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BRITAIN'S  
DANGER, AND SAFETY.

BY THE EDITOR

OF

THE INVERNESS HERALD.

BRING AN INQUIRY INTO THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE  
COUNTRY, AND DEVELOPING MEANS FOR THEIR RE-  
MOVAL.

WITH REMARKS

ON THE

HIGHLAND COTTER SYSTEM,  
AND SUGGESTIONS FOR ITS IMPROVEMENT.

BY J. MACKENZIE, M.D.

ALSO,

AN OUTLINE OF THE DUTCH HOME COLONIES,

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## THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE COUNTRY, &c.

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We recently alluded to the external difficulties affecting the country, which the Conservative Government had to contend with on their assumption of office. The violently hostile disposition of the United States and France to Great Britain, the uncalled for War with Afghanistan and the incipient one against a people amounting to two-thirds of the human race—the Chinese—we included and discussed under this head. With respect to the United States, we congratulated the country on the prospect of this subject of disquiet being set at rest by the Government despatching Lord Ashburton for the purpose of bringing the long disputed questions to a close; and in respect to France, we anticipated most favourably, from the fact of having a powerful and united Government at the helm of this vast empire. With respect to the Whig legacies—the expensive wars in Afghanistan and China, we could offer little more than ardent wishes for their speedy and honourable termination. The measures resorted to by the Cabinet to retrieve the financial disorders of their predecessors, and arrest national bankruptcy, received our admiration as well as approval. While many of our contemporaries were either openly barking, or sullenly growling at the alterations in the Tariff, we expressed a decided opinion, that considering the claims of the labouring classes, to a larger participation of the necessaries of life on the one hand, with the claims of agriculturists and their dependents on the other to protection, Sir Robert Peel's Customs bill must, by all impartial men, be considered as near an approach to perfection as could well be devised. And

what has been the result of the Tariff? The lower classes have been enabled to procure salted provisions, and those of an inferior quality at a lower rate than formerly. Immense quantities of corn have been admitted at an 8s duty, and now that the price is likely to fall owing to our abundant harvest coming to hand the scale of import duty will gradually rise, so as just to protect the agriculturist and the labourer. Highland farms which it was prognosticated would be worthless, have within the last few weeks been let for higher sums than they ever before realized, and the prices of salmon and meat of first quality have scarcely been interfered with. The Income Tax, we not only demonstrated as necessary to deliver the country from the embarrassments occasioned by the Whigs, but was, we remarked, an act of the highest patriotism on the part of the Conservatives who devised and effected it, and completely and for ever rebutted the hackneyed charge that wealthy legislators would tax the necessaries of the poor but never touch their own incomes. While we pointed out to the lower classes the self devotion of a Conservative Government, which had gone to the utmost apparent verge of safety, in order to ensure the former a larger participation of the necessaries of life, and had met the urgent necessities of the country, not by imposing fresh taxes upon the poor, but by taxing the wealthy, and, in so doing, especially their own party; we also urged upon our influential and Conservative friends, the duty of cheerful and patriotic co-operation with the party they had placed in power, convinced from long and deep inquiry into the state of the lower classes, that the measures introduced by Sir Robert Peel were absolutely requisite in the existing state of the country. Had this wise course of legislation not been pursued, and which, despite the sophisticated and impudent misrepresentations of the Whig Press, has had a beneficial effect upon the lower and middling

classes, what might have been the consequences of the late riots in the mining and manufacturing districts? It has been remarked of these, that on no former occasion have large masses of people been congregated for riot, who have conducted themselves with such comparative moderation, and with such an evident conviction of the badness of the cause in which they were embarked; an outbreak, which may be attributed almost entirely to the labours of the Anti Corn-law and Chartist "fire brands." In a paper we took the liberty of transmitting to Sir Robert Peel some months before his assumption of office, we expressed our humble conviction, in connection with this subject, that the main danger of the country did not lie in the disaffection of the Chartists; as the judicious disposal of a moderate military force would probably be sufficient to crush half a dozen simultaneous attempts by such parties to revolutionise the country. The results of the last few weeks have justified these anticipations, we must, however, confess that the disturbances have been more numerous and alarming than we expected; happily, however, the leaders of the *movement*, in their efforts to promote a general disturbance during the vacation of Parliament acted prematurely and unwisely "in their generation." A bountiful Providence, as if to counteract the designs of these impious gamblers in the happiness and blood of their less guilty dupes, was pouring forth the riches of an abundant harvest, and thereby employing the rural population, who might, though we trust they would not, had the attempt been made when they were unoccupied in winter, have joined the ranks of the lawless and rebellious.

These observations have naturally brought us to the consideration of the principal internal difficulties of the country, which, though of such a very serious and formidable character, as to make every man shudder who deeply reflects upon them, and earnestly desires the

perpetuity of the peace and prosperity of his country, are nevertheless capable of being averted by timely and energetic measures. Are we then asked what we consider the principal difficulties of the country? We reply—Population, Exceeding the Existing Amount of Employment and the alimentary produce of the country; and the Moral and Social Evils resulting from an Inadequacy of Religious and Educational Opportunities. Go where we may in Britain, these evils, under some, or all of their forms, encounter the political economist. England and Ireland have already sought the assistance of a Poor Law, and Scotland is probably on the point of resorting to a similar and systematic way of providing for her unemployed population. Our present subject is one then, not only of general importance and interest, but also a local one, in which we are deeply interested. The new Poor Law, as it is termed, was an offspring of Whig extraction, and after hundreds of thousands had been spent in erecting union houses and other necessary machinery, their successors could not have destroyed the system without a fearful sacrifice of public money and injury to the rate payers. They have, however, effected as many improvements in details as the system is, perhaps, capable of admitting. The main principle of the new Poor Law is to deter persons from seeking parochial relief—such clauses for instance as the separation of husbands, wives, and children; the not granting out-door relief, &c. Now, were there adequate employment for all who were industriously disposed, these regulations would be desirable: the misfortune however is, that the country was not, and is not, in a state in which the law could or can be applied, without punishing poverty, either by leaving the honest and industrious labourer with his family to pine for the absolute necessaries of life, or else to forfeit his free agency and liberty in an union house, The aged and

infirm are, we believe, as well provided for under the new as under the old system ; but these claims, with those of operatives at occasional periods of distress in manufacturing districts, do not create the chief strain upon the poor law, which is principally occasioned by the agricultural labourers. In Scotland, owing to the simplicity of living, and the mutual assistance afforded by connexions among the lower classes, to which we must add the extensive adoption of emigration which has been resorted to, the distress consequent upon population far exceeding employment, have rarely been exhibited in that painful manner which is so frequent in the South. With these, however, and some similar exceptions, the condition of the labourers of the three kingdoms are alike.

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STATE OF THE LABOURING CLASSES.

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IN our last, we stated, that while the condition of the labouring population of the three kingdoms, was essentially similar, the Scotch, (and we may also add the Irish peasantry,) from the simplicity of their habits and living, possess an advantage over their English fellow-subjects of the same class. As we consider the evils of pauperism of ranker growth in the south, and the proved inadequacy of the Poor-law to meet the wants of the population, our observations will have particular reference to that quarter, but will at the same time apply generally to the north, which is likely ere long to fly for relief to a general Poor Law. The depressed state of the labouring population is too notorious to require any lengthy demonstration, it is, however, a lamentable fact, that while even the mechanic is born

with a prospect, and stimulus of being able to better his condition, by industry, and, at least by means of a small insurance, and club to provide in some measure against the seasons of sickness and old age, the agricultural labourer is not only, generally born a pauper, but if in the main successful through life in obtaining work, yet he has no stimulus—no prospect of being able to bring up his family at his own expense and of providing the necessaries of existence against old age: this, however, is but the bright side of the labourer's condition; in its prevailing features it is more gloomy and unfavourable. The labourer may be said to be born at the expense of the wealthier portions of the community, upon which, he is more or less dependent through the periods of infancy and childhood. At maturity he follows the natural inclination of his species, by uniting himself in marriage. In the south, especially, his partner has even less opportunity of providing her portion of the necessaries of life for their progeny, than the husband has. Thus the hurden upon the wealthier classes is multiplied. It is difficult to fix upon a spot, where many labourers may not be found, who are willing to work if they could find employment, and who would work assiduously, if it held out to them the prospect of ensuring an adequate provision for their families, and against the wants of sickness and old age—the legitimate desire of every human being: instead of this, however, the labourer finds, that he has not only a deficiency of employment, which, if complete, would only procure a present sufficiency of the absolute necessaries of life, but that all hope of bringing up his family with comfort, and making a provision for the future, is hopeless and vain. Destitute of this stimulus of hope, which forms the main spring of human action—imparting industry to the mechanic, diligence to the tradesman, enterprise to the merchant, and perseverance to the higher classes in their various professions and pursuits—is it surprising that the spirit of the labouring population



is crushed under such difficulties. Pinched with poverty, the labourer looks upon himself, his wife, and children, inadequately clothed and fed, and exposed to the inclemency of the weather, with an eye of dissatisfaction and despair, instead of contentment and delight. On seeking parochial relief, he is told, that as he is an able bodied man, no outdoor relief can be granted, but that he is at liberty to enter the Union House. This alternative from demi starvation, however, can only be purchased by breaking up his little home, by foregoing the company of his wife and children. The three constituent parts of the family being separated as if by death, though alive to the miseries of their state, and aware that they purchase a wretched subsistence, at the sacrifice of their freedom, their habits, their homes, "and all that life holds dear." In order, fully to estimate the amount of this sacrifice, we must remember, that the home of the peasant, however humble, possesses charms as well as that of the prince, and, if we place ourselves in imagination in the situation of the former, where is the man that would not run the risk of any enduring privation, rather than enter the abodes of misfortune and despair, knowing, that it is far easier to break up a home, how wretched soever it may be, than to establish a new one on emerging from the Union House.

Turning our attention from the labourer to his family, the prospect assumes a darker and more dreary aspect. Rarely, indeed, do we find under the distressing circumstances alluded to, that regularity, neatness, industry, and a moral and religious tone oppose, to stem the desolating torrent of adversity. Too generally, the home of the peasant resembles its owner—wild, dreary and desolate. The boys exposed to the influence of bad example, soon enter upon a course of petty degradation; they are, perhaps, detected—carried before a local magistrate, who is unwillingly obliged to convict. The father declares his inability to pay even the lowest

penalty, and the boys must go to prison, where frequently they become more initiated in crime, and certainly pass what may be termed the Rubicon of character, seldom, if ever, repassed to moral reformation. The daughters as they grow up in their miserable home of want and unhappiness, find, that there is inadequate employment and comfort for the single, and that the natural desire of becoming wives and mothers cannot be attained with any prospect of avoiding the privations and miseries they experience at home. Is it, therefore, surprising, that such a conviction should have a demoralising effect; that the female, instead of being stimulated in the path of morality, by the expectation of one day becoming the head of a family, should be induced to set a lighter value upon herself, and destitute of prospective hopes, consult only the present. A little reflection, and a limited knowledge of human nature are quite sufficient, in order, to estimate the calamitous tendency induced by the absence of such a moral stimulus as that alluded to. The result of investigations on this subject but too clearly establishes the case. We cannot, on this occasion, discuss the frightful aggravation with which the evil hinted at, abounds in populous cities, where no shelter, assistance, and counsel, are provided for the industrious and youthful female, during the periods of temporary absence of employment. The doctrine preached by Mr Loch and others, against the evils induced by the peasantry marrying before they have a prospect of maintaining the expenses incident to that state, would have some weight could they show, which we maintain they cannot, that, by deferring matrimony to a certain age, say thirty, the generality of labourers would be in a position *then* to enter upon it with a moral certainty of doing so without encumbrance to the middling and higher classes. This not being the case, the ban placed upon matrimony by Mr Loch, as in the case of the Bridgewater tenantry, must have a vicious and immoral tendency.

Demands, however, upon our space oblige us to postpone until our next number, a fuller consideration of the demoralising effects of the destitution of the labouring classes, and the consequent danger of the State from large masses of the population being in this unhappy position.

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DETERIORATION OF THE PEASANTY—DANGER  
OF THE COUNTRY.

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In our last, we alluded to the destitution of the labouring population, and some of the evils resulting to that class and the higher ranks of society, from this unhappy state of things. It will be universally admitted by those who have taken the pains to enquire into the subject, that a great deterioration in the condition of the peasantry has taken place within the last half century throughout the British Isles, but more especially in the South.

The principal cause of this deterioration is, undoubtedly, the immense increase of population, which is alone sufficient to account for the fact: in addition, however, to this, by the enclosure of waste lands, &c., the labourer of the present day has rarely an opportunity of keeping a cow, and of raising food for his family. The wife also, in the South, has become less capable of adding to the income of the family; for while out of door work for females has by no means increased, the domestic employments of spinning and knitting, by which an industrious woman would formerly earn 3s or 4s per week, has been almost entirely superseded by the introduction of machinery and steam power. In addition, however, to the serious loss incurred by a diminution of the peasant's family resources, we consider the moral evils resulting therefrom, as still more disastrous. We behold the husband, though willing to

work, frequently without employment—he has perhaps little or no garden ground—his wife, daughters, and sons, are no longer busied in spinning, knitting, or tending their cow and pig, and being destitute of proper employment, it is no matter of surprise, that the evil fruits induced by idleness should so alarmingly abound and threaten, notwithstanding the religious efforts that are made to deluge society with vice.

That Demoralization should be more or less the result of such a state, is what every person of common reflection would anticipate, and which daily experience too fully confirms. Destitute of a necessary stimulus, and despairing of obtaining by industry the needful comforts of his station, is it surprising that the labourer is overcome with difficulties he cannot control; that his ragged, perhaps squalid family, no longer cheers and animates him; that he quits his miserable home for the society of the beer or dram shop, and with a heart stung by disappointment, and rendered desperate by despair, he then listens with eagerness to the raving of demagogues, who denounce the throne, the Church, and the aristocracy, as the triune cause of all the poor man's trouble? Is it then surprising, that, under such circumstances, the heart and the affections of the British peasant should be perverted; that he should first engage in poaching, or pilfering, and then proceed to more serious offences against society? Happily the first outbreak of the Chartists was begun in a locality where men were receiving good wages, and who, while they would make some little sacrifices to the swaggering notions of revolutionary daring which they had imbibed, they would, nevertheless, upon receiving a little martial punishment and coercion, consult the better part of valour. In the late riots also, in the mining and manufacturing districts, the unionists were not altogether in a state of destitution. The rural population were happily employed with the labour

afforded by the harvest ; but, had the disturbances, however, occurred when men were goaded on by absolute want throughout the country, who could estimate the calamities which such an outbreak would have caused. Here then is the principal civil danger which now prevails. It is not so much, that portions of the press are issuing, week by week and day by day, the most treasonable appeals, and exciting the worst passions in human nature ; it is not, that this heaven works the excitable population of mining and manufacturing districts, to the highest possible pitch ; these are comparatively minor sources of alarm, inasmuch, as we have before stated, the judicious disposal of an adequate military force, would perhaps be sufficient to repress a dozen simultaneous attempts at revolution ; but the great danger to the country exists in the fact, that each manufacturing or mining nucleus of rebellion, is surrounded with a population likely to be rendered desperate by despair, and who would be led, by distress and the absence of high moral determent, to join in a scramble, if but once fairly began. The rural population might not at first act in unison with the tutored malcontents before alluded to, but experience derived from the riots in the southern counties of England, ought to convince the most sceptical, of the rapidity with which even an agricultural population may be brought to act in unison. A desultory and covert warfare upon the property and lives of the higher classes, carried on simultaneously throughout the country, by those who think they have nothing to lose but their lives, would, however, be perhaps more calamitous and destructive, than even and organized and concentrated warfare.

We are not disposed to be alarmists, but we should be wanting in public duty, did we not state, that a somewhat similar result is what we have long dreaded, and

to which we are assuredly, to all human appearance approaching. It might, and we trust under the worst aspect of affairs would be repressed, and not extend to the peaceful glens of the Highlands, but something more than wishes are required to prevent the calamity alluded to, and in our next, we propose discussing what we believe to be the necessary means to that desirable end.

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#### BRITAIN'S MEANS OF OBTAINING GENERAL PROSPERITY.

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WHILE portions of the higher and middling classes are in the enjoyment of as easy circumstances as their predecessors of like rank or occupation, yet, generally, there is a complaint among most ranks of society, that the acquisition of wealth, or a competency is more difficult now than it used to be.

Our recent examination of the state of the labouring population, has demonstrated that they have not only no opportunity, as a class, of providing against the necessities of sickness and old age, but in a multitude of instances are in a state of the most distressing pauperism. Not only does the destitution of the labouring classes bring heavy burdens upon the trading, as well as higher ones, but the shopkeepers are suffering and have suffered severely, from the labourers being unable, on account of their deteriorated circumstances, to purchase those articles of them, which they were wont. This is a circumstance which has been gradually augmenting; but in England, immediately after the introduction of the new Poor Law, out-door relief being withdrawn from the paupers, the few shillings they used to spend with the shop-keepers were very sensibly missed. Thus, the deterioration of the peas

antry affects not only indirectly as well as directly the country, shop-keepers and the artizans, but the merchant, the ship-owner, and, ultimately, many of the wealthier classes themselves. Volumes might be written in detailing the adverse condition of the labouring population, and the evils and civil danger resulting from it, enough has, however, been advanced on those points. The great desideratum is a remedy for the national malady.

The Chartist cries out, Uproot the existing foundation of society and commence *de novo*; and the Radical quack, somewhat more moderate, but scarcely a whit more sensible, proposes his old antidote of Free Trade and a further Reform of Parliament. But are the difficulties under which the country is confessedly suffering, capable of removal or of a material amelioration? This is a question imperatively forcing itself upon the attention of the political economist, and one upon which so little of a satisfactory nature has hitherto been written, that the proprietors of the *Atlas* newspaper have offered £100 for the best essay on the causes of the existing distress, and the means of its removal. Our appreciation of the domestic dangers and difficulties of the country, and our conviction of the existence of an efficient remedy for them are such, that although the offer of the *Atlas* was some temptation to postpone the discussion of the important subject we had commenced, until January next, when the award is to be made, we have felt it our duty at once to employ the powerful engine at our command, by distinctly expressing our very humble, but at the same time firm conviction, THAT THE DANGER AND DIFFICULTIES, UNDER WHICH BRITAIN IS NOW SUFFERING, MAY NOT ONLY BE GREATLY AMELIORATED, BUT PRACTICALLY REMOVED.

The opinions upon which this conviction is founded are not the crude ideas of a day, but the result of some

years of diligent and extensive investigation, and established upon satisfactory data; the general principles and details being as applicable to the Highlands as to the southern part of England. If, then, we can demonstrate a remedy for national distress in the aggregate, and a plan, in detail, whereby our Scottish and Highland proprietors may not only avoid the grievous burden of a general Poor Law, but may, and that without any revolution in the character of their estates, at the same time that they benefit the peasantry, augment their own revenues, we think the *Herald* will, so far, merit the encomiums which are wont to be bestowed upon the press, and derive ourselves the high satisfaction of having done our duty.

The two great causes of our national distress, we have stated to be, Population Exceeding the Existing Amount of Employment, and the Alimentary Produce of the Country. In other words, there are in Britain, more persons than can find remunerating employment, and the food produced in the country is less than the population requires.

Our remedy for this, is as simple as it is a practicable one, and may be comprised in two words—EMIGRATION and HOME COLONIZATION. Population being too crowded in one part of the empire naturally suggests that men do what Abraham and Lot found necessary, even in their primitive times, viz., go where they had more facilities of living without coming into collision with one another; and, secondly, a non-sufficiency of the food produced in the country to afford the necessaries of life to all the inhabitants, points out the necessity of producing more food.

We maintain, moreover, that Great Britain abundantly affords the requisite facilities of Colonial territory and of domestic land, for effecting these great objects. Emigration and Home Colonization have been coupled together, as the means of delivering the



country from its embarrassments. We believe, that either the one or the other, vigorously and systematically pursued, is of itself capable, under the Divine blessing, of effecting the object we have ascribed to both unitedly; but, however palpable and easy the remedy we advocate, we are not sufficiently sanguine to expect, that either the one or the other would be put into such immediate operation as not to derive extensive assistance from their mutual co-operation. Viewed in operative combination, immediate, as well as effectual, relief to the country would be the result. On the subject of Emigration, we need not dwell at great length, as its advantages, when undertaken with proper care and forethought, have been no where more conspicuous than in the Highlands of Scotland, and no where can a population be found more adapted from hardiness of constitution, and simplicity of habits, for emigrating with every human prospect of success.

*Believing, as we do, that the British Isles, if brought under proper cultivation, would support, in abundance and comfort, the whole of its existing population; we, at the same time, having a view to the practical, as well as theoretical, know, that not only would commerce be benefitted by a more extensive adoption of Transmarine Colonization, but that there are hundreds and thousands of enterprising spirits among our rural population, who would not be satisfied with the prospect of providing a present competency, and against the periods of old age, which we have stated to be the legitimate desire of every human being.*

To such as these, and others in various trades and professions, emigration affords a field for their enterprize which we cannot promise them at home. The road is rougher, but the reward is, humanly speaking, as certain and proportionably great. Australia, the Cape, and especially the British North American possessions, present a field for emigration, which, at present, & for centuries

to come, is capable of beneficially receiving the surplus population of Great Britain, which, while it would relieve the mother country of its incubus of unemployed labour, would, by the remunerating employment of that labour in Colonial pursuits, stimulate home manufactures and commerce by creating a British mart in the Colonies for the manufactures of the mother country, which would render us independent of the fickle tariffs of our competing neighbours. When we consider the contiguity of the Canadas, and the natural adaptation of the Highland peasantry for securing their successful employment in them, we are by no means surprised, that they have obtained a decided preference in the estimation of our northern population.

The great evil of colonization has hitherto been such a dispersion of the emigrants, as to prevent their enjoying the benefits of society, and the natural tendency has thereby been adverse to civilization. The object should be to concentrate an Emigrant population in those districts presenting agricultural facilities, combined, perhaps, with capability of natural defence, and instead of emigrants being dispersed far and wide, they ought, wherever natural obstacles of an insurmountable nature do not interpose, to be located, so as to have the residences of the people within a circuit of a mile or two; the town or village thus forming the nucleus, and their lands extending as the radii of a circle. By this means the advantages derived by society from a division of labour, educational and religious opportunities, and mutual co-operation would be secured, in connection with agricultural pursuits, and a capability of defence—the best deterrent from aggression.

Although we by no means consider the benefit of Emigration adequately impressed upon the unemployed, or the unremunerated in the country, or the facilities of thereby relieving the British Isles made available,

considering the absolute pressure that exists; we acknowledge with pleasure, that the Colonial Passengers' Bill, introduced and carried by our Conservative Government last session, and having for its object the promotion of Emigration, by ensuring additional comforts to the emigrants, is an important step in the right direction. The determination of the Land Company in Canada to procure the settlement of a population, by reducing the price of their locations to the necessities, we may say, of the applicants, is a wise and beneficial measure, to which we look for valuable results. It may be pleasant to live and die on the identical spot where our fathers lived, but the educated mind, with an opportunity before it of fulfilling the natural objects of its creation, need feel solitary in no situation of life, and, in an age of steam and newspapers, can, though a denizen of "the bush," hold intercourse with its fellow-minds in every clime, and, if filled with the principles of philanthropy, feels itself a patriot, not of a mere scanty district, but of all mankind.

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#### BRITAIN'S MEANS OF ACQUIRING GENERAL PROSPERITY.—HOME COLONIZATION.

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IN our last, we stated it to be our deliberate conviction that Emigration and Home Colonization, if energetically pursued, would be sufficient to relieve Great Britain of the distress among the labouring and lower classes, which has long been augmenting. While we are confident of the sufficiency of the above remedy, we are quite aware that the improvement and extension of the British fisheries would be a valuable auxiliary, and that religion and education are necessary to make men happy, whether in affluence or poverty. On

these points we propose, on a future occasion, to offer a few observations, and having briefly discussed the general advantages of Emigration, we now proceed to the consideration of Home Colonization.

The success attending the enclosure and cultivation of waste lands early attracted our attention, and suggested to us the facility of multiplying the alimentary produce of the country to an immense extent. The painful development of distress among the peasantry in the south, and the moral and physical evils which it engendered, induced us to employ our pen in advocating a remedy at once obvious and practicable. An idea of the natural resources of the British Isles may be gathered from the following authenticated tables:—

	Cultivated Acres.	Uncultivated wastes capable of improvement.	Barren and unprofitable.
England.....	25,632,000	3,454,000	3,256,400
Wales.....	3,117,000	530,000	1,105,000
Scotland.....	5,265,000	5,950,000	8,523,930
Ireland.....	12,525,280	4,500,000	2,416,664
British Isles	383,690	166,000	569,469
Total	46,922,970	14,600,000	15,871,463

From the above tables, it will be perceived that fourteen millions of acres (within a few millions of the gross population of Great Britain) though capable of improvement, are lying waste, while thousands of persons are pinched by want of the first necessaries of life, which these now waste lands would abundantly supply. We were aware that much of the land said to be in cultivation was cultivated very improperly, and that the waste lands in Great Britain, susceptible of improvement, amounted to 14,000 acres, but it was not until three

or four years ago, that we obtained an adequate conception of the value of land when allotted to the poor for their occupation. We were indebted about the period alluded to, to Mrs Davies Gilbert, widow of the late President of the Royal Society, for a variety of facts and particulars which she obligingly communicated, respecting the allotment of small patches of land on her estate at Eastbourne in Sussex.

It may be necessary to give some of our northern readers a description of the geological features of the part of Sussex alluded to, lest their prevailing ideas of the rich soil and fine climate of the south should lead them to draw conclusions as far from the truth as those of the countryman who, having heard that there was a Silver Street in London, expected to find the former paved with blocks of that costly material. — Eastbourne lies at the south eastern base of the bold Promontory, well-known to mariners as Beachy head, which rises very abruptly to a high table land, about 600 feet above the sea, and extends for the most part in the form of bleak downs to a considerable distance westerly along the coast, the cliff being composed of strata of chalk and flint, which prevail so much in the vicinity, that, even where lands are cultivated, generally speaking, there is only a slight crust of brown vegetable mould, frequently not a spit deep, above the first stratum of flints with which the lands, when harrowed, seem so thickly covered that there appears scarcely room for a crop to co-exist.

We have alluded to the lands on the slope and at the base of the table land referred to; the summit of which, scorched in summer with the burning rays of the sun, and blighted during much of the other half of the year with storms from all quarters, naturally yields only a scanty herbage for flocks of South Down sheep. Such then are the prevailing features of the locality, and a more unfavourable one for experiments in agriculture

we could not have selected on the southern shores of England; which may be also gathered from the fact of a farm of 200 acres of this land being offered to be let by the proprietor for 4s or 5s an acre. The pauperism and destitution of the labouring classes, which we have already described, no where exhibited itself in a more aggravated aspect than in some of the parishes of Sussex, which, during the agricultural disturbances, were the scenes of frequent cases of incendiarism. Union houses as capacious as palaces, but regarded by the peasantry as prisons, are erected in every district of the county, besides which, multitudes have Emigrated to the United States, and to the British possessions.

The destitution of the labourer drew down ruin upon the shopkeeper, not only by the former failing to purchase the articles the latter trafficked in, but also by the heavy burden occasioned by the poor laws, which grievously oppress and cripple, if not crush, the farmer. On the estate alluded to, a farmer was unable, at the low rent of 5s per acre, to pay his way, and was obliged to give up a large holding. The pressure of these evils, and an addiction to rural economy, appear to have led the proprietress to whom we have alluded, to adopt an allotment system. One fact is said to be worth a hundred arguments; and however obvious the utility of bringing the waste lands into cultivation, and simple the requisite process, the advocacy of the subject is much assisted by being enabled to point to what has been already in a few instances done, as a proof of that which may be as easily accomplished on a scale commensurate with the wants of the lower classes.

Multitudes of industrious labourers being out of employ, and suffering for want of the provisions which the waste lands are capable of producing, the great desiderata of the political economist was to know, in the

aggregate, the *minimum quantity of land* requisite to support a family, and the *minimum capital* such a home colonist would require. Experience derived from the allotments at Eastbourne has supplied satisfactory data on these points.

We shall now proceed to lay before our readers the result of the first experiment made upon the allotment system at Eastbourne, which has been so successful, that land, composing a large farm, which did not remunerate the farmer at 4s or 5s per acre, is now successfully cultivated at a rent of four times that amount, by labourers who would otherwise have been paupers and burdens on the parish. Such has been the success of the system that the owner of the property referred to has now upwards of 400 allotments thus occupied, and in no instance have the labourers applied for parochial relief.

Some months ago, in a letter addressed by us to Sir Robert Peel, which appeared in the *Herald*, we adverted to the success and excellence of the system pursued at Eastbourne. We were since much pleased to find that Dr M'Kenzie of Kinellan, from an ardent desire to benefit the industrious poor, in a recent visit to the south, went expressly to Eastbourne, for the purpose of investigating the circumstances and plans there in operation. Convinced that the opinion of a gentleman so extensively versed in the theory and practice of agriculture, would be particularly valuable to our readers, we wrote to request the favour of his communicating, through the medium of our columns, the results of his enquiries into the allotment system pursued at Eastbourne. Dr Mackenzie having obligingly responded to this request, and his information being more recent than our own, we shall at once lay his valuable Letter before our readers, in which the details of the system appear.

## THE HIGHLAND COTTER SYSTEM.

BY J. MACKENZIE, M.D.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE INVERNESS HERALD.

SIR—At your request, I venture to trespass on the patience of your readers, and endeavour to draw the attention of our Highland proprietors and their factors to the advantages offered by spade husbandry, under the medium allotment system, over the present Highland cotter system. This may, probably, require more space in your valuable paper than I can expect to have allotted to me in one number, and I shall divide the subject, so as if possible, not to try either your patience or that of your readers.

Passing by the small allotment system, as comparatively unknown and unrequired as yet, in our northern Counties, I will examine first the general state of our Cotter population, and I will take one of that class, not as in my eye on this estate or that estate, but as common on all estates that have come under my inspection.

I find him then occupying, say 10 acres of arable land, and 2 of what he calls his "pasture," and which consists with few exceptions, of moorish ground, mostly under heath, broom, furze, or juniper, with, here and there interspersed, a few blades of grass. His house has, probably, been built by his grandfather, and, as he has hardly done any thing to it, except, perhaps, give it a new roof and thatch, or put a buttress to support the clay walls where they threatened to give way, there is nothing to admire either in the architecture or internal arrangement; on the contrary, it too frequently happens that the whole house consists simply of an outer room or kitchen, and an inner bed-room, where father, mother, sons and daughters, of all ages, sleep together in one indiscriminate mass, so as totally to destroy every feeling of decency or propriety. In front of the door is a hole dug out of the soil, into which every thing in the shape of dung and filth is cast, and the very smell of which, added to the want of proper sized windows to show the dirt in the inside of the house, is sufficient to account for the great disregard of cleanliness so frequently met



with among our peasantry. He possesses also a small barn, a byre, and stable, and his stock probably consists of a horse, a cow, a withered calf, a pig and some poultry, with a cart, plough, harrow, spade, and pick, hoe, and a few barn and byre implements. He believes firmly, that his land is very inferior to that of the neighbouring large farm, (from which it may be separated only by a dyke),—and to all proposals of adopting a better system of husbandry, his reply is, “Such might answer on good land, but on his poor land it is impossible.” Even in the vicinity of excellent farming, it is quite common to meet with the following rotation on cotter land, oats, oats or barley, potatoes with one or two drills of turnips, barley, grass, and again two white crops, &c. The land is not ploughed till just before seed time, and the plough, drawn by the cotter’s starved horse, and a neighbour’s, lent for the day, in equally low condition, seldom turns up above 3 inches of soil; indeed, owing to the land never having been trenched, there is little more to turn over. The grass has of course, been bad, and the half starved cow and horse having spent three-fourths of their time on the “pasture” land, or trespassing in the neighbouring plantations, little or no droppings have fallen on the soil to enrich it. The ploughing then being completed about the time when the large farmer had by has finished all his sowing, the cotter commences to sow, but so little is he aware of the value of early sowing, that even then, a job, or wedding, or market, or funeral casting up, will invariably tempt him away to lose some more valuable time. The consequence is, that while the neighbouring large fields are covered over with a luxuriant growth, the dry spring weather sets in, and permanently stints his crop, which never covers the ground, and threshes out even worse than it looks,—nothing being more common than the saying, “I sowed more oats in that field than I threshed out of it. I never saw such bad land—how is a person to pay rent with such land as this?”

When the oats are removed, nothing is done to the land till close upon the time for sowing a second white crop, which, of course, is worse than the first, and the third year sees the potatoes planted late upon a hastily turned up furrow, perfectly matted with weeds, which he either cannot spare time

or expense to clear off. The drills are formed about a foot to 18 inches apart, and the splits set within three or four inches of each other, and if you observe that the large farmer has 24 to 30 inches between each drill and 12 to 18 inches between each split, the answer is sure to be "that may do in his fine land, but our poor land requires quite different treatment." Of course, when the large farmer gets 30 to 40 bolls of potatoes per acre, the cotter rarely gets 10, and the great bulk of these of the size of walnuts, owing to the sets being too thickly planted. He commonly keeps down the blade of the couch grass and weeds in his potatoes, by the hoe, but the roots are as plenty as ever under the surface, and show strongly with the next barley crop, so much so, that when asking a cotter why he did not sow grass seed with his barley, I have often been told it was not needed, as plenty grass grew naturally with it. As to turnips, I might almost say that none are grown by the cotter, for the two or three drills grown, are hardly worth counting. In one estate in my eye, I do not think 100 cotters of average size of lots, could show five acres of turnips were they all clubbed together, and yet, on no estate in Scotland can better farming be seen than in the immediate vicinity of these lots, where the usual proportion of land under turnips yearly is about 8-50ths of the whole farm, so that on a lot of 10 acres, instead of a few drills, there should be at least  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres under turnips every year, if properly farmed. I am frequently told that "there is no use in sowing turnips, as the hares and rabbits eat them all up." And so they do, because there is just enough sown to keep a supply to the hares and rabbits in the neighbourhood, whereas, if each 10 acre cotter had  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres under turnips, no person would ever complain of loss from hares and rabbits, unless they became far more abundant than they are ever likely to be in any estate in these northern counties.

We have now followed the cotter from ploughing up his ley till his grass or weeds are ready for hay or pasture, & his crop ready to cut. Whether he makes hay or pastures his land, the crop is always a starvation one for his poor unfortunate animals, who never know what it is to get a bellyful, and are, consequently, always in some thieving scrape or other, whether on the neighbouring lot, or farm, or in the proprietor's plantations.

Harvest being over, he commences to thresh out his grain and send it to the mill. The result is invariably, a wretched return. While the active and skilful farmer threshes out, perhaps, 10 to 12 returns, the cotter frequently is content with 2, often indeed, no more than he sowed, and is forced to be satisfied with having gained almost as much straw as will keep the horse and cow alive till spring. From such return, good or bad, he is to find meal for his family, oats for his horse, seed for next crop, and rent for the landlord which at, say 15s an acre—£7 10. He seldom sows less than one qr. of oats, and six bushels barley to the acre, which at two returns, will, perhaps, thresh out sixteen quarters in all. His family will consume all the potatoes grown, and eight bolls of meal of 158 lbs. each, which will account for at least seven quarters of oats, and as the horse cannot be allowed to die, or the land be without seed, the landlord might whistle for his rent were it not for the other string to the cotter's bow, viz., labour from home.

I have no hesitation in asserting that in our northern counties not one of a thousand cotters, such as I have been describing, pays his rent and supports his family, from his ten acre lot of land, and I am sure that factors or proprietors who collect their own rents are well acquainted with a few of the following excuses for the £7 10s. not being forth coming at rent day; viz.—  
 “ Please sir, I had such a miserable crop last year, that I was obliged to buy hay for my horse, or he would have died,” or “ I bought some corn and straw at ——— roup to keep the cow and horse alive through the winter, and the bill is not paid yet, and the lawyers are like to destroy me for it,” or, “ I have been sickly for a long time and could not go from home for work” or, “ it defied me to get work in the country, and how in the world can a man be expected to pay his rent when there is no work going on any where, but I hope to get work soon, and as sure as death I'll leave every shilling in my employer's hands till the rent be paid up, if you'll not put me to expenses now.”

In fact, the difficulty of getting rent from such a tenantry is so notorious, that many persons who wish to buy land in our northern counties, ask first if there are many cotters upon it, and if the answer be yes, never think again of the estate, while others, (and

I am happy to say the number is very small), think no more of clearing their properties of these unfortunate, neglected, poor and ignorant, yet warm-hearted creatures, than if they were a drove of sheep ordered off to Falkirk Market.

I believe that I have neither over nor understated the condition of the above class of tenantry, although I have omitted many items of mismanagement, both in respect of their cattle, land and dung, &c., &c.; it comes next to be enquired what is to be done to alter such a wretched state of matters.

One counsellor advises the whole of this class to be got rid of, and thrust into towns and villages, or transported to Canada, or New South Wales, or New Zealand, where there is room for them; as in Great Britain, there is not room for the population, while their small lots being joined together, would make proper sized farms, and give a handsome well-paid rental. One of the most eminent philanthropists and agriculturists that Great Britain has ever produced—Mr Blacker of Armagh—some years ago, advised, as a more rational plan, that proprietors should enquire first whether these unfortunate ignorant creatures are not capable of improvement and instruction, and he has carried this plan, through the medium of agriculturists whose time is wholly devoted to instructing the cotters, into such effect on large estates under his charge in the north of Ireland, that it would raise a blush on the cheeks of our "rooting out" proprietors, were they to visit the estates where his system has been pursued, and contrast them with those where the good old system of neglecting the people (except on rent day) has been the rule. Nor has the system been confined to estates under Mr B.'s charge, for he has had the satisfaction of supplying considerably above 100 proprietors in different parts of Ireland and even in England, with agricultural teachers for their cotter tenantry, and with the most gratifying results, to which I can speak from personal inspection. This system has now been in full operation for, I believe, about ten years in Ireland, and it is high time that Highland proprietors would enquire into its success, if only so far as profit and loss is concerned, irrespective of the incalculable benefit to the poor cotter tenant. And if Paddy can be taught by

precept and example, is it to be believed that Donald will be less willing to receive instruction? In Ireland, the agriculturist says to a cottier who holds his lands only from year to year, "If you please, Pat, did you ever see turnips growing in a field?" "None of your Scotch blarney," says Pat, "I know they'll grow in a garden if its warm, but my father had a cousin who tried them in a field, and surely one trial served him." "Well, but, (says the agriculturist, speaking as if to the proprietor of the estate,) perhaps you would allow me show you a new way of growing them in the fields;" and, after some coaxing, Pat consents, as a great favour, to try the thing. Of course he is charmed with the result, and needs no more lectures on the advantage of green crops. Now, in this country, our cottiers would not hesitate for a moment to take the advice of a properly qualified agriculturist; and, if such advice were given and taken, I need hardly say, that landlords and factors would soon cease to dread the result of "collection-day." In fact, much of the cottier land in this country, is naturally as good as that of the neighbouring large farms, although it has been injured by neglect and injudicious management, & a very few years would soon restore it to the capability of giving adequate returns of every kind of crop.

I have met with some persons, who were convinced that there was nothing like example to teach the cottier class, and who were satisfied, if they would not thus learn to crop their land like the large farmer at their elbow, there was no use in trying them with an agriculturist. Others have imagined, if rules were laid down for them in leases, with restrictions as to cropping, or books published and circulated, giving the best and most concise directions for managing their land, that this would work a charm. While others, declared that they were a stupid, obstinate, ungrateful set, who were incapable of learning or doing any good whatever, and were all a set of thieves and scoundrels, whom a man was a fool if he allowed to remain on his property.

I dissent entirely from all these opinions. Mr Blacker, some years ago, published an invaluable small work, entitled "An Essay on the Improvement to be made on the cultivation of small farms," and

imagined that it would work wonders among his cotters, since he clearly proved that their system was ruinous to themselves and their landlord, whilst by his system they were sure to thrive. But, finding that all his proofs were thrown away, he then fortunately fell on the plan of appointing a well-qualified person to advise and reason with the tenantry. A Highland proprietor lately published "Hints for the use of Highland Tenants and Cottagers," in the full expectation that everything was stated in his work so clearly and forcibly as to convince the most stupid or lazy, and force him to change his system; I doubt much, however, if one single individual has altered his course a hairbreadth on account of the good advice contained in that excellent work.

In fact there is no use trying to reason in print with any one of this class of tenants. Print what you will, the answer or the conviction is, that "all this is very well if I had good land, but with my miserable land there is no use attempting any other system than the one I pursue." Indeed, not a few have told me, when pointing out what a pity it was that they had not put a drain here or there, ploughed their land sooner, or weeded their land better, and that if they had done so and so they would have had very different crops. "Well, no man alive can do more for the miserable land than I do; on that piece of potatoes I put — loads of the best dung ever I had, and see what a poor crop there is;" forgetting entirely that the land perhaps had been a bog all winter for want of draining, that it was then a mass of weeds, and that nine-tenths of the dung he laid on, consisted of till or clay dug from a deep pit or bank, and mixed with a little sapless cow or horse dung, owing to his animals having no proper soft food to convert into liquid manure.

But, indeed, it is needless saying more of what they fail in, and what they want. It must be obvious to every one acquainted with agriculture, who will enquire into the mismanagement of their lands.

*The great error of the cotter system in this part of Scotland, consists in their having too much land.*

There can be no more positive axiom than that *a tenant who is to live by his land, should have only as much as he can cultivate with the spade, or as*

much as will employ one or more pairs of horses. This will not, I believe, admit of denial. There can be no medium quantity without great loss; either from the necessity of keeping too much strength for the quantity of land, or from the land being neglected for want of proper strength to cultivate it. The mass of our cotter population are unable to cultivate the land they possess by the spade, and their lots are too small to support horses. It is therefore necessary in order to bring them to a healthy independent state, and enable them not only to live well by their land, but also to pay their rents punctually and without difficulty,—

1st, To reduce the size of their lots to four or five imperial acres each or thereby, that being the size which a man and his family, if industrious, can properly cultivate with the spade alone without aid from a horse, but with occasional aid from his cows in carting out dung and carting home crop.

2dly. To appoint a well educated agriculturist, whose whole time will be devoted to instructing a certain number of cotters in the most approved methods of growing all kinds of produce, taking note of the more industrious for rewards, and the idle and those who will not take advice, for removal.

I am quite aware that there are difficulties to be overcome before this change can be fully accomplished on any estate, but I think they are by no means so serious on close examination as they appear at a distance.

Let us take one of our Highland estates as an example to begin upon, and say there are 100 cotter tenants upon it in 5 different townships of 20 each. Township A contains 20 lots of different sizes; No. 1 being 15 acres; No. 2, 4 acres, and so on. The tenant of No. 1 will make a grievous lamentation at the certain ruin impending over him should ten of his acres be cut off, and either thrown waste, or given to other two new tenants, or added to the neighbouring lots which have less than the proper number of acres. Argue as you like, you never will convince him that 5 acres of average land can support a family and pay £1 of rent per acre. He will perhaps tell you, as a cotter told me a few weeks ago, when urging the advantage of spade husbandry, that "his neighbour, ———, (who had only about 2 acres of land, and kept no horse, but borrowed

one occasionally), dug part of his land every year, and never had so good a crop on what he dug as what was ploughed; therefore, it was clear, spade husbandry would never answer in our country, whatever it might do in Holland or elsewhere." There is therefore no use in arguing with him. He is ignorant and cannot comprehend your arguments, besides that, feeling how little interest in his prosperity, hitherto has been taken by his landlord or factor, provided he paid his rent, he is almost excuseable in suspecting that there is some conspiracy on foot to screw more out of him without any commensurate advantage to himself. It is, therefore, necessary to act for him, and turn a deaf ear to all his remonstrances—in fact, to force him to benefit himself. He must be restricted to the given number of acres, and obliged to labour these entirely with the spade. This will appear to him a Herculean task, but it is so only in appearance. Others find it perfectly easy when properly timed; and what man has done man can do.

It may be that No. 1, however, holds a lease, and thus prevents your benefiting him against his inclination. This is, of course, an obstacle, but I believe not insurmountable. From some experience in the management of Highland properties, I can say that in this class few, one year with another, are prepared with their rent on the term day, and I would have no hesitation in letting such cotters know, that if they were resolved to adhere to one part of their lease, they must expect to adhere to it in every point, and that the smallest infraction would immediately be taken advantage of, in order to remove them from the estate, which their ignorance and prejudice hindered from being improved. It is possible that this may be thought harsh by many, but I feel that it is the harshness of a parent correcting his child for his future benefit.

I believe I may now leave the cotter in the hands of the agriculturist, for I do not conceive it necessary that I should here fully enter upon the details of spade husbandry. These can easily be learned elsewhere, and are as simple as need be, the keystone of the whole system being feeding the cows during the whole year round in the house, collecting the whole liquid



manure in proper vessels, and applying it immediately to the land, wherever it is most required.

I may, however, give a few specimens of what has been done, and is now doing, in different parts of Britain by the spade. In August last, I had the honour of visiting a lady in Sussex, Mrs Davice Gilbert, who has upwards of 400 tenants on her estates, who cultivate their lots solely by the spade. When I say "honour," I use the word in its true meaning, and not as an empty term of courtesy. I entirely want words to express the sense of that deep debt of gratitude which I feel the present and future generations of the British peasantry, its most valuable though neglected class, owe to Mrs Gilbert, for her indefatigable exertions to raise them from a poor, precarious state of existence, to a degree of independence and comfort that will entitle them to the respect and consideration of the wealthiest and most extensive farmer in the land. By her own individual exertions, aided solely by an untiring energy of mind, she has not only seen through the theory of spade cultivation in its highest perfection as yet known, but has carried the theory into full practice on her estates. And it is a very different thing mastering a theory, from carrying it into effect. I believe Mrs Gilbert alone has the merit of proving practically in Great Britain, that a family can be supported in comfort and independence by the spade, &c., on from 3 to 5 acres of poor thin soil, on the Sussex downs, paying a high rent for the land, and this not in a single case, but in many instances; not for one year, but for many years in succession. And, assuredly, the great mass of land held by our Highland cotters, is capable of yielding, at least, as heavy crops as the land I saw under the spade on Mrs Gilbert's estates.

In order to give an idea of how matters are managed on these spade allotments, I may notice a few of those which I visited on the 19th August, 1842.

George Cruttenden.—A few years ago, Mrs Gilbert lent him money to purchase a cow, and set him up in a house, on a 5 acre lot. The land had formerly been ill cultivated, and about 8 inches deep, above chalk.

The house is charged £10, and the land £3 per acre, in all £25 rent. This seems enormous, yet he assured me, he had always been able easily to pay it, and the

appearance of everything about his premises bespoke great comfort and abundance. His health is bad, and he teaches a school for three hours daily, from 9 till 12, at 1d per week, and from 2 till 5 his scholars aid him in the various agricultural operations going on. He had no pasture and consequently was enabled always to keep two cows and a calf on his lot. Last year he had such a superabundance of food, that as he was not allowed to sell it, he fed a cow for the butcher, besides the above three kept in prime condition. I may observe that they were curry combed and dressed like well kept horses. When I was there, they were feeding on the leaves picked off his plot of field beans, thus showing the advantage of the old proverb, "waste not want not." His land, by the application of liquid manure, was in the highest condition, and as for weeds, few gardens could be seen more free from them. Owing to the excessive drought of this season, the neighbouring large farms presented the most complete want of everything in the shape of green crop that can be imagined, whilst on Cruttenden's and other spade lots, every foot of the ground was covered with the most luxuriant varieties of all kinds of green crop.

I. Piper, East Dean, lame of one leg, which is contracted about 8 inches, has 4 acres of land, for which and house he pays £11 rent, and told me he did not think it dear, as he had always paid it and expected to do so in future. Found him mixing liquid manure with some compost, for laying over his plot of Lucerne, which was most luxuriant. He had cut it twice this year already, and was then cutting it a third time, of course, owing to the soaking with liquid manure which it received after each cutting, yard by yard. He had  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre under wheat, which he expected to thrash out 40 bushels. I have since learned that he was within a bushel of this calculation, and that 27 bushels, the growth of  $\frac{1}{4}$  an acre, paid his rent of £11, leaving him the produce of his cow, which I saw working in a cart, and the rest of his crops, all which were most luxuriant, for his subsistence. When the neighbouring large farmers cows were all but dry for want of green food, his cow was giving 7 lbs, of butter a-week.

J. Dumbrell, Javington, entered on his 3 acres in 1837, was then, owing to bad health, a burden on his

aged parents, whom he now in turn supports. Mrs Gilbert lent him £5 to buy a cow, and his parents provided 2 pigs. The £5 was paid off at 1s 6d per week, and then lent to him again to purchase another cow, on the same terms, and it also was paid off in due time. Rent for land and house (I believe,) £12, which he has always been able to pay regularly. I saw his cow, which for three years had never been out of her stall, and with the exception of having her toes very long and curiously curled up, no animal could be in better condition. His crops were extremely fine.

I need not occupy your columns with other examples of the perfect success which has attended Mrs Gilbert's exertions. It is true the system is merely the same that is pursued with such uniformly successful results in China, Belgium, &c., but those who have tried to introduce a new improvement, inferring any thing like such an alteration of the usual small farming system in Britain (as Mrs Gilbert's is) will perfectly appreciate the value of her experiments, since they are aware of the extreme difficulty and personal trouble requisite to set such an unkuown engine at work, and more especially when the assistants are satisfied it cannot work.

Mrs Gilbert has, unaided, overcome all these difficulties, and the system has proved itself as successful on the poor thin soil of the Southdowns, as it had done in the deeper and more fertile soil of Belgium.

I shall now endeavour to show that what has been done in Sussex may also be done in the Highlands of Scotland.

As not one individual out of a 1000 would, probably, have the energy and perseverance of Mrs Gilbert, so as to order everything, and see these orders obeyed, day after day, and year after year, till the fruit was set, ripe, and gathered, I would recommend that a proprietor who has a number of cotters on his estate, such as I have described, should first of all search for and procure an intelligent agriculturist, taking care that, although ignorant of the spade husbandry and liquid manure system, he be not prejudiced against it or any other theory, but be willing either to work under his employer's direction, however chimerical the theory may seem to him, or follow general directions, which

may easily be put on paper for his guidance. Such persons are not difficult to procure in Scotland at a moderate salary, and their undivided attention being given to the subject, it is perfectly certain that by reasoning, coaxing, or threatening, they will have no difficulty whatever in accomplishing the object desired in a very short time. When I have more leisure than at present, I may, perhaps, suggest the routine necessary to be taken by the agriculturist in reclaiming one of our old fashioned 10 acre cotters, and converting him from a miserable pauper, whose existence depends on the procuring labour anywhere but at home on his own land, and who would not only cease to pay rent, but starve into the bargain under the present system, if owing to the depression of the times he should be unable to procure work from home; but at present I must defer entering on the practice, and content myself with endeavouring to show that the theory is simple and practicable. I need not waste time in proving that the system I have described as general among all the cotter tenantry in the Highlands is utterly bad, and needs reformation, or that the spade husbandry system which exhibits such results as the examples I have given from Sussex, is preferable. But I will address myself to the objections which I have heard stated to the system, by persons, who I believe, had not studied the subject closely.

The objections are—

1st. The ignorance, stupidity, and obstinacy of the class to be improved.

2d. The difficulty of procuring labourers to work on large farms, or public and private undertakings and improvements, if all were employed throughout the year in cultivating their allotments.

3d. The diminished amount of food capable of being supplied to the various classes in towns and elsewhere, whose time is either occupied in trade, or who are mere consumers of produce, and who are now supplied from the overplus crops grown on large farms.

4th. A proprietor whose tenantry depend for support on the annual success of the herring fishery, although waste land to an unlimited amount is within their reach, says, he would not like to see such a fine hardy race of seamen turned into mere clodhoppers, not to

speak of the great national loss that would result from their discontinuing to fish as at present.

5th. The expence of the agriculturist's salary, and difficulty of finding one qualified, with doubts to the actual practicability of such an "El Dorado" scheme.

I am quite willing to admit that the class of persons whom I hope to see raised by spade husbandry to a very different position from that which they now hold in society, are both ignorant and prejudiced to the proprietor's great loss. I therefore ask if it be not desirable to remove their ignorance and prejudice. I deny that they are stupid, or incapable of mental as well as bodily exertion, although at present, owing to their neglected and poverty-stricken state, they exert mind and body only so far as is absolutely indispensable to procure the lowest amount of the necessaries of life capable of supporting existence. They are not only indolent in mind and body, but in spite of the boasted advantages of our national church and school establishments, and the often pointed-to-morality of our rural population, I hesitate not to assert that they are lamentably deficient in attention to the sixth and seventh commandments, and I appeal to every proprietor in the Highlands if he will not bear me out in this assertion. Why is this so? Because they are neglected. Our clergy and schoolmasters are inefficient in too many instances, and overburdened with duties in others, while the proprietors who are so deeply concerned that a different state of things should exist, sit down quietly as if matters could not be mended, and abuse the poor neglected cotter class, as a set of thieves and liars, and everything that is vicious, incapable of amendment, and a nuisance to society that can only be abated by transporting them wholesale to Canada or elsewhere, and supplying their place by sheep and bullocks. Is this rational, or is it Christian? How, on earth, can a proprietor who sees the children of his cotters grow up in ignorance (whether from want of a school within reach, or want of scriptural education, or both combined), imagine that these children when they rise to manhood, and become the cotters on the estate, will be anything but the ignorant, prejudiced, irreligious, immoral, and vicious set that he so bitterly complains of, and wishes swept off his property by the besom of the Emigration-

agent? As justly might one of these cotters complain of the incurable badness and poverty of his land, which never has received one days fair course of tillage, to show what it is capable of being brought to. My readers will then perhaps think that I expect our High-land proprietors to turn preachers or schoolmasters for the benefit of their cotters. Nothing of the kind. While, however, I say it is their duty both towards God and towards their neighbour, to do all they can for the spiritual and temporal instruction of the lower classes on their estates, by enquiring into, countenancing, encouraging, and even prompting the activity of the clergyman, and ascertaining whether the means of education be placed within the reach of all the children on the estate, and if not, doing all in their power to supply the deficiency, and seeing that the Parents avail themselves of the means afforded, by sending their children to school, I assert that it is no less their duty to attend to the temporal interests of the cotter class, in respect of teaching them to cultivate their land in the best manner of which it is capable. It is a duty they owe to themselves, to their pockets, as well as to their tenantry, and as ignorant people are always prejudiced, and must be instructed before they change their ways, I entreat them to try the appointment of properly qualified agricultural instructors for their tenantry, and give the thing a fair chance, as has been done in Ireland with such success, before they join in the cry of "Emigration, emigration," as the only remedy for the present evils of an ignorant, and prejudiced, and indolent set of people.

In reply to the 2d objection, I would beg to observe, that nothing is more easily removed, as proprietors would only have to establish colonies of labourers on different parts of their estates, whose lots should consist of only so much land as would occupy their time, and that of their families, in their leisure hours. Such cotters would live principally by labour from home, wherever it was demanded.

With regard to the fear of a diminution of food for the supply of large towns, &c., were the spade system carried into general effect, I would beg leave to draw attention to the amount of food which Dumbrell on 3 acres of land has raised for the market. I regret that I am not able to give a statement of his crop 1842,

as it is not yet ascertained, but he assured me that in 1841, he grew the following amount of crop:—

Potatoes, .....	80 bushels
Wheat, .....	21½ ...
Oats, .....	44 ...
2 Calves, sold for	£5 10s.
423½ lbs. butter.	

He omits hay, turnips, and mangold wurtzel, as these were consumed by the cows, and, though he grew pigs, this was done by the potatoes, &c., returned above in full, with, I believe, some skim and buttermilk. Yet I think he might have credited the concern with part at all events of the skim-milk, as the pigs would not consume it all.

Some people will fear that, although thus sufficient grain and green crops, with butter and cheese, may be furnished to the country by the spade system, yet animal food could not be grown in sufficient amount on such small spots of land. It will not be denied that pork may be grown to any amount under such a system, but I will be asked how cattle and sheep can be grown without pasture land, and how are they to pasture on half an acre or so of grass? I will not here enter into a disquisition on agriculture, but I unhesitatingly assert that *grazing or pasturing animals of any kind is a barbarism that must disappear ere long, in civilized countries.* The time will come, though it may yet be far distant, when men will not believe that their ancestors wasted land by pasturing it, or they must imagine we, were indeed well off when we allowed one animal destroy as much grass by pasturing as would easily have supported two or three, if otherwise managed. If we, therefore, consider that Dumbrell's three acres of land produced, in 1841, the following amount of food for the public market, independent of several items which he has omitted to note, as skim, or buttermilk, &c:—

80 bushels of potatoes, @ 1s,	- - -	£4 0 0
21½ ... wheat, @ 7s,	- - -	7 10 6
44 ... oats, @ 3s,	- - -	7 4 0
Two calves sold for	- - -	5 10 0
423½ lbs. butter, @ 10d,	- - -	17 12 11

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£41 17 5

A farm of 100 acres ought to yield, in proportion

(suppose it under what is considered the best rotation; viz., the five-course,) a return of £1400, or thereabouts.

Now, I hesitate not to say, that such a return from a farm of 100 acres cultivated in the usual way, is quite unknown. On the contrary, I assert that £600 may be considered a fair average return, from a well cultivated 100 acre farm.

To prove this, we must consider the farm as in the best condition in every respect, of uniformly equal sized fields, viz., twenty acres each, &c., &c. In both cases, I omit seed, though, as Dumbrell dibbles his corn, and the large farmer sows broad-cast, the difference must be materially in favour of the small farm system.

No. 1.	{	10 ac. wheat, @ 4 qrs. @ 56s,	- £112	0	0	
		10 ... barley, @ 6 ... @ 30s,	- 90	0	0	
... 2.		20 ... oats, @ 5 ... @ 24s,	- 120	0	0	
... 3.		20 ... hay, @ 150 stones, @ 8d,	100	0	0	
	{	2 ... potatoes, @ 30 bolls (of 8 bushels), @ 8d,	- -	24	0	0
... 4.		8 ... turnips, for cows &c.,	- -	0	0	0
		8 ... others will feed 80 wedders, say they gain 15lbs each of mutton @ 5d,	- - - -	25	0	0
	{	2 ... tares used for horses,	- -	0	0	0
... 5.		20 ... pasture for cows and horses,	0	0	0	
		Produce of 10 milk cows, say	100	0	0	
		10 calves, say - - - -	27	10	0	

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100 acres, giving return of - - - £598 10 0

It may be objected, that, in the 100 acre farm return, I put no value on the 8 acres of turnips used by the cows, &c., nor on the tares, nor pasture, and that £25 is too little profit on the 80 wedders.

The other items will, I believe, be acknowledged as fair average crops, and the prices are the same as those in Dumbrell's list.

My agricultural readers hardly need to be told, that 10 cows and 4 horses will easily manage to consume 8 imperial acres of turnips, during the 6 or 7 months that turnips are provided for them on all good farms. Dumbrell omits his hay, turnips, and mangold wurtzel, as these are consumed by his cows; had he valued them per ton, my eye deceived me much, if the return



from the two farms would not thus be made to differ even still more widely than they do.

The horses will consume the tares, and the pasture will be found a bare enough allowance for the horses, cows, and calves, by any one who tries the thing practically. I credit the large farm with £100 for hay sold, but I would like to know the 100 acre farm that sells hay to this extent. On the contrary, it is considered bad farming to sell hay at all, or even to make it; and, if the hay be consumed on the land, I doubt its producing anything like £5 per acre, except as benefitting future crops. In almost every farm the hay is consumed by the horses and cows, &c., so that I might fairly have deducted the £100 credited for hay, although, wishing to let the large farm show off as well as it could, I have given it credit as above.

Feeders of sheep, I believe, admit that 10 wedders will consume an imperial acre of average turnips, and that 15 lbs. is a fair average increase of weight to be counted on in each sheep, when fat. I might also fairly deduct 20 qrs. of oats required for the 4 horses, from the gross marketable amount of the large farm, but I do not need to go to work so very closely, nor need I enter further into particulars to show the great loss to the nation, which occurs under the large farm system. It is quite obvious that the small spade cotter is the most desirable tenant that the public can have, and, if most desirable for the public, he must also be most desirable for the landlord.

As to the necessity of training up a population skilled in fishing, and ready for conversion into sailors, I believe it is necessary in this as in many other instances, in order to examine a matter clearly, to take a minute portion, to submit it to close analysis, and to disregard all general appearances and vague declamations upon the value of the British fisheries. We must, therefore, analyse a single family of this fishing population, and let us take the said family from the west coast, or Hebrides, where, in general, there is no tolerably certain annual herring or other fishery, and no markets for fresh fish. In the first place he must purchase a boat, nets, &c., &c. We cannot value these articles at less than £15 to £20, which is so much of his small capital sunk in perishable materials. He possesses also or two acres

of semi-arable, and an almost unlimited amount of waste land; on which he pastures his three or four head of cattle, in common with the other tenants in the township, and for which privilege, with a hut of his own erecting, and no lease, he may pay, say £4 to £5 a-year of rent. His land is wretchedly cultivated, so much so, as to be anything but a profitable concern—were his time spent on it, valued at 3d a-day. He therefore considers that his only chance of support and paying his rent is by fishing; and, probably, the very first year a successful herring fishing turns £10 to £12 into his pocket, and satisfies him that a pursuit, which, by a few weeks toil, enables him to pay his rent and live in all but utter idleness, till it is actually necessary next spring to commence cutting seaware to dung his potatoe land, is the best pursuit that a man of his station can follow. It is all very well pointing out to him that, say three years ago, the fishing failed, and, not only was he unable thereby to pay his rent, but an extremely wet season, added to the most wretched and astonishingly bad system of agriculture, so injured his crops, that, but for the timely aid of the generous "Sassenach" he and his family might probably, from actual want of food, have died. Such an argument will no more convince him that his pursuit is a precarious one and not to be depended on for permanent support, than the gambler's one unlucky throw, convinces of the danger and ruin attending his hazardous employment. In truth, there is more similarity between the fisherman and the gambler than at first sight meets the eye, and I cannot doubt that independent of the Highland west coasters' inconceivable love of indolence and an utter disregard of what the world calls comfort, which he often secures for a year by a few weeks luck at fishing, there is also a deeply hidden but powerful incitement to continue the system from its very uncertainty. It is clear, however, that every pursuit which renders a family dependent on chance for support, however seldom that chance may fail them, say only once in a generation, cannot be considered a desirable or prudent pursuit to which persons should be trained, unless it be impossible to find subsistence for them under a more certain system.

I hold this to be undeniable. I assert then, that the and, if well cultivated, will produce food every year

sufficient to support those who cultivate it, independent of the seasons, even on the West coast and the Hebrides, and as firmly do I assert that experience has frequently shown in a single generation, that the herring fishing will occasionally fail to secure subsistence for those families who depend on it for support. If these are facts, and I believe they cannot be denied by any one skilled in agriculture in its improved and scientific form, I ask, is it wise to train up a tenantry in their present precarious system, when by a better one they might be secure of subsistence every year, and the landlord secure of his rent, which at present is a matter of much anxious headshaking, and guessing, and enquiry into the state of the herring fishing, long before pay day comes round; and I should like to know the West Highland estate where the word "arrears" is not in perpetual circulation in place of cash, and where it had not now and then been necessary to send meal and seed corn and potatoes, at the Proprietor's expence, to support the people in life, till a lucky year enabled them again to pay their rents. Such results prove the present fishery-rent-system to be precarious, and if so, to be a bad system. It remains to be proved that another system is better and not precarious. I pass over "the advantage of creating a nursery for sailors," on the principle that if this advantage can only be procured at the sacrifice or even risk of a whole family's certainty of subsistence, the direct evil immensely overbalances the promised good, and forces us to look to some other means of procuring sailors.

I would then point to the immense tracts of waste land in our north west coasts as the source from whence the population there should derive their existence, instead of trusting to the treacherous sea. The objections, I am aware, will be, that the climate is bad, rendering agriculture as precarious a means of subsistence as fishing, or that the soil is inferior and only fit for pasturing.

I might avail myself of the wretched system (or rather no system) of agriculture pursued on the West coast by the cotters, I might point to the utter want of draining, where draining is needed perhaps more than in any other country, to the frequent succession of white crops, and indeed I might say of green crops, for

I have in my eye spots where potatoes have been grown for ten, twenty, nay, I am assured even a hundred years in succession; to the entire want of sown grass; animal dung being considered of no value in comparison of sea weed, and in fact being all but utterly neglected, to the land being untouched from harvest till perhaps a month *after* seed time, while the seed sown is rarely of the most suitable kind; I might point to all these things, and ask, is it fair to blame the climate when every thing is done that can possibly blacken its already doubtful character? How can any one on his conscience declare that the climate or soil, or both, are not fitted for agriculture, when every thing is done to prevent its succeeding, and when it is certain that the same system adopted even in the Carse of Gowrie, would in a very few years destroy its character for fertility, and stamp its soil and climate as all but equally unsuitable for agriculture with that of the West coast.

I might, I say, avail myself of these answers, but I am willing to concede that the wetness of the climate, (*not the soil*), does render the growing of corn crops less profitable than the same branch of agriculture in most other parts of the empire. That wetness however is always accompanied by a mildness unknown on the East coast, or midland districts, and these two qualities combined, render the West coast better adapted than any other part of the empire for the growth of cattle and stock of all descriptions; and I have yet to learn, that under a proper system, the land will not return as much money to the tenant, who attends *properly* to his milch cows, as to him who trusts to his white crops for subsistence. In fact, the one system is at least as profitable, nay, I assert that it is more profitable than the other, more especially, were it pursued skilfully, and under the very great advantages offered by the mildness of the West coast climate. I have heard it said that cattle of any other breed than the shaggy coated Kyloe never would thrive in a wet climate. I have seen the short horn & its crosses thrive on the West coast fully as well as the Highlander, and under the same out-of-door treatment, but supposing that I admit the Kyloe to be best adapted for out-door treatment in a wet climate, I would enquire why any other breed of cattle would not thrive as well on the West as on the East coast; if (as on both coasts they ought al-

ways to be kept) 11-12ths of their time were spent in the house and they never knew what it was to want a bellyful of the most succulent and nourishing food that the land can be made to produce. Under this system, the West has decidedly the advantage over the East coast and midland districts. I trust, therefore, to hear no more objections as to its wretched cotters being driven to depend on the herring fishing for subsistence because the soil and climate are unsuited for agriculture, and I say to the West Highland and Island proprietors, who wish to have the hated term of "arrears" entirely disused, "do something to show your poor ignorant cotters that every one of them can live in ease and independence on his land, and may leave others, who either have no land, or not enough to support a family, or who will not learn to make it support their families and pay their way, to follow so precarious a pursuit as the herring fishery for subsistence." If it be absolutely necessary for the welfare of the nation to pursue the British fisheries, surely it cannot be right to do so at the expense of taking a single cotter away from an occupation, that by filling up every hour of his time on land from one end of the year to another, enables him to secure abundance of food, &c. &c., year after year for his support, to say nothing of the incalculable advantage to his family and himself, of his being always at home; while it is equally certain that the fisheries, every now and then fail to remunerate those who depend on them for support, and even when they do give a proper return, do so at the cost of separating a man from his family, for perhaps several months at a time, which of itself is sufficient to stamp the pursuit as positively bad, so long as any other holds out a reasonable promise of subsistence without so very great a drawback.

The last objection to which I am called on to reply is, the difficulty of getting an agriculturist capable of instructing cotter tenants, the expence of his salary, and the danger of the cotter not following his advice; to such an objection a reply is easy, for no difficulty will be experienced in getting a person qualified to teach them more than they at present know of agriculture, and who, at all events, can keep them to certain fixed principles, from which they must not deviate on pain of removal from the estate; while the

expence of his salary will surely never be grudged by any Highland proprietor, if he remembers the length of his yearly "arrear column," and can be assured that under the management of a judicious, or even almost injudicious agriculturist, if he merely keeps the cotter to a certain number of plain rules, "the arrear column" in a very short time will be utterly unknown. I say nothing as to the satisfaction cheaply bought by the agriculturist's salary, of knowing that one's cotters had always abundance of food, and every comfort under their roofs, and were quite prepared with the rents on the term day, instead of as present knowing, as every proprietor ought to know, and every factor does know, that not one cotter on his estate has sufficient food, either in quantity or in quality, all the year round; that from actual poverty and neglect they live in a state of discomfort, vice, and misery, only concealed from the public "eye of astonishment," by its being so universal as not to attract or offend the eye or ear always accustomed to see or hear of it. Oh! if landlords of such a tenantry knew, as their factors do, the privations which their cotters often suffer from the anxiety to gain a shilling, and to save that shilling to meet the rent or arrears, when a beloved wife or child is pining and wasting into the grave before their eyes, from insufficient food, or clothing, or inability to remain at home in wet and storm, though disease and death be the evident result of the want of warmth and comfort, or the impossibility of expending that shilling, or even a fraction of it in the purchase of some remedy, to which skilful advice might easily point as all but certain to restore once more vigour to the heart, colour to the palid cheek, and firmness to the step; if they could but know, could but think of, or see these results of the present wretched neglecting system which surround them on every side, how would that shilling burn in the hand, and rouse its now possessor to enquire, "Can this be possible, can I have been living so long with all this wretchedness around me, utterly unknown and unthought of; what can I do for these poor people? And as sure as this question is seriously asked, as soon and as positively might it be answered, that if their condition be fully enquired into, and means taken to ascertain what has been done and is now doing to effect a change in the condition of this

class of people, as certainly, and as easily, and as cheaply, may they be raised from their present wretched condition, to one of comfort, ease, and independence.

I have now considered the principal defects in the cotter system as it exists at present, and shown it to be the very opposite of what it ought to be. I think I have also shown how easy it is to change the present system, which is bad in every sense of the word, and to substitute for it, one which will ensure comfort and independence to the tenant, and an easily and cheerfully paid rental to the landlord. When I have leisure, I may, perhaps, again request room in your columns for the discussion of this subject.

Kinellan, 5th October, 1842.

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#### AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITIES OF THE HIGHLNADS

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To one accustomed to the neat and comfortable cottage of the English peasant, generally covered with honeysuckle, roses, and fruit trees, and the whole surrounded by a well clipped hawthorn fence, enclosing a flower garden in front, with its choice collection of herbs of an odoriferous or medicinal kind, and at the side or rear a well stocked vegetable garden, with the domicile of the pig, or anything else that might offend the eye, cast discreetly in the shade; (the contrast afforded by the wretchedly barren and miserable appearance of the Highland cottage or bothy, is most striking and puzzling. Let this assertion satisfy all at a distance, those near at hand have too abundant evidence of its truthfulness. We have before stated, that taking in account the simplicity of living among the Highland peasantry, they are scarcely, if at all exceeded in worldly circumstances by the peasantry of the South. We again express our deliberate conviction that both are in a position of great, and we must add, unnecessary destitution. The well cultivated garden of the English labourer, which sheds its fragrance upon the traveller as

he rolls by in his splendid carriage, is but too frequently a mockery of the peasant's wants, being wholly inadequate, from its limited dimensions, to supply the actual necessities of his family, although it unquestionably affords a pleasing trait of his taste and industry, and a demonstration of the diligence with which he would cultivate the land, were a sufficient quantity allotted, to enable him to escape the ignominy and ills of pauperism. Is the contrast to which we have alluded produced by a want of taste in the Highlander? The enthusiasm with which he dilates upon the beauties of his native scenery; his generally respectable appearance, when equipped for kirk or a holiday; and, above all, the natural, but simple, elegance of the females, certainly far superior to that of either the English or French peasantry, forbid the supposition. *Intensity* is the distinguishing characteristic of the Irishman, and *tenacity* is equally that of the Scotchman; and to this we are inclined to attribute the deficiency of the Highland peasant in the domestic matters to which we have alluded. Even parties of much better information have met our observations on the destitute appearance of the Highlanders' home, by observing, that hedges and fences could only be kept up at great expense, and covering the whole retreat with a declaration, that what was practicable in the fine soil and climate of the South, was here quite out of question. These opinions seem to prevail among the peasantry themselves, who are so accustomed to privation, as to use no efforts to make the best of what is within their reach. We consider the objections adverted to, contradicted by the actual productions of the Highlands, and the excuse as to climate, a perfect libel upon the country. We have always been convinced of the capability of the soil, if properly cultivated, to bring forth in luxuriance the common produce of England, and if any doubts had remained upon the subject, the clearly expressed opinions and the elaborate details which will be found in



the communication with which Dr Mackenzie has favoured us, would for ever have set them at rest. We have for years advocated Home Colonization as the only Paladium of British greatness and security for the future,—we reiterate our conviction that there is abundance of waste or unprofitable land to support the whole population of the British Isles in competency and comfort, and we rejoice to find that our opinion of the adaptation of the Highland straths to produce, under proper cultivation, the prime necessaries of existence, as well as on the southern shores of England, is most completely borne out by such an agriculturist as Dr Mackenzie, whose letter, we are convinced, will be read with the greatest interest by the public in general, and especially by our Highland proprietors.

Had the vast sums expended in the erection and maintenance of the new Poor Law machinery in England and Ireland been applied to the principles of parochial or national Colonization, we should soon have had a happy and a comparatively independent peasantry. A home market for manufactured produce, consequent upon the generally improved circumstances of the lower classes, would have been created, which would have been more valuable than our foreign trade is ever likely to become; at least at any other period than one of a war, in which the fleets of Britain should again monopolize the carrying trade of the world—a consummation this, which the Christian patriot could never desire.

In expressing a conviction that Home Colonization on a general scale must yet be resorted to, before Great Britain will ever know the blessings of intestine peace, we would only appeal to the rapid spread which Chartist principles are making, simply because the labouring population is distressed and not better employed. Give the latter an opportunity of providing by their industry the necessaries of life, and the six points of the Charter will be as amusing and innocuous a tale as

the seven Champions of Christendom. Scotland, from the excellence of her religious and educational institutions, and the moral character of the people in general, has hitherto staved off the curse "of him who gives," "and him who takes," a poor-law. She must shortly either adopt the economical and patriotic plan of enabling her surplus and unemployed population to support themselves by honest industry, or reduce her—

"Bold peasantry, a nation's pride,"

to the demoralising condition of disaffected legalized paupers; her interior, convulsed with the throes of Chartist violence, and her coasts girt with

"A wild amphibious race,

With sullen woe displayed in every face."

We tremble to contemplate the bursting of that storm which has long assuredly been gathering in our horizon, and which no legislation, either of a Whig or Conservative character, can possibly avert, unless on the basis of meeting the necessities of augmented population, by augmented produce and beneficial employment. This, and this only, does home colonization afford, for although we have adverted to what emigration is capable of effecting, yet taking a practical view of the subject, we cannot anticipate that universal adoption of the latter, which would render the former unnecessary.

Previously to discussing the manner in which Home Colonization should be commenced, we shall in our next advert to the system adopted in Belgium, &c.

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#### CONTINENTAL EXPERIMENTS IN HOME COLONIZATION.

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Although our knowledge of the civil economy of the Chinese is very limited, the fact of that empire supporting a denser population than is to be found in any other part of the world, owing to the high cultivation of the land, has excited the astonishment and admiration of those who have been able to penetrate

beyond the exclusive barriers enclosing this remarkable people from the gaze of foreign nations. In the great art of supporting an immense population in comfort, or at least in competency, the Chinese are greatly in advance of other countries. Unthinned by frequent and desolating wars, the population of China, ages ago, rendered a system of rural colonization necessary, and it has hitherto preserved that vast empire from those internal commotions and revolutions which almost necessarily arise from the circumstance of vast masses of the population being in want of the necessaries of life. Next to China, the Netherlands attracted attention for the success with which it set on foot a system of agricultural colonization. In 1824, J. Ross, Esq. of Berbice, Inverness, was requested by Government to investigate and report upon the method there pursued, and having been favoured with a copy of his report to the then Under Secretary of State, Wilmot Horton, Esq., M. P.: we shall proceed to lay some of its interesting particulars before our readers.

Mr Ross, after adverting to the peculiar injuries which the Netherlands had sustained, by the annihilation of its trade, and from having been the theatre on which no inconsiderable portion of the struggle between France and the Allies took place, proceeds to notice the peculiar distress which the country experienced by the population being largely augmented on the disbanding of the army. Instead, however, of introducing a system, like the English Poor Laws, which may be defined, in its practical operation, as one to make the poor miserable at the serious expense of the rich and middling classes; a few patriotic individuals, struck upon the wiser method of enabling the poor to support themselves, and thereby benefit society instead of burdening it. Mr Ross's report is so perspicuous that we cannot do better than allow it to speak for itself, in describing the means resorted to for the pur-

pose of meeting the evil of a surplus population. He thus writes—

“The only mode which presented itself as likely to produce such salutary consequences, seemed to be the employment of the indigent in agricultural pursuits, on lands not hitherto subjected to the hand of man; and these are the arguments brought forward in support of that opinion,—First, Holland is still an importing country: therefore to that extent that it does import articles of first necessity, better to grow them within itself than purchase in a foreign market. Secondly, manufacturing establishments require large capitals—manufactures are brought to perfection slowly, and after all should have to compete with those of other countries already in possession of the market of the world: but in cultivating the earth the same objections do not lie: because, though the indigent may, by their labour, produce nothing of exchangeable value to the state, they may nevertheless, live themselves in some share of comfort, and that money or those sums which went to their support before thus employed, will then be free to take a direction that may effect a reaction in the diseased and exhausted body politic. But some capital is necessary to till the earth. The poor man may say, and say truly, ‘Here I am ready to labour,—but who will give me land?—the means to erect a house?—to buy implements of husbandry, and to support my family until such time as the earth I am willing to till yield sufficient for that purpose?’ It will be seen hereafter that the capital thus appropriated returns as high an interest as could be obtained in that country in any other channel.

“Impressed with a conviction of that and the foregoing considerations, a number of patriotic and benevolent men were induced, in 1818, to form themselves into a society at the Hague, under the title of “*Société de Bien-faisance*,” with a view to open subscription books in different places, to raise a fund wherewith at least to make an experiment on the principles they maintained and advocated, but without anticipating the success and mighty results which time and experience have assured to them. For the rules and regulations by which the Society, under the patronage of government, and presidency of Prince Fre-

derick, are united together, I must take the liberty to refer you to General Van den Bosch's and Le Baron de Keeverberg's tracts on that subject.

"That excellent man, General Van den Bosch, who merits well, not only of his country, but all mankind, digested a plan of colonization on the principles laid down by the Society, which are these:—*First*, the colonists shall, by their own proper labour, grow food for their support, and shall manufacture their own raiment, &c. *Secondly*, to enable them to do so, the means shall be furnished them, but in order to enhance the value of their labour in their own estimation, by way of loan. *Thirdly*, that a system of instruction be adopted, calculated to reform the morals of the old, generate industrious habits, religious and moral sentiments in the young, *who are again to be spread abroad in society, the fleets, the armies, as the want of these may keep up a demand for them.*

"Two things must be kept in view, first, that the Society do not contemplate any thing like separating this class from the mass of society, or to render them wealthy and independent, but simply to improve their condition, physically and morally, enabling them to support themselves usefully and honourably by their own industry. *Fourthly, and lastly.* The obtaining an enactment in favour of the Society, making it binding on the colonists to continue to cultivate the lands provided for them, till such time as they should discharge the debt contracted in properly establishing them in their allotments, and the period within which that should be effected limited to 16 years.

"Things thus matured, and the funds of the Society equal to their first expectations, under the auspices of Government, and immediate direction of General Van den Bosch, was commenced in the summer of 1818, the settlement of Frederick's Oord (Frederick's land, in compliment to the Prince at the head of the Society) situate in the western extremity of the Province of Drenthe, nine or ten miles north east of the town of *Steenwyk*, washed by the *Aa*, made navigable to the colony: thus affording an easy communication with that town, and the *Zuyder Zee*, at *Blackzyl*, Province of *Overyssel*.

"In the five northern provinces of the Netherlands, namely, Groningen, Drenthe, Friesland, Overyssel and

Guilderland, are vast tracts of waste lands, which seem susceptible in a high degree of being reduced to a state of perfect cultivation; being for the most part composed of the following strata:—Surface covered with soft short heath—two or three inches of vegetable mould—sand slightly intermixed with shells—sand & clay, and lastly, pure clay. These appearances do not always hold—for in some places, under the soft heath, is a great depth of pure sand; and in others of moss, of which good use is made as fuel. These sands scarcely any where assume the character of hills, but have formed themselves in gentle undulations, little above a level.

“Of that description, then situate as stated, the Society purchased several hundred acres (Arpens Rhyland), which were laid out in allotments of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  acres for each family of six persons (*ménage de six*), in the most regular manner. Of this a correct idea may be formed, by supposing an extensive plain through which are cut two or more parallel roads, thirty feet wide, and five or six hundred yards asunder; these again intersected at right angles by similar roads at convenient distances. On each side of the road is planted a row of forest trees—and immediately behind, at forty or fifty yards asunder, are erected the dwellings of the colonists. Then, behind each house is the lot of land specified. These are the outlines of Frederick’s Oord, and with such variations as the nature of the ground may make necessary, of other colonies more recently formed. In commencing Frederick’s Oord, labourers and tradesmen were employed, besides persons intending to settle there: Bricks and lime were made on the spot, shells for the latter having been conveyed up the *Aa*. A magazine was built on the line of communication with that river, and in the centre of the infant colony a schoolhouse, and about 50 farm houses erected, and as many families, 300 persons, accommodated in the course of that year. That part of a farm house which is occupied by the family is of substantial brick & lime work, thatched with straw, and contains two sleeping rooms and parlour: under one roof, but divided by a brick wall, is a division to preserve the crops of the farm in, and another for the cows, &c. That portion of the building is of wood.

“Whatever the Society furnish to the colonist in

the first instance—as seed grain, lint to spin, two cows for each farm, &c.—is in the shape of a loan; and, it has been found, that seventeen hundred florins (£141 13s 4d sterling) will cover all expences in properly establishing six persons as above. That sum, then, the head of each family (menage), engages to pay off in sixteen years; in the debt, however, is included 5 per cent. interest, on the cost of the farmhouse and purchase of the land. In these two last, he, the colonist, does not acquire any property, but all else enumerated become his. In withholding from him any property in the soil, the object being to prevent it from passing away from under the control of the Society, who reserve it, as an asylum for other indigent persons, at the death or relinquishment of the present occupant. This last can only take place when the original debt is cancelled, but does not follow as a consequence of that cancellation. On the contrary, the farm is then held for life, on payment of 5 per cent. interest on purchase of the land, erections of the farm, &c., and charge of local administration. The present occupant's children or descendants have no greater claim to the farm than any others, the presumption being, that, from the education bestowed on them and habits acquired, they are provided for in the general mass of society. Suppose the present occupant die, having discharged his debt in part, it is competent for the Society to place in the direction of that farm one of deceased's children, if equal to it, or another, assuming as much of the debt as yet remains, and a corresponding title to the moveable property, or he begins a new contract: the Society dividing deceased's property among such of his family, as, by their labour, have a claim to it. It is with a view to this equitable distribution, that each individual has the value of his labour entered to his credit in registers kept for the purpose. For ploughing\* and harrowing, and also for conveying the produce of the soil to wheresoever it may be necessary, the Society furnish horses at a very small rate of hire; but some of the first and most industrious settlers have become owners of horses themselves, and, consequently, increased means of improving their land

\* The plough is used only to break up the soil in the first instance, but, thereafter, the spade is chiefly employed.

by manure. To every twelve farms there is an overseer (inspecteur) accountable to a sub-director, he again to a director, he to a director-general, who is responsible to a permanent committee of the society.

“ To the situation of overseer a colonist is eligible, and it is his business to see that the farms are cultivated in the most advantageous manner, that the cattle be well fed, cleanliness attended to in the dwellings, that none be idle, and that each finish the task assigned — of all which, an exact account is kept, and return rendered weekly from one officer to another, till, in a condensed form, the matter is laid before the Society.

“ In the factories are made coarse linen, woollen cloths, blankets, carpeting utensils for farming and domestic purposes, in short, everything necessary for their own use, which, with the produce of domestic labour, as spinning, knitting, making up cloths, by women and infirm men, are deposited in warehouses; whence, issued, as need be to the colonists, at prices covering the cost of the material of labour. If by reason of sickness or other cause, a farm should be likely to fall behind, and it will be necessary to employ one or more to labour it, the person or persons so employed have credit for his or their labour at the rate current in the country, and the farm debited with the same: on no account is it to be neglected, because, if that were suffered to take place, it would be only increasing the difficulties of the unfortunate.

“ Hitherto, the surplus produce of the soil has been bought up by the society, for the support of new establishments; and the same remark applies as to the manufactures, except in a few instances of considerable quantities of linens bought for the transatlantic colonies, and carpeting disposed of in the neighbouring towns.

“ Many of the first colonists have paid off more of the first debt than should fall to the period in which that has been done; and are in a condition to pay off the whole if that were required. A few have become subscribers to the fund which first established them in their farms. And being so to the amount of a dollar per annum, they became members of the *Société de Bienfaisance*.



“ At Frederick’s Oord, there are all sects of Christians, and Jews, and places of worship provided for them all. It is the schoolmasters who read divine service in the Chapels of the Protestants and Catholics, and Jews meet to perform in their own way in a house set apart for that purpose.

“ Children under twelve years of age are four hours at school, and as many at some light work, according to age and strength. Above twelve, and not adults, two hours at school and six at work daily. All are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, and girls, needle work. For such as may seem worthy of that distinction in the development of talent or application, there is a school wherein the higher branches, as geometry, algebra, &c. &c., are taught. At this time there are now thirty boys, but none are exempt from a certain portion of labour—gymnastic exercises, severe, but amusing withal, are daily assigned to the older boys, to strengthen and unfold the powers of the body.

“ I have hitherto been speaking of indigent persons obtaining settlements at Frederick’s Oord; these, however, must not be confounded with beggars, against whom there is a very summary law, obliging them to abstain from infesting the high ways and roads on pain of being kept to hard labour for a longer or shorter period, according to the number and character of the infractions of the law. Beggars are now sent to Frederick’s Oord to serve in the capacity of servants to the farmers, and if able and refuse to work, as sometimes happens, are confined on bread and water for a period of fourteen days; but, if this do not bend their refractoriness, they are altogether removed to another establishment at Ommerschans. Exclusively of being well fed and clothed, these beggar-servants are allowed a small part of the value of their weekly labour, not more than one-fifth; yet lest they should make an improper use of this, there is, for doubtful characters, a paper circulating medium which carries on the face of it, that it is of no value without the limits of the colony; but will obtain within whatever may be necessary for them. I should have observed that there are a certain number of shops, under proper regulations, allowed in the Colony, where gro-

spect towards superiors, and propriety and decorum in their intercourse with each other, subscribed to by the colonists, they are subject to no other laws or restrictions than those which govern the kingdom of the Netherlands. And it is well worthy of remark that to the present day there is no instance of a violation of those by any of the colonists. So perfectly satisfied are they with their condition and the means pursuing to meliorate it, that let a settlement on equal terms, be offered in the bosom of society where they passed their earlier days, and, perhaps, not one would be found ready to accept of the charge.

“ I conversed with one, who, by the death of a relative fell into some little property that might in that country be esteemed a small independence, and who could consequently retire, but he prefers remaining to fulfil his engagements to the society by his own industry.

“ Frederick’s Oord has now become a parent colony, if I may so express myself, sending forth others (but on exactly similar principles) which have grown up more rapidly and are of greater extent than itself, which contains a population of 591 persons.”

The length at which we have found it necessary to extract the interesting particulars furnished in the valuable report of Mr Ross, forbids our now indulging in any additional observations of our own, further than by stating that this system is now widely extended, and as successful in its operations as at the period of Mr Ross’s inspection.

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#### PROSPERITY OF THE COUNTRY.—APPLICATION OF THE MEANS.

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HAVING recently been occupied with an enquiry into the causes of the difficulties of the country, and the means of remedying them, we purpose previously to urging the adoption of the latter, briefly to recapitulate the results of our investigation. In the first place we have shown that the main difficulty of the country arises from the distressed circumstances of the labouring

classes, induced by population exceeding the existing amount of employment, and the alimentary produce of the country ; aggravated by moral and social evils connected with an inadequacy of religious and educational opportunities. The remedies we then proposed, in order to remove the existing evils, were the dispersion of the dense population of Britain over her extensive colonies, and augmenting the alimentary produce of the country, by an extensive system of Home Colonization upon the best principles of rural economy. By these means, we asserted that Great Britain could maintain her population for ages to come in competency and comfort, with the same facility as are the dense masses in China and Belgium. Interesting details of the origin and success of the system of Home Colonization practised in the Netherlands, furnished in the Report of Mr Ross, we laid before our readers ; and its adaptation to the circumstances of this country was proved from the actual operation of the system at Eastbourne in Sussex. Our opinion, that what had been accomplished at that place might be done throughout the country, not excepting the Isles and Highlands of Scotland, was fully borne out in the excellent letter of Dr Mackenzie, who having personally inspected the rural economy pursued at Eastbourne, ably contrasted the ruinous character of the Highland cotter system with the former, and added the weight of his valuable testimony to the equal capabilities of the Highlands for successfully carrying out the improved system of cottage husbandry pursued in the south.

While we look upon the gradual extension of the British fisheries, as an object of great national importance, not only as affording a nursery for our navy, but as supplying an inexhaustible amount of most nutritious food to the population, and frequently extracting wealth from nature's resources with less actual outlay than in any other department, yet we fully admit

the cogency of Dr Mackenzie's reasoning, when adverting to the frequent destitution in the Highland fisheries, he advocates the necessity for the fishermen following an improved cotter system of agriculture, whereby they would be morally certain of living always in comfort, instead of being occasionally, through the failure of the fishing season, absolutely dependent upon charity for *existence*. Our knowledge of the peculiar tenacity with which the fishing classes retain their native habits, together with various other considerations lead us to suggest, that the great object in seeking to benefit these useful and interesting people, should be to impress upon them the importance of so far adopting the system of cultivation already recommended, as that, under the most unfavourable circumstances, their crofts or allotments, would produce sufficient milk, potatoes, and meal, to support themselves and families; pursuing their fishing avocations, so far, and so far only, as would be consistent with the former; a combination, we believe, as practicable as it is obviously necessary.

This remark applies not only in the Highlands but throughout the British Isles, inasmuch, as everywhere, distress consequent upon the failure of a fishing season, is a tax upon the neighbouring community, owing to the too general improvidence of the hardy sons of the ocean. Simply securing this "sheet anchor" of the fisherman's existence, we cannot urge too strongly upon the legislature or upon capitalists, the advantages resulting from an extension of the British fisheries, inasmuch, as the railroads which intersect the country are opening markets for fish in the interior, where this wholesome variety of food was formerly excluded by the expense and distance of conveyance; an extension, which will enhance the value of the British fisheries and render a larger supply necessary.

We have stated, that the distress of the labouring

classes is aggravated by a deficiency of religious and educational opportunities, and that the former of these blessings is absolutely necessary to render men happy, whether in affluence or poverty. We must, however, forbear entering upon this wide field of discussion and content ourselves, with observing that the unwearying labours of a faithful and teaching ministry are indispensably requisite to preserve society from falling into wide-spread and prevailing corruption of principle and practice.

On the broad and highly interesting subject of education, as a means of removing, or, preventing in future, much of the demoralization among the working classes, which may be identified with actual ignorance, we intend on the present occasion only to advert to the simple but efficacious plan of rural self-supporting schools, so successfully established near Eastbourne, upon the principle of the scholars, who only pay a penny a-week, working according to their ability for three hours daily upon the schoolmaster's allotment, in return for which they receive three hour's instruction daily. Such an arrangement deserves unmixed approbation, not only for its economy, but for its beneficial effects upon the children in developing their physical powers and educating them in habits of industry. Nothing can be more simple than the extension of these schools throughout the length and breadth of the land, which would be attended with incalculable benefits to the rising generation and to society in general.

Previously to urging the adoption of the political remedies we have advocated, we must remark, that the great desideratum has been to ascertain the *minimum* quantity of land and amount of capital requisite for the maintenance of a family. In Belgium, according to the statement of Mr Ross, a family of six individuals is enabled to live in competency by properly cultivating *three and a half acres*, and including the erection

of a small but complete farm-house, a stock, consisting of two cows, seed grain, materials for spinning, and provisions for the support of the family until the first year's crop come to hand, £141 13s. 4d. is the capital required.

At Eastbourne about the same quantity of land has answered the purpose of family support; cottages also being obtainable near the allotments, and cotters having procured the loan of £5 or £10 to purchase a cow or two, many industrious individuals have transferred themselves from the condition of paupers into that of honest independence of parochial or charitable support. At Eastbourne, as before stated, on one estate no less than 400 Home Colonists, as we shall denominate them successfully, and on remunerative terms cultivate *at high rents*, £3 per acre, allotments of land, which, when in the form of a large farm, could not fetch 5s. per acre, and at the same time remunerate the occupier. Previously to the introduction of this system into the parish of Eastbourne, the Poor rates were frightfully and ruinously high, and the population demoralised, being noted for smuggling and incendiarism. The grievous oppression of the Poor Laws in this locality will be easily perceived from the following facts extracted from the Poor Law Commissioners' Report published by authority in 1833.

#### EASTBOURNE, SUSSEX.

The population in 1831 amounted to 2726, the parish included 4597 acres, Rental, £6,288; Rack rent, £8,866; Rates in the Pound, THIRTEEN SHILLINGS; weekly wages of labourers, 12s. In 1830 the sum expended on the Poor was £3,991; in 1831, £3,551; in 1832, £4,250!!!

Out of this last sum we will only quote four items of expenditure, the remaining ones being composed of miscellaneous expenses of minor importance.

Widows, infirm and sick in out door relief,	£271	0	0
Paupers not coming under the above description,	-	-	-
Expended at the Work-house,	-	571	12
Rent of Work house,	-	90	0

The entire expense of pauper maintenance for the quarter ending 24th Jue 1842, amounts to £499 18 1¼. Emigration having been adopted to a considerable extent at Eastbourne, we understand the population is about the same as under the previous census, and considering the expense of pauper management is now as great as in 1832; we believe, by multiplying the June quarter by 4 that we shall arrive at a fair estimate of the benefit the allotment system has conferred upon this previously pauper ridden parish.

1842—Expense of June Quarter, £499 18 1¼ x 4 =	£1,999	16	6
Expense in 1832, - - -	4,250	0	0
Deduct 1842, - - -	1,999	16	6
	<hr/>		
Decrease, - - -	£2,250	3	6

Assuming then, as beyond all question, that Britain possesses not only in her colonies, an adequate field for the beneficial employment of her surplus population; but she contains within her sea girt precincts a sufficient quantity of waste land, which, if cultivated on the principles we have been advocating, would afford remunerating employment to the small occupiers; a handsome return to the landlord in the form of rent; relief to the pauper supporting classes by the virtual abolition of poor rates; and prosperity to our manufactures and commerce, by opening up ten thousand channels of home trade now closed by the destitution of the labouring classes; it devolves upon us to point out how we are to apply the means necessary for restoring general prosperity to the country. This is unquestionably a great subject not to be arrived at with a jump, but requiring variety as well as comprehensiveness of idea, and in this manner it will be our humble endeavour to grapple with it.

Although political society is at present ostensibly divided into 3 or 4 sections, they are already resolving themselves into two great contending parties, Conservative and Chartist, between which there is every prospect of a mighty and desperate struggle occurring. We have already expressed our conviction that the latter is only dangerous on account of wide spread distress among the labouring and working classes, which, if brought by a season of scarcity, or some such event, into circumstances of less endurable privation, would naturally make common cause with these political malcontents, and probably involve the country in anarchy and bloodshed. It is therefore obviously necessary to anticipate and to avert the great crisis in our national history, upon the very brink of which we are assuredly standing, by detaching its only powerful element, for evil—Industry degraded and depressed, and converting it into an additional antagonist to the malific principles with which a continuation of existing causes would otherwise infallibly lead it to coalesce. In other words, as Chartism is denouncing the Conservative aristocracy and landed proprietary of the kingdom, and aiming assiduously for their violent overthrow, let the latter palpably demonstrate, by setting on foot an extensive system of Home Colonization, that they are the best friends of the labouring classes. That they are now such, we unhesitatingly assert, and could easily prove by analysing the lists of our benevolent institutions and societies, among not the least of which we consider the Labourers' Friend Society, patronized by her Majesty, but only adequate from its limited extent and objects to serve as a valuable pioneer in the cause of the improvement of the rural population. It may be said, that in suggesting the adoption of a system of Home Colonization in the first place as a *party* measure, we are acting invidiously and unwisely, we believe, however, we can prove that we are acting fairly



and discreetly; for what can be more fair than, as the Conservative wealth and landed proprietary of the country are held up by the politically disaffected as the heartless enemies of the labouring classes, the first, instead of indiscriminately mixing up their benevolence where it is never properly estimated, should do themselves the justice of placing it in a position where it could neither be overlooked nor mistaken. This course being adopted by the Conservative representatives of the wealth and land of the country, their example would be followed by the like representatives of Whiggery; a minority doomed in the natural course of events to virtual political annihilation, by the more worthy part rising and coalescing with Conservatism, and the less worthy portion sinking into the dregs of Chartism. Such emulation, however, between Conservatives and Whigs, while it would bring out in bold relief the patriotism of the former, would operate reciprocally as an efficient stimulus, tending to promote in a high degree the welfare of the labouring classes. We would, therefore, in the first place recommend the cause of Home Colonization to be set on foot, by the leaders of the Conservative party, forming an institution which might be denominated the Conservative Patriotic Society, serving generally as a nucleus whence all efforts for accomplishing the objects might emanate, or be recorded, so that needful information and something like system might be obtained.

With an urgent necessity existing throughout every part of the British Isles, for the adoption of rural colonization, we believe that no merely legislative measures could be rendered applicable to all the varied circumstances of the country. We must, however, express our approbation of a suggestion of Mr Blacker, the distinguished agriculturist of Armagh, who, we believe, was the first to bring into successful practice, the rural economy now adopted at Eastbourne, and

who, in a recently printed tract, shows the facility of affording employment to the labouring classes, and augmenting the agricultural productions of the country, so as to render Britain entirely independent of foreign supplies, provided the Legislature would advance landed proprietors capital requisite for thus improving or bringing under cultivation entailed estates.\* Of the safety and value of Mr Blacker's suggestion, so applicable to large properties, we have no doubt whatever.

We would also suggest that the Legislature might beneficially introduce a measure for advancing, or enabling Poor Law Unions, or in Scotland, Administrators of the Poor, to raise loans for the purpose of forming parochial colonies, similar in principle to the system pursued in the Netherlands, which we have previously detailed. This plan opens up a wide and safe field of improvement, whereby, as we have before said, poor rates might in a short time be virtually superseded. Let us, for instance, suppose that, as in Holland, a family of six individuals, now chargeable on the poor rates, were, at an expense of £140 loan, settled on an allotment. These six individuals now costing the parish 3s a-head per week, or together £46 16s 0d per annum, this sum in three years amounts to £140 8s, equivalent to the sum required to place them in a situation of thereafter securing their own livelihood. Now, were the £140, or three years' charge absolutely given by the parish to get entirely rid of six individuals, we believe that the average of pauper liabilities would, in the present prospects of the poor justify such an expenditure; but if on the principle of the Dutch system, the £140 capital be only advanced in the shape

\* In our next we purpose laying Mr Blacker's valuable tract before our readers, being unwilling at a late period of the week to separate it.

of a loan to be paid up by the head of the family or those representing him, in the space of sixteen years, the proved safety and certainty of the proceeding as tending to the annihilation of poor's rates, enhancing the value of land, adding to the productive resources of the kingdom, and creating a new spring to trade and commerce, is, we submit, unanswerably proved. The main features of the Dutch colonies adverted to, might be followed out with an easy alteration and adaptation of the details; thus, the colonist while made liable for the amount of loan advanced, or for the balance which his farm failed of affording when given up, need not be absolutely compelled to remain to the expiration of his term. We do not, however, anticipate any practical difficulty on this score, as the proprietor of the allotments at Eastbourne has found no fickleness in the home colonists as to occupancy, which will appear from the following recent testimony:—

“ I received the rent of 424 cotters at Michaelmas last; they began with 50 in 1830, and not one penny has been lost in eleven years, though taken without reference to character, and told the rent would not be demanded, if not tendered between old and new Michaelmas. If any one dies or removes, some one has always brought the past year's rent to obtain future possession, and not one tenant has in eleven years been convicted of a misdemeanor before a magistrate.”

In addition to the suggestions already made for bringing a system of Home Colonization into operation, we may observe, that the success of the Dutch Society adverted to, and the satisfactory data showing what has been accomplished in the Netherlands, may as successfully be performed in the British Isles, points out the pecuniary remuneration, as well as national benefit, an extensive Joint Stock Company might derive by purchasing land, and systematically locating colonists thereon. Again, proprietors generally could not more profitably invest their capital, than by following the ex-

ample pursued at Eastbourne, even if requisite, in the first instance, to make some advances of capital.

In conclusion, the adoption of any one of these plans of applying Home Colonization would be attended with great advantage, but so formidable and urgent are the internal difficulties of the country, that recourse to all of the suggested methods of accomplishing the desired end, will not be found more than is required.

Such then, are the main features of the remedy we propose ; minor details connected with the adoption of the lucrative employments of husbandry by the artisans, who, if unable to obtain remunerating wages, are at least entitled to a diminution of the hours of labour, and such suggestions as these our space forbids our entering upon. The question proposed simply is, shall we have starving, and disaffected masses to support by heavy poor laws, and restrain by expensive police and military establishments ; or shall we have an industrious, contented and happy population.

By the obvious advantages of improving landed property ; by the natural desire to perpetuate the blessings of our peaceful and invaluable constitution ; and by the claims of a vitally distressed and deteriorated peasantry, we would urge upon our Conservative leaders the duty and advantages of setting on foot such a general system of Home Colonization as we have dwelt upon, either, 1st, by such a society as suggested ; 2d, by our present patriotic government instituting or supporting a legislative measure for advancing loans to extensive landed proprietors for the improvement of their estates ; 3d, by establishing parochial colonies, for which the Poor Law machinery, if needful, might easily be adapted ; 4th, by promoting the establishment of a Joint Stock Company to carry out the intended objects ; or, 5thly, by all proprietors of land individually endeavouring, according to their ability, to adopt the allotment system ; or, finally, by hav-

ing a general recourse to some or all of these suggested methods of applying so satisfactory and palpable a remedy to the crying and fearful evils which are exhausting the life-blood of this vast empire, and dragging her in the meridian of her glory to the precipice of destruction.

We cannot close our observations, without expressing our unfeigned delight at the circumstance of one of our Conservative Highland proprietors having empowered Dr Mackenzie to appropriate a vacant farm to the purpose of the systematic settlement of a number of cotters on five acre allotments, with necessary buildings, and under the constant superintendence of an agricultural instructor in the improved system of rural economy. An event which, we are persuaded, is calculated and likely to effect a great and beneficial revolution among the cotters in the Highlands, both as regards society and themselves.

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