

*Inverness Courier*

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His lordship [Marquis of Lorne] gives a miserable picture of the island of Tyree as regards over-population:— "I may mention to you two facts—first, that there are 1400 people and upwards who do not pay one farthing of rent either to the proprietor or to any tenant. Secondly that the population has now for many years entirely exhausted ALL the peat fuel on the island. The poor people are compelled to come over to our property of the Ross of Mull every summer for their year's stock of fuel. Many of the poor people who have no boats of their own pay £3 freight for their winter's cargo. It is given them for nothing—for the labour of cutting. But suppose the Ross of Mull belonged to another proprietor! No proprietor but he to whom both estates belonged could of course allow such enormous peat-cutting for nothing. It very much cuts up the agricultural value of great stretches of improvable land. If Tyree belonged to any other proprietor the people would be starved out of the island for want of firing. Now, in such a case as this, is it right to allow things to go on they are? I think not. And though the people themselves, from the indolence and apathy always occasioned by such poverty, should be unwilling to move, I hold that the power of the proprietor is not only legitimately but necessarily used when employed to insist on the emigration of those people. Anything like violent compulsion must, of course, be avoided, and every precaution used for the safe transport and comfortable employment or settlement of the emigrants. It would be an immense relief, not only pecuniary, but as regards responsibility, if the assistance I have mentioned were given by the Government."

*Transcription by Billy Clelland.*