

destructible stone, that never resolves into soil, was covered by a stratum of dark peat, where the proprietor had experimented on the capabilities of the native Highlanders, by measuring out to them amid the moor, at a low rent, several small farms, of ten or twelve acres a-piece. But in a moor composed of peat and quartz-rock no rent can be low. No farmer thrives on a barren soil, let his rent be what it may; and so the speculation here had turned out a bad one. The quartz-rock and the peat proved pauper-making deposits; and while the tenants paid their rents irregularly and ill, the demands made on the poor-rates by the hangers-on of the colony came to be demanded very regularly indeed, and were beginning to overtop the nominal rent in their amount. "How," we have frequently inquired of the poor people, "are you spending your strength on patches so miserably unproductive as these? You are said to be lazy. For our own part, what we chiefly wonder at is your great industry. Were we at least in your circumstances, we would improve upon your indolence, by striking work, and not labouring at all." The usual reply used to be,—“Ah, there is good land in the country, but *they* will not give it to us.” And certainly we did see in the Highlands many tracts of kindly-looking soil. Green margins, along the sides of long-withdrawing valleys, which still bore the marks of the plough, but now under natural grass, seemed much better fitted to be, as of old, scenes of human industry, than the cold ungenial mosses or the barren moors. But in at least nineteen cases out of every twenty we found the green patches bound by lease to some extensive sheep-farmer, and as unavailable for the purposes of the present emergency, even to the proprietor, as if they lay in the United States or the Canadas.

So far as we could see, the effects of recent emigration had not been favourable. The poor-rates were heaviest in the districts from which the greatest numbers had emigrated.