

**THE LAND MONOPOLY, OR,
LAND, TAXATION, AND
PAUPERISM: OR LAND,
TAXATION, AND PAUPERISM**

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The Land Monopoly, Or, Land, Taxation, and Pauperism: Or Land, Taxation, and Pauperism by Ernest Rolleston

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THE

LAND MONOPOLY;

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WITH A CHAPTER ON



IRELAND: ITS DISCONTENT AND REMEDY.

BY ERNEST ROLLESTON.

MANCHESTER: JOHN HEYWOOD, EXCELSIOR BUILDINGS, RIDGEFIELD:
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The following pages, with the exception of the First Chapter, referring more particularly to Ireland, were published in another form a few years ago. The writer believes they will be found of greater value at the present time, as the Land Question is rapidly becoming the most important question of the day; and in giving them their present form he is acting in deference to the wishes of some friends whose opinions and judgment he highly values.

January, 1831.

Release 1-2-29 MVP

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THE
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CHAPTER I.

IRELAND'S DISCONTENT AND REMEDY.

THE question of Land Reform is every day attracting the attention of earnest men of every political party, and a far greater change than some of them perceive is inevitable in the immediate future.

It is impossible that the iniquitous system under which the land is held in Great Britain and Ireland, can be upheld much longer. It is not alone the artizans and labourers who suffer and have been pauperised and so many rendered criminals by the existence of such a system, but capitalists, manufacturers, and tradesmen of every grade have been compelled to pay rates and taxes which should have been borne entirely by the land. By the imposition of rates, taxes, excise and customs duties, trade and

commerce have been restricted, and their full development prevented, and the bulk of the people have been, and still are, kept in a state of poverty and wretchedness which can find no parallel in any civilised country.

A comparatively small number of men or families having, many of them by very questionable means, got possession of nearly all the land in the three kingdoms, the legislative and administrative powers fell into their hands, almost as a matter of course; and the results of such powers are seen in the squalid misery, the wretched and ill-ventilated dwellings, the ignorance and the crimes of the people, the spasmodic paralysis of our national industries, the squandering of millions of wealth annually over unworthy objects or worthless persons, and the numerous costly and unjust wars into which the country has been so often plunged. In putting a period to all these evils, the tradesmen, manufacturers, and capitalists are as much interested as the labouring classes themselves.

The evils flowing from this system have produced a state of discontent in Ireland, bordering on rebellion; and it would be absurd to expect that any people should for ever remain quiescent under the oppression and wrongs, both in Church and State, which they have had for many generations to endure. It was not until after hundreds of men had been shot, hanged, or starved to death, that the tithes exacted by an alien church were done away with by the passing of the Tithes Commutation Act; and then even the landholders who passed that Act, grasping as they have ever been,

took care to put twenty per cent of the tithes into their own pockets, thus "robbing," as they would say in other cases, the Church as well as the people.

The famine and famine-fever consequent on the failure of the potato crop in 1845, which led to the repeal of the Corn Laws early in the following year, are not likely to be forgotten by those who are old enough to remember their occurrence. Old and young alike were stricken down in thousands by the famine-fever, and a wail of sorrow, suffering, and terror was heard all over the country. But weakened by suffering and having had to sacrifice all they ever possessed, even in this time of general distress, a number of Irish landholders evicted thousands of these suffering wretches, levelled their miserable cabins to the ground, and drove the inmates away like vermin to starve by the roadside.

The present state of Ireland demands the serious attention of the Government, which will probably find a considerable amount of obstruction thrown in their way by those interested in keeping back all reforms. The people in Ireland have been exasperated by the action of the House of Lords in contemptuously throwing out the small Disturbance Bill, after its having passed the House of Commons by a large majority. The Bill might have somewhat pacified Ireland until Government had had time to watch its effects, and to elaborate some more extensive measures. The action of the Lords produced a considerable amount of indignation throughout the country, and the question has been often asked if an irresponsible and hereditary body of men shall much longer