

of the potato crop, leaving railway investment and expenditure for after consideration.

No one at all acquainted with the existing condition of Ireland supposes that a failure of the potato crop can recur for two succeeding years without producing serious consequences, not only in that country, but in England also. One of the most obvious difficulties will be that the rents will not be paid with regularity; and this will be the cause of great embarrassment, not less to the tenants than to those who depend almost entirely upon the rents for their incomes. We are not referring now to the effect of the loss of the "lazy root" on the peasantry—those who depend upon the produce of their patch of potato ground for the sole means of sustenance; and who, when deprived of it by any calamity, have positively nothing between them and starvation. In this case the evil is of such magnitude, that charity and the assistance of Government to provide employment and food must be called on to mitigate the sufferings of the poor. From that class it will be hopeless even for the middle man to attempt to exact the rent of the miserable hovel and patch of land on which the poor creatures have hitherto existed. They must now seek the means of subsistence elsewhere. The railways and Government works will afford them some relief; and out of the present difficulty even permanent good may be derived, if the peasantry are induced to exert themselves to obtain employment, and are enabled to adopt a more generous and human kind of food than the "lazy root."

There are, however, other classes in Ireland who will suffer from the failure of the potato crop;—and even more severely, perhaps, than the lower class—the peasantry. The farmers are understood to be great losers by the failure of the crop; and many of them have already signified to their landlords that they will not in consequence have the means of meeting their rents when they become due. They have also determined, at least for a time, to give up the cultivation of potatoes, and depend on other kinds of produce. The loss they will incur this year, in addition to last year, is more serious than may at first be apparent, for very few of them have capital of their own to fall back upon; and the banks and money lenders who assisted them with advances this year will hardly be willing to do so now that the prospect of payment has become more remote. Most of the farmers are indebted to the banks in some shape or other; either on their Rent Bills, which, on being handed to the landlord, in anticipation of the time when the rent becomes payable are immediately lodged by him at his bank and discounted; or in other cases, where the farmers are respectable in character and industrious, the banks have made advances to them on the cash credit system. In either case, it is said, the farmers will be unable to meet the demands upon them, and that insolvency and ruin must, in many cases be the result. This will embarrass the landlords, who will be called upon to provide for the unpaid bills of their tenants in the bankers' hands; and those who view the present aspect of Irish affairs in the most discouraging point of view, are confident in their expressions that the most serious monetary derangement will be caused by these calamities.

We are by no means disposed to join in this very unfavourable report. We think there are many circumstances at present in existence which will greatly mitigate the evils of the season, even allowing them to be as serious as they are described. In the first place it must not be forgotten that the harvest, except for potatoes, has been most abundant and fruitful. The crops of oats and wheat have seldom been so fine, and they are being secured in the best condition. The same remark applies to other kinds of farm produce, and whether for man or animals, with the exception of potatoes, it is equally abundant and excellent. This circumstance must, in the present state of affairs, be peculiarly beneficial to the Irish farmer. The failure of the potatoes will necessarily increase the price of oatmeal—the food which after potatoes will be most generally adopted by the peasantry, for they have shown on many occasions that they will not, if possible, employ the Indian corn. Oats and corn generally will have their prices maintained from this circumstance, and Government have officially declared that they will not interfere with the natural operations of the market, by importing food to be sold at reduced rates. This measure of the late Government was much complained of by all parties engaged in the corn trade, because it necessarily fixed an arbitrary price for corn when it might have been far more remunerative. This difficulty will not exist during the present season; and the ability of the peasantry to purchase the better kind of food will be much greater than it was the last year. The systematic employment of all the able-bodied men who choose to work in the construction of the new railways, or on Government works, which will be amply provided, will place the poorer classes in a far better position than they have hitherto enjoyed. They will have more money to purchase bread than they have previously had even for potatoes; and we confidently expect that however severe may be the loss by the potato crop this season, it will not be felt so severely by any class in Ireland as it was last year.

For these reasons we dissent from the opinion that the partial failure of the harvest in Ireland is likely to cause a serious monetary derangement either there or in this country. And with regard to the other apprehended difficulty in the money market, caused by railway expenditure, we think, as we shall hereafter show, that, although deserving of serious consideration by bankers, its probable effects are much exaggerated, and it cannot under any circumstances produce the disasters which are so confidently predicted.—*1b.*

The following Address to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland passed at a public Meeting in Cork, has been presented by a deputation headed by the Lord Lieutenant of that County.—It explains the urgent distress occasioned by the second failure of the Potato Crop, and the practical remedies which are recommended to ensure employment and subsistence for the people. It appears that the Government has taken up the matter very warmly, and all parties have come forward to co-operate in relieving the distress so much dreaded. Depots of Indian Meal are now forming in the most remote districts throughout the Country. The proposal to adopt a large and liberal measure for the agricultural improvement of the Country, *at the cost of the property improved*, is well deserving of attention. It has long been in successful operation in one of the most prosperous Counties of this Province.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE EARL OF BESBOROUGH, LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

*May it please Your Excellency,*

At a Meeting of the Clergy, Magistrates, and Landholders of the Poor-Law Union of Skibbereen, held on the 17th of August, a Deputation was named to represent the Union, and to submit to Your Excellency the very deplorable and alarming state of that part of the country; and at a subsequent Meeting of the West Riding of the County of Cork, convened by the Lord Lieutenant of the County, and held at Dunmanway, on Tuesday the 25th of August, the Earl of Bandon, at the unanimous request of the Meeting, determined to accompany the Deputation. It therefore becomes our duty, in laying before Your Excellency a copy of the Resolutions unanimously adopted at the first named Meeting, respectfully to offer, for Your Excellency's consideration, as nearly as possible, the concentrated opinions of the most intelligent persons with whom we have conferred upon the present awful state of the country; fully confiding in the anxious desire of Your Excellency, and of Her Majesty's Government, to adopt the most efficacious measures for averting the impending evil. The Deputation humbly submit that this important subject should be considered under two heads:—

1st. The provision of an ample supply of wholesome food on the cheapest and most advantageous terms, as a substitute for the food of the people, which may be considered, as far as our district is concerned, wholly and utterly destroyed.

2nd. The adoption of some wise and comprehensive system by which the labour of the people may be made available to their support, and by which the enormous expense and the debasing degradation of eleemosynary relief may be avoided.

In reference to the first point, while the Deputation fully concur in the wisdom of interfering, as little as can be avoided, with the ordinary progress of private enterprise, they cannot help expressing to Your Excellency their alarm at certain indications, which have already been evinced in some commercial communities, towards a spirit of monopoly in that article which is likely to be the main resource of the people; and they confidently hope that no smaller degree of provident arrangement, than that which so happily averted famine during the last season, will upon the present occasion be extended, most especially to remote Districts, which, from their backward and comparative primitive state, are deprived of the benefits of extensive commercial competition.

The Deputation, therefore, earnestly hope, that in the District which they represent, comprising six Poor Law Unions, with an area exceeding 800,000 acres, and a population of nearly 400,000 inhabitants, depots for food may be formed, to be resorted to if necessary, as a check upon any attempt at inordinate monopoly; and the Deputation beg respectfully to suggest the towns of Clonakilty, Skibbereen, and Bantry, as suitable places for such purpose, being seaport towns, and, therefore, accessible by water.

The consideration of the second, and not less important subject, of employment, the Deputation approach with extreme diffidence; believing that it is occupying the attention of the most enlightened individuals in the confidence of the Government; they venture, however, respectfully to offer the opinions of practical men resident among, and conversant with the habits of the people, and acquainted with the circumstances of the country.

That a large and comprehensive system of what are termed "Public Works," will be indispensable for the immediate relief of the people, the Deputation are especially instructed to state to your Excellency; and, that the urgency is so great, and the danger likely to result from famine or disease produced by the use of unwholesome food so imminent, as to render it expedient that your Excellency would be pleased, under the provisions of the recent Statute, to direct that an Extraordinary Presentment Sessions should be called, with all possible expedition, and at the shortest notice, in each of the baronies of the West Riding of the County of Cork, from which applications under the 9th of the Queen remain undisposed of.