

LAND SYSTEMS

AND

INDUSTRIAL ECONOMY

OF

IRELAND, ENGLAND, AND CONTINENTAL COUNTRIES.

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LAND SYSTEMS

&c.



INTRODUCTION.

ALONG with a republication of several essays in deference to many suggestions, this volume contains additional articles* on the Land Systems of Ireland and England, and on the industrial economy of La Creuse, Westphalia and the Ruhr Basin, and Belgium, founded on later study and local inquiry.

It appears to the author that the Land Systems of England and Ireland are best studied together. The two systems react in many ways on each other; their results present some striking resemblances, and where they differ most, the differences are instructive. They have a common origin and foundation. The first sentence in Mr. Furlong's standard treatise on the Law of Landlord and Tenant in Ireland is: 'The common law regulating the enjoyment of real property

* Marked with an asterisk in the table of contents.

parition en masse chez nous. Ils parcourent en bandes les forêts voisines de la commune, où ils trouvent un abri assuré, après les déprédations nocturnes.

“Depuis la plantation jusqu'à la récolte, ces bêtes fauves ne cessent de faire la guerre aux champs de pommes de terre. C'est la nuit qu'elles choisissent pour exercer leurs rapines. Le sanglier voyage volontiers par bandes. Aujourd'hui, ils vous culbuteront quelques centaines de plantes de pommes de terre dans un champ, demain dans un autre ; parfois, la même nuit, dans cinq ou six champs différents à la fois.

“Que dirai-je des champs de seigle ou d'orge situés à proximité des bois ?—A peine le grain commence-t-il à mûrir, que les sangliers arrivent. Ils se jettent de préférence sur les parties les plus belles et les plus épaisses, ils forment des javelles, les couchent à terre, dévorent les épis, se vautrent dans la paille, courent de çà de là, et vous mettent la récolte dans un état lamentable.

“Que mettra le laboureur dans son champ, après la pomme de terre ainsi ravagée ? Du seigle, le plus souvent. Eh bien, pour glaner la pomme de terre oubliée dans les sillons, le sanglier vous retournera un champ tout entier : avant la fin de l'hiver, pas un pied carré n'aura échappé à ses atteintes.

“Que faire ?—Voilà sept ans que cela dure, et réellement nous avons subi de grandes pertes à cause de cela. Toute la population demande à cors et à cris que le gouvernement, protecteur naturel de nos propriétés, et auquel nous payons régulièrement l'impôt, intervienne et prenne des mesures promptes et ex-

péditives pour nous délivrer de ces animaux destructeurs.”

Where such complaints are heard, however, Adam Smith's third period of husbandry has been reached ; in Ardenne the wild boar has scope enough without obtruding within the precincts of human cultivation. He may roam the very 'forest of Arden,' which Murray's 'Handbook' says recalls so well Shakespeare's description of its scenery, that one might dream of meeting there the banished duke in sylvan court. And in truth, the natives of Ardenne in general may, in comparison with the ever-toiling Flemings, whom they contemn, be said, like the duke's companions, 'to fleet their time carelessly as they did in the golden time.' M. de Laveleye remarks upon their hospitality to strangers. But hospitality is a primitive virtue, sometimes accompanied by that primitive development of the intellect, which takes forms considered blamable where industry has arrived at the advanced commercial stage at which honesty is accounted the best policy. The tourist who comes for sport is welcomed, but as the people of the place themselves observe, it is *toujours le dernier venu*, supposed to come with the most open hand, who gets the peasant's heartiest aid, and the village host will sometimes balk his sport for private ends. A very pleasant innkeeper caused us, not long ago, to miss a boar-hunt that he might not miss us at his *table d'hôte*, and if his charges were low in proportion to the prices of an untravelled place, he seemed to think he might requite himself for entertainment at so light a cost by indirect and ingenious

