

V.—*What the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland has effected (1847-1880).*

[Appendix to Report of Council].

WITHOUT referring to the dissemination of sound statistical knowledge and a knowledge of Political Economy, and the correction of erroneous impressions, and the saving of waste of capital by discouraging such enterprizes as the attempt to manufacture sugar from beet root in Ireland, or the attempt to grow flax in districts not suited for it, the most definite measure of what the Society has effected is the extent to which the Society has contributed to the formation of public opinion upon questions that have been actually successfully legislated upon. This is the function which such bodies as the Statistical Society and the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science have been recognized by the press as specially fitted to discharge.

1847.

The Society was founded by the then Whately Professor of Political Economy in the University of Dublin, in November, 1847. In 1848 the first imperfect Incumbered Estates Act was passed, which proved a total failure; and the first great measure which the discussions of the Society led up to was the second Incumbered Estates Act of 1849, which initiated the Incumbered Estates Temporary Commission, ultimately merged in the Landed Estates Court, and which has proved one of the largest and one of the most successful measures of law reform ever passed for Ireland. The measure was preceded by a series of papers on the legal impediments to the transfer of land, by one of the Secretaries, in which the principles of the measure of Parliamentary title, or extension of the doctrine of "market overt" to land, and any creditor being allowed to sue, were sketched out. This was followed by the examination of three officers of the Society—Dr. (afterwards Judge) Longfield, Mr. (afterwards Mr. Justice) Lawson, and Dr. Hancock—before the Parliamentary Committee whose inquiries preceded the passing of the second Incumbered Estates Act.

1850.

*Lord Romilly's Map Registration Act.*

In 1850 Lord Romilly's Registration of Deeds (Ireland) Act was passed, embodying the plan of making use of the Ordnance Survey maps as the basis of registration. In November, 1849, a paper had been read by one of the Secretaries on the utility of making the Ordnance Survey the basis of a General Register of Deeds and Judgments in Ireland. The Act of 1850 was not to come into operation until Land Indexes, under the direction of the Treasury, at the cost of the general taxes, had been completed. The Tenement Valuation, long since completed at local cost, contains in itself perfect land indexes, so that no real impediment exists to the carrying

out of the principle sanctioned by Parliament in 1850, by that Act (Lord Romilly's Act); but it nevertheless, after the lapse of a quarter of a century, still remains a dead letter.

1852.

*Irish part of Patent Law Reform.*

In 1852 the Patent Laws were reformed. Before that year the cost of a patent in Ireland was £135, while in Scotland it was only £75. The cost of a patent for the whole of the United Kingdom was £376, whilst the highest cost to a native in any foreign country was only £80. The defects in the Patent Laws as affecting Ireland had been pointed out in a paper by one of the Secretaries, published by the Society in 1850, and one of the objects to which the Social Inquiry Fund was applied in 1851 was obtaining a report by Mr. (now Mr. Justice) Lawson in the Patent Laws, which was of use in carrying the general reform, and secured the complete removal of the special Irish grievance on this question.

1853.

*Removal of Exemption of Real Property from Legacy Duty.*

In 1853, in the first of Mr. Gladstone's financial budgets, the injustice of having personal property liable to legacy duty, while real property was exempted, was redressed by the introduction of the duty on succession to real estates. The injustice, thus redressed, was strongly pointed out in a paper "On the general principles of taxation, as illustrating the advantages of a perfect income tax," read by one of the Secretaries, in November, 1850.

1856-'57.

*Probate Court Established.*

In 1856-'57 the antiquated and complicated jurisdiction as to wills was abolished, and a Probate Court substituted in England, and another Probate Court in Ireland. The carrying of this great reform required a strong expression of public opinion, and in 1852 part of the Social Inquiry Fund was employed in obtaining a report from Mr. (now Mr. Justice) Lawson "On the present state of the law and practice in Ireland with respect to wills and the administration of assets."

1858.

*Reformatory Schools Act passed.*

In 1858 the Reformatory Schools Act was passed for Ireland. Four years previously, the late Mr. W. Harvey Pim had read a paper on the importance of reformatory establishments for juvenile delinquents.

1860.

*The French Treaty and the Wine Duties.*

In 1860 the great feature of one of Mr. Gladstone's budgets was the reduction of the duty on French wines as part of the policy of

extending free trade by treaty with France, in the negotiation of which Mr. Cobden took so large a part. Seven years before, in 1853, Mr. Dunbar Ingram (afterwards a leading member of the Indian Bar), read a paper "On the wine duties and their effects on the commercial relations between the British dominions and France."

1860.

*Landlord and Tenant Consolidation Act.*

In 1860, Lord Cardwell's Landlord and Tenant Consolidation Act and Landed Property, Ireland, Improvement Act were passed. Nine years previously a portion of the Social Inquiry Fund had been devoted to secure a Report from the late Mr. Robert Longfield, "On the legislative measures requisite to facilitate the adoption of commercial contracts respecting the occupation of land."

1861.

*Post Office Savings Banks.*

In 1861, the Act was passed for establishing Post Office Savings Banks. Nine years previously, shortly after the failures of the Cuffestreet Bank in Dublin, and the Killarney and Tralee Banks in the south of Ireland, one of the Secretaries, in a paper entitled "What are the duties of the public with respect to Chartered Savings Banks," had proposed Post Office Savings Banks, with absolute security, as a remedy for the defective system of the trustee banks, under which the depositors had lost so much.

1862.

*Partnerships of Limited Liability.*

In 1862, the law was passed for the complete recognition of Limited Liability Companies. Eleven years previously, in November, 1851, Mr. Jonathan Pim (afterwards M.P. for Dublin) had read a paper on "Limited liability in partnerships," and in 1852 part of the Social Inquiry Fund was applied to secure a Report from Mr. (afterwards Master) Colles, "On the policy of limited liability in partnerships."

1862.

*Boarding-out of Pauper Children.*

In 1862 the first Act was passed, enabling orphan and deserted children to be boarded out, under the Poor-law. There are now 1,500 children boarded out. This important reform had been preceded by papers read in 1859—(1) by one of the Secretaries "On the importance of substituting the family system of rearing orphan children for the system now pursued in our workhouses," and (2) a paper by Mr. John O'Hagan, entitled "Observations on Dr. Hancock's plans for rearing poor orphans in families instead of placing them in workhouses," and by a paper in February 1862, by Professor O'Shaughnessy, entitled "Some remarks on Mr. Archer's scheme for befriending orphan pauper girls."

1863.

*Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages.*

In 1863 the system of Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages was introduced, somewhat similar to what had existed in England for twenty-seven years previously. Five years previously the Council of the Statistical Society had appointed a committee which made a special report on the subject in 1858. This report was followed by Lord Mayo's Bill of 1859, and in 1860 a paper was read by Mr. Arthur Moore, entitled: "Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in Ireland: Observations on the late Government Bill of 1859."

1865.

*Record of Title Act.*

In 1865 the Record of Title Act was passed, mainly based on the plan of Sir Robert Torrens: which he had brought forward in the Society two years previously in a paper "On the transfer of land and registration of title." Sir Robert Torrens was assisted by Mr. Henry Dix Hutton, one of the Secretaries of the Society.

1865.

*Land Debenture Act.*

In the same year, 1865, the Land Debenture Act was passed. This originated in a paper read by Judge Longfield six years previously, entitled "A proposal for an Act to authorize the issue of land debentures in connection with sales made in the Landed Estates Courts, with a copy of the proposed Act."

1866.

*Sanitary Act.*

In 1866 Ireland was in a very backward state as to sanitary legislation, being still under some Irish Acts of 1818 and 1819 passed before the poor-law guardians or any of the modern town authorities had been constituted, and under English Acts of 1848 and 1849 which had been repealed for England in 1855. To the passing of the Sanitary Act, 1866, Dr. Mapother, now President of the Statistical Society, contributed three remarkable papers; in February, 1864, "On the sanitary state of Dublin;" in February, 1865, "On the differences between the statutes bearing on public health for England and Ireland;" and in December, 1865, on the "Unhealthiness of Irish towns, and the want of sanitary legislation."

1870.

*Irish Land Act.*

In 1870 the Land Act, introduced by Mr. Gladstone, was passed. A number of papers had been read on the land question in the twenty-three years which had elapsed from the foundation of the Society to 1870. The authors were—Judge Longfield, Mr. Justice Lawson, Lord Emly, Mr. Jonathan Pim, Mr. James Haughton, Dr. Hancock, Mr.

Conway Dobbs, Mr. Sergeant Heron, Professor Hearne, Mr. Greer, M.P., Mr. Dix Hutton, and Mr. Ross; besides these, out of the Social Inquiry Fund, and a special fund placed at the disposal of the Society by Mr. Jonathan Pim, reports had been made by Mr. Robert Longfield, Q.C., and Mr. Randal McDonnell, Q.C.

1872.

*Irish Statute Law Revision.*

In 1872 an Act was passed for the revision of the statute law of Ireland, so far as it was affected by the English Acts extended to Ireland of Poyning's Law of 10 Henry VII. This reform had been strongly urged by the Council of the Statistical Society in one of their Reports, of November, 1871.

1872.

*Extension of Local Government Acts to Ireland.*

In 1872 some of the provisions of the English Local Government Acts were extended to Ireland, and this has been carried further by subsequent Acts. This reform was advocated by Mr. John Hancock, in February, 1869, in a paper entitled, "Should the Local Government Acts be extended to Ireland," and one part of the question was dealt with in a paper by Mr. Heron, "On the means of diminishing the expense and delay of passing local and personal Acts relating to Ireland through Parliament."

1872.

*Introduction of Money Orders into the United States, and between Ireland and United States.*

In 1872, when Lord Emly was Postmaster-General, the Council pressed on his notice the importance of having money orders established between Ireland and United States, and this reform, so valuable to emigrants, was carried. The bringing of this subject under the notice of the American Consul in Dublin, seven years previously, by one of the Secretaries, had contributed to the establishing of the money order system in the United States.

1874.

*Extension of Civil Bill Jurisdiction to matters of Title.*

In 1874 a limited jurisdiction in matters of title was conferred on the Irish Civil Bill Courts. This reform had been recommended by Mr. Constantine Molloy in 1870, and by Mr. George Orme Malley, Q.C., in 1872.

1876.

The session of 1876 was marked by the passing of the largest number of reforms that had been advocated in the Statistical Society of any year since the Society was founded.

*Restraint on Poor Removals from England.*

(1) A most powerful check was put on poor removals of persons of Irish birth from England and Wales, by giving such persons a

settlement in England after residing for three years in one parish. The evils of poor removals had been brought before the Society in a paper by Dr. Hancock in 1871.

*Cost of Deaf, Dumb, and Blind, made Union charges.*

(2) A great step was made towards union-rating in Ireland, by making the charge for the deaf, dumb, and blind a union charge.

*Portion of charges of Indoor Relief transferred from electoral divisions too highly rated.*

(3) A further step in the same direction was made by a power of transferring part of the workhouse charges for indoor relief from one electoral division rated above a certain sum, upon the other electoral divisions of the same union. These reforms had both a tendency towards assimilating the Poor-laws in the two countries, so strongly advocated by Dr. Hancock in 1862, and by Dr. Ingram, in his address as Vice-President, in 1863, and in a paper read by him in 1864.

*Boarding-out of Pauper Children extended to thirteen years of age.*

(4) A further extension of the boarding-out of pauper children was permitted in the Act, allowing them to be boarded-out up to thirteen years of age. Dr. Ingram brought this reform forward in his address, as Vice-President, in November, 1875, and further advocated it in a paper read in January, 1876.

*Admiralty jurisdiction conferred on Recorders of Belfast and Cork.*

(5) An Act was passed conferring Admiralty jurisdiction on the Recorders of Belfast and Cork. This reform was specially recommended by a committee of the Society in January, 1870.

*Abolition of Market Juries.*

(6) Jurors in Dublin and other towns were partially relieved by the abolition of market juries, an antiquated and obsolete institution, that had been superseded by the police and other local authorities. This reform had been specially recommended by a committee of the Society in 1874, which was appointed to examine the causes of the excessive summoning of jurors in the City of Dublin.

*Balloting for jurors as in Civil Cases extended to Criminal Cases.*

(7) The principle of balloting for jurors to settle the order in which they should be called in court, which has so long prevailed in civil cases, was extended to juries in criminal cases. This change was suggested so far back as 1865, in a paper read before the Society by Mr. Constantine Molloy.

1877.

*Extension of jurisdiction of Irish County Courts.*

In 1877 the Irish County Officers and Courts Act passed, embodying reforms which had been advocated in several papers read before the Society.

1878.

*Ante-Union Statute Law Revision.*

In 1878, progress was made in the revision of the Ante-Union Statutes, which had been frequently advocated by the Council.

*Relief of Blind and Imbecile.*

The Poor Afflicted Persons Relief Act was passed, effecting some salutary reforms in the mode of providing for the blind and for imbeciles. A clause which would have allowed the same amount of assistance that is given to cripples' homes in England was unfortunately struck out in the passing of the Act through Parliament.

1879.

*Ante-Union Statute Law Revision.*

In 1879 the revision of the Ante-Union Statute Law was completed, and the Council made representations to the Government with a view to have a revised edition of the Ante-Union Statutes issued, as in England.

1880.

*County Court Jurisdiction in Lunacy Act.*

In 1880 the County Court Jurisdiction in Lunacy Act, carried by Lord O'Hagan, was a reform recommended in the Report of one of the Society's committees, similar to a reform passed in the same session for Scotland, but which has not yet been adopted in England.

*Limitation of Costs Bill.*

The limitation of Costs Bill of Mr. Errington, which passed the House of Commons, but was not successful in the House of Lords, arose from some facts disclosed in a paper read in the early part of the session.

Such being the evidences of the practical utility of the Society in matters of legislation, it only remains to notice that the Society discharges an important function in keeping the progress of Ireland up to the rest of the United Kingdom in the important subjects which fall within its discussion.

*Co-operation with Economic and Statistical Section of the British Association.*

In 1857 the Society took an active part in the second reception in Dublin of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and supplied the local officers for the Section of Economic Science and Statistics—Archbishop Whately, the then President of the Statistical Society, being president of the section. In 1878 the Council joined with the Town Council, Trinity College, and other leading bodies in Dublin, in the third reception of the Association, when Dr. Ingram, the President of the Statistical Society, was chosen president of the section.

*Co-operation with the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science.*

The branch of the Statistical Society for promoting scientific

inquiries into social questions commenced in 1850, thus preceding the National Association in the promotion of social science by six years. The Society was able to take an active part in the first reception of the National Association in Dublin, at an early period of its existence, in 1861; and has joined with the Town Council of Dublin in inviting the Association to pay a second visit to Dublin in 1881—an invitation which has been accepted.

*Co-operation with the Charity Organisation Society of London.*

The Statistical Society has, by the formation of a committee to collect information, been able to supply some at least of the valuable functions discharged by the London Charity Organisation Society. On one subject in particular, at the invitation of Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Charity Organisation Committee of the Statistical Society was able to take an active part in promoting his plan of improved provision by the state for the care of imbeciles, idiots, and the deaf, dumb, and blind.

The origin of the co-operation of the Society being thus sought, affords an evidence of the utility of its proceedings. It was a paper read twelve years previously, January, 1864, by Mr. Jonathan Pim, "On the necessity of a state provision for the education of the deaf and dumb, and blind, and imbecile," which led to this result.

*Co-operation with the State Charities Aid Association of New York.*

The railway and financial crisis in America produced a large amount of distress, especially in New York. This gave rise to the active exertions and researches of the Charities' Aid Association of New York. Amongst these researches importance was attached to a paper published by the Statistical Society, so far back as 1851, summing up the results of researches during the Irish famine, and pointing out the paramount importance of investigating the causes of pauperism. From this and another paper on Poor-laws, the State Charities' Aid Association of New York, elected Dr. Hancock as an Honorary Corresponding Member of their Society. The case of the London and New York Associations show that at this moment papers read some years ago in our Society are influencing the course of charitable effort in two of the greatest centres of human population in the world.

*Barrington Lectures on Political Economy, and the Trades Union Congress.*

A committee of the Society has for upwards of thirty years had the management of the trust, amounting to £4,000, left by Mr. Barrington of Dublin, for teaching political economy in a popular form in a way to reach the working-classes. Two of the courses of lectures are given in Working-men's Clubs in Dublin, and Mr. Murphy, the Dublin working-man who was selected to preside at the recent Trades Union Congress, had obtained a certificate for proficiency in Political Economy at an examination of a class in Political Economy, conducted under the Barrington Lecture Trust.