

regular employment. We do not say that any such system is acted on, but it is easy to do so without being discovered, and it is well known that the man who is instrumental in raising the price of labour, is less favourably looked on by his class than the man who aids in keeping it down. We are also aware that no such combination, if it were attempted, could long affect the market rate of wage, because wages, like every marketable commodity, are regulated by the demand. If the supply be equal to the demand, they will be steady and uniform—if it rise above or below the demand they will gradually rise or fall, notwithstanding every effort to counteract the tendency; but it is sufficient to show that the Feeing Market is not so advantageous as many suppose for the disposal of labour, and we think that other arrangements equally conducive to this, and far more beneficial in other respects, might be adopted.

Having thus glanced at the Bothie System and the Feeing Market, we may inquire whether they have any, and what, effect upon the moral and religious character of the peasantry of Aberdeenshire?

We know no summary of duties of master and servant more concise or authoritative than that given by the Apostle Paul, in the sixth chapter of Ephesians. He says, "Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free; and ye masters do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with Him."

We think that service has its rights as well as its duties. Its rights appear to us to be—clean and comfortable lodging, wholesome and nutritious food, and regular and well paid wage. Its duties are fidelity, honesty, and prompt and respectful obedience, every thing being done in accordance with the Bible precept, "do to others as you would have others do to you."

In what respect are these duties and these services discharged under existing circumstances? Is the filthy ill-conditioned Bothie suitable accommodation? Is the self-prepared food palatable or nutritious? Is the wage payable half-yearly, under frequent deductions, in accordance with the precept.

Is the service usually rendered hearty, zealous, neither short of time nor quality? Is the obedience uniformly immediate? as much in accordance with the spirit as the letter of the command. Is there not a nice calculation of time, so that the hours and minutes of service shall not exceed the legitimate number? Is there not often a reluctant obedience, almost amounting to disobedience, either by tardy compliance with the order, or a wilful, though pretended, perversion of its import?

We would ask of the masters, what is the general character of their servants? Of servants, what is the general character of their masters?

Is there any thing like the old fashioned kindly feeling which formerly existed, when servants entered at the first year of the tenant's lease, and removed at the last. When, in familiar speech, they spoke of our horses and our cattle, as if they belonged to themselves—as if our master and our mistress had only the additional trouble of buying and selling? We fear not. Do they not on the contrary enter the service with indifference, pass the six months in jangling, and part with mutual dislike? We would have the system entirely changed. We would abolish the Feeing Market, and put an end to the half-yearly engagement, and we would propose instead, an engagement during pleasure, with a month's notice or a month's wage, when either party desired to be free.