

But Your Committee, in adverting to the redundant population in Ireland, cannot but press upon the attention of the House the condition of that part of it (alluded to in the Report of last year) which, under the present circumstances, is more peculiarly and strictly redundant, and to a case on which they conceive that Emigration may be brought to bear with most important and beneficial results.

Your Committee beg to refer to a late Act for the prevention of under-tenancy in Ireland, and to the obstacles which at present stand in the way of its effectual operation. From the uniform tenor of the evidence given by the Irish witnesses, it appears that there is now among the Landowners in Ireland, a growing conviction (already almost universal) of the mischief of the system of an under-tenantry, and of the excess of population which attends it. They are satisfied that the best chance for the improvement of their estates and the amelioration of the condition of the people is the removal of this grievance, by the ejectment of that excess of tenantry, under the precautions which the late Act affords against its recurrence. In many parts of Ireland, and those obviously the most crowded, this process is constantly and extensively in force, checked only in some cases by motives of humanity, and the dread of immediate disturbance of the peace. The miserable beings, thus dislodged from their abodes, find themselves without resource or refuge. They first make an attempt to establish themselves on the next estate, upon the same footing; if that expedient fails, with the trifling pecuniary means derived from the remission of their rents, and the sale of the stock which their landlord may relinquish, they proceed to the nearest bog, or to a neighbouring town; the little money acquired by these means is soon spent, employment is scarcely to be obtained, and the most abject existence is supported by the assistance of the establishments for the suppression of mendicity, and the Government, which contributes to provide funds for the purpose. In the towns, distress accumulates in proportion as it decreases in the country, whilst a population of vagrants is gathered together in a state of misery, thereby affording materials for disorder and crime. By such a population, the rate of wages also is generally depressed, the means of obtaining comfortable maintenance is rendered impossible, and the most miserable cabins are multiplied, on the bogs, and in the suburbs of the great towns. The ultimate consequences appear in contagious fever, of the prevalence of which an illustration will be found in the fact, that within the city of Dublin alone (where it has been accurately ascertained) out of a population of two hundred thousand inhabitants, sixty thousand cases have passed through the hospital in the course of the last year. That this account is in no manner overcharged, Your Committee have only to refer for proof to the forcible and concurrent testimony of the Irish witnesses, from whence it is almost wholly drawn. That the causes which produced this state of things are in a course of constant progress, as there asserted, can hardly be questioned; and in respect of Ireland alone, the consequences to which they may ultimately lead, if some steps be not taken to check or correct their action, it is difficult to measure or foresee.

From Question  
2601 to 2612.

The evidence of Mr. Dixon (referred to in the margin) respecting the practical difficulty of landlords in Westmeath effecting the ejectment of their extra or surreptitious tenantry, is of the utmost importance.

From that, and much other similar evidence, Your Committee are convinced of the general feeling entertained by Irish Proprietors, of the advantage to be derived from diminishing the population on their estates. Your Committee entertain no doubt that this feeling is strong enough to induce them, in many instances, to make a pecuniary contribution towards the expense of Emigration\*; and

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\* Your Committee would specially refer the House to the evidence of Mr. Leslie Foster, upon the subject of giving facilities by law to Irish proprietors, to charge their estates for the