

sive tracts of land now under deer, formerly teemed with flocks and herds, which, after supplying the wants of the home population, were annually exported in great numbers to meet the demand of our manufacturing brethren in the south. To this extent, therefore, the nation becomes less supporting than it once was, and we must look elsewhere to meet the deficiency. The supplanters of these flocks—the deer—are, as is well known, no value in commercial point of view, so that there is no compensating supply in this way for the loss sustained. When a proprietor converts a large portion of his estate into a deer forest, instead of desiring to see increased traffic, and more of the stir and bustle of active business, as he would otherwise naturally do, he now seeks stagnation and stillness—he courts solitude and isolation, and aims at the reconversion of the country into the desolate hunting ground that it was a thousand years ago.”

With such a system in operation, where are the chances of the improvement of the agricultural resources of the Highlands. Mr. Mackay states—“There are thousands, aye tens of thousands, of acres of waste ground throughout the Highlands, which, by the simple adoption of a judicious and enlightened policy, might be increased from twenty to forty fold in value in twenty-five years, at very little expense to the proprietor. This seems a startling statement; one apparently too good to be true. But is true, and we could adduce a hundred instances in proof of it. There are few farms, indeed, in the Highlands, to which there is not attached waste ground which might be profitably brought into cultivation. Yet there it remains, untouched and unprofitable in every respect, while the tenant would usually respond heartily to the offer of an advance by the proprietor for its reclamation. To the capitalist such improvement offers the highest possible inducement in the way of investment. The tenant will usually be found glad to pay 6 per cent. on the outlay; the proprietor has the best security for his money in the actual improvement of the soil, which he cannot possibly lose; so that such a safe and remunerative investment for money is rarely to be found. He reaps this interest for his money for the first nineteen years, and will derive from fifteen to twenty per cent. in perpetuity thereafter. And even where the proprietor has to borrow money for the purpose it will be seen that it is still his interest to improve. He can borrow from any of ‘The Lands Improvements Companies,’ at a certain rate of interest, to pay off principal and interest in twenty-five years. The tenant will be found willing to pay within, say one per cent. of the interest thus paid, and in many cases he will even pay the whole: so that the owner has his land converted from moor ground, worth perhaps a shilling an acre, without costing him anything but the trouble of negotiating the busi-

ness, or at the most at a cost to him of perhaps five pounds per acre.”

And again—

“To what purpose are our millions of acres of improvable waste lands allowed to lie unproductive? It is said they are generally incapable of remunerative reclamation; and no doubt there are circumstances of soil, position, altitude, or climate, where such an assertion holds good. But we deny its applicability in general terms, so long as we see so many thousands of acres in our own locality now lying waste, which we know to be adapted to the raising of every species of cultivated crops. We can point out 20,000 acres of such land within twenty miles of Inverness, the so-called capital of the Highlands. Is this on account of an adverse climate? Are the waste lands not in the same climate with our present fruitful fields? Is it on account of their altitude? Have we not waving corn fields and a prosperous tenantry in the heights of Strathspey and Badenoch, in the brace of Urquhart, and in the very mountain gorges of the Monillia. And yet why are these more favoured lands not reclaimed? Not because they are not eminently adapted for cultivation—not because the people are unwilling to undertake the task (on the contrary, they are only too eager to do so,) but because the soil is not free. The entail laws so bind the hands of proprietors, that though they should have any disposition to improve, they cannot; neither can they treat with tenants on eligible terms; and, moreover they cannot sell their land to others who would improve them. The repeal of this law is one of the palpable modes by which it is in the power of the Legislature to advance, especially the Highlands of Scotland in which the evil effects of the law have been very severely felt. Tens of thousands of acres might thus pass into the hands of capitalists of every calibre. We might have our reclaimable moors sold out to industrious farmers in lots, as is now done in the forests of Canada. And if this were done, the grand climax of the emigrant's ambition—the goal to which he aspires, and which is the most attractive motive in inducing him to emigrate, viz., the possession of a piece of land of his own, on which he might labour and expend all his energies, with the satisfaction of leaving a certain patrimony to his family—this, we say, would be attainable at home as easily, and with as great a prospect of satisfaction, as it would be in Canada, or in any other country.”

The author proceeds to state that in Canada the capital required to purchase and clear an acre of ground is equal to the fee simple of much of the reclaimable waste lands in Scotland. This may be correct in particular instances, but comparing the wild lands of the two countries, as a whole, for agricultural purposes, those of Canada are unquestionably very superior in point