

## I.—IRELAND.

THE Committee of 1826, and Your present Committee, have examined twenty-five Witnesses upon the subject of the state of the labouring Population in Ireland. Eight of those witnesses were examined before the Committee of 1826, and seventeen before the present Committee; and two of those witnesses were examined before both Committees. Those witnesses consisted of five Members of Parliament, who were also Members of Your Committee; eleven residents in Ireland, including the Bishop of Limerick, three Land Agents, whom the Committee had an opportunity of examining, from their being accidentally present at Election Committees, and Mr. Nimmo, a civil engineer; Mr. Blake, one of the members of the late Commission of Inquiry into the state of Education in Ireland; and the Rev. T. R. Malthus,

Your Committee, while they refer to the Evidence itself, as well for the minute details of facts, as to prove the unanimous feeling entertained by all these witnesses as to the enormous evils existing, and still greater to be anticipated from the unchecked progress of Population, may be allowed to call the attention of the House to a few observations practically connected with the relief to be afforded by Emigration.

Your Committee deem it unnecessary to expatiate upon the extreme wretchedness of a great portion of the peasantry in many parts of Ireland. The evidence which has been produced before successive Committees of the House cannot fail to have made a strong impression on this subject, upon those Members who have not themselves been eye-witnesses of the circumstances; and whatever complicated causes may have led to this state of things, the fact is undeniable, that, generally speaking, there is that excess of labour, as compared with any permanent demand for it, which has reduced and must keep down the labourer at the lowest possible amount of subsistence. It even appears in evidence, that private individuals have frequently employed labourers at this low rate, rather from motives of charity than from any beneficial interest accruing to the party employing them; and upon this particular point, Your Committee beg to refer to the evidence of Mr. Dixon, a land agent, in answer to the Questions numbered in the margin. The House are aware that one of the popular modes of treating the subject of Ireland is to express a wish for the rapid introduction of capital into that country. Nothing is more easy than to express a general proposition of this nature, but Your Committee would particularly wish to press upon the attention of the House, that the evils of a population furnishing an excess of labour above the demand for it, contain within themselves a self-producing and self-aggravating principle; and that so long as no measures are taken to restrain them, they must not only continue to exist and increase, but by their very existence must prevent the introduction of that capital, which, if introduced, would diminish the redundancy, by establishing a greater equality between the supply of labour and the effective demand. Under the present circumstances, the opinion entertained of the insecurity of property in Ireland, arising from the state of the population, must operate as a most effectual discouragement to the introduction of capital; that is to say, no person will be disposed to establish large manufactories, or to make great agricultural improvements, in a country which has been, and may again be the scene of insurrectionary movements, and where his returns (which alone can insure the introduction of capital) may consequently be affected by such contingency.

## QUESTIONS,

2521,

2552,

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A reference both to the Evidence taken before Your Committee, and to the Evidence already presented to Parliament by the Committee appointed to consider