

VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

Some of our readers may have felt that the View in last month's TOWER was too severe an arraignment of the land-lord system of the old world, that we should not have intimated that the majority at least of the present aristocratic land-holding class are the descendants of robbers who took the land from the people.

We feel however that we did not draw too dark a picture of the injustice; and in fact that the *truth* on the subject is rarely stated for fear of offending those high in influence, or their friends. It may be claimed by some that the peasantry were more happy years ago when they were without educational advantages, ignorant, etc., and virtually bought and sold with the land. This may be true in many instances, and so too, no doubt, many of the negroes once slaves in the United States were happier and better provided for in slavery, than now that they are their own masters. But the principle involved is that the freedom is needful to the development of the human mind and of self-control and progress in general toward the true ends of human existence.

We were reasoning of *righteousness*, not of temporary expediency as viewed by narrow minds from a selfish standpoint. We reasoned too, of "judgment to come," and that speedily now, for we are in the beginning of the great Day of Judgment – the Millennial age, in which judgment shall be laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet (Isa. 28:17); in which, too, the unjust shall receive a *just* recompense there-for. Though it may be claimed for the masses, that "ignorance *was* bliss," it can be claimed no longer. Soon this and similar wrongs will bring the great time of trouble foretold in Scripture. Let all the *saints* scrutinize closely, every act of dealing and relationship with each other and with the world; let us make certain that justice prevails in every instance – that we do to others not differently from what we would wish them to do to us if our places were changed – making sure to err, if at all, on the side of benevolence. And if we are

among those suffering injustice, we, above all others, must be patient and forbearing, not seeking to recompense evil for evil, but call to mind the words of the Apostle – Avenge not yourselves dearly beloved but rather let your wrath give place to sympathy and pity, remembering that it is written, "Vengeance is mine *I will repay* saith the Lord." Our condition is far different from that of the poor world. If we suffer losses or injustice in earthly matters, let us remember that to us those things are already counted "loss and dross." (Phil. 3:8.) We have our real [R1038 : page 1] heart-treasures, grand and precious reserved in heaven for us; we have the comfort of the Scriptures, while they have naught but earthly joys and comforts in the present life, and often few of them (and often fears for the everlasting future) and no wonder if they cling to their little all, and sometimes try and get yours and feel restless. We can well afford to be patient indeed. And patience in earthly matters on the part of the consecrated, will go far toward impressing the hearts and watering the seeds of truth concerning God's glorious Plan of the Ages, which from time to time we may be able to drop into aching hearts.

Our statement of last month that the *few* hold the titles to the lands of the old world is amply borne out, by an exhaustive and able article entitled "Landed Income and Landed Estate," in the London [R1038 : page 2] *Quarterly Review*. It gives very full statistics relative to the ownership of the soil of Great Britain and Ireland, showing that three-fourths of the land is owned by 58,170 persons, showing an average of 6,576 acres to each person. These figures include none with a less acreage than 380 acres, and twelve thousand of them average over 16,000 acres each. And from such facts the writer draws the sensible conclusion: – "It is of importance to the country, and of pressing importance to landlords, if they wish to be secure from confiscation and pillage in the future, that the land-owning class should be increased."

We print below a clipping from the *Pittsburgh Times*, referring to the eviction of some of the poor of Scotland, which is valuable, as

showing that worldly men no less than ourselves see these wrongs and are bold enough to speak the truth on the subject. Alas! that self-interest should close the eyes and mouths of so many. [R1038 : page 2]

MEN WHO HAVE NO RIGHTS.

"Twenty-five families of honest Scotch people, escorted by Highland pipers, playing funeral dirges, to the ships which were to take them into exile! That was a picture presented at a port in the Hebrides, and is a striking example of the workings of the British land system. These people were not sent into exile for any crime, but simply because they could not pay the rent demanded for the land stolen from their ancestors.

"In the Scotch Highlands we see the system of a landed aristocracy in its worst forms. Under the old clan system the land belonged to the tribe and was divided afresh at the accession of each new chief, the chief taking his share like the other members, but exacting nothing from his subjects but civil obedience and military service. After the second Jacobite rebellion in 1745 the process of dissolution of the old clans, which had already begun, was completed. The chief was transformed into the landlord, the land of the clan into his property, and the members of the clan into his tenants. Under the old system a man who was disabled from personal service in war paid for exemption in cash or in kind. These payments under the new system became the rule and were called rent. Thus the landlord system was established.

"The old independent chieftains, living in simplicity with their clans as with a big family, were now transformed into bewigged autocrats, fluttering around the court in London and only going to their Scotch estates to hunt in the autumn. Those estates were left in charge of stewards, whose fidelity was measured by the amount of rent they could grind out of the tenants. As the rage for hunting increased the landlords came to consider their Scotch estates valuable only as

shooting preserves, and they frequently leased their shooting rights to rich Englishmen.

"Then began the "clearing" of these estates, in which the Duke of Sutherland was the first. Wide valleys and hillsides dotted with the dwellings of the humble crofters were cleared of their human habitations and again made into a wilderness whose only inhabitants were deer and grouse, pheasants and foxes. The most productive use to which the land was put was sheep raising. The human inhabitants were driven off to America and the colonies, or to the sea-port towns, where they gained a miserable subsistence by fishing. Some refused to leave the homes where their ancestors had dwelt for centuries. Their dwellings were burned from over their heads and the bailiff drove them out. Thus, while the American backwoodsman was clearing away the forest from the fertile plains and bringing them under the domain of man, the British landlord was clearing away the human inhabitants of the Highland valleys and making them again a howling wilderness, where only the wild beasts roamed.

"Of late years the growth of population has created such a demand for the small patches of lands which the lords still left their tenants to live on, that their rents have steadily risen until the crofters could not force a subsistence from the soil. Then they refused to pay the rent, resisted those who came to exact payment and were only dragooned into submission by military force. But popular sympathy had been aroused on their behalf throughout the British Empire, and their few champions in Parliament demanded that the law should be changed so that such abominations might cease. The Tory Government said it could not do this, but admitted that the case of the crofters was a hard one and made an appropriation to enable them to emigrate to Manitoba. Those twenty-five families who left the Hebrides to the mournful music of the bag-pipes were the first of the exiles. They leave the homes of their ancestors to carve out new homes in the wilderness and leave the land, which, according to their old laws belongs to them, in possession of the robbers whom the English Government protects.

"What feelings towards the English Government will these people carry into exile? Will their hearts be burning with loyalty to Queen Victoria because her Government paid their expenses, or will they be burning with hatred against the country which exiles the poor and industrious to feed the vices of the rich and lazy?"

