

158
FACTS FROM GWEEDORE.

COMPILED FROM NOTES

BY LORD GEORGE HILL, M.R.I.A.

WITH MAPS AND FRONTISPIECE.

Third Edition,

CONTAINING

AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER IN REFERENCE TO THE RESULTS OF THE SYSTEM PURSUED IN THAT DISTRICT SINCE THE YEAR 1838, WITH OBSERVATIONS ON THE POOR RATE, SCHOOLS FOR THE PEASANTRY, EMIGRATION, AND ILLICIT DISTILLATION.



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DUBLIN :

PHILIP DIXON HARDY AND SONS,

23, UPPER SACKVILLE-STREET,

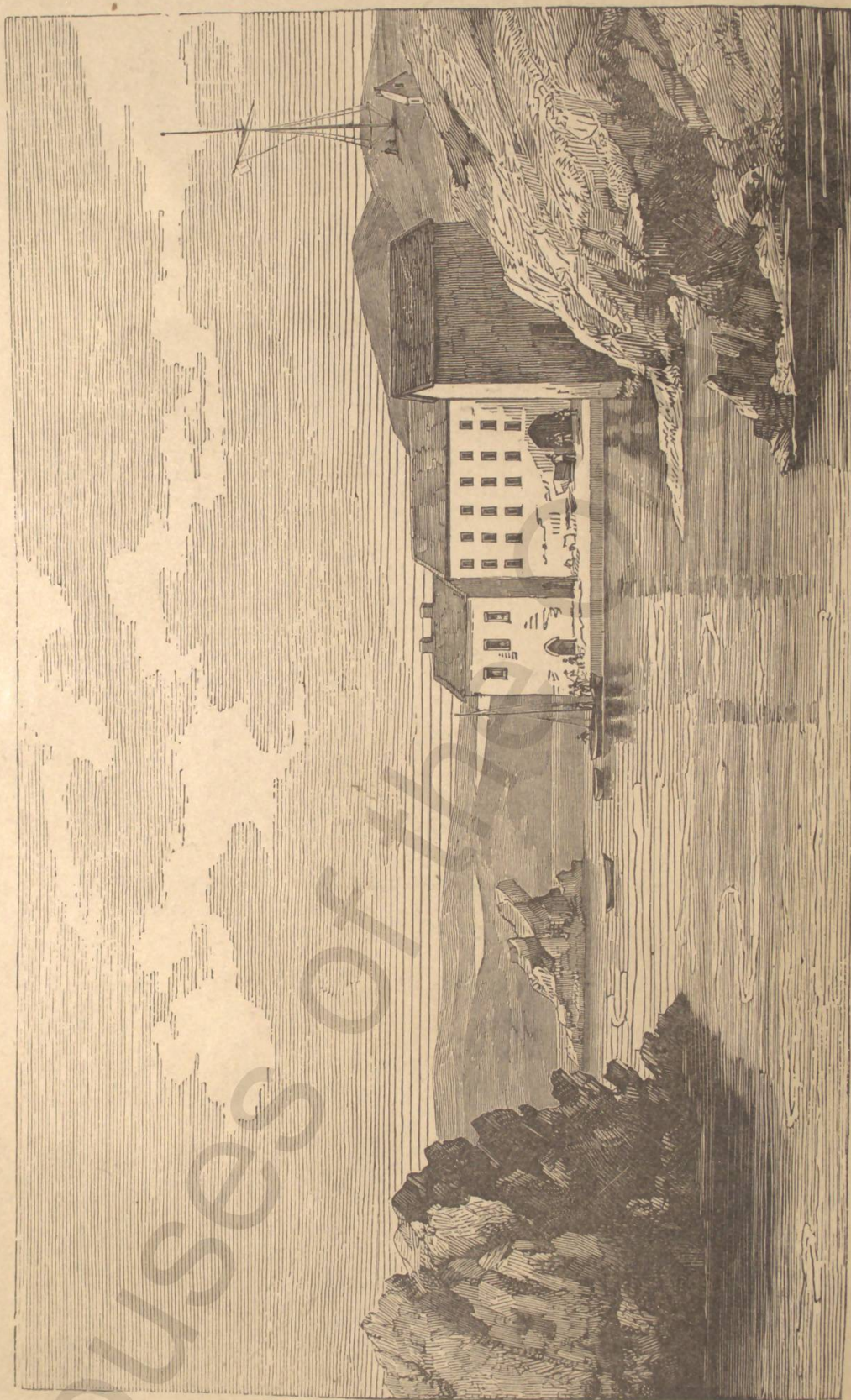
LONDON : HATCHARD AND SONS, PICCADILLY.

1854.

Houses of the Oireachtas

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58
504

Houses of the Oireachtas



BUNBEG HARBOUR AND STORE.

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE object of the following pages is, to give some idea of the ruinous system

ERRATA.

Page 8. last line, for *inevitable* read inevitable.

Page 24, line 6 from top, for *country*, read county.

a second Edition of "Facts from Gweedore," has taken the opportunity of adding to the work a map, two lists of premiums distributed by him every spring and autumn, and also two addresses to his tenantry, upon the bad effects of the subdivision of land.

June, 1846.

Houses of the Oireachtas

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE object of the following pages is, to give some idea of the ruinous system of *Rundale*, as practised in the district of Gweedore (Parish of Tullaghobegly, Barony of Kilmacrennan), County Donegal; with a brief statement of efforts made on the property of Lord G. A. Hill, to obviate it and its attendant evils, and otherwise to improve the condition and increase the comforts of the tenantry.

Lord George Hill having been induced, by the representations of many persons interested in the improvement of the peasantry of Ireland, to publish a second Edition of "Facts from Gweedore," has taken the opportunity of adding to the work a map, two lists of premiums distributed by him every spring and autumn, and also two addresses to his tenantry, upon the bad effects of the subdivision of land.

June, 1846.

Houses of the Oireachtas

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER TO THIRD EDITION,

In reference to the results of the system pursued in that district since the year 1838, with observations on the Poor Rate, Schools for the Peasantry, Emigration, and Illicit Distillation.

LORD G. A. Hill having been frequently urged to publish a third Edition of "Facts from Gweedore," in acceding to the suggestion, gladly avails himself of the opportunity thus afforded, of offering his warmest thanks to the friends who so kindly sent assistance to the district of Gweedore, in 1846 and 1847.

An allusion to those times, necessarily suggests to him, how deeply he is also indebted to the Society of Friends, to the Irish Peasantry Improvement Society of London, and to the Baptist Society, for their substantial sympathy during that period of unparalleled distress and suffering.

Lord G. Hill would unfairly underrate the value and success of the aid thus rendered, if he did not express his conviction, that but for it (and gratefully does he allude to it) the Gweedore district would have been absolutely desolated, and he himself have shared the fate of many a worthy proprietor in the south and west of Ireland.

Such being his impressions, he considers it as gratifying, and satisfactory to himself, as it is plainly due to those who took so lively an interest in the attempt made to improve the condition of the inhabitants of Gweedore, that they should know something as to the manner in which their bounty was expended, and how far such expenditure was successful.

The resources then confided to him, were chiefly employed in relieving those incapable of working—in making bridle roads through the mountains and bogs—and in building small bridges over the rivers and streams. The labour attendant upon such works, not only realized, at the moment, the means of preserving life, but has ever since been productive of the most

positive comfort, security and advantage, to the very persons who were *saved* by the original outlay : and so successful have those *little* works proved, that now nearly all the inhabitants of the district can reach their cabins, day or night, dry-shod.

The uprooting of the wretched old system of Rundale, and in lieu giving to each tenant a separate, clearly-defined, and equivalent farm, has had the effect of *more than doubling* the quantity of land previously under cultivation ; chiefly by inducing the tenantry to bestow an amount of care and labour on THEIR OWN SHARE ; which they, naturally, under the ancient system, *never thought it worth their while* to exert on the precarious scraps of a field, held in common, by a dozen or two of neighbours. The rents, however, have not yet been raised : such a step has been abstained from with a view of allowing the tenantry to work themselves first into better circumstances. Still it is pleasing, and very satisfactory, to find that both rents and the County Cess, are more punctually paid than either formerly were ; and it is encouraging to observe, that regularity on the part of the landlord, his agent and overseers, has had its effect upon the tenants of the estate : all promises and agreements having been faithfully adhered to, and impartial justice rendered to all, a greater amount of confidence has sprung up. Tricks, subterfuge, and craft are less resorted to by the inhabitants. There are no arrears upon the property except those due by a few widows. Disputes are less frequent, and the Petty Sessions, accordingly, not so crowded as they used to be. That the latter are *felt* blessings, a remark occasionally made by the tenants to Lord George would imply—" We have great peace now !" It is presumptive proof of some good having been effected, that there has been as yet *no occasion* to eject any one off the estate.

In agriculture, they have taken a step in the right direction : both turnips and flax are now cultivated in some measure ; but the revival of the price of kelp has assisted most in supporting the inhabitants on the coast, many of whom have amassed much wealth by that trade. Carts now are numerous in the district.

Although the grain store at Bunbeg was originally built in the hope of supplanting illicit distillation, by opening a regular market for grain, yet, as

the corn, when converted into whiskey, produces so much greater a price, it is to be regretted that but little of it is offered for sale at the store ; and now that the duty on spirits has been raised, greater encouragement is given to that popular evil, which coercive measures can never suppress. The propensities and practices involved in it are most demoralizing and disadvantageous to the peasantry, for if their *gains* are large, so are their *losses* ; while in consequence of such gambling transactions their families and farms are neglected, and they themselves are never permanently benefitted.

Intemperance is much on the increase : the medal system having had its day. It was not founded on *principle*, and therefore could not be expected to have any long duration.

It is now fifteen years since Lord G. Hill commenced the attempt to ameliorate the condition of the people of the Gweedore district ; during which period he has been on the most friendly terms with them ; and although the changes made upset all their ancient ways of dealing in, and parceling out, land, they seemed, very early in the transaction, to have understood that Lord George's object throughout, was to endeavour to put them in a way of doing better for themselves, and not with a view of taking their land from them, or of driving them out of their own country. These innovations, however, alarmed the neighbourhood, and an appeal was made by a tenant to his landlord, " Not to *bother* his tenants as Lord George Hill had done !"

The reclaimed land around the Gweedore Hotel, which had been considered valueless by the peasantry, produces about six tons of fiorin grass to the acre, and maintains fifty head of cattle. The value of such reclamation will be the better appreciated, when it is stated that eight years since, every cart load of hay consumed at the hotel had to be conveyed a distance of twelve miles. It was also necessary—ten years ago—to send nearly the same distance to a Post Office, upon the chance of a letter being there : now a mail car runs daily to the hotel, bringing the letters which left Dublin the night before.

The little Inn at Gweedore continues to be much frequented by tourists ; such of them as are anglers can now obtain leave to fish by applying to the landlord of the hotel.

In addition to the romantic scenery in the neighbourhood, of which the conical Mountain of Arigle is the leading feature, the new Church at Dunlewey—built of white and grey marble, from quarries in the immediate vicinity—forms an object of much interest and attraction.

The peasantry in this district having, in many instances, experienced that they can be made amenable to the laws (their bad advisers, and would-be agitators, being kept within bounds) a greater spirit of industry is likely to be the result. It may be mentioned as a remarkable fact, that those who pay the lowest rents are the idlest and most miserable !

The attention of the Irish peasantry has been too often diverted from lawful occupations by interested persons, who live upon their victims ; holding the people up, at the same time, to public commiseration, and would fain persuade strangers that the means of support are not to be had in a country, where, on the contrary, all the necessaries of life are to be obtained, if system, industry, and early hours were more inculcated and better observed. The Irish are a people capable—when brought under salutary discipline—of performing all duties, and doing all work : but it is lamentable to observe that the greater number of them, must repair to America, or some other foreign land, in order to shew what they really can do ; the “social evils” and inveterate bad habits prevailing at home, being too strong for them. The remark, therefore, is obvious here, that we are not educating our population for ourselves, but for other countries.

Early training, that would teach them the value of time, and the advantages of *method* and regularity, in their occupation and business, would avail much ; but until the schools are provided with a clock and a bell, and the children attending them can NOTICE something more clean and regular than they see at home, little can be accomplished for the civilization of the people ; and they must emigrate before they can apply to any purpose such instructions as they acquire in the scantily appointed schools at present provided them. When they emigrate, they perceive the advantages enjoyed elsewhere, where emancipation from the tyranny of home habits and customs, is not only allowable, but creditable ; and by their resigning themselves to *inevitable* industry, they are soon enabled to send large sums of money to

Ireland to bring out their relatives to partake of the advantages which they enjoy. In this manner we lose the greater part of our enterprising population, and we may blame ourselves for it.

The Irish people have profited much by the famine ; the lesson was severe ; but so rooted were they in old prejudices and old ways, that no teacher could have induced them to make the changes, which this visitation of Divine Providence has brought about, both in their habits of life, and in their modes of agriculture. The use of money for buying food is now better understood, for when the potato crop flourished, it was only hoarded for the purchase of land, and but grudgingly expended in either food or clothing ; rags and poor living being more a *fashion* than a *necessity*, and therefore not to be regarded as real indications of poverty. Emigrating—for the wish of doing better elsewhere—and not the famine, has thinned the population in this part of the country.

The poor law has also largely concurred with the famine towards the improvement of the country, having brought to light the true condition of *individuals* ; relieving real want, and checking, in a great measure, the proneness to imposition so long tolerated and connived at. This wholesome enactment, however, unfortunately, has not been carried out as originally intended, and those numerous tenants upon the coast of the county Donegal, rated under £4, and extending for miles along the shore, are exempted from paying the rate—this class continues the old practice of relieving strolling beggars, and takes no interest (not being *personally* concerned) in the working of the law : they care not how numerous the inmates of the poor house are, nor what impositions are practised upon the Guardians, but receive, indiscriminately, all wanderers into their cabins. These vagrants bring with them disease, false reports and idle tales, and inflict themselves upon all—all receiving them : few liking to expose themselves to their curse, and the majority deeming it a merit to help every mendicant.

The plea for not carrying out the law, as originally intended, is, that the expense of collecting the rate would be too great ; but surely if it only paid that expense, the principle of making every one holding land bear a part in the working of the law, would sufficiently repay the State. By *exemption*,

indifference is encouraged, and a premium held out to small holdings under £4; whereas, if every farmer paid his share, however small, towards the maintenance of the poor, in the same manner as he does towards the county rates, he would feel interested in the faithful administration of the poor law, and would take pains to discourage mendicancy and fraud.

One other subject, Lord G. Hill is anxious to touch upon, and though its introduction may not be strictly relevant, its importance may justify a little irregularity.

Lord George's experience with poor houses has shewn him that a great difficulty exists in rearing the numerous children thronging some of them, owing to the want of suitable employment, and the expense of providing in each poor house competent persons to teach them trades, &c. It would appear, however, that a favourable opportunity is approaching, owing to the improved condition of the country, of placing these children in a better position, by making one poor house serve for the paupers of two or more unions, where the inmates happen to be few in number, as is, it is pleasant to observe, the case at present, and concentrating the children from several unions into one *appropriated* poor house, converting it into an industrial school, in which they could be brought up to agriculture and useful trades.

Lord G. Hill trusts he has shown in the preceding remarks (the result of long and anxious experience) that some progress has been made towards bettering the condition of the tenancies which fell under his control; and he hopes that those who may read them, especially such friends as have kindly interested themselves in the welfare of the Gweedore district, will be inclined to feel that he has satisfactorily answered the oft-repeated and searching question—"DOES IT PAY?"

GWEEDORE, Nov. 1853.

FACTS FROM GWEEDORE.

"But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies."—GOLDSMITH.

IN the year 1838, and subsequently, Lord George A. Hill purchased small properties, situated at Gweedore, in the parish of Tullaghobegly, County Donegal, which in the aggregate amounted to upwards of twenty-three thousand acres; the number of inhabitants thereon being about three thousand; nearly seven hundred of whom paid rent.

The district extends for some miles along the N. W. coast or corner of Ireland, and the scenery is of the very wildest description; the Atlantic dashing along those shores in all its magnificent freshness, whilst the harsh screeching of the sea-fowl is its continual and suitable accompaniment. The coast is studded with numerous little islands, and when the ocean is "up," or ruffled, it may be seen striking against opposing head-lands or precipitous cliffs, with a force and effect that is grand beyond description; the waves forming into a column of foam, which is driven to an immense height, and remaining visible for many seconds, until the feathered spray becomes gracefully and gradually dispersed—

"It plays with the clouds, it mocks the skies,
Or like a cradled creature lies."

The social condition of the peasantry, previously to the transfer of these properties, was more deplorable than can well be conceived; famine was periodical, and fever its attendant; wretchedness pervaded the district. At last that very extremity of misery which threatened even depopulation, excited or directed the philanthropy of one in humble life (the teacher of the National School), who in his benevolent effort to depict the wants, sufferings, and privations of his neighbours, collected his materials, and embodied them in a memorial, which he forwarded to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in the year 1837.

The following is an authentic copy of that faithful memorial—

“To his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

THE MEMORIAL OF PATRICK M'KYE.

“MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH,

“That the parishioners of this parish of West Tullaghobegley, in the Barony of Kilma-
crennan, and County of Donegal, are in the most needy, hungry, and naked condition of any
people that ever came within the precincts of my knowledge, although I have travelled a part
of nine Counties in Ireland, also a part of England and Scotland, together with a part of Bri-
tish America. I have likewise perambulated 2253 miles through seven of the United States,
and never witnessed the tenth part of such hunger, hardships, and nakedness.

“Now, my Lord, if the causes which I now lay before your Excellency, were not of very
extraordinary importance, I would never presume that it should be laid before you.

“But I consider myself in duty bound by charity to relieve distressed and hungry fellow-man.

“Although I am sorry to state that my charity cannot extend further than to explain to
the rich, where hunger and hardships exists, in almost in the greatest degree that nature can
endure.

“And which I shall endeavour to explain in detail, with all the truth and accuracy in my
power, and that without the least exaggeration, as follows:—

“There is about 4000* persons in this parish, and all Catholics, and as poor as I shall de-
scribe, having among them no more than—

“One cart,
No wheel car,
No coach, or any other vehicle,
One plough,
Sixteen harrows,
Eight saddles,
Two pillions,
Eleven bridles,
Twenty shovels,
Thirty-two rakes,
Seven table-forks,
Ninty-three chairs,
Two hundred and forty-three stools,
Ten iron grapes,
No swine, hogs, or pigs,
Twenty-seven geese,
Three turkeys,
Two feather beds,
Eight chaff beds,
Two stables,
Six cow houses,
One national school,

No other school,
One priest,
No other resident gentleman,
No bonnet,
No clock,
Three watches,
Eight brass candlesticks,
No looking glasses above 3d. in price,
No boots, no spurs,
No fruit trees,
No turnips,
No parsnips,
No carrots,
No clover,
Or any other garden vegetables, but
potatoes and cabbage, and not more
than ten square feet of glass in win-
dows in the whole, with the excep-
tion of the chapel, the school house,
the priest's house, Mr. Dombrain's
house, and the constabulary barrack.

“None of their either married or unmarried woman can afford more than one shift,[“] and the
fewest number cannot afford any, and more than one half of both men and women cannot
afford shoes to their feet, nor can many of them afford a second bed, but whole families of sons
and daughters of mature age indiscriminately lying together with their parents, and all in the
bare buff.

* This is an error : the population of Tullaghobegly being 9049 in the year 1841. Paddy M'Kye, however, when he
wrote in the year 1837, had no means of ascertaining this, as he had all the other particulars in his statement.

"They have no means of harrowing their land, but with meadow rakes. Their Farms are so small that from four to ten Farms can be harrowed in a day with one rake.

"Their beds are straw—green and dried rushes or mountain bent: their bed-clothes are either coarse sheets, or no sheets, and ragged filthy blankets.

"And worse than all that I have mentioned, there is a general prospect of starvation, at the present prevailing among them, and that originating from various causes, but the principal cause is a rot or failure of seed in the last year's crop, together with a scarcity of winter forage, in consequence of a long continuation of storm since October last, in this part of the country.

"So that they the people, were under the necessity of cutting down their potatoes and give them to their cattle to keep them alive. All these circumstances connected together, has brought hunger to reign among them to that degree, that the generality of the peasantry are on the small allowance of one meal a day, and many families cannot afford more than one meal in two days, and sometimes one meal in three days.

"Their children crying and fainting with hunger, and their parents weeping, being full of grief, hunger, debility and dejection, with glooming aspect, looking at their children likely to expire in the jaws of starvation.

"Also, in addition to all, their cattle and sheep are dying with hunger, and their owners forced by hunger to eat the flesh of such.

"'Tis reasonable to suppose that the use of such flesh will raise some infectious disease among the people, and may very reasonably be supposed, that the people will die more numerous than the cattle and sheep, if some immediate relief are not sent to alleviate their hunger.

"Now, my Lord, it may perhaps seem inconsistent with truth that all that I have said could possibly be true, but to convince your noble Excellency of the truth of all that I have said, I will venture to challenge the world to produce one single person to contradict any part of my statement.

"Although I must acknowledge, that if reference were made to any of the landlords or landholders of the parish, that they would contradict it, as it is evident it would blast their honours if it were known abroad, that such a degree of want existed in their estates among their tenantry. But here is how I make my reference and support the truth of all that I have said; that is, if any unprejudiced gentleman should be sent here to investigate strictly into the truth of it; I will, if called on, go with him from house to house, where his eyes will fully satisfy and convince him, and where I can show him about one hundred and forty children bare naked, and was so during winter, and some hundreds only covered with filthy rags, most disgusting to look at. Also, man and beast housed together, *i. e.* the families in one end of the house, and the cattle in the other end of the kitchen.

"Some houses having within its walls, from One cwt. to Thirty cwts. of dung, others having from Ten to Fifteen tons weight of dung, and only cleaned out once a year!

"I have also to add that the National School has greatly decreased in number of scholars, through hunger and extreme poverty; and the Teacher of said School, with a family of nine persons, depending on a Salary of £8 a year, without any benefit from any other source. If I may hyperbolically speak, it is an honor to the board of Education!

"One remark before I conclude, I refer your noble Excellency for the authenticity of the above statement to the Rev. H. O'F——, Parish Priest, and to Mr. R——. Chief Constable, stationed at Gweedore, in said parish, and Mr. P——, Chief Officer of Coast Guard in same district.

"Your most humble and obedient Servant,

"PATRICK M'KYE.

Amongst the advantages that resulted from the foregoing petition, which appeared in some English newspapers, was the distribution in the district of

supplies of shirts, shifts, flannel petticoats, and bed-ticks, furnished by an English gentleman, whose name has never transpired.

The lamentable condition of this people is scarcely, in fairness, to be attributed to individual neglect or apathy. It is rather the results of a system which for ages has held its sway, and which no one proprietor could grapple with, or obviate, unless he was prepared, resolutely, patiently, and expensively, to introduce and work out, a *counter-system*.

It is hoped, if it can be shown that reasonable success has attended the efforts which have been made, with a view to such an object, even where prospects were most gloomy and forbidding; others, instead of anticipating difficulties, or magnifying actual ones, so as to consider them insurmountable—saying with the slothful man, “There is a lion in the way”—will rather be encouraged to meet them energetically, and not soon become weary in well-doing.

This wild mountain district, prior to 1838, was divided into small properties; there were no resident proprietors. The estates were of such little value, that no gentleman, or scarcely a respectable person, would, or could, act as agent for them. Rents were very small—almost nominal, and there was no regularity as to collecting them: trifling sums were taken at fairs, or whenever or wherever they could be got; often no receipt was given—no accurate accounts kept: consequently the greatest confusion prevailed, as to what was due upon the properties. There were arrears of eight, ten, and even twenty years standing: some of the tenants not having paid rent for that period, and many lived on the estates quite unknown. A part of one estate of the value of £20 per annum, appeared not to be known to the person who sold the property to which it belonged, as it was not even *mentioned* in the rent-roll returned to Lord G. Hill, when he purchased. The *manner*, too, in which the rents were collected, was strange and unsatisfactory, as may be gathered from an incident. The agent to one of the small properties, came on a particular day, a distance of about fourteen miles, with a view of receiving the rents. Having mentioned his errand to a gentleman by whom he was met, he added, “he must *return*, as the day was *too bad* to attempt collecting them.” This observation caused some surprise, and the gentleman not exactly comprehending *how* rain had to do with rents, or that money could not be received on *any sort* of day, anxiously inquired: when the agent solved the difficulty by replying, “that he had to go *from house to house through the mountains*, in order to pick the rent up, having thus to take whatever the tenants were pleased to offer.” As to coercing the people, it was never *thought* of, or *feared*. When an attempt to do so was once made by a proprietor, he had to bring with him the whole yeomanry corps he com-

manded, simply to protect his bailiff. On occasions, when rent *was* paid by each tenant, *whiskey*, quite as a matter of course, was given; and on the properties passing into other hands, the people were at first *shocked*, and very much annoyed at the discontinuance of the "good old practice," and some of them, more indignant and high-spirited than the rest, even offered to treat the agent, "when *he* would not treat *them*."

It will serve as a specimen of the way in which these estates were managed by the agents to whom they were formerly entrusted, to give the two following *original notes*, which will also show that the tenants "made," or fixed "the rent themselves," and paid what they pleased. The notes are the reply from one of those agents, to an inquiry which was made of him by letter, in consequence of tenants refusing to pay the amount of rent as returned in the rental, and are as follows:—

No. 1.—"A.B. made the rent himself, and never paid me more than £1 10s. yearly.

C——, done the same, and never paid me more than £1 12s. yearly.

D. E. paid the same yearly, £1 12s.

F—— returned what I returned to you to Mr. G——. Mr. H—— never got more from them than what I returned to you now, but he wanted to make the rent-roll look large in Mr. G——'s eyes.

No. 2.—"A.B., Shoe-maker,	...	...	...	...	...	£1	8	5
C. D., Black,	...	...	...	...	...	1	8	5
E.F.	...	...	...	...	...	0	19	0
C.'s Mother	...	...	...	...	...	0	9	6
							<hr/>	
							£4	5 4

"They have five one-third cow's grass among the tribe, let them show you that they have not this quantity—they make the rent themselves, and C.D. would never pay for the old woman's part although he had the benefit."

The most extraordinary devices were had recourse to, in those parts of Donegal, in order to *beguile* the people into paying their rent; the following plan, which is true in every particular, has at all events, the merit of being pretty original. A bailiff had repeatedly gone to a man's house, that he might seize his cattle and put them into the pound for rent long due; but he could never find them, as they had, previously, on each occasion, been removed out of the way. The last time he was thus disappointed and mocked, he became so very angry and excited, that he took hold of the man by the collar of his coat, and dragged him over the mountains to the road, swearing that he would now "put *himself* into the pound, and where he must remain until the rent was paid, just to teach him *not to hide his cattle again!*" In apparent justification of what he felt must appear unusual or illegal, he boldly asserted that "there was a recent act of parliament come out, for the *very*

purpose, just to punish all rascally tenants acting in that blackguard way, and that his brother had a *fine new gun*, with which, if he showed his nose over the pound wall, he would instantly shoot him *dead* !” But the delinquent, not relishing the prospect of being shot, *even* by a *nice* gun, begged hard for mercy. The bailiff, really in a great passion, and being powerfully strong, was dragging the poor man along with him, like a child ; and not minding his entreaties, to be given a few more days indulgence to make up the rent, or that he might not be shamed before the whole parish, only doggedly replied to all, by declaring, that *to the pound he must go* ! As they went thus along the road, a gentleman to whom the parties were known, on riding up to them, had overheard much of what had passed between them ; and the bailiff, knowingly anticipating that he would be disposed to mediate, at once addressed him—“ Now, your honour, I *hope* you will not interfere for this man, as I would not like to refuse you.” The gentleman seeing how it was, said, that *for this time*, he would go security that the man would keep his word ; when the bailiff (pretending to do it very reluctantly) released him !

While on the subject relative to the collection of rents, another characteristic incident (also illustrative of bailiff tactics) may be narrated, which, though a little out of place, as to *time*, is otherwise appropriate. The County Cess collector, meeting one of the bailiffs, asked him how he was getting in the rents of his division ; the bailiff replied that he was doing very well, and expected they would be all paid in a few days. The collector remarked, “ If he got the rent from the *tailor*, he would be a clever fellow, as he had never been known to pay rent, cess, or any other tax.” The bailiff said he would do his best, and having heard, a few days after, that the tailor had engaged a horse to go to Dunfanaghy to purchase potatoes, he took the opportunity of his being from home, and boldly went to his wife for the rent. She assured him that there was not *one shilling* in the house ! But the bailiff not intending to be put off, told her “ that was not true !” that her husband had *sent* him for it ! and if two years rent was not instantly paid, they would get none of the land that was dividing ; “ and,” continued he, “ by the same token, the money is in the chest, *in his breeches pocket* !” The hit was a fortunate one, and succeeded ; the tailor’s wife hesitating no longer, immediately ran to the chest, turned out the garment specified, and handed the bailiff the two years’ rent ! With it he pretty smartly and triumphantly decamped to the office, and had scarcely paid it in, when the breathless and terrified tailor arrived in pursuit ; his wrath was *out of all measure* ; and as soon as he could make any attempt at articulation, he demanded a warrant against the bailiff for robbery ! and at the same time commenced furiously to abuse him ; but the bailiff had his reward, and in the fulness of his tri-

umph, took not the slightest notice of the tailor's wrath, but coolly observed, addressing the agent—"Och, yer honour, was not I the lucky man that happened to say, it was in the breeches pocket!"

The sea-weed is thrown on these shores in immense quantities *after a storm*; therefore, the people naturally conclude, that without a few *good storms*, "the country would be lost!" and on this account it was, that the past winter was considered quite a *failure* and even an *alarming* one! For which reason the cordial chorus of these people, with an eye to *agricultural results*, would ever be—

"If a storm should come and awake the deep,
What matter, what matter, *we shall dig and reap!*"

The weed thus cast in is taken off by the country people to spread over their ground, and also on the unreclaimed moors, which yield good crops of *potatoes* the first year, and *oats* the next, though the land is perfectly undrained and badly laboured! In the summer season, when the cast-in-sea-weed is not required for manure, kelp, in enormous quantities, is made of it along the shore.* The people being totally ignorant of agriculture, some of them (there are many such instances) take much trouble in *washing the shells and sand out of the sea weed*, before *venturing* to put it on their land, "lest it should injure the bog!"

The *style* of their farming implements and appointments was of apiece with their ignorance and errors; these things remaining in a state of much *simplicity*, particularly in the article of *harness*, as the land has been seen to be harrowed with the harrow made fast *to the pony's tail*!†

The sea coast is the part most thickly inhabited, on account of the facility of obtaining sea-rack for manure, and also subsistence when provisions are scarce, such as shell-fish, dilosk, sloake, as well as for the convenience of getting to and from the islands to graze the cattle, &c. Large tracts in the interior are consequently neglected, and lying waste, from the population thronging the shore, where the land is subdivided into very small portions.

* Owing to the vast demand for kelp, for the production of iodine, it is likely to bring an unprecedented high price.

† This custom of harrowing from the horse's tail prevailed in Erris, County Mayo. A gentleman, in giving evidence before the Land Commissioners, says, "Harrowing by the horse's tail was practised there until I put an end to it. I had a good deal of trouble in effecting that object, for I was obliged to make an experiment upon one of the countrymen, by getting him to draw a weight after himself by the skirts of his coat. That man is still living upon whom I performed the experiment. You might see the poor horse, with the rope fastened to his tail, and then to the harrow; or if the hair of the tail was long, it was fastened by a peg into a hole in the harrow, and when thus harnessed, the man mounted upon him, and drove over the field."

The wretched system of Rundale being here in full force and operation, all this district of country is held under what is known by that term, and which may be thus described:—In some instances, a tenant having any part of a townland (no matter how small), had his *proportion* in thirty or forty different places, and without fences between them, it being utterly impossible to have any, as the proportions were so very numerous, and frequently so small, that not more than half a stone of oats was required to sow one of such divisions. Thus every tenant considers himself entitled to a portion of each various quality of land in his townland; and the man who had some *good* land at one extremity, was sure to have some *bad* at the other, and a bit of *middling* in the centre, and bits of other quality in odd corners, each bounded by his neighbour's property, and without any fence or ditch between them. Under such circumstances as these, could any one wonder at the desperation of a poor man, who having his inheritance in *thirty-two* different places, abandoned them in utter despair of ever being able to *make them out*!

Fights, trespasses, confusion, disputes and assaults, were the natural and unavoidable consequences of this system; these evils, in their various forms, were endless, and caused great loss of time and expense to the people attending petty sessions; and, of course, continued disunion amongst neighbours, was *perpetuated*. The system, too, was a complete bar to any attempt at improvement; as, on a certain day, all the cattle belonging to the townland were brought from the mountains and allowed to run indiscriminately over the arable land, and any that had not their potatoes dug, or other crops off the ground, were much injured; neither could any one man venture to grow turnips, clover, or other green crops, for nothing short of a seven feet wall would keep out the mountain sheep. To add to this, no one would attempt to manure better, or otherwise improve his proportion, as his neighbour's cattle only would have the benefit; and in spring no individual occupier of the division, would set or sow, or labour in the fields, before a certain day, when the cattle were again sent to the hills, until after harvest: and should any one of them, more industrious or enterprising than another, reclaim a portion of the bog or mountain, it would be taken from him, as soon as he had got *one* crop off it, and it would forthwith be divided among *all* the tenants of the townland, in proportion to the rent each paid.

But the system of Rundale, was not confined to the land, the very animals are known to have been *quartered* by a similar complex tenure; and the following instance, at all events, may be depended upon as *true*—In an adjacent island, *three* men were concerned in *one* horse; but the poor brute was rendered useless, as the unfortunate foot of the supernumerary leg remained *unshod*, none of them being willing to acknowledge its dependency, and ac-

cordingly it became quite lame. There were many intestine rows on the subject: at length one of the "company," came to the mainland, and called on a magistrate for advice, stating that the animal was entirely useless now; that he had not only kept up, decently, his proper hoof, at his own expense, but had shod this *fourth foot twice to boot!* yet the other two proprietors resolutely refused to shoe more than *their own foot!*

The "good will" or tenant right of a farm is generally very high, often amounting to forty or fifty years' purchase. Land being the thing most coveted (as indeed it was the only means of subsistence, employment being uncertain, and, at that time no support being provided for the poor), every penny was carefully put by, with the view of being one day employed in the purchase of "a bit of land." This took all their little capital, and very often left them in debt to some money lender, who had made up the required sum, and at an enormous rate of interest. It has been so high as five shillings for a pound, per annum, *paid in advance* on receiving it! By this means, nothing was left for the purchase of cattle or seed; indeed many never contemplate anything beyond potatoes sufficient to feed their families for the *greater* part of the year; five or six half-starved miserable sheep, to supply them with clothing, and furnish a few pairs of socks for sale, to buy tobacco or pay the County Cess; the little corn grown being ample to meet the demands of the landlord, which varied from three shillings to thirty shillings per annum. These sheep, too, it may be remarked, are subjected not only to a *general* shearing once a year, but also to repeated, though partial "clippings," at all seasons. Thus, if a woman was making up stockings for an approaching fair, and became short of wool, she would catch her sheep or lamb and cut off just "*quantum sufficit.*" This gave the poor animal a very strange and ridiculous, yet pitiable, appearance. In some instances of the kind, a *fore-quarter* would be bare to the skin, while the *hind* was clad and comfortable: or the whole neck would be shorn to the shoulders, where the spoliation generally terminated abruptly.

It often happens that a man has *three* dwellings—one in the mountains, another upon the shore, and the third upon an island, he and his family, flitting from one to another of these habitations, as the various and peculiar herbage of each, is thought to be beneficial to the cattle, which are supposed, at times, to have a disease requiring change of pasture, whilst in reality they only want *more food.* This change usually takes place upon a fixed day, the junior branches of the family generally perform the land journey on the top of the household goods, with which the pony may often be seen so loaded, and at the same time so *obscured* that little more than the head can be observed; and thus the chair or two, the creels, and the iron pot, the piggin,

and the various selected *et cetera*—as if invested with a sort of dull locomotive power—creep along the roads. The little churn is slung on one side of the animal, into which the youngest child is often thrust, its head being the only part visible ; and in this plight it resembles in *various* particulars, a sweep peeping and screeching too, at the top of a chimney.

These little islands, to which the peasantry thus occasionally migrate, not being far from the mainland, are, in moderate weather, easy of access ; and they constitute a very pleasing feature in the general scenery. The island of Gola, the largest of the four belonging to Lord G. Hill, is five hundred acres in extent, two miles from the shore, and having one hundred and fifty inhabitants on it. In this island, there is a very beautiful natural arch, formed by the action of the ocean, through which *another* such arch may be seen on an islet, in the distance. Near to this spot (on Gola), the curious plant “Rose-root” (*Rhodiola Rosea*) grows wild and in abundance ; on breaking the root detached kernels are found ; which possess, in a high degree, the delicious fragrance of the rose, particularly when dried, but if cultivated in a garden it loses much of its sweetness : the root furnishes an astringent medicine ; the leaves are said to be efficacious when applied to a wound. Goats and sheep eat this plant ; cows and swine refuse it. It grows on the mountains of Westmorland, Cumberland, Yorkshire, and Wales ; on the summits of the Highland Mountains, the shores of the Hebrides, the northern coast of Antrim, the Island of Raghery, and the Western coast of Ireland.

Owing to the people’s Arab mode of life, not having a fixed residence, no pains are taken to make any one of their habitations at all comfortable : each consists of four walls, built of large rough stones (sometimes they are merely sods), put together without mortar ; no chimney, a front and back door (a contrivance or arrangement for *taking advantage* of the wind) a small aperture in the wall, to be called, in courtesy, a window, but having no glass in it, a dried sheep skin being its substitute.

One or two wooden stools, an iron potato-pot, sometimes an old crazy bedstead, filled up with heather or *potatoes*, and little or no bedclothes, with a churn, two or three piggins, a spade, a shovel, and a *pipe*, are the contents of the cabin, half of which, without any ceremony or partition, is given up to the cattle : and the reason the people assign for keeping the cows in the same house or apartment with themselves is, that “it is more convenient when one wants a drop of milk.” The cattle in this district are of a poor stunted description, nothing having been done to improve the breed ; neither are there any pigs on the property, nor was any attempt made at a garden, yard, or out-houses. Indeed, the state of these cabins, or rather *hovels*, was shocking beyond all description, being dark, dismal, and, in every imaginable

way, dirty and utterly comfortless. The memorial of Patrick M'Kye, which is given at the commencement, affords a good estimate and idea of the accumulated filth and *furniture* inside.

Under all these circumstances of their condition, from varied and perpetual depression, it could scarcely be considered an *exaggeration* to declare, that their very minds had become so far degenerated below the human standard, that they seemed even *reconciled* to such habits and wretchedness.

Their houses, too, were in clusters, another great evil: particularly as it so much tended to the spread of fever and other infectious diseases: in addition to which, the women's time was taken up wrangling and scolding. The *packed* state of the little community affording copious sources of civil war: and worse than all, the men were generally far away from their farms. The total neglect of these mountain districts is, in a great measure, the cause of their wild and uncivilized condition: the people being left entirely to themselves, have done as they pleased—"every man did that which was right in his own eyes." They divided and sub-divided; and sold the land, without being interfered with, or in anywise controlled: and accordingly there could be no other result, but that the holdings became in very many cases, reduced to such small patches, as to be incapable of producing anything like sufficient food for the family; or else scattered in so many bits, here and there, that it would take a very "cute" man to *find* them. One instance of sub-division may be mentioned; a small field of about *half an acre*, was held by *twenty-six* people!!

They made a habit of trafficking in their land, and would sell small portions of it, as they wanted money, either for ever or for a term of years, or mortgage it as *interest* on money borrowed until the sum was re-paid; which was very often proved equivalent to a lease for nine hundred and ninety-nine years! These bargains were of the most complicated nature. The farms were also frequently, at the death of the parents, reduced to atoms at *once*; being then divided *among all the children*: in such cases, when the farm was small, it left to each a mere "*skibberlin*" (a shred off a coat), and by this simple process the next generation were beggars.

The land is never let, sold, or devised by the *acre*, but by "a cow's grass. This is a *complement* of land well understood by the people, being in fact the general standard; and they judge of the dimensions of a holding by its being to the extent, as the case may be, of one, two, or three "cow's grass;" although a *cow's grass*, as it varies according to the quality of the land, comprises for this reason, a rather indefinite quantity. Thus the townlands are all divided into so many cow's grass, which of course have been cut up *ad infinitum*. By this rude anatomy they have been divided not only into the

fourth part of a cow's grass, called a "foot," but into the *eighth* part of a cow's grass, or *half a foot*, denominated "a cleet." And for the faithful illustration of such *limbs* of land, a portion of the production of a native poet (the poem having reference to an adjacent property), may here be quoted, as it developes the "*cloven foot*" of these ancient arrangements, much more forcibly than mere prose could be expected to do.

" You landlords all, I pray draw near,
A comical story you soon shall hear,
Of a property situate in Donegal,
Held by a hundred tenants in all ;
And each having seven young brats to squall.

Although each farm was in Bundale,
To divide each plot, they could not fail,
With son or daughter, aye, or mother,
With either uncle, aunt, or brother ;
And thus they divided with one another.

Although each holding wouldn't feed an ass,
It went by the name of the Cow's-grass :
For Shane had two, Teague two and a-half,
Manus five-eighths, and Margery a calf ;
Each portion was only the breadth of a staff."

&c. &c. &c.

This system has held its ground, on the most sure "*footing*" which the following authentic document will show, being the rental and divisions of a townland, as it stood when purchased by Lord G. Hill. The system is therein recognised, and even adopted, to indicate the partitions of a whole townland ; and, although the reader should not be able to comprehend such a statement of accounts, or assent to its accuracy, *that* does not in any degree render it the less genuine !

(COW'S GRASS.)					£	s.	d.
A. B.	...	...	2	...	...	1	10 0
Widow C.	...	...	1	..	...	1	13 4
D. E. one foot of	...	...	1	..	...	0	16 0
And added to all the E's makes	...	...	3	...	...	2	8 0
F. G.	...	...	1	...	...	0	16 0
Eight cows.					...	8	3 4

The immense tracts of mountain grazing, for want of regulation, were trespassed over by cattle from the neighbouring properties, or by those belonging to friends and relations of the more powerful clans, to the detriment of the weaker. Indeed the country was ruled by a few *bullies*, lawless distillers, who acknowledged neither landlord nor agent ; and, the absence of anything like roads effectually kept civilization from the district, and prevented the people bringing more land into cultivation.

*Illustration of the evil of unrestricted subdividing farms
and the difficulty of its correction afterwards*

Fig 1

*Shows the subdivision effected in 1 generation.
This Townland contains 205 acres formerly held
by 2 but now occupied in 422 lots by 29 tenants,
3 of whose scattered holdings are shown in
different colours.*

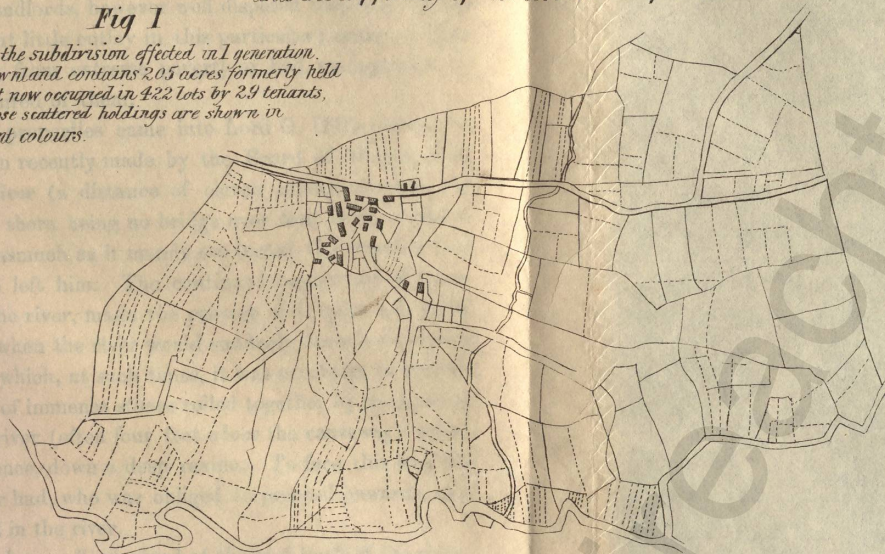


Fig 2

*Shows the arrangement proposed by the Proprietor,
without turning out any tenant, and giving to each
tenant one lot equivalent to his former scattered
holdings.*

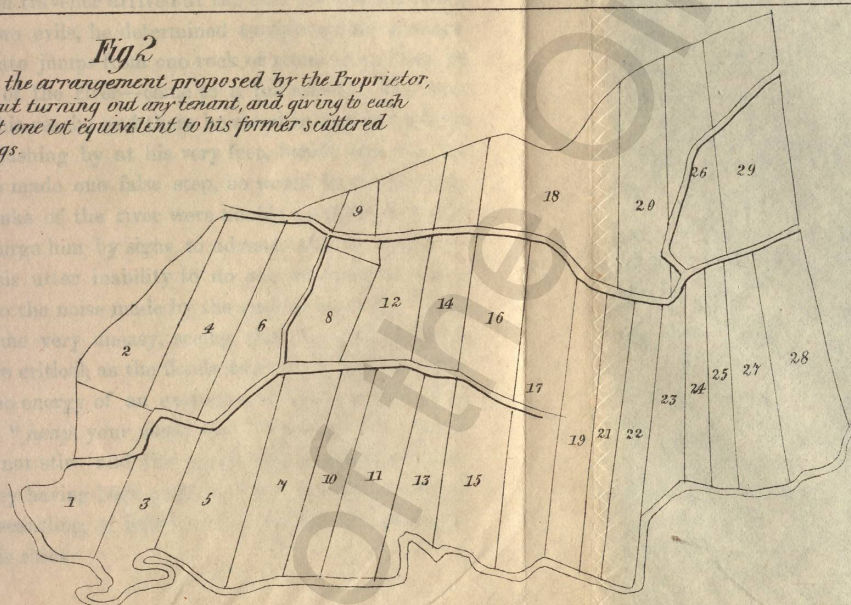
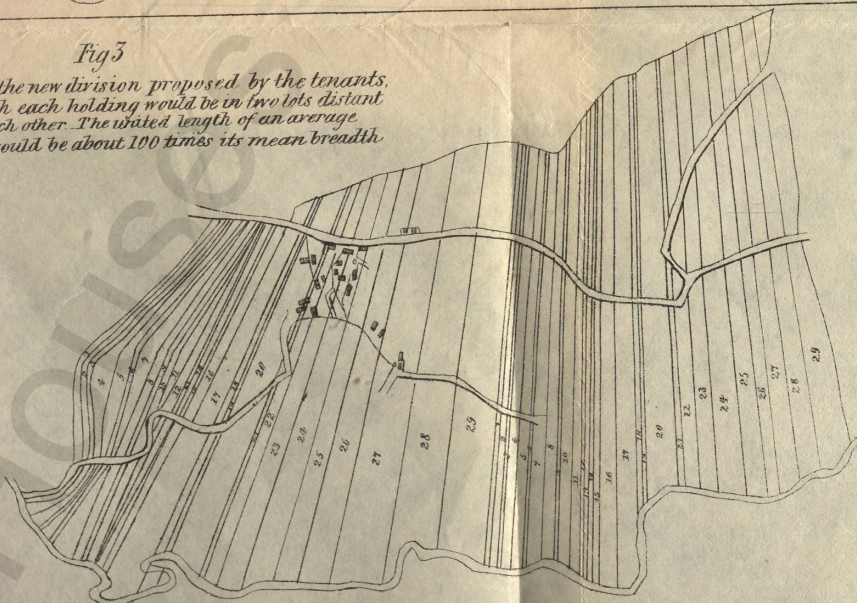


Fig 3

*Shows the new division proposed by the tenants,
by which each holding would be in two lots distant
from each other. The stated length of an average
farm, would be about 100 times its mean breadth.*



Houses of the Oireachtas

This is a subject highly deserving the attention of Government, as the *whole rent* of a mountain property, laid out in making only *branch* roads, from the leading ones, to the different townlands would not suffice; and the circumstances of some of the landlords, however well disposed they may be, are such, that they can afford but little outlay in this particular; many of their tenants being often unable, from extreme poverty or bad management, to pay even the small rent required of them.

At the period when these properties came into Lord G. Hill's possession, though a fine road had been recently made by the Board of Works, from Malins to the Gweedore River (a distance of eleven miles), through the barony of Kilmacrenan, yet there being no bridge over that river, it was of little use for many years, inasmuch as it merely conducted the traveller to a mountain torrent, and there left him. The continued occurrence of providential escapes in crossing the river, made the passage of it quite a dreadful ordeal in the time of rains, when the river would suddenly become swollen to a frightful degree; through which, at such times, it was necessary to venture on a rude causeway, formed of immense stones rolled together by the country people, and over which the river (often four feet *above* the causeway), swept with awful rapidity, and thence, down a deep ravine. To face this was the only alternative the traveller had, who was obliged to proceed onwards, at a time when there was a flood in the river.

On one occasion, an English traveller arrived at the east bank of the river; having to choose between two evils, he determined to attempt the passage. After a succession of desperate jumps from one rock or stone to another, he at last—in about the middle of the river—came to a full stand! The *next* stride seeming quite beyond his reach; and there he stood in a most perilous position. The torrent was dashing by at his very feet, beside him was the ravine; down which, had he made one false step, he would have been hurried! The people on the banks of the river were unable to afford him any assistance; they could only urge him by signs to advance at once, while *his* signals in reply, intimated his utter inability to do so; much of the scene was but dumb-show, owing to the noise made by the rush of so great a body of water. The people became very uneasy, seeing that his situation was every moment becoming more critical, as the floods were rising rapidly. One of them, at last, with all the energy of an excited and kind-hearted Irishman, screamed out mightily, "*jump, your sowl, you, if there's life in you.*" It was all in vain—he could not stir—and the people ultimately saved him, only with much difficulty, they having been actually obliged, in the dearth of timber of a more suitable scantling, to *break up one of their bed-steads*, in order to make a bridge of its sides.

No high road *at all* led into or through these mountains previously to 1834, when, owing to the exertions of a public spirited individual, the one (from Malins to the Gweedore river), which has just been mentioned, was made by the Board of Works; which road branched off at the Claudy bridge to the sea, and joined the coast road from Dunfanaghy. The road to Dunfanaghy, although a country road, was full of sloughs, and not passable for carts; the few bridges upon the line being also in very bad repair: so that the people of the district, though contributing their proportion to the County Cess, derived but very little benefit or comfort from it. Even in the year 1837, when the Lord Lieutenant made his tour through those parts of Donegal, the leading road was so broken up and intercepted by boggy sloughs (though in the middle of summer) that his Excellency might not have been able to proceed along part of it, had it not been for the ingenuity of a country fellow, who, observing the difficulty, with all the quickness and spirit of a rustic Raleigh, ran to his cabin, *whipt* off the door, and hurrying to his Excellency's relief, laid it down before his horse's feet: by this device his Lordship and staff were enabled to proceed in comfort. As soon as they had passed, the man immediately hoisted the door on his shoulders, tripped on merrily before his Excellency, until he saw it necessary to lower it again; and thus he accompanied the cavalcade, being, perhaps, not the least useful attaché to the suite.

Up to the period of Lord G. Hill's becoming the proprietor of the Gweedore district, the people were in the most lawless condition. A fact illustrative of the insubordinate state of that part of the country may be mentioned. About the year 1822, a gentleman, to whom a small portion of the district belonged, thinking it desirable to place the property under respectable and efficient management, appointed as his agent a neighbouring magistrate. The proprietor, soon after, accompanied by his new agent, went to the property, with a view of entering upon improved or improving arrangements, but the people became so violent and outrageous at this *intrusion*, or perhaps they rather considered it *invasion*, on the part of their landlord, that both he and his intended agent were obliged *at once* to go away and leave the property in the hands of the former agent, a person that could scarcely read or write, in whose *care* it remained until purchased by Lord G. Hill.

Such was the *reputation* of the district, that strangers from adjoining parishes were afraid to "cross the border," and gentlemen who were hardy or curious enough to *venture* to attend a fair, held in the heart of the district, are known to have been afforded an escort of Coast Guard as a protection; such a precaution being deemed expedient in consequence of two

revenue police parties having been recently beaten and disarmed ; and upwards of fifty constabulary also, repulsed and forced to give up collecting tithe, about the same time (1834).

No fairs were ever held without some serious rows, and drinking (acting no doubt as an exciting cause), was then carried to a frightful excess. It could scarcely be otherwise, owing to the terrible facility that universally existed of procuring poteen ; for before roads were made through the district, illicit distillation was carried on to such an extent, that not only all the grain in the county was made into whiskey, but also great quantities were brought from the counties of Sligo and Mayo, for the same purpose. The nearest market towns being nine, sixteen, and twenty-eight miles distant ; they had thus far to go in order to purchase the smallest or commonest articles, such as iron to shoe a horse, boards and nails for a coffin, &c. and a man going such a distance, with a horse load of oats (i. e. a sack-full slung across its back), would accept *any* price which might be offered, rather than bring it back ; advantage was consequently taken of this very circumstance by the traders. The general system, or alternative, therefore, was to make the grain into whiskey, which was certain of paying a remunerating price, besides that this mode of trading was more agreeable and congenial to a people fond of excitement and an irregular life, though of course, the practice was sure to lead to idleness and dissolute habits. In fact, the people were, in a great measure *driven* into, and *exposed* to, these snares, owing to what has just been stated, viz.—the want of a more legitimate mart for traffic. Even at home they were obliged either to make it into whiskey themselves, or to sell it to a private distiller on credit, till he sold his whiskey, and should *it* be seized, they lost all. To add to this, they had no regular weights or measures ; and when a bargain was made it was generally subject to the condition to purchase, or abide by, such a man's weights or measures ; and these (reputed) weights were mostly round stones taken off the beach.

The visits of the revenue police, who are stationed at a distance of eight or ten miles, are only occasional,* and can never put down illicit distillation entirely : they now and then make a seizure, or take some prisoners, and a few of these unfortunate people may be *ruined* accordingly ; but, much profit being made by those who escape detection, many are therefore induced to try their luck. By this system all the corn which should have furnished meal for them in summer, before the new potatoes came in, was consumed ; and often in July and August, they were without provisions, and could only obtain “ credit meal,” at an exorbitant price from meal-mongers and other extortioners. It was owing to this wholesale destruction of the corn by making

* There has been a party of Revenue Police stationed at Gweedore since October, 1852.

it into whiskey and the waste of time consequent upon it, causing their farms to be almost totally neglected, that famine was several times brought on, and hundreds must inevitably have perished, but for the immense relief in money and meal, which was supplied by Government and the English people.

The natives of the Islands along these coasts are very fearless boat-men, and skilful *in their own way*. There is a simple and very ancient kind of substitute for a boat, called a Corragh, in general use; they are very neatly and ingeniously made. In "building" them, a flat oval frame, or gunwale, with holes at regular distances, from which the ribs are to *start*, is laid down in the first instance, and secured to the ground. The ribs which consist of stout sallows, are planted in the gunwale holes; and the sides are basket-work for about six inches wide, above the *flooring* (as a *skirting*), all round; the ribs (being intertwined at their junction) are crossed by transverse laths, extending from stern to stem, and which are lashed together where they cross each other, with cords made of horse hair. The frame is therefore very strong and elastic; it is then "skinned" with a hide or tarred canvas. A very good one that would last for four years perfect, may be made at a cost of thirty shillings; seven score of sallows are required, and a man would make one entirely, including "skinning," and tarring in four days. There is no beam or seat in a corragh, but the "crew" sit down *on the floor*, and must remain there perfectly steady, as a very little *lateral* motion (there being no keel) would capsize them. Short paddles are used to propel them; and when one person only works a corragh, he kneels at the bow, and with alternate strokes, from side to side, guides the frail barque.

It is a wonderful sight to watch one go to the islands through a surf, on a rocky beach where no other *boat* could land in safety. But they are very "*ticklish*" things, and great skill and caution is required for their safe management. About Gweedore and Rosses their dimensions are generally as follows—from stern to stem (above) 9 feet; width, 3 feet; depth, 2 feet—The corragh is a most *handy* little thing. The people have been known to bring their cattle from the islands in those little cots. Such a cargo is thus *shipped*:—the animal is thrown down on the land, its legs tied, lifted into the corragh, and laid on its back, making it fast by ropes, then the corragh is carried into the water. The extraordinary escape of a corragh thus freighted, is so well authenticated, and believed at the place, where it is said to have occurred, that it is worth mentioning:—

"Some twenty years have elapsed since Paddy M'Bride, who, like Crusoe, was sole lord of the small Island of Dooey, about two or three miles north of Ballynass, between Tory Island and the mainland. Paddy was a cattle breeder in a small way; he hired a bull for the season, which was landed on

Dooey Island. When the season had passed, he was tied *four shanks together* (on a small strand, the only *one spot on the Island* from whence the bull could be shipped), and rolled into a *corragh* of wicker-work seven feet long, four feet beam, and two feet in depth of hold ; all this was done by Paddy and two sons of his, then well-grown young men, Charley and Hugh. The corragh was propelled by a paddle wrought by Charles ; and Hugh, who was the stoutest of the two, took charge of the bull, and occasionally steered the corragh with a spare paddle. Away they started, Charley, the bull, and Hughey. They got on cheerly until they were half way, when the bull broke the lashing of his shanks and threatened death and destruction to all hands—there was no time to hesitate, Hughey *threw himself on the bull*, and taking off his hat or ‘caubeen,’ pulled it over the *nose of the bull*, and Charley turned and got his feet to the *snout* of the animal, and both succeeded completely in stopping respiration, so that in a few minutes the bull was *dead*. Both Charley and Hugh M’Bride are alive and well, and still on Island Dooey. Hugh had a knife, and first thought of cutting the bull’s *wizen*, but a lucky presence of mind suggested the ‘caubeen,’ which ended the animal’s life without a dying *throe*, the *fear of which* deterred Hugh from using the knife. The M’Brides were *sued* for the value of the bull, but under the circumstances of the case, the jury decided in their favour.”

Another instance of the rash and reckless daring of these islanders (being in place here) may be told—it happened recently and in the neighbourhood. A man and his wife coming out of the Island of Arranmore, in a little boat filled with turf, had a horse *standing on the top of it* ; with the roll of a sea, the animal was thrown out, and as they were a long way from land, must have been drowned, had not the man cleverly succeeded in getting him into the boat again !

In the beginning of January shoals of herrings make their appearance upon this coast, when the people, clubbing their means to purchase boats and nets make great exertions to avail themselves of this supposed source of profit. No salt was to be had but at the distant towns before mentioned ; and when the fish were abundant, an immense price was paid for salt. For want, however, of regularity and protection, the fishery, instead of proving a blessing and a source of profit, often turns out the reverse, especially as it has occasioned a fearful loss of life, for which there could be no compensation.

Wherries from Rush, Balbriggan, and Skerries, and other strange boats, come here and molest the poor natives, cutting their nets and otherwise annoying them. From the stormy and rugged character of the coast, the people are afraid to stay out all night by their nets, in their small boats ; and therefore, contrary to what should be the practice, they cast their nets by

day light, leave them there all night, and return in the morning *to look for them*. By such means, if a storm arises, the nets break adrift, get mixed together, and floating about full of dead fish, scare the shoals from the coast—many hundred pounds worth of nets are lost in this manner. Whereas, if the Government sent a cutter to preserve order, much mischief would be prevented; its presence would give confidence to the fishermen, who would, under such circumstances, remain out with their nets, knowing that should it come on to blow, there would be assistance and a refuge at hand.

The Irish language is universally spoken. Many of the peasantry do not understand English, or very little, particularly the women or children; and even those who are competent to speak in the latter language, seem especially unwilling to do so in the Petty Sessions Court, from a feeling, no doubt, that they cannot do justice to their case, except in their own language; and thus it is by no means an unusual thing to hear a man declare “on his oath,” in very fair English too, *that he cannot speak that language!* The assertion is thoughtlessly made, and probably merely intended to imply his inability to give descriptions, or carry on a conversation in the language. From this imperfect knowledge which the people have of English, they sometimes express themselves very strangely, of which the following circumstance furnishes an example.—An officer of the Coast Guard, who resided at the west bank of the Gweedore river, had two or three friends dining with him, one of them being the surgeon of *that* district. As the party were comfortably enjoying themselves, the officer’s servant rushed into the apartment, wringing his hands, exclaiming in a dolorous tone—“Troggs, Masther—Muster Appleton’s *brusted!*” The dreadful communication was received with a roar of laughter. “Muster Appleton,” the old chief boatman, had been twice bled that day for pleurisy, and the vein had *burst open*. Some one had run from his abode for the doctor, to go and tie up his arm again, as they feared he would bleed to death.

The people of this district are partial to their families, and dislike sending their children from them; they are sociable, droll, friendly, and neighbourly, where their interest will not suffer; but they are at the same time jealous of each other, avaricious, and, though there is but little thieving, fond of making very hard bargains—this propensity was displayed in a striking manner a few years ago. The people being in great distress, and in actual want of food, some relief was sent to the district, to be distributed in return for their work on a public road. But they, not liking the terms proposed, rejected them, cutting the matter short, by coolly saying—“we can go back to our cockles!” They are great talkers; as firing is plentiful, they sit up half the night in winter, talking and telling stories; they therefore dislike

living in detached houses. They are, however, a quiet, inoffensive race, when not interfered with, naturally civil and kind in their manner ; and they can be brave too, where *humanity* demands of them to be so.

An instance of even noble heroism, and also of the greatest self-denial in the midst of terrible privations, which they are capable of, has been left on record by one, who, from having lived amongst them for twenty years, knew them well, and loved them in proportion to his knowledge for their many excellent traits. The insertion of these incidents here will establish the truth of the statement made above, and also go a good way in neutralizing and compensating for, the few unfavourable characteristics in their disposition which candour required to be stated. The writer alluded to, introduces his anecdotes in the following words—

“The peasantry (of Gweedore and Rosses) he has ever found kind and respectful, and grateful for any attention shown to them ; they are a *bright and intelligent people*, patiently bearing the most severe privations, and generous even to a fault. In illustration of which, the writer must grace these pages with the following touching little anecdotes—

“A dreadful famine prevailed here in 1831. Two of the poorer description of the peasantry came to the writer’s cottage, craving a little food, to carry home to their wives and fifteen children, none of whom, or themselves, had tasted a morsel for forty-eight hours. They were requested to take each as much as would suffice for a supper and breakfast for their families ; but when they saw that the writer had scarcely a week’s potatoes left, and although they knew that no provisions of any kind could be obtained even for money, in any other place within their reach, with a generous forbearance they absolutely refused to take even a single potatoe, and actually went away without any, saying, ‘that there was little enough for the writer’s own family.’ ”

The other anecdote tends to pourtray their character in a very different aspect, and it is as follows—

“In the winter of 1832–3, in the bleak month of February, a schooner, with a crew of four men, in the middle of the night, and during a tremendous gale from the N.W. was dashed against the rocks of Innis-Irrir, and very soon sunk—one man was lost, the other three men were thrown upon the top of a high and perpendicular rock, within a stone’s throw of the island—

“———— as bleak a precipice as e’er
Gave mariner a shelter and despair ;
A spot to make the saved regret the deck,
Which late went down, and envy the lost wreck.”

“In which situation they were discovered when day appeared. Attempts

were made to throw them coals of fire and potatoes, but in vain, their fate seemed sealed ; for to attempt to rescue them, through such a terrible sea as was breaking between the rock and the island, was a forlorn hope indeed, and appeared almost impossible.

“What was to be done? If the unfortunate men were to spend another night on that horrid rock, it would doubtless be their last. To the honour of human nature, be it told, that six of these poor islanders manned three *corraghs*, two in each, and watching a favourable interval between two waves, gallantly shot across the foam in their little cots, and gained a nook in the rock !

“Here a new difficulty opposed itself ; high over their heads, prostrate on the rock, benumbed with cold, wet, bruised, and nearly paralyzed from the combined effects of fear and the dreadful sufferings of the preceding night, lay the poor objects of their solicitude ; and (the rock being perfectly perpendicular at its sides) there was no other way of gaining access to the *corraghs* but by *dropping* into them, at the imminent risk of either upsetting or ‘staving’ them (one of the three—the captain—was upwards of 14 stone weight.)

“The noble fellows paused but for a moment—such hearts are not easily daunted—the attempt was made, providentially without an accident occurring—each *corragh* received its guest, and the gallant fellows succeeded, as if by the interposition of a miracle, in landing each his charge in safety on the island.”

From there being no resident proprietor, and consequently no employment for the people, many of them go to Scotland in summer (often bringing fever back with them, and other diseases), and also to the neighbourhood of Raphoe, and Derry for work. They seldom go out to labour on their farms till after ten o’clock, when they have had their breakfast ; and the spring and harvest time are the only periods at which they exert themselves, and then they work very hard ; for the remainder of the year they are idle.

Such, then, is a sketch of the Gweedore district, on its passing into the possession of Lord George Hill. It now remains—as was proposed at the commencement—to give, in a second part, “A brief statement of efforts made on the property, to improve the condition and increase the comforts of the tenantry.”

FACTS FROM GWEEDORE.

PART II.

“The slothful man saith there is a lion in the way.”

As soon as Lord G. Hill had purchased the main part of the Gweedore properties, and had appointed an agent, temporary apartments were fitted up on the spot, as it was considered desirable by his Lordship, that he and his agent should reside on the property as constantly as possible, in order that they might become acquainted with the tenantry.

Lord G. Hill also made it his business to visit himself, the house of every tenant on his estate, for the purpose of establishing a mutual acquaintance and of acquiring an insight into their condition and character. This was much facilitated by his Lordship possessing some knowledge of the Irish language, as it was pleasing and attracting to the people, and brought about an intercourse to which they were unaccustomed, and they asserted that he could not be a lord at all, particularly *as he spoke Irish*.

As illicit distillation induced lawless and irregular habits in the people, and rendered them liable to fines and imprisonments, thereby causing the ruin of their families and farms, and frequently also producing famine by consuming the grain which should otherwise have supplied them with food ; measures were immediately adopted to check the pernicious practice. In 1839, a corn store, 84 feet long by 22 feet wide, having three lofts and a kiln, was built at the port of Bunbeg, capable of containing three or four tons of oats. A quay was formed in front of the store, at which vessels of 200 tons can load or discharge, there being 16 feet of water at the height of the tide. A market was thus established for the grain of the district, the price given for it being much the same as at Letterkenny, six and twenty miles distant.

It may here be remarked, that at that period, no vessel could be freighted in Liverpool for Gweedore; its bay, and the anchorage under the Island of Gola, being as little known in England as if it had been on the coast of Africa. Captain Stewart of H.M. Excise Cutter "The Chichester," who wintered at Gweedore in 1841, kindly wrote an account of the spot to some friends in Liverpool, and there has since been no hesitation on the part of ship owners to send vessels to the place.

There was much difficulty in getting this store built; even the *site* of it had to be excavated, by blasting from the solid rock, and there were no masons or carpenters in the country capable of erecting a building of the kind. So great was the difficulty of getting even a coffin made, that to secure the services of a carpenter, such as the district afforded, many of the people gave him annually by way of a *retaining fee*, sheaves of oats, on the express condition of *making their coffin when they died!* It was therefore found necessary to introduce competent tradesmen, and even then, much manœuvring was requisite to get those who were brought for the purpose to *remain*. They were paid regularly every Saturday night; but it was by no means unusual, on mustering the hands on Monday morning, to have it reported that a carpenter or mason had deserted in the interval, and it was no wonder! The aspect of the country being so prodigiously different from any thing they had ever seen, and the comforts they had been accustomed to, such as bread and meat, not, for any consideration to be procured, their being neither baker nor butcher nearer than a day's journey! Even tea and sugar could only be purchased of huxters at an exorbitant price, and of the worst description. One of the persons employed, a County Down man, was so much astonished at the desperate ruggedness of the country, and its most forbidding appearance, that he did not scruple to say, "the art of man could not *red* it up."

When the store was finished, a wheelwright was sent to Gweedore for the purpose of making carts and barrows for the tenantry, as there were only two carts and no wheelbarrows on the estate. Timber and iron were accordingly brought from Derry to be used for the purpose. The tenants, however, applied to be allowed, as a favour, to purchase a portion of those things, as nothing of the kind could be procured nearer than Letterkenny, the Cross Roads, or Dunfanaghy; a few were at first accommodated, but those who could not be supplied from a stock so inadequate, becoming annoyed and jealous, it was determined that iron and timber should be sold at the store, as the people were in such evident want of them. It was also thought that a few other articles in general demand might be disposed of at a moderate

price, such as salt, soap, candles, tobacco, and tea.* But from the sales increasing, the idea was suggested of establishing a general store or shop for the accommodation of the people. The new shop was managed by the wheelwright, under the superintendence of the Agent, for three years, until the sales became so very extensive, that it was considered advisable to entrust the concern to a more experienced person.

To give some conception of the increase of business, it may be mentioned that the first quarter's sales to the 19th of December, 1840, amounted to 40*l.* 12*s.* 10*d.* The sales for the quarter ending 19th December, 1842, amounted to 260*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.* whilst the corresponding quarter for 1844 was 550*l.* In consequence of the great increase of business, the shop was enlarged to double its original size, and three or four persons instead of only one, are now required to wait upon the customers. The consumption of bread, flour, and biscuit, since their introduction into the district, affords a fair criterion of the improved habits and circumstances of the inhabitants; the average sale of bread alone at the shop being about three dozen shilling loaves weekly. Every thing that it is thought possible to be required in a maritime country is sold in this shop at Letterkenny prices, as particularized in the following bill, the goods being imported direct from Liverpool, Glasgow, and Dublin. All transactions both at the store and shop are *ready money*. Hides and butter are also purchased there from the people.

Over the entrance gate to the storeyard there is the following inscription:—

JS áðprátiñameáct lejr an Títearíña
meaðácan fáilra: áct jre an meaðácan
cearú a òrl. Seanraíðte caibíðl xi.
raim l.

Lord G. A. Hill's store, Bunbeg, Gweedore, is now supplied with the following articles for sale at very reasonable prices:—Ironmongery, Drugs Groceries, &c.

Awl Blades,
Beams,
Bellows,
Bridles,
Brushes,
Candlesticks,

Canvass for Sails,
Cart Chains,
Combs of every kind,
Delft of all descriptions, viz.—
Cups and Saucers,
Jugs and Mugs

Basins,
Dishes,
Plates,
Pots, Pans, &c.
Files, every kind,
Fishing Hooks,

* In 1845 upwards of Three Hundred pounds worth of excisable articles, such as tea, tobacco, and snuff, were sold at Lord G. Hill's shop at Bunbeg.

Fishing Lines,
 Funnels,
 Glass, viz.—
 Window,
 Looking Glasses,
 Spy do.
 Bottles,
 Wine, &c.

Heel Ball,
 Hemp,
 Hinges,
 Iron, viz.—
 Horse Shoes,
 Nail Rod,
 Hoop,
 Pots,
 Pans,
 Kettles,
 Saucepans, &c.

Italian Irons,
 Knitting Needles,
 Knives, Dinner,
 —— Pocket,
 Leather of all kinds,
 Locks of all kinds,
 Nails of all kinds,
 Oakum,
 Plaster of Paris,
 Pickles, Mixed,
 Raisins,
 Rice,
 Rhubarb,
 Redwood,
 Rotten Stone,
 Resin,
 Slates in variety,
 Sugars, viz.—
 Moist,
 Loaf,
 Candy and Barley,

Molasses,
 Magnesia,
 Manna.
 Nutmeg,
 Oils, viz.—
 Boiled,
 Raw,
 Sperm,
 Castor,
 Ointment,
 Paints, viz.—
 White,
 Black,

Green,
 Red, &c.
 Pitch,
 Pepper, viz.
 Cayenne,
 Black,
 White,
 Plasters, viz.
 Blistering,
 Adhesive,
 Diachylon,
 Cantharides,

Salt,
 Saltpetre,
 Senna,
 Shumac,
 Spermaceti,
 Spirits of Hartshorn,
 Spirits of Turpentine,
 Sulphur,
 Tar,
 Teas, viz.

Bohea,
 Congou,
 Hyson,
 Treacle,
 Turmerie,
 Umber,
 Varnish,
 Vinegar, best London,
 Whiting, &c.
 Barley, Scotch,
 —— Pearl,

Biscuits,
 Coffee,
 Flour, American,
 Flour, Sligo,
 Split Peas,
 Bath Brick,
 Blacking,
 Blue Stone.
 —— Button,
 Candles,
 Congreve Matches,
 Soap,
 Soda,
 Starch,
 Mustard,
 Tobacco of all kinds,
 Tobacco Pipes,
 Servant's Friend,
 Account Books,
 Children's Books,

India Rubber,
 Ink,
 Lead Pencils,
 Sealing Wax,
 Writing Paper,
 Wafers,
 Reaping Hooks,
 Ropes, New and Old,
 Sandpaper,
 Shoes,
 Shoeheels,
 Shoehairs,
 Shovels and Spades,
 Shot,
 Spouting,
 Timber, Spars, &c.
 Wheelbarrows, &c.
 Allspice,
 Alum,
 Arrow Root,
 Bitter Aloes,
 Brimstone,
 Camphor,
 Carraway seeds,
 Cassia Liquere,
 Catsup,
 Cinnamon,
 Cloves,
 Comfits,
 Copperas,
 Cream of Tartar,
 Epsom Salts,
 Fuller's Earth,
 Fustic,
 Ginger,
 Glue,
 Indigo,
 Madder,
 Lozenges, viz.—
 Peppermint,
 Cinnamon,
 Liquorice,
 Logwood,
 Blacklead,
 Lampblack,
 Lint,
 Meal,
 Woollen and Drapery Goods,
 Rugs,
 Quilts,
 Sheets,
 Drawers,
 Flannels,

Calicos, Plain and Printed,	Laces,	Cottons,
Moleskins,	Ribbons,	Buttons,
Fustians,	Hats,	Twist,
Cords,	Caps,	Sewing Silk,
Cambray,	Pilot Cloths,	Spools,
Checks,	Waistcoatings,	Pipings.
Shirting,	Stocks,	Stay Laces,
Merinoes,	Unions,	Scissors,
Orleans Cloth,	Cravats,	Thimbles, Knives, &c.
Jeans,	Bodkins,	
Handkerchiefs,	Tapes,	—
Muslins,	Threads,	WILLIAM JAMES,
Shawls,	Pins and Needles,	Agent.

It may be here stated, that previously to the shop being established, there was neither hardware nor crockery to be seen in the cabins, but now these things have become quite common. The increased purchase of oats at Bunbeg store is also very considerable; and it will appear so when it is taken into account that the inhabitants of this district were never in the habit of selling their grain, but made it, and all they could procure besides, into poteen. The first year (1839) that grain was purchased, £479 9s. 6½d. was paid for oats at the store, and for the year 1844 the amount brought in was upwards of £1100.

The next important step taken was to endeavour to obviate the old Rundle system by placing each tenant on his own farm, preparatory to which every landholder on the estate was served with "*notice to quit*." A surveyor was employed and maps were drawn: after six months had elapsed a commencement was made upon one of the townlands. The tenants were all assembled, and although they advanced innumerable objections, peaceably consented to allow the new allotment to be made. It having been, at the time, most fully explained and guaranteed that each tenant should have a just proportion of the townland, according to his rent; and that all bargains made previously should be strictly investigated and arranged, so that none should, as far as it was possible, suffer by the change.

For this purpose they were allowed to choose and appoint a committee of themselves to accompany the agent and surveyor, and assist in laying out the new farm.

After the townland was all divided by these persons, the tenants were allowed as many days as was thought necessary, in order that they might look over the new farms, before they cast lots for them, or were placed on them: and whenever a reasonable objection was made, the divisions were reconsidered and altered accordingly.

It took about three years to accomplish the divisions, as upwards of twenty thousand acres had to be thus arranged and distributed. Altogether it was a

difficult task, and much thwarted by the people, as they naturally did not like that their old ways should be disturbed or interfered with, nor were they disposed, as yet, to abandon the Rundale system. They did not seem to have a taste for simple, plain-dealing, or that matters should be put straight and made easy of apprehension. The greater part of the tenants had to remove their houses (formerly in small clusters), to their new farms. This, though troublesome to them, was not a very expensive affair; as the custom on such occasions, is for the person who has the work to be done, to hire a fiddler, upon which *engagement* all the neighbours joyously assemble, and carry, in an incredibly short time, the stones and timber upon their backs to the new site: men, women, and children alternately dancing and working while daylight lasts, at the termination of which they adjourn to some dwelling where they finish the night, often prolonging the dance to dawn of day, and with little other *entertainment* but that which a fiddler or two affords.

The opposition on the part of the people to the new system was vexatious and harrassing, though with the following exception not violent. It was thought advisable, at the very commencement, that a few ten acre farms should be fenced in on the waste land, with a hope of inducing the tenants to remove there from other parts of the estate, where they were too crowded. But nothing would tempt them to make the fences, though they were offered to be well paid for doing so. They imagined, that by persevering in this way, they would in the end *tire out* Lord G. Hill, prevent the divisions from being occupied, and thus defeat altogether the new plans! It was only by employing a fearless wanderer that the ditching could be commenced at all, and when he was engaged at the work the people endeavoured to frighten him away by throwing sods at him, but he was as resolute as his employers intended him to be, and their attempt so far failed. After he had been at work about a week, and had made some progress in the fence, the wheelwright returning home one night met a person on the road, who told him that as many men had gone over to the new ditch as would soon *settle* it! He immediately ran to the police barracks, and got two of the men to go with him, to reconnoitre what was going on. The night was so dark that when they arrived at the scene of action, they could not guess how many persons they had to contend with, but they heard spades busily at work. "Up and at them" was the word; and never was *ditch* more gallantly stormed. The trio resolutely charged! the *trenches* were instantly abandoned, and each assailant had his prisoner! The gang were fairly taken by surprise, not knowing what force *they* had to cope with, and probably concluding that they were "surrounded," wisely determined to run away.

The wheelwright, a large and powerful man, was the only one of the three

who held his prisoner firmly, and never uttered a single word until he had safely lodged him in the barracks; and not a particle of dress was left on the prisoner, except his cravat and shirtcollar, from the struggles he had made to escape. The agent being a magistrate, attended at the police barracks next day, and with great difficulty persuaded the prisoner to give up the names of all concerned in the outrage, and to swear informations against them. This alarmed them so much, that they agreed not only to repair the damage they had done, but also to make the fences required. After this interruption, the divisions of the townlands were settled without any further opposition.

The benefit to the tenants was so very evident on that part of the estate where the Rundale system had been abolished, that those on that part of the property where it was still in force became pressing, and even annoying, to have *their* land divided in like manner; some of them even *pleading* with the agent, that as they had paid their rent, they considered they had as good a right to have farms cut out for them, as those who already enjoyed the advantage.

The pleasure the people feel in assembling and chatting together, made them consider the removal of the houses from the clusters or hamlets in which they were generally built, to the separate farms, a great grievance, and some even were persuaded that these *lonely dwellings* would entail expense upon them, as the following story will show:—The agent having observed to a tenant that one of these settlers appeared to be doing much better since he had removed from the village, as he could now attend more closely to his farm instead of idling and gossiping with his neighbours, was told that he was much mistaken, and that the man *could not stand it very long* on account of the expense, as he was obliged to *keep a servant maid just to talk to his wife*.

Wherever the *mountains* were taken from the people, enough of grazing was given to them for their own cattle. But *in every case*, where any of the *arable* land, or a part of their new divisions was required by Lord G. Hill, *the full amount of tenant-right* was given for it, to the tenant from whom it was taken, and it was allowed to be valued by two of the neighbours, which being done, the purchase money was *forthwith paid*.

The dividing of the land, in this wild and remote district, would never have been accomplished without serious commotion, had not the people felt fully satisfied that there was every disposition *to keep faith with them*, and to give them the utmost *fair play*. Their complaints, grievances, and objections were all patiently listened to, respected, investigated, and if well-founded, redressed. Some of these were *upwards of twenty years standing*, where

bullies, associated with a strong faction, had usurped possession of land. In one instance, a tenant having complained to his landlord, about thirty years since, that his neighbour was unjustly keeping part of his land from him, *for which he was paying rent*, the landlord accordingly came to the ground, in order to inquire into and arrange the matter, when his tenant actually took him by the heels, dragged him over the land, and threatened to drown him in a bog-hole ! The landlord begged his life, and when the ruffian let go his hold of him, went away, and never after returned. This dispute remained unsettled when Lord G. Hill purchased the property, and was one of those grievances redressed on being represented and substantiated.

When these new arrangements were in some degree organized, premiums were offered for the encouragement of industry, as it was hoped that they would have a cheering and stimulating effect upon the tenantry, giving money gratuitously being as much as possible avoided. A list of premiums was therefore printed and circulated ; they were offered for improvements in agriculture, including draining and fencing, to be done in accordance with the plans of the agriculturist ; also for neat cabins with chimnies (walls being plastered and white-washed inside and outside, and manure heaps removed a reasonable distance), for bedding and bed clothes, crops (particularly *green* crops), improved breed of cattle and pigs, woollens, stockings, butter, &c.

The first year *not a single individual* could be induced to compete for the premiums, the people thinking it all a *hoax*, and that it was "only an attempt to *humbug* them !" being convinced in their minds that no gentleman would be *so great a fool* as to give his money merely to benefit others ; no doubt they considered themselves very *knowing* in not being *taken in*.

In 1840, the tenants observing that any promise made to them was strictly fulfilled, acquired confidence, and some thought they might, at all events, *try* the thing. That year, therefore, there were thirty-six competitors for the premiums, which amounted to £40 1s. 6d. and were so fairly awarded by the judges, that they caused general satisfaction.

In 1841 the competitors were forty in number, and the sum given £47 2s. 6d.

In 1842 they were increased to eighty-four, being more than double the number of the preceding year ; the amount of premiums being £49 5s.

In 1843 the candidates were two hundred and fifty, and the amount of money £69 12s. 6d.

In 1844 the number of competitors were two hundred and thirty-nine, and the amount of premiums £60.

Much assistance has been received by his Lordship from the liberal grants made to him, for the last three years, by the London Irish Peasantry

Improvement Society, enabling him to continue a system of premiums, which appear to have had so beneficial an effect.

As the general progress can in no way be more authentically, as well as concisely, displayed, than by quoting the reports, which gentlemen, who acted as judges at annual exhibitions, kindly put together for Lord G. Hill's satisfaction; the following passages from them are selected for this purpose.—The Report for the year 1843, after a prefatory and complimentary observation, proceeds—

“When we call to our recollection the state in which this district of country was, within a few years back, almost in a state of nature, uncultivated and neglected, we cannot but congratulate his Lordship, his tenants, and the country at large, at the rapid and progressive improvements which have been made, and which have already so materially changed the appearance of the country.

“We have found a considerable extent of new ground, reclaimed from bog and mountain, bearing good crops of oats and potatoes, and in many places, the tenants already attempting the cultivation of green crops, by raising turnips, the value of which, as it becomes more generally known, will, no doubt, induce numbers of others to follow their example.

“We have to express our satisfaction at the evident improvement in the mode of reclaiming and cultivating the boggy and mountain lands, by draining and spade husbandry, and at the judicious manner in which, under the guidance of his Lordship's agriculturist, the exertions of the people are directed, and their time and labour turned to the best account.

“We are also happy to find so much attention given to the home manufacture of woollens, the quality of the cloth of various kinds, and the flannel, stockings,* &c., exhibited being most creditable. This branch of industry is, we conceive, particularly valuable, as it gives that employment to the females for which they are peculiarly fitted, and enables them to contribute, in no small degree, to the health and comfort of their families, affording cheap and warm clothing, and inculcating a spirit of exertion among them.

“In nothing, however, have we had such pleasure, as in the marked improvement in the dwelling and office houses of the tenants, knowing what difficulties old habits and prejudices present to such changes. Until lately the people were crowded together in miserable villages, where want of cleanliness and the impure exhalations of dungpits, close to their dwelling-houses, generated disease and misery. Now we behold in all directions neat and

* The best of the stockings and socks are bought up by Lord G. Hill, and sent for sale to Messrs. Hawes & Ottley, 40, 41, Poultry, London, and to Messrs. Smyth & Son, Abbey-street, Dublin.

comfortable cottages, attracting the eye by their well-thatched roofs and white-washed walls, giving an aspect of life, health, and cheerfulness: nor were we disappointed upon a closer inspection; we found that the interior of the houses fully realized the expectations raised by their exterior appearance, clean, orderly, and well ventilated rooms, comfortable and suitable beds and bedsteads, with a supply of bedclothing and furniture equal at least to the wants of the inmates, and in many instances showing a taste in the arrangement for which we were quite unprepared.

“Those various improvements we consider, in a great measure, attributable to the division of the lands into separate farms, and placing each tenant’s house upon his own ground, one of the great advantages of which is, enabling them to place their dwellings, offices, and manure heaps in the most convenient situations for comfort and cleanliness; advantages of which, it is but justice to the tenants to say, they have fully availed themselves.

“It was peculiarly gratifying to us to witness the respectable appearance and orderly demeanour of the crowds of persons assembled upon this occasion, and the gratitude displayed in the looks and manner, even more than by the expressions of the successful candidates, when after the dinner* provided for them by his Lordship; and his agent had announced the decision of the judges; they approached his Lordship, and received from his hands the amount of the prizes respectively awarded them.

“In concluding our Report, we cannot avoid noticing the great benefit which his Lordship has conferred upon this extensive district by the establishments at Bunbeg, where all the articles required for the consumption of the country are imported, and sold at a moderate rate, and a market provided for the purchase and export of its redundant produce.

“His excellent, comfortable, and well managed hotel, now affords to travellers an opportunity of visiting this hitherto neglected and almost unknown, but interesting and beautiful portion of the County Donegal, and of which we have no doubt, numbers will avail themselves.

D. LATOUCHE.

W. RAMSAY,

HUGH M’FADDEN, P.P.

JOHN LAW.

H. LETHEM.

JOHN SPROULE.

F. MANSFIELD.”

The second report quoted from is used only so far as it supplies a notice of things omitted in, or posterior to, the former.

* The poor people could not believe that they would be permitted to dine with his Lordship! When assembled outside the house where the dinner was provided, seeing the surveyor—whom they knew—at the door, they anxiously inquired of him, “if it was really true that they were to go in?”

"It is worthy of remark, that so substantial are those rewards, that in several instances they have many times exceeded the annual amount of rent paid by the successful candidates.

"We are much astonished at the great extent of fencing and draining on the estate; all having been made since September, 1843; the tenants now beginning to feel the benefit of such improvements.

"We suppose it would not be believed that in this district, until very lately, fences were altogether unknown, as this part of the country was held *in common*; and as to draining, or removing stones out of the land by trenching, such ideas never entered their heads.

"We wish also to observe, that his Lordship having imported some of the West-Highland bulls and heifers, will thereby, in a short time improve the breed of cattle, as they seem so peculiarly adapted to this climate: and though it may be wandering from the limits of an *agricultural report*—we cannot omit noticing the many additional buildings that have been erected during the last year.

"We find a convenient session-house, an airy and commodious school-house, a dispensary,* and several pretty and substantial cottages, all in a state of forwardness. But we were chiefly delighted with the new mill, the machinery of which is constructed on the most improved principles, and erected by a young man, a native of Ramelton.

"We visited the old and only mill of the district, which was in operation even last season; it is in a romantic and retired situation, no doubt it answered *its* purpose all the better on that account, but it is a most miserable specimen of its kind, and very forcibly *demonstrates* the vast difference between *things as they are, and things as they were.*

"The new mill was worked on the premium day, and it was not a little amusing to witness the astonishment of the people at the incomprehensible results it produced.

"Previously to the distribution of premiums, the anxious party of candidates, to the amount of 235, with his Lordship and a few friends, sat down to a substantial cold dinner, after which the rewards were distributed; and the only incident which occurred to damp the general joy was, that his Lordship, according to his standing rule,† felt himself under the necessity of with-

* The establishment of a Dispensary, and consequent introduction into the district of a fully qualified medical gentleman, has been effected since Lord G. Hill became the proprietor.

† RULE.—"The following exceptions shall preclude tenants from receiving any of the foregoing premiums:—Convicted of making, or being concerned in making, illicit malt or whiskey; convicted of being concerned in any breach of the public peace; not paying up their rent, without the necessity of using compulsory measures to induce them to do so."

holding hard-won premiums from one poor woman, because her husband had been convicted of a misdemeanour, and imprisoned for the offence.

“And we deem it very deserving of note here, as indicative of his Lordship’s determination to suppress the ruinous trade of illicit distillation, that one of the tenants who had been convicted of whiskey making, was excluded from the dinner, and from the list of competitors for the premiums ; and this must have been the more vexatious, as the man would have otherwise received one of the first premiums.

“We are certain we only express the feelings of every person who witnessed or took part in the proceedings, when we say, that we enjoyed a high gratification ; and that we look forward with great pleasure and interest, to being afforded the privilege of attending similar meetings again.

WILLIAM RAMSAY.

VALENTINE P. GRIFFITH.

THOMAS PATTERSON.

ROBERT PATTERSON.

JOHN MASTERS.

WILLIAM HAGERTY,

GEORGE COOKE.

GEORGE F. BRADY.

JAMES HAWES.”

Gweedore, 10th October, 1844.

An observation at the close of the former report will prepare the reader for some notice of Lord G. Hill’s HOTEL.

It was built about the year 1842, and is placed on the road side, midway between Dunlewey and the sea, in a picturesque situation. To a stranger visiting this hotel, its site and vicinity will seem still wild enough. The small portion of the adjacent hill and moors, brought under cultivation, amounting to between fifteen and twenty acres, makes the wilderness of the surrounding country more striking ; the labour and expense in trenching, draining, and fencing the farm, have been very great. Some persons seeing these works in progress, were much more disposed to pity those who undertook such a task, than to hope, that it could be, in any degree successful. A few years ago the place was little better than a desert ; no road, no hut, no boat on the river.

The force of this statement will be increased tenfold, by quoting the remark of Lieutenant P——d, R.N. He says, in the visitor’s book—

“Not far from the spot on which this neat and comfortable hotel now stands, and less than thirteen years from the present date (July, 1843), the writer of these lines, and four other persons were travelling from Dunlewey to Bunbeg, when they were benighted, and nearly lost. There was no inn then, nor even a road of any kind in this direction ; the night was dark, their only guide a star, and through forgetting to make allowance for its

nothing, as it declined, they had deviated from their proper course (being without chart or compass) and had nearly foundered in a *shaskin* (a shaking bog). What a charming contrast now presents itself to the view."

Another extract from the same source confirms the above:—

"GWEEDORE.

"There was a time in boyhood's years,
Which I remember well
When first I visited Gweedore,
I dreamt not of *hotel*.

I lay upon a green rush bed,
Bestrewn upon the floor;
I never thought to've laid my head,
On *pillow*, at Gweedore.

I've lain upon the self-same bed,
With master, man, and maid,
And in the same apartment where
The cows and sheep were laid.

One cov'ring did us all, you see—
('Tis true, 'twas summer weather,)

And as we had no other choice,
We all lay snug together.

Our food was not the finest sort,
But *then* we knew no better:
Praties at head, at foot, at sides,
Without or milk or butter.

But thank my stars, I've lived so long,
A happier time to see,
A noble landlord here among,
His happy hills with me.

He's built a home for travellers,
For you—for me—for all!

He's set a bright example,
To those of Donegal. R.M."

The plan of the hotel is well adapted to an exposed situation. The traveller on arriving drives into a court yard at the back of the house: in one corner is the entrance door, sheltered by a long porch; by this arrangement the three sitting rooms, which occupy the front of the house, are free from draughts, and have the benefit of all the sunshine. There are six bed-rooms. The whole of the establishment (including the stables) is fitted up, and furnished with every attention to comfort and convenience.

The river Claudy, in its course from the Dunlewey Lakes to the sea, flows at the foot of the Hotel Garden, where a boat is provided for the use of visitors who may wish to go to the Lake by water, or amuse themselves fishing. A post car also is kept, and mountain ponies can be obtained to assist ramblers in their excursions.

The school-house, which has already been mentioned, consists of a comfortable dwelling for the teacher, with a lofty school-room, 25 feet by 15. The females, adults as well as children, who are permitted to attend this school, are taught needle-work. This sort of instruction is very much required; the women of the district knowing little or nothing themselves of sewing, and are obliged to get their gowns made by *tailors*. A competent master and mistress are maintained by Lord G. Hill.

A resident Minister of the Church of England, performs Divine Service morning and evening each Lord's day in the school-room, which is licensed

for the purpose ; and the children who attend on these occasions, receive also further religious instruction.

On the front of the school-house there is an inscription in Irish, of which the following is a copy :—

Tea3a1r3 an leanb ran τ-rl3e añ an
cójn dó mteact: 43rr anran bjar ré
40rta n3 tpej3fj0 ré j. Seanná30r
c4jb. xxii. n 6.

Above which, and equally conspicuous, is a clock, and at the opposite end a bell, which is to be rung at stated hours every day, thus the people of this remote district may be led into regular and punctual habits as to time.

It has been attempted in the first part of this brief sketch, to describe the danger that occasionally attended a passage over the Gweedore river, though the traveller was conducted to its banks by a fine Board of Works road.

In the year 1840, a bridge was built over the river at the expense of the County, but the road to Dungloe, which had been laid out by the Board of Works, from the bridge, was not made, therefore the communication along the coast is still imperfect, disjointed, and most uncertain. The consequence is, that travellers, as well as the inhabitants, are as yet grievously obstructed by the ever-varying and perilous barrier, which an extensive and circuitous strand opposes generally *twice a day*, as at high water the communication is entirely stopped, there being no other road.*

Several miles of bridle-roads have been carried through the property by Lord G. Hill, which have been instrumental in enabling the tenants to reclaim land that hitherto was inaccessible.

This statement of "Facts from Gweedore" would be incomplete, without observing that Lord G. Hill feels much gratified at the manner in which his intentions and efforts for the improvement of his tenantry have been received by them. To the untiring zeal, judgment, ability, and kindness invariably shown by his agent, Mr. Forster, in promoting and carrying out all his plans and wishes, his Lordship attributes, in a great measure, the successful results of his attempts to ameliorate the condition of the people of Gweedore.

The great advantage arising from the temperate habits into which they have now been led, is so obvious, that it is earnestly to be wished they may be lasting. This change has led to a revolution even in their festivities. For-

* This difficulty was happily overcome, and a road made at the head of the strand in 1847.

merly it was the custom at weddings, for each friend or relative of the bride or bridegroom, to *deposit* a bottle of whiskey. But now, happily, it is otherwise; a *shilling loaf* is the wholesome substitute, which undergoes a sort of distillation, or rather *brewing*, as follows ;—“ Loaves of white bread are *cut down*, put into a large black metal pot, full of water, and *seasoned*—*ad libitum* with ginger, carraway seeds, sugar, and *plenty* of pepper, all boiled together.” This beverage enjoys various appellations, such as *lemonade*, hot jugs, sweet water, &c. The invention is simple, and long may they prize it. Ever may it contribute to social and sober enjoyment, and soon may they be induced to confine their distillations and their desires, to this *rectified* species of harmless poteen, which will exempt them from pains, penalties, and police, and—

“LEAVE NO STING BEHIND.”

APPENDIX.

[I.]

PREMIUMS.

The following PREMIUMS will be given in September, by Lord G. HILL, to his Tenants at Gweedore, in the barony of Kilmacrenan.

1—For the best, neatest, and cleanest Cottage, built on one of the old Farms since September, 1843 ... £3 0 0	9—For the best Heifer Calf ... £1 0 0
Do. second best ... 2 0 0	Do. second best ... 0 10 0
Do. third best ... 1 10 0	Do. third best ... 0 5 0
Do. fourth best ... 1 0 0	
2—For the neatest and cleanest of the Premium Cottages ... 1 10 0	10—For the largest and best heap of Compost ... 1 10 0
Do. second best ... 1 0 0	Do. second best ... 1 0 0
Do. third best ... 0 15 0	Do. third best ... 0 15 0
Do. fourth best ... 0 10 0	Do. fourth best ... 0 10 0
3—For the best and largest Crop of Turnips .. 1 10 0	11—For the best Colt from his Lordship's Horse, the General ... 0 10 0
Do. second best ... 0 10 0	
Do. third best ... 0 5 0	12—For the best Filly from his Lordship's Horse, the General ... 0 10 0
4—For the greatest quantity of Land prepared with gravel for cropping the ensuing season ... 2 0 0	13—For the greatest quantity of ground Trenched 20 inches deep ... 1 0 0
Do. second best ... 1 0 0	Do. second best ... 0 10 0
Do. third best ... 0 15 0	Do. third best ... 0 5 0
Do. fourth best ... 0 10 0	14—For the Farm having the best Fences all round it ... 2 0 0
5—For the best drained Farm ... 1 0 0	Do. second best ... 1 0 0
Do. second best ... 0 15 0	Do. third best ... 0 15 0
Do. third best ... 0 10 0	Do. fourth best ... 0 10 0
Do. fourth best ... 0 5 0	15—For a tillage Farm held by a farmer which with its Farm House, Offices, and Fences shall be best cultivated, and in best order ... 2 0 0
6—For the best Breeding Sow ... 1 0 0	
Do. second best ... 0 10 0	16—For the neatest and best kept labourer's Cottage with a Plot of Ground, attached to it not exceeding half an acre English ... 1 0 0
7—For the best Boar Pig ... 1 0 0	
Do. second best ... 0 10 0	
8—For the best Bull Calf ... 1 0 0	
Do. second best ... 0 10 0	
Do. third best ... 0 5 0	

PREMIUMS.

THE FOLLOWING PREMIUMS

WILL BE GIVEN TO LORD GEORGE HILL'S TENANTS

BY THE

IRISH PEASANTRY IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY FOR LONDON.

1—For the best, neatest, and cleanest Cottage, built on one of the new Farms since September, 1843 ... £3 0 0	6—For the best half-dozen pair of long Stockings made on his Lordship's Estate ... £0 10 0
Do. second best ... 2 0 0	Do. second best ... 0 6 0
Do. third best ... 1 10 0	Do. third best ... 0 3 6
Do. fourth best ... 1 0 0	Do. fourth best ... 0 2 6
2—For the best Pig-stye, built since September, 1843 ... 0 10 0	7—For the best Firkin or Crock of Butter made on his Lord- ship's Estate ... 1 0 0
Do. second best ... 0 5 0	Do. second best ... 0 10 0
3—For the neatest and best Stable and Cow-house, built since September, 1843 ... 1 0 0	Do. third best ... 0 5 0
Do. second best ... 0 10 0	8—For the best Web of Cloth of 14 yards, made on his Lord- ship's Estate ... 0 15 0
Do. third best ... 0 5 0	Do. second best ... 0 10 0
4—For the cleanest and best bed and bedding that has not received a Premium ... 1 0 0	Do. third best ... 0 5 0
Do. second best ... 0 10 0	9—For the best Web of White Flannel of 14 yards, made on his Lordship's Estate ... 0 15 0
Do. third best ... 0 7 6	Do. second best ... 0 10 0
5—For the best half-dozen pair of Socks made on his Lord- ship's Estate ... 0 6 0	Do. third best ... 0 5 0
Do. second best ... 0 4 0	10—For the best Web of Red Flan- nel of 14 yards, made on his Lordship's Estate ... 0 15 0
Do. third best ... 0 3 0	Do. second best ... 0 10 0
Do. fourth best ... 0 2 6	Do. third best ... 0 5 0

All Tenants wishing to contend for any of the above Premiums, must give notice in writing to Mr. Forster, to be lodged with Mr. Robertson, the Agriculturist, 14 days at least before the 1st of September; no claim can or will otherwise be attended to. All Tenants intending to claim for Fences, Draining, heaps of Compost, sowing Turnips, and other improvements on the Estate, must do them under the direction and instruction of Mr. Robertson.

The Tenant claiming a Cottage Premium, must have it finished as follows:—The walls, inside and out, must be plastered and white-washed, and regular funnels for all the fire-places; the front of the Cottage to be paved and gravelled; all Manure to be removed a reasonable distance from the front of the house; to have an out house for the cattle, which are, on no account, to be kept inside of the dwelling-house.

The following exceptions shall preclude the Tenants from receiving any of the foregoing Premiums:—Convicted of making, or being concerned in making, Illicit Malt or Whiskey; convicted of being concerned in any breach of the Public Peace; not paying up his Rent without the necessity of using compulsory measures to induce him to do so.

[II.]

PREMIUMS GIVEN IN APRIL

BY

LORD GEORGE HILL, TO HIS TENANTS AT GWEEDORE.

To the Tenant in JAMES M'BRIDE'S DISTRICT, that makes the best and greatest number of Perches of Fences, of either Stone or Sod, between the 12th November, 1844, and the 1st April, 1845 ... £2 0 0

To the Second best ... £1 10 0
To the Third best ... 1 0 0
To the Fourth best ... 0 15 0

To the Tenant that will trench the greatest quantity of Ground, 20 inches deep, between the 12th November, 1844, and the 1st April, 1845 ... 2 0 0

To the Second best ... £1 10 0
To the Third best ... 1 0 0
To the Fourth best ... 0 15 0

To the Tenant in ARTHUR DOUGHERTY'S DISTRICT, that makes the best and greatest number of Perches of Fences, of either Stone or Sod, between the 12th November, 1844, and the 1st November, 1845 ... 2 0 0

To the Second best ... £1 10 0
To the Third best ... 1 0 0
To the Fourth best ... 0 15 0

To the Tenant that will trench the greatest quantity of Ground, 20 inches deep, between the 12th November, 1844, and the 1st April, 1845 ... 2 0 0

To the Second best ... £1 10 0
To the Third best ... 1 0 0
To the Fourth best ... 0 15 0

To the Tenant in HUGH SWEENY'S DISTRICT, that makes the best and greatest number of Perches of Fences, of either Stone or Sod, between the 12th November, 1844, and the 1st April, 1845 ... 2 0 0

To the Second best ... £1 10 0
To the Third best ... 1 0 0
To the Fourth best ... 0 15 0

To the Tenant that will trench the greatest quantity of Ground, 20 inches deep, between the 12th November, 1844, and the 1st April, 1845 ... 2 0 0

To the Second best ... £1 10 0
To the Third best ... 1 0 0
To the Fourth best ... 0 15 0

To the Tenant in JOHN O'DONNELL'S DISTRICT, that will trench the greatest quantity of Ground, 20 inches deep, between the 12th November, 1844, and the 1st April, 1845 ... 2 0 0

To the Second best ... £1 10 0
To the Third best ... 1 0 0
To the Fourth best ... 0 15 0

All Tenants, wishing to contend for any of the above, must strictly adhere to the following Rules—

All stone fences to be built as dry walls, and all sod fences to be built of sods alone; and all fences along the roads, to be built with the fence on the road and the trench in the field.

The trenching not to be less than 20 inches deep, and if gravel is not turned up with the trenching, it must be got, and a good quantity put on the ground.

Notice, in writing, must be given to Mr. ROBERTSON, the Agriculturist, that he may attend and examine the work, and direct how it is to be done.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,

That all the Premium Cottages will be frequently visited, between the 12th of November, 1844, and the 12th of September, 1845; and those kept in the best and cleanest condition, during that period, will receive Premiums.

GWEEDORE, 12th November, 1844.

[III.]

TO THE TENANTS OF LORD GEORGE HILL,
IN GWEE DORE.

THE LANDS on this ESTATE having been newly divided and made into regular FARMS, the TENANTS will be better able to follow an improved mode of AGRICULTURE, such as growing TURNIPS and CLOVER ; and each man being now independent of his neighbour, can Lime, Fence, and Drain his Land, so as to profit by his own Industry.

Lord GEORGE expects that great improvements will now be made upon the Farms, and a better system followed. With a view to this, his Lordship has appointed Mr. ROBERTSON, an experienced Agriculturist, to advise his Tenants as to the best way of managing the Land ; and he trusts that they will have the good sense to follow his instructions.

I have received his Lordship's directions to give notice, that any more sub-dividing of the Farms will not be allowed, and that any Tenant selling, dividing, or exchanging without leave, will be severely punished ; and those that buy without leave, will not be taken as Tenants.

In case any Tenant should wish to sell or exchange, he is desired to come to BUNBEG Office, and enter his Name and Townland, the quantity of Land, and to whom he proposes to sell, in a book to be kept by Mr. Robertson. I shall, upon seeing the entry of the Name, enquire into the case, always with a view of enlarging the adjoining Farms, at the same time making due and just allowance to the out-going Tenant for his improvements on the Farm, and reporting the whole proceeding to his Lordship.

His Lordship has seen, with real pleasure, the improvements made in some of the Houses, and the exertions of many of the tenants ; and his Lordship desires me to direct their attention to the cleanliness and arrangement of the Furniture and Inside of their Houses, which must depend very much on their Wives and Daughters ; and also upon having proper Chimnies and Dry Floors, the Windows made to open freely, and daily to let in the fresh air.

No New Houses can be built without leave. Attention to the above Regulations will, in a very short time, believe me, work an alteration upon all the inhabitants on his Lordship's Estate, highly advantageous, as well as creditable, both to the Landlord and his Tenantry.

ADDRESS.

I shall now conclude, by calling the particular attention of the Bailiffs to the instructions they have so repeatedly received, and for the neglect of which no excuse will be taken. I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the good behaviour of the Tenantry, and I beg to offer my sincere good wishes, in his Lordship's name and my own, for their welfare.

FRANCIS FORSTER, *Agent to his Lordship.*

Bunbeg Office, Jan. 1, 1842.

NOTICE TO TENANTS.

As most of the Farms belonging to me in Gweedore are very small at present, it is of great importance that they should not be made *smaller*: but on the contrary, that each Tenant should purchase any small piece of land which may be next to him, to *enlarge* his own Farm.

The Sons and Daughters of the Tenants must try and do for themselves, and if their Parents can give them a cow, or the price of one, they should take a Mountain Farm, or go out to service, or get work elsewhere, if none is to be had near home.

The old plan of dividing the Land amongst the Children of a Family has made many Beggars; this will, therefore, no longer be allowed.

No Land can now be Divided, nor Bought, nor Sold, whether by *Will*, or under any pretence: nor can any House be built or Enlarged without permission being first given for the same by Mr. FORSTER, through the District Bailiff.

Fences must now be built upon all Lock Spittings, and every one remove his House to his own Land.

This will prevent, in some measure, the many disputes caused by Trespass.

Any Tenant breaking through these Rules will be Ejected from his Farm, and be put out of the Estate.

The Bailiffs have strict orders to see that these regulations are enforced; and it is hoped that the Tenants will see that these Rules are made, like the new division of the Land, for *their good*.

By their sincere Friend and Landlord,

GEORGE A. HILL.

Gweedore, 1844.

[IV.]

THOUGHTS ON EMIGRATION,

SUGGESTED BY THE FOREGOING FACTS.

Assist us at home,
And we ne'er need roam.

THE "Facts from Gweedore" have been published from a desire to show that as so many thousands of acres still remain uncultivated in Ireland, the population cannot be said to be too great for the country, but that it merely requires to be more equally distributed over its surface, and that to effect this, capital, superintendence, and nursing, are indispensable.

If this be so, "and population is riches," why should Emigration be encouraged by the State, there being room enough for the people and for their improvement at home, and when so much larger an amount of human happiness might be diffused through Ireland, if a portion of public patronage were bestowed upon the promotion and encouragement of elementary instruction, thereby conducting life, vigor, and hope into those channels which private benevolence can scarcely be expected to originate and keep going. The evils of Emigration are great, personally and politically; personally—it inflicts expatriation, a punishment without crime; politically—it is a sort of national suicide, needlessly, wilfully, recklessly, discarding a worthy, intelligent, enterprising class. Instead, therefore, of "Ireland for the Irish," let us have "The Irish for Ireland." Is it too much to say, or too much to expect, that if the Peasantry of Ireland were assisted at home, Emigration, with its attendant evils, dangers, and heart-rending separations, would, to a very great extent, be uncalled for; while, at the same time, a fair and remunerative return for capital expended, might be calculated upon; to which may be added, the unspeakable satisfaction to be derived from an humble consciousness, that our time, thoughts, talents, influence, means, were devoted to the noble effort of raising the character, increasing and perpetuating the comforts of the kind-hearted beings whom Divine Providence has made to be mainly dependant upon our guardianship and mercy.

Emigration never can be looked upon as a remedy while it involves in its consequences the utter and irreparable disruption of every blessed tie en-

twined around the human heart ! Is it straining the Scriptures to add, in the words of the Prophet, “ Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him : but weep sore for him that goeth away ; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.” The mournful results of Emigration cannot be more graphically represented than by quoting the sentiments of that feeling Poet, who was himself an ardent Irishman. In exposing and reprobating the evil in question, he says—

“ Good Heaven ! what sorrows gloom’d that parting day,
That call’d them from their native walks away ;
When the poor exiles’ ev’ry pleasure past,
Hung round the bow’rs, and fondly looked their last :
And shudd’ring still to face the distant deep,
Return’d and wept, and still return’d to weep.”

GOLDSMITH.

One quotation more shall end these remarks. It is taken from a work entitled “ The Perils of the Nation, published in 1843 ; the extract contains much encouragement and consolation—

“ It is true the magnitude of the existing evil naturally discourages individual effort ; ‘ What I can do,’ says the benevolent man, ‘ is but a drop in the bucket : it will effect no perceptible deduction from the enormous amount of suffering.’ This is, however, a fallacious mode of reasoning. The bucket is filled with such drops ; and even if it be so, that a noble example fails to win public attention, or to induce general imitation, still be it remembered, that as individuals, the poor suffer and perish : as individuals must both they and we stand before the judgment seat of God : and no man will be called to account for more than his own personal share, by commission or omission, in the general transaction against the poor : and that on him, who considers the poor and needy, the blessing is pronounced without reference to the narrow space within which his actual means may confine his compassionate deeds. To him who for the sake of Christ, shows substantial kindness to a poor member of the Christian body, the acknowledgment is sure, ‘ Forasmuch as thou didst it unto one of the least of these my brethren, thou didst it unto me.’ The servant, who having only two talents, faithfully devotes those two to the service of God—and what service more acceptable to God, than a tender care for his poor ?—is certain to receive, no less than his fellow-servant, who has in like manner traded with ten—the testimony that forms his public introduction into the glories of eternity ; ‘ Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ ”—(Page 166 and 167.)

A MAP OF The Principal Leading Roads in the North West District of **DONEGAL**

By Robert Montgomery,
1845.

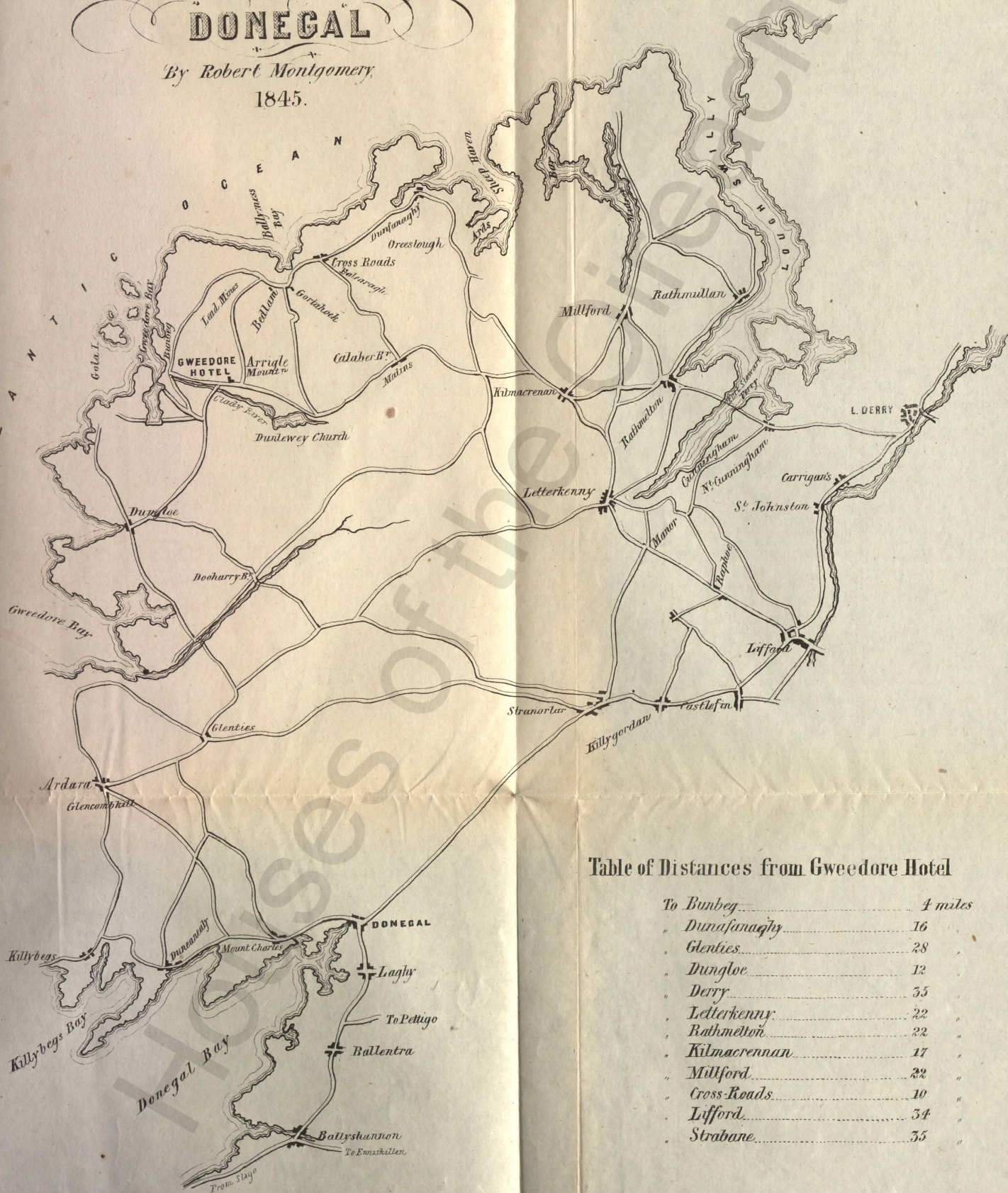


Table of Distances from Gweedore Hotel

To Bunbeg.....	4 miles
" Dunasinaaghy.....	16
" Glenties.....	28
" Dungloe.....	12
" Derry.....	35
" Letterkenny.....	22
" Rathmellon.....	22
" Kilmacrennan.....	17
" Millford.....	22
" Cross Roads.....	10
" Lifford.....	34
" Strabane.....	35

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

“FACTS FROM GWEEDORE.”

[*Opinions of the Work.*]

* * * Cure for those evils lay with the next generation : but Lord G. Hill's book afforded the most signal proof that even in the short space of seven years, the efforts of a resident Landlord might be crowned with complete success,—*Mr. Ward's speech, House of Commons, April 17, 1845.*

* * * See the account of Lord George Hill's efforts, which were no less amusing than extraordinary.—*Mr. V. Smith's speech, April 17th, 1845.*

I need only remind you of the improvements effected in Ireland by Lord George Hill. Is it true that only in the year 1838 that nobleman purchased some 18,000 or 20,000 acres of land in the wildest part of Ireland : that he said to himself, “I will perform my duty as a Landlord : I will persevere against all difficulties : I will not be deterred by any opposition I may encounter from my tenants or neighbours, but I will persevere in my attempt to improve the condition of the people? Is it true that that noble lord had succeeded in his attempt? Has he not succeeded without the advantage of those prejudices which ancient hereditary descent might have created in his favour—for he purchased the property as a stranger—in conciliating the good-will of the people? Is it true that by perseverance, by forbearance, by deference in the first instance perhaps to the ignorance, or prejudices of the people, by kindly feeling, and by evincing determination to effect improvements, he has effected the revolution he contemplated in the country (hear, hear); and has not this been done consistently with the promotion of his own interests? has not the value of his property improved? Have not his rentals increased? (hear). I must say I think that gentleman, by the example he has set, has entitled himself to be regarded as a public benefactor to his country. (hear, hear). I honor and respect the motives which have led him to adopt this course, and I envy him the gratifying reflections of his own conscience (Col. Conolly here made his observation to the Right Hon. Bart.) My Hon. and gallant friend says that my statement is strictly correct. (hear and cheers). My own impression is that though much may be done by good legislation, by which the foundation at least of social improvement may be laid, yet that the immediate practical improvement of Ireland will be most efficaciously promoted by a combination of the Landlords, resident and absentee, to follow the example of Lord G. Hill to improve their property, and to increase its productiveness, while at the same time they conciliate the affections and goodwill of those who stand towards them in the relation of tenants.—*Sir R. Peel's speech, House of Commons, April 27, 1846.*

* * * That his outlay will be more than repaid, even in a pecuniary way.* * * However this may be, Heaven smiles upon his western Oasis of Gweedore; and we are right glad that Lord G. Hill has permitted this little book to be published. It is truly a voice crying from the Wilderness.—“*The Nation*,” April 25th, 1846.

* * * It is a description of the marvels which have been wrought by Lord G. A. Hill, on an estate purchased by him seven years ago; the conclusions to be drawn from it are of immense importance, as shewing what may be done, and what ought to be done for Ireland.—“*Leeds Intelligencer*.”

* * * A community most helpless and desperate in condition and circumstances, has been by these means reclaimed, and smiling content and the rewards of industry are everywhere to be seen.—*Times' Commissioner's Letter, page 128.*

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“HINTS TO DONEGAL TOURISTS”

WITH

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