

acres, being 16,000 acres for each member. One hundred and eleven of these grants were actually assigned to the first-created Baronets—each being not only defined by metes and bounds, but likewise erected into a Free Barony and Regality. The other thirty-nine grants were not given, because of the intervention of the Civil Wars. But it is a compact between the Crown and the State in Scotland, that no Baronet should ever be created in Scotland except for the express purpose of promoting the plantation of New Scotland; and that each shall have the stipulated territorial qualification of 16,000 acres, the same to be held of the Scottish Crown as a Free Barony and Regality. Further, each Baronet on his creation paid a quota of 3000 merks—no small sum two centuries ago—to the national treasury, in consideration of his admission into the Order. And the Patent of every Baronet created down to the Union, gives to him and his heirs male, every right, property, immunity, liberty, and prerogative whatsoever, that is or may be enjoyed by the senior Baronets, under whatsoever law, constitution, or ordinance constituting the Baronetage.

And these rights are not territorial alone, but political likewise. The Baronetage of Scotland is in fact the Peerage of New Scotland. Every Baronet, in virtue of his Barony and Regality, enjoys hereditary seat and voice in all the Legislative Assemblies of the Province. The seigniorial privileges possessed by each Baronet within his 16,000 acres—a territory sufficiently large to make several parishes—are such as the words a Barony and Regality implied under the feudal system. The rights, therefore, of the Body, taken collectively, are such as no Order of nobility ever enjoyed, in any kingdom or nation, from the beginning of the world downwards.

Nor does the revival of these rights hinge upon matter of opinion, upon what the Government may think of the subject on the one hand, or what the public, or individuals, may think of it on the other. Their revival is grounded ON LAW, and can, further, be advocated upon every principle of justice, of truth, of propriety, of humanity, of policy. The Kings who conferred them lay it down in their charters “that no lapse of time, non-user, prescription, nor any adverse circumstance whatsoever, shall bar the functions and hereditaments which they bestow.” And why? Because the peaceable exercise of the same by the Order, is, in every age and generation, to be held as “a purpose highly concerning the Sovereign’s honour and the good and credit of this ancient Kingdom.” There is no man, then, true to the interests of the Scottish Monarchy—there is no liege-subject of the Scottish Realm, faithful to the common birthrights of his race—who can feel indifferent or hostile to the question of their restitution. The Baronet, in especial, who shall turn his back on this cause, under the present exigent and calamitous posture of affairs, must be regarded by the universal British public, as lost to every high and just perception of his duty to his Order, his Family, and his Country.

Neither is the revival of the rights and prerogatives of the Baronets to be regarded only in a political aspect. Consider the immense patronage which they would place at the disposal of the Baronets. At the present moment, the difficulty of finding openings for the junior members of good families is found insuperable. It is an error to suppose that the systematic plantation of 2½ million acres of land, would open a door of relief only for the unemployed and distressed among the lower orders. To elevate indeed the lowest platform of humanity—the platform of humble life—is the best object this side of death, to which either patriot or philanthropist can consecrate their labours. But let it not be forgot that Sir Robert Peel, four years ago, stated in his place in Parliament the melancholy fact, that since his then recent accession to office he had received no less than 23,000 applications from distressed gentlemen in need of situations. Can those men of quality, education, and honour, who have their bread to earn, or the junior branches of the Scottish Aristocracy,