

One objection I wish to meet in advance in case it should be urged. Great importance is attached to the uniformity of the census returns of this country and Great Britain; and I think very justly so—for unless they are prepared on a uniform method, no comparisons can be instituted between the circumstances of the two countries. The addition of the information I have suggested would not interfere with the existing uniformity, It would only be over and above the information furnished in the English Census—totally separate therefrom, and in no way interfering with uniformity in the other matters.

Our Irish Census is already very much in advance of the English Census, embracing as it does many more subjects. The statistics relating to religious professions and education are entirely absent from the English returns. I do not know whether it is in contemplation to add either of these subjects to the English Census this time. Whether or not, I should be glad to see our Irish Census maintaining its well established superiority, and becoming each decade more and more useful to the public; and I feel that if the suggestion I have made receives your favourable consideration, and has the good fortune to be carried into effect, we should have fresh cause to congratulate ourselves upon the increased value of our Irish census.

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IX.—*On the equal importance of the Education, Poor-law, Cheap Law for Small Holders, and Land Questions, at the present crisis.* By W. Neilson Hancock, LL.D.

[Read, 27th January, 1880.]

*Migratory labourers from Mayo to England.*

In an article in the *Fortnightly Review* for January, I called attention to the case of the migratory labourers in Mayo, and their sufferings from non-employment in England last year, as one branch of the present crisis to which sufficient attention had not been hitherto paid.

Now this connexion between Mayo labourers and England is one of very long standing. So far back as the census of 1841, that accomplished statistician, the late Sir Thomas Larcom, had the number of deck passengers to England ascertained, and in that summer it was 57,651; of these 25,118 came from Connaught—10,430 from the County of Mayo. Attention was called to these figures, in this Society, so far back as 1848, in a paper on the condition of the Irish labourer. The statistics of migratory labourers, though collected in a less perfect form from 1851 till a few years since, were never compiled or published, so it has been necessary to resort to private information. With the development of railways and progress of education, the number of labourers migrating increased; the 25,000 from Connaught rose to 35,000 a few years

since, and those from Mayo from 10,000 to 20,000 in 1878. Last year the Mayo men fell to 15,000; there was a further fall of 2,000 from the rest of Connaught, or 7,000 men whose English employment was stopped in 1879. This, at £14 10s. a man, to cover wages brought home, and cost of food and clothes in England, represents for 7,000 men £100,000 less English wages earned by them this year than last year; and last year was also an unfavourable season.

Then the 20,000 who went from Connaught this year brought home less wages. At the same rate as above stated, their English wages would be £300,000. According to one estimate they lost this year a third, or £100,000; according to another, two-thirds, or £200,000. If we take a half, £150,000—and add it to the £100,000 lost by the 7,000 men that did not get over to England at all—we get a loss to Connaught from this single source in this year of a quarter of a million of money, or £250,000.

If we take the Duchess of Marlborough's good charity, the Mansion House Fund, the funds raised by appeals of ministers of religion, and by politicians, how short the amount yet subscribed comes to meet this single loss to the one province of Connaught. Now should the whole of the distress thence produced be thrown on the unions in Mayo alone? Why should the large farmers in England, and the wealthy proprietors who have so long sustained the large farm system be thus able to cast off the people whose labour has been used for the whole of their lives since they were strong enough to go over to England? It may be thought there is no precedent for dealing with this question; but there is. Large farmers in England, in what are called close parishes, did precisely the same thing to English labourers: that is, all the labourers' houses were pulled down, and only those labourers employed who resided outside the parish: hence they escaped poor-rates, not only for the Irish labourers, but also for the English labourers.

*How has Parliament dealt with the migratory labourers' question?*

Now how did Parliament deal with that question? So far back as 1865, union-rating was substituted for parish-rating, and so a farmer could not escape rates by employing English labourers outside his parish, unless they were outside his union. But the Irish migratory labourer got no benefit from this; for if he fell destitute he could be removed, and the latest reform recommended on the subject does not touch his case, because the committee\* of last session only venture to recommend the residence to protect against removal to be reduced to a year, and as these Mayo labourers only reside at most about half a year in England they are unprotected.

Parliament has, however, gone much further in London. The work of the west end of London is done by labourers residing largely in the east of London, or in other unions than those where the employers live. For the London migratory labourers a law has been passed in recent years creating a common fund for all workhouse

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\* Commons' Committee on Poor Removals, 1879, No. 282.

relief in the London metropolitan district. Now, why should the employers at the west end of London have to pay for the labourers at east of London, and the employers in the centre of England not have to pay for those Mayo labourers whom they have employed each summer, or the most valuable part of their whole working life. Why, again, should the large farm system which treats labourers in this way be held up as the model system to adopt, and these allotment labourers who are compelled by law to reside so far from their work be brought forward as illustrations of the small farm system, of which they really form no part.

Again, if these labourers were not prevented by law from residing in England there would be as many persons of Irish birth residing in the agricultural districts of England, as there are in the town districts. The very different proportion is not a natural arrangement, but an artificial one, which under a real union between the Kingdoms should have no existence.

*Migratory labourers from County Armagh (Camlough) to England, and County Donegal (Templecrone) to Scotland.*

The migratory labourers turn up in two other places which have attracted considerable attention. Camlough, in the County of Armagh, where a meeting was held, is the centre of the district from which Celtic labourers go to England by Warrenpoint and Greenore, and I have ascertained that their wages this year were only two-thirds of the usual amount. Their depressed state, again, is a poor-law more than a land question. Take, again, the occupants of Templecrone glebe, in Donegal. I am informed that they, like the tenants of Mr. Hill, who owns the neighbouring Gweedore estate, usually migrate to Scotland for work—walking to Londonderry and taking steamer there. In 1841, 4,915 Donegal men went to Scotland; 11,317 went from the ports of Londonderry and Portrush, and 7,477 from Belfast.

In the published memorial of Mr. Hill's tenants they state "*loss of work abroad*" as the main cause of their present state. Now, twenty years ago, when I visited Gweedore, I learned that nearly all the able-bodied youths and men worked from early spring to late autumn in Scotland, and brought enough savings back to support themselves and their families and pay their rent; so they, like the Mayo men, are really allotment labourers naturally belonging to Scotland, only forced by Scotch law to reside in Ireland. They are so far worse off than the Mayo men, that the principle of union-rating has not yet been applied in Scotland for the protection of Scotch labourers.

*Want of union-rating in Scotland injurious to Irish migratory labourers.*

The want of this reform of the Scotch poor-law was pointed out at the Statistical Section of the British Association, at Glasgow, by an influential Scotch official (Secretary of the Section), Mr. Alexander MacNeill Caird,\* in these terms:—

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\* This worthy gentleman has died since the paper was read.

“Another evil was the area for rating and settlement. That in Scotland was limited to parishes: in England there were only 647 of such areas,\* while in Scotland there were 804. In England the population to each area was, 35,972, while in Scotland it was only 4,280; and London, with a population equal to Scotland, had only thirty. † Nearly one in three of these areas in Scotland had fewer than 1,000 inhabitants, and every tenth parish fewer than 500. That caused a great inequality of rating between neighbouring parishes, and a multitude of petty administrations with limited views and increased expenses, and continual interparochial conflicts. As an instance of that, he mentioned that in the barony parish of Glasgow alone there were commonly between 2,000 and 3,000 undetermined cases of settlement. Again, the law of settlement was adverse to freedom of labour, and the effect of it was that a man whose settlement was in a small parish was practically limited to the inhabitants of that parish to find customers for his labour. It operated by creating a fictitious interest, in every land- or house-owner, farmer, and ratepayer feeling it their duty to prevent a man being in their parish long enough to obtain a settlement there. The field for a labouring man was therefore physically limited to narrow bounds round the place where he lived, and any arrangement which artificially increased his difficulty in obtaining a house in another district, where he could have steadier work and better wages, was a source of oppression to him. The law of settlement in narrow areas had led to the pulling down of houses and restriction of the accommodation of labourers in country parishes in Scotland, and one result of that was that nearly one-third of the whole people of Scotland lived in houses of one room. That was a fact which required to be enforced on the legislature, in order that wider bounds of settlement might be adopted, as had been done eleven years ago in England.”

Now why should the large farm system of Scotland be held up as a model, without any regard to the state of these poor Donegal men, who are forced to live so far from their work? Why should the Scotch farmers and the proprietors in the east of Scotland, who have so long maintained the large farm system, be allowed to cast these hard working Celts off after twenty years' employment from early spring to late autumn; and if they do so, why should the case of these allotment labourers be brought against the system of small farms, or against peasant proprietors?

*Coincidence of distress with districts of backward education in Ireland.*

In a very able paper read at the Statistical Society of London last year, by Mr. Ravenstein, on “The Celtic Languages of the British Isles,” there is a very remarkable statement about this district in Donegal, where so much distress prevails. Speaking of the barony of Boylagh, he says:—

“Irish maintains its ground there more firmly than in any other part of Ireland; and the proportion of persons able to speak it has actually increased to a slight extent between 1851 and 1871. In the former year 47.4 per cent., and the latter year 48.8 per cent. of the population spoke Irish.”

Now when we find this district at a stand-still, if not going back, in the matter of education—when we find this want of education

\* Unions.

† And these thirty, with a population about equal to all Scotland, have a common poor fund for workhouse relief and some other charges.

stands in the way of the migratory labour by which they live, is it not high time to consider carefully the effect of delaying longer to extend, either the school attendance committees, which were constituted by the present government for all districts in England that have not adopted school-boards, or the permission to have school-boards where the people so desire, which the Gladstone government established in England?

Why should the state take less care of the children of the labourers employed by English and Scotch farmers, if they are compelled by legal arrangements to reside in Ireland, than of the children of the labourers who happen to reside in England and Scotland? The Scotch and English law provides means for paying for education of children whose parents are too poor to pay. This is the best of all charity; and if we only had school-attendance committees in every union, with the same power and duties as school-attendance committees in England, what an admirable organization it would be to carry us over the three or four years before the country recovers entirely from the present pressure? Such was the time it took before, in 1847 and in 1862, for recovery. In such years there is the danger of children's education being sacrificed, with calamitous consequences, that will last for a whole generation. We hear a great deal of seed potatoes; but the care of the rising generation of human beings is a far more important matter than even seed potatoes.

Mr. Richard O'Shaughnessy\* brought the defect of the Irish Education system, in the matter I am referring to, before the House of Commons in 1877. Mr. Butt pointed out where the difficulty lay. † I brought the subject before the Statistical Society of London last spring, and the solution I ventured to propose was not a law of Queen Elizabeth, as an accomplished critic suggested, but a law of Queen Victoria—one of the present parliament—which Viscount Sandon, as Education Minister of the present government, carried for the protection of the English labourers' children.

Whilst this education part of the question admits of such an easy solution, Mr. Ravenstein's map shows the extreme importance of it. The distressed districts in Ireland coincide in a remarkable manner with the districts where, so late as 1871, over 50 per cent. of the population speak Irish.

*Probable duration of the present crisis.*

This time twelvemonths I pointed out in my Bank Statistics the serious state the country was then in—with a fall in bank deposits of £1,516,000 greater than in 1863, and a rise in poor-relief of 6,911—nearly equal to the rise of 7,181 in 1863. I also called attention to the series of bad years, showing two years of diminished increase, and then two years of marked decrease. Taking, then, the bank deposits as a safe guide, especially if the circulation be added, it was two years before the country recovered the effects of 1860, '1, '2, and '3; and it was five years before the country recovered the effects of 1847. In one respect we are indeed better off than in

\* *Hansard*, vol. 233, p. 17.

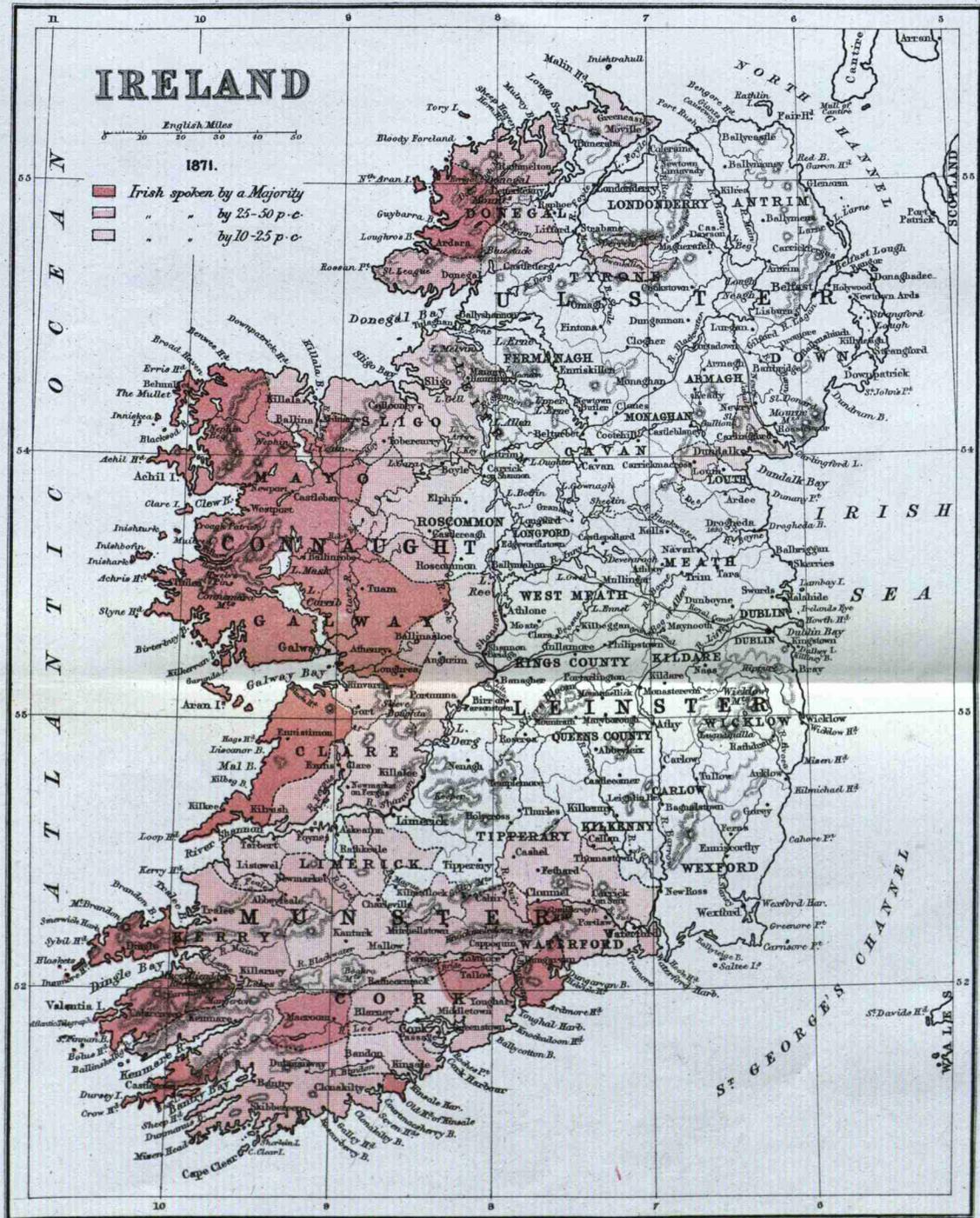
† *Ib.* p. 36.

# IRELAND

English Miles  
0 20 40 60

1871.

- Irish spoken by a Majority
- " " by 25-50 p.c.
- " " by 10-25 p.c.



1846—the total exclusion of indian-meal, the food of the poor, and the high duty on foreign corn, which enhanced the price of bread from 1816 to 1846, has not now to be suspended; the ports have not now to be opened by a prime minister; even the shilling duty on corn, which survived 1849, disappeared in 1869, so they are open by statute for eleven years—though strangely enough a gentleman of some influence, who thought it necessary to qualify his adherence to the principles of political economy, has suggested the opening of the ports as an important measure to be adopted at the present crisis!

The past year was more like 1846 than any year since. The Report of the Irish Local Government Board, of 25th October, published in November last, states:

“In regard to the potato crop, it will be seen that there is not much variation in the reports, and that it is described almost everywhere as deficient in quantity, inferior in quality, and affected by blight; and that upon the whole there will not be more than *half an average crop*.”\*

Although this startling statement was published, it is remarkable how few people thought of measuring definitely what this loss meant. I have not seen the loss measured in a single speech, or letter, or leading article since;\* yet in Thom's Statistics for 1879 (p. 694) there is a perfect means of measuring given.

VALUE OF POTATO CROP AT ESTIMATED AVERAGE PRICE OF SIXTY SHILLINGS PER TON.

Year.	Value.	Average of six years.	Value below average of six years.
	£	£	£
1871	8,381,000	9,251,000	
1872	5,417,000		
1873	8,049,000		
1874	10,655,000		
1875	10,539,000		
1876	12,464,000		
1877	5,272,000	...	3,989,000
1878	7,580,000	...	1,671,000
1879	4,625,000*	...	4,626,000

As the tenement valuation of the land of Ireland is only £11,000,000, the loss of £4,626,000 is a very serious item, and the loss of three years in succession, £10,286,000, or more than a whole year's crop—therefore in the aggregate worse than 1846, and nearly equal to the whole valuation of the land of Ireland, exclusive of buildings—is a most serious loss, especially in a crop that both

\* The Registrar-General's Preliminary Report on the Returns of Agricultural Produce in Ireland, presented early in February, shows the loss on potatoes to be nearer a *third* than *half* a crop. He values the crop at £3,341,000 only. The other crops he returns as all worse than 1878; making the total loss, including potatoes, as quoted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Parliament, £10,000,000 in 1879—from £32,758,000 in 1878, to £22,743,000 in 1879.

in growth and consumption so much affects the poorest class in the country. If the whole crop is only half an average, the loss in some districts must be nearly total.

Such was the loss to farmers—especially the small farmers—sustained in 1877—£7,192,000, as compared with a good year like 1876, or a loss of about £4,000,000 compared with an average of six years. In 1878 this loss in potatoes alone was about £2,000,000, and this year, according to the Local Government Board Report, between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000 below an average year,\* so that the aggregate losses of the three years taken together is equal to the total loss in 1846, and the Report of the Local Government Board, comparing the third year of pressure with the second, naturally fails to give a real measure of the crisis.

The accumulative effect of the three bad years is most important to bear in mind, because it accounts for the indebtedness of the people and the exhaustion of their savings. It is also important with regard to the duration of measures of relief. The crisis will in its results resemble the 1846 crisis more than the crisis of 1862.

Now if it takes three or four years to recover the position we were in in 1876, the first point to see to is the education of the rising generation of labourers' children—to see that the arrangements of the state, already eight years behind those of Scotland and ten years behind those of England, does not in the next four years of temptation on the poor to neglect education still more seriously break down.

*How to deal with case of migratory labourers.*

The next point, the case of the migratory labourers, must be taken up and thoroughly dealt with, making their English and Scotch employers pay their fair share, as the employers in the west of London have to pay for the labourers of the east. The principle of union-rating, established in England thirteen years ago for the protection of the labouring classes, so ardently advocated for Scotland by Mr. MacNeil Caird, as a protection against labourers being evicted and their houses pulled down, should be extended to Scotland and Ireland. The principle of a common fund for all London unions should be extended to the three unions in Dublin Metropolitan Police District, and to those of Glasgow and Edinburgh. The penalty of a month's imprisonment on migratory labourers seeking relief in another union, which exists in Ireland and not in England, should be abolished.

*Want of cheap legal arrangements to protect the savings and property of the labouring classes.*

The case of the occupiers of Templecrone glebe brings up another question, to which so much attention has been paid by this Society in numerous reports and papers—the want of cheap legal arrangements to protect the savings and property of the labouring classes. The Labourers' Congress for the United Kingdom, which met at

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\* The Registrar General's figures (see p. 57, note), since published, makes the loss about £6,000,000 below an average year.

Edinburgh last year, and which is to meet in Dublin this year, made the very natural demand for an assimilation of the laws that affect them through the whole United Kingdom.

For want of this principle guiding our legislature since the Union, our local courts were, at the time the occupiers of Templecrone Glebe were officially dealt with under the Church Act, in the matter of equitable jurisdiction a century behind the Scotch local courts, and some years behind English local courts; hence the only way of recovering a mortgage of a freehold interest was by a suit in Chancery, or a sale in the Landed Estates Court, at the minimum cost in the latter case of £100. Hence the Church Temporalities Commissioners felt constrained by law to require the full purchase-money from all purchasers of church lands, where the sum was less than £50, and half the money when it was between £50 and £100. The result was that there were three laws—the rich were allowed three-fourths of their purchase-money at 4 per cent., the intermediate class were allowed half the purchase-money at 4 per cent., whilst the poorest of all were required to pay the full purchase-money. Now it is essential to understand that this inequality of treatment by a public department, dealing with public money, arose entirely from the defective state of the law. These Templecrone occupiers were under this pressure. They could not live in Scotland where their work lay, because the labourers' houses were pulled down there, as Mr. MacNeil Caird describes, for want of union-rating being extended to Scotland. Then they ran the risk of losing their holdings in Ireland, if they did not buy or come to terms with some friendly purchaser, because the neighbouring proprietors were stimulated by want of union-rating in Ireland, to be uneasy at their presence in their electoral division. Accordingly, they either purchased or made over their interest to a friendly purchaser, who had to indemnify himself either in interest or rent for the risk he ran under the still defective state of the law in dealing with such small interests.

Now these men went every year from Derry to Glasgow and back. The ship which was their temporary habitation is locally registered either in Glasgow or Londonderry, may be held in sixty-four shares, and may have any number of charges upon it. These interests are all transferable on a local register kept by Government officers, without expense to the shipowner, for the benefit of shipping and trade, but out of the general taxes to which these labourers contribute. In Scotland they use railways on the way. The land occupied by the railways and the stations they wait in have all been changed by Act of Parliament from real into personal property. This personal property is all locally registered, and registered as stock, so that you can buy a £1 worth of it. The arrangement of the loans on this railway personal property are so admirably managed, that the companies can borrow on debenture stock at less than 4 per cent. The application of the ships' register principle to land has been carried for England by Lord Cairns,\* with the approval of Lord Selborne, and is recommended to be continued by the Land Titles and

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\* *Stat. 1875, c. 87.*

Transfer Committee\* of last session; but our Irish Registration of Deeds and Assurance Commission† has reported against any extension of this English law to Ireland.

Now, if the Church Temporalities Commissioners had been allowed, at the option of the purchaser, to convert any part of the Church lands not worth more than £30 a year into personal property, and to have it registered with the clerk of each Poor-law Union as proposed by some, with the petty sessions clerk of the County Court towns, or in that great institution of our time, where the interests of the poor have been most truly studied, at the Post Office Savings' Bank of the nearest town where a county court is held, the registry to be called the Small Holders' Land Registry, and to be conducted like a ship's register, they might have lent these Temple-crone allotment labourers three-fourths of the purchase-money at 4 per cent., and dealt equal treatment to poor and rich. The men could have borrowed the other one-fourth at 4 per cent. or less, from relatives and friends.‡ They would have been safe and contented, and would have their savings since 1876 to fall back on in this year of pressure, instead of paying the large sums it is stated they have paid since 1876.

The state, by Post-Office Savings' Banks, which were suggested in this Society some fifteen years before they were adopted, by Artizans' Dwelling Acts, have done something for the savings and dwellings of town labourers; but of all the labourers who have a claim on the Imperial Parliament for equal laws and equal treatment, equal protection for their savings and their property, and equal care in any affliction or adversity, are these Celtic labourers in Donegal, Mayo, and Armagh, who have for the last forty years given their strength to sustain the boasted large farm system of the Lothians of Scotland, and the most favoured districts of England, and who are now overtaken by a five-fold calamity. Their employment in England and Scotland has stopped, from foreign competition that they could never have foreseen or calculated upon; their allotment potatoes, the chief food of themselves and their children, is officially reported to be half gone; their supply of fuel is officially reported to be everywhere greatly deficient, and much suffering and sickness are anticipated from this cause; then, if able-bodied, they have no right to relief, and the guardians cannot give them out-door relief as in England, unless the workhouse is full, and even then cannot give it if they have a quarter of acre of land, which their allotments generally exceed; they have not the protection of the English law of unionising against the temptation to evict them from their allotments; and, lastly, they have not equal educational arrangements with the children of the labouring classes in England and Scotland, to enable their children to be prepared to struggle in the competition of the labour market of the United Kingdom, in which they have spent their lives.

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\* *Par. Pap.* 1879, No. 244 and Index.

† *First Report, Par. Pap.* 1879, c. 2443.

‡ *Report Irish Land Act (1870) Committee, Par. Pap.* 1878, No. 249, p. 332.

*Conclusion.*

For these reasons I venture to submit that the Education Question, the Poor-law Question, and Cheap Law for Small-holders Question, are of equal importance with the Land Question at the present crisis in Ireland.

*Postscript summary of recommendations in paper.*

The specific recommendations in the paper are—*As to education*; the extension to Ireland of school attendance committees on the English model: \* *As to Poor-laws*; the extension of union rating to Ireland and Scotland; the extension of the London common poor fund to the three unions in Dublin Metropolitan Police District, and to Glasgow and Edinburgh, and in case of migratory labourers over the area of migration: *As to cheap law for small holders of land*; the extension of Lord Cairns's Land Transfer Act, 1875, to Ireland; the extension of the railway principle of converting real into personal property at the will of the holder to all real property below £30 a year, which purchaser wishes to convert; local registries for such small holders in the 155 towns in Ireland where county courts are held, with clerk of guardians, petty session's clerk, or post-office savings bank, on ship's register plan, as adapted by Lord Cairns to land.

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X.—*Some further information as to Migratory Labourers from Mayo to England, and as to Importance of Limiting Low Taxes and Law Charges in Proceedings affecting Small Holders of Land.* By W. Neilson Hancock, LL.D.

[Read, 17th February, 1880.]

*Migratory labourers from Mayo and Donegal to England and Scotland.*

THE great interest which has been taken in the facts I brought forward at the last meeting as to the migratory labourers, induced me to continue my researches. The points to which I specially directed my attention were: firstly, whether 1879 was the first year of the falling off in the employment of these migratory labourers; and secondly, to get more detailed information as to the period of the year when this employment commenced. As to a considerable body of these labourers I have learned that:—

“1876 was a good fair year.

“1877 not so good.

“1878 much worse, and many had to borrow money to pay their way home.”

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\* For details see paper on “Feasibility of Compulsory Education in Ireland,” *London Statistical Journal* for June, 1879.