby causing an immediate loss to the occupier, and a certain loss to the landlord. The advantages arising from steam were not known at this, or for a considerable period after, for such were the expenses and the tedious process of communication, and the casualties attending the export of stock and the other necessaries of life to England, where a better market could be had for any surplus we had of these articles not consumed by us, that it was nearly a choice of evils to adopt this course, although we were not in a condition to purchase those luxuries of life. Such was the state of trade then and since ; and thus, it might be said, the country was convulsed by the sudden transition from war to peace, and this state of things continued more or less until time brought every thing to that level which no human effort or any legislative measure

could remedy or prevent. Several portions of the Continent that we supplied with our manufacture, such as linen, calico, and other articles, now manufacture those articles themselves, and this has added to the decline of trade. Since the introduction of machinery and steam into manufactories, the labour of man has in a great measure been dispensed with, but the inconceivable advantages to the community at large, arising from steam, has more than counterbalanced the evils caused by its introduction, and thus a state of things has been produced by this great revolution in manual labour which time only can bring to its proper level.

There has been a considerable capital lying unproductive in this country, and scarcely any portion of it circulated until lately, except in the Mining Company, which has been established a few years since for the working of copper, lead, slates, and various other articles—and this speculation has been attended with success for the proprietors, as I understand it has paid them, on an average, eight per cent. on their shares—and as a proof, among the many which could be adduced, that if capital was invested in the working of the various other mines of Ireland, not taking into consideration the advantages derivable to the speculators, what a field for the employment of the labourer, and the money thus derived by both classes flowing into the other channels of industry. It is considered by some a difficult matter to invest capital in any speculation at present, and how the labourer and artisan can be employed—what better proof can you have to the contrary than the prosperity of the Mining Company. Where are your coal mines, and several others in this country, not inferior to any in the United Kingdom, which could be worked with equal advantages, and in which capital could be safely invested with a certainty of remuneration? And, then, you wonder at the poverty of the humble classes of society, and want of employment! What is marvellous in it? Is it not a natural consequence, for want of the proper means to be taken by you, (and which is in your power,) that such a state of things should occur? And then you arraign the government for not adopting the necessary remedies! No government that ever was formed could do so so effectual as you could yourselves, for by bringing the resources of the country into operation you improve your own condition and that of the humble class, and until this system is generally adopted, no act of the legislature (though ever so well disposed to improve the country,) can grapple with the evils which must more or less attend this country. Improve the condition of the humble classes in society and you extinguish crime—one of the sources of the many evils of Ireland—and you also make them good subjects; leave them in a destitute condition and you expose them to every temptation to become bad ones, and entail upon yourself a tax for their support,

when their crimes put them out of the pale of society and condemn them to the dungeon or to be exiled from their native land. It may be adduced that these are evils which could not be avoided. I maintain that they could; and I much fear that a great responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the wealthier classes by not preventing such a state of things, when it is in their power to do so without the risk of loss. On the contrary, again, for what is understood by the words of the Lord, when he declared, that "to you," meaning the wealthier classes, "the poor are left." I am not the advocate of those evil disposed persons who are callous to every thing, and whom no kind act could make worthy members of society.

Having dilated on the advantages that would result from the reclamation of the waste lands of Ireland, in the third edition of my work, published on the State of Ireland in the year 1839, it may not be out of place to make a few observations thereon, on the present occasion. The society formed under the act of parliament, subsequently passed for the above purpose—I might be allowed to say I was the humble instrument in the formation thereof—a society, if they persevere with a determined spirit, will go far to ameliorate the condition of the peasantry of this country. There are nearly two million acres of waste lands in Ireland, three-fourths of which are reclaimable—some at a very small outlay. What way more advantageous could the government advance money than to reclaim this land, wherein thousands could, in a few years, be comfortably located? What have they done in Holland by application and perseverance?—why, they have reclaimed an immense quantity of marshy ground, inferior to a great portion of our bog land in this country—the immense advantages that would be the result of accomplishing this object time only could prove. What way more permanent can you employ the labourer than in improving these waste lands, and give him an opportunity of being located thereon, even if he had but ten acres, it will enable him to support himself and family, and to make the most of the produce, and keep him employed? Railroads, or any other public works that may possibly be conceived, may employ the labourer for a time, but the same want of employment overtakes him when they are finished.

When we consider the giant strides that steam is making in improving trade and commerce, and the introduction of railroads in this country, and when we review the period previous to the introduction of steam into England, and the casualties and uncertainties attending the communication by sea, and delay by land, in the transmission of goods or travelling, and contrast it with the present time, we must admit that what has been accomplished nearly approaches a miracle. It is true that it has had the effect of throwing thousands out of employment; but when we consider the great changes it has effected in

the prices of the articles of clothing, both for male and female, and the facilities it has given for imports and exports of live stock and merchandise, and consequently an advantage in prices, there is no contrast whatever—for the amount of gain on the one hand is treble the loss on the other—time, the great disposer of all things, will bring to a level the loss sustained by the artisan and the labourer.

What a field for the investment of capital is now open by the intended railroads for this country ; when the line is good, there must be an advantage to speculators, and when the government have evinced a disposition to encourage these advantages and give every facility for that purpose, particularly when the speculation appears to them to be free from jobbing or taking advantage of the unwary, and those of the humble class in society who could badly afford to suffer even a trifling loss, the nation at large must give the government that merit for good intentions towards this country which their watchfulness and care entitle them to, for the welfare and protection of all classes, rich and poor. There can be no doubt but the introduction of railroads into this country will have the effect of stagnating the employment of numbers ; but as I before stated, look to the advantages that will result from it to the traders and the agricultural portion of the community, particularly those in the provincial towns who hitherto had no profitable market for their goods ; but the facilities which steam communication will give them in the way of imports and exports will enable them to bring their goods to the best market, and obtain the highest prices for same, which they could not hitherto have done, and it will also enable them to meet their engagements and pay their rents better than what they have hitherto done ; in fact, the change will have a powerful effect in that respect, and give a new impulse to the trade and commerce of this country.

The feeling which exists between landlord and tenant in this country it is asserted is not the same as it is in the sister kingdom ; beyond controversy, the cause arises from the unstable tenure in which small divisional farms are held. I think it ought to be the duty of the landlord, even for his own interest, to give a good industrious tenant at will an interest in the farm he occupies, by giving him a lease ; it is the common practice to do so in England. I understand the landlord often presses the tenant to take a lease when he finds him industrious and punctual in the payment of his rent ; and why not adopt it more generally in this country, and it would facilitate so desirable an object in a great degree. If the government, where the yearly rent did not exceed 100*l.*, reduced the stamp duty on leases to five shillings, and up to 50*l.*, two shillings and sixpence—because it is obvious, that the stamp duty on leases at present, for small considerations, prevent the humble class of farmers from taking leases in a great

many instances—this reduction would be a desirable boon, and one which I doubt not but the present government would grant, when the object to be attained was the improvement of the condition of the peasantry.

There can be no doubt but emigration, conducted and based on sound principles, would be of advantage to the middling farmers and labouring classes of this country, for, until the waste lands are reclaimed, or a reasonable portion of them, there will not be a sufficiency of land unoccupied to employ those wanting farms, unless subdivided into con-acres. It would be well if the government, in order to encourage emigrants, took care, that in landing them at their destination, there were appointed agents who would have them taken care of until whatever portion of land they were to occupy was given up to them; and in like manner, with regard to artisans and labourers, that they should be protected until they were provided with employment, or located. By adopting this course, which would be attended with very little expense, the fears entertained by emigrants (and, perhaps, in a great many instances well founded,) would be dissipated and set at rest, and it would act as a stimulant to them to emigrate—and the uncertainty in which their condition by emigration hitherto was placed prevented thousands from so doing—there cannot be for one moment, a reasonable doubt, that if these suggestions were attended to, but emigration would make rapid strides among the labouring classes, artisans, and farmers.

Considering the disposition evinced by the present government, by the late reduction of duties to improve the condition of this country, merits the gratitude of all. There can be no doubt but some of those duties crippled trade to a considerable extent—for instance, the materials used in building. The reduction of duties on consumable articles must tend to the comfort of the working classes, inasmuch as temperance has made such rapid strides among them, and the money which was squandered by them on maltliquor is now laid out by them in the purchase of the articles of tea and sugar, and other commodities; and the great increase of consumption occasioned in this respect has nearly made up for any deficiency in the revenue occasioned by the reduction of those duties; and the same advantages may be said to arise from the reduction of duties on the different other articles. This is a bold effort of the government to give an impulse to trade, and it is more beneficial to the community at large that the income tax should be continued to be paid by those who are able to bear it, and not to press upon the humble class of society, by putting a drag on the materials of industry in taxing them. If the government persevere in removing these restrictions which fetter trade and commerce and injure the prospects of the artisan and labourer, it will tend much to allay the feelings of interested individuals and unite all classes in supporting

them, when their aim and only object is the prosperity and welfare of Ireland.

It may be necessary to observe, that with regard to the reclamation of the waste lands, if the government purchased them, or advanced money to trustees for that purpose, and had the lands reclaimed, and set them in small farms, from ten to twenty acres, it would be a most effectual mode to locate a considerable portion of the small farmers. The waste lands reclaimed by joint proprietors or private individuals are generally set in large quantities to a few tenants, and the middleman has no chance of reaping any advantage. Several tracts of waste lands in this country, the fee of which has been purchased so low as two shillings and sixpence and four shilling an acre, and which does not require in the reclamation thereof an outlay of three pound an acre, is now fit for any produce; and there could be no doubt that any money advanced for this great undertaking would be well expended and give a clear return of eight per cent, besides the incalculable benefits that would be conferred on the middling farmers by adopting this plan. As I have before stated, there are nearly two million acres of waste lands in this country, the greater portion of which could be reclaimed, and what better way could you settle the number of individuals trained up to agricultural pursuits than the plan which I have laid down; for if one million of acres were only reclaimed, and it is laid down by competent authority that three-fourths could, allowing each family ten or twenty acres, you could settle, at least, suppose only the one-half fit for farming purposes, or less, fifty thousand families; and if this land was set at a pound per acre, purchasing the fee-simple thereof was five shillings, the reclamation five pounds, say ten pounds the highest, so that at the highest calculation you had the fee for ten years' purchase—and it might be said that you had the fee of the greatest portion for seven years' purchase, and a right should be vested in the tenant at will, or by lease, of purchasing the fee in his farm, on paying all expenses, with interest at five per cent.

The condition of a tenant at will should be put on a more satisfactory footing: that he ought to get compensation in case he was deprived of his farm for his outlay in improving it, and perhaps, it would be a desirable course for the legislature to pass a law for that purpose, and if possible (could the difficulties be surmounted which stand in the way,) adopt some measure to enable a deserving tenant to get a lease of his farm for twenty-one or thirty years; this would give him an interest in the soil, and the land (instead of being, as it is at present, only half tilled, and two or three successive crops raised from one course of cultivation, a thing detrimental to both parties,) would be cultivated in a manner advantageous to both, and it would create such a feeling between them that nothing could sever, and put

an effectual barrier on the heart-rending scenes which we daily witness in different parts of this country.

There is a considerable portion of the property of this country under receivers of the Equity Courts of Chancery and Exchequer, and when a farm is to be let by the officers of these courts, it is in the nature of a public auction. The highest bidder is declared the tenant in nine cases out of ten, at a rent the farm is not worth, and which he could not eventually pay. He undertakes this, I might say, rack-rent, in order to get some place for himself, and, perhaps, numerous family. What is the consequence? He gets into arrear, (perhaps through the want of requisites to put the ground into proper cultivation, and thereby to realise the produce which the soil would yield, if not reduced by deficient cultivation,) and is eventually ejected; and the result is, that his successor is marked out for destruction, and, unfortunately, the threat is too often carried into execution. This is a great source of the evils of this country, and some remedy should be adopted to check it. If a discretionary power were given to the officers of those courts to fix upon a fair rent, under the declaration of two or three respectable individuals, indifferent to the parties, resident in the locality of the farm, as to its value, it would do much in checking the progress of the outrages which are daily committed upon innocent individuals, and sets the laws of the land at defiance, and must in a great measure swell the list of absenteeism, and must make property in those districts of very little value to the proprietors.

There should be some change in the law of ejecting tenants. The present practice is somewhat oppressive. By a slight alteration, the ends of justice would be as well attained and the tenant more justly dealt with. He should get twelve months' notice instead of the six hitherto given, before a civil bill ejectment or proceedings in the superior courts should be brought, and the like period to redeem. This only to apply to landed property, and this re-assurable time might enable him to redeem his farm, and bring him again on terms with his landlord; and if he is eventually ejected, he ought to get reasonable compensation for any improvement his farm has received during his tenure.

The establishment of loan societies by government would be productive of incalculable benefits. What service could be rendered to the struggling farmer, by small advances, to enable him to cultivate land in a proper manner, and also to pay his rent, whereby he would be enabled to sell the produce of his farm at a season when prices were good. When we take into consideration the loss those poor men sustain, and the ruin, in many cases, it brings on them, in being obliged to bring their goods to a bad market to pay their rent, and meet the pressing demands of their landlords, we must come to the

conclusion, that a great portion of their destitution and wretchedness proceeds from this cause; for, perhaps, with a bad or middling produce, the entire sale goes to meet his landlord's demands and his labourers' wages. No wonder he should have nothing to subsist upon but potatoes, be badly clad, and wretchedly housed, and his farm the next season in a bad condition for want of the means of cultivation. The Agricultural Bank of Ireland was in the habit of accommodating the farmers with advances in the way of loan, by bills, at a small discount. It told well for them, and their condition was much improved, which could be attested by many; but since the failure of that bank, which it is supposed arose from the want of unity in its managers, they have suffered much for the want of such accommodation. Consider the advantages even to struggling shopkeepers and artisans in carrying on their trade and business. Many there are that a trifling advance in the hour of emergency would save from ruin, and many a good mechanic, obliged to wade through difficulty and poverty, that a few pounds would enable him to make his labour more productive, and bring comfort to himself and his family. These advances to be repaid weekly, with security, by sixpence in the pound, and a penny to defray the expenses of each loan establishment. Nothing could be done so effectual to improve the condition and add to the comforts of the industrious portion of the community as this plan, while it would be the preventive of a great deal of misery and wretchedness. The government could run no great risk, or sustain much loss in the accomplishment of this object; and, inasmuch as the farmers have not so quick a return of money as mechanics or shopkeepers, and perhaps may reside six or seven miles from the loan office, payments from them at the rate I have mentioned in the pound, every three months, should be accepted.

The habitations of the labouring classes and small farmers are wretchedly constructed—unhealthy and unfit for human beings to live in. They are generally composed of one room, where the family and all the live stock they are possessed of inhale the same air, and leaves them susceptible of fevers and other diseases; and it is a fact, confirmatory of this, that there are more fevers in the country parts, both common and malignant, than there is in the cities and large towns, though the air in the country parts is purer and lighter, and, as a natural consequence, should be less susceptible of disease. How often are the inhabitants of the larger towns afflicted with those distempers by communication with the poorer country classes, not half cured of the contagious diseases; and would it not be for the interest of all, and the health and comfort of the community at large, that steps should be taken to remedy this general evil; would it not also be prudent as it would be humane, that the landlords of tenants at

will should have his property-dwellings, at least, containing two apartments, with proper ventilation; for, I believe, two out of every three of the dwellings of the poorer classes at present have no thorough air, except the air that passes through the door of their neglected dwellings, and rests there. And it would be proper to establish district dispensaries which would tend much to prevent the spread of disease. There might be this exception to the dwellings of the leasehold tenants, as to the item of expense, though the landlord should be bound to see that the dwellings of his tenants were healthy and constructed as I have stated; yet, that the leasehold tenants had an interest that the tenants at will had not, and therefore, the former should be bound to keep his dwelling in proper repair and condition. To effect this desirable object, a power should be vested in two or more of the magistrates of the district to appoint overseers to inspect those habitations, and report thereon, to them, as to their state, and with a like power vested in them to impose a small penalty, or in default of payment, a short imprisonment, on the landlords of the tenants at will, who permitted the habitations of those tenants to be in the condition reported on. The same penalties and rules to be enforced against the leasehold tenants, who should be responsible themselves. Their reports to be made at every quarter sessions, and the decision of the majority of the magistrates to be binding. The salary of those officers, who could be procured in country districts, at a small yearly sum, might be paid out of the assessments of the county, or by presentment at the assizes for the district, and thus, by this simple, but humane plan, a great deal of the misery and wretchedness of the poorer classes could be prevented.

If all parties could be brought into unison to improve the condition of their countrymen, no government that ever was formed, or legislative assembly convened together, can do so effectually, as the co-operation of those of influence and property in the country. All differences, whether arising from political causes or religion, should be buried in oblivion when the welfare of our fellow-creature is concerned. Charity knows no religion, but to do good to all creeds and sects. This is real charity. And that charity the Saviour of the world came on earth to inculcate, and which was so forcibly described by his precursor, Saint John the Baptist. We profess to feel for the woes and wants of our suffering countrymen; our religion tells us we should do so. Real philanthropy consists not in fine professions, but acts—prove them by your acts, that you have real philanthropy in you, and unite as one man, with a determined and persevering spirit, to make Ireland what the great Creator intended she should be—a happy country, and her people contented. Blessed with every advantage of soil, and ports for that purpose, and possessing a brave

yet generous people, suffering inconceivable poverty and wretchedness, patient and martyr-like—to you it is left at the eleventh hour to remedy their condition—come to their succour with the dispositions of guardians, believing that there is a future state, and that the most trifling act done to alleviate their wretchedness would not go unrewarded. He has declared they were left to you, and it should be borne in mind, that their poverty, destitution, and unparalleled wretchedness, may eventually rise in judgment against those who could dispel it. There is a limit to every thing, and a frontier to which wretchedness and destitution will not go beyond. Can we calmly reflect upon these things for a moment, and not come to the conclusion, that the wants and woes of our fellow-creatures was a matter which involved our own welfare here and hereafter. With what anxiety and selfishness some men run their course in this life, amassing riches, and during that career, giving themselves no concern as to the wants or sufferings of their fellow-creatures, and a few minutes after the breath of existence ceases. Where is the good of all this? Job has said wisely, “We bring nothing into this world, and bring nothing out of it but our good works,” and perhaps this wealth is left to a child who may squander it as profusely as it was amassed by penury.

We profess and desire to encourage the manufacture of our country; our professions should be sincere and confirmed by acts that would put the poor artisan’s shuttle in motion, and that is the way to improve the condition of your suffering countrymen. While I am of opinion that trade should be as free as the air we breathe, yet still there is an old adage, “that charity begins at home,” we should encourage the manufacture of our country so far as the revival of what is now unproductive extends.

The rents of a good portion of the property of the country are too high—some still at the late war rates—landlords would do well to reduce them. The consequence of this is, the tenant without capital, and a heavy rent, is not able to half till the land, and therefore the landlord is the greatest sufferer, and, I say, a fool to himself. By reducing the rents it would be a sure way of saving your fellow-creatures.

We aim for power and places of high trust; no man should envy him who possesses either, without he had the disposition, the courage, and the manliness to wield that power and exercise that trust for the welfare of all those over whom he is appointed to govern, and distribute justice to all without distinction of creed, sect, or party. Trust, I might say, is a dangerous responsibility, and the idea of not discharging that trust faithfully and impartially, and for the good of all, must overwhelm a prudent, feeling man, and drive him almost to despair,

when it is declared by Him, the source of all power, that strict is the account we shall have to render of our stewardship when he summons us to account for it. Who then shall seek for trust or power except to have an opportunity of complying with the mandate of our divine Maker, and exhibiting to those over whom we are placed the finer qualities of our nature.

At this eventful crisis, let all co-operate for the improvement of the country—the government are disposed to give you every assistance for that purpose, founded on sound principles. The reduction of the taxes on various articles, which certainly crippled trade, has laid the foundation for you to improve upon. Without your co-operation, I assert, without fear of controversy, that no government with the best intentions towards the country, could remove the many evils which press upon the suffering poor, without the co-operation of those to whom they are subject or dependant for their subsistence.

It may be said there is no difficulty in legislating upon the question of fixity of tenure which now engrosses the attention of a considerable portion of the wealth, talent, and landed proprietors of the country. I say there is, and it is surmounted with difficulties, such as would perplex any assembly to legislate upon in such a manner as to do justice to landlord and tenant; though some measures are called for to give an honest and industrious tenant an interest in the soil he cultivates, and expend upon it what he is possessed of, particularly as against such landlords who have no great claim to humanity; yet still to do so, it is in part assuming a portion of that dominion which he holds as a matter of right over his own property. But it may said, property has its rights as well as its duties, and perhaps those having a claim to the finest feelings of humanity would come to the conclusion, that a portion of those duties of the lord of the soil was to make his tenant have an interest in the soil he occupies, which would tend to the advantage of both, and not leave him an uncertain tenure as tenant at will; but then it will be said the voluntary principle will not do, and some measure must be passed to compel landlords to give leases to their tenants. There may be no difficulty in enacting a law to compel the landlords to give tenants at will compensation for their improvements on their farms when they are dispossessed of them, but if the difficulties which surround the other could be overcome with justice to both, it is a thing loudly called for, and would tend much to improve the condition of the humbler class of farmers, and promote that peace and respect for the laws amongst them, which would be the best proof that they were not looked upon as mere serfs and slaves, and perhaps in time it would be the means of putting an extinguisher on those crimes which would disgrace barbarians to be guilty of, and which, instead of ameliorating their condition, thwart the best intentions of government, and of those who have it in their power to do so.

If the legislature should pass any act regulating this question, I am of opinion that no new tenant ought to get a lease for a lesser quantity of land than ten acres, with no power to him to sub-let; and that tenants at will, in possession, getting leases, should prove themselves during their tenancy good tenants, industriously disposed, and deserving of a lease by punctual payment of their rents, and not being in arrear at the time of obtaining it—this should be their qualification. And I am also of opinion if the landlord ejects a tenant of this description, who perhaps by bad seasons, with his family visited by sickness and affliction, that it would be inhuman and repugnant to the feelings which should possess a Christian, not to give this wretched tenant reasonable compensation for the loss of his farm, even the improvements he made thereon during his tenancy, to prevent him and his wretched family (which, generally speaking, is larger than those with better means for their support,) from starving and perishing on the highway, houseless and destitute. Has not this been the case? Does not human nature revolt at this, and censure that landlord who could, forgetful of this, disregard the first principles of nature, and deny that mercy to his poor tenants which he would expect from a higher tribunal himself. It is impossible to dispose of this evil of such magnitude lightly; it is one which in its present form convulses society, sets all law at defiance, and would frustrate the intentions of the best government that ever did or would preside over the destinies of this country. The bad tenant (who has a dishonest principle inherent in him, and exhibits a callous indifference as to himself and his family, should not be entitled to this consideration; he has the same opportunities of the industrious, good tenant, therefore he should not be entitled to any remuneration, The law, both human and divine, condemns him; he is his own judge and juror, and puts himself out of the pale of society and the consideration of every humane man.

A great deal of evidence has been obtained by the Land Commissioners upon tenant right in the North. This practice, it would appear, has been recognised by some of the landed proprietors there; enforced by the outgoing, and complied with by the incoming tenant. What doubt can exist on the mind of any man, particularly those acquainted with agriculture, that this practice must be highly injurious to the incoming tenant, by depriving him of that capital which he required to improve his farm, and stock it. But it will be said, if this practice was adopted and adhered to in the South and West, that a great deal of the agrarian outrages and cold blooded murders committed there, would be prevented. In the first place, the practice if adopted, could not be complied with, for the incoming tenants in those quarters have not the means; they are not able to half stock their farm, and what is worse to cultivate it—there exists some difference between the

farmers in the North, and those of the South and West; a great portion of the former follow their trades; they persevere in industry, and are economical and intelligent, and evince a disposition to lay by a portion of their industry to meet an emergency; besides, they are almost universally engaged in pursuits of a mercantile or artisan description, and therefore enabled, independant of the produce of the ground, to sustain themselves, and thus they are enabled to comply with this custom. I must say, and I believe I am supported in the assertion, that the tenants in the latter quarter are not so circumstanced; there may be some good reason for it, not having such an interest in their farms as the northerns have, but I believe the principal reason is, they have not employment, and for these reasons how could this custom be adopted in the South or West. It is also in evidence before the commissioners that there is as much given in the purchase of tenant right in the North as would (in some cases) purchase the fee in the South or West; and before I close this subject, I must admit, that the tenants in the South and West are not inferior in labour or agricultural pursuits to the North or any other portion of the globe, even with all the disadvantages they labour under. Were agrarian outrages known during the late war? They were not, for the prices then were in some instances treble what they are now, though the rent was a third more, and therefore, the eviction of tenantry was a thing of rare occurrence. If the landlords by any legislative enactment are obliged to give the outgoing tenant (such as I have before described,) remuneration for improvements, or expenditure on their farms, would not this be recognising the "tenant's right" in the North, and would it not be better for landlords to do so, and get proper tenants, than to have intimidation stalk abroad, unchecked and uncontrolled, with the loss of life and injury to property: but who will advocate those rights for the confirmed bad tenant, indifferent as to the payment of his rent, and also the cultivation of his farm. It would be a monstrous doctrine to inculcate,—such, would be subversive of the rights of property, and would leave it very little value to the possessors of it.

If the legislature could adopt some remedy with regard to the annual sums drawn from this country by absentees, and spent in a foreign clime, either in the shape of a tax on their income or in some other way, it would raise a fund to alleviate a portion of the mass of suffering and destitution which the humble class have to undergo. What doubt can there be on the mind of any one having pretensions to Christianity, that if the money which those absentees spend abroad was spent at home, but the artisan and the labourer would be benefitted by it, though I might say, perhaps without flattery, I have been the humble instrument in procuring a poor law for Ireland, feeling that in the absence of those combined efforts on the part of the wealthier

classes of society to make voluntary contributions somewhat effectual, to cover the destitution of the indigent and unemployed ; that a poor law was indispensable, yet I considered that remedy imperfect, which did not give out-door relief, or a substitute, by which the applicant would be enabled, to obtain assistance without any derogatory means, or the means of employment to the able bodied man wanting such. This absentee tax or fund would go very far to remedy many of those evils which the humble classes suffer, and perhaps in a great many instances, would be the means of compelling some of those who migrate for pleasure to stop at home. Those to be exempted from the tax, should be such as were obliged to reside out of the country for the benefit of their health, having a medical certificate to that effect, and also for the transaction of business which should require their attendance, and also those, not so privileged, who did not reside out of the country for six months in succession.

You have many opportunities afforded you, as I have suggested, of giving employment to the labourer, and that of a permanent nature, anything temporary will not do. There are amongst others I have mentioned, the mines of this country, which could be worked to your advantage, and the reclamation of the waste lands—perhaps you could not embark money in a better speculation ; those already worked are returning eight per cent. upon the capital. Humble as my plans and suggestions are for the improvement of the condition of the country, the government following up their good intentions to alleviate the mass of suffering in it, may be induced to take same into their consideration, and adopt some of them. Make the people happy and you make them good subjects, and you link together those ties which nothing could sever, and which would be the most certain mode of fixing the equanimity of the two countries on that basis nothing could disturb—leave the public in wretchedness, they become bad subjects and regardless of existence, and open to the commission of every crime, though there is no extenuation for the commission of crime under any circumstance. Let all cheerfully unite in the good work of improvement, let it not be done by halves, it is worthy of a good cause, and one which the highest in authority in the country should take a pride to assist, and I trust that co-operation will make Ireland, and her people, what nature and nature's God intended them to be, happy, prosperous, and contented.