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The original book for this e-text is full of inconsistent hyphenation, punctuation and capitalization, which has been preserved. This e-text contains Irish dialect, with unusual spelling.

Obvious typographical errors have been corrected. For a complete list, please see the end of this document.

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IRELAND AS IT IS

AND AS IT WOULD BE

UNDER HOME RULE.

SIXTY-TWO LETTERS
WRITTEN BY THE
SPECIAL COMMISSIONER
OF THE
BIRMINGHAM DAILY GAZETTE,

Between March and August, 1893.

With Map of Ireland showing the places visited.

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SPECIAL COMMISSIONER'S PREFACE.

Irish Loyalists will not soon forget the early part of 1893. Arriving in Dublin in March, it at once became evident that the industrial community regarded Home Rule, not with the academical indifference attributed to the bulk of the English electorate, but with absolute dismay; not as a possibility which might be pleasantly discussed between friends, but as a wholly unnecessary measure, darkly iniquitous, threatening the total destruction of all they held dear. English lukewarmness was hotly resented, but the certainty that England must herself receive a dangerous if not a mortal wound, was scant comfort to men who felt themselves on the eve of a hopeless struggle for political, nay, even for material existence. This was before the vast demonstrations of Belfast and Dublin, before the memorable function in the Albert Hall, London, before the hundreds of speakers sent forth by the Irish Unionist Alliance had visited England, spreading the light of accurate knowledge, returning to Ireland with tidings of comfort and joy. The change in public feeling was instant and remarkable. Although from day to day the passage of the Bill through the Commons became more and more a certainty, the Irish Unionists completely discarded their fears, resuming their normal condition of trust and confidence. Mr. H.L. Barnardo, J.P., of Dublin, aptly expressed the universal feeling when he said:—

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"We have been to England, and we know three things,—that the Bill will pass the Commons, that the Lords will throw it out, and that the English people don't care if they do."

This accounted for the renewed serenity of the well-doing classes, whose air and attitude were those of men thankful for having narrowly escaped a great danger. The rebound was easily observable in cities like Dublin and Belfast, where also was abundantly evident the placid resignation of the Separatist forces, whose discontent with the actual Bill and profound distrust of its framer, superadded to an ever-increasing qualmishness inevitably arising from acquaintance with the prospective statesmen of an Irish Legislature, caused them to look forward

to the action of the Lords with ill-disguised complacency. In regions more remote the scattered Loyalists lacked the consolation arising from numbers and propinquity to England, and accordingly their tremors continued, and, in a smaller degree, continue still. To them the Bill is a matter of life and death; and while their industry is crippled, their mental peace is destroyed by the ever-present torture of suspense.

As to the merits of the case for Home Rule, I would earnestly ask fair-minded opponents to remember that during my wanderings I met with numbers of intelligent and honourable men, both Scots and English, who having come to Ireland as earnest, nay, even by their own confession, as bigoted Gladstonians, had changed their opinions on personal acquaintance with the facts, and strove with all the energy of conscientious men who had unwittingly led others astray, to repair, so far as in them lay, the results of their former political action. And it should be especially noted that of all those I so met who had arrived in Ireland as Home Rulers, not one retained his original faith. A very slight process of inductive reasoning will develop the suggestiveness of this incontestible fact.

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Readers will hardly require to be reminded that the letters were written, not in studious retirement with ample time at command, but for a Daily Paper, at the rate of nearly eight newspaper columns a week, in the intervals of travel and inquiry, often under grave difficulties and with one eye on the inexorable clock. The precepts of the Master were of necessity ignored: —

> *Sæpe stylum vertas, iterum quæ digna legi sint Scripturus; neque,*
> *te ut miretur turba labores Contentus paucis lectoribus.*

But before committing them to paper, the facts were sifted with scrupulous care, and where personal investigation was impracticable, nothing was adduced except upon evidence of weight and authority sufficient to prove anything. And as during a six months' hue and cry of the Nationalist press of Ireland, aided and abetted by some English prints, no single statement was in any degree shaken, the letters have re-appeared precisely as at first.

R.J.B.,
Special Commissioner of the *Birmingham Daily Gazette*.

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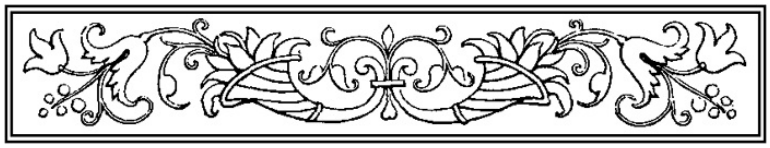
EDITOR'S REVIEW.

The *Birmingham Daily Gazette* of August 18, 1893, thus summed up the labours of its Special Commissioner:—We publish to-day the last of our Special Commissioner's letters on "Ireland As It Is." His task has been an arduous one, and not without a strong element of personal danger. That he has been kept under the close observation of the Irish police; that they have frequently given

him timely warning of personal danger; that he has dared to go to places in County Clare when the police warned him to refrain, and his native car-driver refused to venture, are facts which he has modestly abstained from bringing into the prominence they deserved. We must necessarily speak of the merits of his labour with a certain measure of reserve, but the many letters which lie before us are at least a gratifying proof that his work has been appreciated, and that it has cast new lights upon the Irish problem. To the simple direction, "State nothing that you cannot stand by," he has been faithful even beyond our most sanguine hopes. A stranger in a strange land seeking information wherever it can be found, and compelled on many occasions to accept the statements made to him, may easily be led into error. It is to the credit of our Commissioner that he has withheld some of the most sensational stories retailed to him, because he had not an opportunity of verifying them in detail. The notorious Father Humphreys, of Tipperary, will not [viii] soon forget his experience of giving the lie to the *Gazette*; neither will those who organised an "indignation" meeting at Tuam be likely to congratulate themselves upon having stung our Commissioner into retaliation. It may be recalled as an illustration of the desperate efforts made to discredit him that after he had attended a Nationalist meeting at Dundalk he was denounced as a "liar" and a "pimp" because he had stated that he was invited to address the score of persons who had "met in their thousands" to shake the foundations of the British Empire. His assailants fiercely declared that he was not invited to speak; he was only informed that he might address the meeting if he desired to do so!

Our Commissioner has travelled about four thousand miles since he started last March. He has taken no lop-sided view of Ireland. The prosperous North has been contrasted with the stagnant South, and the causes of their difference have been explained. The splendid work of industrial development inaugurated in the poverty-stricken West by that greatest of all Irish Secretaries, Mr. Balfour, has been compared with the mischievous encouragements of idleness, the lavish professions of sentimental sympathy, and the dogged refusals of substantial help since the present Government took office. Above all, our Commissioner has provided conclusive evidence that Irish Nationalism is a mere delusive sham—a paltry euphemism for the predatory passion which a succession of professional agitators have aroused in the hearts of the people. If the Land Question could be settled, there would be an end of the clamour for independence and of the insensate shrieking against British rule. With a definite stake in the country the peasantry upon whom the Nationalist agitation mainly relies would cease to place their faith in the impecunious and blatant scoundrelism which fattens upon the discord and misery which it provokes in the [ix] name of Patriotism. Our Commissioner believes that the priests, who have an even stronger hold upon the people than the politicians, would find their power weakened if it were possible to greatly extend the system of peasant proprietary which it was the purpose of the Land Purchase of 1891 to foster. Land hunger lies at the root of Irish disaffection, and the Romish hierarchy have found in the deep-rooted prejudices and the ignorant superstitions of the people a foundation upon which they have reared an appalling superstructure of social and spiritual tyranny. Politicians have taught the peasantry to believe that they have been robbed of the land which is their only means of subsistence in a country that is destitute of mineral wealth, that lacks capital, and is overshadowed by the enormous commercial energy of Great Britain. The priests have adopted the theses of politicians, and have brought the terrors of their sacred calling into play in order to make themselves the masters of the people.

Home Rule would be the signal for a ghastly civil war, ruinous to Ireland, and fatal to that spirit of religious toleration by which the Roman Catholics and the Protestants have obtained equal rights of citizenship under the rule of the Queen and the Imperial Parliament. The cultured Roman Catholics of England and Ireland look with pain and regret at the insensate bigotry and domineering intolerance which made the exposures in County Meath possible. They see in these wild claims of absolutism in the domain of temporal as well as spiritual affairs, a grave danger to all pure religion. They perceive that the revival of the old sectarian passions in Ireland cannot fail to react on Great Britain, and even if the Keltic priesthood triumphed over the Ulster Protestants their victory would be a fatal one to all who hold by the Roman Catholic faith in England. Home [x] Rule would bring misery and disaster in its train, and even the Parnellite section of the Irish people, who have shaken off clerical domination, tremble at the prospect of it while nine-tenths of their co-religionists are destitute of personal freedom. We must find the solution of Ireland's disaffection in another way, and mainly by a bold handling of the agrarian question, which lies at the root of all. The task before the Unionist party is not a light one. They must crush the Nationalist conspiracy, and uproot the fantastic hopes which unscrupulous men have implanted in the minds of an ignorant and credulous people. They must extend the noble system of practical aid to Ireland so successfully inaugurated by Mr. Balfour in his light railway, fishery, and agricultural development schemes. And they must mitigate the friction between owners and occupiers of the soil by making it easy and profitable for tenants and landlords alike to avail themselves of British credit in terminating a relationship which has been fraught with occasions of bitter hostility and mistrust. Under such a policy we can see bright prospects of a happy future for the sister island, but under the policy of Home Rule we see only the lowering clouds of civil war and the dark shadows of reawakened religious animosity.



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AND AS IT WOULD BE

UNDER HOME RULE.

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IRELAND AS IT IS

AND AS IT WOULD BE

UNDER HOME RULE.

No. 1.—THE SPIRIT OF THE CAPITAL.

ToC

By the Spirit of the Capital I do not mean, as an Irishman would tell you, Jameson's whiskey, nor yet the vivifying soul of Guinness's double stout, but the mental posture of the dwellers in Dublin with reference to Home Rule. There can be no doubt of the interest prevailing in the Irish metropolis. The people are wrought into a fever-heat of expectancy and intense nervous excitement. Home Rule is the only topic of conversation. In hotels, on the steamers, in railway carriages, on tramcars, in the market-place, on the steps of the temples, at the corners of the streets, in the music halls, the wondering stranger hears of Home Rule, Home Rule, Home Rule, first, last, midst, and without end.

Obviously so much discussion shows difference of opinion, divergency of conception, conflicting interests. It is borne in upon you that the Irish people are far from agreed as to what Home Rule means, and that every individual has his own pet notion, the various theories differing as widely as the education and social position of their proposers. But the most striking feature in the attitude of Dublin is undoubtedly the intense, the deep-rooted, the perfervid hatred of the bill shown by the better sort of people, the nervous anxiety of the law-abiding classes, the undisguised alarm of everybody who has anything to lose, whether commercial men, private traders, manufacturers, or the representatives of learning and culture. The mere shadow of Home Rule has already seriously affected stocks and securities, has brought about withdrawal of capital, and is sending both English and Irish commercial travellers home empty-handed. Sir Howard Grubb, maker of the great telescope of the Lick Observatory, America, an Irishman whose scientific and commercial successes are a glory to his country, and whose titular honours have been won by sheer force of merit, declares that the passing of the Home Rule Bill will be the signal heralding his departure to England, with plant and working staff, and that he has been preparing for this since 1886. One of the largest booksellers in the city tells me that, acting in conjunction with others of the trade, during the last six weeks no orders have been given to [2] English travellers, adding—and thoughtful people should find this highly suggestive—"The Dublin Unionists are the people who have the money and the education. The people who have money to spend are becoming excessively careful. They know not what may be in store, but they fear that if Home Rule becomes law they will be ruined, and more than ninety-five per cent. of my customers are Unionists."

Further inquiry confirmed the statement that the book-buying community are practically Unionists to a man. The same figures hold good among the Irish Quakers. Ninety-five per cent. is the proportion given to me by an eminent Friend, no stranger to Birmingham, intimately known to Alderman White and three generations of the Cadbury family. He said, "Irish Quakers are Unionists, because they are on the spot, because they understand the subject, because they know what will follow, because they share the dangers of the threatened revolution. What may be the proportion of Home Rulers among the English Friends I do not know, but probably the Gladstonians have a majority, for precisely opposite reasons to those I have stated, that is,—they are not on the spot, do not understand the matter, are unable to see what will take place, and regard themselves as safe, whatever happens." The Irish Quakers have issued a manifesto which should weigh with their English brethren and with the country at large. The Quakers know their way about. Their piety has not blunted their perceptive faculties, has not taken the edge off their keenness. Their reputation for shrewdness is equal to their reputation for integrity, which is saying a good deal. With them the innocence of the dove is happily combined with considerable wisdom of the serpent. And at least ninety-five per cent. of the Irish Quakers are earnest Unionists.

But although the deep concern of the respectable classes of the Irish capital is calculated to fill the wandering Englishman with grave uneasiness, it is not all tragedy. The Dubliners must have their fun, and, like the Parisians, will sport with matters of heaviest import. The poorer classes treat the universal subject lightly, as beseems men who have nothing to lose and everything to gain. The prevailing trait in their mental attitude is incredulousness. You cannot make them believe that the bill will pass. "We'll get Home Rule when a pair o' white wings sprouts out o' me shoulders an' I fly away like a blackbird," said an old market woman with great emphasis; and a Dublin jackeen, piloting an American over the city, said: "This, Sorr, is College Green, an' that, Sorr, is Thrinity College, an' that Sorr,"—here he pointed to the grand pile opposite the College —"that Sorr, is the grate buildin' in which the Irish Parliament is *not* going to meet!" At one of the music halls an old woman (Ireland) is represented as buying a coffin for a deceased son named "Home Rule" Bill, when the following conversation occurs:—

"Is it an oak or an elm coffin ye want?"

"Ah, thin, just a chape deal coffin, shure—wid a few archangels on the lid." [3]

"Will ye want any trimmings?"

"Arrah, what d'ye mane by trimmin's?"

"Trimmings for the coffin."

"Bad luck to yer trimmin's. What would I want wid them? Sure 'twas 'trimmin's' that kilt him!"

It is hoped that Saxon readers will see this subtle joke when I explain that "delirium" should come before "trimmin's."

Underneath the incredulity of the lower classes—and be it observed that their incredulity is obviously based on an instinctive feeling that the claims and arguments of their own party are alike preposterous—underneath this vein of unbelief is a vein of extraordinary credulity. Poverty is to be at once and for ever abolished. "The millions an' millions that John Bull dhrags out iv us,

to kape up his grandeur, an' to pay soldiers to grind us down, we'll put into our own pockets, av you plaze," was the answer vouchsafed to an inquiry as to what advantages were expected from the passing of the Home Rule Bill. The speaker was a political barber. Another of the craft said, in answer to the same query, "Well, Sorr, I think we have a right to our indipindence. Sure, we'd be as sthrong as Switzerland or Belgium." A small farmer from the outlying district thought that rents would be lowered, that money would be advanced to struggling tenants, that great public works would be instituted, and plainly intimated that all these good things and many more had been roundly promised by the Home Rule leaders, and that he, for one, fully believed that all would duly come to pass, once the Bill were carried, which happy event he never expected to see. Every man was to be a kind of king in his own country, evictions were to be utterly unknown; the peasantry were to live rent free, under a visionary scheme of which he had all the absurd particulars; the old sporting maxim reminding farmers that landlord shooting begins on January 1st and ends on December 31st was to become obsolete by reason of a complete extinction of the species—only an odd one being occasionally dug out of the bogs along with trunks of bog-oak and skeletons of the great Irish elk; while the family pig, which, having for ages occupied a responsible position in the matter of "Rint," is understood to be an inveterate landlord-hater, will be released from his delicate situation, will be relieved from his harassing anxieties, will no longer be sacrificed to the exigencies of the occasion; but, on the contrary, will peacefully expire of old age, surrounded by every tribute of respect. The dirtiest of the Dubliners hold opinions as to the marvellous results of Home Rule more adapted to their own positions and pursuits, but apparently on the same plane, no whit higher in the scale of intelligence. They regard the English as their natural enemies, and the lower you go the more truculent they become. One and all they hold the belief, industriously instilled by agitators, that the poverty of Ireland is due to the aggrandisement of England, that the bulk of Irish taxation flows into English coffers, and is used [4] for English purposes to the exclusion of Ireland, and this they have swallowed and insist upon, in defiance of common reason and the evidence of their senses. The instinct of patriotism is not *en évidence*. The dominant passion is cupidity, and nothing higher; sheer greed of gain, lust of possession, and nothing nobler. Selfishness and the hope of plunder are the actuating impulses at the poll; crass ignorance and bitter prejudice the mental disposition of the lower class of voters. Four hours' slumming convinced me of this, and must convince anyone. "We'll bate the English into the say," said a resident in the sweet region yclept Summer Hill. "Whin we get the police in our hands an' an army of our own, we'd sweep them out o' the counthry av we only held cabbage-shtalks. Ireland for the Irish, an' to hell wid John Bull! Thim's my sintiments." And those are the "sintiments" of his class. I have spent days among the Irish Home Rulers without having once heard of the Union of Hearts. The phrase serves well enough to tickle the simple souls of the long-eared but short-headed fraternity of pseudo-philosophical-philanthropists across the water, but it has no currency in Ireland.

Like the country folks the city slummers believe that unheard-of advantages would follow the great Bill, and, unconsciously parodying Sancho Panza, say in effect, "Now blessings light on him who first invented Home Rule! it covers a man all over, thoughts and all, like a cloak; it is meat for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, heat for the cold, and cold for the hot." The bare thought of the coming Paradise illuminates their dirty visages. Like the lunatic, the lover, and the poet, they are of imagination all compact, and, unlike the character mentioned by the Bard, they "can hold a fire in their hands, By thinking on the frosty Caucasus, And cloy the hungry edge of appetite By bare imagination of a feast; And wallow naked in December snow By thinking on fantastic summer's heat."

Meanwhile, they lounge about in idleness, hugging their misery, discussing the "bating" of the Unionist party, or, as I saw them yesterday evening, listening to the crooning of an ancient female gutter-snipe, a dun-coloured heap of decrepit wretchedness, chanting the great future of the Irish Parliament in a picturesque and extraordinary doggerel anent the "larned reprisintatives of the Oirish na-a-tion. Promiscu-o-ous they shtand in em-u-la-a-tion." The small shopkeepers, once ardent Nationalists, seem to be changing their minds. One of them confided to me the fact that he and his fellows, brought actually face to face with the possibility that the end of their aspirations and agitations would be attained, were beginning to ask whether, after all, taxation would be remitted, whether indeed the rates would not be heavier, and whether the moneyed people would remain in the country at all. Hearing on all sides these and similar confessions, accompanied by urgent admonitions of secrecy, you begin to ask whether the past conduct of these enlightened voters had any more substantial basis than a cantankerous and [5] unreasonable discontent, superadded to an Irishman's natural love of fighting. The leaders of the Separatist party have made the most frantic efforts to win over the police, but apparently without much success. The Dublin constabulary, a body of 1,300 men, is totally separate and distinct from the Royal Irish Constabulary, but I have reason to believe that the feeling of both forces is averse to Home Rule. Said a sergeant yesterday, "John Bull may have faults, but," and here he winked expressively, "but—he pays!" Then he went on—"I am a Westmeath man, a Roman Catholic, an' as good an Irishman as any of thim; an' I'd like Home Rule if it was local self-government, what they call the gas an' wather management, or the like of that. But although I've the highest respect for my counthry, an' for my counthrymen, I'd like to feel that my pay was in better hands, and—what is of more importance—my pension, afther 30 years' service."

Here was a complete lack of confidence, but my friend had more to say. He referred to the provisions of the bill, spoke of the six years' arrangement, and on this point exhibited great native shrewdness. "How do we know we'll be employed for six years, once the Irish leaders get matters in their own hands? They may promise fairly enough, but they would be subject to several influences which might prevint thim kaping their promise. First of all, when they had the power,

they would naturally like to manage things their own way—an' not to be altogether bound down so hard an' fast by their engagement with the English Parliament. Then, although they profess such friendship, they don't altogether like us. We may tell them we are Nationalists, an' that we're runnin' over with patriotism; but they'll tell us that we stood by at evictions, an' that we fired on the people at Mitchelstown. But the greatest thing of all is this—all their counthry friends, all the terrorisers, the men that mutilated the cattle, the village ruffians that for years have been doin' their work, an' actin' as their spies—all these will have to be provided for. The same with our officers, but their case is still worse. They have had to pass a regular military examination, which means an expensive education. They will get the go-by an' the dirty kick-out, in order that the friends of the ruling party, who have been so long in the desert, may be furnished with posts. 'Tis human nature, Sorr." Wherefore, the constabulary, it would seem, may be trusted to take care of themselves, but the situation is suggestive of serious complications, once the bill were passed. A full private this morning told me that without the security of the British Exchequer the force would not hold together for four-and-twenty hours, a statement which, whatever be its value, is at least an indication of the amount of trust which some of the Irish people, and those not the worst informed, are disposed to place in the distinguished assembly which, according to the authority hereinbefore-mentioned is *not* to meet on College Green.

A never-ending complaint which follows you everywhere is the supineness of the English [6] electorate. Men whose interests are seriously threatened, such as the better class of shopkeepers, are unable to understand the comparative calmness of the British public at large. Passionately they ask why England leaves them to their fate, and strongly they urge that prompt and decided action should be taken, if not for the sake of Ireland, then in the interests of England herself. Disruption, pure and simple, the breaking up of the Empire, with panic and general ruin, are in their opinion the sure and certain concomitants of the bill now before the House. They declare that Englishmen as a whole, whether Gladstonians or Unionists, fail to realise the gravity of the situation, and they lose no opportunity of saying whenever they hear an English accent, "WE DON'T WANT IT, WE DON'T WANT IT!" Not always do they trouble to say what is the thing they so emphatically reject. "Pardon me, Sir, but are you English?" Receiving an affirmative the rejoinder comes at once, and forcefully, "We don't want it, we don't want it! Tell the English people that if they knew all they would not entertain the idea for a moment." The phrase meets you everywhere, is roared at you in chorus in commercial rooms, haunts you in your sleep, and, if they would own it, must be painfully suggestive to Gladstonian visitors. But there are none so blind as those who will not see, none so deaf as those who will not hear. It is impossible to withhold sympathy with the indignation and mental anxiety of these industrious men, who have made Dublin what she is, and whose only notion of happiness is the fulfilment of duty, their sole means of acquiring wealth or middleclass comfort, hard and honest work. That the backbone of the city should stand with their fortunes subject to the will of a few unscrupulous agitators is indeed, as they say, an inscrutable dispensation of Providence.

Help, however, is at hand. As Hercules hangs backward in their need they have determined to help themselves. During the Easter recess both Ireland and England will be made to ring with denunciations of Home Rule, denunciations uttered for the most part by Irishmen. Orators will go forth throughout the length and breadth of both islands, with the object of laying the truth of the matter before the people—demonstrating the dire results which the most intelligent almost unanimously predict. There will be no lack of funds—Catholics and Protestants are subscribing, among the former the grandson of Daniel O'Connell, the great Liberator of Ireland. Money is literally pouring into the offices of the Irish Unionist Alliance. Little Roman Catholic Tralee, in the heart of Kerry, one of the most disturbed districts, has sent several hundreds. In three weeks the subscriptions have reached £20,000. That ought to be enough to enable Irish Unionists not, as one said to me, "to enlighten the English people. We do not presume to so much. But we will try to let some of the Darkness out."

Dublin, March 28th.

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[7]

No. 2.—PANIC AND DISASTER.

ToC

The situation is becoming hourly more serious. The over-excited condition of men's minds is rapidly ripening into a panic. The impending Second Reading is driving the respectable population of Ireland into absolute despair. The capital is inundated by men from all parts of the kingdom anxious to know the worst, running hither and thither, asking whether, even at the eleventh hour, anything may be done to avert the dreaded calamity. An eminent solicitor assures me that during the last four-and-twenty hours a striking change of opinion has taken place. Red-hot Home Rulers when confronted with the looming actuality are on all sides abandoning their loudly proclaimed political

opinions. My friend's business—he is, or has been, an ardent Home Ruler—is chiefly connected with land conveyancing, and he declares that his office is besieged by people anxious to "withdraw their charges" on land and house property, that is, to recall their money advanced on mortgage, however profitable the investment, however apparently solid the security. He instanced the case of an estate in Cavan, bearing three mortgages of respectively £1,000, £3,000, and £4,000, and leaving to the borrower a clear income of £1,700 a year after all claims were paid. The three lenders are strenuously endeavouring to realise, the thousand-pounder being prostrate with affright, but although the investments under normal conditions would fetch a good premium, not a penny can be raised in any direction. The lenders are Home Rulers, and eighty per cent. of the population of Cavan are Roman Catholic.

The same story is heard everywhere, with "damnable iteration." The cause of charity is suffering severely. The building of additions to the Rotunda Hospital and the Hospital for Consumptives, at a cost of twenty thousand pounds, has been definitely abandoned, although three-quarters of the money has been raised. The building trade is at a complete standstill. On every hand contracts are thrown up, great works are put aside. Mr. Kane, High Sheriff of Kildare, declines to proceed with the building of his new mansion, which was to cost many thousand pounds. Mr. John Jameson, the eminent distiller, who also contemplated the construction of a palatial residence, which would take years to build, has dropped the idea. The project for the formation of a great Donegal Oyster-bed Company, which long bade fair to prosper, and to confer a boon on the starving peasantry of the coast, has been cast to the winds. Among the shoals of similar occurrences which confront you at every turn, some contain an element almost of humour. A Dublin architect tells a quaint story of this kind. It may not be generally known in England that the Roman Catholics of Ireland can borrow money from John Bull for the erection of "glebe-houses," at 4 per cent., repayable in 49 years. In a certain recent case the priest thought the builder's estimate too high, and, without absolutely declining the contract, intimated that he [8]
would "wait a while." Said the architect, "Better make up your mind before June, or you may have the Irish Legislature to deal with." This argument acted like magic. The good Father instantly saw its cogency, and, like every other patriotic Nationalist whose personal interest is involved, preferred to place himself in English hands rather than in those of his own countrymen, and incontinently accepted the contract, begging the architect to proceed with all haste.

A run on the Post Office Savings Bank threatens to clear out every penny of Irish money, and why? Because it has dawned on the small hoarders, the thrifty and industrious members of the lower classes, that the Post Office is to be transferred to the Irish Legislature. A friend tells me that yesterday his Catholic cook begged for an interview. She had money in the Post Office Savings Bank, and thereanent required advice, asking if it would be safe till to-morrow! Following up this hint, pregnant with meaning, though delivered in jest, I found that the feeling of insecurity is spreading like wild fire, to the intense indignation of those patriots who have no savings, and who are alive to the fact that under the provisions of the proposed Act the four millions supposed to be lying in the Post Office Savings Bank would constitute the entire working capital, as distinguished from current income, of the College Green Legislature. The master of a small sub-office told me that the withdrawals at his little place amounted to £200 per week, rising latterly to £70 per day, and that it was necessary to get money from London to meet the demands. Concurrently with this I learn that the Dublin Savings Bank, an institution managed by merchants of the city, for the encouragement of thrift, is receiving the money so withdrawn, and this confidence is explained by the well-known fact that the directors have publicly declared that on the passing of the Home Rule Bill they will pay 20s. in the pound and close the bank, in addition to which significant ultimatum they have, in writing, declared to Mr. Gladstone, that this course of action is due to the fact that they repudiate the security of the proposed Irish Legislature. To put the thing in a nutshell it may be said that not a single Irishman in or out of the country is willing to trust the Irish Legislature with a single penny of his own money.

A curious feature of the Nationalist character is the profound contempt expressed for Nationalist M.P.'s. Englishmen are accustomed to speak of their own members, representing their own opinions, with respect. Not so in Dublin. A rabid Nationalist said to me, "I am an Irishman to the backbone. I am a Home Ruler out-and-out. But do you think I'd trust my property with either of the two Tims? Do you think such men as Tim Harrington and Tim Healy are fit to be trusted with the spending of 2½ millions of money per annum? They have their job, and they work well at their job, and the Irish people have backed them up out of pure divilment. 'Tis [9]
mighty fine to take a rise out of John Bull, to harass him, to worry him, to badger him out of his seven sinses. The half of the voters never were serious, or voted as they were told by men who expatiated on the wrongs which have been dinned into them from infancy. But to trust these orators with their money! Bedad, we're not all out such omadhauns (idiots) as that! Paddy is not altogether such a fool as he looks."

Although public feeling has suddenly deepened in intensity, the change has been for some time in progress. I am enabled to state on irrefragable authority, that Lord Houghton's sudden departure from Dublin on Sunday week was entirely due to his alarm at the shifting aspect of affairs, which rendered instant conference with Mr. Gladstone a matter of urgent necessity. And it should be especially noted that this change is most apparent not in the Protestant North, not among the irreconcilable black and heretic Ulsterites, but in Nationalist Dublin, in the Roman Catholic south—not simply among the moneyed classes and well-to-do shopkeepers of Dublin, but among the industrious poor, and the small farmers of the region round about. The opinions and feelings of the better classes have ever been dead against the Bill, and the best portion of the poorer people are assuredly moving in the same direction. That such is the simple fact is undeniable. It is thrust upon you whether you will or no. You are compelled to believe it,

whatever your political creed. It manifests itself in a variety of ways. Mr. Love, of Kildare, a landed proprietor, now in Dublin, says that on Sunday last Dr. Gowing, parish priest of Kill, denounced Home Rule from the altar, and advised the people to have none of it.

The Dubliners are beginning to publicly ridicule their Nationalist members. A bog-oak carving represents a typical Irishman driving a "conthrairy pig," which is supposed to stand for Tim Harrington. The interesting animal is deviating from the right way, gazing fixedly at a milestone which bears the legend, "IX. miles to College Green." His master gives him a cut of the whip and a jerk of the rope, and thus addresses the wayward Tim, "Arrah, don't be wastin' yer larnin', radin' milestones. Ye're not goin' to Dublin—ye're goin' to BRAY!" A Phœnix Park orator who sang amusing songs finished his appeal for coppers thus, "Sure, Home Rule is a splindid thing—an iligant thing intirely, an' a blind man could see the goodness iv it wid his two eyes. Didn't ye all know Tim Harrington whin he hadn't the price iv his breakfast? Didn't ye know him whin he would dhrop on his two marrowbones and thank God for the price of a shmell of calamity-wather" (whiskey). "An' now look at him! D'ye mind the iligant property he has outside Dublin? An ye'll all get the like o' that, every bosthoon among yez, av ye get Home Rule. But yez must sind *me* to Parlimint. Sure I have ivery quollification. Wasn't I born among yez? Wasn't I rared among yez? Don't I know what yez wants? An' didn't I go many a day widout a male? Aye, that I did, an' could [10] do it again! Sind *me* to Parlimint, till I get within whisperin' distance of Misther Gladstone—within whisperin' distance, d'ye mind me? Ye'll all get lashins of dhrink, an' free quarthers at the Castle. An' all ye have to do is to pay me, an' pay me well." Here the speaker laid his finger along his nose and broke into a comic song having reference to "the broad Atlantic," which he chanted in a brogue almost as broad as the Atlantic itself.

The better class of vacillating Nationalists are ready to give a plausible reason for the faith that is in them. You cannot catch an Irish Home Ruler napping, nor will he admit that he was ever wrong. He will talk to the average Englishman about Irish rights and Irish wrongs, Irish virtues and Irish abstinence from crime with a reckless disregard for truth that can only be born of a firm belief that Irish newspapers are never read outside Ireland, and will then walk off and plume himself on the assumption that because he met no point-blank contradiction he has duped his victim into believing the most absurd mass of wild misinformation that was ever crammed down the throats of the most gullible of his rustic countrymen. It must be admitted that they are shrewd critics of the Bill, of which every individual citizen, whatever his conviction, has an annotated copy in his tail-pocket. The Dublin change of front is ascribed to the "insulting manner in which the Bill is drafted." The Nationalists, one and all, roundly declare, in terms which admit of no qualification, that the present bill means no less than separation, and while admitting that this is their dearest aspiration, declare that England will only have herself to thank. They complain that the word "Parliament" is never used in the Bill when referring to the Irish Legislature, but console themselves with the reflection that the supremacy of Parliament proper is only mentioned in the preamble, which they rejoice to believe is not part of the bill, and therefore is not binding in law. The Treasury clauses they declare to have been drawn by a deadly enemy of Ireland, but here again they find salvation in the alleged inconsistency of the various provisions of the bill.

They accept with exceeding great joy the provision which will enable them to deprive of their property, rights, and privileges all existing Corporations whether incorporated under Royal Charter or otherwise, pointing out that this means ownership and control of the Bank of Ireland, Trinity College, and all the churches and cathedrals, which hereafter are to be wrested from Protestant hands and devoted to the propagandism of the Roman Catholic faith; and that the Bill confers these powers is, they say, made clearly evident by the clause that places these matters in the hands of an executive "directed by Irish Act." By virtue of his position they have already nominated Archbishop Walsh on this executive, with other ecclesiastics of like kidney. This they admit is a good mouthful, but they scornfully assert that while Mr. Gladstone has left them income-tax to pay, he has also loaded them with the Post Office, a Greek gift, which under the best English management is worked at a loss of fifty thousand pounds a year! The two Home [11] Rulers who in my hearing so ruthlessly dissected the Bill made merry over the clause which excludes the Irish Government from all control of the "foreign mails or submarine telegraphs or through-lines in connection therewith," pouring on the unhappy sentence whole cataracts of ridicule. "We have the thing in our hands, and we are not to control its working," said they. "The cable between England and America passes through Ireland, will be worked by our servants, by people who will look to us as their paymasters, and we are to have no control!" The preposterous absurdity of the notion tickled the entire company. "But if England does not please us, can we not cut the cable? Can we not order our own paid servants to cease transmitting messages, or to transmit only such as have survived the inspection of the accredited officials of the Irish people?" It was thought that this was reasonable and a possible, nay a probable conjuncture, and might be used as a weapon to damage English trade. "Let them go round or lay another cable," said one patriot.

This sort of discussion, more or less reasonable, is everywhere heard, and should be of some value in indicating the use Irishmen expect to make of the Act. Not a single friendly syllable, not a word of amicable fellowship with England, not a scintilla of gratitude for favours past or to come, nothing but undisguised animosity, and a fixed resolution to make every clause of the Act a battlefield. I speak that I do know and testify that I have seen. My personal relations with the Irish people have been and continue to be of the most gratifying kind. In the homes of the highest, in the great manufactories, even in the lowest slums I have seen much that is attractive in the Irish character—much that excites warm interest, and is calculated to attach you to the people. I have conversed with scores of Home Rulers of all shades, and to the query as to

whether ultimate separation is hoped for, I have received an invariable affirmative. True it is that the answer varied in terms from the blunt "Yes" of the uncompromising man to the more or less veiled assent of the more cautious, but the result was in substance ever the same. Talk about the Union of Hearts, the pacification of Ireland, the brotherly love that is to ensue, and the Unionists turn away with undissembled impatience, the Home Rulers with a chuckle and a sneer. As well tell reasonable Irishmen that the world is flat, or that a straight line between two given points is the longest, or that the sun moves round the moon, or any other inane absurdity contrary to the evidence of science and their senses. The English Gladstonians who babble about brotherly love and conciliation should move about Dublin in disguise. Disguise would in their case be necessary to get at the truth, for Paddy is a shrewd trickster, and delights in humbugging this species of visitor, whom he calls "the slobbering Saxon." Then if they would return and still vote for Home Rule they are no less than traitors to their country and enemies to their fellow-country men.

The weather is very fine, and the fashionable resorts are fairly well frequented, but trade daily [12] grows worse. Wholesale houses, says a high authority, are "not dull, but stone dead." The pious Irish fast and pray during the week, and the great Roman Catholic Retreat at Milltown is crowded to the limits of its accommodation. The ladies wear a kind of half-mourning, a stylish sort of reminder of original sin. Sackcloth and ashes in Catholic Dublin consist of fetching brown, grey, or tan costumes, set off with huge bunches of fragrant violets, tied with a bow the exact shade of the flower, or a dull shade of purple, a sort of Lenten lugubriousness particularly becoming to blonde penitents. The ladies are indefatigable in their efforts against Home Rule, and one distinguished canvasser for signatures to the Roman Catholic petition has been warned by the police, as she values her life, to leave Dublin for a time. The ruffian class, needless to say, has undergone no change, but still demands the bill, and this delicate lady, for years foremost in every good and charitable work, is driven from her home by threatening letters—that accursed resort to anonymous intimidation which so discredits the Irish claim to superior courage and chivalry. The Catholics of Dublin are signing numerously, but the number of signatories by no means represents the opponents of the Bill.

Englishmen cannot be brought to realise for one moment the system of terrorism and intimidation which prevails even in the very heart of the capital. Parnellite spies are everywhere and know everything, and woe to the helpless man who dares to have a mind of his own. And not only are the poor coerced and deprived of the liberty of the subject, but the wealthiest manufacturers—men whose firms are of the greatest magnitude—will caution you against using their names in connection with anything that could give a clue to their real sentiments. This difficulty arises everywhere and information can only be extracted after a promise that its source shall never be disclosed. The priests are credited with unheard-of influence among the poor. "At the present moment the ruffians are held in leash. The order has gone forth that pending the Home Rule debate they are to 'be good.' But if I sign that petition, although here in Dublin, the thing would be known at Tralee, 200 miles away, before I reached home—and a hundred to one that the first blackguard that passed would put a match in my thatch, would burn my stacks, would hough or mutilate my cattle." The speaker was a Roman Catholic farmer from Kerry. Mr. Morley, in stating that the prosecution of the Rev. Robert Eager had ceased and determined, was utterly wrong. The rector's cousin, Mr. W.J. Eager, also of Tralee, told me that threatening letters with coffins and cross-bones were still pouring in in profusion. Mr. Eager was calmly requested to give up land which he had held for 15 years to a man who had previously rented it, and as the good parson failed to see the force of this argument he is threatened with a violent death. In England such a thing could only happen in a pantomime, but some of the Irish think it the quintessence of reasonable action. These are the class that support the Bill; these are the men [13] Mr. Gladstone and his conglomeration of cranks and faddists hope to satisfy. A brilliant kind of prospect for poor John Bull.

Mr. John Morley should accompany me in my peregrinations among the intelligent voters who have placed him and his great chief in power, along with the galaxy of minor stars which rise with the Grand Man's rising and set at his setting. "The British Government won't allow us to work the gold mines in the Wicklow mountains. Whin we get the Bill every man can take a shpade, an' begorra! can dig what he wants." "The Phaynix Park is all cramfull o' coal that the Castle folks won't allow us to dig, bad scran to them. Whin we get the Bill wu'll sink thim mines an' send the Castle to Blazes." But the quaintest, the funniest, the most sweetly ingenuous of the lot was the reason given by a gentleman of patriarchal age and powerful odour, whom I encountered in Hamilton's Lane. He said, "Ye see, Sorr, this is the way iv it. 'Tis the Americans we'll look to, by raison that they're mostly our own folks. They're powerful big invintors, but bedad, they haven't the wather power to work the invintions. Now *we* have the wather power, an' the invintions 'll be brought over here to be worked. An' that'll give the poor folks imploymint."

The poor man's ignorance was doubtless dense, his credulity amusing, his childlike simplicity interesting. But the darkness of his ignorance was no blacker, the extent of his credulity no more amazing, than the ignorance and credulity of English Gladstonian speakers, who, with a Primitive Methodist accent and a Salvation Army voice, proclaim, with a Bible twang, their conviction that Home Rule means the friendship of Ireland.

Dublin, March 30th.

No. 3.—ULSTER'S PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.

ToC

Ulster will fight, and fight to the death. The people have taken a resolution—deep, stern, and irrevocable. Outwardly they do not seem so troubled as the Dubliners. They are quiet in their movements, moderate in their speech. They show no kind of alarm, for they know their own strength, and are fully prepared for the worst. They speak and act like men whose minds are made up, who will use every Constitutional means of maintaining their freedom, and, these failing, will take the matter in their own strong hands. Meanwhile they preserve external calm, and systematically make their arrangements. If ever they went through a talking stage, that is now over. They have passed the time of discussion, and are preparing for action. If ever they showed heat, that period [14] also is past. They have reached the cold stage, in which men act on ascertained principles and not in the frenzy of passion. There is nothing hysterical about the Belfast men. They are by no means the kind of people who run hither and thither wringing their hands. Neither are they men who will sit down under oppression. And oppression is what they expect from a Dublin Government. Mr. Gladstone and his tribe may pooh-pooh this notion, but the feeling in Ulster is strong and immovable. The tens of thousands of Protestants thickly scattered over other provinces feel more strongly still; as well they may, for they have not the numbers, the organisation, the unity which is strength, that characterise the province of Ulster. They hold that Home Rule is at the bottom a religious movement, that by circuitous methods, and subterranean strategy, the religious re-conquest of the island is sought; that the ignorant peasantry, composing the large majority of the electorate, are entirely in the hands of the priests, and that these black swarms of Papists have a congenital hatred of England, which must bring about separation. These are the opinions of thousands of eminent men whose ability is beyond argument, who have lived all their lives on the spot, who from childhood have had innumerable facilities for knowing the truth, whose interests are bound up with the prosperity of Ireland, and who, on every ground, are admittedly the best judges. Said Mr. Albert Quill, the Dublin barrister:—

"Mr. Gladstone, who in eighty-four years has spent a week in Ireland, puts aside Sir Edward Harland, who has built a fleet of great ships in an Irish port, and sneers at the opinion of the Belfast deputation who have lived all their lives in Ireland." A Roman Catholic Unionist, an eminent physician, said to me:—

"I fear that Catholicism would ultimately lose by the change, although at first it would undoubtedly obtain a strong ascendant. The bulk of the Irish Catholics have a deep animosity to the English people, whom they regard as heretics, and the Protestants of Ireland would in self-defence be compelled to band themselves together, for underneath the specious surface of the Home Rule movement are the teeth and claws of the tiger. Persecution would follow separation, which is inevitable if the present bill be carried. A Dublin Parliament would make a Protestant's life a burden. This would react in time, and Catholicism would suffer in the long run. And for this reason, amongst others, I am against Home Rule."

But what are the Belfast men doing? *Imprimis* they are working in what may be called the regular English methods. Unionist clubs are springing up in all directions. The Earl of Ranfurly opened three in one evening, and others spring up almost every day. The Ulster Anti-Repeal and Loyalist Association will during the month of April hold over three hundred meetings in England, all manned by competent speakers. The Irish Unionist Association and the Conservative Association are likewise doing excellent work, which is patent to everybody. But other [15] associations which do not need public offices are flourishing like green bay trees, and their work is eminently suggestive. By virtue of an all-powerful introduction, I yesterday visited what may be called the Ulster war department, and there saw regular preparation for an open campaign, the preliminaries for which are under eminently able superintendence. The tables are covered with documents connected with the sale and purchase of rifles and munitions of war. One of them sets forth the particulars of a German offer of 245,000 Mauser rifles, the arm last discarded by the Prussian Government, with 50,000,000 cartridges. As the first 150,000 Mausers were manufactured by the National Arms and Ammunition Company, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, it may be interesting to record that the quoted price was 16s. each, the cartridges being thrown in for nothing. Another offer referred to 149,000 stand of arms, with 30,000,000 cartridges. A third document, the aspect of which to a native of Brum was like rivers of water in a thirsty land, was said to have been summarily set aside by reason of the comparative antiquity of the excellent weapon offered, notwithstanding the tempting lowness of the quoted price.

A novel and unexpected accession of information was the revelation of a deep and sincere sympathy among the working men of England, who, with gentlemen of position and rifle volunteers by hundreds and thousands, are offering their services in the field, should civil war ensue. The letters were shown to me, all carefully filed, and sufficient liberty was permitted to enable me to be satisfied as to the tenour of their contents. Among the more important was a short note from a distinguished personage, offering a contribution of £500, with his guarantee of a force of two hundred men. This also was from England, a fact which the scoffers at Ulster will do well to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. The guarantee fund for the first campaign now amounts to nearly a million and a half, which the best financial authority of Belfast tells me is "as good as the Bank of England." What the Dublin police-sergeant said of John Bull may also be said

of the Ulsterman—"He may have faults, but—he Pays!" Funds for current purposes are readily forthcoming, £50,000 being already in hand, while promises of a whole year's income seem thick as autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa. No means is left untried, no stone is left unturned to render abortive what the dry and caustic Northerners call the Home Ruin Bill, or the Bill for the *Bitter* Government of Ireland.

Moving hourly among people accurately and minutely acquainted with the local position, you cannot fail to be struck by the marvellous unanimity with which all Irish Unionists predict the exact result of such a bill as constitutes the present bone of contention, and their precise agreement as to concerted action should the crisis arise. They ridicule the English notion that they intend to take the field at once. Nothing of the kind. They will await the imposition of taxes [16] by a Dublin Parliament, and will steadfastly refuse to pay. The money must then be collected by force of arms, that is, by the Royal Irish Constabulary, who will be met by men who under their very noses are now becoming expert in battalion drill, having mastered company drill, with manual and firing exercise; and whose numbers—I love to be particular—amount to the respectable total of one hundred and sixty-four thousand six hundred and fourteen, all duly enrolled and pledged to act together anywhere and at any time, most of them already well armed, and the remainder about to be furnished with splendid and effective weapons, which before this appears in print will have been landed from a specially chartered steamer, and instantly distributed from a spot I am forbidden to indicate, by an organisation specially created for the purpose.

All these particulars—and more—were furnished by gentlemen of high position and unimpeachable integrity, whose statements, of themselves sufficient, were abundantly confirmed by the exhibition under restrictive pledges, of undeniable documentary proofs, with partial but satisfactory glimpses of the work actually in hand. No vapouring here, no breathless haste, not a suspicion of excitement. Nothing but a cold, emotionless, methodical, business-like precision, a well-considered series of commercial transactions, conducted by men specially acquainted with the articles required and regularly trained to office routine. English Home Rulers, unable to see a yard in front of them, whose training and instincts are of the goody-goody, milk and water type,—the lily-livered weaklings, who measure the courage of others by their own,—may be excused their inability to conceive the situation. They cannot understand the dour, unyielding spirit of the Ulsterman in a matter which affects his property, his religion, his freedom. A party backboneless as the Globerigina ooze, and, like that sub-Atlantic production, only held together by its own sliminess, must ever fail to realise the grit which means resistance, sacrifice, endurance; cannot grasp the outlines of the Ulster character and spirit, which resemble those which actuated the Scottish Covenanters, the Puritan army of Cromwell, or even—and this illustration should be especially grateful to Gladstonians—the Dutch Boers of the Transvaal.

But although the surface is placid the depths are turbulent. If Dublin is simmering, Belfast is boiling. The breed is different. The Northerner is not demonstrative, is slow to anger, but being moved is not easily appeased. The typical Irishman, with his cutaway coat, his pipe stuck in his conical caubeen, his "sprig of shillelagh," or bludgeon the Donnybrook Fair hero who "shpinds half a-crown, Mates wid a frind An' (for love) knocks him down" is totally unknown in these regions. The men who by their ability and industry have lifted Ireland out of the slough, given her prosperity and comparative affluence, marched hand in hand with the English people, have only seen, with wonder, the rollicking Kelt, devoid of care, forethought, and responsibility, during their trips to the South and West—or wherever Home Rulers most do congregate. Strange it is, [17] but perfectly true, that in most cases an Irishman's politics may be determined by outward and visible signs, so plain that he who runs may read. In Dundalk, which should be a thriving port, you see in and around the town long rows of low thatch-covered cabins, with putrid dunghills "convaynient," dirty, half-fed, barefooted children, and—magnificent Catholic churches. Home Rule rules the roost. As you move northwards, the symptoms of poverty gradually disappear. Scarva, the annual meeting ground of 5,000 to 10,000 Orangemen, who on July 13, the day after the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne, fight the battle o'er again, with a King William and a King James, mounted respectively on their regulation white and bay chargers—Scarva is neat, clean and civilised. Bessbrook, the Quaker colony, is, as might be expected, a model community. Lurgan is well built, smart, trim, and delightful, a wealthy manufacturing place with the general aspect of Leamington. As the train steamed into the station an American traveller took a general survey of the district, and said to the general company—

"I reckon this is a Unionist place."

A fierce-looking man from Dundalk admitted the soft impeachment.

"Thought so. Can spot a Home Rule town far off as I can see it. Mud huts, whitewashed cabins with no upstairs, muck-heaps, and bad fences. Can spot a Home Ruler as far as I can see him. Darned if I couldn't track him by scent, like a foxhound. That's the rank and file—very rank, I should say, most of them. And old J. Bull concludes to let the dunghill folks, powerful lazy beggars they seem, come top-sawyer over the fellows that built a place like this, eh?"

The Newry man, taking off his hat, revealing a head of hair like a disorderly halo, took from the lining a little paper which called upon the Irish peasantry to remember their wrongs, referred to the time when Englishmen could murder Irishmen with impunity, stated that the thing had often been done, and called upon every male from fifteen to fifty to enrol himself in the Irish Independent Army—referring to the Protestants as "a cruel and bloody minority." The Yankee returned the bill contemptuously.

"You think this a question of counting noses. Now, I'm a sympathiser of Home Rule, but if I was

J.B. it would be different. I'm hanged if I would not stick to my clean, clever, faithful friends, though they were outnumbered by twenty to one. An' I'm a Republican, mind ye that. Ye might ask me to put the muck-heap men at the head of affairs—ye might ask till doomsday, but ye'd never get it. An' any man's a fool that would do it."

A placard announcing the formation of an Irish Army of Independence, and calling on the people to enrol themselves, has been extensively circulated, and it is said that the Roman Catholics, like the Protestants, are industriously drilling, north, south, east and west. I am careful [18] to use the term Protestants, as the force available is drawn from the general body of Nonconformists. Orangemen are members of the Church of Ireland, and have always been regarded as Conservative. On the contrary, Presbyterians and Methodists are considered to be advanced Liberals, and herein lies a popular English fallacy—Gladstonians often refer to the Orange agitation against the disestablishment of the Irish Church, which they would fain compare with the present opposition to Home Rule, forgetting or ignoring the fact that the strength of Ulster resides in the Nonconformist bodies, and that these were all in favour of disestablishment, leaving the Orangemen in a hopeless minority. Now, however, the Nonconformists have joined their forces with those of the Orange bodies, which creates a very different aspect of affairs. The English Home Rulers say the opposition will end in smoke. It is said that the most insane are sometimes wiser than they dream, just as liars sometimes speak truth by accident. The movement will end in smoke, but it will be the smoke of battle. Every man who supports the Home Rule Bill incurs the stigma of blood-guiltiness. The bill that succeeds Home Rule will be the Butchers' Bill. No doubt Mr. Gladstone will explain away the "painful occurrences which we all deplore," and will endeavour to transfer the blame to other shoulders. His talent for explanation is unapproachable, but unhappily he cannot explain the slain to life again.

In a former letter I pointed out how cleverly the Nationalists dissect the bill, how they point out that its proposals are insulting to Ireland, how they prove that its provisions are inconsistent and unworkable, how they propose to discount the trumpery restrictions and the gimcrack "safeguards" of the proposed measure, how in short, they tear the bill to rags, laugh its powers to scorn, and hold its authors in high derision. The Belfast men do not discuss the bill, do not examine it clause by clause, do not quibble over the purport of this or the probable effect of that, do not ask how the customs are to be collected, or who is to pay for this, that, or the other. They descend to no details, enter into no particulars, point out no minor fallacies, argue no questions of the ultimate effect of any one section of the bill. They reject the measure as a whole. The principle is bad, radically rotten, and cannot be amended. With the Home Rulers they agree that the bill means Separation, and therefore they put it away *en bloc*. They will have no part with the unclean thing, but cast it to the winds, bundle it out neck and crop, kick it downstairs, treat it with immeasurable contempt. They are well versed in the broad principles of Constitutional law, as it at present exists; will tell you that the Irish Constabulary is the only force that can be brought against them for the collection of the taxes, which they will absolutely refuse; declare that the military can only be used against them for this purpose by Act of Parliament; cite the preamble of the Army Bill, which shows that there is no standing army, but only a force renewed in its functions from year to year; show that the monarch has ceased to be generalissimo of the [19] British troops since such a year, refer to the sad case of Charles I., who would fain have collected Ship-money from a certain John Hampden, and endeavoured to use the English army for this laudable purpose, meeting a fate at once horrible and instructive. Then comes the application. Similar causes, say they, will bring about similar effects, and if the quality and temper of the people be considered their arguments seem reasonable.

The Irish army of Independence is already a subject of mockery. "Ten of our men would make a hundred of them run like hares. On the 27th ult. a party of Orangemen were fired upon near Stewartstown, and although unarmed they stormed the hill whence came the shots, while the heroic riflemen who had fired 14 bullets, luckily without effect, showed that if too cowardly to fight, they were not too lazy to run." This occurrence, of which I had the description from authority, would have excited some attention in England, but here it is lightly passed over as nothing exceptional. "We are holding back our men. The other party are egging us on to outbreak, in the hope that our cause will be discredited, and that Lord Salisbury's visit in May might be hindered." There is a mutual repugnance between the two peoples, but the character of the repulsion is different. The Roman Catholics manifest an unmistakable hatred—the term is no whit too strong—a hatred of the social and intellectual superiority of their fellow-countrymen, who in turn look upon the Catholics (as a whole) with mistrust, mingled with contempt. As well ask Brother Jonathan to submit to the rule of the negro, as well ask the London trader to put his interests in the hands of a Seven Dials' syndicate, as well ask Mr. Gladstone and his followers to listen to reason or to talk common sense, as to expect the powerful and influential Protestants of Belfast and Ulster generally to entrust their future to a Legislature elected by the most illiterate electorate in the three kingdoms, and under the thumb of the priests—who wield a despotic power which people in England cannot be made to understand. A short time ago the Dublin Freemasons held a bazaar in aid of a charity whose object was the complete care of orphan children. The Catholic Archbishop immediately fulminated a decree that whosoever patronised the show would incur the terrors of the church, which means that they would perish everlastingly. Some poor folks, servant girls and porters and the like, who were sent by their mistresses or called by their honest avocations, dared to enter the accursed precincts, and emerging alive, rushed to confession, that the leprosy of Masonic charity might be washed from their souls by absolution.

Absolution was refused. The wretched outcasts were referred to the Bishop, who in this dire

emergency had sole power to unlock the gates of heaven. Do English people know what an Irish Catholic feels when refused absolution? I trow not, and that therefore they cannot justly estimate the power of the priests. Another illustration. A friend of mine made some purchases and sent a [20] man for them, one of five hundred Catholics in his employ. The poor fellow halted two hundred yards from the contaminating circle, and by the aid of a policeman, got the parcel brought to him —without risking his immortal soul.

The bazaar realised twenty-two thousand pounds.

The Ireland of the harp and vesper bell, free from the dominion of England, having the prestige of an independent Catholic State, the Ireland of excommunication by bell, book, and candle, the Ireland of the priest and Pope—that, and no other, according to Ulstermen, is the ultimate end of Home Rule. They will have none of it, their determination is announced, and they will stand by what they say. From what I have seen and heard I am convinced that Ulster means business, and also has the power to win. The Irish Unionists are worthy co-partners in the great fight, and Englishmen should stand with them shoulder to shoulder. But with or without English aid, Ulster may be trusted to hold its own.

Belfast, April 1st.

No. 4.—MR. BALFOUR'S WELCOME.

ToC

Arriving in the northern capital from Dublin you are apt to experience a kind of chill, akin to that felt by the boy of easy-going parents who, visiting the house of a staid and sober uncle, said to his little cousins, "At home we can fight with pillows, and let off crackers in the kitchen, and ride on the poker and tongs across the dining-room tables, and shy oranges at the chimney ornaments, and cut the sofas and pull out the stuffing, but here we get no fun at all!" The effervescence of the sunny south is conspicuous by its absence, and be it observed that the political south and the geographical south of Ireland are entirely different, the Ulstermen invariably using the term to denote an imaginary line across the country just above Dundalk. The mention of this town reminds me of a Cork commercial traveller's description of the Dundalk festivities in connection with the visit of our famous citizen, Mr. Egan, on the occasion of his release—"There was a murtherin' big crowd o' the greatest ruffians ye ever clapped your two eyes on. Some o' them had long sticks with a lump o' tow on the end, steeped in petroleum or something equally inflammable, an' whin they got the word to march—the hero was in a brake—they lit up and walked away in procession without looking at him at all, or taking any notice of him, which was moighty strange, I thought. They went on an' on, a lot o' rapscallions ye wouldn't like to meet in a lonely lane, and whin the brake stopped, for some reason or other, the whole o' them were unconscious of it, an' marched on without the grate man, leaving him an' his brake alone. I had the curiosity to go to the meetin'. There were two factions in the town, an' only one of them was [21] riprisinted, the others stood aloof. They are at daggers drawn, flyin' at each other's throat, although Catholics and Home Rulers, an' this meetin' was the funniest thing at all! The chairman was a common fellow that made money some way, an' ye may say he liked to hear himself spake. An' be the powdhers o' war, he had the convaniences for speech-makin', for he had a jaw like a bulldog, an' a mouth on him ye couldn't span with your two hands." Further description proceeded in the same strain, and even allowing for the exuberancies of my friend's southern imagination, and his wide command of figurative language, this account of the kind of people who constitute ninety-nine hundredths of Mr. Gladstone's allies should give Home Rulers pause.

There is no lack of enthusiasm here, but the people mind their work, and do not bubble over every five minutes. They certainly showed warmth on Monday morning, and never was popular ruler, victorious general, or famous statesman welcomed with more spontaneous burst of popular acclaim. York Street was literally full of all classes of people, save and except the typical Irish poor. Of the tens of thousands who filled Royal Avenue, Donegal Place, and the broad road to the North Counties Railway, I saw none poorly clad. All were well dressed, orderly, respectable, and wonderfully good-humoured, besides being the tallest and best-grown people I have ever seen in a fairly extensive European experience. I was admitted to the station with a little knot, comprising the Marquess of Ormonde, Lord Londonderry, the gigantic Dr. Kane, head of the Ulster Orangemen, and Colonel Saunderson, full as ever of fun and fight. It was at first intended to keep the people outside, and a strong detachment of police guarded the great gates, but in vain. They were swept away by mere pressure, and the people occupied the place to the number of many thousands, mostly wearing primroses. As the train steamed in there was a tremendous rush and cheering—genuine British cheering, such as that with which Birmingham used on great occasions to greet John Bright—rendering almost inaudible the numerous explosions of fog-signals which perhaps by way of salute had been placed at the entrance to the station. There was a mocking shout of "Dynamite," followed by a roar of laughter, and despite the frantic efforts of

the railway men, who humanely struggled to avoid the seemingly impending sacrifices *à la* Juggernaut, the more active members of the crowd storming the train, instantly sprang aloft and manned the tops of the carriages with a solid mass of vociferating humanity. Soon Mr. Balfour's face appeared, and a moment after he was standing amidst the throng, swayed hither and thither by loyalists who shook his hands, patted him on the back, deafened him with their cheers. Out came the horses, dashing through the people, snorting and plunging like so many Gladstonians, but happily injuring no one. In went the men, Mr. Balfour laughing merrily, and looking uncommonly fit, lifting his soft brown hat in mute recognition of the magnificent welcome [22] accorded by men who are perhaps among the most competent judges of his merit as a benefactor of Ireland. Away went the carriage, amid tumultuous shouting of "No Home Rule," and "God save the Queen." This went on for miles, from the Northern Counties' Terminus to Victoria Street, when Lord Londonderry signalled to quicken the pace, and after a short speech at the Albert Memorial, the *cortége* disappeared over the bridge, and I returned to meet the English working men who arrived an hour later. Splendid it was to hear the six hundred miners from Newcastle-on-Tyne shouting "Old Ireland for ever!" while the generous Irishmen responded with "Rule Britannia" and cheers for Old England. Cheers for Belfast and Newcastle alternated with such stentorian vigour, each side shouting for the other, that you might have been excused for imagining that the Union of Hearts was an accomplished fact, and that brotherly love had begun and must ever continue. Said a miner, "We're all surprised to see that the people here are just like Englishmen. An' I'm blest if they aren't more loyal than the English themselves."

From Monday morning the city has been resounding with beat of drum and the shrill sounds of the fife. The houses are swathed in bunting, and the public buildings were already covered with banners when I arrived on Friday last. This, however is not characteristic Belfast form. The Belfasters *can* rejoice, and whatever they do, is thoroughly done, but work is their vocation, as befits their grave and sober mood. They are great at figures, and by them they try to show that they, and not the Dubliners, should be first considered. They are practical, and although not without sentiment, avoid all useless manifestation of mere feeling. They are mainly utilitarian, and prefer mathematical proof, on which they themselves propose to rely, in proving their case. Here is an instance. A Belfast accountant, who is also a public officer, has collected a number of comparative figures on which he bases the claims of Belfast to prior consideration. The figures are certainly exact, and are submitted as evidence of the superior business management, and larger, keener capacity of Protestant Belfast as compared with those of Catholic Dublin. Beginning with the functions of the Dublin Lord Mayor, secretary, and so forth, which cost £4,967 a year, it is shown that the same work in Belfast—which is rather larger than Dublin—costs only £176. Let us tabulate a few representative cases:—

	Dublin.	Belfast.
Mayor, &c.	£4,967	£176
Town Clerk, secretaries of committees, law agents	5,659	2,752
Treasurer, accountants, stock registrar	3,402	2,168
Fire Brigade, salaries and lighting	3,616	1,247
Coroners, sanitary officials	3,530	1,310
Wages of sanitary staff	2,233	1,130
Surveyors (borough & waterworks) and Secretaries	6,070	4,472
Clerks of Peace and Revision Officers	2,451	1,552
Totals	£31,928	£14,807

This discrepancy is everywhere observable. The Dublin Gas Management costs £14,850 against [23] £8,060 in Belfast, with the result that the Ulster City Gasworks yielded in 1891 a profit of £27,105, charging 2s. 9d., while the Dubliners charge 3s. 6d. and make no profit at all. The Belfast markets yield a profit of about £3,500, while on the Dublin markets and abattoir there was a deficit of £3,012 to be made good by the ratepayers. Dublin, with property amounting to £20,000 a year and old-established Royal bounties, owes nearly twice as much as Belfast, which latter city spends more on what may be called the advance of civilisation. In 1892 Belfast spent £8,000 on a public park—Government providing for this matter in Dublin—£5,686 on public libraries, and £4,100 on baths and workhouses, against £1,217 and £1,627 for like purposes in Dublin. "Therefore," say the Belfast men, "we will not have our affairs managed by these incompetent men, who, besides their demonstrated incapacity to deal with finance, are dependent for their position on the illiterates of the agricultural districts, who are to a man under the thumb of the priests, and who, moreover, have shown that their rapacity is equal to their lack of integrity, and whose leading doctrine is the repudiation of lawful contracts," a point on which commercial Ulster is excessively severe. One thing is certain—Ulster will never pay taxes levied by an Irish Legislature in which Ulster would be utterly swamped. All classes are of this opinion, from the Earl of Ranfurly, who during a long interview repeatedly expressed his conviction that the passing of any Home Rule Bill would be fraught with most lamentable results, to the humble trimmer of a suburban hedge who, having admitted that he was from the county Roscommon, and (therefore) a Catholic Home Ruler, claimed to know the Ulster temper in virtue of 28 years' residence in or near Belfast, and said—

"What they say they mane, an' the divil himself wouldn't tur-r-n thim. Ah, but they're a har-r-d-timpered breed, ivery mother's son o' them. Ye can comether (gammon) a Roscommon man, but a Bilfast man, whillaloo!" He stopped in sheer despair of finding words to express the futility of attempting to take in a Belfast man. "An' whin ye ax thim for taxes, an' they say they won't pay—ye might jist as well whistle jigs to a milestone! 'Tis thrue what I tell ye."

As for to-day, the magnificence of the pageant beggars description. Whether regarded from a scenic point of view or with respect to numbers and enthusiasm, never since Belfast was Belfast has the city looked upon a sight approaching it. From early morning brass bands and fife bands commenced to enter the city from every point of the compass, and wherever you turned the air resounded with the inspiring rattle of the drum. Monday's display of bunting was sufficiently lavish to suggest the impossibility of exhibiting any more, but the Belfasters accomplished the feat, and the bright sunshine on the brilliant colours of the myriad banners was strongly reminiscent of Paris *en fête* under the Empire. The Belfast streets are long, straight, and wide, [24] and mostly intersect at right angles. Much of the concourse was thus visible from any moderate coign of vantage, and from the Grand Stand in Donegal Place the sight was truly wonderful. The vast space, right, left, and front, was from 10 o'clock closely packed with a mighty multitude that no man could number, and locomotion became every moment so painful as to threaten total stagnation. The crowd was eminently respectable and perfectly orderly, and submitted to the passage of innumerable musical organisations with charming good humour. Never have I seen or heard of such an assemblage of bands, all uniformed, all preceded by gorgeous banners bearing all kinds of loyal and party mottoes, all marching in splendid military fashion, and of themselves numerous enough to furnish a very considerable demonstration. Many of the tunes were of a decidedly martial character, and strange to English ears, such as the "Boyne Water," the "Orange Lily" and the "Protestant Boys," the last being a version of the "Lillibulero" so often mentioned by Scott. All these tunes, more or less distasteful to Nationalists, were interspersed with others less debatable, such as "Rule Britannia," "The Old Folks at Home," "The Last Rose of Summer," "God Save the Queen," and "See the Conquering Hero comes," which last generally accompanied the portrait of Orange William, the "Glorious, Pious, and Immortal," mounted on his famous white charger, which noble animal is depicted in the attitude erroneously believed to be peculiar to that of Bonaparte when crossing the Alps. The Earl of Beaconsfield was also to the fore with primroses galore; indeed, the favourite flower was invariably worn by the ladies, who were greatly in evidence. "Our God, our Country, and our Empire" was the motto over Mr. Balfour, with a huge "Welcome" in white on scarlet ground, the whole surrounded by immense Union Jacks. The familiar red, white, and blue bore the brunt of the decorative responsibilities, although here and there the green flag of Ireland hung cheek by jowl with the English standard, emphasising the friendliness of the present Union. As time went on the crowd became more and more dense, and a breathless pressman, who reached his post at twelve o'clock, stated that the seething myriads of Donegal Place and the adjacent streets were "hardly a circumstance" to what he had seen in the York Road, where the people awaited the hero of the hour. Things were getting serious at 12.15, and then it was that the active members of the crowd swarmed on the railings, balancing themselves in most uncomfortable situations, and maintaining their spiky seats with a tenacious martyrdom which spoke volumes for the determination of the Ulster character.

On and ever on went the bands in seemingly endless procession, although merely assembling for the great march past, and therefore only a fraction of the impending multitude. Some enterprising men climbed the trees bordering the square, driving away the little flocks of sparrows which till then had conducted a noisy committee meeting in the branches, heedless of [25] the drumming and general uproar, but which now dispersed without so much as a vote of thanks to the chair. At 12.30 a foam of white faces broke over the roofs of the lofty buildings around, protected by stone balustrades. At the same moment a shout of "They are coming" was heard, followed fey a thunderous roar of cheering. Mr. Balfour slowly emerged from York Road, amid immense acclamation, his carriage, piloted by the Corporation, moving inch by inch through the solid mass with inconceivable difficulty. Over and over again the line of vehicles stopped dead, and it was clear that the horses had much trouble to maintain their gravity. As the carriage with Sir Daniel Dixon (the Lord Mayor of Belfast), Sir Samuel Black (Town Clerk), and Lord Londonderry neared the Grand Stand, the pressmen agreed that nothing equal to this demonstration had ever before been held within the British Islands. Mr. Balfour having gained the platform the procession proper commenced, headed by the banner of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, while the people broke into a chorus, asserting that Britons never, never shall be slaves.

This at 12.35 precisely. Next came the Belfast Water Commissioners, the Belfast Board of Guardians, the provincial Corporate bodies, and the provincial Boards of Guardians. A tremendous tumult of voices accompanied all these, but when the Trinity College graduates arrived the din became overpowering. Their standard was halted opposite Mr. Balfour, and the young fellows burst into wild and uncontrollable enthusiasm. The medical students of Queen's College, Belfast, with the *alumni* of the Methodist and Presbyterian College succeeding, gave "God Save the Queen" with great vigour, and came in a close second; but nothing quite touched the Trinity College men. The Scottish Unionist clubs, a fine body, two thousand strong, confirmed the statement that Scots who understand the situation are against Home Rule. Most of these men work in the shipbuilding yards of Belfast. The Belfast Unionist Clubs and the Provincial Unionist Clubs were, of course, heartily greeted, returning the applause with interest, and the Independent Order of Rechabites showed that their alleged exclusive partiality for cold water had not diminished their lung power. The British Order of Ancient Free Gardeners, the Loyal Order of

Ancient Shepherds, and the Independent Order of Oddfellows reminded the Brutal Saxon who might be present of his native shore, the men being of the familiar sturdy type, marching in dense columns, all gloriously arrayed. There was none of the artful spreading over the ground which I observed in the great Birmingham demonstration which was to "end or mend" the Lords; and another point of divergency consists in the fact that the Belfast demonstration, which was incomparably larger, was perfectly spontaneous, and not due to organisation.

Baronets and other gentlemen of distinction headed the Unionist clubs, walking through the streets in such manner as was never known before. Magistrates and Presbyterian ministers [26] tramped with the rank and file. Sir William Ewart, Bart., Mr. Thomas Sinclair, J.P.—a great name in the city—and the Rev. Dr. Lynd were especially prominent. Some of the teetotallers wore white sashes, which were perhaps more conspicuous than the gaudy colours affected by the Orangemen, and one body of Unionists from the suburban clubs waved white handkerchiefs, a feature which for obvious reasons can never occur in Nationalist processions. The Shepherds have a pastoral dress, each man carrying a crook, and the marshals of the lodges bore long halberds. The van of each column was preceded by a stout fellow, who dexterously raising a long staff in a twirling fashion peculiar to Ireland, shouted, "Faugh-a-Ballagh," which being interpreted signifies "Clear the way." The Oddfellows marched to the tune known in England as "We won't go home till morning," which is the same as "Marlborough goes to war," the favourite air of the Great Napoleon. All this time Mr. Balfour is standing at my elbow as I write, bareheaded, acknowledging the finest reception ever accorded to any man in Ireland, not excepting Dan O'Connell and Parnell. The funeral of the uncrowned king was a comparatively small affair, while the respectability of the crowd was of course immeasurably below that of the Belfast concourse. An old man somehow got near the platform and presented Mr. Balfour with a bunch of orange lilies, saying that was the flower the people would fight under. The Young Men's Christian Association cheered lustily for the Union to the tune of three thousand strong. The Central Presbyterian Association marched past singing "God is our refuge and our strength," and the Church of Ireland Young Men's Society, headed by the clergy, superintended by the Bishop of the diocese from the stand, made a brave and gallant show. Hour after hour glides by, and still the teeming multitude moves on, and still Mr. Balfour stands uncovered. No joke to be a hero nowadays. The "Young Irelands" gave a grand cheer, and passed in brave array, singing with the Y.M.C.A. "Hold the Fort" and "God Save the Queen." Dr. Kane, the Bishop of Clogher, Captain Somerset Maxwell, Colonel Saunderson, and the Earl of Erne, Grand Master of the Orangemen of Ireland, received a stupendous reception as they followed the Young Men Christians, mustered in overwhelming force. The "Marseillaise" here broke out with considerable severity, and Mr. Balfour broke out into a broad smile, which ran over into a laugh, as the too familiar strains of "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay" made the welkin ring. Then came "The March of the Men of Harlech," mixed with "Home Sweet Home" and "The Boyne Water," till the senses reeled again.

At 3.35 the two miles of Orangemen seemed likely to go on for ever, and Mr. Balfour said to me, "I think this demonstration undoubtedly the greatest ever seen, and if you like you may convey that as my message to the Unionists of Birmingham. They will know what the effect of this will be. I need say no more." I asked Mr. Balfour if he thought the bill would pass, and he replied, [27] "Tell the Birmingham men what I have said already. They will require no more." At 4.10 the procession was in full swing, but Mr. Balfour seemed to have had about enough and showed symptoms of making a move, and, as a preliminary, put on his hat. This was the signal for cheering, which perhaps surpassed anything that had gone before. The great ex-Irish-Secretary effaced himself; and Colonel Saunderson, backed by Lord Salisbury's son and several Irish peers, essayed to fill the gap. I ventured in my timid way to tap the gallant Colonel on the shoulder with a view to tapping his sentiments, which proved to be exultant. He told me of the wire he had received from Lord Salisbury, and spoke of the meeting in the Botanic Gardens which had taken place while I had watched the procession. Then he said, "Tell the Birmingham people through the *Gazette* that as we have the last Prime Minister and the present Chief of the Opposition with us, we cannot be called revolutionary. As for this meeting, it will speak for itself. I think it the biggest thing ever known." During the procession a copy of the Home Rule Bill was burnt on the top of a pole in front of the Grand Stand.

After exactly four hours of watching, I accepted the proffered aid of an Irish friend who agreed to lead me by roundabout ways to the telegraph office. After many narrow passages and devious turns, we struck the Royal Avenue, a long, long way from our starting place. Here we took the still advancing procession in flank. It was now 4.45, and my friend said, "By jabers, there's forty million more of them. I believe the procession reaches all round the world, and moves in a continuous band." And, sure enough, they were coming on as fresh as ever, but I felt that four hours and a quarter of bands and drums was enough at once, so I made a dash for the wires before they should be absolutely blocked. My account is not, perhaps, quite perfect, but it was pencilled under extraordinary circumstances—ten people talking to me at once, a lady's umbrella in my side, a thousand people leaning on my right elbow, and five hundred bands sounding in my ear. Surely it may be said to have been written under fire.

Belfast, April 4th.

No. 5.—HAS Mr. MORLEY LIED?

ToC

Before leaving Belfast I obtained incontrovertible evidence anent the growing fears of Mr. Gladstone's Government. Mr. Morley has denied the existence of any such nervousness, and has repudiated the assertion that precautions have been taken. But what is the truth of the matter? Let us see whether his statement is borne out by facts.

[28] In February certain military officers received a confidential communication having reference to the defence of the Belfast barracks. They were requested to examine and report upon the possibility of these buildings being tenable against a *coup de main*, were ordered to examine the loop-holes for musketry, to prepare plans of the same, and to duly submit them to the proper authorities, giving their opinion as to the practicability and sufficiency of existing arrangements in the event of the buildings being assaulted by organised bodies of armed civilians, during the absence of soldiers who might be about the city, taking their walks abroad, after the regulation manner permitted to Mr. Thomas Atkins under ordinary circumstances. The order was executed, the plans were duly furnished, and if Mr. Morley is still unaware of the fact, I have much pleasure in imparting the information which I have on the best authority attainable in an imperfect world. He may rely on this statement as being absolutely undeniable, and to descend to particulars, I will add that plans were made of the Tram Stables Barracks, the Willow Bank Barracks, and the Victoria Barracks. As I have said, the instructions were marked Confidential, and the Irish Secretary may have relied on this magic word in formulating his denials. The alternative hypothesis is, of course, obvious enough. The work may have been ordered and executed without Mr. Morley's knowledge, but it has been done, and, after proper inquiry, he will not venture to deny it. The circumstance is a curious commentary on the Gladstonian affectation of perfect security, and the scornful references of Home Rulers to the alleged determination of Ulstermen, in the last resource, to push matters to extremity. I could tell him more than this. It would be easy to adduce other instances of Governmental nervousness, but prudential and confidential considerations intervene.

However, while in the vein, let me submit for serious contemplation the fact that up to the morning postal delivery of Wednesday, April 5, 1893, written offers of personal assistance in the matter of armed resistance to the exact number of ten thousand and five have reached a certain Ulster organisation from England and Scotland, the roll including five generals, with a percentage of Victoria Cross men. This statement is made on the authority of the Earl of Ranfurly, who told me that the matter was within his personal knowledge, and that the whole of these communications were entirely spontaneous and altogether unsolicited, and that nobody in Ireland was in any way responsible for their existence. Lord Ranfurly also said that while the hearty friendship and co-operation of these gentlemen were warmly appreciated by Irish Loyalists, he was quite certain that their generous aid would never be required, for that Home Rule was now defunct, dead, and buried, and beyond the possibility of resurrection. It may be remarked, in passing, that this is the feeling of the best-informed Irish Home Rulers, and that many in my hearing have offered to back their opinion by laying odds. The rejection of the Bill so far from exasperating the Nationalist party, would positively come as a relief. To say that they are [29] lukewarm is only to fairly indicate a state of feeling which is rapidly degenerating into frigidity. They declare that the Bill is unworkable, and while maintaining their abstract right to demand whatever they choose, believe that, taking one consideration with another, the lot of autonomic Ireland would not be a happy one.

Mr. Richard Patterson, J.P., the great ironmonger of Belfast, observes that "according to Mr. Gladstone the only people who really understand Ulster are those who have never been in it." My interview with him was both instructive and interesting. He is one of the Harbour Commissioners, and a gentleman of considerable scientific attainments, as well as a great public and commercial man. He belongs to the Reform Club and, with his fellow-members, was up to 1886 a devoted follower of Mr. Gladstone. The name of his firm, established in 1786 on the very ground it now occupies, is a household word in Ireland, and Mr. Patterson himself has the respect and esteem of his bitterest political opponents. He pointed out the unfairness and injustice of Mr. Gladstone's reference to religion, when turning a deaf ear to the Belfast deputation. "The report of the Chamber of Commerce," he said, "was a purely business statement, and had no element of party feeling. The fact that the Protestant members of the Chamber outnumber the Catholics is in no respect due to religious intolerance, which in this body is totally unknown. Anybody who pays a guinea a year may be elected a member, whatever his religion, whatever his circumstances, providing he is a decent member of society, which is the only qualification required. Members are certainly elected by ballot, but during the many years I have belonged to the Chamber not a single person has been black-balled. If the Protestants are more numerous, the fact simply demonstrates their superior prosperity, arising only from their more steady application to hard work. We live on terms of perfect friendship with our Catholic countrymen, and we assiduously cultivate the sentiment. It is only when a weak and ignorant pandering to disloyalty excites opposition that enmity begins. Only let us alone, that is all we ask. We were going on beautifully until Mr. Gladstone and his accomplices upset everything." Speaking of the difference between the Ulster men and the Irish Kelts, Mr. Patterson said, "Prosperity or the reverse is indicative of the breed. The Southern Irish had more advantages than the Ulstermen. They had better land, better harbours, a far more productive country, and yet they always seethe in discontent. Put 20,000 Northerners in Cork, and in twenty years the

Southern port could knock Liverpool out of time." Addressing himself to the Home Rule Bill, he declared that the practical, keen-witted merchants of Belfast dismissed the whole concoction as unworthy of sober consideration, and declared that an awful responsibility rested on Mr. Gladstone. Said this experienced J.P.:

"The Belfast riots of 1886 were terrible. Forty people were killed in the streets, and what I saw [30] in my capacity of magistrate was dreadful in the extreme. The injuries from gun-shot wounds were almost innumerable, and many a local doctor gained experience in this line which is unknown to many an army surgeon. The riots began with the ruffian class, from which this great city is not entirely free, and gradually rose upwards to the shipbuilding yards. All this disturbance and awful loss of life were entirely due to the production of Mr. Gladstone's first bill. And now they tell us that a worse bill—for it is a worse bill—might become law without any inconvenience. I submit to any reasonable man that if the mere menace of a bill cost forty lives in Belfast alone, the loss of life all over Ireland, once the bill were passed, would be enormous. And all this will be attributable to the action of Mr. Gladstone, who has never been in Ulster."

Walking down Royal Avenue I met Colonel Saunderson, radiant after the great demonstration of two days ago, wearing a big bunch of violets in place of Tuesday's bouquet of primroses. He stopped to express good wishes to the *Gazette*, and said that the Belfasters were proud of Birmingham, which city he regarded as being the most advanced and enlightened in the world. While he so spake, up came the mighty Dr. Kane, idol of the Ulsterites, towering over the gallant Colonel's paltry six feet one, and looking down smilingly from his altitude in infinite space on my own discreditable five feet ten. He agreed with the Colonel as to the merits of Birmingham, and added that every Unionist in Belfast cherished a deep sentiment of gratitude to the hardware city, requesting me to explode the misleading statements of the Separatist press, which asserts that Tuesday's procession consisted of Orangemen. "The first two hours," said the Reverend Doctor, "consisted of bodies who do not processionise, and who never perform in public, in or out of Belfast, Methodists, Presbyterians, and the like, while the 25,000 or 30,000 Orangemen who came in at the tail of the show were a mere fraction of the whole. Colonel Saunderson, the Earl of Erne, and myself stood up in our carriage and cheered the Radical Reform Club, a thing we certainly have never done before." Here the Colonel laughed, and said—

"The union of hearts, Doctor."

"Yes, the union of hearts and no mistake, as the Grand Old Man will find—to his cost. All classes are united against the common enemy" (Mr. Gladstone). "But tell me something—How is it that the English people are deceived by that arch-professor of cant? Tell me that!"

I requested the good doctor to ask me something easier, and he doubtless would have done so, but at this moment up came the famous Dr. Traill, the Admirable Crichton of Ireland, and with my usual thirst for knowledge, I ventured to suggest that the mathematical intellect of the Trinity College Examiner might possibly grapple with the problem.

The learned professor smiled, gripped my unworthy fin, shook out some words of greeting, [31] wagged his head hopelessly, and—bolted like a rocket.

Dr. Traill is said to be equally versed in Law, Physic, and Divinity, to sport with trigonometry, and to amuse his lighter moments with the differential calculus. But "this knowledge was too wonderful for him, he could not attain unto it," and to avoid confession of defeat, he fled with lightning speed. This erudite doctor is well known in England, especially among riflemen. Colonel Saunderson describes him as a wonderful shot at a thousand yards, and thinks he was once one of the Irish Eight at Wimbledon. I met him on the stand on Tuesday, when he amusingly described his adventures on the Continent. "The poor Poles," he said, "wished to take me to their collective bosom, and to fall on my individual neck, the moment they found I was an Irishman. They said we were brothers in misfortune!" Whereat this learned pundit laughed good-humouredly. It may be that Dr. Traill is the long-range rifleman of whom a Land League man remarked, on hearing that the marksman had made a long series of bull's eyes—

"The saints betune us an' harm—but wouldn't he make an iligant tenant!"

Dr. Kane was not surprised to see the professor run away. He said, "I cannot understand it all. I must and will cross the Channel immediately to investigate this strange phenomenon. I have always considered the English a people of superior mental force, men who could not be easily deceived. That they should pin their faith to a man who has proved to demonstration that Home Rule is impossible, who more than any other has branded the Nationalist party with ignominy, I cannot understand." The Doctor perhaps momentarily forgot that the English do not pin their faith to Mr. Gladstone, that the adverse majority are dead against him, and that this majority is daily increasing by leaps and bounds. Gallant Captain Leslie, whom I saw earlier in the day, more accurately hit the situation. This splendid old soldier said, "The English people are not to be blamed. Living under social conditions of perfect freedom and friendship they do not understand the conditions prevailing in Ireland; they cannot be expected to understand a state of things differing so widely from anything within the circle of their own experience. But all the same, if they grant Home Rule, if they listen to the disloyal party rather than to their loyal friends, if they truckle to treason rather than support their own supporters, the consequences will be disastrous to England, and where the disasters will stop is a piece of knowledge which 'passes the wit of man.'"

Running up to Ballymena, I encountered several interesting personalities, each of whom had his own view of the all-absorbing subject, and looked at the matter from his own standpoint. An Irish-American of high culture, a man of science, looked up from what he regarded as "the most

interesting book in existence," which turned out to be Thompson's "Evolution of Sex," and said that once Home Rule were in force the blackguard American-Irish would return in shoals, and [32] that the Fenians of America might be expected to "boss the show." "How is it," he asked, "that the English people listen to what appears the chief argument of Separatist orators—that agitation will come to an end, that the Irish will be content to rest and be thankful? Clearly while money and power can be had by agitation, so long will agitation continue. That seems so obvious to me, that I wonder at the patience of the North of England men—I was among them during the general election—in listening quietly to this argument, if it be one at all. And with all their experience of the past to enlighten them into the bargain. Was not the disestablishment of the Church to remove all cause of discontent? Then it was the land. You gave several Land Acts, most favourable laws, very one-sided, all in favour of the tenant, far beyond what English, Scotch, or Welsh farmers hope to get. Have you satisfied Irishmen yet? No, and you never will. The more you give, the more they ask. They never will be content. '"Tis not their nature to.' England now suffers for her own weak good nature. The true curse of Ireland is laziness. I left Belfast at twenty, but I am well acquainted with Ireland. In the North they work and prosper. In the South they do nothing but nurse their grievances. Twenty years' firm government, as Lord Salisbury said, would enrich the country. Do the right thing by them—put them level with England and Scotland, and then put down your foot. Let them know that howling will do no good, and they'll stop it like a shot. Paddy is mighty 'cute, and knows when he has a *man* to deal with. Put a noodle over him and that noodle's life will be a burden. And serve him right. Fools must expect fools' reward."

A Catholic priest I met elsewhere was very chary of his opinions, and confined himself to the "hope that England would see her way to compensate the Church and the country for centuries of extortion and oppression." This he thought was a matter of "common honesty." He did not exactly suggest a perpetual church-rate for the benefit of the Catholics of Ireland, but the thing is on the cards, and may be proposed by Mr. Gladstone later on. Something ought to be done, something substantial, for the gentlemen educated under the Maynooth Grant. Mr. Bull has admitted the principle, and his sense of fair play will doubtless lead him to do the right thing, always, of course, under compulsion, which is now usually regarded as the mainspring of that estimable gentleman's supposed virtuous actions.

Ballymena is a smart looking place, trig and trim, thriving and well-liking, a place to look upon and live. The people are all well-clad, and prosperous, well-fed and well-grown. The men are mostly big, the women mostly beautiful; the houses are of stone, handsome and well-built. On the bleaching grounds you see long miles of linen—Irish miles, of course—and all the surroundings are pleasant. After this, no need to say the place is one of the blackest, most Unionist, Protestant, [33] and loyal in the whole country. A number of buff placards issued by Nationalists attract respectful attention. The same bill is stuck all over Belfast—in the High Street, on the hoardings facing the heretic meeting houses, everywhere. It purports to present the sentiments of the great Duke of Wellington *re* the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and is to the effect that in moments of danger and difficulty the Roman Catholics had caused the British Empire to float buoyant when other Empires were wrecked; that the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and they only, had saved our freedom, our Constitution, our institutions, and in short that it is to the Irish Roman Catholics that we owe everything worth having. Alone they did it. The priest, in short, has made Mr. Bull the man he is.

Can anybody in England "go one better" than this?

These extracts are plainly taken from some speech on the Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill, and refer to the valour of the Irish soldiery, whose bravery in fighting for a Protestant cause was doubtless invaluable to the cause of liberty. There is an apocryphal story concerning Alfred de Musset, who on his death-bed is reported to have conveyed to a friend with his last breath his last, his only wish, to wit:—

"Don't permit me to be annotated." The Iron Duke might have said the same if he had thought of it. He could not know that, shorn of his context, divorced from his drift, he would be placarded in his native land as an agent in the cause of sedition and disloyalty. This truly Grand Old Man, who, in his determination to uphold the dignity and unity of the Empire "stood four-square to all the winds that blew," would scarcely have sided with the modern G.O.M. and his satellites, Horsewhipped Healy and Breeches O'Brien.

One word as to the alleged "intolerance of the fanatic Orangemen of Belfast."

The placards above-mentioned were up on Tuesday last. They are large and boldly printed, and attracted crowds of readers—but not a hand was raised to deface them, to damage them, to do them any injury whatever. I watched them for four-and-twenty hours, and not a finger was lifted against any one in the High Street or elsewhere, so far as I could ascertain.

There are twenty thousand Orangemen in the city, and the Protestants outnumber the Papists by three to one. Yet the placard was treated with absolute respect, and although I entered several groups of readers I heard no words of criticism—no comment, unfavourable or otherwise, no gesture of dissent. The people seemed to be interested in the bill, and desirous of giving it respectful consideration. I have seen Liberal Birmingham, when in the days of old it assembled round Tory posters—but the subject becomes delicate; better change our ground. It is, however, only fair to say that the Gladstonians of Birmingham, who, as everybody knows, formed the extreme and inferior wing of the old Radical party, can hardly teach the Belfast men tolerance.

Ballymena, April 6th.

[34]

No. 6.—THE EXODUS OF INDUSTRY.

ToC

Derry is a charming town, unique, indescribable. Take equal parts of Amsterdam and Antwerp, add the Rhine at Cologne, and Waterloo Bridge, mix with the wall of Chester and the old guns of Peel Castle, throw in a strong infusion of Wales, with about twenty Nottingham lace factories, stir up well and allow to settle, and you will get the general effect. The bit of history resulting in the raising of the siege still influences Derry conduct and opinions. The 'Prentice Boys of Derry, eight hundred strong, are ardent loyalists, and having once beaten an army twenty-five thousand strong, believe that for the good of the country, like the orator who had often "gone widout a male," they too could "do it again." They do not expect to be confronted with the necessity, but both the Boys and the Orangemen of Derry, with all their co-religionists, are deeply pledged to resist a Dublin Parliament. "We would not take the initiative, but would merely stand on our own defence, and offer a dogged resistance. We have a tolerable store of arms, although this place was long a proclaimed district, and we have fifteen modern cannon, two of which are six-pounders, the rest mostly four-pounders, and one or two two-pounders, which are snugly stored away, for fear of accident." Thus spake one who certainly knows, and his words were amply confirmed from another quarter.

Derry makes shirts. The industrious Derryans make much money, and in many ways. They catch big salmon in the middle of the town, and outside it they have what Mr. Gladstone would call a "plethora" of rivers. They ship unnumbered emigrants to the Far West, and carry the produce of the surrounding agriculturists to Glasgow and Liverpool. They also make collars and cuffs, but this is mere sport. Their real vocation is the making of shirts, which they turn out by the million, mostly of high quality. Numbers of great London houses have their works at Derry. Welch, Margeston and Co. among others. The Derry partner, Mr. Robert Greer, an Englishman forty years resident in the town, favoured me with his views *re* Home Rule, thus:—

"The bill would be ruinous to Ireland, but not to the same extent as to England. Being an Englishman, I may be regarded as free from the sectarian animosity which actuates the opposing parties, but I cannot close my eyes to the results of the bill, results of which no sane person, in a position to give an opinion, can have any doubt. We are so convinced that the bill would render our business difficult, not to say impracticable, that our London partners say they will remove the works, plant, machinery, and all, to the West of Scotland or elsewhere.

"About 1,200 girls are employed in the mill, and 3,000 to 4,000 women at their own homes all over the surrounding country.

"Mr. Gladstone may think he knows best, but here the unanimous opinion is that trade will be fatally injured. Ireland is no mean market for English goods, and the market will be closed because Ireland will have no money to spend. Go outside the manufacturing towns and what do you see? Chronic poverty. Manufacturers will remove to the Continent, to America—anywhere else—leaving the peasantry only. The prospective taxes are alarming. We know what would be one of the very first acts of a Dublin Parliament. They would curry favour with the poor, the lazy districts, by an equalisation of the poor rate. In Derry, where everybody works for his bread, the rate is about sixpence in the pound. There are districts where it runs to ten shillings in the pound. The wealthy traders, the capitalists, the manufacturers of the North will have to pay for the loafers of the South. The big men would gather up their goods and chattels and clear out. There are other reasons for this course."

[35]

Here Mr. Greer made the inevitable statement that Englishmen out of Ireland did not understand the question; and another large manufacturer chipped in with:—

"Leave us alone, and we get on admirably. There is no intolerance; everybody lives comfortably with his neighbour. But pass the bill and what happens? The Catholic employés would become unmanageable, would begin to kick over the traces, would want to dictate terms, would attempt to dominate the Protestant section, which would rebel, and trouble would ensue. They would not work together. It is impracticable to say: Employ one faith only and Home Rule means that Catholicism is to hold the sway. The Nationalist leaders foster this spirit, otherwise there would be no Home Rule. The workpeople would act as directed by the priest, even in matters connected with employment. You have no idea what that means to us. It means ruin. The people do not know their own mind, and their ignorance is amazing. My porter says that when the bill becomes law, which will take place in one month from date, he will have a situation in Dublin at a thousand a year, and both he and others sincerely believe in such a changed state of things for Catholics alone."

I went over Welch, Margetson's works, a wonderful place, where were hundreds of women, clean and well-dressed, working at the various departments of shirt-making. The highest class of

mill hands I ever saw, working in large and well-ventilated rooms, many getting a pound a week. Another firm over the way employs one thousand five hundred more. And according to the best authority, that of the owners, all this is to leave the country when Ireland gets Home Rule.

A very intelligent Catholic farmer living a few miles out of Donegal said, "Farmers look at the bill in the light of the land question. We're not such fools as to believe in Gladstone or his bill for anythin' else. Shure, Gladstone never invints anythin' at all, but only waits till pressure is put on him. Shure, iverythin' has to be dhragged out iv him, an' if he settles the land question, divil thank him, 'tis because he knows he's bate out an' out, an' *has* to do it, whether he will or no. An' [36] now he comes bowin' an' scrapin' an' condiscindin' to relave us—whin we kicked it out o' his skin. Ah! the divil sweep him an' his condiscinshun."

Ingratitude, thy name is Irish Tenant!

Misther O'Doherty proceeded to say that landlords were all right now, under compulsion. But the tenantry demanded that they should be released entirely from the landlords' yoke. He said that the agriculturists were not in touch with the whole question of Home Rule, nor would they consider any subject but that of the land. The Nationalists had preached prairie value, and the people were tickled by the idea of driving out landowners and Protestants. All the evicted tenants, all the men who have no land, all the ne'er-do-weels would expect to be satisfied. Ulster is tillage—the South is mostly grazing. Ulster had been profitably cultivated by black Protestants, and their land was coveted by the priests for their own people. My friend admitted that, although born a Catholic, his religious opinions were liberal. I asked him if the Protestant minority would be comfortable under a Dublin Parliament. He shook his head negatively—"Under equal laws they are friendly enough, but they do not associate, they do not intermarry, they have little or nothing to do with each other. They are like oil and wather in the same bottle, ye can put them together but they won't mix. And the Protestant minority has always been the best off, simply because they are hard workers. A full-blooded Irishman is no worker. He likes to live from hand to mouth, and that satisfies him. When he has enough to last him a day through he drops work at once. The Protestants have Scotch blood, and they go on working with the notion that they'll be better off than their father, who was better off than their grandfather. And that's the whole of it."

Mr. J. Gilbert Kennedy, of Donegal, holds similar views of Irish indolence. He told me that although living in a congested district he could not obtain men to dig in his gardens, except when thereto driven by sheer necessity, and that having received a day's pay they would not return to work so long as their money lasted. "They will put up with semi-starvation, cold, and nakedness most patiently. Their endurance is most commendable. They will bear anything, only—don't ask them to work." Mrs. Kennedy said that with crowds of poor girls around her, she was compelled to obtain kitchen maids and so forth from Belfast. "They will not be servants, and when they afford casual help, they do it as a great favour."

A Scotsman who employs five hundred men in the mechanical work said: "I have been in Ireland fifteen years, and have gone on fairly smoothly, but with a world of management. For the sake of peace I have not five Protestants in the place; and I would have none if I could help it. It is, however, necessary to have Protestant foremen. Irishmen are not born mechanics. In Scotland and England men take to the vice and the lathe like mother's milk, but here it is labour and pain. [37] Irishmen are not capable of steady, unremitting work. They want a day on and a day off. They wish to be traders, cattle-drovers, pig-jobbers, that they may wander from fair to fair. My men have little to do beyond minding machines; otherwise I must have Scots or English. Discharge a man and the most singular things occur. In a late instance I had seven written requests from all sorts of quarters to take the man back, although before discharge he had been duly warned. The entire neighbourhood called on me—the man's father, wife, mother, the priest, a Protestant lady, three whiskey-sellers, two Presbyterians, the Church of Ireland parson, God knows who. This lasted a fortnight, and then threatening letters set in; coffins, skulls, and marrow-bones were chalked all over the place, with my initials. Indeed you may say they are a wonderful people."

Mr. E.T. Herdman, J.P., of Sion Mills, Co. Tyrone, should know something of the Irish people. The model village above-named belongs to him. Travellers to Londonderry viâ the Great Northern will remember how the great Herdman flax-spinning mills, with their clean, prosperous, almost palatial appearance, relieve the melancholy aspect of the peaty landscape about the Rivers Mourne and Derg. Mr. Herdman pays in wages some £30,000 a year, a sum of which the magnitude assumes colossal proportions in view of the surrounding landscape. The people of the district speak highly of the Herdman family, who are their greatest benefactors, but they failed to return Mr. E.T. Herdman, who contested East Donegal in 1892. The people were willing enough, but the priests stepped in and sent a Nationalist. Said Mr. Herdman, "Home Rule would be fatal to England. The Irish people have more affinity with the Americans or the French than with the English, and the moment international difficulties arise Ireland would have to be reconquered by force of arms. And complications would arise, and in my estimation would arise very early." A landowner I met at Beragh, County Tyrone, held somewhat original opinions. He said, "I refused to identify myself with any Unionist movement. If we're going to be robbed, let us be robbed; if our land is going to be confiscated, let it be confiscated. The British Government is going to give us something, if not much, by way of compensation; and my opinion is, that if the Grand Old Man lives five years longer he'll propose to give the Irish tenants the fee-simple of the lands without a penny to pay. That's my view, begad. I'm a sportsman, not a politician, and my wife says I'm a fool, and very likely she knows best. But, begad, I say let us have prairie value to-day, for to-morrow the G.O.M. will give us nothing at all."

The most extraordinary curiosity of Derry, the *lusus naturæ* of which the citizens justly boast, is *the* Protestant Home Ruler of brains and integrity who, under the familiar appellation of John

Cook, lives in Waterloo Place. Reliable judges said, "Mr. Cook is a man of high honour, and the most sincere patriot imaginable, besides being a highly-cultured gentleman." So excited was I, so eager to see an Irish Home Ruler combining these qualities with his political faith, that I set off instanter in search of him, and having sought diligently till I found him, intimated a desire to sit at his patriotic feet. He consented to unburden his Nationalist bosom, and assuredly seemed to merit the high character he everywhere bears. Having heard his opinion on the general question, I submitted that Mr. Bull's difficulty was lack of confidence, and that he might grant a Home Rule Bill, if the Irish leaders were men of different stamp. He said they were "clever men not overburdened with money," and admitted that a superior class would have been more trustworthy, but relied on the people. "If the first administrators of the law were dishonest, the people would replace them by others. The keystone of my political faith is trust in the people. The Irish are keen politicians, and may be trusted to keep things square." [38]

I submitted that the patriots were in the pay of the Irish-Americans, who were no friends of England—

"The present Nationalist members are not purists, but to take money for their services, to accept £300 a year is no more disgraceful than the action of the Lord Chancellor who takes £10,000. The American-Irish cherish a just resentment. They went away because they were driven out of the country by the land system of that day. And the Irish people must be allowed to regenerate themselves. It cannot be done by England. Better let them go to hell in their own way than attempt to spoon-feed them. But the injustice of former days does not justify the injustice to the landlords proposed by the present bill. It is a bad bill, an unjust bill, and would do more harm than good. England should have a voice in fixing the price, for if the matter be left to the Irish Parliament gross injustice will be done. The tenants were buying their land, aided by the English loans, for they found that their four per cent. interest came lower than their rent. But they have quite ceased to buy, and for the stipulated three years will pay their rent as usual, and why? Because they expect the Irish legislature to give them even better terms—or even to get the land for nothing. Retributive justice is satisfied. For the last twenty years the landlords have suffered fearfully. The present bill is radically unsound, and I trust it will never become law."

And this was all that the one specimen of a Protestant Home Ruler I have found in Ireland could say in favour of his views! His intelligence and probity compelled him to denounce Mr. Gladstone's Bill as "unjust" and radically unsound, and his patriotism caused him to pray that it might never become law! I left him more Unionist than ever.

The great Orange leader of Derry, Mr. John Guy Ferguson, once Grand Ruler, and of world-wide fame, deprecated appeal to arms, except under direst necessity. "I should recommend resistance to all except the Queen's troops. Before all things a sincere loyalist, I should never consent to fire a shot on them. Others think differently, and in case of pressure and excitement the most regrettable things might happen. The people of Derry are full of their great victory of 1688, and believe that their one hundred and five days' resistance saved England from Catholic tyranny. The Bishop of Derry, as you know, had ordered that the troops of King James should be admitted when the thirteen Prentice Boys closed the gate on the very nose of his army." I saw the two white standards taken from the Catholic troops flanking the high altar of the Cathedral; which also contains the grandly-carved case of an organ taken from a wreck of the Spanish Armada in 1588, just a century before the siege. The people have ever before them these warlike spoils, which may account for their martial spirit. An old Prentice Boy told me of the great doings of 1870, how a Catholic publican, one O'Donnell, endeavoured to prevent the annual marching of the Boys, who on the anniversary of the raising of the siege, parade the walls, fire guns, and burn traitor Lundy in effigy; how 5,000 men in sleeve-waistcoats entered the town to stop the procession, how the military intervened, and forbade both marching and burning; how the Boys seized the Town Hall, and in face of 1,700 soldiers and police burnt an effigy hanging from a high window, which the authorities could not reach; how Colonel Hillier broke down the doors and stormed the hall at the bayonet's point, to search both sexes for arms. Gleefully he produced an alphabetical rhyme, which he thought rather appropriate to the present time, and which ended as follows:—"X is the excellent way they (the authorities) were beaten, and exceeding amount of dirt they have eaten. Y is the yielding to blackguards unshorn, which cannot and will not much longer be borne. Z is the zeal with which England put down the Protestant boys who stood up for the crown." In 1883 Lord Mayor Dawson of Dublin wished to lecture at Derry, but the Boys took the Hall and held it, declining to permit the "colleague of Carey" (on the Dublin Town Council) to speak in the city. There you have the present spirit of Derry. [39]

Two miles outside the town I came on a fine Home Ruler, who had somewhere failed to sell a pig. "Sorra one o' me 'll do any good till we get Home Rule." He paid £5 a year for two acres of land with a house. "'Tis the one-half too much, Av I paid fifty shillings, I'd be aisy," he said. Truly a small sum to stand between him and affluence. I failed to sympathise with this worthy man, but my spirits fell as I walked through a collar factory, and thought of Mr. Gladstone. The dislocation of the shirt trade is less serious. Few Irish patriots have any personal interest in this particular branch of industry.

Dublin, April 8th.

MR. BALFOUR IN DUBLIN.

ToC

Mr. Balfour is the most popular man in Ireland, and his Dublin visit will be for ever memorable. The Leinster Hall, which holds several thousands, was packed by half-past five; ninety minutes before starting time, and the multitude outside was of enormous proportions. The people were respectable, quiet, good-humoured, as are Unionist crowds in general, though it was plain that the Dubliners are more demonstrative than the Belfast men. The line of police in Hawkins Street had much difficulty in regulating the surging throng which pressed tumultuously on the great entrance without the smallest hope of ever getting in. The turmoil of cheering and singing was incessant, and everyone seemed under the influence of pleasurable excitement. As you caught the eye of any member of the crowd he would smile with a "What-a-day-we're-having" kind of expression. The college students were in great form, cheering with an inexhaustible vigour, every man smoking and carrying a "thrifle iv a switch." Portraits of Mr. Balfour found a ready sale, and Tussaud's great exhibition of waxworks next door to the hall was quite unable to compete with the living hero. Messrs. Burke and Hare, Parnell and Informer Carey, Tim Healy and Breeches O'Brien, Mr. Gladstone and Palmer the poisoner, with other benefactors and philanthropists, were at a discount. The outsiders were waiting to see Mr. Balfour, but they were disappointed. Lord Iveagh's carriage suddenly appeared in Poolbeg Street at the pressmen's entrance, and the hero slipped into the hall almost unobserved. Inside, the enthusiasm was tremendous. The building is planned like the Birmingham Town Hall, and the leading features of the auditorium are similar. The orchestra was crowded to the ceiling, the great gallery was closely packed, the windows were occupied, and every inch of floor was covered. A band played "God Save the Queen," "Rule Britannia," and the "Boyne Water." The word "Union," followed by the names of Balfour, Abercorn, Iveagh, Hartington, Chamberlain, and Goschen, was conspicuous on the side galleries, and over Mr. Balfour's head was a great banner bearing the rose, thistle, and shamrock, with the Union Jack and the English crown over all. Boldly-printed mottoes in scarlet and white, such as "Quis Separabit?" "Union is strength," "We Won't submit to Home Rule," and "God Bless Balfour," abounded, and in the galleries and on the floor men waved the British flag. The people listened to the band, or amused themselves with patriotic songs and Kentish fire, till Mr. Balfour arrived, when their cheering, loud and long, was taken up outside, and reverberated through the city.

The preliminaries being over, the principal speaker rose amid redoubled applause, which gradually subsided to the silence of intense expectation. Mr. Balfour's first words fell like drops of water in a thirsty land, and never had a speaker a more eager, attentive, respectful audience. Now and then stentorian shouts of assent encouraged him, but the listeners were mostly too much in earnest for noise. It was plain that they meant business, and that the demonstration was no mere empty tomfoolery. Parnellites were there—a drop in the ocean—but their small efforts at interruption were smilingly received. True, there was once a shout of "Throw him out," but a trumpet-like voice screamed "Give him a wash, 'tis what he mostly needs, the crathur," upon which a roar of laughter proclaimed that the offender was forgiven. The outsiders continued their singing and cheering, and when Mr. Balfour concluded sent up a shout the like of which Dublin has seldom heard, if ever. Succeeding speakers were well received, the audience holding their ground. Mr. J. Hall, of Cork, evoked great cheering by the affirmation that Protestants desired no advantage, no privilege, unshared by their Catholic brethren. Similar points made by other speakers met with an instant and hearty confirmation that was unmistakable. Lord Sligo pointed out that firmness and integrity were nowhere better understood than in Ireland, and said that while William O'Brien, the great Nationalist, visited Cork under a powerful escort of police, who with the utmost difficulty prevented the populace from tearing him to pieces; on the other hand, Mr. Balfour had passed through the length and breadth of the land, visiting the poverty-stricken and disturbed districts of the West, with no other protection beyond that afforded by "his tender-hearted sister." Mr. Balfour rose to make a second speech, and the enthusiasm reached its climax. The great ex-Secretary seemed touched, and although speaking slowly showed more than his usual emotion. When he concluded the people sent up a shout such as England never hears—an original shout, long drawn out on a high musical note, something like the unisonous tone of forty factory bulls.

[41]

The students went outside, and with their friends formed in military columns—the outside files well armed with knobby sticks as a deterrent to possible Parnellite enterprise. An extemporised arch of Union Jacks canopied Mr. Balfour in his carriage, which was drawn by hundreds of willing hands linked in long line. The column, properly marshalled, moved away, keeping step amid loud shouts of "Right, left, right, left," until perfect uniformity was attained, and the disciplined force marched steadily on to College Green, following the triumphal chariot with alternate verses of "God Save the Queen" and "Rule Britannia," each verse interpolated with great bursts of applause. At Trinity College the glare of torches appeared, and simultaneously an organised attempt at groaning boomed in under the cheering. Heedless of the rabble the column marched merrily on, not with the broken rush of an English mob, but with the irresistible force of unity in a concrete mass, with the multitudinous tramp of an army division. The yelling slummers hovered on each flank, frantic with impotent rage; willing to wound and yet afraid to strike, knowing that to themselves open conflict meant annihilation. A savage, unsavoury horde of rat-like ruffians,

[42]

these same allies of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Morley, a peculiarly repulsive residuum these Dublin off-scourings. They screamed "To hell with Balfour," "To hell with the English," "To hell with your Unionists," "To hell with Queen Victoria." Some of them sang a doggerel, beginning:—

Let the English remember,
We'll make them surrender,
And chase them to their boats,
And cut their —— throats,
And make a big flood
Of their bad black blood—

not precisely a poem to herald the famous "Union of hearts" so confidently expected. The Unionists tramped on cheering triumphantly, rejoicing in their strength, ignoring the taunting and jeering of the Parnellite scum as beneath contempt. An old Home Ruler expressed disapprobation of his party. "What's the use of showing your teeth when you can't bite?" he said. "Wait till we get the bill and then we will show them and the English what we can do."

On through Grafton Street, Nassau Street, and into Dawson Street, always with great shouting and singing of "God Save the Queen," and "Rule Britannia," the torches still glaring in front. At Morrisson's Hotel, where Parnell was arrested, a man shouted "Three cheers for Gladstone," but nobody responded. The rabble may use him, but they refused a single shout. On the other hand groans were given with leonine force both for Morley and his master. Arrived at St. Stephen's Green, the procession halted at Lord Iveagh's residence, and Mr. Balfour came on the balcony, receiving a welcome right royal. He made another speech amid cheering and groaning of tremendous energy, making himself tolerably well heard under abnormal conditions. When he said "This day shall never fade from my recollection," the lamp beside him was removed and all was over. Back tramped the column, with its clouds of camp-followers, on the way cheering and sending to hell the member for South Tyrone, with other prominent politicians who live on the line of march. The students held their sticks aloft, striking them together in time to their singing. A shindy had been predicted on the return to College Green, and little groups of Scots Greys and Gordon Highlanders, the latter in their white uniforms, lounged about smoking their pipes in happy expectation, but beyond cheering at the statue of Orange William in Dame Street, nothing whatever occurred, and presently the crowd began to disperse. Seeing this, the police, who until now had been massed in strong force broke up into units, and moving leisurely about said, "Good night, boys; you have had enough fun for one day. Get to bed, all of you." Then the young men who had composed the great loyalist column left the square in little bands, each singing "God save the Queen," and every man feeling that he had deserved well of his country. The bill may be stone dead, but there is a satisfaction in the act of shovelling earth on the corpse.

Dublin, April 8th.

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[43]

No. 7.—BAD FOR ENGLAND, RUINOUS TO IRELAND.

ToC

Home Rule for Ireland means damage and loss to English working men. During the late general election the working men candidates of Birmingham, and of England generally, argued that once Ireland were granted Home Rule the distressful land would immediately become a Garden of Eden, a sort of Hibernian El-Dorado; that the poverty which drove Irishmen from their native shores would at once and for ever cease and determine, and that thenceforth—and here was the bribe—Irishmen would cease to compete with the overcrowded artisans and labourers of England. That these statements are diametrically opposed to the truth is well known to all persons of moderate intelligence, and the personal statement of several great capitalists with reference to their course of action in the event of Home Rule becoming law tends to show that multitudes of the industrious classes of Irish manufacturing towns will at once be thrown out of employment, and must of necessity flock to England, increasing the congestion of its great cities, competing with English labour, and inevitably lowering the rate of wages. Hear what comfortable words Mr. Robert Worthington can speak.

Mr. Worthington is no politician; never has interfered with party questions; has always confined his attention to his business affairs. It was because of this that Mr. Balfour sent for him to confer anent the light railways, which have proved such a blessing to the country. It was Mr. Worthington who carried out most of these beneficent works. Besides this, Mr. Worthington has built railways to the amount of three-quarters of a million in Ireland alone. He has employed 5,300 men at one time, and his regular average exceeds 1,500 all the year round. He may therefore be said to know what he is talking about. I called on him at 30, Dame Street, before I left Dublin, and he said, "The bill would be bad for England in every way, and would ruin Ireland. The question is certainly one for the English working man. If he wishes to avoid the competition

of armies of Irish labourers and artisans he must throw out the bill. And this is how it will work—

"All the railways I have constructed in Ireland have been built on county guarantees assisted by special grants from the Imperial Treasury. Without these special grants the work could never have been undertaken at all. If Home Rule becomes law those special grants from the Imperial Treasury will be no longer available; and what will be the result? Clearly that the work will not be undertaken; that the building of railways will come to an end, and that the Irish peasants who have devoted themselves to railway work will go to England and try to find employment there. Once a railway navvy, always a railway navvy, is a well-known and very true saying.

"For my own part I shall be compelled to compete in England, having nothing to do in Ireland, [44] and I shall of course transport my staff and labourers across the Channel.

"The railways of Ireland, fostered by English capital, resting on England's security, have given vast employment to my countrymen. But they would do so no longer. Let us give an example to prove my point.

"Before the introduction of the Home Rule Bill the railway stock to which I have referred stood at a premium of 27 per cent. Since the bill became public and has been the subject of popular discussion, I brought out the Ballinrobe and Claremorris Railway—with what result? Not one-seventh of the sum required has been subscribed, although in the absence of the bill the amount would certainly have been subscribed four times over, at a premium of 20 per cent. What does this prove?

"Simply this—that the farmers and small shopkeepers who invest in this class of security will not trust their savings in the hands of the proposed Irish Legislature. The bill, therefore, stops progress, retards enterprise, drives away capital, and the workers must follow the money. That seems clear enough. Everybody here concedes so much. More than this. I can say from my own experience, and from the reports of my agents and engineers in the South and West of Ireland, that the Nationalists do not want this bill. I do not speak of Home Rule, but of this bill only. All condemn its provisions, and universally concur in the opinion that once it were passed it would be succeeded by a more violent agitation than anything we have yet seen—an agitation having for its object the radical amendment of the measure.

"There is a complete cessation of railway work. Already the men are thinking of moving. But this is not all. I am now at a standstill, pulled up short by the bill. What is the effect on England? Under ordinary circumstances I buy largely all kinds of railway material—steel rails, sleepers, fasteners, engines, and carriages. Every year I send thousands and thousands of pounds to England for these things, and surely most of the money goes indirectly into the pockets of English working men, who are now suffering the loss of all this by reason of their apathy in this matter. I speak only as a man of business, anxious for the prosperity of my country. I do not discuss Home Rule; never did discuss it and never will. But I end where I began, and I repeat the bill will ruin Ireland, will be bad for England, and I will add that the British Government will soon be compelled to intervene to stave off Irish bankruptcy. Home Rulers are now becoming afraid of the bill; artisans, farmers, and labourers think it a good joke. They relished the hunt, but they don't want the game.

"Returning to my own affairs, I say without hesitation that though the mere threat of the bill has paralysed my business, and that the passing of the bill would drive my men to England, yet—throw out the bill, deliver us from the impending dread, and during the next two years I shall myself expend £150,000 in railway material manufactured by British artisans. Emphatically I [45] repeat that Home Rule to the British working man means increased competition and direct pecuniary loss."

Mr. S. McGregor, of 30, Anglesea Street, Dublin, has been located in the city for 34 years, and seems to have been a politician from the first. Coming from the Land o' Cakes, he landed an advanced Radical, and a devoted admirer of the Grand Auld Mon. Once on the spot a change came o'er the spirit of his dream. His shop has the very unusual feature of indicating his political views. Her Gracious Majesty, Lord Beaconsfield, and Mr. Balfour look down upon you from neat frames. I am disposed to regard Mr. McGregor as the pluckiest man in Ireland. A quiet, peaceful citizen he is, one who remembers the Sawbath, and on weekdays concentrates his faculties on his occupation as a tailor and clothier. I did not seek the interview, which arose from a business call not altogether unconnected with a missing button, but his opinions and his information are well worth recording. Mr. McGregor said, "I thrust my opinions on none, but I have a right to my opinions, and I do not affect concealment. The great defect of the Irish Unionists is want of courage. They dare not for their lives come forward and boldly state their convictions. If Lord Emly or some other Irish Roman Catholic nobleman had come forward earlier, it might have induced weak-kneed members of the party to do likewise. The Unionists do not exercise the great influence they undoubtedly possess. They allow themselves to be terrorised into silence. Let them have the courage of their opinions and they have nothing to fear. The masses of the industrial population are not in favour of Home Rule. The corner-men, who want to spend what they never earned, and the farmers, who hope to get the land for nothing, are the only hearty Home Rulers in Ireland. I employ ten people, all Roman Catholics, some of them with me for twenty-five years. None of these are Home Rulers. I became a convert to Conservatism by my intimate knowledge and personal acquaintance with many of the leaders of the Fenian movement. I saw through the hollowness of the whole thing, and declined any connection therewith. Poor Henry Rowles, who was to be told off by signal to shoot Mr. Foster, was one of my workmen. He died in prison, some said from sheer fright, but two or three of his friends were hanged. He was mixed up by marriage with the Fenian party, and was drawn on and on like many another. I would rather not name the

Fenian leaders I knew, and the reason is this. I knew them too well. Speaking of the Unionist lack of courage, you must not be too much surprised. During the last fourteen years Unionists have had to maintain a guerilla warfare for existence. But the strangest feature of the present position is this—the Home Rulers are kicking at the bill! A great Home Ruler of my acquaintance (Mr. McGregor referred me to him) is getting quite afraid. He is a farmer holding 300 acres under Lord Besborough, and says that he trusts things will remain as they are. He has a good landlord, borrows money by the subvention, and has a perfect horror of the class of men who will obtain [46] the upper hand in Ireland. A Nationalist over the way was about to extend the buildings you see there. Plans were drafted, and offices were to be built. Out comes the bill and in goes the project. He has no confidence in the Irish Nationalist leaders; but, strange to say he believes in Mr. Gladstone. He admits that the Irish M.P.'s are not quite up to his ideal, but believes that the Grand Old Man's genius for accommodation and ingenious dovetailing of Imperial interests will pull the country through. Meanwhile he lays out no penny of money.

"I am a Presbyterian, and what is more a United Presbyterian, belonging to the Presbyter of Scotland. All Scotch Presbyterians are advanced Radicals. We have four hundred members here. They came here worshippers of Gladstone and Home Rulers to the tune of 97 per cent. The congregation is now 99 per cent. Unionist or Conservative out and out. Of the four hundred we have only three Home Rulers. What will the English people say to that? Tell them that our minister, who came here a Home Ruler, is now on a Unionist mission in Scotland—the Rev. Mr. Procter, brother of Procter, the cartoonist of *Moonshine* and the *Sketch*, to wit. My workpeople, all steady, industrious people, ask but one thing—it is to be let alone."

Here Mr. G.M. Roche, the great Irish wool-factor and famous amateur photographer, said—

"Ah! we must have the bill. 'Tis all we want to finish us up. We're never happy unless we're miserable; the bill will make us so and we'll never be properly discontented till we get it!"

Passing through the Counties of Louth, Dublin, Londonderry, Monaghan, Tyrone, Donegal, and Fermanagh, I met with many farmers whose statements amply confirmed the words of the descendant of the great Sir Boyle Roche. These unhappy men had been divested of their last grievance, stripped of their burning wrongs, heartlessly robbed of their long-cherished injuries. It was bad enough before, when Irishmen had nothing except grievances, but at least they had these, handed down from father to son, from generation to generation, along with the family physiognomy, two precious, priceless heirlooms, remarkable as being the only hereditary possessions upon which the brutal Saxon failed to cast his blood-shot, covetous eye. And now the grievances are taken away, the *Lares* and *Penates* of the farmer's cabin are ruthlessly removed, and the melancholy peasant looks around for the immaterial antiquities bequeathed by his long-lost forefathers. "Ah; don't the days seem lank and long, When all goes right and nothing goes wrong, And isn't our life extremely flat, When we've nothing whatever to grumble at." The Irish farmer is with the poet, who hits his harrowing anguish to a hair. He folds his hands and looks about, uncertain what to do next. His rent has been lowered by 35 per cent., he has compensation for improvements, fixity of tenure, and may borrow money to buy the land outright at a percentage, which will amount to less than his immortal Rint. What is the unhappy man to [47] do? His grievances have been his sole theme from boyhood's happy days, the basis of his conversation, his actuating motive, the very backbone of his personal entity. Now they are gone, the fine gold has become dim, and the weapons of war have perished. Once he could walk abroad with the proud consciousness that he was a wronged man, a martyr, a brave patriot struggling nobly against the adverse fates, a broth of a boy, whose melancholy position was noted by the gods, and whose manly bearing under proffered slavery established a complete claim to high consideration in Olympus. But now, with heart bowed down with grief and woe, he walks heavily, and even as a man who mourneth for his mother, over the enfranchised unfamiliar turf. He peeps into the bog-hole, and does not recognise himself. He could pay the rent twice over, but he hates conventionalities, and would rather keep the money. He is constructed to run on grievances, and in no other grooves, and the strangeness of his present position is embarrassing. The tenants of Lord Leitrim, Lord Lifford, and the Duke of Abercorn make no complaint of their landlords. On the contrary, they distinctly state that all are individually kind and reasonable men, and while attributing their own improved position to the various Land Acts given to Ireland, which leave the actual possessor of the land small option in the matter, they freely admit that these gentlemen willingly do more than is ordained by any act of Parliament, and that over and above the provisions of the law, all three are fair-minded men, desirous of doing the right thing by their people and the country at large. Other landlords there were on whose devoted heads were breathed curses both loud and deep.

The late Lord Leitrim was exalted to the skies, but his murdered father was visited with blackest malediction. At Clones, in the County Monaghan, I met a sort of roadside specimen of the *Agricola Hibernicus*, who explained his position thus:—"Ye see, we wor rayduced 35 per cent., an' 'tis thrue what ye say; but then produce is rayduced 50 per cent., so we're 15 per cent. worse off than iver we wor before. We want another Land Act that'll go to the root. An' that we'll get from an Oirish Parliament an' only from that. 'Tis not the tinints that's always the worst off. Many's the time I seen thim that had a farrum of their own go to the dogs, while thim that had rint to pay sthruggled and sthrived an' made money an' bought the freeholders out. For whin they had nothin' to pay they did no work, an' then, bedad ivery mortial thing wint to the divil. An' that's how it'll be wid the lazy ones once we get Home Rule, which means the land for nothin' or next to nothin'. Barney will kick up his heels and roar whirroo, but call again in a year an' ye'll see he hasn't enough money to jingle on a tombstone."

My next from the New Tipperary, whither I journey viâ Kildare, Kilkenny, and Limerick, *en*

route for Cork and the Blood-taxed Kerry, where Kerry cows are cut and carved. Now meditation on marauding moonlighters makes melancholy musing mine.

Limerick, April 11th.

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[48]

No. 8.—TERRORISM AT TIPPERARY.

ToC

Tipperary is Irish, and no mistake. Walking into town from Limerick the first dwellings you reach are of the most primitive description, whether regarded as to sanitary arrangements or otherwise. The ground to the right slopes downwards, and the cabins are built with sloping floors. The architects of these aboriginal erections stuck up four brick walls, a hole in, a hole out, and a hole in the top, without troubling to level the ground. Entering, you take a downward step, and if you walk to the opposite exit, you will need to hold on to the furniture, if any. If you slip on the front step you will fall head first into the back yard, and though your landing might be soft enough, it would have a nameless horror, far more killing than a stony fall. The women stand about frowsy and unkempt, with wild Irish eyes, all wearing the shawl as a hood, many in picturesque tatters, like the cast-off rags of a scarecrow, rags and flesh alike unwashed and of evil odour. The children look healthy and strong, though some of them are almost *in puris naturalibus*. Their faces are washed once a week; one of them said so, but the statement lacks confirmation, and is opposed to the evidence of the senses. Scenes like these greet the visitor to Old Tipperary, that is, Tipperary proper, if he enter from Limerick. The town is said to be old, and in good sooth the dunghills seem to possess a considerable antiquity. In this matter the Tipperary men are sentimental enough—conservative enough for anything. At Tipperary, of all places, the brutal Saxon will learn how much has been bequeathed to Irishmen by their mighty forefathers.

The eastern side is better. A grand new Roman Catholic church has just been built at a cost of £25,000, and in front of the gilded railings—for they are gilt like the railings of Paris—were dreadful old women, like Macbethian witches, holding out their skinny hands for alms. Smartly dressed young ladies, daughters of publicans and shopkeepers, passed in jauntily, took a splash in the holy water, crossed themselves all over, knocked off a few prayers, and tripped merrily away. The better parts of the town belong to Mr. Smith-Barry, the knock-me-down cabins to Mr. Stafford O'Brien, whose system is different. As the leases fall in the former has modern houses built, while the latter is in the hands of the middlemen, who sub-let the houses, and leave things to slide. The *laissez-aller* policy is very suitable to the genius of the genuine Irish, who may be said to rule the roost in Tipperary.

I interviewed all sorts and conditions of men, but every individual bound me down to closest secrecy. And although nobody said anything approaching high treason, their alarm on finding they had ventured to express to a stranger anything like their real opinion was very significant. The conversations took place last evening, and this morning before breakfast a young man called on me at the Station Hotel, Limerick Junction, three miles from Tipperary, "on urgent business." [49] "Me father thinks he said too much, an' that ye moight put what he said in print, wid his name to it. Ye promised ye wouldn't, an' me father has confidence, but he wishes to remoind ye that there's plinty in Tipperary would curse him for spakin' wid an Englishman, an' that dozens of thim would murther him or you for the price of a pot of porter." Another messenger shortly arrived, bearing a letter in which the writer said that any mention of his name would simply ruin him, and that he might leave the country at once. And yet these men had only said what Englishmen would account as nothing.

New Tipperary adjoins the old, to which it is on the whole superior. All the descriptions I have seen of the Land League buildings are untrue and unfair. Most of them were written by men who never saw the place, and who paraphrased and perpetuated the original error. It was described as a "mile or two from Tipperary," and the buildings were called "tumble-down shanties of wood, warped and decaying, already falling to pieces." The place adjoins and interlocks with the old town; it is not separated by more than the breadth of a street, is largely built of stone, and comprises a stone arcade, which alone cost many thousands. Some of the cottages are of wood, but they look well, are slated, and seem in good condition. The butter mart, a post and rail affair, with barbed wire decorations, is desolate enough, and nearly all the shops are shuttered. Enamel plates with Dillon Street and Emmett Street still attest the glory that has departed, but the plate bearing Parnell Street escaped my research. The William O'Brien Arcade is scattered to the winds, save and except the sturdy stone walls, which (*à la* Macaulay's New-Zealander) I surveyed with satisfaction, sketching the ruins of the structure from a broken bench in Dillon Street.

A full and true history of the New Tipperary venture has never been written. As in the present juncture the story is suggestive and instructive, I will try to submit the whole in a form at once concise and accurate. The particulars have been culled with great pains from many quarters and

carefully collated on the spot, and may be relied on as minutely exact and undeniable. Everyone admits Mr. Smith-Barry's claim to the title of a good landlord, an excellent landlord, one of a thousand. Before the *casus belli* was found by William O'Brien all was prosperity, harmony, and peace. Mr. Smith-Barry owns about 5,000 acres of land situate in the fat and fertile plain of Tipperary, known as the Golden Vale, with the best part of the county town itself. Tipperary is a great butter centre. The people are ever driving to the butter factory, which seemed to be worked in the Brittany way. Donkey-carts driven by women, and bearing barrels of milk, abound on the Limerick Road. The land is so rich, grand meadows, and heavy dairy-ground, that the place prospered abundantly, and was by commercial men reckoned an excellent place for business. But they have changed all that. The Tipperary folks were once thought as good as the [50] Bank of England. Now they dislike to pay anything or anybody. Their delicate sense of *meum* and *tuum* is blunted. They take all they can get, and pay as little as they can. They affect dunghills and dirt, and have a natural affinity for battle, murder, and sudden death. How did all this come about?

First, as to Mr. Smith-Barry's character. The most advanced Nationalists, the Fenian papers, the Catholic clergy, all concurred in blessing him. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Cloyne, Canon Hegarty, P.P., and Tim Healy spoke of him in the character of a landlord in highest terms. Sir Charles Russell, Tim Harrington, Mr. O'Leary (Chairman of the Clonakilty Town Commissioners, a violent Nationalist), and Canon Keller (R.C.) unanimously agreed that Mr. Smith-Barry must be exempted from the general condemnation of Irish landlords. They said he was the "kindest of landlords," and that his tenants were "comfortable, respectable, and happy." They proclaimed his "generous and noble deeds," declaring that "there have been no cases of oppression or hardship, and the best and most kindly relations have existed." All these sayings are gathered from Nationalist papers, which would supply thousands of similar character, and up to the time of O'Brien's interference, none of an opposite sort. But, as Serjeant Buzfuz would have said, the serpent was on the trail, the viper was on the hearthstone, the sapper and miner was at work. Thanks to the patriot's influence, the Paradise was soon to become an Inferno.

A Mr. Ponsonby wanted his rents, or part of them. His tenants had lived rent-free for so long—some of them were seven years behind—that they naturally resented the proposed innovation. Mr. Smith-Barry and others came to Mr. Ponsonby's assistance, and, endeavouring to settle the thing by arbitration, proposed that the landlord should knock off £22,000 of arrears, should make reductions of 24 to 34 per cent. in the rents, and make the tenants absolute owners in 49 years. This was not good enough. Judge Gibson thought it "extravagantly generous," but the Tipperary folks resented Mr. Smith-Barry's connection with such a disgracefully tyrannical piece of business, and, at the instance of William O'Brien, determined to make him rue the day he imagined it. They sent a deputation to remonstrate, and Mr. Smith-Barry, while adhering to his opinion as to the liberality of the proposition, explained that he was only one of many, and that whatever he said or did would not change the course of events. The Tipperary folks required him to repudiate the arrangement, to turn his back on his friend and himself, and—here is the cream of the whole thing, this is deliciously Irish—they soberly, seriously, and officially proposed to Mr. Smith-Barry that in addition to the 15 per cent. abatement they had just received on their rent he should make a further remittance of 10 per cent. to enable them to assist the Ponsonby tenants in carrying on the war against their landlord, on whose side Mr. Smith-Barry was fighting. They said in effect, "You have given us 3s. in the pound, to which we had no claim; now we want 2s. [51] more, to enable us to smash the landlord combination, of which you are the leader." This occurred in the proceedings of a business deputation, and not in a comic opera.

Mr. Smith-Barry failed to see the sweet reasonableness of this delightful proposition, and then the fun began.

O'Brien to the rescue, whirroo!

He rushed from Dublin, and told the Tipperary men to pay Smith-Barry no rent. If they paid a penny they were traitors, slaves, murderers, felons, brigands, and bosthoons. If they refused to pay they were patriots, heroes, angels, cherubim and seraphim, the whole country would worship them, they would powerfully assist the Ponsonby folks in the next county, they would be saviours of Ireland.

And besides all this they would keep the money in their pockets. But this was a mere detail.

The people took O'Brien's advice, withholding Mr. Smith-Barry's rent, keeping in their purses what was due to him, in order that somebody's tenants in the next county might get better terms. Still Mr. Smith-Barry held out, and the Land League determined to make of him a terrible example. He owned most of the town. Happy thought! let the shopkeepers leave his hated tenements. Let their habitations be desolate and no man to dwell in their tents. The Land League can build another Tipperary over the way, the tenants can hop across, and Mr. Smith-Barry will be left in the lurch! The end, it was thought, would justify the means, and some sacrifice was expected. Things would not work smoothly at first. The homes of their fathers were void; new dunghills, comparatively flavourless, had to be made, the old accretions, endeared by ancestral associations, had to be abandoned, and the old effluvium weakened by distance was all that was left to them. The new town was off the main line of trade and traffic, but it was thought that these, with the old Tipperary odour, would come in time. Streets and marts were built by the Land League at a cost of £20,000 or more. The people moved away, but they soon moved back again. The shopkeepers could do no business, so with bated breath and whispering humbleness they returned to Mr. Smith-Barry. The mart was declared illegal, and the old one was re-opened. But while the agitation continued, the town was possessed by devils. Terrorism and outrage abounded on every side. The local papers published the names of men who dared to avow esteem

for Mr. Smith-Barry, or who were supposed to favour his cause. The Tipperary boys threw bombshells into their houses, pigeon-holed their windows with stones, threw blasts of gun-powder with burning fuses into their homes. They were pitilessly boycotted, and a regular system of spies watched their goings out and their comings in. If they were shopkeepers everything was done to injure them, and people who patronised them were not only placed on the Black List but were assaulted on leaving the shops, and their purchases taken by violence and destroyed. Broken windows and threats of instant death were so common as to be unworthy of mention, and [52] the hundred extra armed policemen who were marched into the town were utterly powerless against the prevailing rowdyism of the Nationalist party. Honest men were coerced into acting as though dishonest, and one unfortunate man, who had in a moment of weakness paid half-a-year's rent, pitifully besought Mr. Smith-Barry's agent to sue him along with the rest, and declared he would rather pay it over again than have it known that the money had been paid. "Ye can pay a year's gale for six months, but ye can't rise again from the dead," said this pious victim to circumstances.

At last the leaders were prosecuted, but before this the Boys had great divarshun. These good Gladstonians, these ardent Home Rulers, these patriotic purists, these famous members of the sans-shirt Separatist section, set no limits to their sacrifices in the Good Cause, stuck at nothing that would exemplify their determination to bring about the Union of Hearts, were resolved to take their light from under a bushel and set it in a candlestick. They wrecked many houses and sorely beat the inmates. They burnt barns, and stacks, and homesteads, and in one case a poor man's donkey-cart with its load of oats. They exploded in people's homes metal boxes, leaden pipes, and glass bottles containing gun-powder, in such numbers as to be beyond reckoning. They burnt the doors and window sashes of the empty houses, knocked people down at dark corners with heavy bludgeons, and fired shots into windows by way of adding zest to the family hearth. Poor John Quinlan escaped five shots, all fired into his house. Mr. Bell, of Pegsboro, beat this record with six. He was *believed* to sympathise with Mr. Smith-Barry! Men with white masks pervaded the vicinity from the gentle gloaming till the witching morn, and woe to the weak among their opponents, or even among the neutrals, whom they might meet on their march!

The tenants were great losers. A commercial man from Dublin assured me that the agitation cost him £2,000 in bad debts. The people were inconvenienced, unsettled, permanently demoralised, their peaceful relations rudely interrupted, themselves and their commercial connections more or less discredited and injured, and the whole prosperous community impoverished, by the machinations of O'Brien and Bishop Croke of Thurles, a few miles away. The inferior clergy were of course in their element. Father Humphreys and others were notorious for the violence of their language. Gladstonians who think Home Rule heralds the millennium, and who babble of brotherly love, should note the neat speech of good Father Haynes, who said, "We would, if we could, pelt them not only with dynamite, but with the lightnings of heaven and the fires of hell, till every British bulldog, whelp, and cur would be pulverised and made top-dressing for the soil." This is the feeling of the priests, and the people are under the priestly thumb. That this is so is proved by recent events in Dublin. None but the Parnellites could make head against the Catholic Party. In the recent conflict the Parnellites were squelched. Tim Healy kicked and [53] bit, but Bishop Walsh got him on the ropes, and Tim "went down to avoid punishment." The priest holds Tim in the hollow of his hand. Tim and his tribe must be docile, must answer to the whistle, must keep to heel, or they will feel the lash. Should they rebel, their constituencies, acting on priestly orders, will cast them out as unclean, and their occupation, the means by which they live, will be gone. Tim and his congeries hate the clerics, but they fear the flagellum. They loathe their chains, but they must grin and bear them. They have no choice between that and political extinction.

The opinion of Tipperary men on the question of religious toleration is practically unanimous. Pass Home Rule and the Protestants must perforce clear out. As it is, they are entirely excluded from any elective position, their dead are hooted in the streets, their funeral services are mocked and derided by a jeering crowd. The other day a man was fined for insulting the venerable Protestant pastor of Cappawhite, near Tipperary, while the old man was peacefully conducting the burial service of a member of his congregation. Foul oaths and execrations being meekly accepted without protest, a more enterprising Papist struck the pastor with a sod of turf, for which he was punished. But, returning to our muttons, let me conclude with three important points:

(1) Mr. Smith-Barry built the Town Hall of Tipperary at a cost of £3,000, and gave the use thereof to the Town Commissioners for nothing. He spent £1,000 on a butter weigh-house, £500 on a market yard, and tidied up the green at a cost of £300. He gave thirty acres of land for a park, and the ground for the Catholic Cathedral. He offered the land for a Temperance Hall (I think he promised to build it), on condition that it was not used as a political meeting-house. The Catholic Bishop declined to accede to this, and the project was abandoned.

(2) Several dupes of the Land League, for various outrages, were sentenced to punishment varying from one year's hard labour to seven years' penal servitude.

(3) O'Brien, M.P., and Dillon, M.P., who had brought about the trouble, were with others convicted of conspiracy, and were sentenced to six months' imprisonment. But this was in their absence, for soon after the trial commenced, being released on bail, they ran away, putting the salt sea between themselves and their deservings. Heroes and martyrs of Ireland, of whom the brutal Briton hears so much, receive these patriots into your glorious company!

The spirit of Tipperary is ever the same. No open hostility now, but the fires of fanaticism are only smouldering, and only a breath is needed to revive the flame. Every Protestant I saw, and all

the intelligent and enlightened Catholics, concur that this is so, and that Home Rule would supply the needful impulse. These men also submit that they understand the matter better than Mr. Gladstone and his patch-work party.

Tipperary April 12th.

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[54]

No. 9.—TYRANNY AND TERRORISM.

ToC

The peasantry and small shopkeepers of this district can only be captured by stratagem, and this for two reasons. Their native politeness makes them all things to all men, and their fear of consequences is ever before them. Their caution is not the Scotsman's ingrained discretion, but rather the result of an ever-present fear. English working men of directly opposite politics chum together in good fellowship, harbouring no animosity, agreeing to differ in a friendly way. It is not so in Ireland. The Irish labourer is differently situated. He dare not think for himself, and to boldly speak his mind would mean unknown misfortunes, affecting the liberty and perhaps the lives of himself and those nearest and dearest to him. That is, of course, assuming that his opinions were not approved by the village ruffians who watch his every movement, of whom he stands in deadly terror, and whom he dreads as almost divining his most secret thoughts. A direct query as to present politics would fail in every case. As well try to catch Thames trout with a bent pin, or shoot snipe with a bow and arrow. My plan has been to lounge about brandishing a big red guide-book, a broad-brimmed hat, and an American accent; speaking of antiquities, shortest roads to famous spots, occasionally shmoking my clay dhudeen with the foinest pisantry in the wurruld and listening to their comments on the "moighty foine weather we're havin', Glory be to God." They generally veer round to the universal subject, seeking up-to-date information. Discovering my ignorance of the question, they explain the whole matter, incidentally disclosing their own opinions. The field workers of this district are fairly intelligent. Most have been in England, working as harvesters, and some of the better-informed believe that in future they will be compelled to live in England altogether.

A fine old man, living by the roadside near Oolagh, said:—"I wint to England for thirty-four years runnin', and to the same place, in North Staffordshire, first wid father, thin wid son. Whin I got too ould an' stiff I sent me own son. First it was old Micky, thin it was young Micky. He's away four months, and brings back enough to help us thro' the winter, thanks be to God. The other time he mostly works at the big farrum beyant there. Whin they cut up the big farrums into little ones, nayther meself nor Micky will get anything, by raison we're dacent, harmless people. 'Tis the murtherin' moonlighters will get the land, an' me son wouldn't demane himself by stoppin' in the counthry to work for them. First 'twas the landlords dhrove us away, next 'twill be the tenants. We're bound to be slaughtered some way, although 'twas said that when we 'bolished the landlords we'd end our troubles. But begorra, there's more ways o' killin' a dog than by chokin' him wid butther." There is a growing feeling among the farmers that the land will be [55] heavily taxed to raise revenue, and that this means expatriation to the labouring classes, who will swarm to England in greater numbers than ever.

Another grand old man, named Mulqueen, spoke English imperfectly, and it was only by dint of frequent repetition that his meaning could be mastered. Well clothed and well groomed, he stood at his cottage door, the picture of well-earned repose. Thirty-two years of constabulary service and twenty-one years in a private capacity had brought him to seventy-five, when he returned to end his days on his native spot, among Irish-speaking people, and under the noble shadow of the Galtee Mountains. Divested of the accent which flavoured his rusty English, Mr. Mulqueen's opinions were as follows:—

"I am a Home Ruler and I voted for a Nationalist. But I am now doubtful as to the wisdom of that course. I see that Irishmen quarrel at every turn, that they are splitting up already, that the country under their management would be torn to pieces, that the people would suffer severely, and that England would have to interfere to keep our leaders from each other's throats. It was Irish disputes that brought the English here at first. In the event of an Irish Legislature Irish disagreements would bring them here again. We'll never be able to govern ourselves until the people are more enlightened." I left this sensible and truly patriotic Irishman with the wish that there were more like him. He was a pious Catholic, and regretted to learn that I was otherwise, admitting in extenuation that this was rather a misfortune than a fault, and, with a parting hand-shake, expressing an earnest hope that "the golden gates of glory might open to receive my sowl, and that we might again convarse in the company of the blessed saints in the peaceful courts of heaven." This old-fashioned pious kindliness is hardly now the mode, and isolated instances can rarely be met with even in remote country districts.

Running down to Limerick, I witnessed a warm contention between a Unionist from Belfast and

a commercial traveller from Mullingar, a hot Home Ruler, the latter basing his arguments on alleged iniquitous treatment of his father, a West Meath farmer, and defending boycotting as "a bloodless weapon," which phrase he evidently considered unanswerable. The Land League he contended was a fair combination to protect the interests of the tenants, and avowed that all evictions were unwarrantable acts of tyranny. The Belfast man showed that these arguments were equally applicable to the other side, and asked the patriot if eviction were not likewise "a bloodless weapon," to which inquiry the Mullingar man failed to find the proper answer, and, not coming up to time, was by his backers held to have thrown up the sponge. This incident is only valuable as showing the poor line of country hunted by the more brainy Nationalists. A County Clare man boasted of his collection of Irish curiosities. "I have the pistol O'Connell shot So-and-So with, I have the pistol Grattan used when he met Somebody else, I have the sword of Wolfe [56] Tone, the pike that Miles O'Flanagan—" Here the Ulsterman broke in with—

"Excuse me, Sir. There's one thing I'd like to see if ye have it. Like you, I am a pathriotic Irishman, and take deloight in relics appertaining to the histhory of me counthry. Tell me now, have ye the horsewhip, the thunderin' big horsewhip, that young McDermot, of Thrinity College, used when he administhered condign punishment to Tim Healy? Have ye that, now?"

The County Clare man was completely knocked out. He discontinued the recital of his catalogue, and surveyed the scenery in dignified silence. His own friends chuckled. This was the most unkindest cut of all. Irishmen love to see a splendid knockdown blow. They are full of fight, and their spirit must have vent. They fight for fun, for love, for anything, for nothing, with words, with blows, with tongues, with blackthorns, anywhere, anyhow, only let them fight. Remove Mr. Bull, they will fight each other. Heaven help the right when nobody stands by to see fair play!

A Mr. Magrath, of Killmallock, was inclined to take a jocose view of the situation. "Faix, the English could never govern Ireland, an' small blame to thim for that same. Did ye see the Divil's Bit Mountains as ye came down from Dublin? Ye did? Av coorse, ye couldn't help but see them. Did ye see the big bite he tuk out o' the range—ye can see the marks o' the divil's own teeth, an' the very shape of his gums, divil sweep him! Shure, I seen it meself whin I wint to the Curragh races wid Barney Maloney; an' by the same token, 'twas Barney axplained it to me. Didn't the divil take his bite, an' then didn't he dhrop it on the plain out there forninst ye, the big lump they call the rock iv Cashel? Av coorse he did. An' if the divil himself found Ireland too hard a nut to crack, how can the English expect to manage us? Anyway, 'tis too big a mouthful for Misther Bull." One gentleman stood at his shop door, and having looked carefully around, said, "Ye niver know who ye're spakin' wid, an' ye niver know who's spyin' ye. Ah, this is a terrible counthry since we all got upset wid this Home Rule question. Did ye hear of Sadleir, of Tipperary? Ye didn't? He was a savin', sthrivin' man, an' he married a woman wid money. He had a foine shop, wid ploughs, an' sickles, an' spades for the whole counthry round. 'Twas a grand business he had, an' he made a powerful dale o' money. He was a quiet man, an' niver wint to the whiskey shops, where the boys they would be quarrellin' an' knockin' hell out iv each other. He introduced a timprance lecturer that towld the boys the poteen was pizenin' thim, an' 'twas wather they must dhrink. Ha! Ha! Will I tell ye what owld Sheela Maguire said to the timprance man?"

I admitted a delirious delight in discursive digression.

"The timprance man had a wondherful glass that made iverything a thousand million times as big. What's this he called it? Ye're right, 'twas a my-cross-scrope; ye hit it to a pop; bedad 'tis yerself has the larnin.' An' the people looked through it at the wather he put in a glass, an' they [57] seen the wather all swimmin' wid snakes an' scorpions; 'twas enough to terrify the mortal sowl out o' ye. An' so Sheela looked in an' saw them. An' the man put in the wather a good dhrop o' whiskey, an' he says, says he, 'Now ye'll see the effect on animal life,' says he. An' Sheela looked in again, an' she seen the snakes all doubled up, an' kilt, an' murthered an' says Sheela, says she: —

"'May the divil fly away wid me,' says she, 'if I ever touch wather again till I first put in whiskey to kill them fellows!'

"'Twas poor Sadleir, of Tipperary town, brought the man down. Sadleir must howld land; nothin' less would sarve him, an' he tuk from Smith-Barry a big houldin', an' paid the out-going tenant five thousand pounds for his interest. Whin the throubles began he refused to join the Land League, by raison that he'd put all his money in the land. They sent him terrible letthers wid skulls an' guns, an' coffins, an' they said Will ye join? An' he said No, once. They smashed ivery pane o' glass in his house, an' they said Will ye join? An' he said No, twice. They bate his servants next, an' said Will ye join? An' he said No, three times. They threw explosives into the house, an' said Will ye join? An' he broke down. He was afeard for his life. He wint in wid the rest, an' refused to pay rint', an' iv coorse he got evicted, an' lost his five thousand pounds he put into the farm, an' then he lost his business, an' before long he died with a broken heart. An' where did he die? Just in the workhouse. 'Twas all thro' William O'Brien, the great frind iv Oireland, that this happened. An' if O'Brien an' his frinds got into power, why wouldn't it happen again? But we're afeard to breathe almost in this unfortunate counthry, God help us!"

Amid the varying opinions of the Irish people there is one point on which they are unanimous. They have no confidence in their present leaders, whom they freely accuse of blackguardism, lying, and flagrant dishonesty. Business men, although Home Rulers, agree that the destinies of the country should not be trusted to either or any of the jarring factions, which like unclean birds of evil omen hover darkling around, already disputing with horrid dissonance possession of the carcase on which they hope to batten. At the Station Hotel, Limerick Junction, a warm Nationalist said to me, "The country will be ruined with those blackguards. We have a right to Home Rule, an

abstract right to manage our own affairs, and I believe in the principle. But I want such men as Andrew Jameson, or Jonathan Hogg, or that other Quaker, Pym, the big draper. There we have honourable gentlemen, whom we or the English alike might trust, either as to ability or integrity. We might place ourselves in the hands of such men and close our eyes with perfect confidence. Our misfortune is that our men, as a whole, are a long way below par. They inspire no confidence, they carry no weight, and nobody has any respect for them." Here my friend mentioned names, and spoke of an Irish M.P.'s conduct at Sligo. I give his story exactly as I heard it, premising that my informant's *tout ensemble* was satisfactory, and that he assured me I might [58] rely on his words:—"At the Imperial Hotel a discussion arose—a merely political discussion—and blows were exchanged, the 'honourable gentleman' and others rolling about the floor like so many savage bull dogs in a regular rough-and-tumble fight. The poor 'boots' got his face badly bruised, and for some days went about in mourning. I see that this same member is bringing in a Bill in the House of Commons, and I read it through with great interest, because I remembered the row, which was hushed up, and never appeared in the papers. Imagine any Irishman, with any respect either for himself or his country, trusting either to a parcel of fellows like that."

My friend spoke more moderately of the objectionable Irish M.P.'s than they do of each other, but his opinions were obviously strong enough for anything. The attitude of the *Freeman's Journal* moved him to contempt, and its abject subjection to the priesthood excited his disgust. He said, waving the despised sheet with indignity—"We have no paper now. We lost all when we lost Parnell. He was a Protestant, and could carry the English people, and with all his faults he had the training of a gentleman. Look at the low-bred animals that represent us now. Look at Blank-Blanky and his whole boiling. I swear I am ashamed to look an Englishman in the face. The very thought of the Irish members makes me puke."

The mention of Mr. Jonathan Hogg reminds me that this eminent Dubliner submitted to me a point which I do not remember to have seen in print. Said Mr. Hogg: "When the Irish Legislature has become an accomplished fact, which is extremely improbable, the land will be divided and sub-divided until the separate holdings will yield incomes below the amount required for the payment of income-tax. The effect of this will be that a large number of incomes now paying tax will disappear, each leaving a number of small incomes paying no tax, so that a larger tax must be levied on the remaining incomes to meet the deficiency. Then the large manufacturers who can move away will certainly do so, and the country will suffer severely. Employment will be scarce or altogether lacking, and the people will go to England, by their competition lowering the rate of wage." The mention of Mr. Andrew Jameson reminds me of his opinion *re* Customs. He said to me "The bill nominally deprecates Separation, and yet proposes to establish a Custom House between the two countries, making Ireland a foreign country at once." Mr. John Jameson, who was present along with Mr. Arundel, the business manager of the great J.J. concern, then expressed his fears anent the practicability of Customs' collections on the Irish coast. He said, "We have 1,300 coastguards at present, and this force is ample when backed by the Royal Irish Constabulary, marching and patrolling in the interior. But when the constabulary are no longer engaged in the direct protection of British interests the little force of thirteen hundred coastguards must prove quite insufficient, and I doubt if even thirteen thousand would prove an [59] adequate force. The Irish people will have no interest in protecting the British Government. Their interest will be exactly the other way. Grave difficulties attend the proposition having regard to the Customs duties between the two countries." Another eminent authority then present referred to the encouragement which the Act would give to the enterprising smuggler, and thought that a small fleet of American steamers, smart built, fast little boats, would instantly spring into existence to carry on a splendidly paying trade—a trade, too, having untold fascination for the Yankees, while the average Irishman, as everybody knows, is a smuggler by nature, disposition, heredity, and divine right. It was also pointed out that, whereas huge quantities of spirits now pass to Ireland through the ports of Bristol and London, under the new dispensation Irish merchants would order direct, which would inflict loss on England. The details of this loss were fully explained, but I omit them for the reason that experts will understand, while lay readers may safely accept a statement uttered in the presence of the two Jamesons and receiving their assent.

But my friend's conversation reminded me of something more, and I remembered a little story I heard in Dublin respecting a daily disseminator of priest-ordered politics. It owed some rent for the premises it occupies on the thymy banks of the odorous Liffey. It owed, I say, for owing, not paying, is the strong suit of the party it represents. It was pressed to pay, coaxed to plank down, soothered to shell out. A registered letter with premonitory twist of the screw "fetched" the patriot laggards. They or "It" paid up, but failed to look pleasant. In his hurry the glad recipient of the cash gave a receipt up to date instead of up to the time the rent was due. The immaculate organ of highly-rectified morality wished to hold the writer of the receipt to his pen-slip, to nobble the rent; and being reproached backed out with:—

"We thought you wanted to give it as a present." The landlord is a strong Unionist. The rottenness of repudiation is spreading everywhere. Lying and theft, under other names, would be, the dominant influences under the new *régime*. But it may be objected—If Irishmen have no respect for their members, why did they elect them? If they object to Home Rule, why did they vote for it? And so on, and so on. These queries at first blush seem unanswerable, but they are not really so. Attentive readers of later letters will discover the reason why. Further, it may be remarked, in passing, that questions are more easily asked than answered. Here is an instance. The facts are undeniable, staring us in the face:—

The base and bloody Balfour, unaccompanied by men who have been called his black and brutal

bloodhounds, moves about in Ireland unmolested, with no other protection than that of his sister.

The bright and brilliant O'Brien, the purist-patriot, visiting the constituency of which he is the senior member, is with difficulty protected by a powerful force of the police he has so often affected to despise. [60]

Other Nationalist members dare not appear in Nationalist quarters. How is this?

To return to the objections given above. Since the appearance of the bill, Irishmen have been changing their minds. Day by day they dread it more and more. They still believe that under certain conditions Home Rule would be a good thing for Ireland. But they begin to see that the required conditions do not exist. They begin to see that they have been used by such men as O'Brien and Healy, they see the incompetency which has reduced the party paper to so low an ebb, they see the misery and degradation which the Land League inflicted on the once thriving districts of Tipperary; they saw their neighbours, poor, unlettered men, dupes of unscrupulous lying eloquence, men whom it was murder to deceive—they saw these men sentenced to long terms of penal servitude, while the instigators of the crimes for which they had suffered, availing themselves of the liberal English law, broke their bail, and, travelling first-class to Paris, lived in the best hotels of that gay city on the plunder they had wiled from ignorant servant girls, being clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day, while their friends the felons trod the tireless wheel and the housemaids went on with their scrubbing.

The Irish people have seen these things and many more, and, as the French say, they have reflected. A very considerable proportion of the lower classes have already changed their minds, but—they dare not own it. So the process of education is comparatively slow. A small farmer said to me, "Not an hour's walk from here, a small tinant like meself was suspicted to be a thraitor to the cause. He was a sthrivin' man, an' he had really no politics, an' only wanted to get lave to work his land, an' earn his bit an' sup.

"He had two sthrappin' daughters, as nice, dacent young girls as ye'd see in a summer's day. They were seen spakin' to a pliceman—that was all they done—an' four men came that night, four ruffians wid white masks, an' havin' secured the father, they dhragged the young girls out of bed at the dead hour, an' stripped them to the skin. Thin they cut off their hair close wid a knife, the way ye'd cut corn, an' scarified their bodies wid knives. Would ye wondher we're careful?"

I asked him whether a Protestant could in his district hope to be elected to any public position, the Board of Guardians for instance (he was a good Catholic). His answer was an unqualified No. Then he took time, and shortly proposed the following statement of the position, which I present on account of its gem-like finish:—

"I wouldn't say but they'd put on a Protestant av he paid for it by settlin' wid the priest that for certain considerations he would be contint wid a seat on the boord. An' thin he must renounce his political ideas, or promise never to mintion thim in public. But, begorra, he'd have to sell his birthright for a mess of pottage by makin' a decoy duck of himself!" [61]

In adding this great specimen to the immortal list of memorable mixed metaphors, I feel that my visit to Ireland has not been quite in vain.

Oolagh, (Co. Tipperary), April 15th.

No. 10.—DEFYING THE LAND LEAGUE.

ToC

"Burn everything English except English coals." That was the first sentiment I heard in "rebel Cork," and it certainly expresses the dominant feeling of the local Nationalist party, who do not seem to have heard of the proposed Union of Hearts, or, if they have heard, they certainly have not heeded. Nor will anyone who knows for one moment assert that the Corkers entertain the idea. My hotel is a hotbed of sedition. It is the southern head-quarters of the Parnellite party. The spacious entrance hall is a favourite resort of the leading Cork Nationalists, who air their views in public with much excited gesture, having its basis in whiskey-nourished hatred of English rule. They walk to the bar, suck in the liquid bliss, and return to the spot whence they may look upon the beauteous promenaders of Patrick Street. They prefer the kaleidoscopic change of the streets to the stationary beauty of the bar, and while admitting the unfleeting quality of the fixed stars they worship the procession of the equinoxes. On Saturday last, the day O'Brien died, the Mayor of Cork, with Mayoral chain and hosts of satellites, might have been seen under the familiar portal, discussing the proposed public funeral of the lamented friend, once Mayor of the City, and described as "a gentleman who had, by his courageous and outspoken utterances, obtained the distinguished honour of imprisonment by the British Government." Particulars were not given, as the first two incarcerations occurred under Forster and Trevelyan. The third, under Balfour, was a term of fourteen days for assaulting a policeman. The Corporation discussed the patriot's

merits without descending to detail. Outside, the newspaper boys were yelling "Arrest of Misther Balfour-r-r," but the Corporation were no buyers. The populace might be taken in, but official Cork know it was the "wrong 'un," and clave to its hard-earned pence.

Public opinion here is much the same as in Dublin, only hotter. Respectable people who have anything to lose are, if possible, more seriously alarmed. The lower classes are, if possible, more bitter, more implacable in their animosity to everything English. Nevertheless, the feeling against [62] Home Rule is assuredly gaining ground, even among the most ardent Nationalists. The great meeting of last Wednesday showed what the Unionists could do, how they could crowd a great platform with the intelligence of the country, and fill a great hall with the Unionist rank and file. The Loyalists have astonished themselves. They knew not their own strength. Now they are taking fresh heart, determined to hold out to extremity. The Separatists—for the Corkers are Separatists *au naturel*—are somewhat disconcerted, and try to minimise the effect of the meeting by sneering and contumely; but it will not do. They affect hilarity, but their laughter is not real. Perhaps nothing shows the shallowness of men more than the tricks they think sufficient to deceive. And then the leaders are accustomed to a credulous public. The place is eminently religious. Cork is the Isle of Saints—with a port and a garrison to enhance its sanctity. At certain seasons a big trade is done in candles, on which names are written, which being blessed and burnt have powerful influence in the heavenly courts. It costs a trifle to hallow the tallow, but no matter. A friend has seen a muddy little well, which is fine for sore eyes. Offerings of old bottles and little headless images were planted around, but the favourite gift was a pin, stuck in the ground by way of fee. Jolly Mr. Whicker, of Dublin, who represents three Birmingham houses, saw Father McFadden, of Gweedore, waving his hat when in custody. A policeman insisted that this should cease, when a man in the crowd said to Mr. Whicker:—

"Arrah, now, look at the holy man. He puts on his hat widout a wurrud, whin he could strike the man dead wid jist sayin' a curse. 'Tis a good saint he is, to go wid the police, whin if he sthretched out his hand he could wither thim up, an' bur-rn thim like sthraws in the blazin' turf!"

These people have votes, and to a man support the Nationalist party. It is proposed to place Ireland under a Government governed by these good folks, who are in turn governed by their sacred medicine-men.

A member of the firm of Cooke Brothers, a native of Cork, in business in this city fifty years, said:—

"There can be no doubt that the bill means ruin for Ireland, and therefore damage to England. The poor folks here believe the most extravagant things, and follow the agitators like a flock of sheep. They are undoubtedly wanting in energy. We have the richest land in Ireland, wonderful pastures that turn out the most splendid cattle in the world, big salmon rivers, a most fruitful country, a land flowing with milk and honey. As the rents are judicially fixed there can be no ground for complaint, but the people will not help themselves. Whether it is in the climate I cannot say, but I must reluctantly admit—and no one will gainsay my statement—that the people of the South, to put it mildly, are not a striving sort.

"They want somebody else to do something for them. They get on a stick and wait till it turns to [63] a horse before they ride. No Act of Parliament will help them, for they will not help themselves.

"Look at the magnificent country you saw from Dublin to this city. Compare it with the black and desolate bogs of Ulster, and then ask yourself this question—How is it that the Ulster people, with far worse land, worse harbours, worse position, and having the same laws, are prosperous and content to have no change? If the Northerns and Southerns would swop countries, Ireland must develop into one of the most prosperous countries in the world. The Ulster men are tremendously handicapped as against the Munster folks, but—they are workers. Some say that if they were here the climate would enervate them, but I do not find that my experience countenances this supposition. Fifty years ago all the leading merchants and tradesmen of Cork were Catholics. It is not so now. What does that prove? I withhold my own opinion.

"The Southerners are better fixed than the Ulstermen, but they are idle, and—this is very important—extremely sentimental."

An avowed Nationalist, one Sullivan, completely bore out this last statement. "We want to manage our own business, and be ruled by Irishmen. You say in England that we shall be poor, and so we may, but that is no argument at all. It might influence a nation of shopkeepers, but it has no weight with Irishmen, who have a proper and creditable wish to make their country one of the nations of the world. The very servant girls feel this, and the poorest peasant woman now having what she calls a 'tay brakefast' is willing to go back to porridge if the country was once rid of the English. Never you mind what will happen to us. Cut us adrift, and that will be all we ask. If we need help we can affiliate with America or even France. The first is half our own people, the second understands the Irish nation, which fought for centuries in the French armies, and, under Marshal Saxe, an Irishman, routed the English at Fontenoy." This gentleman was civil and moderate in tone, but he did not promise to walk down the ages arm-in-arm with England, attesting eternal amity by exchanging smokes and drinks. "We'll be very glad to see the English as tourists," he said. "And they will have to behave themselves, too," he added, reflectively.

A large trader of Patrick Street has most serious misgivings as to the effect of the bill. He said:—

"I had just been over to England to make purchases. Arriving here, I found the bill just out. I read it, and at once cancelled half my orders. We are reducing stock. What Home Rule would do for us I cannot contemplate. The mere threat amounts to partial paralysis. What the Cork people

want with Home Rule is beyond me. They have everything in their own hands. The city elections of all kinds are governed by the rural voters of five miles round. Wealth and commercial capital are completely swamped by these obedient servants of the priests. Mr. Gladstone talks of an [64] Upper House, with a £20 qualification. Why, the qualification for the Grand Jury is £40. Many of the twenty-pounders round here cannot read or write, and yet they will be qualified for the Irish House of Lords.

A customer came up and said:—"Gladstone wants to hand the capital and commerce of this country to men like Tim Healy, who expects to be Prime Minister, and who will succeed, if the bill passes and he can eat priestly dirt enough. I knew where he was reared in Waterford, in a little tripe and drischeen shop."

I rose to a point of order. Would the honourable member now addressing the House kindly explain the technical term "drischeen shop?" "Certainly. The drischeen is a sort of pudding, made of hog's blood and entrails, with a mixture of tansy and other things. Tim would know them well for he was reared on them, which accounts for his characteristic career. Do you know that the Queenstown Town Commissioners call each other liars, and invite each other to come out and settle it on the landing? Get the *Cork Constitution*, look over the file, and you'll drop on gems that will be the soul of your next letter. Don't miss it. And that's the sort of folks Mr. Gladstone would trust with the fate of England as well as Ireland, for their fates would be the same. You cannot separate them. The people of England do not seem to see through that. They will have an awful awakening. And serve them right. They make a pact with traitors; they offer their throats to the murderer, and they say, 'Anything to oblige you. I know you won't hurt us much.'

"The Southern Irish are the most lovable people in the world, with all their faults, if they were not led astray by hireling agitators, who ruin the country by playing on the people's ignorance, exciting the Catholic hope of religious domination, and trusting to damage England as a great spreader of Protestantism. A lie is no lie if told to a Protestant. To keep a Protestant out of heaven would be a meritorious action. And they would readily damage themselves if by doing so they could also damage England. Englishmen hardly believe this, but every commercial traveller from an English house knows it is true."

I tested a number of English commercials on this point. All confirmed the statement above given. Many had been Gladstonians, but now all were Unionists. None of them knew an English or Scotch commercial who, having travelled in Ireland, remained a Home Ruler. Such a person, they thought, did not exist. Admitted that for business purposes the apparent *rara avis* might possibly, though not probably, be found, all agreed that no Englishman in his senses, with personal knowledge of the subject, could over support Home Rule. Two Gladstonians went from Chester to Tipperary to investigate the troubles: both returned converted. Six men from a shop-fitting establishment in Birmingham worked some weeks in Dublin: all returned Unionist to the [65] core. This from Mr. Sibley, of Grafton street, Dublin, in whose splendid shop I met the Duchess of Leinster, handsomest woman in Ireland, and therefore (say Irishmen) handsomest in the world. She was buying books for Mr. Balfour, who, she said, was a great reader of everything connected with Ireland or Irish affairs. Mr. Sibley is a partner of Mr. Combridge, of New street, Birmingham, and is a leading Irish Unionist. Returning to the cancelling of orders, I will add that Mr. Richard Patterson, J.P., of Belfast, the largest buyer of hardware in Ireland, has cancelled very largely, together with two other large firms, whose names he gave me. You will remember Mr. John Cook, the Protestant Home Ruler, of Derry. His manager, Mr. Smith, has written the Birmingham factor of the house, to omit his usual visit, as the firm will have no orders for him. A strange comment on Mr. Cook's theories of confidence. Mr. Cook is an excellent, a high-minded man. He asked me how I would class him among his party. I called him a Visionary in Excelsis.

Every self-respecting Saxon visitor to Cork visits the famous castle of Blarney, seven miles away, to see the scenery and kiss the Blarney Stone, the apparent source of Home Rule inspiration.

There is a stone there
That whoever kisses
Och! he never misses
    To grow eloquent.
'Tis he may clamber
To a lady's chamber,
Or become a member
    Of Parliament.

A clever spouter
He'll sure turn out, or
An out-an'-outer
    To be let alone!
Don't hope to hindher him
Or to bewildher him—
Sure, he's a pilgrim
    From the Blarney stone!

The walk is delightful, not unlike that from Colwyn Bay to Conway, but more beautiful still, as instead of the London and North Western Railway a lovely river runs along the valley on your right. The Cork and Muskerry Light Railway occupies the roadside for the first four miles, relic of the beneficent Balfour—winding by the river side for the rest of the journey, through fat

meadows dotted with thriving kine, and having a background of richly-wooded hills. At Carrickrohane your left is bounded by a huge precipitous rock, covered from base to summit with ivy and other greenery, a great grey building on the very brink of the abyss, flanked by Scotch firs, peering over the precipice. A fine stone bridge, garrisoned by salmon-fishers, leads to the Anglers' Rest, and here I found a splendid character, one Dennis Mulcahy, who boasted of his successful resistance to the Land League. Having told me of his adventures in America, and how his oyster-bar experiences in the Far West had opened his eyes to the fact that the Irish people were being humbugged, he narrated his return to his native land, on his succession to a small farm left him by "an ould aunt he had." His language was so forcible and picturesque that I despair of conveying its effect, more especially as no pen can describe the rich brogue, which, notwithstanding his two years' residence in the States, was still thick enough to be cut with a knife. Apart from its amusing side, his story has a moral, and may be instructively applied. [66]

"'Twas at Ballina I was, the toime o' the Land Lague. 'Twas there Captain Moonlight started from, an' the whole disthrict was shiverin' in their shoes. I refused to subscribe to the Land Lague, an' they started to compil me, but, be the powers, they tackled the wrong tom-cat whin they wint to coarce Dennis Mulcahy. Threatenin' letthers, wid pictures o' death's-heads, an' guns, an' pikes, an' coffins, was but a thrifle to the way they wint on. But they knew I had a thrifle of a sivin-shooter, an' bad luck to the one o' thim that dared mislist me at all. At last it got abroad that I was to get a batin' wid blackthorn sticks, for they wor tired the life out o' them, raisonin' wid me. Well, says I, I'm here, says I, an' the first man that raises a hand to me, I'll invite him to his own inquist, says I, for, bedad, I'll perforate him like a riddle, says I. Well, it wint on an' on, till one day I was stayin' at a bit of a shebeen outside the place, when a slip o' a girleen kem to me—I was sittin' on a bench in the back garden, the way I'd enjoy my pipe in the fresh air, an', says she, 'Get out o' this, for there's a whole crew o' thim inside going to bate you.' That was six or seven o' a fine summer's night, an' I walked into the house an' took a look at thim—a thievin' heap o' blayguards as iver ye seen wid your two eyes."

"I wint out again an' sat in the haggard, where I could kape my eye on the dure. Prisintly out comes one o' thim, to commince the row, I suppose.

"He spoke o' the Land Lague, an' I towld him I didn't agree wid it at all, and 'twas a thievin' invintion o' a set o' roguish schamers.

"'Ye'd betther mind yer manners,' says he, 'onless ye have yer revalver,' says he, lookin' at me maningly.

"Faix, 'tis here, says I, pullin' out the tool.

"'But can ye handle it?' says he.

"Begorra, says I, I'd shoot a fly off yer nose; an' wid that I looked round for a mark, an' I seen in a three foreninst me a lump o' a crow sittin' annoyin' me. 'Will ye quit yer dhrimandhru?' says I, to the botherin' ould rook.

"'Caw, caw, caw,' says he, vexin' me intirely.

"Bang! says I, an the dirty blackburd comes fluttherin' down, an' dhropped in the haggard like a log o' limestone.

"Ye should have seen that fellow! The landlord wid the whole rout o' thim runs out. 'What's the matter?' says he, starin' round like a sick cod-fish.

"'I'm afther charmin' a burd out iv a three; 'tis a way I have,' says I, shovin' in a fresh cartridge from my waistcoat pocket, fair an' aisy, an' kapin' me back to the haystack.

"'Was it you kilt the jackdaw?' says he.

"''Twas meself,' says I, 'that did it,' says I.

"'An' ye carry a murdherin' thing like that in a paceful counthry,' says he. ''Tis yer American thrainin' says he, sneerin'. [67]

"I tuk off me hat an' giv' him a bow an' a scrape. 'Is it yerself would insinse me into the rudiments o' polite larnin'?' says I. Thin I looked him straight into the white iv his eye, an' give him the length o' my tongue. Me blood was up whin I seen this spalpeen wid his dirty set o' vagabones waitin' to murther me if they ketched me unbeknownst. 'Michael Hegarty,' says I, 'where did ye scour up yer thievin' set o' rag-heaps?' says I. 'Ye'd bate me wid blackthorns, would ye? Come on, you and your dirty thribe, till I put sivin shots into yez. Shure I could pick the eye out o' yez shure I could shoot a louse off yer ear,' says I. 'Anger me,' says I, 'an' I'll murther the whole parish; raise a stick to me, an' I'll shlaughter the whole counthry side.' An' wid that I cocked me little shootin'-iron.

"Ye should have seen that shebeen-keeper; ye should have seen the whole o' them whin I raised me voice an' lifted me little Colt!

"They tumbled away through the dure, crossin' each other like threes ye'd cut down, lavin' the landlord, struck all iv a heap, the mug on him white as a new twelve-pinny, staggerin' on his two shin-bones, an' thrimblin' an' shiverin' wid fright, till ye'd think he'd shake the teeth out iv his head.

"The murdherin' vilyans want shtandin' up to, an' they'll rispict ye. I had no further trouble. That was the last o' thim. 'Tis the wake an' difinceless people they bate an' murther. I heerd there was talk o' shootin' me from the back iv a ditch; an' that one said, 'But av ye missed?' says he. 'What thin?' says he.

"Ye should sind ould Gladstone an' Morley an' the other ould women to Carrignaheela till I give them a noggin' o' right poteen an' insinse thim into the way iv it. The only way o' managin' me counthrymin is to be the masther all out, an' 'tis thrue what I spake, an' sorra one o' me cares who hears me opinion. I'm the only man in the counthry that dares open his teeth, an' yet they all thrate me well now, an' the priest invites me to his house. An' all because I spake me mind, an' don't care three thraneens for the whole o' thim. 'Twas in America I larned the secret."

Cork, April 20th.

No. 11.—THE CRY FOR PEACE AND QUIETNESS.

ToC

"What's the next place to this?" I asked, as the Southern and Western Railway deposited me at Tralee. I was uncertain as to whether the place was a terminus, but the gintleman who dhrove the cyar I hailed marvelled greatly at my ignorance. He surveyed me from top to toe with a compassionate expression. No doubt he had heard much of the ignorance of the uncivilised English, but this beat the record. [68] Not to know that Tralee was on the sea, not to know that the little port frowned o'er the wild Atlantic main, as Mr. Micawber would have said. He struggled for a moment with his emotion and then said,

"Musha, the next parish is Amerikay!"

I apologised for my imperfect geographical knowledge, but the cyar-man was immovable. No pardoning look stole over his big red face, which was of the size and complexion of a newly cut ham. Nor would he enter into conversation with the inquiring stranger. He cursed his horse with a copiousness which showed his power of imagination, and with a minute attention to detail which demonstrated a superior business capacity. Put him in the House amongst the Nationalist members, and he is bound to come to the front. The qualifications above-mentioned cannot fail to ensure success. We have the examples before us, no need to mention names. A hard cheek, a bitter tongue, and a good digestion are the three great steps in the Irish Parliamentary *gradus ad Parnassum*, the cheek to enable its happy possessor to "snub up" to gentlemen of birth and breeding, the tongue to drip gall and venom on all and sundry, the digestion to eat dirt *ad libitum* and to endure hebdomadal horsewhippings. Such a man, I am sure, was the dhriver of my cyar, who may readily be identified. His physiognomy is very like the railway map of Ireland, coloured red, with the rivers and mountain ranges in dark-blue or plum-colour. As a means of ready reference he would be invaluable in the House of Commons. How interesting to see Mr. Gladstone poring over his cheek (Connaught and Leinster), his jaw (Munster, with a pimple for Parnellite Cork), and his forehead (Ulster, with the eyes for Derry and Belfast). The G.O.M. would find the Kerry member invaluable. Like the rest he would probably be devoid of shame, untroubled by scruples, and a straight voter for his side, so long as he was not allowed to go "widout a male." Who knows but that, like the Prime Minister's chief Irish adviser, he may even have been reared on the savoury tripe and the succulent "drischeen"?

All the Tralee folks are shy of political talk. They eye you for a long time before they commit themselves, but when once started they can hardly stop, so warm are they, so intensely interested in the great question. Running down the line, a Cork merchant said "The Kerry folks are decent, quiet folks by nature. Do not believe that these simple villagers are the determined murderers they would seem to be. No brighter intellects in Ireland, no better hearts, no more hospitable hosts in the Emerald Isle. They are very superstitious. There you have it all. 'Tis their beautiful ingenuousness that makes them so easily led astray. What do these simple country folks, living on their farms, without books, without newspapers, without communication with large centres—what do they know about intricate State affairs? What can they do but listen to the priest, regarded as the great scholar of the district, reverenced as almost—nay, quite infallible, and credited with the power to give or withhold eternal life? For while in England the people only [69] respect a parson according to the esteem he deserves as a man, in Ireland the priestly office invests the man with a character entirely different from his own, and covers everything. These poor folks felt the pinch of hard times, and the agitators, backed by their Church, saw their opportunity and commenced to use it. Hence the Kerry moonlighters, poor fellows, fighting in their rude and uncouth way for what they believed to be patriotism and freedom. They should be pitied rather than blamed, for they were assuredly acting up to their light, and upon the advice of men they had from childhood been taught to regard as wise, sincere, and disinterested counsellors.

"Ah me, what terrible times we had in Cork! Belfast may boast, but Belfast is not in it. We were in the centre of the fire. The shopkeepers of Patrick Street deserve the fullest recognition from the British nation. They had to furnish juries to well and truly try the moonlighters of Kerry, Clare, and several other counties. They sat for eight months, had to adjourn over Christmas, and

those men returned true bills at the peril of their lives. The venue was changed to Cork for all these counties, and every man jack of the jury knew full well that any day some fanatic friend of the convicted men might shoot or stab him in the street. The loyalty of Belfast is all the talk, but it has never undergone so severe a test. There the Loyalists have it all their own way. Here the Loyalists, instead of being three to one, are only one to three. The Ulstermen are the entrenched army; the Cork Unionists are the advanced picket. More judges got promotion from Cork than elsewhere. We changed the barristers' silk to ermine, too. All this shows what we went through. Everything is quiet now; Balfour terrified the life out of them, and Captain Moonlight at the mention of that name would skip like spring-heeled Jack."

The Kerry folks turned out bright as their reputation. It was hard to believe that these simple, kindly peasants had ever stained their beautiful pastoral country with the bloodiest, cruellest deeds of recent times. They have a polite, deferential manner without servility, and a pious way of interpolating prayer and thanksgiving with their ordinary conversation.

"Good morning, Sir."

"Good mornin', an' God save ye, Sorr."

"Fine weather."

"'Tis indeed foine weather, glory be to God."

"Nice country."

"Troth, it is a splindid country. The Lord keep us in it."

A prosperous-looking shop with a portly personage at the door looked so uncommonly Unionistic that I ventured to make a few inquiries *re* the antiquities of the district. The inevitable topic soon turned up, and to my surprise my friend avowed himself a Home Ruler and a Protectionist. His opinions and illustrations struck me as remarkable, and with his permission I record them here. [70]

"Yes, I am a Home Ruler—in theory. I think Home Rule would be best for both. Best for you and best for me, as the song says; but mark me well—NOT YET.

"You are surprised that I should say Not Yet so emphatically, but the fact is I love my country, and, besides, all my interests and those of my children are bound up with the prosperity of the country. This ought to sharpen a man's wits, if anything could do it, and I have for many years been engaged in thinking out the matter, and my mind is now made up.

"Home Rule from Gladstone will ruin us altogether. We must have Home Rule from Balfour. We *must* have Home Rule, but we must have it from a Conservative Government. You smile. Is that new to you? It is? Just because Home Rulers in this country cannot afford to express their views at this moment. But the hope is entertained by all, I will say all, the most advanced Irish Home Rulers. By advanced I mean educated, enlightened. Let me give you an illustration which I heard from a friend in Cork.

"Here is Ireland, a delicate plant requiring untold watching and careful training. Around it on the ground are a number of slugs and snails. Or call them hireling agitators if you like. I sprinkle salt around the roots to kill off the brutes and save my darling plant. That salt is Conservatism. It is furnished by people of property, by men who have interests to guard. Salt is a grand thing, let me tell you! Balfour is the man to sprinkle salt. Home Rule from him would be safe. He is the greatest man that ever governed Ireland, but that must be stale to you. You must have heard that everywhere. He put his foot on rebellion and crushed it out of existence. On the other hand the poor folks of the West coast would lie down and let him walk over them. They hold him in such esteem that they would regard it a favour if he would honour them by wiping his feet on them. He might walk unarmed and unattended through Ireland from end to end with perfect safety. But which of the Nationalist members could do that? Not one. The city scum, the criminal, irreclaimable class, shout 'Hell to Balfour,' but these poor readers of the *Freeman's Journal* and such-like prints, prepared for their special use and written down to their level, must not be classed with the people of Ireland at all. Every country has its ruffian element, every country has its poisonous press. Ireland is no worse than other countries in these respects."

My Irish Conservative Home Ruler would have gone on indefinitely, furnishing excellent matter, for he improved as he warmed up, but unhappily a priest called on him to make some purchase, and he had to leave me without much notice. "Over the way," he said. "Trip across to the opposite shop, and you'll find another Tory Home Ruler."

As I "tripped" across I thought of the Pills and Ointment man who amassed a colossal fortune by fifty years' advertising of the fact that wonders never will cease. Mr. Overtheway was not quite so Tory as might be supposed, after all. He said:— [71]

"I have no objection to Home Rule, but, although a Catholic, I have the greatest objection to Rome Rule, which is precisely what it means. I object to this great Empire being ruled from Rome. The greatest Empire that the world ever saw to be bossed by a party of priests! Do the English know what they are now submitting to?

"Let me put the thing logically, and controvert me if you can.

"If Mr. Gladstone wished to go to war to-morrow, is he not at the mercy of the Irish Nationalist party? Could he get votes of supply without their aid? In the event of any sudden, or grave emergency, any serious and critical contingency, would they not hold the key of the position, would they not have the power to make or mar the Empire? Surely they would. And are not these

men in the hands of the priests? Surely they are. That is a matter of common knowledge, as sure as that water will drown and fire will burn. A pretty position for a sensible man like John Bull to be placed in by a blethering idiot, who can argue with equal volubility on either side, but with more conviction when in the wrong. Bull must have been drunk, and drunk on stupid beer, when he placed his heart strings between the finger and thumb of a quack like that, who, whatever the result, whether we get Home Rule or not, has ruined the country for five-and-twenty years.

"Yes, I am a Home Ruler. But for heaven's sake don't thrust self-government on an unfortunate country that is not ready for it. That country cries for it, you say. The snuffling old air-pump across the Channel says the same thing. Says he: 'Beloved brethren, I greet you. I fall on your neck and kiss your two ears, and give you all you ask. For why, beloved brethren? Why do I this thing. Let us in a spirit of love enquire. Because it is the wish of the country; because it is the aspiration of the people; because I feel a deep-seated, internal affection for your beautiful land, in whose affairs, during my eighty-four years' pilgrimage in this vale of tears, I have, as you know, always shown the strongest, the warmest, the most passionate interest, and on whose lovely shores I have during my seven dozen years spent (altogether) nearly a week. It has been said that I have never been in Ulster, and that, therefore, I am unable to appreciate the situation. An atrocious falsehood. I have spent two hours (nearly) in the northern province, having landed from Sir Somebody's yacht to see the Giant's Causeway. I have studied the Irish question by means of mineral specimens gathered from the four provinces, and I am, therefore, competent to settle the Irish question for ever. Do you know a greater man than myself? I confess I don't. Bless you, my children. You ask for Home Rule. Enough. The fact that you ask proves a Divine right to have what you ask for. You are a people rightly struggling to be free,' says owld Gladstone. 'Hell to my sowl,' says he, 'but that's what ye are,' says he. [72]

"And he starts to murder us by giving what the most ignorant, unthinking, unpatriotic, self-seeking people in the country have asked for, and swears that because they ask they must have.

"As well give a razor to a baby that cried for it.

"Ireland must be treated as an infant.

"An Irish Legislature would lead to untold miseries. We might arrive there some day, but not at a jump. The change is too sudden. We want a little training. We want to grow, and growth is a thing that cannot be forced. It takes time. Give us time for heaven's sake. Give us Home Rule, but also give us time. Give us milk, then fish, then perhaps a chop, and then, as we grow strong, beefsteak and onions. A word in your ear. This is certain truth, you can go Nap on it. Tell the English people that the people are getting sick of agitation, that they want peace and quietness, that they are losing faith in agitators, having before them a considerable stretch of history, which, notwithstanding the scattered population, is filtering down into the minds of the people, with its morals all in big print. The Irish folks are naturally quick-witted. They are simple and confiding, many of them very ignorant, if you will, but they find out their friends in the long run. Look at Balfour. Not a man in the whole world for whom the people have so much affection. Which do you think would get the best welcome to-morrow—Balfour or Morley? Balfour a hundred thousand times. Ah, now; my countrymen know the real article when they see it. Home Rule we want for convenience and for cheapness. We don't want to be compelled to rush to London before we can build a bridge. But rather a million times submit to expense and inconvenience than hand the country over to a set of thieves who'd sell us to-morrow. We're not such fools as ye take us for. Don't we know these heroes? And when we see them and Gladstone and Morley and Humbug Harcourt with his seventeen chins, all rowling together in Abraham's bosom (as ye may say)—Harcourt licking Harrington's boots, when only yesterday Tim was spittin' in his eye—we say to ourselves 'Wait yet awhile, my Boys, wait yet awhile.' But when ye've finished yer slavering and splathering, and when Tim Healy can find time to take his heel off Morley's neck, then, and not before, we'll have something to say to you.

"But you should call on my friend on the right. He is also a Home Ruler—like myself."

Number three had powerfully-developed opinions. He said—"Home Rule on Conservative lines is my ticket. We'll get it on no other. I console myself with that idea. Otherwise it would be a frightful business, and what would become of us, I cannot tell. But I do not believe that even Gladstone would be so insane as to give it us. I cannot believe that the middle class voters of England would stand by and see the corresponding class in this country exterminated. Home Rule as much as you like, if we had the right men. The very poorest peasants are becoming alive to the fact that under present circumstances the thing would never do for them. They want the right men, that is, men of money and character, to come forward. And I declare most solemnly, that I am convinced that the Irish people would fall into line, and see the bill thrown out with perfect quietude. Now the push has come, they really do not want Home Rule, and, what is more, they absolutely dread it, and I firmly believe that a general election at the present moment would send a majority of Unionists to power. The priests are working for life and death. They see that this is their best chance, perhaps their very last opportunity. I am a Catholic; but then I am a Parnellite, a Tory Parnellite. And I have no intention of bartering away my political freedom to my Church, which, in my opinion, should keep clear of politics. The clergy have now advised payment of rent, so that the Government may not be embarrassed at a very critical juncture. And the tenants are paying their rent, although the present period is one of great agricultural depression. Look at this: The Ulster farmers are terribly hard up, are complaining that they cannot pay. This is the Protestant province, where the priests have little scope. But in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, the people are paying the landlord. The word has gone round—pay the landlord, whomever else you don't pay! The oilcake man, the implement man, the shopkeeper, are not getting their dues, but notwithstanding the pinch of the present moment, the landlord (who [73]

knows all about it) is paid. And the priests in some cases are actually remitting the clerical dues to enable the small men to pay the rint. Pay the rint, say they, if you pledge your very boots, if you have to go to the gombeen man (money-lender), if you have almost to rob the Church. They want to get possession, they want to get power, they want to get Home Rule; and then they know that, as Scripture says, 'All these things shall be added unto them.' Let them once get the upper hand, and they can very soon recoup themselves.

"The priests are showing England their power, with a view to future good bargains. 'You see what we can do,' say they. Arrange the matter with us. We are the boys. The Reverend Father O'Codling is the man. Have no dealings, except such as are authorised by us, with the red-headed Tim Healy Short. The Clergy have only one idea; that is, of course, the predominance of their Church. Very natural, and, from their point of view, very proper. I find no fault with them, but I say their object hardly commends itself to my undivided admiration, and, being still friendly, we on this subject part company. I wish to let the priests down easy. They are mostly very good men, apart from politics. They are good customers to me, and they pay very promptly. They spend their money in the country, and I'd have no fault to find if they'd lave politics alone. Mind that owld Gladstone doesn't become a Papist all out. 'Twould be better for him, no doubt, and as the whole jing-bang that turned round with him before would no doubt still follow at his heels, we'd get a [74] considerable quantity of converts, if we could say little about the quality. D'ye hear what that owld woman's singing?"

I listened with interest. The minstrelsy of Ireland seems to have drifted into the hands of the most unpoetical people in the green isle. The poor old creature walked very, very slowly along the gutter, ever and anon giving herself a suggestive twitch, which plainly indicated some cutaneous titillation—the South is a grazing country. This was all I heard—

Owld Oireland was Owld Oireland
  Whin England was a pup.
Oireland will be Owld Oireland
  Whin England's bur-r-sted up!

If my friends are right as to the change of feeling *re* Home Rule, the dear old lady was hardly up to date. But the great author of "Dirty Little England"—I judge of the author by the internal evidence of sentiment, style, and literary merit—certainly composed the above beautiful stanza in the sure and certain hope that the present bill would become law.

Number Three qualified his remarks on rent, when speaking of the County Clare. "There they embarrass the Government by refusing to pay, and by shooting people in the good old way, just at the most ticklish time." He said, "Clare has always been an exceptional county. Clare returned Daniel O'Connell, by him secured Catholic Emancipation, and from that time has called itself the premier county of Ireland. They are queer, unmanageable divils, are the Clare folks, and we are only divided from them by the Shannon. So the Kerry folks go mad sometimes by contagion. I should advise you to keep away from Clare. You might get a shot-hole put into you. Every visitor is noticed in those lonely regions, and the little country towns only serve to disseminate the arrival of a stranger to the rural districts. Suppose you walk five miles out of Ennis the day after you arrive there, I would wager a pound the first woman that sees you pass her cottage will say, 'That's the Englishman that Maureen O'Hagan said was staying at the Queen's Hotel.' The servants are regular spies, every one of them. I couldn't speak politics in my house because I've a Catholic nurse. Good bye, I hope ye won't get shot."

I thanked him for the interest expressed, but failed to share his nervousness. After having mingled with the Nationalist crowd that followed the Balfour column in the Dublin torchlight procession, after having escaped unhurt from the blazing Nationalists who swarm in the Royal Victoria Hotel, Cork, having walked down the Limerick entrance to the balmy Tipperary, a little shooting, more or less, is unworthy a moment's consideration. Besides which, my perpetual journeying and interviewing and scribbling have made me so thin that Captain Moonlight himself would be bound to miss. However, it is well to be prepared for the worst, so—*Pax vobiscum*, and away to County Clare.

Tralee (Co. Kerry), April 20th.

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[75]

No. 12.—ENGLISH IGNORANCE AND IRISH PERVERSITY.

ToC

Almost enchanting place when you have time to look at it. My flying visit of ten days ago gave the city no chance. Let me redeem this error, so far as possible. There are two, if not three Limericks in one, a shamrock tripartition, a trinity in unity,—English-town, Irish-town, and New Town Perry. New Limerick is a well-built city, which will compare favourably with anything reasonable anywhere. Much of it resembles the architecture of Bedford Square, London. The streets are broad and rectangular, the shops handsome and well furnished. But it is the natural features of the vicinity which "knock" the susceptible Saxon. The Shannon, the classic Shannon, sweeps grandly through the town, winding romantically under the five great bridges, washing the walls of the stupendous Castle erected by King John, the only British sovereign who ever visited Limerick—serpentining through meadows backed by mountains robed in purple haze, reflecting in its broad mirror many a romantic and historic ruin, its banks dotted with salmon-fishers pulling out great fish and knocking them on the head, its promenades abounding with the handsomest women in the world. For the Limerick ladies are said to be the most beautiful in Ireland, and competent English judges—I know nothing of such matters—assure me that the boast is justified. Get to Cruise's Royal Hotel, which for a hundred years has looked over the Shannon, take root in its airy, roomy precincts, pleasant, clean, and sweet, with white-haired servitors like noble earls in disguise to bring your ham and eggs, Limerick ham, mind you, which at this moment fetches 114s. per cwt. in London; and with the awful cliffs of Kilkee within easy distance, where the angry Atlantic Ocean, dashing with gigantic force against the rock-bound coast, sends spray two or three miles inland, the falls of Castleconnel with the salmon-fisheries under your very nose, and the four hours river-steamer to Kilrush, with more Cathedrals, statues, antiquities, curiosities, novelties, quaintnesses than could be described in a three-volume novel—do all those things, and, while on your back in the smoke room, after a hard day's pleasure, you will probably be heard to murmur that in the general Fall some of us dropped easily enough, and that, all things considered, Adam's unhappy collapse was decidedly excusable.

The Limerick folks are said to be the most Catholic people in Ireland. They are more loyal than the Corkers. Why is this? The more Catholic, the more disloyal, is the general experience. Nobody whose opinion is worth anything will deny this, and however much you may wish to dissociate religion from politics, you cannot blink this fact. In dealing with important matters, it is useless to march a hair's-breadth beside the truth. Better go for it baldheaded, calling things by [76] their right names, taking your gruel, and standing by to receive the lash. You are bound to win in the long run. I say the Catholic priests are disloyal to the Queen. Men of the old school, the few who remain, are loyal, ardently loyal. The old-timers were gentlemen. They were sent to Douai or some other Continental theological school, where they rubbed against gentlemen of broad culture, of extensive view, of perfect civilisation. They returned to Ireland with a personal weight, a cultivation, a refinement, which made them the salt of Irish earth. These men are still loyal. The Maynooth men, sons of small farmers, back-street shopkeepers, pawnbrokers, and gombeen men, aided by British gold, these half-bred, half-educated absorbers of eleemosynary ecclesiasticism, are deadly enemies to the Empire. This is Mr. Bull's guerdon for the Maynooth grant. My authority is undeniable. The statement is made on the assurance of eminent Catholics. Two Catholic J.P.'s yesterday concurred in this, and no intelligent Irish Catholic will think otherwise. Surely this consideration should be a factor in arguments against Home Rule.

Then why are the Limerick Catholics loyal? Because the Limerick Bishop is loyal. Bishop O'Dwyer is opposed to Home Rule. Said Mr. James Frost, J.P., of George's Street: "When the Bishop first came here he invited some four hundred Catholics to a banquet at the palace. After dinner he proposed the health of the Queen, and all the company save two or three rose and received the toast with enthusiasm, waving their handkerchiefs and showing an amount of warmth that was most gratifying to me. I need not tell you that an average Home Rule audience would not have accepted the toast at all. This shows you the feeling of the most intelligent Catholics. The people of education and property are loyal. It shows also that they are opposed to Home Rule."

"But if the best Catholics are opposed to Home Rule, why don't they say so publicly?"

"A fair question, which shall have a precise answer. But first, we must go back to Mr. Balfour's great Land Act, and the lowering of the franchise, and observe the effect of these two enactments.

"The people were at one time terribly ill-used. That is all over now, but the memory still rankles. The Irish are great people for tradition. The landlords have for ages been the traditional embodiment of tyranny and religious ascendency. The Irish people have long memories, very long memories. Englishmen would say: 'No matter what happened to my great-grandfather; I am treated well, and that is enough for me.' Irishmen still go harping on the landlord, although he no longer has any power. The terrible history of the former relationship between landlord and tenant is still kept up and remembered, and will be remembered for ages, if not for ever. Presently you will see the bearing of all this on your question—Why do not the best Catholics come forward and speak against Home Rule?

"When the franchise was lowered the rebound from repression was tremendous, like a powerful [77] spring that has been held down, or like an explosive which is the more destructive in proportion as it is more confined. People newly made free go to the opposite extreme. Emancipate a serf and he becomes insolent, he does not know how to use his freedom, and becomes violent. The great majority of the people are smarting from the old land laws, which have left a bitter animosity against English rule, which is popularly denounced as being responsible for them.

"To speak against Home Rule is to associate yourself with the worst aspects of the land

question. The bulk of the people are incapable of making a distinction. And while they entertain some respect for a Protestant opponent, they are irreconcilable with Unionist Catholics, just as the English Gladstonians have a far more virulent dislike for the Liberal Unionists than for the rankest Tories. They say to the Protestants, 'We know why you uphold Unionism'—that is, as they believe, landlordism—'for the landlords are English and Protestant; your position is understandable.' But to the Catholic they say, 'You are not only an enemy, but a renegade, a traitor, and a deserter.' And whatever that man's position may be, the people can make things uncomfortable for him."

Another Catholic living near, said: "'How would Home Rule work?' you ask. Most destructively, most ruinously. Under the most favourable circumstances, whether Home Rule passes or not, the country will not recover the shock of the present agitation for many a year; not, I think, in my lifetime. I was over in the North of England last year, and I found that the people there knew nothing of the question, literally nothing. Clever men, intelligent men, men who had the ear of the people, displayed a profundity of ignorance on Irish questions, conjoined with a confidence in discussing them, surpassing belief. They changed their minds on hearing my statements, and on obtaining exact information. I must give them credit for that. I believe the English Gladstonians are only suffering from ignorance. Their leader is certainly not less ignorant than the bleating flock at his heels. They smugly argue from the known to the unknown on entirely false premises. They know that when Englishmen act in this or that way, such and such things will happen. They know what they themselves would do in certain conjunctures, and when they are told by Irishmen that Irishmen under similar conditions would act quite differently, they snort and say 'nonsense.' They are too dense to appreciate the radical difference between the two races. The breeds don't mix and don't understand each other. It was miserable to hear these men—I am sure they were good men—prattling like bib-and-tucker babies about Irish affairs, and speaking of Gladstone as possessing a quality which we Catholics only ascribe to the Pope. Ha! ha! They think that vain old cataract of verbiage to be infallible. He knows nothing of the matter, does not understand the tools he is working with, any one of whom could buy and sell him and simple, clever Morley [78] twenty times over. Both Gladstone and Morley *are* clever in books, in words, in theories, adepts in debating, smart and adroit in talk. But they know no more of Paddy than the babe unborn. I say nothing of Harcourt and the other understrappers. They'll say anything that suits, whatever it may be. We reckoned them up long since. Cannot the English people see through these nimble twisters and time-servers, this crowd of lay Vicars of Bray?"

Catholic Home Ruler Number Three said, "I agree with all who say that the priests would do their best to secure a dominating influence in political affairs. And although I think we ought to have an Irish Legislature, although I believe it would be good for us, yet if the priestly influence were to become supreme for one moment of time—if you tell me that the Catholic Church is to hold the reins for one second, then I say, away with Home Rule, away with it for ever! Better stay as we are."

This gentleman seems to have about as much logical foresight as some of those he criticises. He dreads priestly domination above everything, and yet would approve of giving the priests a chance of being masters. He continued:—

"The present Irish leaders are the curse of the movement, which, should it succeed, would in their hands bring untold sorrows on the country. As a Catholic Home Ruler, I put up my hands in supplication, and I beg, I implore of the English people to withhold their assent. For God's sake don't give it us at present. We must have it sooner or later, but wait till we have leaders we can trust. Have you met a decent Home Ruler who trusts the present men? No. I knew you would say so. Such a man cannot be found in Ireland. Then why send them to Parliament, say you? That is just what you Englishmen do not understand. That is one of the points old Gladstone is wrecking the country on. You think it unanswerable. Listen to me.

"When the franchise was lowered, then the mistake was made. You let in an immense electorate utterly incapable of discussing any question of State; and, rushing from the extreme of abject servility to a sort of tyrannical mastery, they elected as their representatives, not the most able men, not the most orderly men, not the men of some training and education, not the men who had some stake in the country, but the most violent men, the glibbest men, the most factious, the most contumacious, the most pragmatical men were the men they elected. Look at the Poor-Law Boards. See the set sent there. Those are the men who will be sent to the Dublin Parliament. Are they men to be trusted with the affairs of State? Look up your Burke, and observe the qualifications he thinks necessary to a statesman. Then look at the blacksmith who represents the county Tipperary, the mason who represents Meath, the drapers' assistants and bacon factors' clerks who represent other places. You don't quite see this in England. These men perhaps tell you that they are kings in their own country. Ireland is a long way off, and far-away [79] hills are green.

"Reverse the situation. Let Dublin be the seat of Empire and London wanting Home Rule. You really want it, and think it would be best for both—a convenience for yourself and a saving of time for all. Would you not draw back at the last moment if under the circumstances I have named, your country was to be handed over to fellows whose sole income was derived from their political work, artisans, clerks, and shopkeepers' assistants? What would these men do with their power? Make haste to be rich—nothing more. Patriots are they? Rubbish; they are mere mercenaries. Parnell knew that. He said to me:—

"'Under the circumstances I must use these men, whom I would not otherwise touch with a forty-foot pole. Adversity makes us acquainted with strange bedfellows. Any port is good in a storm. These men will fight well—for their pay, and will work the thing up. But when we get the

bill, when we come into power, their work is done. They will be dropped at once, or furnished with places where they may get an honest living.'"

Catholic Home Ruler Number Four said: "The Meath election shows the feeling of the priests, and what they would do if they could. They loathed Parnell, but he was too strong for them. And weren't they glad to give him the slip on the ground of morality. Home Rule was comparatively a safe thing while Parnell lived. Now I would not advise it for some years. We must have better men to the fore. We in Limerick are loyal, although Catholics and Home Rulers. Don't laugh at that. It is a fact, though I admit it is hard to believe. Put it down, if you like, to the influence of the Bishop. The young priests I say nothing about. Their loyalty is a negligeable quantity. They do not object to Protestants *qua* Protestants, but they object to them as representatives of English rule."

This reminded me of Dr. Kane, of Belfast, who said to me, "They hate us, not because we are Protestants, not because we are Orangemen, not because we are strangers in the land, but because we are the hated English garrison."

Here I am bound to interpolate a word of qualification. The Mardyke promenade of Cork, a mile-long avenue of elms, has many comfortable seats, whereon perpetually do sit the "millingtary" of the sacrilegious Saxon, holding sweet converse with the Milesian counterparts of the Saxon Sarah Ann. The road is full of them, Tommy's yellow-striped legs marching with the neat kirtle of Nora, Sheela, or Maureen. As it was in the Isle of Saints, so it was in Ulster, is now in Limerick, and shall be in Hibernia *in sæcula sæculorum*. A Limerick constable said, "A regiment will come into the city at four o'clock, and at eight they'll every man walk out a girl. The infatuation of the servant-girl class for the military is surprisin'. Only let them walk out with a soldier, and they 'chuck' everything, even Home Rule." The hated garrison are not among the [80]
people who never will be missed. Wherever Tommy goes he seems to be able to sample the female population. The soldiers always have a rare good time.

A carman who drove me to Castleconnel proved the most interesting politician since Dennis Mulcahy, of Carrignaheela. He knew all about the average English voter, and resented his superior influence in Irish affairs. "Shure, we're all undher the thumb o' a set o' black men that lives undher the bowils o' the airth. Yer honner must know all about thim miners in the Black Counthry, an' in Wales, an' the Narth o' England? Ye didn't? Ah, now, ye're jokin' me, ye take me for an omadhaun all out. Ye know all about it; ye know that these poor men goes down, an' down, an' down, till ye'd think they'd niver shtop, an' that they stay there a whole week afore they come up agin. An' then they shtand in tubs while their wives an' sweethearts washes an' scrubs thim, an' makes white men out o' the black men that comes up, an' thin walks thim off home. Now, shtandin' in a tub at the mouth o' the pit to be washed by yer wimmenfolks is what we wouldn't do in this counthry—'tisn't black naygurs we are—an' these men that lives in the dark and have no time to think, an' nothin' to think wid, these are the men ye put to rule this counthry, men that they print sich rubbish as *Tit-Bits* for, because they couldn't understand sinse. An' the man that first found out that they couldn't understand sinse, an' gave thim somethin' that wanted no brains, they say has made a fortune. Is that thrue, now?

"As for owld Gladstone, I wouldn't trust him out o' me sight. We'll get no Home Rule, the owld thrickster doesn't mane it. 'Tis like a man I knew that was axed to lind a friend £100. He didn't like to lind, an' he was afeared to say No, an' he was in a quondairy intirely. So, says he 'I'll lind ye the money,' says he, 'if ye'll bring the securities down to the bank,' says he, 'an' get the cash off me banker.' Thin he went saycretly to the banker, an' says he, 'This thievin' blayguard,' says he, 'wants the money, and he'll never repay me; I wouldn't thrust him,' says he. 'Now, will ye help me, for I couldn't say No, by raison he's a relative, an' an owld acquaintance,' says he.

"'An' how'll I do that?' says the banker.

"'Ye can tur-rn up yer nose at the securities.'

"'Ha, Ha,' says the banker, 'is it there ye are? Ye're a deep one; begorra ye are. Nabocklish,' says he, 'I'll do it for ye,' says he.

"So whin the borrower wint for the money, the banker sent out word that the securities wor not good enough, an' that he wouldn't advance a farden.

"Then the borrower goes to his frind an' complains, an' thin the frind acts all out the way Gladstone'll act when the bill's refused at the Lords, or may be at the Commons. 'Hell to him,' he roars, 'the blayguard thief iv a thievin' banker. I'll tache him to refuse a frind, says he. 'Sarve him right,' says he, 'av I bate his head into a turnip-mash an' poolverise him into Lundy Foot snuff. [81]
May be I won't, whin I meet him, thrash him till the blood pours down his heels,' says he. That'll be the way iv it. That's what Gladstone will say whin the bill's lost, which he manes it to be, the conthrivin' owld son o' a schamer.

"A gintleman axed me which o' them I like best o' the two Home Rule Bills, an' I towld him that whin I lived at Ennis, an' drove a car at the station there, the visithors, Americans an' English, would be axin' me whin they lepped on the car which was the best hotel in Ennis. Now, whiniver I gave them my advice they would be cur-rsin' an' sinkin' at me whin they met me aftherwards in the sthreet, be raison that there was only two hotels in the place, an' nayther o' thim was at all aiqual to what they wor used to in their own counthries. So I got to know this, an' iver afther, whin they would be sayin' to me,

"'Which is the best hotel in Ennis?' says they, an' I would answer,

"'Faix, there's only two o' thim, an' to whichiver one ye go ye will be sorrowin' that ye didn't go

to the other,' says I.

"An' that's my reply as to which of the two Home Rule Bills I like best."

In the city of Limerick itself all is quiet and orderly. Outside, things are different. Disturbed parts of the County Clare are dangerous to strangers, and, what is more to the point, somewhat difficult of access. The country is not criss-crossed with railways as in England, and vehicles for long journeys are rather hard to get. However, I have chartered a car for a three-day trip into what may be called the interior, have fired several hundred cartridges from a Winchester repeating rifle, and written letters to my dearest friends. I start to-morrow, and if I do not succeed in bottoming the recent outrages—which are hushed up as much as possible, and of which the local newspaper-men, both Nationalist and Conservative, together with Head-Constable MacBrinn, declare they cannot get at the precise particulars—if I cannot get to the root of the matter, I shall in my next letter have the honour of stating the reason why.

Limerick, April 22nd.

No. 13.—THE CURSE OF COUNTY CLARE.

ToC

Once again the difference between Ireland and England is forcibly exemplified. It was certain that several moonlighting expeditions had recently been perpetrated in the neighbourhood of Limerick, which is only divided by the Shannon from the County Clare. You walk over a bridge in the centre of the city and you change your county, but nobody in Limerick seems to know anything about the matter. The local papers hush up the [82] outrages when they hear of them, which is seldom or never. The people who know anything will not, dare not tell, and even the police have the utmost difficulty in establishing the bare facts of any given case. English publicity is entirely unknown. Local correspondents do not always exist in country towns, and the distances are so great, in comparison with the facilities for travel, that newspaper-men seldom or never visit the scene of the occurrence. And besides the awkward and remote position of the country hamlets and mountain farms, there are other excellent reasons for journalistic reticence. The people do not wish to read such news, the editors do not wish to print these discreditable records, and the police, although eminently and invariably civil and obliging, are debarred by their official position from disclosing what they know. The very victims themselves are often silent, refusing to give details, and almost always declining to give evidence. That the sufferers usually know and could easily identify the cowardly ruffians who so cruelly maltreat them is a well-ascertained fact. That they usually declare they have no clue to the offenders is equally well known. The difficulty of arresting suspected men is enhanced by the fact that the moonlighters have a complete system of scouts who in this bare and thinly populated district, descry the police when miles away, giving timely warning to the marauders; these, besides, are readily concealed by their neighbours and friends, who in this display an ingenuity and enthusiasm worthy a better cause. Suppose the villains are caught red-handed; even then the difficulties are by no means over. In Ireland a felon once in the hands of the police, by that one circumstance at once and for ever becomes a hero, a martyr, a man to be excused, to be prayed for, to be worshipped. No matter how black his offence, the touch of the constabulary washes him whiter than snow, purifies him from every earthly taint, surrounds him with a halo of sanctity. Those whom he has injured will not bear witness against him, because their temerity might cost them their lives, the loss of their property, the esteem of their fellow-men. What this means we shall shortly see. The cases I have examined will speak for themselves. And let it be remembered that close proximity to the scenes described produces an incomparably stronger effect than any description, however minute, however painstaking. The utter lawlessness of the districts I have visited since penning Monday's letter has produced a profound, an indelible impression. I pass over the means employed to get over the ground, merely stating that horseflesh has borne the brunt of the business. That and pedestrianism are the only means available, with untold patience and perseverance to worm out the true story. People will not show the way, or will direct you wrongly. Their ignorance, that is, their assumed ignorance, is wonderful, incredible. They are all sthrangers in those parts. They never knew a family of that name, never heard of any moonlighting, swear that the amusement is unknown thereabouts, assert that the whole thing is a fabrication of the police. All the people [83] round are decent, honest, hard-working folks, without a fault; pious, virtuous, immaculate. You push on, and your friend runs after you. Stay a moment, something has struck him. Just at the last distressing hour, his brain displayed amazing power. Now he comes to think of it, something was said to have happened over there, at Ballygammon, ten miles in the opposite direction. A stack was fired, and they said it was the Boys. It was the police who burnt the hay, but they deny it "av coorse." He is suspiciously anxious to afford all the information he can. Ballygammon is the spot, and Tim Mugphiller your man. Mention Mike Delany and you will get every information, and —have ye a screw of tobacky these hard times. You pursue your way certain that at last you are

on the right track, and Mike's jaw drops to his knees. Too late he sees that his only chance of altering your course was to point out the right one.

Dropping for once scenery and surroundings, let us at once plunge, as Horace advises, *in medias res*. The district in Mr. Balfour's time was pleasant and peaceable. Curiously enough its troubles commenced with the change of Government. From March 18 to April 18 the police of Newcastlewest received tidings of fifteen outrages. How many have been perpetrated no man living can tell, for people often think it wisest to hold their peace. Ireland is often said to be almost free from crime, except of the agrarian kind, and moonlighting is partly condoned by reason of its alleged cause. How must we class the following case?

On February 19, 1893, four armed men with blackened faces and dressed as women, attacked the dwelling of T. Donoghue, of Boola, not far from Newcastle. They burst open the door and entered, not to revenge any real or fancied wrong, but purely and simply to obtain possession of a sum of £150, which Donoghue's daughter had brought from America. They believed they would have an easy prey, but they were mistaken; there were two or three men in the house, and the heroes decamped instanter, followed, unknown to themselves, by one of Donoghue's family. Having duly run them to earth, he informed the police, who caught them neatly enough, their shoes covered with fresh mud, and with every circumstance of guilt. The Donoghue folks identified them. The case was perfectly clear—that is the expressed opinion of everybody I have met, official and otherwise. It was tried at the Limerick Spring Assizes, and the jury returned a verdict of "Not guilty!" These patriotic jurors had doubtless much respect for their oaths, more for the interests of justice, more still for their own skins. This case is public property, and is only cited to prove that when the difficulty of arrest and the greater difficulty of obtaining evidence are with infinite pains overcome, the jury will not convict, no matter what the crime. Before he commences his career of crime, the moonlight marauder knows the chances of being caught are immensely in his favour, that should luck in this matter be against him, his very victim will [84] decline to identify him, nay, will affirm that he is not the man, and that when the worst comes to the worst, no jury in the counties of Kerry, Clare, or Limerick will convict.

Here are some results of my researches. The particulars of these cases now first appear in print.

A man named James Dore, who keeps a public-house in Bridge Street, Newcastlewest—I can vouch for his beer—also held a small farm of forty-nine acres from the Earl of Devon, for which he paid the modest rent of £11 10s. per annum—the land maintaining sixteen cows and calves, which, on the usual local computation of £10 profit on each cow, would leave a gain of £148 10s. —not a bad investment, as Irish farming goes. So it was considered, and when the tenant-right was announced as for sale by auction, two cousins of Dore, who held farms contiguous, agreed to jointly bid for the tenant-right, and having secured the land, to arrange its partition between themselves. They went to £400, but this was not regarded as enough, and the tenant-right was for a specified time held over for purchase by private agreement. A farmer named William Quirke offered £590, which was accepted, and the money paid. After this, the two cousins came forward and said they would purchase the tenant-right, offering £40 more than Quirke had paid. They were told that they were too late, and the Earl's agent (Mr. Curling) said nothing could now be done. This was on the 13th of the present month of April. On the 14th, Mr. James Cooke, Lord Devon's bailiff, was seen showing the purchaser Quirke over the newly-acquired holding. Poor Quirke little knew what was at that moment hanging over him. He had not long to wait. The dastard demon of moonlight ruffianism was on his track.

Quirke had a son aged fourteen years, but looking two years younger, a simple peasant lad, who cannot have injured his country very much. He was tending a cow, which required watching, his father and mother taking their rest while the child sat out the lonely hours in the cowhouse. He heard something, and listened with all his ears. Not voices, but a subdued whispering. It was the dead hour of night, two or half-past two, and the boy was frightened. The place is lonely, seven miles or more from Newcastlewest, and up towards the mountains. He listened and listened, and again heard the mysterious sounds. He says he "thought it was the fairies." He stole from the byre and went to the house. A horrible dread had crept over him, and father and mother were there. As he opened the door a terrible blow from behind struck him down. He was not stunned, though felled by the butt-end of a gun. They beat and kicked him as he lay. He gave an anguished cry. The mother heard and recognised her boy's voice, and, waking the father, said "Go down, they're killing my lad." The old man, for he is an old man, went down the stairs naked and unarmed. The foul marauders met him half-way up, and served him as they had served the [85] boy, throwing him down, kicking him, and beating him with butt-ends of guns; with one terrible blow breaking three of his ribs; and saying, "Give it up, give it up." He said he would "give it up"; promised by all he held sacred, begged hard for his life, and implored them at least to spare the young lad. Their reply to this was to fire a charge of shot into the boy's legs, a portion of the charge entering the limbs of an old woman—his grandmother, I think—who was feebly trying to shield the lad. This was such excellent sport that more was thought expedient. A charge of shot was fired into the father's legs, and as one knee-joint is injured, the elder Quirke's condition is precarious even without his broken ribs and other injuries. The cowardly hounds then left, in their horrid disguise adding a new terror to the lonely night. The evening's entertainment was not yet over. They crossed a couple of fields to a house where dwelt Quirke's married son. They burst open the door of his cottage and dragged the young fellow—he is about twenty-five—from his bed, beating him sorely, and in the presence of his wife firing a charge of shot into his legs. Then they went home, each man to his virtuous couch, to dream fair dreams of the coming Paradise, when they and their kind may work their own sweet will, free from the fear of a hireling

constabulary, and under the ægis of a truly national senate, given to a grateful country by a Grand Old Man.

The Quirkes know their assailants, but they will not tell. "What good would it do me to have men imprisoned?" says William Quirke, senior. "My lad's life might pay for it, and perhaps my own." The most influential people of the district have remonstrated with him, argued, persuaded, all in vain. William Quirke has a wish to remain in this sublunary sphere. His spirit is not anxious to take unto itself the wings of a dove, that it may fly away and be at rest. Like the dying Methodist, whose preacher reminded him of the beauties of Paradise, he likes "about here pretty well." Mr. Heard, Divisional Commissioner in charge of the constabulary organisation of the Counties of Cork, Limerick, and Kerry can get nothing out of William Quirke. County-inspector Moriarty can stir nothing, nor Major Rolleston, Resident Magistrate, nor Inspectors Wright, Pattison, and Huddy, all of whom have done their level best. These gentlemen assert that obviously Quirke knows the moonlighters, and for my own part, I am certain of it. The married son is equally dumb. "They were disguised," he says. "But you would recognise their voices." Then comes the strangest assertion, "They never spoke a word." In other words, he affirms that a number of men, not less than seven or eight, burst open his door, dragged him from bed, maltreated and shot him, to the accompaniment of his wife's terrified screaming and his own protestations, without uttering a single syllable! The bold Gladstonians whose influence removed Mr. Balfour from office and delivered the country into ruffian hands, will say: And serve the [86] people right! If they will not bear witness let the victims suffer. You cannot help people who will not help themselves. The police are there, the magistrates are there, the prisons are there, the hangman, if need be, is there. If they will not avail themselves of the protection provided, let them suffer. Let them go at it. All their own fault. Nobody but themselves to blame.

All very plausible and reasonable—in theory. Let us look a little closer into this matter. What does William Quirke say:—"Nobody can help an Irish farmer in a lonely part of Ireland. There are too many ways of getting at him. Suppose I gave such evidence as would satisfy anybody—I do not say I could—I don't know anything; but suppose I knew and told, would a Limerick jury convict? Certainly not. Everybody knows that. The police, the magistrates, will tell you that, every one of them. Nobody will say anything else. Then, why rouse more enmity? I shall give up the land even if I lose the money, the savings of a life-time, added to a loan, which I can repay in time. That is settled. What good would the land do me, once I were dead? I value my life more than my money, and more especially do I think of those belonging to me. Suppose I held on, and kept the land. Every time the lad went out I'd expect him to be brought in shot to his mother and me. And when I saw the lad's dead face, what would I think? And what would I say when his mother turned round and said, 'Ye have the land, haven't ye, William?' Our lives would not be worth twopence if I held on. Do you remember Carey, the informer? The British Empire couldn't protect him, though it shipped him across the world. How would I be among the mountains here? I could be shot going to or coming from market, my cattle houghed or mutilated, nobody would buy from me, nobody would sell to me, nobody would work on my farm. My stacks would be burnt. Look at the hay burnt in the last few weeks! You say I'd get a presentment against the county—and if I did I'd have to wait till next March for the money. Where's the capital to carry on? Suppose I wanted thirty tons of hay between this and that. That would cost £90. Where would I get the money? But that's not it. Life is dear, and life might at any moment be taken. If my stacks were burnt in July I'd have to wait a year for my money. I'd be cut off from all communication with the people, and shunned as if I'd the plague. If I went to market the people would leave the road to me, would cross over to the other side when they saw me coming. You never saw boycotting; you don't know what it means."

In a lonely stretch of gorse-bordered road, steep and rough, I came upon two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, with rifles, sword-bayonets, and bâtons. We had a chat, and I examined their short Sniders while they admired the humble Winchester I carried for company, and which on one occasion had acted like a charm. They carried buckshot cartridges and ball, and had no [87] objection to express their views. "Balfour was the man to keep the country quiet. Two resident magistrates could convict, and the blackguards knew that, if caught, it was all up with them. They are the most cowardly vermin on the face of the earth, for although if any of our men (who never go singly, but always in twos or threes) were to appear unarmed, they'd be murdered at sight. Yet although they often fire on us, they mostly do it from such distances that their bullets have no effect, so that they can run away the moment they pull the trigger. Lately things have been looking rather blue over there." One pointed to the hills dividing the county from Kerry. "The Kerry men are getting rifles. I know the 'ping' of the brutes only too well. Let them get a few men who know their weapons, and we'll be potted at five hundred yards easily enough. Yes, they have rifles now, and what for? To shoot sparrows? No. You can't guess? Give it up? Ye do? Then I'll tell you. To carry out the Home Rule Bill. Yes, I do think so. Will you tell me this? Who will in future collect rates and taxes? The tenants do not think they will have any more rent to pay. Lots of them will tell you that. These very men have the members of the Irish Parliament in their hands. That is; they can return whomsoever they choose. The representation of the country is in their hands. And the priests agree with them. No difference there, their object is one and the same, and when the priests and the farmers unite, who can compel them to pay up? Is the Irish Legislature which will be returned by these men—is it a likely body to compel payment of tribute to the hated Saxon at the point of the bayonet? When the British Government, with all the resources of Gladstonian civilisation, failed to put down boycotting, how do you suppose a sympathetic Government, returned by the farmers, consisting of farmers' sons, with a sprinkling of clever attorneys, more smart than honest, will proceed with compulsory action? Why they could do nothing if they wished, but then they will have no desire to compel. The English people

are only commencing their troubles. They don't know they're born yet. Gladstone will have some explaining to do, but he can do it, he can do it. He'd explain the shot out of the Quirke family's legs. Ah! but he's a terrible curse to this country."

The other officer said:—"Our duty is very discouraging. We are hindered and baffled on every side by the people, whose sympathies are always against the law. Now in England your sympathies are with the law, and the people have the sense to support it, knowing that it will support them, so long as they do the right thing. It was bad enough to have the people against us, but now things are a hundred times worse. When Balfour was in power, we felt that our labour was not in vain. We felt that there was some chance of getting a conviction—not much, perhaps, but still a chance. Now, if we catch the criminals redhanded, we know no jury will convict. We try [88] to do our duty, but of course we can't put the same heart into it as we could if we thought our work would do any good. And another thing—we knew Balfour, so long as we were acting with integrity, would back us up. Now we never know what we're going to get—whether we shall be praised or kicked behind. This Government is not only weak but also slippery. Outrages are increasing. News of three more reached the Newcastlewest Barracks this very day. We had a man on horseback scouring the mountains for information. The outraged people sometimes keep it close. What's the good, they say. We hear of the affair from other people, and the principals, so to speak, ask us to make no fuss about it, as they don't want to be murdered. The country is getting worse every day. We'll have such a bloody winter as Ireland never saw."

Another small moonlighting incident, now appearing for the first time on this or any other stage. Some tenants years ago were evicted on the Langford estates. Negotiations were proceeding for their proximate restoration, but nothing could be settled. A few days ago a small farmer named Benjamin Brosna, aged 55, agreed with the proper authorities to graze some cattle on the land in question pending the arrangement of the matter. A meeting at Haye's Cross was immediately convened by two holy men of the district, to wit, Father Keefe, P.P., and Father Brew, C.C., both of Meelin, and under the guidance of these good easy men, it was resolved that any man grazing cattle on the Langford land was as bad as the landlord, and must be treated accordingly. On the same day, April 18, or rather in the night succeeding the day of the meeting, eleven masked and armed men entered Brosna's house, and one of them, presenting a gun, said, "We have you now, you grass-grabber." Brosna seized the gun, and being hale and active, despite his 55 years, showed such vigorous fight that he fell through the doorway into the yard along with two others, where he was brutally beaten, and must have been killed—it was their clear intention—but for the pitchy darkness of the yard and the number of his assailants, who in their fury fell over each other, enabling Brosna, who being on his own ground knew the ropes better than they, in the darkness to glide under a cart and escape over an adjacent wall, where he hid himself. They lost him, and returned to the house, firing shots at whatever they could damage, and smashing everything breakable, from the windows upwards. Brosna will lose the sight of one eye, which is practically beaten out. His servants, named Larkin, have been compelled to leave by means of threatening letters. Their father has also been threatened with death unless he instantly removes them from Brosna's house.

I could continue indefinitely, continuing my remarks to the occurrences of one month or so; and if I abruptly conclude it is because time presses, my return to civilisation having been effected at 3.30 this morning, after a ten miles' mountain walk, followed by three hours' ride in the blissful bowels of an empty cattle-truck. But for the good Samaritan of a luggage train I must last night [89] have camped beneath the canopy of heaven. No scarcity of fun in Ireland—which beats the world for sparkling incident.

Rathkeale (Co. Limerick), April 24th.

No. 14.—LAWLESSNESS AND LAZINESS.

ToC

The fruits of Gladstonian rule are ripening fast. Mr. Morley's visit to Cork *en route* for Dublin corresponds with Inspector Moriarty's visit to the Irish capital. Mr. Moriarty is the county inspector in whose district most of the recent outrages have been perpetrated, and is therefore able to give the Irish Secretary plenty of news. His report will doubtless remain secret, as it is sensational. Mr. Morley has too much regard for the sensibilities of Mr. and Mrs. Bull, and when the Limerick inspector, entering the State confessional of Dublin Castle, advances and says, "I could a tale unfold whose lightest word Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood, Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres, Thy knotted and combined locks to part, And each particular hair to stand on end, Like quills upon the fretful porcupine,"—when Mr. Moriarty utters the familiar and appropriate words the Irish Secretary will say with deprecatory gesture, "Enough, enough. 'Twas ever thus. This is the effect of kindness. What ho, my henchmen bold! A flagon, a mighty flagon of most ancient sack. I feel that I am about to be prostrated. Such is the fate of greatness. Uneasy

lies the head that wears a crown. It is a great and glorious thing, To be an Irish Sec. But give to me my hollow tree, A crust of bread and liberty. The word is porpentine, not porcupine, Mr. Inspector. A common corruption. Verify your quotations. Have them (in future) attested by two resident magistrates. And now to work. All in strict confidence. Let not the world hear of these things. Let not the people know that violence and rapine walk hand-in-hand with my administration. Nameless in dark oblivion let it dwell. Let it be *sub rosâ, sub sigillâ confessionis, sub-auditer, sub* everything. Tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in Askalon, for behold, if the people heard, they would marvel, and fear greatly; and—be afraid."

The officer would then produce his budget, with its horrors, its indecencies, its record of trickery, treachery, cowardly revenge, and midnight terrorism. The local press correspondents of the rural districts are nearly all Nationalists, and they either furnish garbled reports, or none at all. The reporters of Conservative papers, comparatively Conservative, I mean, are also Nationalists. The Irish themselves know not what is taking place ten miles away. How is England to learn the precise state of things? I have fished up a few recent samples of minor occurrences which will form part of Mr. Moriarty's news. These smaller outrages invariably lead up to murder [90] if the victim resist. They are so many turns of the screw, just to let the recalcitrant feel what can be done. In the large majority of cases he gives way at the first hint. Let us relate some neighbouring experiences.

David Geary, of Castlemahon, late in the evening heard an explosion at the door of his cottage. He ran out, and found a fuse burning, lying where it had been cast, while a volley of large stones whizzed past his head. There had been some litigation between a man named Callaghan and a road contractor, and Geary had allowed the road contractor's men to take their food in wet weather under his roof.

On April 15, at two in the morning, a party of masked moonlighters visited the cottage of Mrs. Breens, of Raheenish, and having fired two shots through the parlour window, shattering the woodwork by way of letting the widow know they were there, fired a third through her bed-room window to expedite the lady's movements. Almost paralysed with fear, she parleyed with the besieging force, which, by its spokesman, demanded her late husband's gun, threatening to put "daylight through her" unless it were instantly given up. It was in her son's possession, and she hurried to his room. The young dog came on the scene, and instead of handing out the gun, fired two shots from a revolver into the darkness. Whereupon the band of Irish hero-patriots outside fled with electric speed, and returned no more. At Ardagh the police found a haystack burning. They saved about ten tons, but Patrick Cremmin claims £88 from the county. He had offended somebody, but he declares he knows not the motive. In other words, he wants to let the thing drop—bar the £88. Another stack of hay, partly saved by the police, was burnt because evictions had taken place: damage £20, which the county must pay. R. Plummer, a labourer with Brosna, whose case was given in my last, has received a letter threatening him with death unless he left Brosna's employ. Some say the name is Brosnan or Bresnahan. Beware of the quibbling of Irish malcontents, who on the strength of a misprint or a wrongly-spelt name, boldly state that no such person ever existed, and that therefore the case is a pure invention. Here is a specimen of the toleration Loyalists and Protestants may expect:—A special train having been run from Newcastle to Limerick to enable people to attend a Unionist meeting in the latter city, the Nationalists took steps to mark their sense of the railway company's indiscretion, and a train soon afterwards leaving Newcastle for Tralee, they hurled a great stone from the Garryduff Bridge, smashing the window of the guard's van and doing other injury. At Gurtnaclochy, to deter a witness in a legal case, a threatening letter was sent, sixty yards of a sod fence thrown down, and a coffin and gun neatly cut on the field. On the Roman Catholic Chapel wall at Ashford a notice was posted threatening with death anyone who bought hay or turnips from a boycotted man, and the same day a man named Herlihy received a threatening letter. On April 15 a party of armed, disguised [91] men with blackened faces, called on a poor man at Inniskeen, and having smashed the windows, tried to force the door, but stopped to parley. They called on "Young Patrick" to hand out the father's gun, and the young man complied. Being twitted with this he said, "I want to live. If I had refused the gun my life would not be worth twopence. I would be 'covered' from a bush or a fence when I walked out, or shot dead in the door as I looked down the lane, as was done in another case. I know the parties well, but I would not give evidence. Neither will I give the police any more information. It would not hurt the criminals, but it would hurt me. For while the jury would not convict, the secret tribunal that sat on me would not be so merciful, and many a man would like the distinction of being singled out to execute the secret decrees of the Moonlight fraternity." Another person standing by said, "What happened at Galbally, near Tipperary? A priest denounced a Protestant named Allen from the altar, and a week after the man was shot dead in his tracks. Everybody knew perfectly well who did the deed. All knew the man who wanted Allen's land, and it was thought that there was evidence enough to hang him twenty times. He is alive and well, and if you go any Saturday to the Tipperary market Father Humphreys will introduce you to him. He was discharged without a stain on his character, and brass bands met him on his return, also a torchlight procession."

In Ireland, even more than in England, brass bands are necessary to the expression of the popular emotion. Brass bands met Egan, the liberated, everywhere. Brass bands accompanied the march of O'Brien's mourners at the Cork funeral last week. Not a murderer in Ireland whose release would not be celebrated with blare of brass bands, and glare of burning grease. Mr. Morley could not land in Cork, however privately, for he did not wish to speak, without a brass band being loosed on his heels. The great philosophical Radical, the encyclopædia of political wisdom, the benefactor, the saviour, the regenerator of Ireland, left Cork to the strains of the Butter Exchange Band—*con amore*, *affetuoso*, and doubtless *con spirito*. Yet some will say that

the Irish are not grateful! Mr. Morley stayed at the hotel I had just left, the Royal Victoria, which I justly described as a hot-bed of sedition. It was here, in room No. 72, that Dalton so terribly punched the long-suffering head of Tim Healy. At the Four Courts, Dublin, I saw a waiter who witnessed the famous horsewhipping in that city. I asked him if it were a severe affair, or whether, as the Nationalist papers affirmed, only a formality, a sort of Consider-yourself-flogged. How that waiter expanded and enjoyed the Pleasures of Memory! "It was a most thrimindious affair, Sorr. McDermott was a fine, powerful sthrip of a boy, an' handled the horsewhip iligant. Ye could hear the whack, whack, whack in the refreshment room wid the doors closed, twenty yards [92] away. It was for all the world a fine, big, healthy kind of batin' that Tim got. An' the way he wriggled was the curiousest thing at all. 'Twas enough to make yer jump out of yer skin wid just burstin' with laffin'."

Leaving outrages and violence to Messrs. Morley and Moriarty, let me narrate the effect of the impending Home Rule Bill on some of the commercial community. A well-known tradesman says: "A man in Newcastlewest owed me £24 for goods delivered. He had a flourishing shop and also an excellent farm. He was so slow in paying, and apparently so certain that in a little while he would escape altogether, that I sued him for the amount. It was a common action for a common debt, between one Irish tradesman and another. But I am a Unionist, and therefore fair game. I got judgment, but no instalments were paid. I remonstrated over and over again, and was from time to time met with solemn promises, the debtor gaining time by every delay. At last I lost patience, and determined to distrain. Everybody laughed at me. 'Where will you get an auctioneer, and who will bid? they asked. I determined to carry through this one case, if it cost a hundred pounds. I got a good revolver, and succeeded in bringing an auctioneer from a distance. The debtor said he would brain me with a bill-hook if I put my foot on his ground, and another man promised to shoot me from a bed-room window. It was necessary, to carry out the sale at all, to have police protection. I went to the barracks and submitted the case. Had I a sheriff's order, &c., &c., &c.? All difficulties overcome I went to the 'sale.' We seized a cow, a watch, and some of my own goods, and commenced the auction. Nobody bid but myself, and when I had covered the amount due the sale ceased, the aspect of the people being very menacing. Remember, this was not agrarian at all. The debt was for goods delivered to be sold in the way of trade. Most of them were there before my face. The debtor came and said, 'You can't take the things away. But we like your pluck, and if you will settle the matter for £5 I will give you the money.' I declined to take £5 for £24 and costs, although the police looked on the offer as unexpectedly liberal, and the bystanders shed tears of emotion and said that Gallagher was 'iver an' always the dacent boy.' When I wished to remove the things the troubles began. I had my revolver, the police their rifles, but things looked very blue. I drove the cow to the station and got her away, but the other things could not walk aboard, and how to get them there was hard to know. I asked people I knew to lend me their carts—people who were under some obligation to me, men I had known and done business with for years. They all refused; they feared the evil eye of the vigilance committee of a Fenian organisation still in full swing among us, and keeping regular books for settlement when they have the power. I was determined not to be beat, so I went to Limerick, nearly thirty miles [93] away, to get a float or wagon. The news was there before me, not a wheel to be had in the city. At last, by means of powerful influence, I got a cart, on condition that the owner's name should be taken off, and my name painted on. Then I returned to Newcastle and bore away the goods in triumph. Alas! my troubles were only beginning! I had been told that the goods were not the debtor's, but belonged to someone else. The cow, they said, was a neighbour's, who had 'lent' it to my debtor. The watch, they said, was the property of a friend, who had handed it to my debtor that he might take it somewhere to be repaired. The landlord of the house claimed that he had previously seized everything, but had allowed things to remain out of kindness. I was cited in four actions for illegal distraint, all of which were so evidently trumped-up that they were quashed. But the time they took! And the annoyance they caused. The expense also was considerable, and the idea of getting expenses out of these people—but I need add nothing on that score.

"There were six witnesses in one case, and they could never be found, so long as the judge could have patience to wait. Every lie, trick, subterfuge you can imagine, was practised on poor me. At last all was over, but at what a cost! The big chap who had threatened me with the bill-hook came humbly forward and said: "Plase yer honner's worship, I'm very deaf, an' I'm short sighted, and I'm very wake intirely, an' ye must give me toime to insinse meself into the way of it." And that rascal had everything repeated several times, until I was on fifty occasions on the point of chucking up the whole thing.

"Before the Home Rule Bill had implanted dishonest ideas in his head, before the promises of unscrupulous agitators had unsettled and demoralised the people, that man was a straightforward, good, paying fellow. Only he thought that by waiting till the bill was passed he would have nothing to pay. The ignorant among us harbour that idea, and the disloyalty of the lower classes is so intense that you could not understand it unless you lived here at least two years."

English friends who praise the affection of the Irish people, and who speak of the Union of Hearts, may note the lectures of the popular Miss Gonne, who is being enthusiastically welcomed in Nationalist Ireland. No doubt the local papers expurgated the text; at the present moment the word has gone round:—"Let us get the bill, let us get the bill, and then!" But enough remains to show the general tone. Addressing the Irish National Literary Society, of Loughrea, Miss Gonne said that she must "contradict Lord Wolseley in his statement that England was never insulted by invasion since the days of William the Conqueror. It would be deeply interesting to the men and women of Connaught to hear once again how a gallant body of French troops, fighting in the name of Liberty and Ireland, had conquered nearly the whole of that province at a time when

England had in her service in Ireland no less than one hundred and fifty thousand trained troops. [94] She would remind them that France was the one great military nation of Europe that had been the friend of Ireland"—a remark which was received with loud and prolonged applause. "And it would be a matter of some pride to us to reflect that in these military relations the record of the Irish brigades in the service of France compared not without advantage with the military services which France had been able to render to Ireland." This passage clearly refers to the aid the two countries have afforded each other as against England, and the whole lecture seems to have aimed at the heaping of ignominy on the British name. The stronger the denunciation of England, the more popular the speaker. The Union of Hearts gets "no show" at all. The phrase is unknown to Irish Nationalists. However deceitful they may be, it cannot yet be said that they have sunk thus low.

Looking over Wednesday's *Cork Examiner*, I observe that amid other things the Reverend John O'Mahony attributes the fact that "The teeming treasures of the deep were almost left untouched," that is, off the Irish coast, and that this is "a disgrace and a dishonour to the people through whose misrule and misgovernment the unhappy result was brought about." Father O'Mahony is a Corker, and should know that he is talking nonsense. Let me explain.

In Cork I met a gentleman for twenty-five years engaged in supplying fishermen with all their needs. He said, "The Irish fishermen are the laziest, most provoking beggars under the sun." He showed me two sizes of net-mesh and said, "This is the size of a shilling, this is the size of a halfpenny. The Scotsmen and Shetlanders use the shilling size. The difference seems small, but it is very important. The Irishmen use the halfpenny size, and will use no other. They say that what was good enough for their fathers is good enough for them. When the fish are netted they make a rush, and many of them escape the larger mesh, which they can get through, unless of the largest size. The small mesh catches them by the gills and hangs them. This, however, is a small matter. The most important thing is the depth of fishing. The Scotsmen and Shetlanders come up to the Irish coast, which is remarkably rich in fish, and when they meet a school of fish they fish very deep and bring them up by tons, while the Irishmen are skimming the tops of the shoals, and drawing up trumpery dozens, because their fathers did so. Years ago I used to argue the point, but I know better now. When the water is troubled, when the wind is blowing, and things are a trifle rough, then is the time to fish. The herrings cannot see the net when the water is agitated. The Scotsmen are on the job, full of spirits and go, but Paddy gets up and takes a look and goes to bed again. He waits for fine weather, so as to give the fish a chance. The poor Shetlanders come over long leagues of sea, catch ling a yard long, under Paddy's nose, take it to Shetland, cure it, and bring it back to him, that he may buy it at twopence a pound. At the mouth of the [95] Blackwater are the finest soles in the world, but the Irish are too lazy to catch them;—great thick beggars of fish four inches thick, you never saw such soles, the Dover soles are lice to them, they'd fetch a pound apiece in London if they were known. Change the subject. Every time I come round here I get into a rage. The British Government finds these men boats. The Shetlanders sometimes land, and when they contrast the fat pastures and teeming south coast of Ireland with their own cold seas and stony hills they say with the Ulstermen, 'Would that you would change countries!'"

I asked him how he accounted for this extraordinary state of things. He said:—

"As an Irishman I am bound to answer one question by asking another. Was there ever a free and prosperous country where the Roman Catholic religion was predominant?"

I could not answer him at the moment, but perhaps Father O'Mahony, who knows so much, may satisfy him on the point. Or in the absence of this eloquent kisser of the Blarney Stone some other black-coated Corker may respond. Goodness knows, they are numerous enough. All are well clothed and well fed, while the flock that feed the pastor are mostly in squalid poverty, actually bending the knee to their greasy task-masters, poor ignorant victims of circumstances.

Among the many nostrums offered to Ireland, nobody offers soap. The greatest inventions are often the simplest, and with all humility I make the suggestion. Ireland is badly off for soap, and cleanliness is next to godliness. Father Humphreys, of Tipperary, boasts of his influence with the poor—delights to prove how in the matter of rent they took his advice, and so on. Suppose he asks them to wash themselves! The suggestion may at first sight appear startling. All novelties are alarming at first; but the mortality, except among old people, would probably prove less than Father Humphreys might expect. He would have some difficulty in recognising his flock, but the resources of civilisation would probably be sufficient to conquer this drawback. Persons over forty might be exempted, as nothing less than skinning would meet their case, but the young might possibly be trained, against tradition and heredity, to the regular use of water. But I fear the good Father will hardly strain his authority so far. An edict to wash would mean blue ructions in Tipperary, open rebellion would ensue, and the mighty Catholic Church would totter to its fall. The threat to wash would be an untold terrorism, the use of soap an outrage which could only be atoned by blood. And Father Humphreys (if he knew the words) might truly say *Cui bono*? Why wash? Is not soap an enemy to the faith? Do not the people suit our purpose much better as they are? *Thigum thu*, brutal and heretic Saxon?

Killaloe (Co. Clare), April 27th.

No. 15.—THE PERIL TO ENGLISH TRADE.

ToC

As the great object of public interest in the city of Limerick is the Treaty Stone, a huge block of granite, raised on a pedestal on the Clare side of Thomond Bridge, to commemorate the Violated Treaty so graphically described by Macaulay, and to keep in remembrance of the people the alleged ancient atrocities of the brutal Saxon—so the key-note of Ennis is the memorial to the Manchester Martyrs, erected outside the town to commemorate the people who erected it. That is how it strikes the average observer. For while the patriotic murderers of the Manchester policemen, to wit, O'Brien, Allen, and Larkin, have only one tablet to the three heroes, the members of the committee who were responsible for this Nationalist or rather Fenian monument have immortalised themselves on three tablets. But although party feeling runs high, and the town as a whole appears to be eminently disloyal and inimical to England, there are not wanting reasonable people who look on the proposed change with grave suspicion, even though they nominally profess to support the abstract doctrine of Home Rule. Naturally, their main opinions are very like those I have previously recorded as being prevalent in the neighbouring counties of Limerick, Cork, and Kerry. They believe the present time unseasonable, and they have no confidence in the present representatives of the Nationalist party. They believe that the Irish people are not yet sufficiently educated to be at all capable of self-government, and they fail to see what substantial advantages would accrue from any Home Rule Bill. More especially do they distrust Mr. Gladstone; and although in England the Nationalist leaders speak gratefully of the Grand Old Man, it is probable that such references would in Ireland be received in silence, if not with outspoken derision. A well-known Nationalist thus expressed himself on this point:—

"Gladstone's recent attack on Parnell was one of the meanest acts of a naturally mean and cowardly man, whose whole biography is a continuous story of surrender, abject and unconditional. Parnell was his master. With all his faults, Parnell was much the better man. He was too cool a swordsman for Gladstone, and, spite of the Grand Man's tricky dodging and shifting, Parnell beat him at every point, until he was thoroughly cowed and had to give in. What surprises me is that the English people are led away by a mere talker. They claim to be the most straightforward and practical people in the world. Answer me this:—Did you, did anybody, ever know Gladstone to give a straightforward answer to any one question? Straight dealing is not in him. He is slippery as an eel—with all his 'honesty,' his piety, his benevolence. But as he reads the Bible in Hawarden Church, the English believe in him. They have no other reason that I can see. Have you heard any Irishman speak well of Gladstone? No, and you never will. How long in [97] the country? Five weeks only? You may stay five years, and you will not hear a word expressing sincere esteem. About separation? Well, most of the unthinking people, that is, the great majority, would vote in favour of it to-morrow. All sentiment, the very romance of sentimentality. I have been in England, I have been in America, and you could hardly believe the difference in the people's views. The Irish are not practical enough. 'Ireland a nation' is bound to be the next cry, if Home Rule become law under the present leaders of the Nationalist party."

"But how about the pledges, the solemn and reiterated pledges, of Michael Davitt and the rest?"

"I suppose you ask me seriously? You do? An Irishman would regard the question as a joke. The pledges are not worth a straw. Their object is to deceive, and so to carry the point at issue. Would John Bull come with an injured air and say, with tears in his voice, 'You said you'd be good. You promised to be loyal. You really did. Did you not, now?' Don't you think John would cut a pretty figure? Davitt knows where to have him. He knows that a quiet, moderate, reasonable tone fetches him. Parnell, too, knew that the method with John was a steady, quiet persistence without excitement. John listens to Davitt, and says to himself, 'Now this is a calm, steady fellow. Nothing fly-away about *him*. No shouting and screaming there. This is the kind of man who *must* boss the show. Give him what he wants.'

"Look how Morley was taken in. And so, no doubt, was many another.

"If England trusts the assurances of these men, and if the bill under present conditions becomes law, we shall have two generations of experiment, of corruption, of turmoil, of jobbery such as the British Empire has never seen.

"Yes, I am a Home Ruler—at the proper time. But Home Rule in our present circumstances would mean revolution, and, a hundred to one, the reconquest of Ireland. And in the event of any foreign complication you would have all your work cut out to effect your purpose."

A gentleman from Mallow said, "The Gaelic clubs all over the country are in a high state of organisation, and a perfect state of drill. The splendid force of constabulary which are now for you would be against you. The Irish Legislature, from the first, would have the power to raise a force of Volunteers, and the Irish are such a military nation that in six months they could muster a very formidable force. I am a Unionist, a Protestant too, but I find that my Catholic and Home Rule friends, that is, the superior sort, the best-read, the most thinking men, agree with me perfectly. But while I can understand Irish Home Rulers, even the most extreme sort, I cannot understand any sensible Englishman entertaining such an insane idea. As manager of one of the largest concerns in Cork I have made many visits to England, and I found the supporters of Mr. [98]

Gladstone so utterly misinformed, so credulous, so blankly ignorant of the matter, that I forbore to debate the thing at all. And their assumption was on a level with their ignorance, which is saying a good deal."

Mr. Thomas Manley, the great horse dealer, a famous character throughout the three kingdoms, said to me, "The Limerick horse fair of Thursday last was the worst I ever attended in forty years. There is no money in the country. The little that changed hands was for horses of a common sort, and every one, I do believe, was bought for England and Scotland, tramcar-horses and such like. Home Rule is killing the country already. I farmed a thousand acres of land in Ireland for many a long year, and since I went more fully into the horse-dealing business I kept two hundred and fifty acres going. I have horsed the six crack cavalry regiments of the British army, and I know every nook and corner of Ireland; know, perhaps, every farmer who can breed and rear a horse, and I also know their opinions. Give me the power and I would do four things. Here they are:—

"I would first settle the land question, then reform the poor-laws, then rearrange the Grand Jury laws, then commence to reclaim the land, which would pay ten per cent.

"The Tories should undertake these measures. They would then knock the bottom out of the Home Rule agitation. The people are downright sick of the whole business. They expected to be well off before this. They find themselves going down the nick."

Mr. Abraham P. Keeley said: "There is much fault found with the landlords, but they are by no means so much to blame as is supposed. Put the saddle on the right horse. And the right horse is the steam horse. The rapid transit of grain and general farm produce has lowered the value of land more rapidly than the landlords could lower the rent. Every year the prairie lands of America are further opened up by railways; India and Egypt and Australia are now in the swim, and Ireland, as a purely agricultural country, must suffer. A curious illustration of the purely rural condition of the country was mentioned the other day. Nearly all the great towns drink the water of the rivers upon which they stand. Cork drinks the Lee; Limerick drinks the Shannon; you can catch trout from the busiest quay in Limerick. Now, the towns of England don't drink their own rivers. You don't drink the Rea at Birmingham, I think?"

I was obliged to admit that the pellucid waters of the crystal Rea were not the favourite table beverage of the citizens of Brum, but submitted that Mr. Joseph Malins, the Grand Worthy Chief Templar, and his great and influential following might possibly use this innocent means of dissipation.

Mr. Thomas Manley continued: "The tenant farmer has cried himself up, and the Nationalists have cried him up as the finest, most industrious, most honest, most frugal, most self-sacrificing fellow in the world. But he isn't. Not a bit of it. The landlords and their agents have over and over again been shot for rack-renting when the rents had been forced up by secret competitions among neighbours and even relations. [99]

"Ask any living Irish farmer if I am right, and he will say, Yes, ten times yes.

"The Irishman has a land-hunger such as is unknown over the water. And why? Because the land is his sole means of living. We have no enterprise, no manufactures to speak of. The Celtic nature is to hoard. The Englishman invests what the Irishman would bury in his back garden, or hang up the chimney in an old stocking. So we have no big works all over the country to employ the people. And as we are very prolific, the only remedy is emigration. Down at Queenstown the other day I saw 250 Irish emigrants leaving the country. A Nationalist friend said, 'If they'd only wait a bit till we get Home Rule, they needn't go, the crathurs.' What's to hinder it? How will they be better off? Will the land sustain more with Home Rule than without it? And when capital is driven away, as it must and will be the moment we pass the bill, instead of more factories we'll have less, and England and Scotland will be over-run with thousands of starving Irish folks whose means of living is taken away.

"As an Irish farmer, and an Irish farmer's son, living on Irish farms for more than sixty years, having an intimate acquaintance with the whole of Ireland, and almost every acre of England, I deliberately say that the Irish farmer is much better off than the English, Scotch, or Welsh farmer, not only in the matter of law, but in the matter of soil.

"In many parts of England the soil must be manured after every crop. Every time you take out you must put in. Not so in Ireland. Nature has been so bountiful to us that we can take three, and even six, crops off the land after a single dose of manure. Of course the farmer grumbles, and no wonder. The price of stock and general produce is so depressed that Irish farmers are pinched. But so they are in England. And yet you have no moonlighting. You don't shoot your landlords. If the land will not pay you give it up and take to something else. An Irishman goes on holding, simply refusing to pay rent. His neighbours, who are in the same fix, support him. When the landlord wishes to distrain, after waiting seven years or so, he has to get a decree. The tenants know of it as soon as he, and they set sentinels. When the police are signalled the cattle are driven away and mixed with those of other farmers—every difficulty that Irish cleverness can invent is placed in the way. Then the landlord, whether or not successful in distraining, is boycotted, and the people reckon it a virtue to shoot him down on sight. Conviction is almost, if not quite, impossible, for even if you found a willing witness—a very unlikely thing I can tell you—even then the witness knows himself marked for the same fate. If he went to America or Australia he would be traced, and someone would be found to settle him. Such things have happened over and over again, and people know the risk is great. But about rack-rents. [100]

"I have told you of Irish avariciousness in the matter of land, and have explained the reason of

it. Rents have been forced up by people going behind each other's backs and offering more and more, in their eagerness to acquire the holding outbidding each other. Landlords are human; agents, if possible, still more human. They handed over the land to the highest bidder. What more natural? The farmers are not business men. They offered more than the land could pay. You know the results. But why curse and blaspheme the landlords for what was in many cases their own deliberate act?"

On Friday last I had a small object-lesson in Irish affairs. Colonel O'Callaghan, of Bodyke, went to Limerick to buy cattle for grazing on his estate. The cattle were duly bought, but the gallant Colonel had to drive them through the city with his own right hand. I saw his martial form looming in the rear of a skittish column of cows, and even as the vulture scenteth the carcase afar off, even so, scenting interesting matter, did I swoop down on the unhappy Colonel, startling him severely with my sudden dash. He said, "I'm driving cows now," and, truth to tell, there was no denying it. Even as he spoke, a perverse beast of Nationalist tendencies effected a diversion to the right, plainly intending a charge down Denmark Street, *en route* for Irish Town, and the gallant Colonel waiving ceremony and a formidable shillelagh, hastened by a flank movement to cut off this retreat, and to guide the erring creature in the right way to fresh woods and pastures new. I fired a Parthian arrow after the parting pair. "Appointment?" I shouted, but the Colonel shook his head. It was no time for gentle assignations. The cursed crew in front of him absorbed his faculties, and then he half expected to be shot from any street abutting on his path. Perhaps I may nail him yet. He has been attempting to distrain. If the Colonel refuses to speak I will interview his tenants. I have said I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil—with the readers of the *Gazette*. *Dixi.* I have spoken! There is much shooting on the Bodyke estates, and in Ennis they say that sixty policemen are stationed there to pick up the game. Nobody has been bagged as yet, but the Clare folks are still hoping. To-morrow a trusty steed will bear me to the spot. Relying on a carefully-considered, carefully-studied Nationalist appearance, an anti-landlord look, and a decided No-Rent expression in my left eye, I feel that I could ride through the most dangerous districts with perfect impunity. "Base is the slave that pays," says Ancient Pistol. That is my present motto. One touch of No Rent makes the Irish kin.

The English people should be told that nearly all Irishmen, whether Unionist or otherwise, are strong Protectionists. The moment Home Rule becomes law a tremendous attempt will be made [101] to shut out English goods. "The very first thing we do," said to me an influential Dubliner I met here, "is to double the harbour dues; you can't prevent that, I suppose? The first good result will be the choking-off of all the Scotch and Manx fishermen who infest our seas. At present they bring their fish into Dublin, whence it is sent all over Ireland, competing against Irish fishermen. Then we'll tax all manufactured goods. We will admit the raw material duty-free, but we must be permitted to know what suits us best, and we must, and will, tax flour, but not wheat. We in Ireland, forsooth, must submit to having all our flour mills closed to suit the swarming populations of Manchester and Birmingham. They must have a cheap loaf. Dear me! and so flour comes here untaxed, having given employment to people in America, while our folks are walking about idle. Go down the river Boyne, from Trim to Drogheda. What do you see? Twelve mills, with machinery worth £100,000 or more, lying idle. One of those mills once employed fifty or sixty men. Now it employs none. Tax flour, I say, and so says everybody. We must have Protection, and very stringent Protection. Irish manufacturers must be sustained against English competition. Twenty years ago Dublin was a great place for cabinet work. Now nothing is done there, or next to nothing. Everything must come from London. At the same period we did a great trade in leather. The leather trade is gone to the devil. We did a big turnover in boots and shoes. Now every pair worn in the city comes from Northampton. Ireland and Irish goods for the Irish, and burn everything English but English coals. Give us Home Rule, and all these trades will be restored to us."

Thus spoke the great Home Ruler, who declined to permit his name to appear, as he said it might affect his business. His sentiments are universal, and, as I have said, his opinions are shared by the great majority of Irishmen, even though professedly Unionist.

A word of comment on the patriotic sentiments of my friend. I went to Delany, of George Street, Limerick, for a suit of Blarney tweed. He had not a yard in the place. He was indicated as the leading clothier and outfitter of the city, but the Mahony Mills were not represented amongst his patterns. He had Scotch tweeds, Yorkshire tweeds, West of England tweeds, but although the Blarney tweeds are said to be the best in the world as well as the handsomest, I had to seek them elsewhere. An English friend says, "The Irish politicians are rather inconsistent. They came into this hotel one evening, six of them, red-hot from a Nationalist meeting, cursing England up hill and down dale, till I really felt quite nervous. I hadn't got a Winchester like that. (I hope it won't go off.) They agreed that to boycott English goods was the correct thing, and of course they were for burning all but English coals, when the leader of the gang said, 'Now, boys, what will you drink,' and hang me! if they didn't every one take a bottle of Bass's bitter beer! Did you ever know such inconsistency?"

The quirks and quips of the Irish character would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer. Spinning along [102] the lane to Killaloe, with Mr. Beesley, of Leeds, and Mr. Abraham Keeley, of Mallow, balanced on opposite sides of a jaunting car, we came on a semi-savage specimen of the genuine Irish sort. Semi-savage! he was seven-eighths savage, and semi-lunatic, just clever enough to mind the cows and goats which, with a donkey or two, grazed by the way-side. He might be five-and-twenty, and looked strong and lusty. His naked feet were black with the dirt of his childhood, and not only black, but shining and gleaming in the sun. His tattered trousers were completely worn away to the knee, showing his muscular legs to perfection. The rags that clothed his body were confusing

and indefinite. You could not tell where one garment ended and another began, or whether there were more than one at all. Cover a pump with boiling glue, shake over it a sack of rags, and you will get an approximate effect of his costume. His tawny, matted hair and beard had never known brush, comb, or steel. It was a virgin forest. He scratched his head with the air of the old woman who said "Forty years long have this generation troubled me;" and ran after the car with outstretched hand. I threw him a penny, upon which he threw himself at full length, his tongue hanging out, a greedy sparkle in his eye. My Irish friend instantly stopped the car.

"Now I'll show you something. This man is more than half an idiot, but watch him." Then he cried:

"Come here, now, I'll toss you for the penny."

The man came quickly forward.

"Now then, put down your penny, and call. What is it? Head or harp, speak while it spins!"

"Head," shouted the savage, and head it was.

He picked up the second penny with glee, and said with a burst of wild laughter. "Toss more, more, more; toss ever an' always; toss agin, agin, agin."

The car-driver was disgusted. "Bad luck to ye for a madman. Ye have the gamblin' blood in ye. Bedad, ye'd break Monty Carly, ye would."

Then looking at the gambler's black and polished feet, he said:—

"Tell me, now, honey, is it Day an' Martin's ye use?"

Ennis (Co. Clare), April 29th.

No. 16.—CIVIL WAR IN COUNTY CLARE.

ToC

The name of Bodyke is famous throughout all lands, but few people know anything about the place or the particulars of the great dispute. The whole district is at present in a state of complete lawlessness. The condition of matters is almost incredible, and is such as might possibly be expected in the heart of Africa, but hardly in a civilised country, especially when that country is under the benignant British rule. The law-breakers seem [103] to have the upper hand, and to be almost, if not quite, masters of the situation. The whole estate is divided into three properties, Fort Ann, Milltown, and Bodyke, about five thousand acres in all, of which the first two comprise about one thousand five hundred acres, isolated from the Bodyke lands, which latter may amount to some three thousand five hundred acres. Either by reason of their superior honesty, or, as is sometimes suggested, on account of their inferior strategic position, the tenants of the Fort Ann and Milltown lands pay their rent. The men of Bodyke are in a state of open rebellion, and resist every process of law both by evasion and open force. The hill-tops are manned by sentries armed with rifles. Bivouac fires blaze nightly on every commanding eminence. Colonel O'Callaghan's agent is a cock-shot from every convenient mound. His rides are made musical by the 'ping' of rifle balls, and nothing but the dread of his repeating rifle, with which he is known to be handy, prevents the marksmen from coming to close quarters. Mr. Stannard MacAdam seems to bear a charmed life. He is a fine athletic young man, calm and collected, modest and unassuming, and, as he declares, no talker. He has been described as a man of deeds, not words. He said, "I am not a literary man. I have not the skill to describe incident, or to give a clear and detailed account of what has taken place. I have refused to give information to the local journalists. My business is to manage the estate, and that takes me all my time. You must get particulars elsewhere. I would rather not speak of my own affairs or those of Colonel O'Callaghan."

There was nothing for it but to turn my unwilling back on this veritable gold mine. But although Mr. MacAdam could not or would not speak, others were not so reticent, and once in the neighbourhood the state of things was made plainly evident. The road from Ennis to Bodyke is dull and dreary, and abounds with painful memories. Half-an-hour out you reach the house, or what remains of it, of Francis Hynes, who was hanged for shooting a man. A little further and you reach the place where Mr. Perry was shot. A wooded spot, "convaynient" for ambush, once screened some would-be murderers who missed their mark. Then comes the house of the Misses Brown, in which on Christmas Eve shots were fired, by way of celebrating the festive season. From a clump of trees some four hundred yards from the road the police on a car were fired upon, the horse being shot dead in his tracks. The tenantry of this sweet district are keeping up their rifle practice, and competent judges say that the Bodyke men possess not less than fifty rifles, none of which can be found by the police. Said one of the constabulary, "They lack nerve to fire from shorter distances, as they think MacAdam is the better shot, and to miss him would be risky, as he is known to shoot rabbits with ball cartridge. At the same time, I remember Burke of [104]

Loughrea, who was shot, had also a fine reputation as a rifleman, but they settled him neatly enough. I saw him in the Railway Inn, Athenry, just before he was killed, with a repeating rifle slung on his back and a revolver on his hip. I saw him ride away, his servant driving while Burke kept the cocked rifle ready, the butt under his armpit, the trigger in his hand. He sat with his back to the horse, keeping a good look-out, and yet they shot both him and his servant as they galloped along. The horse and car came in without them. To carry arms is therefore not a complete security, though no doubt it is, to some extent, a deterrent. But my opinion is that when a man is ordered to be shot he will be shot. Clare swarms with secret societies, and you never know from one moment to another what resolutions they will pass. I don't know what the end of it will be, but I should think that Home Rule, by giving the murderers a fancied security, would in this district lead to wholesale bloodshed. The whole country would rise, as they do now, to meet the landlord or his agent, but they would then do murder without the smallest hesitation."

His companion said—the police here are never alone—"The first thing Morley did was to rescind the Crimes Act. When we heard of that we said 'Now it's coming.' And we've got it. Every man with a head on him, and not a turnip, knew very well what would happen. The police are shot at till they take no notice of it. Sometimes we charge up the hills to the spot where the firing started, but among the rocks and ravines and hills and holes they run like rabbits, or they hand their arms to some fleet-footed chap to hide, while they stay—aye, they do, they actually stand their ground till we come, and there they are working at a hedge or digging the ground, and looking as innocent and stupid as possible. They never saw anybody, and never heard any firing—or they thought it was the Colonel shooting a hare. We hardly know what to do in doubtful cases, as we know the tenants have the support of the Government, and it is as much as our places are worth to make any mistake under present circumstances. The tenants know that too, so between them and Morley we feel between two fires."

The trouble has been alive for fifteen years or so, but it was not until 1887 that Bodyke became a regularly historic place. The tenants had paid no rent for years, and wholesale evictions were tried, but without effect. The people walked in again the next day, and as the gallant Colonel had not an army division at his back he was obliged to confess himself beaten at every point. He went in for arbitration, but before giving details let us first take a bird's eye view of his position. I will endeavour to state the case as fairly as possible, premising that nothing will be given beyond what is freely admitted by both parties to the dispute.

The Colonel, who is a powerfully-built, bronzed, and active man, seemingly over sixty years old, left the service just forty years ago. Four years before that his father had died, heavily in debt, leaving the estate encumbered by a mortgage, a jointure to the relict, Mrs. O'Callaghan, now [105]
deceased (the said jointure being at that time several years in arrear), a head rent of a hundred guineas a year to Colonel Patterson, with taxes, tithe rent-charges, and heaven knows what besides. In 1846 and 1847 his father had made considerable reductions in the rents of the Bodyke holdings, but the tenants had contrived to fall into arrears to the respectable tune of £6,000, or thereabouts. Such was the state of things when the heir came into his happy possessions.

A Protestant clergyman said to me—"Land in Ireland is like self-righteousness. The more you have, the worse off you are." Thus was it at Bodyke.

Something had to be done. To ask the tenants for the £6,000 was mere waste of breath. The young soldier had no agent. He was determined to be the people's friend. Although a Black Protestant, he was ambitious of Catholic good-will. He wanted to have the tenants blessing him. He coveted the good name which is better than rubies. He wished to make things comfortable, to be a general benefactor of his species; if a Protestant landlord and a Roman Catholic tenantry can be said to be of the same species at all, a point which, according to the Nationalist press, is at least doubtful. He called the tenants together, and agreed to accept three hundred pounds for the six thousand pounds legally due, so as to make a fresh start and encourage the people to walk in the paths of righteousness. When times began to mend, the Colonel himself a farmer, commenced to raise the rents until they reached the amount paid during his father's reign. The people stood it quietly enough until 1879, when the Colonel appointed agents. This year was one of agricultural depression. A Mr. Willis succeeded the two first agents, but during the troubles he resigned his charge. The popular opinion leans to the supposition that his administration was ineffective, that is, that he was comparatively unused to field strategy, that he lacked dash and military resource, and that he entertained a constitutional objection to being shot. The rents came under the judicial arrangement, and reductions were made. Still things would not work smoothly, and it was agreed that bad years should be further considered on rent days. This agreement led to reductions on the judicial rent of 25 to 30 per cent., besides which the Colonel, in the arbitration of 1887, had accepted £1,000 in lieu of several thousand pounds of arrears then due. After November, 1891, the tenants ceased to pay rent at all, and that is practically their present position. The Colonel, who being himself an experienced farmer is a competent judge of agricultural affairs, thinks the tenants are able to pay, and even believes that they are willing, were it not for the intimidation of half-a-score village ruffians whose threatened moonlighting exploits, when considered in conjunction with the bloody deeds which have characterised the district up to recent times, are sufficient to paralyse the whole force of the British Empire, when that force is directed by the feeble fumblers now in office.

That they can pay if they will, is clearly proved by recent occurrences. Let us abandon ancient [106]
history and bring our story down to date. The number of incidents is so great, and the complications arising from local customs and prejudices are so bewildering that only after much inquiry have I been able to sort from the tangled web a few clear and understandable instances,

which, however, may be taken as a fair sample of the whole.

New brooms sweep clean. The new agent, Mr. MacAdam, began to negotiate. Pow-wows and palavers all ended in smoke, and as meanwhile the charges on the estate were going on merrily, and no money was coming in to meet them, writs were issued against six of the best-off farmers; writs, not decrees, the writ being a more effective instrument. One Malone was evicted. He was a married man, without encumbrances, owed several years' arrears, had mismanaged his farm, a really good bit of land, had been forgiven a lot of rent, and still he was not happy. A relative had lent him nearly £200 to carry on, but Malone was a bottomless pit. What he required was a gold mine and a man to shovel up the ore, but unhappily no such thing existed on the farm. The relative offered to take the land, believing that he could soon recoup himself the loan, but Malone held on with iron grip, refusing to listen to the voice of the charmer, charmed he never so wisely. The relative wished to take the place at the judicial rent, and offered to give Malone the house, grass for a cow, and the use of three acres of land. Malone declined to make any change, and as a last resort it was decided to evict him. On the auspicious day MacAdam arrived from Limerick, accompanied by two men from Dublin, whom he proposed to instal as caretakers in Malone's house. The Sheriff's party were late, and MacAdam, waiting at some distance, was discovered and the alarm given. Horns were blown, the chapel bell was rung, the whole country turned out in force. Anticipating seizure, the people drove away their cattle, and shortly no hoof nor horn was visible in the district. A crowd collected and, observing the caretakers, at once divined their mission, and perceived that not seizure, but eviction, was the order of the day. They rushed to Malone's house, and, with his consent and assistance, tore off the roof, smashed the windows, and demolished the doors. The place was thus rendered uninhabitable.

This having been happily effected, the Sheriff's party arrived an hour or so late, in the Irish fashion. Possession was formally given to the agent, who was now free to revel in the four bare walls, and to enjoy the highly-ventilated condition of the building. The crowd became more and more threatening, and if they could have mustered pluck to run in on the loaded rifles, Sheriff, agent, and escort must have been murdered without mercy. The shouting and threatening were heard two miles away. But the tenants had taken other measures. A firing party was posted on a neighbouring hill, and as the Sheriff left the shelter of the walls a volley was poured in from a [107] clump of trees four hundred yards away, one bullet narrowly missing a man who ducked at the flash. The riflemen were visible among the trees, and the Sheriff returned the fire. Several policemen also fired into the clump, but without effect, and their fire was briskly returned from the hill, this time just missing the head of a policeman covered by a bush, a bullet cutting off a branch close to his ear. The police then prepared to charge up the hill, when the firing party decamped. No arrests were made, although the marksmen must have been dwellers in the neighbourhood. A policeman said, "We know who they are; you can't conceal these things in a country place; but we have no legal evidence, and although we saw them at four hundred yards, who will accept our identification at such a distance? And of course no jury would convict. We have no remedy in this unfortunate country. So long as Gladstone and such folks are bidding for the people's votes so long we shall have lawlessness. But for the change of Government all would long have been settled amicably. But I heard a young priest say to the people, 'Hold on a bit till the new Government goes in.'"

To return to the Malone affair, Mr. MacAdam applied to the police for resident protection not for himself, but for the caretakers, whom he now proposed to instal in a farmhouse in the occupation of one of the Colonel's servants, and from which no one had been evicted. The authorities refused protection on the very remarkable plea that the situation of the aforesaid premises was so dangerous! so that had the place been quite safe, they would have consented to protect it. MacAdam determined to carry out his plan, with or without protection. He left Limerick at midnight with an ammunition and provision train of seven cars, with two caretakers and four workmen, with materials to fortify the place. He had previously given the authorities notice that he meant to occupy Knockclare, the house in question, and before he started they sent a police-sergeant from Tulla, a twenty miles drive, to formally warn him off, for that his life would assuredly be taken, and the officer also demanded that he should be permitted to personally warn the caretakers of the risk they ran. This was granted, but the men stuck to their guns. At the eviction a man had funked, frightened out of his seven senses. The police declined all responsibility, but offered to guard the farm for a shilling per man per day. MacAdam thought this proposal without precedent, and left the police to their own devices, driving along the twenty miles of hilly road, with sorry steeds that refused the last hill, so that the loads had to be pushed and carried up by the men. This was at eight or nine in the morning, after many hours' toilsome march. The fun was not over yet. Like the penny show, it was "just a-goin' to begin."

The crowd turned out and with awful threats of instant death menaced the lives of the party, who, with levelled rifles, at last gained the building. The people brought boards, and showed the caretakers their coffins in the rough. They spoke of shooting, and swore they would roast them [108] alive that night by burning the house in which they were sheltered. A shot was fired at MacAdam. A sergeant with one man arrived from Tulla police-barracks and urged the party to leave before they were murdered. MacAdam would hold his post at all risks. Later eight armed policemen arrived, and then two carmen started to go home. A wall of stones blocked the road. They somehow got over that, and found a second wall a little further on. Here was a menacing crowd, and the police who followed the car drew their revolvers, and with great determination advanced on the mob, saving the carmen's lives, for which they were publicly praised from the Bench. But the jarveys returned, and by a circuitous route reached Limerick viâ Killaloe, thanking Heaven for their whole skins, and vowing never to so risk them again. The County Inspector who refused the party police protection explained that he did so "out of regard for the safety of his men." He

said, "I had more than Mr. MacAdam and his party to consider. I must preserve the lives of the men in my charge."

At present the two caretakers hold the citadel, which is also garrisoned by a force of sixteen policemen regularly relieved by day and by night, every man armed to the teeth. Now and then the foinest pisintry in the wuruld turn out to the neighbouring hills and blaze away with rifles at the doors and windows of the little barn-like structure. The marksmen want a competent instructor. Anyone who knows anything of shooting knows the high art and scientific knowledge required for long-range rifle practice. These men are willing, but they lack science. Knowledge to their eyes her ample page, Rich with the spoils of time, has ne'er unrolled. Mr. Gladstone might bring over from the Transvaal a number of the Boers whose shooting impressed him so much to coach these humble Kelts in the mysteries of rifle shooting. Such a measure would perceptibly accelerate the passage of the Home Rule Bill.

Such is the state of things in Bodyke at this moment. Colonel O'Callaghan has had no penny of rent for years—that is, nothing for himself. What has been paid by the tenants of Fort Ann and Milltown has been barely sufficient to meet the charges on the estate. The Colonel thinks that the more he concedes the more his people want. He has had many narrow escapes from shooting, and rather expects to be bagged at last. He seems to be constitutionally unconscious of fear, but the police, against his wish, watch over him. In the few instances in which Mr. MacAdam, his agent, has effected seizures, the people have immediately paid up—have simply walked into their houses, brought out the money, and planked down the rent with all expenses, the latter amounting to some 20 or 25 per cent. They *can* pay. The Colonel, who lives by farming, having no other source of income, knows their respective positions exactly, and declines to be humbugged. The tenants believe that they will shortly have the land for nothing, and they are content to [109] remain in a state of siege, themselves beleaguering the investing force, lodged in the centre of the position. The fields are desolate, tillage is suspended, and the whole of the cattle are driven out of sight. Armed men watch each other by night and by day, and bloodshed may take place at any moment. The farming operations of the whole region are disorganised and out of joint. Six men have been arrested for threats and violence, but all were discharged—the jury would not convict, although the judge said the evidence for the defence was of itself sufficient to convict the gang. A ruffian sprang on MacAdam with an open knife, swearing he would disembowel him. After a terrible struggle the man was disarmed and secured, brought up before the beak, and the offence proved to the hilt. This gentleman was dismissed without a stain on his character. MacAdam asked that he should at least be bound over to keep the peace. This small boon was refused. Comment is needless. How long are the English people going to stand this Morley-Gladstone management?

I have not yet been able to interview Colonel O'Callaghan himself, but my information, backed by my own observation, may be relied on as accurate. The carman who drove me hither said "The Bodyke boys are dacent fellows, but they must have their sport. Tis their nature to be shootin' folks, an' ye can't find fault with a snipe for havin' a long bill. An' they murther ye in sich a tinder-hearted way that no raisonable landlord could have any objection to it."

I have the honour of again remarking that Ireland is a wonderful country.

Bodyke (Co. Clare), May 2nd.

No. 17.—RENT AT THE ROOT OF NATIONALISM.

ToC

The tenants of the Bodyke property stigmatise Colonel O'Callaghan as the worst landlord in the world, and declare themselves totally unable to pay the rent demanded, and even in some cases say that they cannot pay any rent at all, a statement which is effectually contradicted by the fact that most of them pay up when fairly out-generalled by the dashing strategy of Mr. Stannard MacAdam, whose experience as a racing bicyclist seems to have stood him in good stead. The country about Bodyke has an unfertile look, a stony, boggy, barren appearance. Here and there are patches of tolerable land, but the district cannot fairly be called a garden of Eden. Being desirous of hearing both sides of the question, I have conversed with several of the complaining farmers, most of whom have very small holdings, if their size be reckoned by the rent demanded. The farmers' homes are not [110] luxurious, but the rural standard of luxury is in Ireland everywhere far below that of the English cottar, who would hold up his hands in dismay if required to accommodate himself to such surroundings. Briefly stated, the case of the tenants is based on an alleged agreement on the part of Colonel O'Callaghan to make a reduction of twenty-five per cent. on judicial rents and thirty-seven and a half per cent. on non-judicial rents, whenever the farming season proved unfavourable. This was duly carried out until 1891, when the question arose as to whether that was or was not a bad year. The tenants say that 1891 was abnormally bad for them, but that on

attending to pay their rent, believing that the reductions which had formerly been made, and which they had come to regard as invariable, would again take place, they were told that the customary rebate would now cease and determine, and that therefore they were expected to pay their rents in full. This they profess to regard as a flagrant breach of faith, and they at once decided to pay no rent at all. The position became a deadlock, and such it still remains. They affect to believe that the last agent, Mr. Willis, resigned his post out of sheer sympathy, and not because he feared sudden translation to a brighter sphere. They complain that the Colonel's stables are too handsome, and that they themselves live in cabins less luxurious than the lodgings of the landlord's horses. There is no epithet too strong to express their indignation against the devoted Colonel, who was described by one imaginative peasant, who had worked himself up to a sort of descriptive convulsion, as a "Rawhacious Vagabone," a fine instance of extemporaneous word-coining of the ideo-phonetic school, which will doubtless be greedily accepted by Nationalist Parliamentarians who, long ago, exhausted their vocabulary of expletives in dealing with Mr. Gladstone and each other.

The Bodykers have one leading idea, to "wait yet awhile." Home Rule will banish the landlords, and give the people the land for nothing at all. The peasantry are mostly fine-grown men, well-built and well-nourished, bearing no external trace of the hardships they claim to have endured. They are civil and obliging, and thoroughly inured to the interviewer. They have a peculiar accent, of a sing-song character, which now and then threatens to break down the stranger's gravity. That the present state of things is intolerable, and cannot last much longer, they freely admit, but they claim to have the tacit sympathy of the present Government, and gleefully relate with what unwillingness police protection was granted to the agent and his men. They disclaim any intention of shooting or otherwise murdering the landlord or his officers, and assert that the fact that they still live is sufficient evidence in this direction. Said one white-headed man of gentle, deferential manner:—

"The days o' landlord shootin' is gone by. If the Boys wanted to shoot the Colonel what's to hinder them? Would his double-barrel protect him, or the four dogs he has about him, that he sends sniffin' an' growlin' about the threes an' ditches. If the word wint out he wouldn't live a [111] day, nor his agint nayther. An' his durty emergency men, that's posted like spies at the house beyant, could be potted any time they showed their noses. An' couldn't we starve thim out? Couldn't we cut off their provisions? Why would we commit murther whin we have only to wait till things turn round, which wid the help of God will be afore long. We're harassed an' troubled, always pullin' the divil by the tail, but that won't last for ever. We'll have our own men, that ondershtands Oireland, to put us right, an' then O'Callaghan an' all his durty thribe'll be fired out of the counthry before ye can say black's the white o' my eye; an' black curses go wid thim."

The caretakers are not accessible. Stringent orders forbid the giving of information to any person whatever. This is unfortunate, as a look at their diaries would prove amusing. They must feel like rabbits living in a burrow bored in a sporting district, or the man in the iron mask, or the late respected Damocles, or the gentleman who saw the handwriting on the wall. Their sleep must be troubled. They must have ugly dreams of treasons, stratagems, and spoils, and when they wake, swearing a prayer or two, they doubtless see through the gloom, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN (I quote from memory), in lurid letters on the ceiling of their stronghold. Their waking visions and their daily talk must be of guns and pikes, of graves and coffins, shrouds and skeletons. Perhaps they, like Mr. MacAdam and some others, have received missives sprinkled with blood, and ornamented with skulls and cross-bones, those famous national emblems which the Irish tenant sketches with a rude, untutored art; bold, freehand drawings, done in gore by hereditary instinct. It may be that they see the newspapers, that they learn how the other day the house of a caretaker at Tipperary was, by incendiaries, burned to the ground, the poor fellow at the time suffering from lockjaw, taking his food with difficulty, owing to his having some time previously been shot through the face. Or they may read of the shooting case at Castleisland, and how Mr. Magilicuddy suggests that such cases be made public, that the people may know something of the present lawlessness of the country, or of the narrow squeak of Mr. Walshe, a schoolmaster, living just outside Ennis, who barely escaped with his life from two bullets, fired at him, because his wife had been appointed mistress of the girls; or the sad affair of Mr. Blood of the same district, who being an admittedly kind and amiable man, is compelled to be always under the escort of four armed policemen for that he did discharge a herdman without first asking permission from the local patriots. Or they may meditate on the fate of the old man near Clonmel, who was so beaten that he has since died, his daughter, who might have aided him, having first been fastened in her room. These and a hundred similar instances of outrage and attempted murder have crept into print during the last few days. Red ruin and the breaking-up of laws herald the Home Rule Bill. And if the premonitory symptoms be thus severe, how shall we [112] doctor the disease itself?

The other day I stumbled on Mr. Lynn, of Dublin, whom I first met at the Queen's Hotel, Portadown, County Armagh. He said, "We ought to know what the Home Rule Bill will do. We know the materials of which the dish is composed, we have seen their preparation and mixing, we now have the process of cooking before us, and when we get it it will give us indigestion."

The Bodykers have a new grievance, one of most recent date. They had found a delightful means of evasion, which for a time worked well, but the bottom has been knocked out of it, and their legal knowledge has proved of no avail. To pay rent whenever a seizure was effected was voted a bore, a calamitous abandonment of principle, and a loss of money which might be better applied. So that when MacAdam made his latest seizures, say on the land of Brown and Jones, these out-manœuvred tenants brought forward friends named Smith and Robinson who deeply

swore and filed affidavits to the effect that the cattle so seized belonged to them, Smith and Robinson to wit, and not to the afore-mentioned Brown and Jones, on whose land they were found. Here was a pretty kettle of fish. Colonel O'Callaghan, or his agent, were processed for illegal distraint, and the evidence being dead against the landlord, that fell tyrant had on several occasions to disgorge his prey, whereat there was great rejoicing in Bodyke. The new agent, however, is a tough customer, and in his quality of Clerk of Petty Sessions dabbles in legal lore. He found an Act which provides that, after due formalities, distraint may be made on any cattle found on the land in respect of which rent is due, no matter to whom the said cattle may belong. The tenants are said to have been arranging an amicable interchange of grazing land, the cows of Smith feeding on the land of Brown, and *vice versâ*, so that the affidavit agreement might have some colour of decency. The ancient Act discovered by the ardent MacAdam has rendered null and void this proposed fraternal reciprocity, and the order to conceal every hoof and horn pending discovery of the right answer to this last atrocity has been punctually obeyed, the local papers slanging landlord and agent, but seemingly unable to find the proper countermine. No end of details and of incident might be given, but no substantial increase could be made to the information, given in this and my preceding letter. The tenants say that the landlord perversely refuses the reductions allowed in better times, and the landlord says that as a practical farmer he believes that those upon whom he has distrained or attempted to distrain are able to pay in full. He declares that he has not proceeded against those who from any cause are unable to meet their obligations, but only against the well-to-do men, who, having the money in hand, are deliberately withholding his just and reasonable due, taking advantage of the disturbed state of the country and the weakness of the Government to benefit themselves, regardless of the suffering their selfishness entails on innocent people.

In striking contrast to the turbulence of the Bodyke men is the peaceful calm of the [113]
Castleconnel people. I have had several pleasant interviews with Lady de Burgho, whose territory embraces some sixty thousand acres, and who, during a widowed life of twenty-two years, has borne the stress and strain of Irish estate administration, with its eternal and wearisome chopping and changing of law, its labyrinthine complications, its killing responsibilities. Lady de Burgho is, after all, very far from dead, exhibiting in fact a marvellous vitality, and discoursing of the ins and outs of the various harassing Land Acts, and the astute diplomacy needful to save something from the wreck, with a light, airy vivacity, and a rich native humour irresistibly charming. The recital of her troubles, losses, and burdens, the dodgery and trickery of legal luminaries, and the total extinction of rent profits is delivered with an easy grace, and with the colour and effervescence of sparkling Burgundy. To be deprived of nine-tenths of your income seems remarkably good fun; to be ruined, an enviable kind of thing. Lady de Burgho commenced her reign with one fixed principle, from which nothing has ever induced her to deviate. Under no conceivable circumstances would she allow eviction. No agent could induce her to sign a writ. "I could not sleep if I had turned out an Irish family," says Lady de Burgho, adding, with great sagacity, "and besides eviction never does any good." So that this amiable lady has the affections of her people, if she handles not their cash. And who shall estimate the heart's pure feelings? Saith not the wisest of men that a good report maketh the bones fat? Is not the goodwill of the foinest pisintry in the wuruld more to be desired than much fine gold? Is it not sweeter also than honey or the honeycomb?

Certain mortgagees who wished to appropriate certain lands offered liberal terms to Lady de Burgho on condition that she would for three years absent herself from Ireland, holding no communication with her tenants during that period. Lady de Burgho objected. She said, "If I accepted your terms my people on my return would believe, and they would be justified in believing, that I had been for three years incarcerated in a lunatic asylum." Tableau! Three American gentlemen visiting Castleconnel told Lady de Burgho that the success of the present agitation in favour of Home Rule would be the first step towards making Ireland an American dependency, a pronouncement which is not without substantial foundation. The feeling of the masses is towards America, and away from England. To the New World, where are more Irish than in Ireland (so they say) the poorer classes look with steadfast eye. To them America is the chief end of man, the earthly Paradise, the promised land, the El Dorado, a heaven upon earth. Every able-bodied man is saving up to pay his passage, every good-looking girl is anxious to give herself a better chance in the States. Nearly all have relatives to give them a start, and glowing letters from fortunate emigrants are the theme of every village. The effect of these epistles is [114]
obvious enough. Home Rule, say the Nationalists, will stop emigration. That this is with them a matter of hope, or pious belief, is made clear by their conversation. They give no good reason for their faith. They are cornered with consummate ease. The plausibilities gorged by Gladstonian gulls do not go down in Ireland. They are not offered to Irishmen. "Made in Ireland for English gabies" should be branded upon them. The most convincing arguments against the bill are those adduced by Home Rulers in its favour. Here is a faithful statement of reasons for Home Rule, as given by Alderman Downing, of Limerick, and another gentleman then present whose name I know not:—

"When you allow the Irish Legislature to frame its own laws, disorder and outrage will be put down with an iron hand. We have no law at present. Put an Irish Parliament in Dublin, and we would arrange to hang up moonlighters to the nearest tree. Everybody would support the law if imposed from Dublin. They resent it as imposed by Englishmen in London."

"I am not in favour of handing over the government of Ireland to the present leaders of the Irish party. I believe that, once granted Home Rule, they would disappear into private life, and that we should replace them by better men. What reason for believing this? Oh, I think the people would begin to feel their responsibility. Do I think the idea of 'responsibility' is their leading idea?

Perhaps not at this moment, but they will improve. You think that the people may be fairly expected to return the same class of men? Perhaps so. I hope not. I should think they would see the necessity of sending men of position and property. Why don't they send them now? Simply because they won't come forward; that class of men do not believe in Home Rule."

I humbly submitted that this would prevent their coming forward in future, and that if Home Rule were admittedly bad under the present leaders, there was really no case to go to a jury, as there was no evidence before the court to show that the leaders would be dropped. On the contrary, there was every probability that the victorious promoters of the bill would be returned by acclamation. Further, that if Home Rule be gladly accepted as a pearl of great price, to drop the gainers thereof, to dismiss the men who had borne the burden and heat of the day, would be an act of shabbiness unworthy the proverbial gratitude and generosity of the Irish people.

Alderman Downing would only exclude them from Parliamentary place, and would not exclude all even then. The bulk of them might be found some sort of situation where decent salaries would atone for the dropping. Would that be jobbery? "Ah, you ask too many questions."

Let it be noted that although the greater part of the Irish Nationalist members are everywhere rejected beforehand by superior Home Rulers, as unfit for an Irish Parliament, they are [115] apparently for that very reason sent to the House of Commons as the best sort to tease the brutal Saxon. The bulldog is not the noblest, nor the handsomest, nor the swiftest, nor the most faithful, nor the most sagacious, nor the most pleasant companion of the canine world, but he is a good 'un to hang on the nose of the bull.

The Great Unknown said:

"You must admit that English Rule has not been a success. Home Rule is admittedly an experiment—well, yes, I will accept the word risk—Home Rule is admittedly, to some extent, a risk, but let us try it. And if the worst comes to the worst we can go back again to the old arrangement."

The speaker was a kindly gentleman of sixty or sixty-five years, and, like Alderman Downing, spoke in a reasonable, moderate tone. Doubtless both are excellent citizens, men of considerable position and influence, certainly very pleasant companions, and, to all appearance, well-read, well-informed men. And yet, in the presence of Unionist Irishmen, the above-mentioned arguments were all they ventured to offer. Arguments, quotha? Is the hope that the ignorant peasantry of Ireland will return "the better class of men," who "do not believe in Home Rule" an argument? Is the as-you-were assertion an argument? What would the Irish say if Mr. Bull suggested this movement of retrogression? We should have Father Hayes, the friend of Father Humphreys, again calling for "dynamite, for the lightnings of heaven and the fires of hell, to pulverise every British cur into top-dressing for the soil." We should have Father Humphreys himself writing ill-spelt letters to the press, and denouncing all liars as poachers on his own preserves. We should have Dillon and O'Brien and their crew again leading their ignorant countrymen to the treadmill, while the true culprits stalked the streets wearing lemon-coloured kid gloves purchased with the hard-earned and slowly-accumulated cents of Irish-American slaveys. The Protestants would be denounced as the blackest, cruellest, most callous slave-drivers on God's earth. And this reminds me of something.

Doctor O'Shaughnessy, of Limerick, is the most wonderful man in Ireland. His diploma was duly secured in 1826, and Daniel O'Connell was his most intimate friend, and also his patient. The Doctor lived long in London, and was a regular attendant at the House of Commons up to 1832. Twice he fought Limerick for his son, and twice he won easily. The city is now represented by Mr. O'Keefe, and Mr. O'Shaughnessy is a Commissioner of the Board of Works in Dublin. The Doctor has conferred with Earl Spencer on grave and weighty matters, and doubtless his opinion on Irish questions is of greatest value. His pupil and his fellow-student, Dr. Kidd and Dr. Quain (I forget which is which), met at the bedside of Lord Beaconsfield, and medical men admit the doctor's professional eminence. His eighty-four years sit lightly upon him. He looks no more than fifty at [116] most, is straight as a reed, active as a hare, runs upstairs like a boy of fourteen, has the clear blue eye and fresh rosy skin of a young man. He would give the Grand Old Man fifty in a hundred and beat him out of his boots. He might be Mr. Gladstone's son, if he were only fond of jam. The Doctor said several hundred good things which I would like to print, but as our many conferences were unofficial this would be hardly fair. However, I feel sure Doctor O'Shaughnessy will forgive my repeating one statement of his—premising that the Doctor is a devout Catholic, and that he knows all about land.

"The Protestants are not the worst landlords. The hardest men, the most unyielding men the tenants have to meet are the Roman Catholic landlords, the new men."

Here is some food for thought. These few words, properly considered, cover much ground. The Doctor is a Home Ruler, an ardent lover of his country, one of the best of the many high-minded men I have met in Ireland. Were such as he in the forefront of the battle, John Bull might hand the Irish a blank cheque. The consciousness of trust is of all things most binding on men of integrity. But for Mr. Gladstone to hand the honour of England to Horsewhipped Healy and Breeches O'Brien, showing his confidence in them by permitting it to be taken round the corner—that is a different thing. I forgot to mention a remarkable feature in the history of Limerick City, a parallel of which is found in the apocryphal castle in England for which the unique distinction is claimed that Queen Elizabeth never slept there. And so far as I can learn, Tim Healy has not yet been horsewhipped in Limerick.

Bodyke (Co. Clare), May 2nd.

No. 18.—HARD FACTS FOR ENGLISH READERS.

ToC

Gort is a quiet wayside country town about forty miles from Limerick, a little oasis of trees and flowers, with a clear winding trout-stream running all about it. The streets are wide, the houses well-built, the pavements kerbed and in good condition. Trees are bigger and more numerous than usual, and the place has a generally bowery appearance such as is uncommon in Ireland, which is not famous for its timber. Trees are in many parts the grand desideratum, the one thing needful to perfect the beauty of the scenery, but Ireland as compared with England, France, Holland, Belgium, or Germany may almost be called a treeless country. Strange to say, the Home Rule Bill, which affects everything, threatens to deprive the country of its few remaining trees. A Scotsman resident thirteen years in Ireland said to me:—

"The timber you see lying there is not American, but Irish. The people who have timber are in [117] many cases cutting it down, because they foresee a state of general insecurity and depression, and they need all the cash they can command. But there is another reason for the deforesting of the country, which is—that if Home Rule becomes law, the landowners are disposed to believe that no allowance will be made for the timber which may be on the land when the land is sold to the tenant under some unknown Act to be passed at some future day." This fits into the point raised by a tenant farmer living just outside the town, an extraordinary character said to rise at seven o'clock in the morning. He said:—

"They say the farmer is to get the land—but what then? Somebody must own the land, and whoever has it will be reckoned a bloody tyrant. Won't the owner be a landlord? No, say they, no more landlords at all, at all. But isn't that nonsense, says I? If ye split up the land into patches as big as yer hand and give every man a patch, wouldn't some men have twenty or a hundred, or maybe a thousand patches in five years? An' thin, thim that was lazy an' wasteful an' got out o' their land would be for shootin' the savin', sthrivin' man that worked his way up by buying out the drones. For wouldn't he be a landlord the moment he stopped workin' all the land himself. An' that would be sure to happen at wanst. Lord Gough is landlord here, an' ye'll not better him in Ireland. Look at the town there—all built of stone an' paved, wid a fine public well in the square, an' a weigh-house, an' the groves of lilac an' laburnums all out in flower an' dippin' in the wather; where ye may catch mighty fine trout out iv yer bedroom window, bedad ye may, or out of yer kitchin, an' draw them out iv the wather an' dhrop thim in' the fryin' pan off the hook with the bait in their mouths, an' their tails waggin', finishing their brakefasts thimselves while they get yours ready! Throth ye can. None iv us that has any sinse belaves in Home Rule. 'Tis only the ignorant that'll belave anything. No, we're quiet hereabouts, never shot anybody, an' not likely to. Yes, the Protestant Church is iligant enough, but there's very few Protestants hereabouts. It's the gentry an' most respectable folks that's Protestants. Protestants gets on because they kape their shops cleaner, an' has more taste, an' we'd sooner belave thim an' thrust thim that they'd kape their word an' not chate ye, than our own people. Yes, 'tis indeed quare, but it's thrue. The very priests won't deny it. An' another thing they wouldn't deny. The murtherin', sweatin' landlords that'll grind the very soul out of ye—who are they? Tell me now. Just the small men that have got up out of the muck. 'Tisn't the gintry at all. The gintry will wait a year, three years, five years, seven years for rint. The man that bought his farm or two wid borrowed money won't wait a day. 'Out ye go, an' bloody end to ye,' says he. Ye don't hear of thim evictions. The man that sint it to the paper would get bate—or worse.

"An' some of the little houldhers says, 'Pat,' says they, 'what'll we do wid the money whin we've [118] no taxes to pay?' 'Tis what they're tould, the crathurs. God help them, but they're mighty ignorant."

Those who ridicule the assertions of Protestants and Catholic Unionists with reference to the lack of liberty may explain away what was told me by Mr. J.B. Barrington, brother of Sir Charles Barrington, a name of might in Mid-Ireland. He said, "Someone in our neighbourhood went about getting signatures to a petition against the Home Rule Bill. Among others who signed it was Captain Croker's carpenter, who since then has been waylaid and severely beaten. Another case occurring in the same district was even harder. A poor fellow has undergone a very severe thrashing with sticks for having signed the bill when, as a matter of fact, he had refused to sign it! Wasn't that hard lines? Both these men know their assailants, but they will not tell. They think it better to bear those ills they have than fly to others that they know not of. They are quite right, for, as it is, they know the end of the matter. Punish the beaters, and the relations of the convicted men would take up the cause, and if they could not come on the principal, if he had removed, or was awkward to get at, they would pass it on to his relations. So that a man's rebelling against the village ruffians may involve his dearest friends in trouble, may subject them to ill-usage or boycotting. A man might fight it out if he only had himself to consider; but you see

where the shoe pinches."

A decent man in Ennis thus expressed himself anent the Bodyke affair. (My friend is a Catholic Nationalist.) "The Bodyke men are not all out so badly off as they seem. But their acts are bad, for they can pay, and they will not. No, I do not call the Colonel a bad landlord. We know all about it in Ennis; everybody agrees, too. The farmers meet in this town and elsewhere. Two or three of the best talkers lead the meeting, and everything is done *their* way. The more decent, sensible men are not always the best talkers. Look at Gladstone, have ye anybody to come up to him? An' look at his character—one way to-day an' another way to-morrow, an' the divil himself wouldn't say what the day afther that. But often the most decent, sensible men among these farmers can't express themselves, an they get put down. An' all are bound by the resolutions passed. None must pay rent till they get leave from all. What would happen a man who would pay rent on the Bodyke estate? He might order his coffin an' the crape for his berryin, an' dig his own grave to save his widow the expense. Perhaps ye have Gladstonian life-assurance offices in England? What praymium would they want for the life of a Bodyke man that paid his rint to the Colonel?"

The "praymium" would doubtless be "steep." Boycotting is hard to bear, as testified by Mr. Dawson, a certain Clerk of Petty Sessions. He said:—"The Darcy family took a small farm from which a man had been evicted after having paid no rent for seven years. The land lay waste for five years, absolutely derelict, before the Darcys took it in hand. They were boycotted. Their own relations dare not speak to them lest they, too, should be included in the curse. A member of the Darcy family died. [119]

"Then came severe inconveniences. Friends had secretly conveyed provisions to the Darcys, and, at considerable risk to themselves, had afforded some slight countenance and assistance. But a dead body, that was a terrible affair. No coffin could be had in the whole district, and someone went thirty miles and got one at the county town by means of artful stratagem. Then came the funeral. It was to take place at twelve one day, but we found there would be a demonstration, and nobody knew what might happen. The corpse, that of a woman, might have been dragged from the coffin and thrown naked on the street. In the dead of night a young fellow went round the friends, and we buried the poor lady at four in the morning."

The laziness of the Irish people was here exploited with advantage. A great French chief of police, who had made elaborate dispositions to meet a popular uprising, once said, "Send the police home and the military to their barracks. There will be no Revolution this evening on account of the rain." A very slight shower keeps an Irishman from work, and you need not rise very early to get over him. A police officer at Gort said to me, "The people are quiet hereabouts, but I couldn't make you understand their ignorance. They do just what the priest tells them in every mortal thing. They believe that unless they obey they will go to Hell and endure endless torture for ever. They believe that unless they vote as they are told they will be damned to all eternity. But oh! if you could see their laziness. They lie abed half the day, and spend most of the rest in minding other people's business. Before you had been in the town half-an-hour every soul in the place was discussing you. They thought you had a very suspicious appearance, like an agent or a detective or something. Laziness and ignorance, laziness and ignorance, that's what's the matter with Ireland."

The farmers of this truly rural district distinctly state that they do not want Home Rule. They only want the land, and nearly all are furnished with Tim Healy's statement that "The farmer who bought his own land to-day would, when a Home Rule Parliament was won, be very sorry that he was in such a hurry." Just as the men of Bodyke are getting the rifles for which Mr. Davitt wished in order to chastise the Royal Irish Constabulary, by way of showing these "ruffians, the armed mercenaries of England, that the people of Ireland had not lost the spirit of their ancestors." Well may a timid Protestant of Gort say, "These men are deceiving England. They only want to get power, and then they will come out in their true colours. All is quiet here now, but the strength of the undercurrent is something tremendous. The English Home Rulers may pooh-pooh our fears, but they know nothing about it. And, besides, *they* are quite safe. That makes all the difference. [120] The change will not drive them from all they hold dear. I do not agree with the nonsense about cutting our throats in our beds. That speech is an English invention to cast ridicule on us. But we shall have to clear out of this. Life will be unendurable with an Irish Parliament returned by priests. For it *will* be returned by priests. Surely the Gladstonian English admit that? To speak of loyalty to England in connection with an Irish Parliament is too absurd. Did not the Clan-na-Gael circular say that while its objects lay far beyond anything that might openly be named, the National Parliament must be first attained by whatever means? Then it went on to say that Ireland would be able to command the working plant of an armed revolution. Do you not know that the Irish Army of Independence is already being organised? What do you suppose the men who join it think it means? Did not Arthur O'Connor say that when England was involved in war, that would be the time? Did he not say that 100,000 men were already prepared, and that at three days' notice Ireland could possess double that number, all willing to fight England for love, and without any pay? If the English Home Rulers lived in Galway they would remember these things as I do. *You think the Bill can never become law. If you could assure me of that, I would be a happy man this night.* I would go to my pillow more contented than I have been for years. *I and my family would go on our knees and thank God from our hearts.*"

Mr. Wakely, of Mount Shannon Daly, said:—"I live in one of the wildest parts of Galway, but all went on well with us until this Home Rule Bill upset the country. Now I am completely unsettled. Whether to plant the land or let it lie waste, I cannot tell. I might not be able to reap the harvest. Whether to buy stock to raise and fatten, or whether to keep what cash we have with a view to a

sudden pack-up and exit, we do not know. And I think we are not the only timid folks, for the other day I took a horse twenty-four miles to a fair where I made sure of selling him easily. I had to take him back the twenty-four miles, having wasted my trouble and best part of two days. The franchise is too low, that is what ruined the country."

Another desponding Galwegian found fault with the Liberal party of 1884. He said, "They were actuated by so much philanthropy. Their motto was "Trust the people." We know what was their object well enough, They let in the flood of Irish democracy. The Radicals got forty, but the Nationalists gained sixty, and then part of the Radicals—the steady, sensible party among them—ran out a breakwater to prevent both countries being swamped. A break-water is a good thing, but there was no necessity for the flood. They cannot altogether repair the damage they have done. Look at the Irish members of twenty years ago, and look at them now. Formerly they were gentlemen. What are they to-day? A pack of blackguards. Their own supporters shrink from entrusting them with the smallest shred of power. Mr. Gladstone must be as mad as a March [121] hare. The idea of a Dublin Parliament engineered by men whom their own supporters look upon as rowdies would be amusing but for the seriousness of the consequences. Have you been in Ennis? Did you see the great memorial to the Manchester murderers—'Martyrs' they call them? Their lives were taken away for love of their country, and their last breath was God save Ireland! That's the inscription, and what does it mean? Loyalty to England? Would such a thing be permitted on the Continent? Why, any sensible Government would stamp out such an innuendo as open rebellion. It teaches the children hatred of England, and they are fed with lies from their very cradle. Every misfortune—the dirt, the rags, the poverty of the country, are all to be attributed to English rule. Take away that and the people believe they will live in laziness combined with luxury."

The lying of the Home Rulers is indeed unscrupulous. An Irish newspaper of to-day's date, speaking of the opening of the Chicago Exposition, says that "it is fitting to remember that our countrymen have in the United States found an asylum and an opportunity which they have never found at home, that there they have been allowed untrammelled to worship God as they thought right," clearly implying that in Ireland or in England they have no such liberty. A car driver of Limerick, one Hynes, a total abstainer, and a person of some intelligence, firmly believed that England prevented Ireland from mining for coal, which disability, with the resulting poverty, would disappear with the granting of Home Rule. Everywhere this patent obliqueness and absurd unreason. A fiery Nationalist in white heat of debate shook his fist at an Ulsterman, and said, "When we get the bill, you'll not be allowed to have all the manufactories to yourselves," an extraordinary outburst which requires no comment. This burning patriot looked around and said, with the air of a man who is posing his adversary, "Why should they have all the big works in one corner of the island?" In opposition to the melancholy carman was the dictum of Mr. Gallagher, the great high-priest of Kennedy's tobaccos. He said—

"The poverty of Ireland is due to the fact that she has no coal. Geologists say that tens of thousands of years ago a great ice-drift carried away all the coal-depositing strata."

"Another injustice to Ireland," interrupted a sacrilegious Unionist.

"And doubtless due to the baleful machinations of the Base and Bloody Balfour," said another.

It is easy to bear other people's troubles. He jests at scars who never felt a wound. That the Irish nation has untold wrongs to bear is evidenced by a Southern Irish paper, which excitedly narrates the injuries heaped on the holy head of Hibernia by the scoffing Yankee, the wrongful possessor of the American soil. A meeting of distinguished Irish emigrants, who have from time to time favoured the States with their notice, was recently convened in New York, not on this [122] exceptional occasion to metaphorically devour the succulent Saxon, nor to send his enemies a dollar for bread, and ten dollars for lead, nor yet to urge the Gotham nurses and scullerymaids to further contributions in favour of patriot Parliamentarians, but to protest with all the fervour of the conveners' souls, with all the eloquence of their powerful intellects, with all the solemnity of a sacred deed, against the irreverent naming of the animals in the Central Park Zoological Gardens after Irish ladies, Irish gentlemen, Irish saints. Misther Daniel O'Shea, of County Kerry, stated that the great hippotamus had actually been named Miss Murphy! A hijeous baste from a dissolute counthry inhabited wid black nagurs, to be named after an Oirish gyurl! Mr. O'Shea uncorked the vials of his wrath, and poured out his anger with a bubble, the meeting palpitating with hair-raising horror. Some other animal was called Miss Bridget. And Bridget was the name iv an Oirish saint! This must be shtopped. Mr. O'Shea declared he would rather die than allow it to continue. No further particulars are given, but it is understood that the viper had been christened "Tim Healy," the rattlesnake "O'Brien," the laughing hyæna John Dillon, and so on. The Chairman wanted to know why the Yankees did not call the ugly brutes after Lord Salisbury and Colonel Saunderson? Nobody seemed to know, so eight remonstrants were appointed a committee of inquiry.

Mr. O'Shea also denounced the American people as unlawfully holding a country which properly belonged to the Irish, an Irish saint, St. Brengan, having discovered the New World in the *sixteenth* century!

Enough of Ireland's wrongs; there is no end to them. As one of her poets sings, "The cup of her bitterness long has overflowed, And still it is not full."

The great bulk of the intelligent people of Ireland regard Home Rule with dread, and this feeling grows ever deeper and stronger. The country is at present exploited by adventurers, paid by the enemies of England, themselves animated by racial and religious prejudices, willing to serve their paymasters and deserve their pay rather by damaging England than by benefiting

Ireland, for whose interests they care not one straw. Ignorance manipulated by charlatanism and bigotry is, in these latter days, the determining factor in the destinies of the British Empire. Intelligence is dominated by terrorism, by threats of death, of ill-usage, of boycotting—the latter I am told an outcome of an old engine of the Roman Catholic Church, improved and brought up to date. Humphreys, of Tipperary, may know if this is true. It was from one of the "Father's" feculent family, in the heart of his own putrescent parish, that I heard of the local chemist who dare not supply medicine urgently needed by a boycotted person, who was suspected of entertaining what the learned Humphreys would spell as "Brittish" sympathies.

Gort (Co. Galway), May 6th.

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[123]

No. 19.—INDOLENCE AND IMPROVIDENCE.

ToC

Mr. James Dunne, of Athenry, is an acute observer and a shrewd political controversialist. He said: "The people about here, the poor folks such as the small farmers and labourers, have really no opinion at all. They know nothing of Home Rule, one way or the other. If they say anything, it is to the effect that they will obtain some advantage in connection with the land. Beyond that they care nothing for the matter. Not one has any sentiment to be gratified. They only want to live, if possible, a bit more easily. If they can get the land for nothing or even more cheaply, then Home Rule is good. They can see no further than their noses, and they cannot be expected to follow a long chain of argument. They believe just what they are told. Yes, they go to the priest for advice under all circumstances. They ask him to name the man for whom they are to vote, or rather they would ask him if he waited long enough. They vote as they are told; and as the Catholic priest believes that the Catholic religion is the most important thing in the world, which from his point of view is quite proper and right, he naturally influences his people in the direction which is most likely to propagate the true faith, and give to it the predominance which he believes to be its rightful due.

"The people round here are harmless, and will continue so, unless the agitators get hold of them. They are ignorant, and easily led, and an influential speaker who knew their simplicity could make them do anything, no matter what. No, I couldn't say that they are industrious. They do not work hard. They just go along, go along, like. They have no enterprise at all, and you couldn't get them out of the ways of their fathers. They'd think it a positive sin.

"Look at the present fine weather. This is a very early season. No living man has seen such a spring-time in Ireland. Two months of fine warm weather, the ground in fine working condition, everything six weeks before last year. Not a man that started to dig a day earlier. No, the old time will be adhered to just as if it was cold and wet and freezing. You could not stir them with an electric battery. They moon, moon, moon along, in the old, old, old way, waiting for somebody to come and do something for them.

"If they had the land for nothing they would be no better off. They would just do that much less work. They live from hand to mouth. They have no ambition. The same thing that did for their fathers will do for them, the same dirtiness, the same inconvenience. If their father went three miles round a stone wall to get in at a gate they'll do it too. Never would they think of making another gate. They turn round angrily and say, 'Wasn't it good enough for my father, an' wasn't he a betther man than ayther me or you?' If you lived here, you would at first begin to show them [124] things, but when you saw how much better they like their own way you'd stop it. You'd very soon get your heart broke. You couldn't stir them an inch in a thousand years. What will Home Rule do for them? Nobody knows but Gladstone and the Divil."

A bystander said: "Down at Galway there was a man wid a donkey goin' about sellin' fish, which was carried in two panniers. Whin he had only enough to fill one pannier, he put a load o' stones into the other pannier to balance the fish an' make the panniers stick on, an' ride aisier.

"Well, one day an Englishman that had been watchin' Barney for some time comes up to him an' he says, says he—

"'Whin ye have only fish for one pannier why do ye fill up the other wid stones off the beach?' says he.

"'Sure, 'tis to balance it,' says Barney, mighty surprised an' laffin widin himself at the Englishman's ignorance. 'Sure,' says Barney, 'ye wouldn't have a cock-eyed load on the baste, all swingin' on one side, like a pig wid one ear, would ye?' says he.

"But this Englishman was one of thim stiff sort that doesn't know whin he's bate, an' he went on arguin'. Says he—

"'But couldn't you put the half of the fish in one pannier, and the other half in the other

pannier, instead of putting all the fish in one, and filling up the other with stones?' says he. 'Wouldn't that balance the load?' says he. 'And wouldn't that be only half the load for the poor baste?' says he. An' Barney sthruggled a bit till he got a fair grip iv it, d'ye see, but by the sivin pipers that played before Moses, he couldn't see the way to answer this big word of the Englishman; so he says, says he, 'Musha, 'twas me father's way, rest his sowl,' says he. 'An' would I be settin' meself up to be bettherin' his larnin'?' says he. 'Not one o' me would show him sich impidence and disrespect,' says he. 'An' I'll carry the rocks till I die, glory be to God,' says he.

"Now what could ye do with the like iv *him*?"

Mr. Armour, who lived five years near Sligo, said:—"The Connaught folks have no idea of preparing for to-morrow. They are almost entirely destitute of self-reliance. So long as they can carry on from one day to another they are quite content. The bit of ground they live on is not half cultivated. In the summer time you may see two or even three crops growing up together. If they had potatoes on last, they got them up in the most slovenly way, leaving half the crop in the ground. They just hoak out with a stick or a bit of board what they require for that day's food, picking the large ones and leaving the small ones in the ground. Oats or something else will be seen half-choked with weeds and the growth from the potatoes so left. The slovenliness of these people is most exasperating. Of course they are all Home Rulers in effect, though not in theory. By that I mean that they have no politics, except to produce politicians by their votes. They know no more of Home Rule than they know of Heidsieck's champagne, or Christmas strawberries, or [125] soap and water, or any other unknown commodity. They are precisely where their ancestors were, except for the crop of potatoes, which enables them to exist in greater luxury and with less trouble. Their way is to plant the potatoes, dig them as required, and live on them either with the aid of a cow or with the butter-milk of a neighbour who has a cow. No provision for the future is attempted, because the relatives are sure to provide for the worn-out and sickly. That shows their goodheartedness, but it does away with self-dependence. There are some things so deeply ingrained in the Irish character that nothing and nobody can touch them. The very priests themselves cannot move them. Although these people believe that the priests could set them on fire from head to heel, or strike them paralytic, or refuse them entrance into heaven, yet the force of habit is so great, and the dread of public opinion is so powerful, that the people, so long as they remain in Ireland, will never depart a hair's-breadth from the old ways."

A woman who washed and tidied her children would be a mark for every bitter tongue in the parish. A striking case came under my own observation. A woman of the place was speaking most bitterly of another, and she finished up with,—

"She's the lady all out, niver fear. Shure, she washes and dhresses the childer ivery mornin', and turns out the girls wid hats on their heads an' shoes on their feet. Divil a less would sarve her turn! She has a brick flure to her house, an' she washes it—divil a lie I tell ye—she washes it—wid wather—an' wid soap an' wather, ivery Sattherday in the week! The saints betune us an' harm, but all she wants now is to turn Protestant altogether!"

Four miles away is the village of Carnaun, and there I met Philip Fahy, with his son Michael, and another young fellow, all three returning from field work, wearily toiling along the rocky road which runs through the estate of Major Lobdell. The party stopped and sat down to smoke with me. The senior took the lead, not with a brogue but with an accent, translating from the Irish vernacular as he went on. "Long ye may live! We're glad we met ye, thanks be to God. Yer honner's glory is the foinest, splindidist man I seen this twinty year. May God protect ye! 'Tis weary work we does. That foine, big boy ye see foreninst ye, has eighteenpence a day, nine shillin' a week. 'Tis not enough to support him properly. I have a son in England, the cliverist lad ye seen this many a day. Sich a scholar, 'twould be no discredit to have the Queen for his aunt, no it wouldn't. No, he's only just gone, an' I didn't hear from him yet. I didn't tell ye where he'd be, for I wouldn't know meself. But me other boys is goin', for they tell me things will be afther getting worse. God help us, an' stand betune us an harm! Did ye hear of the Home Rule Bill? What does it mane at all, at all? Not one of us knows, more than that lump of stone ye sit on. Will it give us the land for nothin'? for that's all we hear. We'd be obliged av ye could axplain it a [126] thrifle, for sorra a one but's bad off, an' Father O'Baithershin says, Howld yer whist, says he, till ye see what'll happen, says he. Will we get the bit o' ground without rint, yer honner's glory?"

Philip was dressed for agricultural work in the following style, which is clearly considered the correct thing in Galway. One tall "top-hat," with a long fur like that of a mangy rabbit, waving to the jocund zephyrs of Carnaun; one cut-away coat of very thick homespun cloth, having five brass buttons on each breast; breeches and leggings and stout boots completed the outfit, which fitted like a sentry-box, and bore a curiously caricatured resemblance to the Court suit of a Cabinet Minister in full war-paint. The spades with which the labourers till the ground are strange to the English eye, and seem calculated to get through the smallest amount of work with the greatest amount of labour. That they were spades at all was more than I could make out. "What are those implements?" I asked, to which the answer came, "Have ye no shpades in England thin!"

The business end is about two feet long and not more than three inches broad, with a sort of shoulder for the foot. The handles are about six feet long and end like a mop-stick, without any crossbar. A slight alteration would turn these tools into pikes, a much more likely operation than the beating of swords into plough-shares and spears into pruning-hooks. Meanwhile the length of the handle keeps the worker from too dangerous proximity to his work. There is a broader pattern of blade, but the handle is always of the same sanitary length. The children of the soil turn it over at a wholesome distance. They keep six feet of pole between the earth and their nobility. Small blame to them for that same! Shure the wuruld will be afther thim. Shure there's no sinse at all, at all, in workin' life out to kape life in.

"Ah, no," said Misther Fahy. "That tobacky has no strinth in it. We get no satisfaction out iv it. We shmoked a pipe iv it to make frinds, but we'd not shmoke another. 'Tis like chopped hay or tay-leaves, it is. Will we walk back wid yer honner's glory? 'Tis only four miles, it is. No, we bur-rn no powdher here. But on the other side, above Athenry, 'tis there ye'll see the foin shootin'. Thims the boys for powdher an' shot! 'Tis more than nine they shot, aye, and more than tin it was. An' sarve thim right, if they must turn the people out, an' have their own way. May the Lord protect ye! May angels make yer bed this night! Long may ye live, an' yer sowl to glory!"

I had written so far, when glancing through the window, I saw a familiar form, a rosy, healthy, florid gentleman parading on the lawn which fronts the Railway Hotel, puffing a cigarette, briskly turning and returning with something of the motion of a captive lion. I knew that pinky cheek, I knew that bright blue eye; yet here, in the wilds of Galway who could it be? He plays with two sportive spaniels, and cries "Down, Sir, down." Thy voice bewrayeth thee, member for North [127] Galway! The Parnellitic Colonel Nolan, thou, *in propriâ personâ*. What makes he here? When the great Bill impends, why flee the festive scene? I'll speak a little with this learned Theban. I board him, as the French say. For a moment he regards me with suspicion—with a kind of vade-in-retro-Satanas air—but presently he goes ahead. A fair at Tuam, which he never misses. Has paired with somebody, Pierpoint he thinks is the name. His vote will therefore not be lost to his side. "Nothing will now be done before Whitsuntide. Both parties will be on their best behaviour. The Conservatives and obstruction, the Liberals and closure. Strategy to obtain some show of advantage at the recess is now the little game. Knows not what will happen *re* Home Rule. The English Liberals not now so confident as they were. The Government may be ruined by liquor. 'Tis the fate of Liberal Governments to be ruined by drink. The Government of 1874 and the next Liberal Cabinet went to the dogs on liquor. And if the English people are called upon to give a verdict on a local option bill, the result is rather uncertain. Chances perhaps against Mr. Gladstone. The Home Rule question is now quite worked up. The English people are now satisfied to have Home Rule, but some intervening question might delay its final settlement. No, the agitation of the past four or five months had not changed the position one bit. No amount of agitation would now make any difference at all."

From the probable wrecking of the Gladstonian Cabinet on "liquor" to the question of Customs, or, as Colonel Nolan preferred to call it, of Excise, was but an easy step. By a simple *adagio* movement I modulated into the Customs question, mentioning the opinion given to me by Mr. John Jameson himself. The Colonel did not deny, nor admit, that the Irish people were excellent smugglers, but thought the fears of the Unionists exaggerated. He was well aware that smuggling might be carried on—say, on the coast of Connemara and elsewhere, where were roads and bays and natural harbours galore, with a wild and lonely shore far from the centres of Government. Probably at first some money might be lost that way; some little chinks would doubtless be found; there would be some little leakage. But suppose an initial loss of £100,000 or £200,000, it was not likely that such a state of things would be allowed to continue. As to the argument that the rural police would not then assist the 1,300 coastguards, who with the police have been sufficient, there was little or no solidity in this assumption. The Irish Parliament would order the police to assist, and if they did not execute their orders, or if they allowed themselves to be bribed, and the Irish Parliament did not prosecute them for accepting bribes, then the English Government would step in and put matters right. This is just a typical Home Rule argument, the confidence trick all over. The Colonel thought that after a certain amount of shaking down, everything would work sweetly enough. He said nothing about the Union of [128] Hearts, nor have I yet heard the phrase from an Irishman.

A keen observer resident at the Athenry Hotel says:—"Of those who come here the proportion against Home Rule is not less than twenty to one. Now mark my figures, because they are based on careful notes extending over the last six months. When you have all the money in the country, and all the best brains in the country, against the bill, what good could the bill do if it became law? And while I can see, and all these people can see, no end of risk, disturbance, upset, loss, ruin, and everything that is bad, we cannot see anything at all to compensate for the risk. Nobody can put his finger on anything and say, 'There, that's the advantage we'll get from the bill.' 'Tis all fancy, pure fancy. Ireland a nation, and a Roman Catholic nation, is the cry. We may get that, but we'll be bankrupt next day. 'Tis like putting a poor man in a grand house without food, furniture, or money, and without credit to raise anything on the building. There now, ye might say, ye have a splendid place that's all your own. But wouldn't the poor man have to leave it, or die of starvation? Of course I wish to respect my clergy, but I think they should not interfere with politics."

Colonel Nolan said to me: "The priests wield an immense, an incalculable power. All are on the same path, all hammer away at the one point. It is the persistency, the organisation, that tells. In some cases they have been known to preach for a year and a half at a stretch on political subjects. What is going to stand against that?"

With these golden words I close my letter. The priest holds the sceptre of the British Empire. Circumstances have placed in his hands an astonishing opportunity. Nearly every priest in Ireland is using his supernatural credit with one solitary aim. We know their disloyalty, we know they are no friends of England—we know their influence, their organisation, their perseverance, their unscrupulousness, their absolute supremacy in Ireland—and it is high time that England asked herself, in the words of Colonel Nolan—

"What is going to stand against that?"

Athenry (Co. Galway), May 6th.

No. 20.—RELIGION AT THE BOTTOM OF THE IRISH QUESTION.

ToC

Tuam has two cathedrals but no barber. You may be shriven but you cannot be shaved. You may be whitewashed but you cannot be lathered. "One shaves another; we're neighbourly here," said a railway porter. They cut each other's hair by the light of nature, in the open street, with a chorus of bystanders. The Tuamites live in a country of [129] antiquities, but they have no photographer. Nor could I find a photograph for sale. The people are sweetly unsophisticated. A bare-footed old lady sat on the step of the Victoria Hotel, sucking a black dhudeen, sending out smoke like a factory chimney, the picture of innocent enjoyment. The streets were full of pigs from the rural parts, and great was the bargaining and chaffering in Irish, a language which seemed to be composed of rolling r's and booming gutturals. A sustained conversation sounds like the jolting of a country cart over a rocky road, a sudden exclamation like the whirr of a covey of partridges, an oath like the downfall of a truck-load of bricks. I arrived in time for the great pig fair, and Tuam was very busy. It is a poor town, of which the staple trade is religion. The country around is green and beautiful, with brilliant patches of gorse in full bloom, every bush a solid mass of brightest yellow, dazzling you in the sunshine. Many of the streets are wretchedly built, and the Galway Road shows how easily the Catholic poor are satisfied. Not only are the cabins in this district aboriginal in build, but they are also indescribably filthy, and the condition of the inmates, like that of the people inhabiting the poorer parts of Limerick, is no whit higher than that obtaining in the wigwams of the native Americans. The hooded women, black-haired and bare-footed, bronzed and tanned by constant exposure, are wonderfully like the squaws brought from the Far West by Buffalo Bill. The men look more civilised, and the pig-jobbers, with their tall hats, dress coats, and knotty shillelaghs, were the pink of propriety. Now and then a burst of wild excitement would attract the stranger, who would hurry up to see the coming homicide, but there was no manslaughter that I could see. A scene of frantic gesticulation near the Town Hall promised well, but contrary to expectation, there was no murder done. Two wild-eyed men, apparently breathing slaughter, suddenly desisted, reining in their fury and walking off amicably together. An Irish-speaking policeman explained that one having sold the other a pig the buyer was asking for twopence off, and that they now departed to drink the amount between them. People who had done their business went away in queer carts made to carry turf—little things with sides like garden palings four or five feet high. Three or four men would squat on one, closely packed, looking through the bars like fowls in a hen-coop. The donkeys who drew these chariots had all their work cut out, and most of their backs cut up. The drivers laid on with stout ash-plants, sparing no exertion to create the donkey's enthusiasm. Prices ruled low. "'Tis not afther sellin' thim I am," said a peasant who had got rid of his pigs, "'tis bestowin' thim I was, the craythurs. The counthry is ruinated intirely, an' so it is. By the holy poker of Methesulum, the prices we got this day for lowness bangs Banagher, an' Banagher bangs the divil."

The Tuamites spare a little time for politics and boycotting. The public spirit and contempt for [130] British law are all that could be desired by Irish patriotism. Mr. Strachan has recently bought some land. The previous owner, Mr. Dominick Leonard, brother of Dr. Leonard of Athenry, and of Judge Leonard of London, had raised money on the property, and failed to pay interest or principal. An English insurance company determined to realize, and the affair went into the Land Court, Mr. Strachan buying part of the estate for £2,765. It was easy enough to buy, and even to pay, but to get possession was quite another thing. Precise information is difficult to get, for while some decline to say a word, others are mutually contradictory, and a State Commission would hardly sift truth from the confusing mass of details, denials, assertions, and counter-assertions. This much is clear enough. A tenant named Ruane was required to leave a house, with ground, which he had held on the estate bought by Mr. Strachan. He had paid no rent for a long time. Of course he refused to leave, and, a decree having been obtained, he was duly evicted. But, as Lady de Burgho said, evictions do no good. When the officers of the law went home to tea, Mr. Ruane went home also, breaking the locks, forcing the doors, reinstating himself and his furniture, planting his Lares and Penates in their old situations, hanging up his caubeen on the ancestral nail, and crossing his patriotic shin-bones on the familiar hearth. Pulled up for trespass, he declared that if sent to prison fifty times he would still return to the darling spot, and defied the British army and navy—horse, foot, and artillery—ironclads, marines, and 100-ton guns, to keep him out. For three acts of trespass he got three weeks imprisonment. The moment he was released Mr. Ruane walked back home, and took possession once again. There he is now, laughing at the Empire on which the sun never sets. When a certain bishop read "Paradise Lost" to a sporting lord, the impatient auditor's attention was arrested by some bold speech of Satan, whereupon he exclaimed "Dang me, if I don't back that chap. I like his pluck, and I hope he'll win." Something like this might be said of Ruane.

And Ruane will stick to his land. A public meeting held on Sunday week determined to support

him, and to show forth its mind by planting the ground for him. Mr. Strachan seems to have seen the futility of looking to the law, on the security of which he invested his money. Too late he finds that his savings are not safe, and he endeavours to make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness. He has offered Ruane five acres of land and a house, and Ruane would have accepted with thanks had he been allowed. But he went to a meeting in some outlying village, and received his orders from the Land League. For, be it observed, that the people of these parts speak of the Land League as existing in full force. Ruane declined the handsome offer of the kind-hearted Strachan. Ruane will hold the house and land from which he has been evicted, *because* he had been evicted, and that the people may see that they have the mastery. Ruane would prefer the proffered land, but private interests must give way to the public weal. England must be [131] smashed, treated with contumely; her laws, her officers, her edicts treated with contempt, laughed at by every naked gutter-snipe, rendered null and void. That this can be done with perfect impunity is the teaching of priests, Fenians, Nationalists, Federationists—call them what you will—all alike flagrantly disloyal to the English Crown. Not worth while to differentiate them. As the sailor said of crocodiles and alligators, "There's no difference at all. They're all tarnation varmint together."

Mr. Strachan is boycotted, and goes about with a guard of three policemen. What will happen from one day to another nobody can tell. Since I last mentioned Mr. Blood, of Ennis, that most estimable gentleman has been again fired on, this time at a range of 400 yards, and when guarded by the four policemen who accompany him everywhere. Three shots were fired, and the police found an empty rifle cartridge at the firing point. A Protestant in Tuam said to me:—

"Home Rule would mean that every Protestant would have to fly the country. Why should there not be a return to the persecutions of years ago? When first I came to the place the Protestants were hooted as they went to church, and I can remember seeing this very Strachan going to worship on Sunday morning, his black go-to-meeting coat so covered with the spittle of the mob that you would not know him. His wife would come down with a Bible, and the children would run along shouting 'Here comes mother Strachan, with the devil in her fist.' Why, the young men got cows' horns and fixed them up with strings, so that they could tie them on their foreheads. Then with these horns on they would walk before and behind the Protestants as they went to church or left it, to show that the devil was accompanying them. They always figure the devil as being horned. One of the little barefooted boys who ran after these Protestants is now a holy priest in Tuam. And what the people were then, so they will be now, once they get the upper hand. The educated Catholics are excellent people, none better anywhere, none more tolerant. Nothing to fear from them. But how many are there? Look at the masses of ignorant people around us. The density of their ignorance is something that the people of England cannot understand. They have no examples of it. The most stupid and uninformed English you can find have some ray of enlightenment. These people are steeped in ignorance and superstition. Their religion is nothing but fetichism. Their politics? well, they are blind tools of the priests: what else can be said? And the priests have but one object. In all times, in all countries, the Roman Catholic Church has aimed at absolute dominion. The religious question is at the bottom of it all."

No matter where an educated Irishman begins, that is where he always ends. Catholics and Protestants alike come round to the same point at last, though with evident reluctance. The [132] Protestant Unionists especially avoid all mention of religion as long as possible. They know the credal argument excites suspicion. They attack Home Rule from every other point of view, and sometimes you think you have encountered a person of different opinion. Wait till he knows you a little better, has more confidence in your fairness, stands in less fear of a possible snub. Sooner or later, sure as the night follows the day, he is bound to say—

"The religious question is at the bottom of it all."

The people of Ireland do not want an Irish Parliament, and the failure of the bill would not trouble them in the least. They do not care a brass farthing for the bill one way or the other. The great heart of the people is untouched. The masses know nothing of it, and will not feel its loss. They are in the hands of priests and agitators, these poor unlettered peasants, and their blind voting, their inarticulate voice, translated into menace and mock patriotism. Everybody admits that the people would be happy and content if only left alone. Half-a-dozen ruffians with rifles can boss a whole country side, and the people must do as they are told. They do not believe in the secrecy of the ballot. They believe that the priests by their supernatural powers are able to know how everybody voted, and I am assured on highly respectable authority that the secrecy of the ballot in Ireland is, in some parts, a questionable point. At the same time, there is everywhere a strong opinion that another election will give very different results in Ireland. And everywhere there is a growing feeling that the Bill will not become law. This explains the slight rise in the value of Irish securities.

Just outside Tuam I came upon a neatly built, deep-thatched villa, with a flower garden in front, a carefully cultivated kitchen garden running along the road, trim hedges, smart white palings, an orchard of fine young trees, a general air of neatness, industry, prosperity, which, under the circumstances, was positively staggering. I had passed along a mile of cabins in every stage of ruin, from the solitary chimney still standing to the more recent ruin with two gables, from the inhabited pig-sty to the hut whereon grew crops of long grass. I had noted the old lady clad in sackcloth and ashes, who, having invested the combined riches of the neighbourhood in six oranges and a bottle of pop, was sitting on the ground, alternately contemplating the three-legged stool which held the locked-up capital and her own sooty toes, immersed in melancholy reflections anent the present depression in commercial circles. The Paradisaic cottage was startling after this. I stopped a bare-legged boy, and found that the place belonged to a Black

Protestant, and, what was worse, a Presbyterian, and, what was superlatively bad, a Scots Presbyterian. Presently I met a tweed-clad form, red-faced and huge of shoulder, full of strange accents and bearded like the pard. Berwickshire gave him birth, but he has "done time" in Ireland.

"I'm transported this forty-three years. I thought I'd end my days here, but if this bill passes [133] we'll go back to Scotland. We'll have Catholic governors, and they'll do what they like with us. Ye'll have a tangled web to weave, over the Channel there. Ye'll have the whole island in rebellion in five-and-twenty minutes after ye give them power. Anybody that thinks otherwise is either very ignorant of the state of things or else he's a born fule. No, I wouldn't say the folks are all out that lazy, not in this part of Galway. They will work weel enough for a Scots steward, or for an Englishman. But no Irish steward can manage them. Anybody will tell you that. No-one in any part of the country will say any different. Now, that's a queer thing. An Irish steward has no control over them. They don't care for him. And he runs more risk of shooting than an English or Scots steward.

"There was an Irish bailiff where I was steward, and he saw how I managed the men, and thought he'd do it the same way. So once when he and a lot of diggers went in for the praties and buttermilk, the praties were not ready, and he gives the fellow who was responsible a bit of a kick behind with the side of his foot, like.

"The very next night he got six slugs in his head and face and one of his front teeth knocked out. That taught him to leave kicking to foreigners. Once two men were speaking of me. I overheard one say, 'Ah, now, Micky, an' isn't it a pity that Palmer's a Black Protestant, an' that his sowl will blaze in hell for ever, like a tur-rf soddock ye'd pick up in the bog?'"

"Settle the land question and you settle Home Rule. The bad times made Parnell's success. He was backed by the low prices of produce, and the general depression of agricultural interests. The rent has been reduced, but not enough to compensate the drop in the prices of produce. Why, cattle have been fetching one-half what they fetched a short time ago. Potatoes are twopence-halfpenny a stone! Did you ever hear of such a thing? Yes, it enables the people to live very cheaply, but how about the growers? If every man grew his own potatoes and lived on them, well and good, but he must have no rent to pay. That price would not pay for labour and manure. Oats are worth sixpence to ninepence a stone,—a ridiculous price; and we have not yet touched the bottom.

"The land question should be settled. No, it is not satisfactory. People have to wait seven years for a settlement, and meanwhile they could be kicked out of their holdings at one day's notice. The people who bought under Ashbourne's Act are happy, prosperous, and contented. The people who are beside them are the contrary. Home Rulers, bosh! Farmers know as much about Home Rule as a pig knows about the Sabbath Day. The land, the land, the land! Let the Tories take this up and dish the Liberals. Easiest thing alive. How? Compulsory sale, compulsory purchase. Leave nothing to either party. Then you'll hear no more of Home Rule. Let the Unionists hold their ground a bit, till it dies out, or until the rival factious destroy each other. Loyalty? Why those Nationalist members have themselves told you over and over again that they are rebels. Don't [134] you believe them? Some few may be inspired with the idea that the thing is impracticable, but they will all preach separation when the right time comes. 'Pay no taxes to England,' they'll cry. The people can follow that. Tell them that any course of action means non-payment of anything, and they're on it like a shot. Why, the Paying of Tribute to England is already discussed in every whiskey shop in Galway, and every man is prepared to line the ditches with guns and pikes rather than pay one copper. When you can't give Strachan the farm for which he paid last February, when you can't keep a small farmer who won't pay rent from occupying his farm and getting his crops as usual, for he *will* do so, how are you going to raise the famous Tribute Money?"

Near the Town Hall was a great crowd of people listening to a couple of minstrels who chanted alternate lines of a modernised version of the *Shan van vocht*. "Let me make the songs of a people, and I care not who makes its laws." Mr. Gladstone is appreciated now. The heart of the Connaughtman throbs responsive to his pet appellation. This is part of the song—

Oi'm goin' across the say, says the Grand Old Man,
Oi'll be back some other day, says the Grand Old Man;
When Oireland gets fair play
We'll make Balfour rue the day,—
Remimber what I say, says the Grand Old Man.
Whin will ye come back? says the Grand Old Man,
Whin will ye come back? says the Grand Old Man,
Whin Balfour gets the sack
Wid Salisbury on his back,
Or unto hell does pack, says the Grand Old Man.
Will ye deny the Lague? says the Grand Old Man,
No, we'll continue to the Lague, says the Grand Old Man.
John Dillon says at every station,

'Twill be his conversation
Till Oireland is a nation, says the Grand Old
Man.

There are three more verses of this immortal strain. The *Shan van vocht* was the great song of the '98 rebellion, and possibly the G.O.M.'s happy adaptability to the music may put the finishing touch to his world-wide renown. Other songs referred to the arrest of Father Keller, of Youghal. "They gathered in their thousands their grief for to revale, An' mourn for their holy praste all in Kilmainham Jail." These ballads are anonymous, but the talented author of "Dirty little England" stands revealed by internal evidence. The voices which chanted these melodies were discordant, but the people around listened with reverential awe, from time to time making excited comments in Irish. Altogether Tuam is a depressing kind of place, and but for the enterprise of a few Protestants, the place would be a phantasmagoria of pigs, priests, peasants, poverty, and "peelers." Perhaps Galway would have more civilization, if less piety. You cannot move about an Irish country town after nightfall without barking your shins on a Roman Catholic Cathedral. This in time becomes somewhat monotonous.

Tuam (Co. Galway), May 9th.

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[135]

No. 21.—MR. BALFOUR'S FISHERIES.

ToC

A clean, well-built town, with a big river, the Corrib, running through the middle of it, splashing romantically down from the salmon weir, not far from the Protestant Church of Saint Nicholas, a magnificent cathedral-like structure over six hundred years old. There is a big square with trees and handsome buildings, several good hotels, a tramway, and, *mirabile dictu!* a veritable barber's shop. The Connaught folks, as a whole, seem to have fully realised the old saying that shaving by a barber is a barbarous custom, but there is no rule without an exception, and accordingly Mr. McCoy, of Eyre Square, razors and scissors her Majesty's lieges, whether gentle or simple, rebel or loyal, Unionist or Separatist, Catholic or Protestant. The good Figaro himself is an out-and-out Separatist. He swallows complete Independence, and makes no bones about it. He believes in Ireland a Nation, insists on perfect autonomy, and, unlike the bulk of his fellow Nationalists, has the courage of his opinions. His objection to English interference with Irish affairs is openly expressed, and with an emphasis which leaves no doubt of his sincerity. According to Mr. McCoy, the woes of Ireland are each and all directly attributable to English rule. The depopulation of the country, the lack of enterprise, of industry, of the common necessaries of life, of everything to be desired by the sons of men—all these disagreeables are due to the selfishness, the greed, the brutality of Englishmen, who are not only devoid of the higher virtues, but also entirely destitute of common fairness, common honesty, common humanity. Mr. McCoy holds that England exploits Ireland for her own purposes, is a merciless sucker of Hibernia's life-blood, a sweater, a slave-driver, a more than Egyptian taskmaster. Remove the hated English garrison, abolish English influence, let Ireland guide her own destinies, and all will at once be well—trade will revive, poverty will disappear, emigration will be checked, a teeming population will inhabit the land, and the Emerald Isle will once more become great, glorious, and free, Furst flower o' the airth, Furst gem o' the say. No longer will the gallant men of Connaught bow their meek heads to American shears, no longer present their well-developed jaws to Yankee razors; but, instead of this, flocking in their thousands on saints' days and market days to their respective county towns, and especially to Galway, will form *en queue* at the door of Mr. McCoy, to save the country by fostering native industries. No longer will it avail the Chinaman of whom he told me to sail from New York to Ireland, because the latter is the only country wherein Irishmen do not monopolise all the good things, do not boss the show—have, in fact, no voice at all in its management. "But," said my friend, "we'll get no Home Rule, we'll get no Parlimint, we'll get nothin' at all at all till Irishmen rise up in every part o' the wuruld an [136] thrash it out o' ye. What business have the English here at all domineering over us? Didn't one o' their great spakers get up in Parlimint an' say we must be kept paupers? Didn't he say that 'the small loaf was the finest recruiting sergeant in the wuruld?' There ye have the spirit o' the English. We want the counthry to ourselves, an' to manage it our way, not yours. An' that thievin' owld Gladstone's the biggest scut o' thim all. No, I'm not grateful to Gladstone, not a bit iv it. Divil a ha'porth we have to thank him for. Sure, he was rakin Parnell out iv his grave, the mane-spirited scut, that cringed and grinned whin Parnell was alive. Sure, 'twas Gladstone broke up the party wid his morality. 'Ah,' says he, 'I couldn't associate wid such a person, alanna!' An' he wouldn't let it be a Parlimint at all—it must be a leg-is-la-ture, by the hokey, it must, no less. Let him go choke wid his leg-is-la-ture, the durty, mane-spirited owld scut."

Mr. McCoy declines to regard Mr. Gladstone as a benefactor of Ireland, but in this he is not alone. His sentiments are shared by every Irishman I have met, no matter what his politics. The

Unionist party are the more merciful, sparing expletives, calling no ill names. They admire his ability, his wonderful vitality, versatility, ingenuity of trickery. They sincerely believe that he is only crazy, and think it a great pity. They speak of the wreck of his rich intellect, and say in effect *corruptio optimi pessima est*. There is another monkish proverb which may strike them as they watch him in debate, particularly when he seems to be cornered; it runs, *Non habet anguillam, Per caudam qui tenet illam*, which may be extemporaneously rendered, He has not surely caught the eel, Who only holds him by the tail.

Every Nationalist I have met entertains similar opinions, but few express them so unguardedly. Mr. McCoy must be honoured for his candour and superior honesty. If his brethren were all as frankly outspoken as he England would be saved much trouble, much waste of precious time. The secret aspirations of the Irish Nationalist leaders, if openly avowed, would dispose of the Home Rule agitation at once and for ever. No risk of loss, no possible disadvantage, daunted Mr. McCoy. He accepted the statement of a rabid Separatist, quoted in a previous letter, that the Irish would prefer to go to hell their own way. That was his feeling exactly. Not that there was any danger. Great was his confidence, implicit, sublime, ineffably Irish. His was the faith that removes mountains. Not like a grain of mustard seed, but like the rock of Cashel. *Floreat* McCoy!

Mr. Athy, of Kinvarra, has very little to say. He thinks the bill would make Ireland a hell upon earth for all Protestants living in Catholic communities, and that a settlement of the land question would settle the hash of the agitators. Mr. Kendal, of Tallyho, an Englishman twenty-five years resident in Ireland, agrees in the latter opinion. I forgot to question him *re* toleration. He thinks the Home Rule Bill simply insane, absurd, not worth serious discussion by sensible men. "No [137]
intelligent man who knows the country would dream of such madness. The simplicity of the English people must be incredible. Pity they cannot come over and examine for themselves."

Mr. Beddoes, traffic manager of the Limerick and Waterford Railway, came to Ireland an enthusiastic Gladstonian. He had worked with might and main to send Mr. Price to Parliament, and was largely instrumental in returning him. He is now a staunch Unionist, admits the error of his ways, and rejoices that a personal acquaintance with the subject at once led him into the true fold. I had this confession of faith from Mr. Beddoes himself, a keen, successful man of eminently Conservative appearance, a scholar, a traveller, and a great favourite with his men.

"How long were you in Ireland before you changed your mind?" I asked.

"Well," said Mr. Beddoes, "to tell the truth, I began to have my doubts during the first week."

A prosperous Presbyterian of Galway said:—"To say that the Irish people, the masses, want an Irish Parliament is the height of absurdity; and to argue that their aspirations are expressed by their votes is a gross perversion of the truth. The ignorance of the people explains everything. They voted as the priests told them to vote, without the smallest conception of what they were voting for, without the smallest idea of what Home Rule really means. They are quite incapable of understanding a complicated measure of any kind, and they naturally accept the guidance of their spiritual advisers, whom they are accustomed to regard as men of immense erudition, besides being gifted with power to bind and loose, and having the keys of heaven at command. You know how they canvass their penitents in the confessional, and how from the altar they have taught the people to lie, telling them to vote for one man and to shout down the streets for another. The Irish priests are wonderfully moral men in other respects, and cases of immorality in its ordinary sense are so rare as to be practically unknown. I could forgive their politics, and even their confessional influence, if they were not such awful liars. Their want of truthfulness reacts on the people, and if you send a man to do a job, he will return and get his money when he has only half done it. 'Oh, yes,' he'll say, as natural as possible, 'I've done it well, very well.' And they are not ashamed when they are proved to be liars. They think nothing of it. And the way they cheat each other! A few days ago I met a man who pulled out a bundle of one-pound notes, and said, 'I'm afther selling thirteen cows, an' I'm afther buying thirteen more. I sowld me cows to Barney So-and-So, afther givin' him six noggins of poteen, an' I got out of him twenty per cint. more than the price that was goin', thanks be to God!' They are so pious—in words."

"What they want is emancipation from the priests and from the superstitions of the dark ages. [138]
They believe in the fairies still, and attribute all kinds of powers to them. Look at the *Tuam News* of yesterday evening. Perhaps the English people would hesitate before conferring self-government on the poor folks who read that paper, if they could only see the rag for a week or two."

I secured the *Tuam News* for Friday, May 12, 1893, and found the sheet instructive, suggestive, original. There is a big advertisement in Irish, an ancient Irish poem with translation, and a letter from Mr. Henry Smyth, of Harborne, Birmingham, addressed to the National Literary Society of Loughrea, under whose auspices Miss Gonne the other day delivered the rebel lecture quoted in the Killaloe letter. Our fellow-citizen speaks of "the spirit of revival that is abroad amongst you, of your new society rising phoenix-like from the ashes of the old, not uninspired, we may suppose, by the project of your being in the near future masters in your own house, the arbiters of your own destiny, for you will be governed by the men of your own choice." Side by side with this heart-felt utterance let us print another letter appearing in the same issue of the same hebdomadal illuminator:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TUAM NEWS.

Sir,—Permit me a little space in the next issue of the *Tuam News*, relative to my father being killed by the fairies which appeared in the *Tuam News* of the 8th of April

last. I beg to say that he was not killed by the fairies, but I say he was killed by some person or persons unknown as yet. Hoping very soon that the perpetrators of this dastardly outrage will be soon brought to light, I am, Mr. Editor, yours obediently,

DAVID REDINGTON.

Kilcreevanty, May 8th, '93.

What would be thought of an English constituency which required such a contradiction? The people who believe in the fairies form the bulk of the Irish electorate. Their votes have sent the Nationalist members to Parliament; their voice it is which directs the action of Gladstone, Morley, and Tail; their influence ordains the course of legislation; in their hands are the destinies of England and Englishmen. The people themselves are innocent enough. If they hate England it is because they have been so taught by priests and agitators for their own ends. The only remedy is enlightenment, but the process must be slow. The accursed influences are ever at work, on the platform, in the press, at the altar, and I see no countervailing agency. The people are 'cute enough, and would be clever, if once their bonds were broken. They are not fettered by English rule. They are bound down by Ignorance, rank Ignorance, in an Egyptian darkness that may be felt. They are poor in this world's goods, although seemingly healthier and stronger than the English average. Much of their poverty is their own fault. Much more is due to the teachings of agitators. The Land League has mined whole communities. Poverty and Ignorance made the Irish masses an easy prey. Their ancient prejudices are kept alive, their ancient grievances industriously disinterred, their imagination pleased with an illimitable vista of prosperity artfully [139] unrolled before their untutored gaze. We have the result before us. The Gladstonian party in England are responding to the dictates of a handful of hirelings and sacerdotalists, and not to the aspirations of a people. Credulity is the offspring of Ignorance, and accordingly we see that the Irish people believe in Tim Healy and the priests, the Grand Old Man and the fairies. They must be saved from themselves.

The harbour of Galway is very picturesque. A massive ivy-covered arch marks the boundary line of the ancient walls, some of which are still extant. The raggedness and filthiness of the fisher-wives and children must be seen to be understood. A few sturdy fishermen sat gloomily beside two great piles of fish, thrown out of the boats in heaps. Large fish, like cod, and yet not cod; bigger than hake, but not unlike the Cornish fish. To ask a question at a country station or in the street is in Connaught rather embarrassing, as all the people within earshot immediately crowd around to hear what is going on. Not impudent, but sweetly unsophisticated are the Galway folks, openly regarding the stranger with inquiring eye, not unfriendly, but merely curious. Having no business of their own, they take the deepest interest in that of other people. And they make a fuss. They are too polite. They load you with attentions. No trouble is too great. Give them the smallest chance and they put themselves about until you wish you had not spoken. However, I wanted to know about the fish, so I strolled up to two men who were lying at full length on the quay, and said—

"What do you call those fish?"

Both men sprang hastily to their feet, and said—

"Black pollock, Sorr."

"Where do you catch them?"

At this juncture two or three dozen urchins galloped up, most of them, save for a thick skin of dirt, clad in what artists call the nude. They surrounded us, and listened with avidity.

"Outside the Aran Islands."

Here several women joined the group, and more were seen hastening to the scene of excitement from every point of the compass.

"How far away is that?"

"Thirty miles, Sorr."

"What are they worth?"

"A shilling a dozen."

"That is, a penny a pound?"

"No, but a shilling for a dozen fish, and there's thirteen to the dozen."

"And how heavy is the average fish?"

He picked up one by the jaws, and weighing him on his hand, said—

"That chap would be nigh-hand fourteen pounds. Some's more, some's less."

It was even so. The agent of the Congested Districts Board, Mr. Michael Walsh, of Dock Street, [140] confirmed this startling statement. Thirteen huge codlike fish for a shilling! More than a hundredweight and a half of fish for twelve pence sterling! And, as Father Mahony remarks, still the Irish peasant mourns, still groans beneath the cruel English yoke, still turns his back on the teeming treasures of the deep. The brutal Balfour supplied twenty-five boats to the poor peasants of the western seaboard, and these, all working in conjunction under direction, have proved both a boon and a blessing. "Yesterday I sent sixty boxes of mackerel to Messrs. Smith, of Birmingham, and to-day I think I shall send them a hundred," said Mr. Walsh. "These Balfour boats have been a wonderful success. You'll hear the very ignorant still cursing him, but not the

better-informed, nor the people he has benefited. I think him a great man, a very great man, indeed. I am no politician. I only look at the effect he produced and the blessing he was to the people. On Wednesday last the Duras steamer brought in 400 boxes of fish, which had been caught in one day. We thought that pretty good, but Thursday's consignment was simply astonishing, 1,100 boxes coming in. We sent them all to England. Mackerel have fetched grand prices this year. Early in the season we sold them to Birmingham at tenpence apiece wholesale, with carriage and other expenses on the top of that. Better price than the pollock? Well, that fish is not very good just now. Sometimes it fetches six shillings a dozen fish, nearly sixpence each. No, not much for twelve or fourteen pounds of good fish. Half-a-crown a dozen is more usual. There's no demand. Yes, they're cheap to-day. A dozen pounds of fish for a penny would be reckoned 'a cheap loaf' in Birmingham."

A shopkeeper near the harbour complained of the unbusiness-like ways of the Galway townsmen:—"They have no notion of business management. Take the Galway Board of Guardians. They resolved that any contractor furnishing milk below a certain standard should have his contract broken if he were caught swindling the authorities three times in six months. What would they think of such a resolution in England? Well, one fellow was caught three times or more. His milk was found to contain forty-four per cent. of water. Instead of kicking him out at once there was a great debate on the subject. It was not denied that the facts were as I have stated them. His friends simply said, 'Ah, now, let the Boy go on wid the conthract; shure, isn't he the dacent Boy altogether? An' what for would ye break the conthract whin he put in a dhrop of clane wather, that wouldn't hurt anybody. Shure, 'tis very wholesome it is intirely.' As Curran said, 'we are ruined with to-day saying we'll do some thing, and then turning round and saying to-morrow that we won't do it.' Another Guardian named Connor stuck up for the right thing, and another named Davoren gave the contractor's friends a good tongue-thrashing. The milkman was sacked by fifteen votes to nine. The right thing was done, but my point is that a lot of time was [141] wasted in trying to bolster up such a case, and nine men actually voted for the defaulter, whose action was so grossly fraudulent, and who had been caught at least three times in six months.

"The bag factory has just been closed. The Home Rule Bill is at the bottom of this mischief. It was the only factory we had in Galway, and what the people here are to do now God only knows. It gave employment to the working classes of the town, who will now have to go further afield. Some are off to America, some to England, some to Scotland. Curious thing I've noticed. A Scotsman lands here with twopence, next day has fourpence, in five years a house and farm of his own, in twenty-five years an estate, in thirty years is being shot at as a landowner, in forty years has an agent to be deputy cock-shot for him. But Irishmen who go to Scotland nearly always return next year swearing that the country is poor as the Divil. Now, how is that?

"The bag works was just short of money and management. Irishmen are not financiers. They are always getting into holes, and waiting for somebody to get them out. They have no self-reliance. You may hold them up by the scruff of the neck for years and years, and the moment you drop them they hate you like poison. Many shooting cases would show this if impartially looked into. Pity the English do not come over here more than they do. The people get along famously with individual Englishmen, and sometimes they wonder where all the murdering villains are of whom they hear from their spiritual and political advisers. A priest said in my hearing, 'Only the best men come over here. They are picked out to impose on you.' And the poor folks believed him. We want to know each other better. The English are just as ignorant as the Irish, in a way. They know no more of the Irish than the Irish know of them. The poor folks of Connaught firmly believe that they would be well off and able to save money but for the English that ruin the country. And here this Jute Bag Company is bursted up because it had not capital to carry on with. Belfast men or Englishmen would have made it a big success. It stopped because it could not raise enough money to buy a ship-load of jute, and was obliged to buy from hand to mouth from retailers.

"Take the wool trade. Everywhere over Ireland you will see Wool, Wool in big letters on placards for the farmers—notices of one sort or another. We are the centre of a wool district. Not a single wool factory, although the town is in every way fitted for excelling in the woollen trade. We have a grand river, and the people understand wool. They card and spin, and make home-made shawls and coat-pieces at their own homes, just for themselves, and there they stop. They are waiting for Home Rule, they say. Pass the bill, and factories will jump out of the ground like mushrooms. Instead of taking advantage of the means at their disposal, they are looking forward to a speculative something which they cannot define. The English are the cause of any trouble they may have, and an Irish Parliament will totally change the aspect of things. Everybody is [142] going to be well off, and with little or no work. The farmers are going to get the land for nothing, or next to nothing, and all heretics will be sent out of the country, or kept down and in their proper place."

Thus spake a well-to-do Protestant, born in Galway some sixty years ago, a half-breed Irish and Scotchman. I have now heard so many exasperating variations of this same tune, that I should be disposed, had I the power, to take a deep and desperate revenge by granting the grumblers Home Rule on the spot. It would doubtless serve them right, but England has also herself to consider.

Galway Town, May 13th.

No. 22.—THE LAND LEAGUE'S REIGN AT LOUGHREA.

ToC

This is the most depressing town I have seen as yet. Except on market and fair days, literally nothing is done. The streets are nearly deserted, the houses are tumbling down, gable-ends without side-walls or roofs are seen everywhere, nettles are growing in the old chimney corners, and the splendid ruins of the ancient abbey are the most cheerful feature of the place. A few melancholy men stand about, the picture of despondent wretchedness, a few sad-eyed girls wander about with the everlasting hood, hiding their heads and faces, a few miserable old women beg from all and sundry, and the usual swarm of barefooted children are, of course, to the fore. The shopkeepers display their wares, waiting wearily for market day, and dismally hoping against hope for better times. Everybody is in the doleful dumps, everybody says the place is going down, everybody says that things grow worse, that the trade of the place grows smaller by degrees and gradually less, that enterprise is totally extinguished, that there is no employment for the people, and no prospect of any. Those whose heads are just above water are puzzled to know how those worse off than themselves contrive to exist at all, and look towards the future with gloomiest foreboding. Like the man who quoted Christmas strawberries at twelve dollars a pound, they ask how the poor are going to live. The young men of the place seem to have quite lost heart, and no longer muster spirit enough to murder anybody. Loughrea is disloyal as the sea is salt. The man in the street is full of grievances. His poverty and ignorance make him the mark of lying agitators, who arouse in his simple soul implacable resentment for imaginary wrongs. A decent civil working-man named Hanan thus expressed himself:—

"The town was a fine business place until a few years ago, whin the Land League ruined it. Ah, thim was terrible times. We had murthers in the town an' all round the town. Perhaps the people that got shot desarved it, they say here that they did; but, all the same, the place was ruined by [143] the goin's on. It's no joke to kill nine or ten people in and about a quiet little place like this. An' ever since thin the place is goin' down, down, down, an' no one knows what will be the ind iv it. 'Tis all the fault of the English Governmint. The counthry is full of gowld mines, an' silver mines, an' copper mines, an' we're not allowed to work thim. Divil a lie I spake. The Government wouldn't allow us to bore for coal. Sure, we're towld by thim that knows all about it, men that's grate scholars an' can spake out iligant. Why wouldn't we be allowed to sink a coal mine in our own counthry? Why wouldn't we be allowed to get the gowld that's all through the mountains? 'Tis the English that wants iverything for thimsilves, an' makes us all starvin' paupers intirely."

This serves to indicate the kind of falsehoods palmed off upon these poor people in order to make them agitators or criminals. Hanan went on—

"Look at the Galway Bag Factory. I'm towld that's shutting up now. What'll the people do at all, at all, that was employed in it? An' the English Parlimint ordhers it to be closed because it turns out bags chaper than they can make thim in England, an' betther, and the English maker couldn't compate. Ye know betther? I wouldn't conthradict yer honour's glory, ye mane well; but I have it from them that knows. Look at the Galway marble quarries. There's two sorts o' marble in one quarry, an' tis grand stone it is, an' the quarries would give no ind iv imploymint to the poor men that's willin' to work. God help thim, but they're not allowed to cut a lump of stone in their own counthry. What stops them? Sure 'tis the English Government, an' what would it be else? A gintleman isn't allowed to cut a stone on his own land. All must come from England. Ye make us buy it off ye, an' us wid millions of pounds' worth of stone. Ah, now, don't tell me 'tis all rubbish. Sure, I have it sthraight from mimbers of Parlimint. Didn't the English Governmint send out soldiers an' policemen, wid guns an' swords, an' stop the men that wint to cut the stone in the marble quarries I was afther mintionin' to yer honour? Yes, 'twas the Land League that ruined this place, but 'twas the Governmint that made the Land League by dhriving the people into it. No, I wouldn't trust Gladstone or any other Englishman. They'll take care of thimselves, the English. We'll get no more than they can help. What we got out o' Gladstone we bate out o' him. We get nothing but what we conquered. Small thanks we owe, an' small thanks we'll give."

A small farmer said, "The rints isn't low enough. The judicial rints is twice too much, an' the price of stock what it is. We must have a sliding scale, an' pay rint according to the price of produce. We must have the land for half what we pay now. I wouldn't say anythin' agin' the English. I have two brothers there an' they come over here sometimes, an' from what they tell me I believe the English manes well. An' the English law isn't bad at all. 'Tis the administhration of [144] the law that's bad. We have the law, but 'tis no use to us because the landlords administhers it. Divil a bit o' compinsation can we get. An' if we want a pump, or a fence, or a bit o' repairs, we may wait for seven years, till our hearts break wid worryin' afther it. Thin we've our business to mind, an' we've not the time nor the money to go to law, even whin the law is with us an we have a clear case. The landlord has his agint, that has nothin' else to do but to circumvint us, so that the land laws don't do us the good that ye think over in England. Ye have grand laws, says you, an' 'tis thrue for you; but who works the laws? says I. That's where the trouble comes in. Who works the laws? says I.

"Thin ye say, ye can buy your farms all out, says you. But the landlords won't sell, says I. Look

at the Monivea disthrict. French is a good landlord enough, but he won't sell. The tinants want to buy, but if ye go to Monivea Castle ye'll have your labour for your pains. The agint is the landlord's brother, an' a dacent, good man he is. I have a relative over there, an' sorra a word agin aither o' thim will he spake. But when he wint to buy his farm, not an inch would he get."

This statement was so diametrically opposed to that of Mr. John Cook, of Londonderry, who said that the farmers had ceased to buy, owing to their belief that the land would shortly become their own on much better terms than they could at present obtain, that I tramped to Monivea, a distance of six miles from Athenry, for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, how far my Loughrea friend's assertion was borne out by facts. Monivea is a charming village, built round a great green patch of turf, whereon the children play in regiments. Imagine an oblong field three hundred yards long by one hundred wide, bounded at one end by high trees, at the other by a great manor house in ruins, the sides closed in by neat white cottages and a pretty Protestant Church, and you have Monivea, the sweetest village I have seen in Ireland. Here I interviewed four men, one of whom had just returned by the Campania from America, to visit his friends after an absence of many years. This gentleman was a strong Unionist, and ridiculed the idea of Home Rule as the most absurd and useless measure ever brought forward with the object of benefiting his countrymen. "What will ye do wid it when ye've got it?" he said; "sure it can never do ye any good at all. How will it put a penny in yer pockets, an' what would ye get by it that ye can't get widout it?" Two farmers thought they would get the land for a much lower rent. They said that although the landowner, Mr. French, was an excellent, kind, and liberal man, and that no fault at all could be found with his brother, the agent, yet still the land was far too dear, and that a large portion of it was worth nothing at all. "I pay eight and sixpence an acre for land that grows nothing but furze, that a few sheep can nibble round, an', begorra, 'tis not worth half-a-crown. Most iv it is worth just nothin' at all, an' yet I have to scrape together eight and sixpence an [145] acre," said he. "'Tis not possible to get a livin' out iv it."

"Thin why don't ye lave it?" said the man from Missouri.

"Why thin, how could I lave the bit o' ground me father had? Av ye offered me a hundhred acres o' land for nothin' elsewhere, I vow to God I would rather stay on the bit o' rock that grows heath and gorse, if I could only get a crust out iv it, far sooner," said the grumbler.

"An' d'ye think Home Rule will enable ye to do betther? Ye'll believe anythin' in Monivea. Ye are the same as iver ye wor. It's no use raisonin' wid yez at all. Sure, the counthry won't be able to do widout loans, an' who'll lind ye money wid an Irish Parlimint?"

"Why would we want money whin there's gowld to be had for the diggin', av we got lave to dig it?" said the man of Monivea.

The villagers believe that England prevents their mining for coal, gold, silver, copper; that the British Government tyrannically puts down all enterprise; that Home Rule will open mines, build railways, factories, institute great public works; that their friends will flock back from America; that all the money now spent out of the country will be disbursed in Ireland for Irish manufactures; that the land must and will become their own for nothing, or next to nothing; and in short, that simultaneously with the first sitting of an Irish Parliament an era of unprecedented prosperity will immediately set in. The two farmers confirmed what I have been told of the reluctance of the landlords to part with an acre of the land, and said that men had returned from America with money to buy farms, and after having wandered in vain over Ireland were fain to go back to the States, being unable to purchase even at a fancy price. They have been told this by persons in whom they had implicit trust, and I am sure they believed it. A fairly educated man, who had travelled, and from whom I expected better things, has since assured me that the stories about compulsory closing of mines and quarries had been dinned into him from infancy, and that he was of opinion that these assertions were well founded, and that they could not be successfully contradicted. Everywhere the same story of English selfishness and oppression. He cited a case in point. "Twenty years ago there was a silver mine in Kinvarra. It gave a lot of employment to the people of those parts, and was a grand thing for the country at large. The Government stepped in and closed it. I'm towld by them I can believe that 'twas done to keep us poor, so that they could manage us, because we'd not be able to resist oppression and tyranny, we'd be that pauperised. England does everything to keep us down. They have the police and the soldiers everywhere to watch us that we'd get no money at all. So when they see us starting a factory, or a fishery, or opening a mine or a quarry, the word comes down to stop it, and if we'd say No, this is our own country, and we'll do what we like in it, they'd shoot us down, and we couldn't help ourselves. I'm not sayin' that I want Home Rule or anything fanciful just for mere [146] sentiment. We only want our own, and Home Rule will give us our own."

The Home Rule party, the Nationalist patriots who know full well the falsity of these and such-like beliefs, are responsible for this invincible ignorance. Hatred and distrust of England are the staple of their teachings, which the credulous peasantry imbibe like mother's milk. The peripatetic patriots who invade the rural communities seem to be easy, extemporaneous liars, having a natural gift for tergiversation, an undeniable gift for mendacity, an inexhaustible fertility of invention. Such liars, like poets, are born, not made, though doubtless their natural gifts have been improved and developed by constant practice. Like Parolles, they "lie with such volubility that you would think Truth were a fool." The seed has been industriously sown, and John Bull is reaping the harvest. Is there no means of enlightenment available? Is there no antidote to this poison? I am disposed to believe that if the country were stumped by men of known position and integrity much good would be done. Leaflets bearing good names would have considerable effect. The result might not be seen at once, but the thing would work, and the people have less and less confidence in their leaders. The most unlettered peasant is a keen

judge of character, and, given time, would modify his views. The truth about the mines, given in clear and simple language, would have a great effect. Education is fighting for the Union. Time is all the Loyalists require. The National Schools must, in the long run, be fatal to political priestcraft and traitorous agitation.

To return to Loughrea. I walked a short distance out of the town to see the place where Mr. Blake, Lord Clanricarde's agent, was so foully murdered. A little way past the great Carmelite Convent I encountered an old man, who showed me the fatal spot. A pleasant country road with fair green meadows on each side, a house or two not far away, the fields all fenced with the stone walls characteristic of the County Galway. "'Twas here, Sorr, that the guns came over the wall. Misther Blake was dhrivin' to church, at about eleven o'clock o' a foin summer's mornin'. His wife was wid him, an' Timothy Ruane was runnin' the horse—a dacent boy was Tim, would do a hand's turn for anybody. The childer all swore by Tim, be raison he was the boy to give them half-pince for sweets and the like o' that. So they dhrove along, and whin they came tin yards from this, says Tim, sittin' in front wid the reins, says he, 'Misther Blake, I see some men at the back iv the ditch,' says he. 'Drive on, Tim,' says Misther Blake, 'sure that's nothin' to do with aither you or me.' An' the next instant both of thim wor in Eternity! Blake and poor Tim wor kilt outright on the spot, an' nayther of them spoke a word nor made a move, but jist dhropped stone dead, God rest their sowls. An' the wife, that's Misthress Blake, a good, kind-hearted lady she was, was shot in the hip, an' crippled, but she wasn't kilt, d'ye see. Blake was a hard man, they said, an' must have the rint. An' poor Tim was kilt the way he wouldn't tell o' the boys that did it. 'Twas slugs they [147] used, an' not bullets, but they fired at two or three yards, an' so close that the shot hasn't time to spread, an' 'tis as good as a cannon ball. Who were they? All boys belongin' to the place. Mrs. Blake dhropped, an' they thought she was dead, I believe. Some thinks she was shot by accident, an' that they did not mane to kill a wake woman at all. But whin they shot Tim, to kape his mouth shut, why wouldn't they shoot the woman?"

Seven men were arrested, and everybody in the place was believed to know the murderers. The police had no doubt at all that they had the right men. All were acquitted. No evidence was offered. No witness cared to meet the fate of Blake. Silence, in this case, was golden, and no mistake about it.

Walking from the railway station along the main street, in the very heart of the town, you see on your left the modest steeple of the Protestant church, some fifty yards down Church Street. The town is built on two parallel streets, and Church Street is the principal connecting artery, about a hundred yards long. Exactly opposite the church the houses on the right recede some five or six feet from the rank; and here poor Sergeant Linton met his death. He was an Antrim man, a Black Presbyterian, and a total abstainer. His integrity was so well known that he was exempted from attendance at the police roll-call. He was death on secret societies, and was thought to know too much. In the soft twilight of a summer's eve he left the main street and sauntered down Church Street. When he reached the indentation above-mentioned a man shot him with a revolver, and fled into the main street. The unfortunate officer gave chase, pursuing the assassin along the principal thoroughfare, his life-blood ebbing fast, until, on reaching the front of Nevin's Hotel, he fell dead. Arrests were made, and, as before, the criminal was undoubtedly secured. Again no evidence. The murderer was liberated, but he wisely left the country, and will hardly return. A policeman said: "There was no doubt about the case. The criminal was there. Everybody spotted the man, even those who did not see him shoot. But nobody spoke, and if they had spoken he would have got off just the same. The people of this happy country have brought the art of defeating the law to its highest perfection. The most ignorant peasants know all its weak spots, and they work them well, very well indeed, from their own point of view. Suppose ten of Linton's comrades had seen the shot fired, and that they had immediately caught the assassin, with the revolver in his hands. The jury would not have convicted him. Yes, I know that the judge in certain cases can set aside the verdict of the jury. If you did that in Ireland it would cost some lives. Wouldn't there be a shindy! And then there's strong judges and weak judges. Judges don't like being shot more than other people. And Irish judges are made of flesh and blood. Look at O'Halloran's case. I was in the Court when it was tried. A moonlighting case. The police caught a [148] man on the spot, with a rifle having a double load. The thing was clear as the sun at noonday. Acquitted. The jury said, 'Not guilty'; and the man went quietly home. The administration of justice with a weak judge, or with a strong judge who feels a weak Government behind him, is a farce in Ireland.

"What will happen if we do not get the Bill? I think there will be some disturbance—the ruffians are always with us—although the people do not want Home Rule. I mean, they don't care about it. The bulk of the people would not give sixpence for Home Rule. They have been told it will pay them well, and they go in for that. Not one of them would have Home Rule if it cost him a penny, unless he believed he'd get twopence for his outlay. It's the land, and nothing else. The party that puts the land question on a comfortable footing will rule Ireland for ever. That's the opinion of every man in the force, in Loughrea or elsewhere. We have a curiosity here—a priest who goes against Home Rule. A very great man he was, head of a college or something, not one of the common ruck, and he's dead against it, and says so openly. The *Tuam News* used to pitch into him, but he didn't care, so they got tired of it. No good rowing people up when they laugh at you."

An old woman of the type too common in Ireland came up as the officer left me, and said:—

"Musha, now, but 'tis the foin, handsome man ye are, an' ye've a gintleman's face on ye, bedad ye have, an,'" here she showed a halfpenny in her withered claw, "this is all I got since I kem out, and me that's twistin' wid the rummatacks like the divil on a hot griddle; the holy Mother o' God

knows its thrue, an' me ould man, that's seventy or eighty or more—the divil a one o' him knows his own age—he's that sick an' bad, an' that wake intirely, that he couldn't lift a herrin' wid a pair o' hot tongs; 'tis an ulster he has, that does be ruinin' him, the docthor says; bad luck to it for an ulster wid a powltice, an' he's growlin' that he has no tobacky, God help him. (Here I gave her something.) Almighty God open ye the gates in heaven, the Holy Mother o' God pour blessin's upon ye. 'Tis Englishmen I like, bedad it is; the grandest, foinest, greatest counthry in the wuruld, begorra it is—an' why not?"

This outburst somehow reminded me of a certain gentleman I met at the Railway Hotel, Athenry. He said, "I'm a Home Ruler out and out. The counthry's widin a stone's throw o' Hell, an' we may as well be in it althegither."

"Now, Mr. Kelly," said the charming Miss O'Reilly, "you are most inconsistent; you sometimes say you are a Conservative——"

"Aye, aye," assented Mr. Kelly, "but that's only when I'm sober!"

The Loughreans are quiet now, but the secret societies which dealt so lightly with human life are still at work, and the best-informed people believe that the murderous emissaries of the Land League, whose terrorism ruined the town, are only kept down by a powerful and vigilant police. I [149] have only described three of the murders which took place in the town and neighbourhood during a comparatively short period. Add Mr. Burke and driver Wallace; both shot dead near Craughwell. J. Connor, of Carrickeele, who had accepted a situation as bog-ranger, *vice* Keogh, discharged. Shot. Three men arrested. No evidence. Patrick Dempsey, who had taken a small farm from which Martin Birmingham had been evicted. Shot dead in the presence of his two small children, with whom he was walking to church. No evidence. No convictions, but many more crimes, both great and small. So many murders that outrages do not count for much.

It is to the men who are directly responsible for all these horrors that Mr. Gladstone proposes to entrust the government of Ireland.

Loughrea, May 16th.

No. 23.—THE REIGN OF INDOLENCE.

ToC

I have just returned from Innishmore, the largest of the Aran islands, the population of which have been lifted from a condition of chronic starvation and enabled to earn their own livelihood by the splendid organisation of Mr. Balfour for the relief of the congested districts. Postal and other exigences having compelled a hasty return to the mainland, I defer a full account of this most interesting visit until my next letter, when I shall also be in possession of fuller and more accurate information than is attainable on the island itself.

Meanwhile, let us examine the state of Irish feeling by the sad sea waves of Galway Bay. Salthill is a plucky little bathing place; that is, plucky for Ireland. It is easily accessible from Galway town, and looks over the bay, but it is more like a long natural harbour without ships. There is a mile or so of promenade with stone seats at intervals, a shingle dotted with big rocks, a modicum of slate-coloured sand, like that of Schevening, in Holland, and blue hills opposite, like those of Carlingford Lough. The promenade is kerbed by a massive sea wall of limestone, and here and there flights of stone steps lead to the water's edge. Facing the sea are handsome villas, with flower gardens, tidy gravelled walks, shrubberies, snowy window blinds and other appurtenances of a desperately Protestant appearance. No large hotels, no villas with "Apartments" on a card in the fanlight, no boatmen plying for hire, no boats even, either ashore or afloat; no bathing-machines no anything the brutal Saxon mostly needs, except fresh air and blazing sunshine. The Galway end of this fashionable resort has a few shady houses, aggressively Anglicised with names like Wave View House and Elm Tree View, the first looking at a whitewashed wall, the second at a telegraph post. But although some of these houses announce [150] "Furnished Lodgings," no English tourists would "take them on." If you want to bathe you walk into the sea as you stand, or hand your toga virilis to the bystanders, if any. The Connaught folks have no false modesty.

A white-haired gentleman descends from a wagonette and promenades for a while. Then he sits down beside me. The conversation turns on Home Rule. My friend is impatient, has been spending a few days in Belfast. The ignorance of the poor people is astonishing. A Roman Catholic of the Northern city told him that the first act of the Irish Parliament would be to level Cave Hill, and on the site thereof to build cottages for the poor. The hill was full of diamonds, which Queen Victoria would not allow the poor Irish folks to get. The country would be full of money. Didn't Mr. Gladstone say we'd have too much?—a clear allusion to the "chronic plethora." The people would have the upper hand, as they ought to have, and the first thing would be to evict the evictors. The only question was, would they clear out peaceably, or would it be

necessary to call in the aid of the Irish Army of Independence?

"This poor man evidently believed that every respectable person, everybody possessing means and property, was an enemy to the commonwealth. An ardent Home Ruler asked me if the majority had a right to rule. He thought that was a triumphant, an unanswerable question. I replied that during a long and busy life I had always observed how, in successful enterprises, the majority did not rule. The intelligent minority, the persons who had shown their wisdom, their industry, their sagacity, their integrity, that they were competent and reliable, those, I said, were the people who were entrusted with the management of great affairs, and not the many-headed mob. The management of Irish affairs promises to be a task of tremendous difficulty, and those to whom you propose to entrust this huge and complicated machinery stand convicted of inability to manage with even tolerable success such comparatively simple affairs as the party journal, or the rent collection of new Tipperary. Both these enterprises turned out dead failures owing to the total incapacity of the Irish Parliamentary party. And we are asked to entrust the future of the country to these men, whose only qualifications are a faculty for glib talk and an unreasonable hatred of everything English.

"Mr. Gladstone has shown to demonstration that statesmen are no longer to direct the course of legislation; are no longer to lead the people onward in the paths of progressive improvement. The unthinking, uneducated masses are in future to signify their will, and statesmen are to be the automata to carry out their behests, whatever they may be. The unwashed, unshorn incapables who have nothing, because they lack the brains and industry to acquire property, are nowadays told that they, and they alone, shall decide the fate of empires, shall decide the ownership of property, shall manipulate the fortunes of those who have raised themselves from the dirt by ability, self-denial, and unremitting hard work. Look at the comparative returns of the illiterate [151] electorate. In Scotland 1 in 160, in England 1 in 170, in Ireland 1 in 5. In one quarter of Donegal, a Catholic one, more illiterates than in all Scotland. Not that there is so much difference as these figures would seem to show. But if men who can write declare themselves illiterate, so that the priests and village ruffians may be satisfied as to how they individually voted, is not this still more deplorable? The conduct of the English Gladstonians passes my comprehension. They do not examine for themselves. They say Mr. Gladstone says so-and-so, and for them this is sufficient. Do they say their prayers to the Grand Old Man?"

Another Salthill malcontent said:—"An English visitor sneeringly asked me how it was that the Irish could not trust one another. I said, 'We cannot trust these men, and we can give you what ought to be a satisfactory reason for our distrust. They have been condemned as criminals by a competent tribunal, presided over by three English judges, one of them a Roman Catholic. They have been found guilty of criminal conspiracy, of sympathy with crime, and of having furnished the means for its committal, and that after the fairest trial ever held in the world. By a law passed in 1787 by Grattan's Parliament they would have suffered the punishment of death for this same criminal conspiracy. And, apart from Home Rule, leaving the present agitation altogether out of the question, the respectable classes of Ireland entirely object to be represented by such men, either at Westminster or College Green. Their conduct has done more to ruin Ireland than any other calamity which the country has endured for long ages. They have displayed an ingenuity of torture, and a refinement of cruelty, worthy of the Inquisition. Look at the case of District-inspector Murphy, of Woodford, in this county. Not by any means the worst of the tens of thousands of cases all over the country, but impressive to me because it came under my own observation. At the trial of Wilfrid Blunt, Mr. Murphy deposed upon oath that so severely was he boycotted for the mere performance of his duty, that his children were crying for bread, and that he was unable to give them any. Policemen had to bring milk from miles away. In other cases the pupils of these patriots, the preachers of the Land League, poured human filth into the water supply of their victims, who were in many cases ladies of gentle birth and children of tender years. Go up to Cong, and walk out to the place where Lord Mountmorres was murdered, near Clonbur. His whole income was £150 or £200, a poor allowance for a peer, one of the noble house of De Montmorency. He was shot in broad daylight, a dozen houses within call, and an open uncovered country, save for low stone walls, all around. The people danced in derision on the spot where he fell, and threw soil stained with his life blood in the air. He wanted his due, and, goodness knows, he was poor enough to satisfy oven an Irish agitator. His name was down for the next vacancy among the resident magistrates. The people who were guilty of inciting to those [152] outrages are the most prominent of the Nationalist party. Is this the class of men you wish to set over us as governors?"

An artist named Hamilton, a Guernsey man, said, "The English people do not understand what stonethrowing means in Ireland. They read of rows, and so long as no shooting is done, they do not think it serious. The men of Connaught are wonderful shots with big stones, and you would be surprised at the force and precision with which they hurl great lumps of rock weighing three or four pounds. Poor Corbett, a man in Lord Ardilaun's employ, was killed outright by one of these missiles, and only the other day I was reading of the Connaught Rangers in Egypt, the old 88th, how they were short of ammunition at the battle of Aboukir, and how they tore down a wall and actually stopped the French, who were advancing with the bayonet."

A Galway merchant said:—"Balfour is the man for Ireland. A Nationalist member told me he was the cleverest man in the House. He said, 'Chamberlain goes in for hard hitting, and he is very effective, but nobody ever answered the Irish members so readily and smartly as Balfour. We thought twice before we framed our questions, and although we of course disapprove of him, we are bound to admire him immensely.' And as a business man I think Balfour was fully up to the mark. He it was who subsidised the Midland and Western Railway to build the light line now

being made between Galway and Clifden. No company would have undertaken such a concern. As a mere business transaction it could not pay. But look at the good that is being done. The people were starving for want of employment, and no unskilled labour is imported to the district, so that the Connemara folks get the benefit of the work, and also a permanent advantage by the opening up of the Galway fisheries, which are practically inexhaustible. We have the Atlantic to go at. And the fish out of the deep, strong, running water are twice as big as those just off the coast, on herring-banks and shoals. The fishermen know this, and they call these places the mackerel hospitals and infirmaries. These fishermen always knew it, but they had no boats to go out to the deep seas, no nets, no tackle. They have them now, and they got them from Balfour. They get nothing but Home Rule from Morley and Gladstone, and they find it keeps them free from indigestion, although it puts their livers out of order. Amusing chaps, these fishermen. I was in a little country place on the coast, where the judicial and magisterial proceedings are of a very primitive character, and where most of the people speak Irish as their vernacular. One old chap declined to give evidence in English, and asked for an interpreter. The magistrate, who knew the old wag, said, 'Michael Cahill, you speak English very well,' to which the old man replied, '"Tis not for the likes o' me to conthradict yer honner, but divil resave the word iv it I ondhersthand at all, at all.' There was a great roar from the Court, and the interpreter was trotted forward. Another [153] witness was said to have been drunk, but he claimed to be a temperance man. 'What do you drink,' said the magistrate. 'Wather, yer honner,' said the total abstainer. 'Jist pure wather from the spring there beyant,' and then he looked round the Court, and slyly added, 'Wid jist as much whiskey as will take off the earthy taste, yer honner.' He was like the temperance lecturer who preached round Galway, and was afterwards seen crushing sugar in a stiff glass of the crathur at Oughterard. When he was caught redhanded, as it were, he said, 'To be sure I'm a timprance man, but, bedad, ye can't say that I'm a bigoted one'!

"We want Morley to give us a light railway from Clifden to Westport, and then we'd have the whole coast supplied. But he's a tight-fisted one as regards practical work. We've no chance with him, except in matters of sentiment. He wants to give Home Rule, but we can't eat that. And my impression is that we are fast drifting into the position of the man who has nothing, and from whom shall be taken the little that he hath. As to arguments against Home Rule, I do not think it a case for argument. That the thing is bad is self-evident; and self-evident propositions, whether in Euclid or elsewhere, are always the most difficult to prove. Ask me to prove that two added to two make four, ask me how many beans make five, and I gracefully retire. Ask me to show that Home Rule will be bad for Ireland, and I will make but a slight departure from this formula. I say, on the supporters of Home Rule rests the *onus probandi*; they are the people who should show cause, let them prove their case in its favour. Here I am, quite satisfied with the laws as they now are. Show me, say I, how I shall benefit by the proposed change. That knocks them speechless. In England they may make a pretence of proving their case, but in this country they are dumb in the presence of Unionists. They cannot argue with enlightened people. They have not a leg to stand upon, and they know it.

"Consider the fulminations of Archbishop Walsh with regard to that Dublin Freemason Bazaar in aid of orphan children. As you must have heard, the Sacraments were refused to any Catholic attending this purely charitable movement. The Church said in effect—Any one who aids the orphans of freemasons by going to this bazaar, or by patronising the function, whether directly or indirectly, will be damned everlastingly. And the Catholics kept away, frightened by this threat. What would you expect of a people who believe such rubbish? Do you think that a people powerfully influenced, supremely influenced, by the word of a priest are fit to govern themselves? Can you depend on the loyalty of the Catholic priesthood? You surely know better than that. Suppose you gave Ireland Home Rule, and the Church turned rusty? With matters in the hands of an Irish Parliament, who would have the pull in weight of influence, John Bull or the priests? You [154] are walking into a snare with your eyes open. Soon you will be punching your own head and calling yourself a fool. And you will be quite right. England is giving herself away at the bidding of a crowd of fellows who in Ireland are not received into decent society, and few of whom could get 'tick' for a week's board or a week's washing. Not that the latter would be much hardship. Clean linen is a novelty to the bulk of them. And seventy-one out of eighty of these upstarts must do the bidding of the priests.

"Poor old Bull! The fine fellow he was. Respected by everybody. Strong but good-humoured, never hurting a soul. Slapping his breeches pocket now and then, and looking round the world with an eye that seemed to say, 'I could buy and sell the lot of ye; look what a fine fellow I am!' And he was. And he knew it, too. His only fault. Ready to lend a deserving friend a trifle, and apt to poke his nose into what didn't concern him, especially when a small country was being put upon. Then John would come up and say, 'Let him alone, will yer.' A laughing-stock in his old age. But yesterday he might have stood before the world: now none so poor to do him reverence,—Shakespeare! That's what's coming. Poor old Bull! In his dotage making a rod to whip himself. Well, well."

There are Presbyterians at Salthill. Wherever they are they always wear good coats, have good houses, well-clad children. To be comfortably off seems part of their creed. One of them said, "There never was a more faithful worshipper of the Grand Old Man than myself,—up to a certain time, I mean. I dropped him before he went over to Parnell. I gave him up on account of his inconsistency. What staggered me was a trick he tried to play the Queen's College arrangements in Ireland. It was a supplemental charter really changing the whole constitution of the thing, and he tried to carry his point by a dodge. I did not care much about the matter one way or the other, but I thought his underhanded trickery unworthy a statesman, or any other man. I tried not to believe it; that is, I would rather not have believed it. I had a sort of feeling that it couldn't be.

But it was so. Then his pamphlet about Vaticanism, in which he said no Roman Catholic could be loyal, after which he appointed the Marquess of Ripon, a Catholic convert, or pervert, to the Governor-Generalship of India, the most important office in the gift of the Crown. Again, I had no objection to the action in itself, but I considered it from Mr. Gladstone's point of view, and then it dawned on me that he would say anything. You never know what he'll do next. What he says is no guide at all nowadays to what he'll do. He was my hero, but a change has come over him, and now he cannot be trusted. He ought to be looked after in some public institution where the keepers wouldn't contradict him. He was a great man before his mind gave way."

A bustling Belfaster of fatiguing vitality told me this little story which my friends the Catholic [155] clergy may disprove if they can. He said:—"Mr. McMaster, of the firm of Dunbar, McMaster and Co., of Gilford, County Down, conceived the idea of aiding his fellow-countrymen and women who were starving in the congested districts. This was some time ago, but it is a good illustration of the difficulty you have in helping people who will not help themselves. He drew up a scheme, well thought-out and workable, such as a thorough business man might be expected to concoct, and sent down his agent to the districts of Gweedore in Donegal and Maam in Galway, with instructions to engage as many families as possible to work in the mills of the firm, noted all over the world for thread, yarn, and linen-weaving. An enormous affair, employing a whole township. The agent was provided with a document emanating from the priest of the district into which they were invited to migrate, setting forth that no proselytism was intended, and that the migrants would be under the care of Catholic clergy. As they had neither money nor furniture worth moving, it was agreed to pay the cost of transit, and to provide clean, sweet cottages, ready furnished, and with every reasonable convenience. The furniture was to be paid for by instalments, but the cost of removal was to be a gift from Mr. McMaster, who was desirous of aiding the people without pauperising them. They were to work the ordinary factory hours, as enacted by statute, and to be paid the ordinary wages. But they were required to work regularly. No saints' days, no lounging about on the "pattherns" (patron saints' days), no in-and-out running, but steady, regular attendance. People who knew the Keltic Irish laughed at Mr. McMaster, but he had seen their poverty, their filth, their mud cabins, their semi-starvation, and he thought he knew. He offered them work, and everything they seemed to want, out of pure humanity.

"How many people moved to Gilford out of the two counties?"

"Peradventure there might be a hundred found, peradventure there might be fifty, thirty, twenty, ten."

"Guess again. Give it up? Not a single solitary soul accepted Mr. McMaster's offer. These are the people who are waiting for Home Rule. Much good may it do them."

A little Galway man became irate. "'Tis our birthright to hate England. That's why we want Home Rule that we may tache thim their place. I'd fight England, an' I'd do more." Here he looked sternly at the Ulsterman. "I'd do more, I say, I'd fight thim that'd shtand up for her. D'ye see me now?"

The Belfast man proved an awkward customer. He said, "You're too busy to fight anybody just now, you Nationalists. Wait till you've settled your differences, wait till you've cut each other's throats, wait till you've fought over the plunder, like the Kilkenny cats, till there's nothing left of you but the tail. Then we'll send down an army of owld women with besoms to sweep ye into the Atlantic. 'Twill be the first bath your Army of Independence ever got. 'Twill cool their courage and clean their hides at the same time."

The small Separatist was about to make an angry reply, when I interposed with an inquiry as to [156] his estimate of Mr. Gladstone.

"Ah," said the little man, with a pucker of his little nose, and a grand gesture of contempt, "sure he's not worth as much powdher as would blow him to hell."

His sentiment lacks novelty, but I quote him for the picturesqueness of his style.

Salthill, May 18th.

No. 24.—THE ARAN ISLANDS.

ToC

The Aran Islanders seem to have passed most of their time in a state of chronic starvation. The land seems to grow little but rock, and the burning of seaweed, the kelp trade, does not seem to have helped them much. True, the Atlantic was all before them, where to choose, but what Father Mahony would call the teeming treasures of the deep were practically left untouched. If we accept the plain meaning of the good priest's speech, we must believe that the Aran Islanders and Irish fishermen generally preferred to starve rather than to catch fish, unless an Irish Parliament were fixed on College Green. They had no objection to accept charitable aid, no matter from what quarter it came, and the Araners required assistance every other year. They were not unwilling to catch fish, but they had nothing to catch them with; and, strange as it may seem, these islanders, who could scarcely move five yards in any direction without falling into the sea, these amphibious Irishmen, did not know the art of catching fish! They tinkered and slopped around the shoals in the vicinity of the island, but they were never able to catch enough fish to keep themselves from starvation, much less to supply the Dublin and London markets. Their boats were the most primitive affairs imaginable, and showed the Irish spirit of conservatism to perfection. These coraghs are practically the same boat as the Welsh coracle, but much larger. Those I examined were from ten to fifteen feet long and three feet wide. Oak ribs, over which are nailed laths of white deal, two inches wide and half an inch thick. Cover this slight skeleton with tarred canvas, and the ship is nearly complete. It only needs two pairs of wooden thole-pins, and two pairs of oars, long, light, and thin, coming nearly to a point at the water-end, having a perforated block which works on the thole-pins before-mentioned. You want no keel, no helm, no mast. Stay! You need a board or two for seats for the oarsmen. With these frail cockleshells the Araners adventure themselves twelve miles on the Atlantic, and mostly come home again. These makeshift canoes are almost useless for catching fish. Having no helm, it is hard to keep them straight; having no keel, it is needful to sit still, or at any rate to maintain a perfect balance, or over you go. A gust of wind spins the canoe round like a top. These primeval boats are made on [157] the island, thrown together out of fifteen-pennyworth of wood, a few yards of canvas, and a pitch-pot. They have some virtues. They are cheap, and they will not sink. The coraghs always come back, even if bottom up. And when they reach the shore the two occupants (if any) invert the ship, stick a head in the stem and another in the stern, and carry her home to tea. This process is apt to puzzle the uninformed visitor, who sees a strange and fearful animal, like a huge black-beetle, crawling up the cliffs. He begins to think of "antres huge and deserts vast, and anthropophagi, and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders." He hesitates about landing, but if he be on the Duras, Captain Neal Delargy, who equally scoffs at big beetles and Home Rule, will explain, and will accompany him to the tavern on the cliff side, where they charge ordinary prices for beer and give you bread-and-cheese for nothing. And yet the Araners profess to be civilised.

In pursuance of his policy of helping the people to help themselves, Mr. Balfour determined to educate the Araners, and to give them sufficient help in the matter of boats and tackle to make their education of some avail. It was useless to give them boats and nets, for they knew not how to use them, and it is certain that any boat club on the Birmingham Reservoir, or any tripper who has gone mackerel fishing in Douglas Bay, could have given these fishermen much valuable information and instruction. Having once determined to attempt on a tolerably large scale the establishment of a fresh mackerel and fresh herring trade with England, Mr. Balfour set about the gigantic and discouraging task of endeavouring nothing less than the creation of the local industry. But how were the people to be taught the management of large boats, and the kind of nets that were used? After much inquiry, it was decided to subsidise trained crews from other parts of Ireland to show the local fishermen what earnings might be theirs, and at the same time to impart needful instruction to the Connemara and Aran people. It was also arranged to make loans for the purchase of boats and tackle to such persons as might prove likely to benefit by them. Accordingly arrangements were made with the crews of seven Arklow boats to proceed to the Aran Islands, and in order to indemnify them for the risk of working on an untried fishing ground, each crew received a bounty of £40 from the Congested Districts Board. But there was no use in catching fish unless it could be quickly put on the market, and again the necessary plant proved a matter involving considerable expenditure. A derelict Norwegian ship, which two or three years ago had been discovered at sea and towed into Queenstown Harbour, was purchased from the salvors, and anchored in Killeany Bay, outside the harbour of Kilronane, the capital city of the biggest Aran, as an ice-hulk. The Board then entered into an agreement with Mr. W.W. Harvey, of Cork, to market the mackerel at a fixed rate of commission, it being also arranged that he should pay the fishermen the English market price less by a deduction of 7s. a [158] box to cover the cost of ice-packing, carriage, and English salesman's commission. The ice-hulk and boxes were provided by the Board, but Mr. Harvey was to purchase the ice and defray all the cost of labour except the salary of a manager.

In addition to the seven Arklow crews two boats were fitted out by Miss Mansfield for training crews from the parish of Carna, in Connemara; and Miss Skerritt also placed two English-built boats at the Board's disposal for the training of crews from the pretty watering place of Clifden, also in Connemara. An Aran hooker, belonging to Innishmore, joined the little fishing fleet, bringing up the number to exactly a dozen boats. The Rev. W.S. Green, a Protestant parson, who is said to have first discovered these fishing grounds, and who threw himself into the work with wonderful enthusiasm, superintended the experiment in the steamer Fingal, which was specially chartered for the purpose. Mr. Green as a skilled Fisheries Inspector, knew what he was about, and he was empowered to lend nets, where advisable, to the Aran beginners. Away they went to sea, to start with a fortnight's heart-breaking luck. The water in those regions was cold, and the fish were amusing themselves elsewhere. The ice-hulk with its two hundred tons of Norwegian

ice was waiting, and its staff of packers might cool their ardour in the hold. The mackerel would not come to be packed, and the dozen boats, with their master and apprentice crews, cruised up and down on the deep blue sea, with the blue sky overhead, and hope, like Bob Acres' valour, gradually oozing out of their finger-ends. The Arklow men began to talk of going home again. Altogether it was a blue look-out.

At last the luck turned. On April 6th, 1892, six thousand mackerel were despatched to the English market. The weather during much of the season was stormy and unfavourable, but on May 18th, seventy-three thousand three hundred and fifty mackerel were sent to Galway, thirty miles away by sea, and were forwarded thence by two special trains. The Midland and Western Railway, under the management of Mr. Joseph Tatlow, has been prompt, plucky, and obliging, and runs the fish to Dublin as fast as they arrive in Galway. During the season of ten weeks the experienced Arklow crews made on an average £316 per boat, and the greenhorns who were learning the business earned about £70 per boat, although they could not fish at all at the beginning of the season. The total number of mackerel packed on the ice-hulk amounted to the respectable total of two hundred and ninety-nine thousand four hundred and eighty. The "teeming treasures of the deep" were not left untouched on this occasion, though, doubtless, "still the Irish peasant mourns, still groans beneath the cruel English yoke."

Mr. Balfour's benefactions have not been confined to the Aran Islands. Every available fishing place from top to bottom of the whole west coast has been similarly aided, and the value of their produce has increased from next to nothing to something like fifty thousand pounds per month. [159]
This on the authority of Father P.J. McPhilpin, parish priest of Kilronane, Innishmore, who said:—

"We never had a Chief Secretary who so quickly grasped the position, who so rapidly saw what was the right thing to do, and who did it so thoroughly and so promptly. Strange to say the Liberals are always the most illiberal. When we get anything for Ireland it somehow always seems to come from the Tories."

Having been carried from Galway to the ice-hulk in Killeany Bay, and having been duly put ashore in a boat, one of the first persons I saw was Father Thomas Flatley, coadjutor of Father McPhilpin, an earnest Home Ruler, like his superior, and like him a great admirer of Mr. Balfour. Father Flatley wore a yachting cap, or I might have sheered off under all sail—the biretta inspires me with affright—but his nautical rig reassured me, and yawing a little from my course, I put up my helm and boarded him. Too late I saw the black flag—I mean the white choker—but there was nothing of the pirate about Father Tom. He was kindly, courteous, earnest, humorous, hospitable, and full of Latin quotations. Before our acquaintance was two minutes old he invited me to dinner. Then I ran aground on an Arklow boatman, James Doyle by name, a smart tweed-suited sailor, bright and gay. The Post Office was near, and the letters were being given out. Three deliveries a week, weather permitting. The parish priest was there, grave, refined, slightly ascetic, with the azure blue eyes so common in Connaught, never seen in England, although frequently met with in Norway and North Germany. The waiting-women were barefoot, but all the men were shod. The Araners have a speciality in shoes—pampooties, to wit. These are made of raw hide, hair outwards, the toe-piece drawn in, and the whole tied on with string or sinew. The cottages are better built than many on the mainland. Otherwise the winter gales would blow them into the Atlantic main. The thatch is pegged down firmly, and then tied on with a close network of ropes. The people are clean, smart, and good-looking. Miss Margaret Flanagan, who escorted me in my search after pampooties, would pass for a pretty girl anywhere, and the Aran Irish flowed from her lips like a rivulet of cream. She spoke English too. An accomplished young lady, Miss Margaret Kilmartin, aged nineteen, said her father had been wrongfully imprisoned for two and a half years for shooting a bailiff. The national sports are therefore not altogether unknown in the Arans. Miss Kilmartin was *en route* for America, per Teutonic, first to New York, and then a thousand miles by rail, alone, and without a bonnet. She had never been off the island. This little run would be her first flutter from the paternal nest.

The Araners know little of politics, save that the Balfour Government lifted them out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set their feet upon a rock and established their goings. The Balfour boats are there, the Balfour nets are full of fish, the Balfour boys are learning a useful [160]
occupation, and earning money meanwhile. If there is anything in the Aran cupboards, the Araners know who enabled them to put it there. If the young ladies have new shoes, new shawls, new brooches; if the Aran belles make money by mending nets; if the men sometimes see beef; if they compass the thick twist; if they manage without the everlasting hat going round, they have Mr. Balfour to thank, and they know it. They own it, not grudgingly or of necessity, but cheerfully. One battered old wreck raised his hat at every mention of the name. I saw no Morley boats. I saw no Gladstone nets. I saw no Home Rule fish. The Araners do not care for the Grand Old Mendacium. Perhaps they lack patriotism. It may be that they do not share what Mr. Gladstone calls the Aspirations of a people. So far as I could judge, their principal aspiration is to get something to eat. A pampootied native who has often visited the main-land, and is evidently looked upon as a mountain of sagacity and superior wisdom, said to me—

"Not a bit they care but to look afther the wife and childher an' pray to God for good takes o' fish. An' small blame to thim. Before Balfour the people were starvin', an' ivery other year Father Davis that's dead this six months would go round beggin' an' prayin' for a thrifle to kape life in thim. The hardships and the misery the poor folks had, God alone knows. An' would ye say to thim, 'tis Home Rule ye want?

"There was a young fellow fishin' here from Dublin. He went out in the hookers an' injoyed himself all to pieces, a dacent sthrip of a boy, but wid no more brains than a scalpeen (pickled mackerel). He got me to be interpreter to an owld man that would spake wid him over on

Innishmair, an' the owld chap wos tellin' his throubles. So afther a bit, the young fellow says, says he,

"'Tis Home Rule ye want,' says he.

"'No,' says the owld chap, shakin' his head, 'tis my dinner I want,' says he.

"An' that young fellow was mad whin I thranslated it. But 'twas thrue, ivery word iv it. 'Ah! the ignorance, the ignorance,' says he. But then he was spakin' on a full stomach, an' 'tis ill arguin' betwixt a full man and a fastin'.

"I wouldn't say but they'd take more notice afther a while. But they're not used to bein' prosperous, an' they don't know themselves at all. Ye can't cultivate politics on low feed. 'Tis the high livin' that makes the Parliamint men that can talk for twenty-four hours at a sthretch. An' these chaps is gettin' their backs up. In twelve months' time they'll be gettin' consated. 'Tis Balfour that's feedin' thim into condition. Vote against him? Av coorse they will, ivery man o' thim. Sure they'll be towld to vote for a man, an' they'll do it. How would they ondhersthand at all? Av 'twas Misther Balfour himself that wanted their vote he'd get it fast enough. But 'tisn't. An' they'll vote agin' him without knowin' what they're doin'."

Father McPhilpin said, "It is very hard to get them to move. The Irish people are the most [161] conservative in the world. They will not stir for telling, and they will not stir when you take them by the collar and haul them along. They are wedded to the customs of their ancestors; and yet, when once they see the advantage to be obtained by any given change, no people are so quick to follow it up. The difficulty is to start them. The Araners had actually less knowledge of the sea, of boats, nets, and fishing, than people coming here from an inland place. Surprising, but quite true."

Speaking on the general question of Home Rule, I asked Father McPhilpin if the people of Ireland would be loyal.

"Loyal to what?" said the Father, replying quickly.

"Loyal to England, to the Crown, to Queen Victoria."

"The Irish people have always been loyal—much more loyal than the English people. You have only to look at English history. How far shall I go back, Father Tom?" said my genial host to the coadjutor, who just then entered the room. "Shall we go back to Henry II.? Where shall we begin, Father Tom?"

"Well," said Father Tom, "I'd not be for going back quite so far. I think if we began with Charles I.——"

"Very good. Now, were not the Irish loyal when the English people disloyally favoured their Oliver Cromwell and their William the Third?"

I proceeded with the imbibition of Father McPhilpin's excellent tea. The answer was obvious, but Father Tom clearly believed that his senior had me on the hip, and good-naturedly came in with a Latin quotation or two. Both clerics were deeply interested in the condition of the poor in their charge, and indeed all over Ireland, and their profound belief that a Home Rule Bill would benefit the poorer classes, by changing the conditions affecting the tenure or ownership of land, was apparently their chief reason for advocating a College Green Parliament. Father McPhilpin holds some honorary official position in connection with the Aran fisheries, and from him I derived most of my information. Another authority assured me that the Araners were not grateful to England nor to Mr. Balfour, and spoke of the viper that somebody warmed in his bosom with disagreeable results. But, as Father Tom would say, *Omnis comparatio claudicat*, and all my experience points to a proper appreciation of the great ex-Secretary's desire to do the country good. The people know how thoroughly he examined the subject; how he spent weeks in the Congested Districts; how he saw the parish priests, the head men of the districts, the cotters themselves. Every Irishman, whatever his politics, will readily agree that Mr. Balfour knows more about Ireland than any Englishman living, and most of them credit him with more knowledge of the subject than any Irishman. My thorough-going friend, Mr. McCoy, of Galway, hater of England, avowed Separatist, longing to wallow in the brutal Saxon's gore, thinks Mr. Balfour the best friend that Ireland ever had. "I'd agree with you there," said Mr. McCoy. "I don't agree with charity, but I agree with putting people in a way to do things for themselves, which is what Mr. [162] Balfour has done."

Back on the ice-hulk by favour of Thomas Joyce, of Kilronane, skipper and owner of a fishing smack. Mr. William Fitzgerald showed the factory, the great hold with the ice, the windmill which pumps the hulk, the mountains of boxes for fish, the mackerel in process of packing, sixty in a box, most of them very large fish. An unhappy halibut, which had come to an untimely end, stood on his tail in a narrow basket, his mouth wide open, looking like a Home Rule orator descanting on the woes of Ireland. He was slapped into a box and instantly nailed down, which summary process suggested an obvious wish.

Mr. Fitzgerald said: "The fisheries have been a great success, and have done much good. The spring fishery paid well on account of the great price we got for the mackerel. It is not customary to catch fish so early, but when you can do it it pays splendidly. Just now the price is not up to the mark, but we hope for better times. The Arklow men are not subsidised this year. They didn't need it. The ground proved productive, and they were glad to come on their own hook. If they had required a second subsidy they would not have got it."

"Why not?"

"I'm no politician," said Mr. Fitzgerald. "The Araners are so strong and hardy that they would surprise you. They will stand all day on the ice, with nothing on but those pampooties, and you would think they'd need iron soles, instead of a bit of skin. They work hard, and come regularly and give no trouble. No, I could not find any fault with them. They mostly speak Irish among themselves. It's Greek to me, but I can make out that they think a great deal of Mr. Balfour."

A week on the hulk would be refreshing, for on one side there is no land nearer than America. However, I have to go, for the Duras is getting uneasy, so I leave the hulk, the mackerel, the big sea trout which are caught with the mackerel, and steam back to Galway. A splendid fellow in the cabin discloses his views. "We must have complete independence. We shall start with 120,000 men for the Army of Independence. That will be only a nucleus. We shall attract all the brave, chivalrous, adventurous spirits of America. England has India to draw from. Trot your niggers over, we'll make short work of them. We draw from America, Australia, every part of the world. We draw from 24,000,000 of Irishmen all willing to fight for nothing, and even to pay money to be allowed to fight against England. An Irish Republic, under the protection of America. That's the idea. It's the natural thing. Work the two countries together and England may slide. We'll have an Independent Irish Republic in four years; perhaps in three years. Rubbish about pledges of loyalty. The people must be loyal to themselves, not to England. Our members will do what the people want, or they will be replaced by men who will. We have the sentiments of the people, [163] backed by the influence of religion, all tending to complete independence. Who's going to prevent it? We'll have a Declaration of Independence on Saint Patrick's Day, 1897, at latest. Who'll stop it? Mr. Gladstone? Why long before that time we'll convert him, and ten to one he'll draw up the document. What'll you bet that he doesn't come over to Dublin and read it in THE HOUSE?"

Galway, May 20th.

No. 25.—THE PRIESTS AND OUTRAGE. THEY NEVER CONDEMNED IT.

ToC

The people of Moycullen with whom I have spent a day are hardly patriotic. So far as I can gather, they have always paid their rents and worked hard for their living. They know nothing of Home Rule, and they do not murder their friends and neighbours. They send forth a strong contingent of men to work on Mr. Balfour's railway between Galway and Clifden, and find the weekly wages there earned very convenient. They vote as they are told, and do not trouble themselves with matters which are too high for them. If a candidate proposes to make the land much cheaper, or even to spare the necessity of paying any rent at all, the Moyculleners give him their voice. Like every Catholic villager in Ireland they look to Father Pat, Tom, Dick, or Harry for advice, and the good priest gives them the right tip. He points out that Micky O'Codlin promises to support such legislation as shall place the land in the hands of the tillers of the soil, while the Protestant Short declares that the thing is not honest, and cannot be done. The result is precisely what might be expected. The Nationalist members are returned, and Mr. Gladstone, with his most grandiose manner, and with the abject magnanimity he always shows when thoroughly beaten, comes forward and declares he can no longer resist the aspirations of a people. The Separatist sheep tumble over each other in their nervous anxiety to keep close on the heels of the bell-wether, and the Empire is threatened with disintegration to suit the convenience of a party of priests. An eminent Roman Catholic lawyer of Dublin, a Home Ruler, said to me:—

"I vote for Home Rule because the sooner the thing is settled the better, and it will never be settled until we get Home Rule in some form or other. The country is weary of the agitation of the last twenty years, and I am of opinion that Home Rule would do much to restore the freedom of Ireland. For Ireland is in a state of slavery—not to England, but to the priesthood. I believe in the fundamental doctrines of the faith, but I don't believe everything the priests choose to tell me. I am ready to admit that they have more spiritual gifts and graces than anybody else, but I will not believe that they know more about politics, and I will not submit to their dictation. They control [164] the course of affairs both sacred and secular. At the present moment they are running the British Empire. You cannot get away from the fact that they return the Irish majority, and you will admit that the Irish majority is now the ruling power. Let me illustrate my point.

"You in England think we have the franchise in Ireland. Nothing of the kind. There may be a hundred thousand in the North who vote as they think proper, but an overwhelming majority of the South are absolutely in the hands of the clergy, who in many cases lead or drive them in hundreds to the poll."

Here an English civil engineer said:—"When I was engaged on a line at Mayo I actually saw the priest walking in front of some hundreds of voters brought into the town from the rural districts. I was driving along in a car, and my driver shouted 'Parnell for ever!' He was struck on the head and face, his cheek cut open, and himself knocked off the car. How the priestly party do hate the

Parnellites! I wonder what would happen if the Nationalists got into power."

"They would exterminate each other, if possible," said the Dublin man. "We should have an awful ferment, a chaos, an immediate bankruptcy. But let us have it. Let us make the experiment, and thus for ever settle the question. To return to the priests. The people of Ireland have not the franchise, which is monopolised by a few thousand priests and bishops. The Nationalist members, the dauntless seventy-one, are as much the nominees of the Catholic clergy as the old pocket-borough members were nominees of the local landlords. And the same thing will hold good in future. People tell you it will not be so, but that's all humbug. It may be different in five-and-twenty years, when the people are educated, when the National Schools have done their work, but half that time is enough to ruin England. Thanks to agitators, Ireland cannot be any worse off than she is."

Some time ago there was a Convention in Dublin, a Home Rule Convention. There were five hundred delegates, sent up by the votes of the people. Four hundred and nine were priests, who had returned themselves. Can the English Gladstonians get away from the suggestiveness of this fact? Is it sufficiently symptomatic? Can they not diagnose the progress of the disease?

One of the Galway Town Commissioners, also a Roman Catholic, declared that the Irish people, once the kindliest, most honest, most conscientious amongst the nations of the earth, had for years been taught a doctrine of malevolence. "They were naturally benevolent, but their nature has been changed, and I regret to say that in a large measure the priests are responsible for the change. Where once mutual help and perfect honesty reigned, you now find selfishness and mutual distrust. The priests have made the altar a hustings, and even worse than electioneering has been done on that sacred spot. From the altar have been denounced old friends and neighbours who had dared to have an opinion of their own, had dared to show an independent [165] spirit, and to hold on what they thought the true course in spite of the blackguard population of the district. Take the case of O'Mara, of Parsonstown. He was the principal merchant of the place, a very kindly man, of decided politics, a Catholic Conservative, like myself. He sold provisions to what the local priest called the 'helmeted minions of our Saxon taskmasters.' In other words, he sold bread to the constabulary at a time when outrage and murder were being put down with a strong hand. The priest threatened him with boycotting, his friends urged him to give way, and let the police get their 'prog' from a distance, but O'Mara, who was an easy-going man, and who had never obtruded his politics on anyone, showed an unexpected obstinacy, and said he would do as he chose, spite of all the priests on earth. They denounced him from the altar, but, although they tried hard, they failed to ruin him. In other cases, clerical influence has dragged men from positions of competency and caused them to end their days in the workhouse. Then, again, the priests never denounced outrage. They might have stopped the fiendish deeds of the murderous blackguards whose evil propensities were fostered and utilised by the Land League, but they said no word of disapproval. On the contrary they tacitly favoured, or seemed to favour, the most awful assassinations. When the Phœnix Park murders took place, a Galway priest whom I will not name said that he had been requested to ask for the prayers of the faithful in favour of Mr. Burke, one of the murdered men, who belonged to an old Galway family. And what was the remark made by that follower of Jesus Christ? He said, 'I have mentioned the request. You can pray for his soul—*if you like*.' What he meant was plain enough."

"Let me tell you of something even worse," said the Dublin lawyer. "In a certain Catholic church which I regularly attend, and on a Sunday when were present two or three eminent Judges, with a considerable number of the Dublin aristocracy, a certain dignitary, whom I also will not name before our Sassenach friend, actually coupled the names of honest people who had died in their beds with the names of Curley and the other assassins who were hanged for the Phœnix Park murders. We were invited to pray for their souls *en bloc*! And this, mind you, not at the time of the execution, but a year afterwards, on the anniversary of the day, and when the thing might well have been allowed to drop. Did you ever hear of anything more outrageous than the conduct of this priest, who took upon himself to mention these brutal murderers in the same breath with the blessed departed, whose friends and relations were kneeling around? The fact that this cleric could so act shows the immunity of the Irish priesthood, and their confidence in their influence over the people. Don't forget that this was in the capital of Ireland, and that the congregation was aristocratic. How great must be priestly influence over the unlettered peasantry. You see my point? What would the English say to such an exhibition? What would the [166] relatives of decent people in England do if they had been submitted to such an insult by a Protestant parson?"

I disclaimed any right to speak for the brutal Saxon with any degree of authority, but ventured to say that to the best of my knowledge and belief the supposititious reverend gentleman, when next he took his walks abroad, might possibly become acquainted with a novel but vigorous method of propulsion, or even might undergo the process so familiar to Tim Healy, not altogether unconnected with a horsewhip.

The Galway Town Commissioner said:—"We respectable Catholics are in a very awkward position. We have to live among our countrymen who are of a different way of thinking, and unhappily we cannot express our honest opinions without embarassing consequences. In England, where people of opposite politics meet on terms of most sincere friendship, you do not understand our difficulties. We are denounced as unpatriotic, as enemies to our native land, and as aiders and abettors of the hated English rule. Now we know very well—my friend from Dublin, who understands law, will bear me out—we know very well that the English laws are good, excellent, liberal. We know that the English people are anxious to do what is fair and right, and that they have long been doing their best to make us comfortable. But we must keep this

knowledge to ourselves, for such of us who are in business would run great risk of loss, besides social ostracism, if we ventured to boldly express our views. Moreover, we do not care to put ourselves in open conflict with the clergy, upon whom we have been taught to look from earliest childhood with reverence and awe. It is almost, if not quite, a matter of heredity. I declare that, in spite of what I might call my intellectual convictions, I am to some extent overawed by any illiterate farmer's son, who has been ordained a priest. I feel it in my blood. I must have imbibed it with my mother's milk. No use for Conservative Catholics to kick against it. We are too few, and we are bound hand and foot."

So did the Galway man deliver himself. I was reminded of Mr. O'Ryan, of Larne, a devoted Catholic, who said, "I protest from my innermost heart against Home Rule. I protest not only for myself, but also on behalf of my co-religionists that dare not speak, because if they did speak their lives might not be worth an hour's purchase, not being situated, as I am, in the midst of a loyal, and law-abiding population. I believe that all that Ireland requires is a just settlement of the land question, and a fair, reasonable measure of local self-government. For several generations past England has been doing all the good she could for Ireland, and none have more reason than the Roman Catholics of Ireland to be thankful for that good. The loyal Roman Catholics of Ireland are convinced that Home Rule would be the ruin of Ireland in particular and of the British Empire in general, which would find itself deprived in a few hours of a Constitution the workmanship of centuries, and the admiration of the whole nineteenth-century civilisation."

This is tolerably outspoken for an Irish Roman Catholic, but Mr. O'Ryan lives in Ulster, where [167]
people do not shoot their neighbours for difference of political opinion. He said more: "We loyal Catholics could never submit to Mr. Gladstone's ticket-of-leave men placed in power over us in this country, and rather than submit to them we are prepared for the worst, and ready, if need be, to die with the words, 'No surrender,' on our lips."

Archbishop Walsh cursed the Dublin Bazaar for the Irish Masonic Orphanage until he was black in the face, but neither he nor any other Catholic Bishop denounced the perpetrators of outrage, of mutilation, of foul assassinations. When Inspector Martin was butchered on the steps of the presbytery at Gweedore; when Joseph Huddy and John Huddy were murdered and their bodies put in sacks and thrown into Lough Mask; when Mrs. Croughan, of Mullingar, was murdered because she had been seen speaking to the police, four shots being fired into her body; when Luke Dillon, a poor peasant, was shot dead as he walked home from work; when Patrick Halloran, a poor herdsman, was shot dead at his own fireside; when Michael Moloney was murdered for paying his rent; when John Lennane, an old man who had accepted work from a boycotted farmer, was shot dead in the midst of his family; when Thomas Abram met precisely the same fate under similar circumstances; when Constable Kavanagh was murdered; when John Dillon had his brains beaten out and his ears torn away; when Patrick Freely was murdered for paying his rent; when John Curtin was shot dead by moonlighters, to whom he refused to give up his guns; when John Forhan, a feeble old man of nearly seventy years, was murdered for having induced labourers to work on a boycotted farm; when James Ruane, a labourer who worked for a boycotted farmer, was murdered by three shots; when James Quinn was wounded by a bullet, and while disabled, killed by having his throat cut; when Peter McCarthy was murdered because it was thought he meant to pay rent; when James Fitzmaurice, aged seventy, was shot dead in the presence of his daughter Norah, because he had taken a farm which his brother had left, the latter declining to pay rent, although the landlord offered a reduction of 66 per cent.; when Margaret Macmahon, widow, and her little children were three times fired at because the poor woman had earned a few pence by supplying turf to the police; when Patrick Quirke, aged seventy-five, was murdered for taking a farm which somebody else wanted; when the wife of John Collins was indecently assaulted while her husband was being brutally beaten for caretaking; when John Curtin (another John Curtin), a school-master, was shot, and his wife received forty-two slugs in her face, neck, and breast for something they had not done, the school also being fired into, and all children attending it boycotted; when John Connor's wife was shot in the head by moonlighters who wished to vex the husband; when Cornelius Murphy was shot dead while sitting at his "ain fireside" chatting with his wife and children; when Daniel O'Brien, aged seventy-five, talking with his wife, aged seventy, was murdered by a shot; when Patrick Quigley [168]
had the roof of his skull blown away for taking some grazing; when David Barry was shot in the main street of Castleisland; when Patrick Taugney was murdered in the presence of his wife and daughters; when Edmund Allen was shot dead because of a right-of-way dispute—he was a Protestant; when young Cashman, aged twenty, was beaten to death for speaking to a policeman; when poor Spillane was murdered for acting as a caretaker; when Patrick Curtin, John Rahen, and a farmer named Tonery were murdered; when James Spence, aged sixty-five, was beaten to death; when Blake, Ruane, Linton, Burke, Wallace, Dempsey, Timothy Sullivan, John Moylan, James Sheridan, and Constable Cox were shot dead; when James Miller, Michael Ball, Peter Greany, and Bridget McCullagh were murdered—the last a poor widow, who was beaten to death with a spade; when Ryan Foley was brutally murdered; when Michael Baylan was murdered; when Viscount Mountmorres was murdered, and the dead body left on the road, the neighbouring farmers being afraid to give the poor corpse the shelter of a barn; when a car-driver named John Downey was killed by a bullet intended for Mr. Hutchins, J.P.; when young Wheeler, of Oolagh, whence I dated a letter, was shot dead, to punish his father, who was an agent—when all these murders took place, every one of them, and as many more, the work of the Land League, which also was responsible for more outrages, filthy indecencies, and gross brutalities than the entire *Gazette* would hold, and which would in many cases be unfit for publication—then were the clergy SILENT. No denunciations from the altar; no influence exerted in the parish. In many cases a direct encouragement to persevere in the good path. When John

Curtin's daughters attended church after their father's murder they were attacked by a hostile crowd. The police were compelled to charge the infuriated mob. Otherwise the pious Papists would in all probability have consummated the good work by murdering the remainder of the family, after having, in the presence of daughters who nobly fought the murderers, assassinated the father.

What did the good priest, Father O'Connor, say to all this; how express his deep sense of this abject cowardice, this atrocious savagery, this unheard-of-sacrilege?

He "took no notice of the occurrence"—good, easy man. But I am forgetting something. Mr. Curtin was killed by a gang of moonlighters, who knocked him up, and, presenting loaded rifles at the children, asked for the father's arms. Before the terrified boys and girls could comply the father appeared and shot a moonlighter dead in his tracks. The rest fled precipitately, but unhappily Curtin gave chase and was killed. Good Father O'Connor attended the funeral of the moonlighter, who did not belong to his parish, and refused to attend that of Mr. Curtin, who did!

The Catholic Bishops of Ireland stood by and looked on all this without a word of censure. [169] Silence gives consent. Had they fulminated against outrage and secret wholesale murder of poor working men, for nearly all those I have cited were of this class; had they used their immense influence to stem the murderous instincts of ruffians who in many cases took advantage of the prevailing disregard for human life to wreak their private revenge on their neighbours, satisfied that no man dare testify, and that the clergy would aid them to frustrate the law—had the Bishops done this, even the dull and sluggish brain of the brutal Saxon could have understood their action. They uttered no single word of condemnation. An eminent Catholic, a clever professional man, who reveres the faith in which he was bred, but holds its priesthood in lowest contempt, said to me:—"You cannot find a word of condemnation uttered by any Bishop during the whole period when brutal murders were of daily occurrence. I give you your best. I would stake anything on my statement. I have challenged people over and over again, but nobody has ever been able to produce a syllable of censure, of warning, of reprobation. The Bishops were strangely unanimous in their silence."

But when the Irish Masons try to provide for the orphans of their brethren the Archbishop's back is up at once; for Masons have secrets which they may not tell even to priests; and therefore Dr. Walsh declares that whosoever gives sixpence to this cause of charity, or associates with its promoters, shall be cast into hell, there to abide in torture everlastingly—unless previously whitewashed by himself in person. And as I have clearly shown, the influence of Archbishop Walsh and his kind is at this moment supremely powerful in matters affecting the prestige and integrity of England and her people. Wherefore I do not wonder at the saying of an earnest Irishman of famous name, a baronet of long descent, whom I saw yesterday—

"When I see how the thing is being worked, and when, as a Catholic, I recognise the progress and character of the Church policy, and when I see England walking so stupidly into the trap, I don't know what to do—whether to swear, or to go out and be sick."

Moycullen (Connemara), May 23rd.

No. 26.—THE CONNEMARA RAILWAY.

ToC

Mr. Balfour's railway from Galway to Clifden will be exactly fifty miles long, and will run through Crooniffe, Moycullen, Ross, Oughterard, and the wildest and most desolate parts of Connemara. The line has been in contemplation for thirty years at least, but the strong suit of its Irish projectors was talking, not doing, and the project might have remained under discussion until the crack of doom but for Mr. Balfour's [170] energy and administrative power. The Irish patriots had no money, or they would not invest any. The Galway authorities would not authorise a county rate. Anybody who chose might make the line, but the local "powers that be" refused to spend a single penny on an enterprise which would for years provide employment for the starving people of Connemara, and would afterwards prove of incalculable benefit to the whole West of Ireland by opening up an attractive, an immense, an almost inaccessible tourist district, besides affording facilities of transit for agricultural stock and general market produce, and powerfully aiding the rapidly-developing fish trade of the western sea-board. Not a bit of it. The Western Irish are always standing about waiting for something. They talked about the line for a generation or two, but they cut no sod of turf. They harangued meetings convened to hear the prospective blessings of the line, but they declined to put any money on their opinions. The starving peasants of Connemara might have turned cannibals and eaten each other before Irishmen had commenced the railway. The people of the congested districts were unable to live on the sympathy of their fellow-countrymen, and nothing else was offered to them. The Connemarans have an occasional weakness for food. They like a square feed now and again. Their instincts are somewhat material.

They think that Pity without Relief is like Mustard without Beef. They like Sentiment—with something substantial at the back of it. Their patriot-brethren, those warm-hearted, dashing, off-hand, devil-may-care heroes of whom we read in Charles Lever, sometimes visited the district, to rouse the people against the brutal Saxon, but they did no more than this. Sometimes, I say, not often, did the patriots patrol Connemara. There were two reasons for this. First, the Irish patriots do not speak their native language; and the Connemarans are not at home with English. Secondly, and principally, the Connemarans had nothing to give away. They cannot pay for first-class patriotism like that of Davitt, Dillon, O'Brien, and Tim Healy, who latterly have never performed out of London.

And so the Galway folks went on with their railway discussions, and the poor Connemarans went on with their starving. Suddenly Mr. Balfour took the thing up, and the turf began to fly. The Midland and Western Railway Company, in consideration of a grant of £264,000, agreed to make the line, and to afterwards run it, whether it paid or not. The contractors were not allowed to import unskilled labour. The Connemarans were to make the line whether they knew the work or not. They had never seen navvy labour. They knew nothing outside the management of small farms. They had never done regular work. Their usual form is to plant their bit of ground and then to sit down till the crops come up, on which they live till next season. A failure of crops means starvation. This was their normal condition. They enjoyed what Mr. Gladstone would call a "chronic plethora" of hunger. The liverish tourist who adventured himself into these barbarous [171] regions in hopeless quest of appetite for his breakfast, would see the Connemarans in hopeless quest of breakfast for their appetites. The region is healthy enough. As Justice Shallow would say, "Beggars all, beggars all. Marry, good air."

The first thing you see is a twenty-thousand-pound bridge across the Corrib, not very far from the salmon weir, where are more fish than you can count splashing up the salmon stairs, which are arranged to save the salmon the effort of a long jump. Then the line running along the Corrib Valley on a high embankment, past the ruins of what was first a convent, then a whiskey distillery, now a timekeeper's office. An entire field is being dug up and carted away, the soil being excavated to a depth of eight or ten feet, over an area of several acres required for sidings and railway buildings. A strolling Galway man of Home Rule tendencies imparts information. He is eminently discontented, and thinks the way in which the work is conducted another injustice to Ireland. "The people are working and getting wages, but what wages! Thirteen and sixpence a week! Would English navvies work for that? You are getting the labour at starvation prices, and even then you bully the men. They work in gangs, each with a ganger swearing at them in the most offensive and outrageous way. See that gang over there. You can hear the ganger shouting and swearing even at this distance. The poor men are treated like dogs, and even then they can hardly keep body and soul together. They have to come miles and miles to the work, and some live so far away that they can only return home once a week. So they have to camp out in hovels. You are going down the line? Then you will be shocked at the slave-driving you'll see. It reminds me of Legree in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' I am surprised that the men do not drop dead over the work. Not a moment's rest or relaxation. Work, work, work from morning to night, for next to nothing. It ought not to be allowed in a civilised country. And on the top of all this slavery we are expected to be very much obliged for the opportunity of working at all. You chuck us a crust just as you would chuck a bone to a dog, and then you want us to go down on our knees and pour blessings on Balfour's head. We're tired of such stuff; but, thank God, we shall soon have things in our own hands. All these men are small farmers, or small farmers' sons. They can't get a living out of the land, and they are obliged to come to this. Bullied and driven from week's end to week's end, they are the very picture of starvation. A shame and disgrace to the English Government."

I may as well say at once that all this proved to be untrue. No doubt the Galway Home Rulers invent and circulate these falsehoods to discount the effect of the good work of a Conservative Government, and it is, therefore, well that the facts should be placed on record. I pushed on to a cutting where fifty men were busily engaged in loading earth into trucks, having first dug it from a great bank of gravelly soil. An Irish ganger walked to and fro along the top, keeping his eye on [172] the men, and occasionally shouting in an excited tone. But he was not swearing at, or otherwise abusing, the men, who were as fine a company of peasants as you could see anywhere, well-built, well-grown, and muscular. Not a trace of starvation, but, on the contrary, a well-fed, well-nourished look. The ganger, Sullivan, seemed good-tempered enough, only shouting to let off his superfluous vitality. He used no bad language. "Cheer up, my lads," he cried. "In wid the dirt. Look alive, look alive, look alive. Whirroo! Shove it up, my lads, shove it up. Away ye go. Look out for that fall of earth. There she goes. Whirroo!" English navvies would have preferred silence, would have requested him to hold his condemned jaw, would have spent some breath in applying an explosive mining term to his eyes, but these Irish labourers seemed to understand their superior officer, and to cheerfully accept the situation. Mr. Sullivan was civil and good-humoured. "These are a picked lot. Splendid set of fellows, and good workers. No, they do not walk for miles before they reach their work. The engine runs along the line to pick them up in the morning, and to drop them again in the evening. They have half-an-hour for dinner, and half-an-hour for tea. They get about fifteen shillings a week. Boys get less, but thirteen shillings and sixpence is the very bottom. Rubbish about low wages. Nine bob a week is the regular farmer's wage, and these men would have been glad to work for six bob. All have some land, every man of them. They have just come back from planting it. We have been very short of men. They went away at the beginning of April, and they were away for a fortnight or three weeks. Small blame to them. Half or three-quarters of them went to look after their bits of ground. But, barrin' that, they turn up very regularly. They get fifteen shillings a week, where they got nothing. And every

man knows the convenience the line will be to him to get his bit of stuff to Galway market, and also that it will bring money into a country where there was none. They are as contented as can be, and we never hear a word of complaint. We have not heard a grumble since the line was started a year or two ago. These Home Rulers will say anything but their prayers, and them they whistle. Since the work came from the Tories it must be bad. There must be a curse on it. Now, my lads, shove it up, shove it up! (Excuse me, Sir.) Whirroo, my boys. Look out! In wid it, thin! Whirroo!"

A big tank for engine water was being filled by an old man in shirt and trousers, his naked chest shining a hundred yards away. Luke Whelan was his name; a vigorous pumper, he. "'Tis hard work it is, ye may say it. I have another tank or two to fill, an' keep filled, but I have long rests, and time for a grain o' baccy, glory be to God! Thirteen-an'-sixpence it is, but I lost my place at Palmer's flour mills, the work gave out, an' but for this I'd have nothin' at all. Was in the Fifth Fusiliers, but lost me sight (partly) in Injee. Was in the army long enough to get a pension of [173] ninepence a day. Me rint is two pounds a year, and I've only the owld woman to kape. Ah, but Balfour was a blessin' to us altogether! They talk about Home Rule, but what good will that do us? Can we ate it, can we dhrink it, can we shmoke it? The small farmers thinks they'll have the land for nothin', but what about the labourers? Everything that's done is done for the farmers, an' the workin' men gets nothin' at all. In England 'tis the workin' men gets all the consideration; but in this counthry 'tis the farmers, an' the workin' men that have no land may hang themselves. When the big farms is all done away who'll employ the labourers? The gintry that spint money an' made things a bit better is all driven out of the counthry by the Land League. Ye see all around ye the chimneys of places that once was bits of manufactories. All tumblin' down, all tumblin' down. Nobody dares invest money for fear he'd be robbed of his property, the same as the landlords was robbed, an' will be robbed, till the end of the chapther. 'Tis nothin' but robbery ye hear of, an' gettin' other people's property for nothin'. The Home Rule Bill would dhrive all the workin' men out of the counthry to England and America. They must have employment, an' they must go where it is to be had. Engineers have been threatenin' this line for forty years, first one route an' then another, but divil a spade was put in it. England found us the money to build the line, an' the labourers get work. Where will we get work whin nobody would lend us money to build lines? An Irish Parlimint wouldn't build a line in a thousand years. For nobody would thrust thim wid the cash. Yes, wid ninepence a day and thirteen shillings and sixpence a week, I'm comfortable enough. But begorra, the pump leaks, an' I have to pump a quarther more than I should. Av the pump worked right 'tis little grumblin' ye'd hear from Luke Whelan."

Mr. George William Wood, contractors' agent, said:—"The men work as well as they can, but they do not get over the ground like English navvies. They are very regular, very quiet, very sober, and never give the least trouble. Of course, they had to be taught, and they did not like the big navvy shovels. They were used to the six-foot spades with no cross-bar. Yes, you might think it harder work with such tools, but then the Irish labourer dislikes to bend his back. The long handle lets him keep his back straight, there's the difference. However, we insist on the big, short shovels, and they have taken to them all right. These men are not so strong as they seem, and they are not worth nearly so much as English navvies. They may be willing, but they have not the same stamina. The English navvy eats about two pounds of beef for his dinner and washes it down with about two quarts of ale. These men never see meat from one year's end to another. They live on potatoes, and bits of dry bread and water. At three in the afternoon they are not worth much, clean pumped out—might almost as well go home. No, they don't live in hovels. Those who go home but once a week are housed in good wooden sheds, or corrugated iron [174] buildings, with good beds and bedclothes. There are about forty of them in a hut, with a hut-keeper to look after them and to keep order. For this excellent lodging they are charged sixpence a week, and all their prog is supplied at wholesale prices. We buy largely in Dublin, bring it down, of course, carriage free, and both the men and their wives and families are supplied to any amount. They effect a saving of at least twenty per cent., but probably much more, as village stores are terribly dear. The whole district has found out this advantage, and they flock to the hut-store from all parts. So Balfour is a boon to the country at large."

Next day I went down sixteen miles of line to a spot about a mile from Oughterard. It was pay-day, and I clung to the engine along with the engineer, Mr. Wood, and a pay-clerk, armed with several yards of pay-sheet, and a couple of black tin cash-boxes. A wild and stony country, a range of high mountains on the left, wide, flat plains on the right, through which the Corrib serpentined, with big rocks rising from the channel brilliantly white. "They whitewash the rocks, so that they can be seen by the boats and the Cong steamer. Englishmen would blow them up and have done with them, but Irishmen prefer to whitewash them and sail round them. More exciting I suppose, matter of taste." This from the engineer, a Saxon of the usual type. On through bogs, past nameless lakes, and a chaos of limestone rocks and huge granite boulders, lakes, bogs, rocks, in endless succession, with the long mountain reek beside us, and a still higher range in the purple distance. Now and then a green patch sternly walled in, a few cows grazing, a lonely donkey, a few long-tailed black sheep, or a couple of goats. Here and there acres of white blossom, looking like a snowfall. This was the bog bean, growing on a stem a foot high, a silvery tuft of silky bloom hanging downward, two inches long and the bigness of a finger. Sometimes we dashed past walled enclosures so full of stone that they looked like abandoned graveyards, and the only use of the fences, so far as I could see, was to keep thoughtless cattle out. Very little tillage. Just a few ridges of potatoes, but the people who had planted them seemed to have vanished for ever. At long intervals a diminutive white cot, but nothing else to break the succession of lake, rock, and bog. Moycullen, six miles from Galway, is to have a station; another will be built at Ross, ten miles, a third at Oughterard, sixteen and a half miles. Not a stone laid as

yet. At Ross a great excavation. The men had just laid bare a huge boulder of granite, weighing some thirty tons, and Mr. Wood, observing my interest in this relic of the ice-age, gave it to me on the spot. "No granite *in situ* hereabouts, the living rock is mountain limestone, but no end of granite boulders, which are blasted to the tune of half-a-ton of tonite per week." Ten miles from Galway a cutting was being regularly quarried for building purposes, and most of the sixteen or seventeen miles of line I saw was fenced with a Galway wall of uncemented stone four feet six [175] inches high and eighteen inches thick. "The men build stone walls with great skill," said Mr. Wood, "but half the number of English navvies would do more excavating."

The pay-clerk stopped the engine at every gang, and the men came forward for their money. All had the same well-nourished sturdy look, and all seemed well satisfied with their wages. They conversed in Irish, but they mostly understood English, even if they could not speak it themselves. Whole villages were there seemingly of the same name, and strange were the distinctive appellations. There was John Toole and John Toole Pat, John Pat Toole and Pat Toole John. Permutation was the order of the day. There was Tom Joyce Pat and Pat Tom Joyce, Tom Joyce Sally and Tom Joyce boy. Besides this change ringing a little colour was thrown in, and we had Pat Tom Joyce Red and Pat Tom Joyce Black, Red Pat Tom Joyce and Black Tom Joyce Pat. This is called Joyce's country, before Balfour's time depopulating to desolation, now thriving and filling up, re-Joyceing in fact. Nearly seventeen hundred men are at work here and at the other end, and in 1894 the great civiliser will steam from Galway to Clifden, inaugurating (let us hope) a new era of prosperity.

In Oughterard I met an American tourist who said, "I should think Home Rule would about settle Old England. The Irish people show a most unfriendly spirit, and I have come to the conclusion that there is no such word as gratitude in the Irish language. There is some change in this district, and the people seem willing to work, but wherever the agitators have been everything is going to the bad. Nothing but distrust and suspicion. No Irishman would invest in Irish securities. They prefer South Americans! That startled me. I am told that Tim Healy is worth £30,000, all got out of Home Rule, and my informant says that Tim would not risk a penny in his own country. Tim is a blackguardly kind of politician, but he is mighty cute, and shirks Irish securities. Where are the business managers of the Irish nation coming from? That's what I want to know."

I told him of the Galway Harbour Commissioners, who, having been forgiven a Government debt of nearly £10,000, conceived the idea of building a new, grand, splindid, iligant, deep dock, which should increase the trade of the place by allowing ships of great draught to unload in the harbour. Let me repeat the story for the readers of the *Gazette*.

The Harbour Board consulted an eminent engineer, who said the right thing would cost £80,000. They sent him to the right about, and called in another man. "Now," said they, "we can only raise £30,000 by loans from the Board of Works. Will not that suffice? We give you 5 per cent. on the outlay, &c., &c., &c." The new man said £30,000 was ample, took the job, and the work was commenced. Ultimately they borrowed £40,000, which they spent, along with the £10,000 in hand. Then it was found that big ships could not get to the dock at all! No use in a deep dock unless you can swim up to it. To get the big vessels in you required to hoist them out [176] of the water, carry them a few hundred yards, and drop them into the dock. As the Galway men still groan beneath the cruel English yoke, this operation was found impracticable. During some blasting operations a big rock was tumbled out of the dock in process of manufacture, dropping in front of another dock in full working order. The stone was just in the way of the vessels, but as there was no Parliament in College Green, the Harbour Board had not the heart to fish it up. So it crashed through the bottom of a Henderson collier, the owner of which sued the Harbour Board for damages, and was awarded a thousand pounds. The money never was paid, and never will be. The fortunate winner of the suit will sell his claim for £5 in English gold. He was thought to have done well in winning, and my informant, a typical Irishman, admired the complainant's successful attack on the Harbour Board. "But what good come of it at last," I ventured to put in. "Nay, that I cannot tell," said he, "But 'twas a glorious victory."

The Galway Harbour Board spent £50,000 or so on a deep dock which they have not got, and the harbour is in pawn to the Board of Works, which collects the tolls, and otherwise endeavours to indemnify itself. The Harbour Board meets as usual, but it has no powers, no money, no credit, no anything. This is a fair specimen of the business management which characterises the breed of Irishmen who favour Home Rule. The party paper, once a fine property, has in their hands sunk below zero, and they built New Tipperary on land to which they had no title; so that the money was completely thrown away. Almost every Board of Guardians in the country is insolvent, except in those cases where the Government has kicked out the Poor Law Guardians elected by the Parish, and restored solvency by sending down paid men to run the concern for a couple of years. This has been done in several instances, and in every case the paid men, drawing salaries of several hundred a year, have in two years paid off debts, leaving all in good working order, with a balance in the bank. The inference is obvious. Would the Belfast folks have made such a fiasco of a dock? Would Englishmen have exposed themselves to the ridicule of a story which is curiously remindful of Robinson Crusoe and his big canoe? Would the Galway folks ever have built the railway they wanted so badly; or sans England and Mr. Balfour, would not the Connemara men have proceeded to starve until the end of time? A keen old railway man who had thravelled, and who had done railway work in California, said to me, "Whin we get an Oirish Parlimint the labourers may jist put on their hats and go over to England. Thank God, we'll know something besides farm work now, the whole of us. We can get railroad work in England. There'll be none in Oireland, for every mother's son that has money will cut the country. I could take ye

fourteen Oirish miles from Galway, along a road that was spotted wid great jintlemen's houses, an' ivery one of thim's in ruins. The owners that used to live in them, and be a blessin' to the [177] counthry, is all ruined by the land agitation. All are gone, an' their foin, splindid houses tumblin' down, an' the people worse off than iver. If the Bill becomes law the young men will all be off to England and America. There'll be no work, no money in the counthry. Did ye hear what the cyar-dhriver said to Mr. Morley?"

I confessed that the incident escaped my recollection.

"Why the cyar-man was a dacent boy, an Mister Morley axed him how was thrade, an' av he was busy."

"No," says the dhriver, "things is quite, very quite," says he.

"Ye'll be busy when ye get Home Rule," says Mister Morley.

"But that'll only last a week," says the cyar-man.

"An' why so?" says the Irish Secretary, bein' curious an' lookin' round at the dhriver.

"Och," says Pat; "'twill only take a week to dhrive thim to the boats."

"Who d'ye mane, wid yer dhrivin' to the boats?" says owld Morley.

"All the dacent folks that has any money to pay for dhrivin'," says Pat, "for bedad they'll be lavin' the counthry."

"That was a thriminjus rap for owld Morley, but 'twas thrue, an' the Divil himself couldn't deny it."

"An' can ye tell me why the farmers should have all the land an' not the labourers? An' could ye say why them murdherin' Land Leaguers in Parliament wasn't hung up, the rampagious ruffians?"

I could throw no light on these points. My friend had much to say about the Land League M.P.'s, and a score of times asked me why they had not been hanged.

A hard question to answer, when you come to think of it. Does anybody know?

Oughterard (Connemara), May 23rd.

No. 27.—CULTIVATING IRISH INDUSTRY.

ToC

The city of kings. Pronounced Athen-rye, with a bang on the last syllable. A squalid town, standing amid splendid ruins of a bygone time. "Look what English rule has brought us to," said a village politician, waving his hand from the ivy-covered gateway by which you enter the town to the mean-looking houses around. "That's what we could build when we were left to ourselves, an' this is what we can do afther sivin hundhred years of the Saxon." The ruins in question are the remains of fortifications erected after the Norman Conquest of Ireland by the Normans, a great entrance gate, and a strong, oblong keep. The ruins of the Dominican Friary, founded in 1241 by Meyler, of Birmingham, have a thrilling interest of their own, which has its pendant in the story of a Mayence verger, who holds British visitors to the cathedral of that city in breathless rapture as he tells how it is said that a [178] Mayence bishop of eight hundred years ago was said to be of English extraction, or like the Stratford mulberry tree, which is said to be a cutting of a tree said to have grown on the spot where a tree is said to have stood which is said to have been planted by Shakespeare. Galway abounds in ruined fortalices, tumble-down abbeys, ivied towers and castles, none of which were built by the Irish race. The round towers which dot the country here and there, with a few ruined churches, are all that the native Irish can claim in the way of architecture.

The people here are full of interest. The fair at Athenry is something to remember. A very good time it was, cattle selling higher than of yore. The men were queerly, quaintly dressed, speaking Irish, getting extremely drunk on vilest whiskey, leaving the town in twos and threes, tumbling in groups by the roadside, reeking heaps of imbruted humanity. The women were numerous, tall, decent, and modest. All wore the shawl as a hood, the shawls of strange pattern unknown in England. All tucked up the dress nearly to the waist, showing the invariable red kirtle. All, or nearly all, were shod with serviceable shoes, such as would astonish the Parisian makers of bottines. But these shoes were only for show. The ladies walked painfully about in the unaccustomed leather. They seemed to have innumerable corns, to wrestle with bunions huge and dire, to suffer from unknown pedal infirmities. Outside the town the ladies put on their shoes. Outside the town, after the fair, they took them off again, sitting on the roadside, stripping their shapely feet, bundling the obnoxious, crippling abominations into Isabella-colour handkerchiefs, which they tucked under their arms as they bounded away like deer. It was

pleasant to watch their joy, their freedom, their long springy step as their feet once more struck their native heath. They do not spare their shoes by reason of economy, but because they walk better without them. Donned for propriety, doffed for convenience. The young lady who is "on the market" is expected to wear leather on high days and holidays, and she submits—another martyr to fashion. Yet even as the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so longeth her sole after her native turf.

It was at Athenry that I first obtained a precise legal definition of the term Congested District, to the effect that wherever the land valuation amounts to less than 30s. per head of the population the district is held to be congested, and may receive assistance under the Act of 1891. The chief item of the Board's income is the sum of £41,250 a year, being interest at 2¾ per cent. per annum on the sum of £1,500,000 referred to in the Act as the Church Surplus Grant. The Board may, under certain conditions, use the principal, if needful. Two other smaller sums are also available, and the unexpended balance of the Irish Distress Fund has been applied to the completion of the Bealdangan Causeway in Connemara. This was Mr. Balfour's suggestion. There is a widespread idea that only the sea-board is touched, and that only fishermen have reaped the [179] benefit of the Act. This is entirely erroneous. The Board works unceasingly at the development of agriculture, the planting of trees, the breeding of live stock and poultry, the sale of seed potatoes and seed oats, the amalgamation of small holdings, migration, emigration, weaving and spinning, and any other suitable industries, as well as in aid of fishing and fishermen. Besides the innumerable direct and indirect methods by which agriculture and industries are assisted in production, the Board has laboured successfully in the establishment of such means of communication, by railway, steamship, or otherwise, as will enable goods to be imported and exported at rates sufficiently low to make trade possible and profitable to producers and consumers in remote congested districts. Another popular error arises from regarding the work of the Board as merely a means of relief during periods of exceptional distress. Mr. Balfour would be the first to deprecate this notion. His scheme was constructed with a view to bringing about a gradual and lasting improvement in the poor districts of Ireland, by putting the people in a way to help themselves, and not by doling out large sums in charity. The works, which are wrongly called "relief works," are in every instance a well-considered effort to permanently and materially improve the trade and resources of a given area in connection with agriculture and miscellaneous industries. Such was the invariable principle of every action of the Board while under Mr. Balfour's administration. The people have been taught better methods, and helped to carry out the instruction they had received. The Royal Dublin Society has in some instances employed an instructor, whose duty it has been to teach the people the best system of cultivating portions or plots of their holdings, and to encourage them by gifts of seed and by giving prizes to those who were most successful in carrying out the instructions of their teacher. It is conceded that by proper management, by the adoption of modern methods of farming such as are well within the grasp of the smallest landowner, the produce of Irish farms might be increased from one-third to one-half. Consider the effect of this unassailable proposition on the eternal question of rent. The question can hardly be over-estimated. Compare the solidity, the practicability, the substantial usefulness of this kind of help, with the weak pandering to sentiment displayed by the present government. The Board admits that no matter how vigorously and constantly agricultural improvements are inculcated, the tenants of Ireland are tardy in their adoption. The small farmers dislike change, and at the present moment they are rapidly slipping back into their old grooves. They believe that the old system will pay when they have no rent-days to meet. The Balfour Administration encouraged honesty, industry, self-reliance. The Morley Government puts a premium on idleness, unthrift, retrogression, and dishonesty. It is easier to half-till the land, paying small rents or none at all, than to get the utmost out of the land with the object of paying the landlord his due.

The Board is carrying on the afforestation of Ireland, which in many parts is almost without [180] trees. When the potato crop failed in 1890 Mr. Balfour commenced to plant trees on the western sea-board. In 1891 a sum of £1,970 was spent in draining, fencing, and roadmaking, and in planting 90 acres of 960 acquired by the Tory Government for the purpose. In 1892 a further sum of £1,427 was spent in carrying on the work. It is said that a previous Liberal Government had rejected the scheme on the ground that trees would not grow in a situation exposed to the salt gales of the Atlantic, but Mr. Balfour's trees have thriven remarkably well. He tried all sorts, convinced that something should be done, and that an ounce of experiment was worth a pound of theory. Sycamore, ash, elm, beech, birch, poplar, alder, larch, Scotch fir, spruce, silver fir, sea buckthorn, elder, and willow—he gave them all a chance, some as main plantations, some as shelter belts. All proved successful except the silver fir. Besides this, three hundred and fifty holdings have been planted with shelter belts, and about six hundred and fifty more were being planted when Mr. Balfour loosed the reins.

An eminent Irishman, a great authority on this subject, assures me that he could dictate similar facts for a week without stopping to search his memory. Mr. Gladstone proposes to place the poor people of Ireland under a Government utterly inexperienced in the administration of great matters, utterly unreliable where the handling of money is concerned, utterly ignorant of business methods and business routine. The fate of the destitute poor and the fortunes of the well-to-do classes are to be at the mercy of men whose business ventures have been absurdly unsuccessful, who believe that to aid the poor you must rob the rich, and that the No-rent Manifesto, the Plan of Campaign, and the Land League, with its story of outrage and murder, were the perfection of modern statesmanship. The Balfour system teaches men to help themselves. The Morley system teaches men to help themselves to their neighbour's goods.

My friend gave a few more instances of useful assistance rendered by what the poor folks call

the Blessed Board. Special arrangements have been made to enable the farmers to improve the breed of horses. The Queen presented an Arabian horse named Tirassan to the County Donegal. Bulls of superior breed have been sold to decent, honest farmers at one-third of their cost, and this small figure was payable in two yearly instalments. About two hundred black-faced Scotch rams and Cheviot rams have been located in Donegal and Galway free of charge, and young boars of the pure Yorkshire breed are sold to certain selected farmers at a nominal charge on certain conditions calculated to prove useful to the neighbourhood. The breeding and rearing of poultry has received a world of attention, and the poor folks who make a little money by the sale of eggs have been supplied with the best information and substantial assistance.

In a former letter I described the Aran sea-fisheries, and before that I adverted to the fact that the Shetland fishermen came to the Irish Coast, caught ling, and brought it back salted to sell to [181] Irish fishermen. The Board has engaged an experienced fish-curer from Norway to show Irishmen how the thing is done, and English and Scotch fish-curers have been sent to several stations to give instruction in mackerel and herring-curing. Fifteen fish-curing stations are now in full swing, and the poor Irish fishermen, instead of buying salt ling at 2d. a pound, are now selling it at £18 to £20 per ton. A big steamer has been chartered to carry the salt, the fish, and for other useful purposes.

Contrast this work and these results with the work of the Irish agitators and with that of Messrs. Gladstone, Morley, and Co. Sentiment and starvation versus salt fish and satiety. A red-faced Yorkshireman who knows all about fish-curing, said:—"When first I came here I'm blest if the men wasn't transparent. You could see through 'em like lookin' through the rungs of a ladder. Now the beggars are growin' double chins. Now they're a-gettin' cheeky. They're like a hoss as has had a feed of corn. They was meek an' mild enough when I come over. Now they're a-gettin' perky, an' a-talkin' politics. They usen't to see no agitators. They never had no meetin's; why? there was no chance of a collection. Sometimes I gets down on 'em proper. 'Tother day I says, 'You chaps, wi' yer Home Rule, I says, reminds me of a character in the Bible, I says.' Bein' Catholics, they don't read the Bible for theirselves. The priests read it for 'em. But one of 'em cocks up his nose, an' he says, 'We're like a character in the Bible, are we? Well,' he says, 'who was he?'

"'You're like the wild ass that sniffed up the wind instead of goin' in for sommat more substantial,' I says. That's what I told 'em. They did look down their noses, I tell you. An' they fell to talkin' i' Irish. They couldn't answer me, do what they would."

Before leaving the Connemara district I paid a second visit to Oughterard in order that I might see the progress made by Irishmen in the art of railway making. A gang or two were engaged in the comparatively skilled work of rail-laying, and the way they got over the ground was truly surprising. Two trucks stood on the line already laid, one bearing sleepers, the other loaded with steel rails. Four or five couples of men shouldered sleepers and laid them on the track at spots marked by a club-footed Irishman, who swore at everything with a vigour which spoke well for his wind. Several men lifted a thirty feet length of rail, weighing nearly six hundred-weight, and laid it on the sleepers, when it was instantly bolted and secured. The same having been done on the other side, the trucks were pushed along the newly-laid ten yards, and the process was repeated, the Irish ganger above-mentioned swearing till the surrounding bogs seemed to quake. An unhappy Connemaran having dropped his end of the sleeper a few inches from the right spot, was cursed through the entire dictionary, the ganger winding up a solemn declaration that he had not seen anything so Blankly and Double-Blankly and forty times Blankly idiotic since "the owld goat died." An English ganger hard by never spoke at all, but no doubt his men felt lonely. A [182] labourer who had hurt his foot, and was awaiting a friendly truck to take him home, said of the swearer:—

"He manes no harm, an' the Boys doesn't care a rap for his swearin'. These men want no elbowin' on, for they are paid by the piece, so that the harder they work the more they get. All Irish gangers swear like that. An' Irish farm bailiffs is jist the same. Onless they're cussin' an' rippin' an' tearin' they don't think they're doin' the work for which they're paid, an' they don't think their masthers would be contint wid thim. Av an Irish landlord that kept a bailiff didn't hear him swearin' three miles away, he'd discharge him for not workin'. English gangers an' bailiffs says very little, an' ye wouldn't think they wor doin' anythin'. 'Tis quare at first, but ye get used to it in time."

Travelling in any country is always instructive, no matter how much about that country you previously knew. My lame friend may have unconsciously suggested an explanation of the speeches and conduct of the Irish Nationalist Parliamentary contingent. Unless they kept up the cursin' an' swearin', an' rippin' an' tearin', so that they can be heard across the Atlantic, their American paymasters might not be contint wid thim, and might withhold the sinews of war. Once it is understood that the Irish patriots must revile all and sundry to earn their pay, the situation is to some extent explained. Few of them are likely to fail in this supreme requirement. Six pounds a week for abusing the brutal Saxon is far better than the pound or thirty shillings of their pre-political days. They have no inducement to earn an honest living.

The story of the Galway Bag Factory may serve as a pendant to the story of Mr. McMaster's effort to benefit the Catholic peasantry of the counties of Galway and Donegal. The concern had stopped for lack of funds, and Father Peter Dooley went round the town endeavouring to induce people to take shares in the concern, in order that the poor folks of the district might have employment. The mills were reopened, and at first, just at first, the people attended work with tolerable regularity. They then fell off, coming for half a day, coming not at all. The management actually instituted prizes for regularity of attendance. The people, who professed to be dying for

employment, had to be bribed to come to work. Even this was ineffectual, and as a certain number of people were required to work a loom, the absence of one or two made the loom and the other workpeople idle, and as, in order to pay expenses, every loom required to be constantly worked, this skulking was not only annoying, but also a ruinous loss. Mr. Miller, the manager, was compelled to get people over from Scotland, after having long placarded the walls of Galway with notices of vacancies which no Galway girls attempted to fill up. Father Peter remonstrated, and pointed out that as he had been instrumental in reopening the factory, he thought Mr. Miller should oblige him by engaging Galway girls. The manager showed him the placards, and said that [183] if Father Peter would bring the people he would find them employment. Father Peter Dooley went into the highways and hedges, but not a soul could he bring in, although Mr. Miller seems to have been so desperately beset that he would have jumped at the blind, the maimed, the halt, and the lame. The good Father was beaten, but then he had a reason—an excellent reason. When things go wrong in Ireland, it is always some other fellow's fault, just as when the French are beaten in battle they always scream *Nous sommes trahis*! Bad characters had been admitted to the looms. Manager was surprised. Let Father Peter point them out, and away they go—if Father Peter did not hesitate to cast them again on the streets of Galway. Two girls were dismissed. Some of the old workpeople returned to work intermittently, as before. Father Peter wanted the two girls reinstated. The manager declined to see-saw in this way, and sacrilegious Scotsman as he was, dared to say that nothing went well when bossed by priests! From that moment that manager was blighted. His sight grew dim, his hearing became dull, his liver got out of order, his corns grew more numerous and more painful, and a bald spot was seen on his crown. The people worked as before, by fits and starts, but more fitty and starty than ever. The factory was closed, and the manager died. They buried him about a week ago, a sort of human jackdaw of Rheims without the curse taken off. Protestants say the Galway workpeople wore him down, broke his spirit and broke his heart, but Catholics know better. The only wonder was that instead of being instantly consumed by fire from heaven, Miller was permitted to waste away by slow degrees. But that was Father Dooley's good nature.

The Galwegians say that a Belfast firm has taken the mill, and that therefore its future success is assured. The cutest citizens say that this entirely depends on the manager's theory as to workpeople. If he brings them with him, well and good. The work will be done although the workpeople may be boycotted. And then the Irish will have another grievance. They will be able to point to the fact that of a large number of workpeople only a small proportion of Catholics are employed. This is the trick of Nationalists when speaking of the intolerance of Belfast. The officials of that city, and indeed, of every city in Ireland, are mostly Protestants, not because of this, but because they are better men. The Belfast merchants and the Belfast Corporation have a keen eye to the main chance, as is abundantly proved by their success, and in business matters they will have the best men, whether Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Turks, or Infidels. Whatever the cause, it is certain that Protestantism turns out a far larger proportion of able men, and in Ulster, at any rate, you rarely meet a Catholic who is worth his salt. The Catholics of Ulster lack, not toleration, but brains, industry, and business capacity. Anyone who compares the harbours of Cork and Galway with Belfast will at once appreciate the situation. Wherefore let not the Keltic [184] Irish waste their time in clamouring for the redress of non-existent grievances, but buckle to and make their own prosperity. The destinies of nations, like those of individuals, are in their own hands. Honest work is never wasted work. Selah.

Athenry, May 27th.

No. 28.—COULD WE RECONQUER IRELAND?

ToC

The country people call this place "the back of God-speed," "the back of the world," and "the divil's own hunting ground," but why they do it nobody seems to know. The village is on the road to nowhere, and I dropped on it, as it were, accidentally, during a long drive to the remotest end of Galway Bay. Yet even here I found civilised people who regard the proposed College Green Parliament with undisguised aversion. Not the inhabitants, but Irish tourists, bent on exploring the wildest and remotest nooks of their native land, among them a Dublin barrister, whose critical analysis of the powers proposed to be entrusted to the unscrupulous and self-seeking promoters of the Land League may prove useful and interesting to non-legal English readers. A Galway gentleman having during the drive pointed out a large number of desolate mansions rapidly falling into ruin, the conversation turned on the universal subject, and my legal friend embarked on a dissertation on the iniquity of the Gladstone land laws, which have had the effect of ruining a large number of the country gentry of Ireland, driving them from their native shores, impoverishing the landlords without any perceptible benefit to the tenants, who appear to be no better off than ever. What surprised him most was the arrant nonsense talked by the English Gladstonians, and the blindness and apathy of the English people generally, who in his opinion were being gradually led

to the brink of a frightful abyss, which threatened to swallow up the prestige and prosperity of the British people. He said:—

"Have Englishmen forgotten the previous history of the men she is now on the point of entrusting with her future? Are Englishmen unacquainted with the traditional hatred of the Irish malcontents? Do they not know the aspirations of the Catholic clergy, and are they ignorant of their immense influence with the masses? Surely they are, or they would rise in their might and instantly trample out the present agitation, which has for its aim and end, not the benefit of Ireland, not the pacification of the people, who are perfectly peaceful if left alone, not the convenience of Ireland in matters which should be managed by local self-government, but the absolute independence of the country, the creation of a national army, and the affiliation of Ireland with some foreign Power hostile to England, such as either America or France, as occasion might serve. America is largely in the hands of the Irish electorate, and American [185] politicians would not be particularly scrupulous how they purchased Irish support. No need to point out the embarrassing complications likely to result from giving large powers to men who are essentially inimical to England. You can do justice without putting your own head on the block. It has been my business to analyse the bill, in conjunction with other lawyers, Home Rule and otherwise in political colour, and we are all agreed that the so-called safeguards amount to nothing, and it would be incomparably safer for England to throw over the country altogether. Because that is what it must ultimately come to, and we think it would be better to avoid the inevitable agitation, the terrible difficulties foreshadowed by the measure, difficulties which would assuredly lead to the reconquest or the attempted reconquest of the country.

"Gladstonians say this is an absurd idea, that Ireland could offer no resistance worth mentioning, that the British arms would prove instantly victorious over any show of resistance. But would you have Ireland alone to reckon with? Once give her the prestige of a spurious independence, once give to your enemies control over the resources of the country, and you would find the task of reconquest much more arduous than you think. The fact that England's distress would be Ireland's opportunity has been so often insisted upon, both by Unionists and the Nationalists themselves, that I need say nothing on this point, which, besides, is so obvious as to be in itself a sufficient answer to the Home Rule agitation under present circumstances. But even supposing that you had no Eastern and European difficulty—and we know not from one moment to another when war may break out—supposing you only had Ireland to reconquer, do you think this an agreeable prospect? Do you think that reconquest would settle the Irish question? Do you believe that the shooting of a few hundred patriots by the British Grenadiers would further what they call the Union of Hearts?

"These followers of Mr. Gladstone who say, 'Let them have Home Rule to quiet the country, to relieve the House from the endless discussion of the Irish Question so that we can proceed with the disestablishment of the Church, the Local Option Bill, and the thousand-and-one other fads for which English Home Rulers have sold themselves'—the men who say this, and who also say 'If they kick over the traces we can instantly tighten the reins and reduce them to order,' surely these folks cannot be aware that the Gladstone-Morley Government is unable to give Strachan, of Tuam, the land which he has bought and paid for in the Land Courts. The British Government cannot collect the rents of Colonel O'Callaghan, of Bodyke; nor can it prevent the daily cases of moonlighting and outrage which are so carefully hushed up, and which hardly ever get into Irish newspapers. When the British Government cannot make a few farmers either pay their rent or leave the land, the said Government having control over the police and civil officers of the law, [186] how is it going to collect the purchase money of the farms, in the form of rent, when it has not this control?

"The new police will be in the hands of a Parliament, elected by these very farmers, who, so to speak, have tasted blood, have ceased to make efforts to pay rent, have been encouraged in their refusal to pay by the very men Mr. Gladstone proposes to entrust with the whole concern! Will these farmers suddenly turn round and say, 'We declined to pay when English rule would have forced payment, we shall be delighted to pay when nothing could make us do so?' I have been connected with Irish farmers and landowners for thirty years as a land specialist, and I tell you that the thing will work exactly as I have said. Put the Rebel party in power, and see what will happen to you. It is hard to believe that Englishmen will act so stupidly in a matter so vitally affecting their own interests. That is why educated people both in Ireland and England do not believe the bill will ever become law. They cannot conceive the final acceptance of anything so utterly preposterous. But call on me to-morrow, and I will go into the legal possibilities of the question."

So I gathered posies of bog-bean bloom and walked round the big boulders with which this sterile region is thickly strewn. The natives know nothing of Home or any other Rule, and you might as well speak to them of the Darwinian theory, or the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, or the Homeric studies of the Grand Old Man, or the origin of the Sanskrit language. The only opinion I could glean was the leading idea of simple Irish agriculturists everywhere. A young fellow who appeared to be in a state of intellectual advancement so far beyond that of the other Barnans as to be almost out of sight, said:—

"I'm towld that there's to be a Parlimint in Galway city that's to find imploymint for the people, an' that ivery man is to have five acres of good land for nothin', and that if it isn't good land he is to have ten acres, and that there's to be an Oirish King in Dublin, an' that all the sojers an' pleecemen is to be put out o' the counthry, an' all Protestants is to go to England, an' that's all very good, but the Protestants might be allowed to stay, for they're dacent folks, but thin they say that nobody's to howld land but the Catholics."

I met an old lady clad in the short skirt of the Connaught peasantry, walking bare-headed, bare-footed, and almost bare-legged from chapel, carrying a bottle of holy water, probably destined for some important purpose within the sacred precincts of the domestic circle. Perhaps the old man was rheumatic, or it may be that the fairies had spoilt the butther, or that the cow was bewitched, or that the shadow of a black Protestant had fallen across the threshold. She was a promising subject for original conversation, but unhappily she could speak no English. My Galway friend explained the bottle, and said "Here we have true religion. If you want the genuine, unadulterated article you must come to Galway, and especially to Barna. Look how she clings to it, how she holds it to her breast, how reverentially she looks down on it. Suppose she [187] caught her foot on a stone, stumbled, and broke the bottle! Horrid thought, involving (perhaps) eternal damnation, (unless she were quickly absolved by the priest). There is piety for you! As a good Catholic I am ashamed of myself when I think how little religion (comparatively) there is in me. Education has been a curse. How happy I should be if I had that old woman's simple, strong belief in the virtues of holy water, especially when carried home in a well-washed whiskey bottle. But, somehow, the more we Catholics know the less we believe. We go regularly to mass, at any rate I do (my wife is very devout), but I fear that Catholics have less and less faith in proportion to their culture. But for the women Catholicism would not hold its ground among the higher classes of Irishmen for so much as five-and-twenty minutes."

It seems to me that the belief of uncultured Irishmen as to the immense benefits to be derived from Home Rule is exactly on a par with the belief of uncultured Irishwomen as to the immense benefits to be derived from the sprinkling of holy water. No reasonable man, who has carefully examined the subject, will for one moment assert that there is a pin to choose between the two. The votes of these poor folks, admitted by thousands to the electorate, have sent to Westminster the hireling orators whose persistent clamour has turned a slippery statesmen from the paths of patriotism and propriety, and whose subterranean machinations—aided and abetted by men versed in Jesuistic and Machiavellian strategy, and who believe that the end justifies the means—threaten to undermine the British Empire, and to involve the citizens of England in political and financial ruin. A pretty pass for a respectable individual like John Bull. England to be worked by the wire-pulling of a few under-bred, half-educated priests! whose tincture of learning John himself has paid for—poor Bull, who seems to pay for everything, and who would gladly have paid for gentility, too, if the Maynooth professors could have injected the commodity by means of a hypodermic syringe, or even by hydraulic pressure. No use in attempting impossibilities. As well endeavour to communicate good manners or gratitude to a Nationalist M.P.

My legal friend was full of matter, but many of his points were too technical for the general reader. He said:—"Absurd to ask what an Irish Parliament *will* do, because we know the tendencies of the present men. We must ask what it *can* do, for it is certain that its members will from time to time be replaced by men of more 'advanced' opinions. Appetite grows by what it feeds on, and the Irish people want to pose as an independent nation. Englishmen and Scotchmen say Ireland would never be so foolish, and I am not surprised that they should say this. But when did Irishmen act on the lines of Englishmen or Scotchmen? They never did; they never will. The peoples are actuated by entirely different motives. Englishmen look at what is going to pay. They act on whatever basis promises the most substantial return. Irishmen are swayed by sentiment." [188]

Here I remembered a remark of Father McPhilpin, parish priest of Kilronane, Aran Isles. He said:—"The Irish people act more for fancy and less for money than any nation on earth. The poorest classes have less sentiment than the middle classes. They are too closely engaged in securing a livelihood. But the great difficulty of the English in managing the Irish lies in the fact that the English people work on strictly business principles, and that the Irish do not. The English people do not at all understand the Irish; and the reason is perfectly clear to me. They do not appreciate the extent to which mere sentiment will move the Irish race, mere sentiment, as opposed to what you would call business principles."

Returning to my barrister. He continued:—"The Dublin bar has decided—has formally decided—that so far as the action of the Executive is concerned the Irish Parliament will be a supreme and irresponsible body. The action of its officers will not be in any way subject to the review of the English Government. What does this mean? Simply that the life, the liberty, the property of every citizen will be entirely in the hands of the Irish Government. Do the English people know this? I think not. For if they did know, surely they would think twice before they committed decent people to the tender mercies of the inventors and supporters of the Land League, with its ten thousand stories of outrage and murder."

"Give instances of what they can do, say you? They can refuse police protection to persons whose lives are in danger from the National League. And, as you know, scores of persons are at this moment under protection in Ireland. Mr. Blood, of Ennis, would be shot on sight; Mr. Strachan, of Tuam, would be torn to pieces, if without the three, or four policemen who watch over him day and night; the caretakers on the Bodyke estate would get very short shrift, once the sixteen policemen who guard the two men were removed. Blood discharged a labourer, Strachan bought a farm. If, under the now *régime*, a farmer paid rent against the orders of the National League; if a man persisted in holding land from which someone had been evicted years ago; if a man worked for a boycotted person or in any way supported him, although it were his own father, he would be in danger of his life. Would the new Government give police protection to such people? To do so would be to stultify themselves.

"Then again the Irish Executive can refuse police protection to Sheriffs' officers who desire to execute writs for non-payment of rent. No, I do *not* think they would refuse a police escort to Sheriffs' officers proceeding to distrain on the Belfast manufacturers. I think they would order a

strong force to proceed, fully armed, and I am of opinion that the police would require all the weapons they could carry. Not a stiver would they get in Belfast, until backed by the Queen's troops. Then the Ulstermen would pay—to refuse next year. So the process will go on and on, [189] with bloodshed and slaughter every time, the British army enforcing the demands of rebels, against loyalists who sing 'God save the Queen,' Quite in the opera bouffe style of Gilbert and Sullivan, isn't it? Can't you get Gilbert to do a Home Rule opera comique? The absurdities of the situation are already there. No invention required. Immense hit. Wish I knew Gilbert. Money in it. English people might see the thing in the true light, if presented in comic songs, with a rattling chorus. Friend of mine bringing out a Gladstone Suppression Company Unlimited, forty million shares at twopence-halfpenny each. At a premium already. Money subscribed ten times over."

"And won't the new Parliament have a high old time with the new Land Commission. Messrs. Healy and Co. will have the appointment of the Land Commissioners, whose function will be to fix rent. Wouldn't you like to be a landlord under such conditions? Don't you think that the rents will be reduced until the landlords are used up? Remember that the total extinction of the landlords and their expulsion from the country have been over and over again promised by the very men in whose hands you, or rather Mr. Gladstone will place them. No; I exculpate the English people from returning him to power, I know that the brains of England as well as those of Ireland are against him. But the English people stand by and see the thing pressed forward, hoping for the best. They rely on their immense wealth and energy to get them out of any hole they may get into. I am reminded of Captain Webb, who said, 'I am bound to have a go at the Niagara rapids. I know it's infernal risky and therefore infernally foolish, but I must have cash, and I expect I shall pull through somehow.' And I once met a sailor who said that his skipper had not his equal for getting the ship out of a scrape, nor yet his equal for getting into one. Same with England. Webb did not come up again. Might be the same with Bull. England is risking all for peace, just as Webb risked all for money.

"The Irish Parliament may, after three years, break every contract having regard to land, no matter when or how made. Think of the ferment during that three years of waiting. Think of the situation of farmers as well as that of landowners. Who will work the land and do the best for the country without security? Then the College Green folks will have power to establish an armed and disciplined force. The Irish Army of Independence is already recruiting all over the country. For what? Is it to assist England? Is it friendly to England? Why, the very foundation of its sentiment is undying animosity to England. And your English Home Rulers say, 'Quite right, too, the Irish have good reason for their hatred!' Gladstonians come over here, mingle with haters of their native land, and earn a little cheap popularity by slanging John Bull. They get excellent receptions when they speak in that vein, especially if they have any money to spend. But what do the Irish think of them? The poor fools make me sick, splashing their cash about and vilifying England for the cheers of Fenians and the patronage of Maynooth priests. A lady from [190] Wolverhampton, a good, kind lady, was woefully imposed upon somewhere in Connemara. A priest told me; a priest you have met." Here the name was given. "He laughed at the simplicity of this well-meaning benefactor, who was shown nineteen processes for rent, and who shelled out very liberally at the sight."

"Seventeen of them were old ones! The rent had already been paid. But whenever an English *gobemouche* called around out came the old writs until they were clean worn out. They were a splendid source of income while they lasted."

This reminded me of a Bodyker, who said:—"A man named Lancashire came here from Manchester or Birmingham—I think it was Birmingham—and said he was going into the next Parliament, and that he was a great friend of Mr. Gladstone. He was very kind, and seemed made of money, and said he'd make England ring with our wrongs. My son had his name on a card, but a lawyer in Limerick said the name hadn't got in. I forget it now. D'ye know anybody, Sorr, of the name of Lancashire that's a great friend o' Misther Gladstone, an' that lives in Birmingham, an' that didn't get in?"

These Irish peasants ask more questions than anybody can answer. They have a keen scent for cash, especially when the coin is in the keeping of English Gladstonians. They believe with the Claimant that "Sum folks has branes, and sum folks has money, and them what has money is made for them what has branes." The Bodyke farmers and the peasantry of Connemara believe that English Home Rulers have money. Impossible to escape the natural inference.

Barna (Co. Galway), May 30th.

No. 29.—WHAT RACK-RENT MEANS.

ToC

I am disposed to call this quiet inland place a fishing village. The people not only sell fish and eat fish, but they talk fish, read fish, think fish, dream fish. The fishing industry keeps the place going. Anglers swarm hither from every part of the three kingdoms. Last year there were five fishing Colonels at the Greville Arms all at once. Brown-faced people who live in the open air, and who are deeply versed in the mysteries of tackle, cunning in the ways of trout, pike, perch, and salmon, walk the streets clad in tweed suits, with strong shoes and knickerbockers. The Mullingar folks despise the dictum of the American economist who said that every town without a river should buy one, as they are handy things to have. They boast of three magnificent lakes, and they look down on the Athlone people, thirty miles away, with their trumpery Shannon, of which they are so proud, but which the Mullingar folks will tell you is not worth the paper it is written on. Lough Owel, five miles long by [191] two or three wide; Lough Derravarra, six miles by three or four; and Lough Belvidere, eight miles by three, all of which are in the immediate vicinity, may be considered a tolerable allowance of fishing water for one country town. Lough Belvidere, formerly called Lough Ennell, with its thousands of acres of water, would perhaps meet with the approval of the Yankee who called the Mediterranean "a nice pond," not for its size, but for its exceeding beauty. And the most remarkable feature about the fisher-enthusiasts of Mullingar, is the fact, the undoubted, well-attested fact, that they actually catch fish. English anglers, who in response to the inquiries of new arrivals at any Anglican fishing resort state that they have caught nothing yet, having only been fishing for a fortnight, will hardly believe that at Mullingar their countrymen catch fish every day, and big fish too. The lake trout vary from five to twenty pounds in weight, but the latter are not often seen. Nine-pounders are reckoned fairly good, but this weight excites no remark. How big the pike may be I know not, but Mr. Herring, of London, on Monday last, fishing in Lough Derravarra, hauled out a specimen which looked more like a shark than a pike. He weighed over thirty-six pounds, and measured four feet three inches over all. *Hoc egomet oculis meis vidi.* Birmingham anglers who win prizes with takes of four-and-a-half ounces would have recoiled in affright from the monster, even as he lay dead in the entrance hall of the Greville Arms. Old women stand at the street corners with silver eels like boa-constrictors, for which they wish to smite the Saxon to the tune of sixpence each. I vouch for the pike and eels, but confess to some dubiety *re* the story of a fat old English gentleman, who said, "I don't care for fishing for the sake of catching fish. I go out in a boat, hook a big pike, lash the line to the bow, and let the beggar tow me about all day. Boating is my delight. Towards evening I cut my charger loose, and we part with mutual regret. Inexpensive amusement; more humane than ordinary fishing."

Mullingar is a thriving town situate in a fertile district. The land is very rich, and the rents are reasonable. The farmers are well off, and admit the soft impeachment. They are Home Rulers to a man, and they boldly give their reasons. "Did ye ever know a man who was contint wid a good bargain when he has a prospect of a better bargain still?" said a prosperous agriculturist residing a mile outside the town. The country around has a decidedly English appearance. Fat land, good roads, high hedges, daisied meadows, and decent houses everywhere. The main street is long, wide, clean, well-paved, well-built. The shopkeepers who live in the surrounding district make money, and when they "go before," cut up for surprising sums. Said Mr. Gordon, "Everybody here has money. The people are downright well off. Living in constant communication with Dublin, fifty miles away on the main line of the Midland and Western Railway, they have adopted the prevailing politics of the metropolis. They do not understand what Home Rule means, and they [192] blindly believe that they will do better still under a Dublin Parliament. I am quite certain of the contrary. Suppose we want £500 for some improvement, who will lend us the money? I am satisfied that the prosperity of the place would immediately decline. The priests influence the people to an extent Englishmen can never understand. The Protestant clergy do not intervene in mundane matters, but the Catholic clergy consider it their duty to guide the people in politics as well as in religion. Given Home Rule, Protestantism and Protestants would be nowhere. There is no doubt in my mind on this point."

Mr. Mason said:—"The whole agitation would be knocked on the head by the introduction of a severe land measure, which would have the effect of further reducing the rents. No doubt all previous land legislation has been very severe, and I do not say that a further measure would be just and equitable. I merely say that the people do not want Home Rule, but they want the advantages which they are told will accrue from Home Rule. If the measure is not to benefit them in a pecuniary sense, then they do not care two straws about it. Do the English people grasp the present position of landowner and tenant respectively? Let me state it in a very few words.—

"Formerly the landowner was regarded as the owner of the land. At the present moment, and without a line of further legislation, the tenant is the real owner, and not the nominal landlord at all. For owing to reduction of rent, fixity of tenure, free sale, and the tenant-right, the tenant is actually more than two-thirds owner. This is a matter of cash and not of theory, for the tenants' rights are at this moment worth more than double the fee-simple of the land itself. What will the Gladstonian party who prate about Rack-rents say to this?"

This seems a suitable opportunity for calling attention to the term Rack-rents, which in England is almost universally misunderstood. Separatist speakers invariably use the term as denoting an excessive rent, an impossible rent—a rent, which is, as it were, extorted by means of the Rack. The term is purely legal, and denotes a rent paid by ALL yearly tenants, whether their rent, as a whole, be high or low. The lowest-rented yearly tenant in the country is paying Rack-rent. The whole case for the farmers has been obscured and a false issue raised by the constant use of this term, to which a new meaning has been given. Another common term is found in the word Head-rent, of which Gladstonians know no more than of Rack-rent. When Head-rent comes to be discussed in England we shall have Home Rulers explaining that the term refers to decapitation

of tenants for non-payment of Rack-rent. This explanation will not present any appreciable departure from their usual vein. An English Home Ruler who supports Mr. Gladstone "because his father did," and who first landed in Ireland yesterday, said, "I do not approve of ascendency. Hang the rights of property! Give me the rights of intellect. Let us have equality. Treat the Irish [193] fairly, even generously. They should have equal rights with Englishmen. Why keep them down by force of bayonets? Live and let live, that's what I say. Equal laws and equal rights for all."

That is the usual patter of the self-satisfied Separatist, who, having delivered himself, looks around him with an air which seems to say—"What a fine fellow I am, how generous, fair, disinterested. Have I not a noble soul? Did you ever see such magnanimity? Can anybody say anything against such sentiments? Thank heaven that I am not as other men, nor even as this Unionist." He is plausible, but no more. The mob which applauds the hero and hisses the villain of a melodrama pats him on the back, while he looks upward with his hand on his heart and a heaven-is-my-home expression in his eye. Put him under the microscope—he needs it, and you will see him as he is. The platitudes in which he lives, and moves, and has his being have no foundation in fact. His talk is grand, but it lacks substance. It is magnificent, but it is not sense. Listen to what a statesman has said:—

"I have looked in vain for the setting forth of any practical scheme of policy which the Imperial Parliament is not equal to deal with, and which it refuses to deal with, and which is to be brought about by Home Rule."

"There is nothing Ireland has asked, and which this country and this Parliament has refused. This Parliament has done for Ireland what it would have scrupled to do for England or Scotland."

"What are the inequalities of England and Ireland? I declare that I know none, except that there are certain taxes still remaining, which are levied over Englishmen and Scotchmen, and which are not levied over Irishmen; and, likewise, that there are certain purposes for which public money is freely and largely given in Ireland, and for which it is not given in England and Scotland."

I read this deliverance to my Gladstonian friend, who was staggered to learn upon incontrovertible evidence, to wit, the printed report of his speech, that these were the publicly expressed opinions of the Grand Old Man, whose pandering to Irish opinion as expressed by outrage dates from the time of the Clerkenwell explosion. That his conversion to Home Rule is entirely attributable to the endless murders and atrocities of the Land League, the Invincibles, and other Fenian organisations, is universally admitted in Ireland by Unionists and Nationalists alike. And once an Irish Parliament is granted, how will he resist the demand for Irish independence, for the Irish Republic affiliated with America? Query—if a given number of murders were required to bring about Home Rule, how many murders will be required to effect complete separation? A mere question in arithmetic.

Concurrently with the compulsory withdrawal of the Union Jack displayed by my friend Mrs. Gibson, of Northern Hotel, Londonderry, another occurrence, this time in the South, will serve to [194] attest the progress made by the inventor and patentee of the Union of Hearts. During the progress of a cricket match on the Killarney Athletic Grounds, between the clubs of Limerick and Kerry, on Whit-Monday, a Union Jack was hoisted, not as a political banner, but as an ornament, and the only banner available for the purpose. It was left flying when the cricketers went home, but in the morning it lay prone and dishonoured. The forty-foot spar had been sawn through, and in falling had smashed the palings. Let a chorus of musical Gladstonians march through Ireland bearing the Union Jack and singing "God save the Queen," let them do it, with or without police protection, and I will gladly watch their progress, record their prowess, and will have great pleasure in writing their obituary notice. The people, as a whole, are enemies to England. They are filled with a blind, unreasoning, implacable resentment for injuries they have never received, their dislike engendered and sustained by lying priests and selfish agitators, who are hastening to achieve their ends, alarmed at the prospect of popular enlightenment, which would for ever hurl them from power. The opinions of Cardinal Logue have been quoted by Lord Randolph Churchill. The *Freeman's Journal* is still more absolute. Does this sound like the Union of Hearts? Does this give earnest of final settlement, of unbroken peace and contentment, of eternal fraternity and friendship? The *Freeman* says, "We contend that the good government of Ireland by England is *impossible*, not so much by reason of natural obstacles, but because of the radical, essential difference in the public order of the two countries. This, considered in the abstract, makes a gulf profound, impassible—*an obstacle no human ingenuity can remove or overcome*."

This promises well for the success of the Home Rule Bill; but why is the thing "impossible"? Why is the gulf not only profound but also "impassible"? Why is the good government of Ireland by England prevented by an obstacle beyond human ability to remove, and which, as Mr. Gladstone would say, "passes the wit of man." The *Freeman* has no objection to tell us. The writer assumes a high moral standpoint, addressing the eminently respectable and religious Mr. Bull more in sorrow than in anger, but notwithstanding this, in a style to which that highly moral and Twenty-shillings-in-the-pound-paying person is not at all accustomed. The *Freeman* goes on—

"We find ourselves bound by reason and logic to deny to English civilisation the glorious title of Christian."

This is distinctly surprising. John always believed himself a Christian. The natural pain he may be expected to undergo after this disagreeable discovery is luckily to some extent mitigated by the information that although England is not Christian, Ireland is extremely so. The one people (the Irish) "has not only accepted but retained with inviolable constancy the Christian civilisation;" the other (the English) "has not only rejected it, but has been for three centuries the

leader of the great apostacy, and is at this day *the principal obstacle to the conversion of the world*."

Do the English Separatists see daylight now? Will they any longer deny what all intelligent Irishmen of whatever creed readily admit, namely, that religion is at the bottom of the Home Rule question? And is not Mr. Bull surprised to find that after all his missionary collections, he is without the right balm of Gilead, that his civilisation is not Christian, and that he is the principal obstacle to the salvation of the world? Is he not surprised to find that Ireland, with its thousand and ten thousand tales of horror, its brutal outrages on helpless women, its chronic incendiarism, its myriads of indecent anonymous letters addressed to young girls, such as I have seen filed by the ream in Irish police-stations—Ireland with its moonlighting atrocities, its barbarous boycotting of helpless children, its poisoning of wells and water supply, its mutilation of cattle, its unnumbered foul and cowardly murders, its habitual sheltering and protection of unspeakable felons—Ireland, one of the few remaining strongholds of the Catholic faith, has the true Christianity? Ireland would convert the world, but England stops her. The No-rent manifesto, the Plan of Campaign, and the Land League were sample productions of the genuine faith, to say nothing of Horsewhipped Healy, Breeches O'Brien, and T.D. Sullivan, who composed a eulogy on the murderers of Police-sergeant Brett, of Manchester (Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien), [195]

> High upon the gallows tree
> Swung the noble-hearted three.

That is all I can remember, but it may serve to show that Irish Christianity is the real stingo, and no mistake.

A Mullingaringian who wishes to be nameless desires to know particulars of the gorging capacity of the average Gladstonian elector. The particular item that excites his wonder is the letter of Mr. J.W. Logan, M.P., on Irish rents. Briefly stated, Mr. Logan's point is this: That notwithstanding the complaints of Irish landlords they are getting more rent than ever! And he proceeds to adduce testimony thus: Income-tax valuation in Ireland, on land, in three years selected by himself stands as follows:—

1861	£8,990,830
1877	£9,937,681
1891	£9,941,368

Then, after showing the amount of increase, he says:—"Rents continue to rise in Ireland as far as is indicated by the income-tax."

My friend says:—"Mr. Logan is both culpably ignorant and flagrantly dishonest. He seems incapable of understanding the difference between an assessment, a mere valuation, and the actual payment of income-tax. He is dishonest, because he deliberately suppresses the explanation of the difference between the first and second row of figures. When I saw the curiously-selected years, I said, why 1861, 1877, and 1891? I knew there was some thimble-rigging. I looked at the twenty-eighth annual report of her Majesty's Commissioners, that for 1885, the latest I have, and behold, the year 1877 had an asterisk! It was the only starred number on the page. It referred to a foot-note, and that foot-note read as follows:— [196]

"'*The large difference as compared with prior years is due to the value of farmhouses having been previously included under the head of messuages.*'

"The land up to '77 was called land, and the farm buildings were called messuages. But in '77 they began to reckon the buildings as land, shifting an amount from one column of figures to another. A mere matter of book-keeping. Mr. Logan writes to the papers for an explanation which is given in a footnote. He carries his point, for hundreds of people will follow his figures. Give a lie twenty-four hours' start and you can never overtake it. Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just, But four times he who gets his blow in fust. I suppose the Gladstonians claim that the Land Commission reduced rents by 25 to 30 per cent. But here Mr. Logan is proving that the landlords are drawing more money than ever! They wish they could believe it. Valuation is a queer thing. It fluctuates in the most unaccountable way. What an increase shows is the prosperity of the tenant who is putting up buildings and making other improvements. Mr. Logan's third figures show a further increase. Look at the figures in the authorised Report, not for '77 and '91, but between the two. What do you see there?"

I looked, and this is what I saw:—

1880	£9,980,543
1881	£9,980,650
1882	£9,980,215
1883	£9,981,156
1884	£9,982,072
1885	£9,982,031
1886	£9,954,535

So that Mr. Logan might have shown from these figures that during the No-Rent Campaign the landlords were enjoying an untold period of prosperity, for his chosen year, 1891, shows a *decrease* as compared with any one of the seven years above-mentioned. The truth is that the figures prove nothing in support of Mr. Logan's case, which is based on fallacy and suppression of material facts. His comparison of 1861 with 1877, without reference to the explanatory footnote, is of itself sufficient to shoulder him out of court, and stamps him as little more

scrupulous than Father Humphreys, of venerated memory. Mr. Logan's belief that assessment and tax-paying are one and the same thing is here regarded as ridiculous, and my friend thinks that if Mr. Gladstone should impose a tax on Brains, the Grand Old Man's followers will escape with an easy assessment.

Mullingar (Co. Westmeath), June 1st.

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[197]

No. 30.—THE "UNION OF HEARTS."

ToC

It was strange to hear the tune of "Rule Britannia" in the streets of Mullingar. The Irish madden at "God Save the Queen," and would make short work of the performer. It was market day, and the singer was selling printed sheets of poesy. The old tune was fairly correct, but the words were strange and sad. "When Britain first at Hell's command Prepared to cross the Irish main, Thus spake a prophet in our land, 'Mid traitors' scoff and fools' disdain, 'If Britannia cross the waves, Irish ever shall be slaves.' In vain the warning patriot spoke, In treach'rous guise Britannia came—Divided, bent us to her yoke, Till Ireland rose, in Freedom's name, and Britannia boldly braves! Irish are no longer slaves." The people were too busily engaged in selling pigs to pay much attention to the minstrel who, however, was plainly depending on disloyalty for custom. Westmeath was once the home of Whiteboyism, Ribbonism, Fenianism, and all the other isms which have successively ruined the country by banishing security; and a spice of the old leaven still flavours the popular sentiment. "They may swear as they often did our wretchedness to cure, But we'll never trust John Bull again nor let his lies allure. No we won't Bull, we won't Bull, for now nor ever more; For we've hopes on the ocean, we've trust on the shore. Oh! remember the days when their reign we did disturb, At Limerick and Thurles, Blackwater and Benburb. And ask this proud Saxon if our blows he did enjoy When we met him on the battlefield of France, at Fontenoy. Then we'll up for the green, boys, and up for the green! Oh! 'tis still in the dust and a shame to be seen! But we've hearts and we've hands, boys, full strong enough, I ween, To rescue and to raise again our own unsullied green." A group of farmers standing hard by paid some attention to this chant, and one of them, in answer to my inquiry as to how the Union of Hearts was getting on, chuckled vociferously and said, "Aye, aye, Union iv Hearts, how are ye? How are ye, Union iv Hearts?" The group joined in the laugh, and I saw that the joke was an old one.

The Invincibles had a few recruits in Mullingar and district, and the Land Leaguers also made their mark. The stationmaster sued somebody for travelling without a ticket. He was shot dead in the street immediately afterwards. Miss Croughan did not meet popular opinion in the matter of farm management. She was shot as she walked to church one fine Sunday morning. Patrick Farrelly took land which somebody else wanted. Shot as he walked home from work. Mr. Dolan, of a flour mill in the neighbourhood, had some misunderstanding with his workmen. Shot, on the chance that his successor would take warning, and accommodate himself to the public sentiment. Miss Ann Murphy, who with her two brothers lives at a small farm a mile or two away, supplied a [198] jug of milk, and said that things were quiet for the moment, but there was no telling what might happen. The house was roofed with corrugated iron. "Ah," said Miss Murphy, "we were nearly burned to death, myself an' my two brothers. An' this was the way iv it. Tramps and ruffians would call here at nightfall, an' would ask for a shelter an' a lie down, an' I would lay a few bags or something on the flure over beyant, an' they would sthretch themselves out till mornin', an' often and often I would wash their cheeks an' heads where they had been fightin', an' would be all cut an' hacked. One fellow was often here, an' my brothers had reason to refuse him free lodgin's, an' so the next mornin' we found the gate lifted off the hinges an' carried away down the lane. My brothers spoke to the police-sergeant about this, an' the very next thing was to try to burn us alive in our beds. Some ruffian came in the night an' put a match in the thatch, an' I woke almost suffocated. I ran out, an' there was the house on fire, and the cow-house, with a beautiful, lovely cow, all a solid piece of blazin' flames, till ye could see nothin' else. We saved the four walls an' some of the furniture, an' we got £50 from the County. That's the sort of people the Land League brought out all over the country."

A sturdy farmer living near said:—"An' that's what we'll have to suffer again, once ye let Home Rulers have the upper hand. The only way ye can manage these scamps is to make them feel the lash. No good tomfooling with these murdherin' ruffians. With Home Rule they expect to do as they like. If I go into a whiskey shop on a market day, what do I hear? Ever an' always the same things. There is to be no landlords, no policemen, no means of enforcing the law. There ye have it, now. The respectable people who work and make money will be a mark for every robber in the country. An' in Ireland ye can rob and murther widout fear of consequences. See that hill there? Mrs. Smith had her brains blown out as she drove by the foot of it. They meant the shot for her husband, who was with her. They don't make many mistakes. They bide their time, avoid hurry, and do the work both nately an' complately. They track down their victims like sleuth hounds, an'

there's one thing they never go in for,—that's executions. Mrs. Smith, Farrelly, Dolan, Miss Croughan, and the stationmaster, were all comfortably shot without anyone incurring evil consequences. It's devilish hard to catch an Irishman, an' when ye've caught him it's harder still to convict him. They're improvin' in their plannin', but they are not so sure o' their shootin' as they used to be. They fired at Moloney from both sides of the road at once. That was a good idea. But they failed to kill him, and seven of them are arrested. Of course, we'll have no convictions, but it looks better to arrest them, an' it ensures the man that's arrested a brass band an' a collection. So everybody's pleased an' nobody hurt. An' what would ye ask for more?"

[199] On Thursday last, at eleven in the morning, Mr. Weldon C. Moloney, solicitor, of Dublin, was driving near Milltown, on the Bodyke property, when he was wounded from the ankle to the thigh by several simultaneous shots from both sides of the road, and the horse so badly injured that it must probably be destroyed. Mr. Moloney believes that he will be able to identify his assailants, and the police are sure they have the right men. Nothing, therefore, is now wanting to the formalities accompanying the Morley administration of Justice but the march to Court, the cheers of the crowd, the twelve good men and true—who, having sworn to return a verdict in accordance with the evidence, will assuredly say Not Guilty—and the brass band to accompany the marksmen home. If the heroes of this adventure be liberated in the evening a torchlight procession will make the thing complete, and will be handy for burning the haystacks of anyone who may not have joined the promenade.

Athlone is well built and beautifully situated. The Shannon winds round the town, and also cuts it in two, so that one-half is in County Westmeath, province of Leinster, the other in County Roscommon, province of Connaught. The people are fairly well clad, but dirt and squalor such as can hardly be conceived are plentiful enough. The Shannon Saw Mills, which for twenty years have given employment to two hundred men, will shortly be removed to Liverpool, and the Athloners are sad at heart and refuse to be comforted. The concern belongs to Wilson, of Todmorden, Lancashire; and the manager, Mr. Lewis Jones, says that all the timber within reasonable distance is used up, besides which the place is not well fixed for business purposes. The workpeople are manageable enough, but somewhat uncertain in their attendance. They require a half-hour extra at breakfast time every now and then, perhaps twenty times a year or more, that they may attend mass, on the saints' days and such like occasions.

This reminded me of my first entrance to Galway. All the bridges and other lounging places were covered with men who looked as if they ought to be at work. It was Ascension Day, and nobody struck a stroke. My invasion of Athlone afforded a similar experience. There were sixty-five able-bodied men lounging on the Shannon bridge at three in the afternoon—all deeply anxious to know whence I came and whither I was going, all with an intense desire to learn my particular business. Other pauper factories were in full swing, and at the first blush it seemed that the Athloners lived by looking at the river and discussing the affairs of other people. It was Corpus Christi Day, and none but heathen would work. The brutal Saxon with his ding-dong persistency may be making money, but how about his future interests? When the last trump shall sound and the dead shall be raised, where will be the workers on saints' days? Among the goats. But the men who spend these holy seasons in smoking thick twist, with the Shannon for a spittoon, will reap the reward of their self-denial.

[200] Mr. Lewis Jones has always taken a strong interest in politics, and his present opinion is remarkable. "I came to Ireland a Gladstonian, a Home Ruler, and, what is more, a bigoted Home Ruler. How the change to my present opinion was brought about I hardly know. It was not revolution, but rather evolution. No-one can remain a Home Ruler when he understands the subject. The change in myself came about through much travelling all over the country and mixing with the people. I do not blame the English Home Rulers a bit. How can I do so, when I myself was just as ignorant? Had I remained in Liverpool I should have remained a Home Ruler. I am certain of that. Unless you actually live in the country you cannot gauge its feeling, and the Irish people are very difficult to understand. I have always got along with them famously, and I shall take ninety per cent. of our workmen with me to England. No, Home Rule has nothing to do with the removal of the works.

"My cousin and I worked like horses to get in Mr. Neville for the Exchange Division of Liverpool. We actually won, for by a piece of adroit management we polled a number of votes which would certainly have remained unpolled, and we polled them all for our man, who won by a very small majority, eleven, I think. I would willingly go to Liverpool to undo that work, as I now see how completely I was mistaken in my views of the Irish question. I was always a great Radical, and such I shall always remain; but as a Radical I am bound to support what is best for the masses of the people, and I am convinced that Home Rule would reduce the country to beggary. Bankruptcy must and will ensue, and with the flight of the landowners and the destruction of confidence, employment will be unobtainable. Who will embark capital in Ireland under present circumstances?"

A financial authority told me that poor Ireland has thirty-six millions of uninvested money lying idle in the banks. The Irish not only lack enterprise, but they will not trust each other. Great opportunities are lying thickly around, but they seem unable to avail themselves of the finest openings. Mr. Smith, of Athlone, makes twelve and a half miles of Irish tweed every week, and sells it rather faster than he can make it. He commenced with two shillings a week wages, and now he owns a factory and employs five hundred people. A Black Protestant, of course. Mr. Samuel Heaton, of Bradford, is about to go and do likewise. I went over his place an hour ago, and this is what he said:—"This was a flour mill which cost £10,000 to build. The machinery would cost £10,000 more, I should think. It did well for many years, and then it was left to three

brothers, who disputed about it until the concern was ruined as a paying business, and the place was allowed to lie derelict. The water power alone cost them £100 a year, and goodness knows what these splendid buildings would be worth. The Board of Works had got hold of it, and it was understood that anybody might have it a bargain, but nobody came forward. I offered them £30 a year for the whole of the buildings, the waterpower, and the dwelling house hard by, also that [201] other immense building yonder, which might prove handy for a store-house; and my offer was accepted. I took all at that rent for sixty years, with six months' free tenancy to start with, and I was also to have a free gift of all machinery and fittings in the place. Here we are going nicely, only in a small way, but we shall do. We make blankets, tweeds for men's suits and ladies' dresses. When the Athlone people saw us knocking about they were surprised they had never thought of it before. There are hundreds of derelict flour mills going to ruin all over the country, and the owners would gladly let anyone have them and grand water power for nothing for two or three years, just to get a chance of obtaining rent at some future day. We work from morning till night, and neither I nor my sons have ever tasted a spot of intoxicating liquor. Now there are many small mills going in the country, the proprietors of which go on the spree three days a week. If they can do, we can do. This is going to be a big thing. The only difficulty I have is to turn out the stuff. Irish tweeds have such a reputation that we simply cannot meet the demand. Mills and water power may be had for next to nothing, but the Irish have no enterprise, and the English are afraid to put any money in the country under present circumstances."

The Lock Mills above mentioned are three or four stories high, with perhaps a hundred yards of front elevation, a grandly built series of stone buildings close to the Shannon, which is here about a hundred and twenty yards wide, and carries tolerably large steamers and lighters. Six months' occupancy for nothing, the old machinery a free gift, water power and buildings for sixty years at £30 a year. I have previously mentioned the twelve big mills abandoned on the Boyne. Twelve openings for small capitalists—but Irishmen put their money in stockings, under the flure, in the thatch. *They* will not trust Irishmen, although they have no objection to John Bull's doing so. A bank manager of this district said:—

"Poor Connaught, as they call the province, is a great hoarder. And when Irishmen invest they invest outside Ireland. Seventy-eight thousand pounds in the Post Office savings bank in Mayo, the most poverty-stricken district—as they will tell you. There is Connaught money in Australia, in America, in England, and in all kinds of foreign bonds. Irishmen want to keep their hoardings secret. They like to walk about barefoot and have money in their stocking. An old woman who puts on and takes off her shoes outside the town has three sons high up in the Civil Service, and could lend you eight hundred pounds. You would take her for a beggar and might offer her a penny, and she'd take it. Have you noticed the appalling mendicancy of Ireland? Have you reflected on the 'high spirit' of the Irish people? Have you remembered their pride, their repugnance to the Saxon? And have you noticed the everlastingly outstretched hands which meet you at every corner? Beggary, lying, dirt, and laziness invariably accompany priestly rule, and are never seen in Ireland in conjunction with Protestantism? I wish somebody would explain this. The Irish masses are the dirtiest and laziest in the world, but there are no dirty, lazy Protestants. [202] Nobody ever heard of such a thing. And yet because there are more dirty, lazy Catholics than clean, industrious Protestants Mr. Gladstone would give the Catholic party the mastery, and England in future would be ruled from Rome.

"Mr. Gladstone is not responsible for his actions. The Civil Service will not employ a man after sixty-five. The British Government forbids a man to work in its service after that time. The consensus of scientific opinion has fixed sixty-five as the limit at which the control of an office or the execution of routine office work should cease. Slips of memory occur, and the brain has lost its keen edge, its firm grip, its rapid grasp of detail. At sixty-five you are not good enough for the Civil Service, but at eighty-four, when you are nineteen years older, you may govern a vast empire. It is an anomaly. Even the Nationalists think Mr. Gladstone past his work."

This statement was fully borne out by a strong anti-Parnellite of Athlone. He said:—"The bill is a hoax, but it is better than nothing. We'll take what we can get, an' we'll get what we can take—afterwards. Ye wouldn't be surprised that the people's bitter about the bill. Sure, 'tis no Home Rule it is at all, even if we got it as it first stood. 'Tis an insult to offer such a bill to the Irish nation. We want complete independence. We have a sort of a yoke on us, an' we'll never rest till we get it off. Ye say 'This'll happen ye, and That'll happen ye,' an' ye care the divil an' all about it. We don't care what happens, once we get rid of that yoke. A friend of mine said yesterday, 'I never see an Englishman but I think I'd like to have him under my feet, an' meself stickin' somethin' into him.' There's murther in their hearts, an' ye can't wonder at it. An' owld Gladstone's a madman, no less. I'm towld he ordhers a dozen top hats at once, an' his wife gets the shop-keeper to take thim back. An' I'm towld he stales the spoons whin he goes out to dine wid his frinds, an' that his wife takes thim back in a little basket nixt mornin'. And I thought that was all nonsinse till I seen the bill. An' thin I felt I could believe it; for, bedad, nobody but a madman could have drawn up sich a measure, to offind everybody, an' plaze nobody. 'Tis what ye'd expect from a lunatic asylum. But, thin, 'tis Home Rule. 'Tis the principle; an' as the mimber for Roscommon says, '"Tis ourselves will apply it, an' 'tis ourselves will explain it. That's where we'll rape the advantage,' says he."

The Athlone market is "now on," and several hundred cows and calves are lowing in front of the Royal, Mrs. Haire's excellent caravanserai. Sheep are bleating, and excited farmers are yelling like pandemonium or an Irish House of Commons. Athlone is a wonderful place for donkeys, which swell the nine-fold harmony with incessant cacophonous braying, so that the town might fairly claim the distinction of being the chosen home, if not the *fons et origo*, of Nationalist

oratory.

Athlone, June 3rd.

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[203]

No. 31.—THE "UNION OF HEARTS."

ToC

Once again the Atlantic stops me. The eighty-three miles of country between here and Athlone have brought about no great change in the appearance of the people, who, on the whole, are better clad than the Galway folks. The difference in customs, dress, language, manners, and looks between one part of Ireland and another close by is sometimes very considerable. There is a lack of homogeneity, a want of fusion, an obvious need of some mixing process. The people do not travel, and in the rural districts many of them live and die without journeying five miles from home. The railways now projected or in process of construction will shortly change all this, and the tourist, with more convenience, will no longer be able to see the Ireland of centuries ago. The language is rapidly dying out. Not a word of Irish did I hear in Athlone, even on market day. The Westporters know nothing about it. The tongue of the brutal Saxon is everywhere heard. The degenerate Irish of these latter days cannot speak their own language. They preach, teach, quarrel, pray, swear, mourn, sing, bargain, bless, curse, make love in English. They are sufficiently familiar with the British vernacular to lie with the easy grace of a person speaking his mother-tongue. They are a gifted people, and a patriotic—at least they tell us so, and the Irish, they say, is the queen of languages, the softest, the sweetest, the most poetical, the most sonorous, the most soul-satisfying. And yet the patriot members speak it not. William O'Brien is said to know a little, but only as you know a foreign language. He could not address the people on the woes of Ireland, could not lash the brutal Saxon, could not express in his native tongue the withering outpourings of his patriotic soul. He always speaks in English, of which he thinks foul scorn. He is the best Gaelic scholar of the rout, and yet he could not give you the Irish for breeches.

Westport is splendidly situated in a lovely valley watered by a nameless stream which empties itself into Clew Bay. A grand range of mountains rises around, the pyramidal form of Croagh Patrick dominating the quay. It was from the summit of this magnificent height that Saint Patrick sent forth the command which banished from the Green Isle the whole of the reptile tribe. "The Wicklow Hills are very high, An' so's the hill of Howth, Sir; But there's a hill much higher still, Aye, higher than them both, Sir! 'Twas from the top of this high hill Saint Patrick preached the sarmint, That drove the frogs out of the bogs An' bothered all the varmint. The toads went hop, the frogs went flop, Slap-dash into the water, An' the snakes committed suicide to save themselves from slaughter." Pity there is no modern successor of Saint Patrick to extirpate the reptilia of the present day, the moonlighters and their Parliamentary supporters, to wit.

The Westport people are very pious. As I have previously shown by quotations from Irish authorities, Ireland has the true Christianity which England so sadly needs. Unhindered by [204] England, Ireland would evangelise the world, and that in double-quick time. Every town I visit is deeply engaged in religious exercises. In Limerick it was a Triduum with some reference to Saint Monica. In Cork it was something else, which required much expenditure in blessed candles. In Galway the Confraternity of the Holy Girdle was making full time, and in Westport three priests are laying on day and night in a mission. A few days ago they carried the Corpus Christi round the place, six hundred children strewing flowers under the sacerdotal feet, and the crowds of worshippers who flocked into the town necessitated the use of a tent, from which the money-box was stolen. On Sunday last the bridge convaynient to the chapel was covered with country folks who could not get into the building, and a big stall with sacred images in plaster of Paris and highly-coloured pictures in cheap frames was doing a roaring trade. Barefooted women were hurrying to chapel to get pictures blessed, or walking leisurely home with the sanctified treasure under their shawls. A brace of scoffers on the bridge explained the surging crowd, and advised instant application, that evening being the last. "Get inside, wid a candle in yer fist, an' ye can pray till yer teeth dhrop out iv yer head." This irreverence is probably one of the accursed fruits of contact with the sacrilegious Saxon. "The people here are cowardly, knavish, and ignorant," said an Irishman twenty years resident in Westport. "They believe anything the priests tell them, and they will do anything the priests may order or even hint at. They would consider it an honour if the priests told them to lie down that they might walk over them. Politically they are entirely in the hands of the Roman Catholic clergy. They are totally unable to understand or to grasp the meaning of the change now proposed, which would place the country entirely at the mercy of the clerical party. We see the result of popular election in the return of Poor Law Guardians, who spend most of their time in calling each other beggars and liars. Patronage under the Home Rule Bill would mean the instalment of the relatives of priests in all the best offices. Once we have an Irish Parliament, a man of capacity may leave the country unless he have a priest for his uncle.

"We want a liberal measure of Local Government, and a final settlement of the land question.

The poor people are becoming poorer and poorer through this eternal agitation which drives away wealth and capital, and undermines the value of all Irish securities. Poor as we were, we were much better off before the agitation commenced. The poor themselves are becoming alive to the fact that continuous agitation means continuous poverty. We must now have some sort of Home Rule, but we shall be ruined if we get it from a Liberal Government. If we get it from a Tory Government, the English will run to lend us money, but if from a Morley-Gladstone combination they won't advance us a stiver. The present Irish Parliamentary representatives have the confidence of no single Irish party. They were well enough for their immediate purpose, and [205] no better men would come forward. To entrust them with large powers is the very acme of wild insanity. Admitting their honesty, which is doubtful, they have had no experience in business affairs, and their class is demonstratedly devoid of administrative capacity. The Poor Law Guardians of Cork, Portumna, Ballinasloe, Swinford, Ballyvaughan, and many other towns and cities, have by their mismanagement brought their respective districts to insolvency. That every case was a case of mismanagement is clearly proved by the fact that the Government having superseded these Boards in each case by two paid Guardians, a period of two years has sufficed to wipe off all debts, to reduce expenses, and to leave a balance in hand. They then begin to drift again into insolvency. And where the guardians have not been superseded, where they have not yet become bankrupt, they still have a bank balance against them. You will scarcely hear of a solvent parish, even if you offer a reward. And that is the class of persons Mr. Gladstone would entrust with the administration of Irish finance. The result would be the country's bankruptcy, and England would have to pay the damage. Serve England right for her stupidity."

What my friend said anent the class of men who compose the ranks of the Irish Parliamentary party reminds me of something I heard in Athlone. A great anti-Parnellite said:—"Poor Mat Harris was the splindid spaker, in throth! Parnell it was that sent him to the House of Commons. Many's the time I seen him on the roof of the Royal Hotel, fixin the tiles, an' puttin things sthraight, that the rain wouldn't run in. 'Tis a slater he was, an' an iligant slater, at that. An' when he came down for a big dhrink, the way he'd stand at the bar and discoorse about Ireland would brake yer heart. Many's the time I seen the ould waiter listenin' to him till the wather would pour out iv his two good-lookin' eyes. An, thin, 'twas Mat Harris had the gab, rest his sowl! Ye haven't anybody could come up to him barrin' owld Gladstone, divil a one." Another Athloner, speaking of an Irish Nationalist M.P., who luckily still lives, said:—"Mr. Parnell took him up because he was a wonderful fellow to talk, and so was popular with the mob of these parts. I think he was a blacksmith by trade. Parnell got him made M.P., and set him up with a blue pilot coat, but forgot to give him a handkerchief. So he used the tail of his coat alternately with his coat sleeve. He never had a pocket-handkerchief in his life, but he was a born legislator, and the people believed he could do much to restore the vaunted ancient prestige and prosperity of Ireland. He came to Athlone, and went to the Royal, but the waiter, who did not know he was speaking to a member of Parliament, and moreover one of his own kidney, declined to take him in, and recommended a place where he could get a bed for Thruppence! And the M.P. actually had to take it. This was only inconsistent with his new dignity, and not with his previous experiences. This is the kind of [206] person who is to direct Irish legislation more efficiently than the educated class, who unanimously object to Home Rule as detrimental to the interests of both countries, and as likely to further impoverish poor Ireland. The men who now represent the 'patriotic' party will feather their own nests. They care for nothing more."

The Westport folks may not deserve the strictures of their friend of twenty years, but two things are plainly visible. They are dirty, and they have no enterprise. The island-dotted Clew Bay and the sublime panorama of mountain scenery, the sylvan demesne of the Earl of Sligo, and the forest-bordered inlets of Westport Bay, form a scene of surpassing loveliness and magnificence such as England and Wales together cannot show. The town is well laid out, the streets are broad and straight, and Lord Sligo's splendid range of lake and woodland, free to all, adjoins the very centre. And yet the shops are small and mean, the houses are dirty and uninviting, and dunghills front the cottages first seen by the visitor. A breezy street leads upward to the heights, and all along it are dustheaps, with cocks and hens galore, scratching for buried treasure. At the top a stone railway bridge, the interstices facing the sea full of parsley fern, wild maidenhair, hart's-tongue, and a beautiful species unknown to me. The bracing air of the Atlantic sweeps the town, which is sheltered withal by miles of well-grown woods. The houses are dazzling white, and like the Rhine villages look well from a distance. Beware the interiors, or at least look before you leap. Then you will probably leap like the stricken hart, and in the opposite direction. You will be surprised at your own agility. Flee from the "Lodgings and Entertainment" announced in the windows. Your "Entertainment" is likely to be livelier than you expected, and you will wish that your Lodgings were on the cold, cold ground. The Westporters are too pious to wash themselves or their houses. "They wash the middle of their faces once a month," said a Black Methodist. For there are Methodists here, likewise Presbyterians and Plymouth Brethren—besides the Church of Ireland folks, who only are called Protestants. All these must be exempted from the charge of dirtiness. Cleanliness, neatness, prosperity, and Protestantism seem to go together. Father Humphreys himself would not deny this dictum.

For the other clause of the indictment—lack of enterprise—the Westporters are no worse and no better than their neighbours. The Corkers make nothing of their harbour, spending most of their time in talking politics and cursing England. Commercial men speak of the difficulty of doing business at Cork, which does not keep its appointments, is slippery, and requires much spirituous lubrication. Cork ruins more young commercial men than any city in Britain, and owing to the unreliability of its citizens, is more difficult to work. Galway has scores of ruined warehouses and factories, and has been discussing the advisability of building a Town Hall for

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forty years at least. Limerick has a noble river, with an elaborate system of quays, on which no business is done. The estuary of the Shannon, some ten miles wide, lies just below, opening on the Atlantic; and a little enterprise would make the city the Irish head-quarters for grain. The quays are peopled by loafers, barefooted gossiping women, and dirty, ragged children playing at marbles. Great buildings erected to hold the stores that never come, or to manufacture Irish productions which nobody makes, are falling into ruin. I saw the wild birds of the air flying through them, while the people were emigrating or complaining, and nothing seemed to flourish but religious services and fowl-stealing. It was during my sojourn in Limerick that somebody complained to the Town Council of poultry depredations, which complaint drew from that august body a counter-complaint to the effect that the same complainant had complained before, and that he always did it during a Retreat, that is, when the town was full of people engaged in special religious services—so that the heretic observer, and especially the representative of the *Gazette*, referred to by name, might couple the salvation of souls with the perdition of hens, to the great discredit of the faith. But this is a digression.

Westport should brush itself up, cleanse its streets, tidy up its shops, sanitate its surroundings, and offer decent accommodation to tourists. The latter does exist, but is scarce and hard to find. The people of Cork, Limerick, and Galway blame England and English rule for the poverty which is their own fault alone. They hate the Northerners as idle unsuccessful men hate successful industrious men. Belfast is a standing reproach. The people of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught have had the same government under which Ulster has flourished, with incomparably greater advantages of soil and climate than Ulster, with better harbours and a better trading position. But instead of working they stand with folded hands complaining. Instead of putting their own shoulders to the wheel they wait for somebody to lift them out of the rut. Instead of modern methods of agriculture, fishing, or what not, they cling to the ancient ways, and resent advice. The women will not take service; the men will not dig, chop, hammer. They are essentially bone-idle—laziness is in their blood. They will not exert themselves. As Father McPhilpin says, "They will not move. You cannot stir them if you take them by the shoulders and haul at them." What will Home Rule do for such people? Will it serve them instead of work? Will it content the grumblers? Will it silence the agitators? Will it convert the people to industry? Will it imbue them with enterprise? Will it make them dig, chop, fish, hammer? Will it make the factory hands regular day by day? Will it cause the women to wash themselves and cleanse their houses? Will it change their ingrained sluttishness to tidiness and neatness and decency? Father Mahony, of Cork, said that the Irish fisherman turned his back on the teeming treasures of the deep, because he groaned beneath the cruel English yoke. Since then I have seen him fishing, but I did not hear [208] him groan. He wanted boats, nets, and to be taught their use. Mr. Balfour supplied him with plant and instructions. Father Mahony and his tribe of wind-bags feed the people on empty air. The starving poor ask for bread, and they get a speech. They are told to go on grumbling, and things will come all right. Nobody ever tells them to work. Murder and robbery, outrage and spoliation, landlord-shooting and moonlighting, are easier ways of getting what they want. The Plan of Campaign, the No Rent combination, the Land League brotherhood when rightly considered, were just so many substitutes for honest work. Ireland will be happy when Ireland is industrious, and not a moment before.

No need to say that the Westporters are Home Rulers. The clean and tidy folks, the Protestant minority, are heart and soul against the bill, but the respectable voters are swamped all over Ireland, by devotees of the priests. "We think the franchise much too low," said a Presbyterian. "We think illiterate Ireland, with its abject servility to the Catholic clergy, quite unfit to exercise the privilege of sending men to Parliament. We think the intelligent minority should rule, and that the principles which obtain in other matters might well be applied to Parliamentary elections. These ignorant people are no more fit to elect M.P.'s than to elect the President of the Royal Society or the President of the Royal Academy. And yet if mere numbers must decide, if the counting of heads is to make things right or wrong, why not let the people decide these distinctions? The West of Ireland folks know quite as much of art or science as of Home Rule, or any other political question. They have returned, and will in future return, the nominees of the priests."

One of the highest legal authorities in Ireland, himself a Roman Catholic, said to me:—

"You saw the elections voided by reason of undue priestly influence. That was because, in the cases so examined, money was available to pay the costs of appeal. If there had been money enough to contest every case where a Nationalist was returned, you would have seen every such election proved equally illegal, and every one would have been adjudicated void."

The Westport folks are looking for great things from the great Parliament in College Green. A Sligo man who has lived in Dublin was yesterday holding forth on these prospective benefits, his only auditor being one Michael, an ancient waiter of the finest Irish brand. Michael is both pious and excitable, and must have an abnormal bump of wonder. He is a small man with a big head, and is very demonstrative with his hands. He abounds with pious (and other) ejaculations, and belongs to that popular class which is profuse in expressions of surprise and admiration. The most commonplace observation evokes a "D'ye see that, now?" a "D'ye tell me so, thin?" or a "Whillaloo! but that bates all!" As will be seen, Michael artistically suits his exclamations to the tone and matter of the principal narrator, mixing up Christianity and Paganism in a quaintly [209] composite style, but always keeping in harmony with the subject. The Sligo man said:—

"I seen the mails go on the boat at Kingstown, an' there was hundhreds of bags, no less."

"Heavenly Fa-a-ther!" said Michael, throwing up eyes and hands.

"Divil a lie in it. 'Twas six hundhred, I believe."

"Holy Moses preserve us!"

"An' the rivinue is millions an' millions o' pounds."

"The saints in glory!"

"An' wid Home Rule we'd have all that for Oireland."

"Julius Saysar an' Nibuchadnizzar!"

"Forty millions o' goolden sovereigns, divil a less."

"Thunder an' ouns, but ye startle me!"

"An' we're losin' all that"—

"Save *an'* deliver us!"

"Becase the English takes it"—

"Holy Virgin undefiled!"

"To pay peelers an' sojers"—

"Bloody end to thim!"

"To murther and evict us"—

"Lord help us!"

"An' collect taxes an' rint."

"Hell's blazes!"

Ten minutes after this conversation under my window Michael adroitly introduced the subject of postal profits in Ireland. I told him there was an ascertained loss of £50,000 a year, which the new Legislature would have to make up somehow. Michael bore the change with fortitude. The loss of forty millions plus fifty thousand would have upset many a man, but Michael only threw up his eyes and said very softly—

"Heavenly Fa-a-ther!"

Westport, June 6th.

No. 32.—HOME RULE AND IRISH IMMIGRATION.

ToC

A bright country town with a big green square called The Mall, bordered by rows of great elm trees and brilliantly whitewashed houses. The town is about a mile from the station, and the way is pleasant enough. Plenty of trees and pleasant pastures with thriving cattle, mansions with umbrageous carriage-drives, and the immense mass of Croagh Patrick fifteen miles away towering over all. The famous mountain when seen from Castlebar, is as exactly triangular as an Egyptian pyramid, or the famous mound of Waterloo. Few British heights have the striking outline of Croagh Patrick, which may be called the Matterhorn of Ireland. Castlebar is always dotted with soldiers, The [210] Buffs are now marching through the town, on their way to the exercise ground, but the sight is so familiar that the street urchins hardly turn their heads. The Protestant Church, square-towered, fills a corner of The Mall, and there stands a statue of General O'Malley, with a drawn sword of white marble. Lord Lucan, of the Balaklava Charge, hailed from Castlebar. The town and its precincts belong to the Lucans. There is a convent with a big statue of the Virgin Mary, and the usual high wall. The shops are better than those of Westport, and the streets are far above the Irish average in order and cleanliness. The country around is rich in antiquities. Burrishoole Abbey and Aughnagower Tower, with the splendid Round Tower of Turlough, are within easy distance, the last a brisk hour's walk from Castlebar. There in the graveyard I met a Catholic priest of more than average breadth and culture, who discussed Home Rule with apparent sincerity, and with a keener insight than is possessed by most of his profession. He said:—

"When the last explosion took place at Dublin, the first to apprise me of the affair was the Bishop of my diocese, whose comment was summed up in the two words 'Castle job!' Now that riled me. I am tired of that kind of criticism."

Here I may interpolate the critique of Colonel Nolan, who was the first to apprise me of the occurrence.—"I do not say that the Irish Government officials are responsible for the explosion. That would not be fair, as there is no evidence against them. But I do say that if they did arrange the blow-up they could not have selected a better time, and if some mistaken Irish Nationalist be the guilty person he could not have selected a worse time from a patriotic point of view." Thus

spake the Colonel, who has an excellent reputation in his own district. The stoutest Conservatives of Tuam speak well of him. "All the Nolans are good," said a staunch Unionist; and another said, "The Nolans are a good breed. The Colonel is good, and Sebastian Nolan is just as good. Nobody can find fault with the Nolans apart from politics." The Colonel is one of the nine Parnellites accursed of the priests. Perhaps he was present at the Parnellite meeting at Athenry, regarding which Canon Canton, parish priest of Athenry, declared from the altar that every person attending it would be guilty of mortal sin. English readers will note that the Parnellites resent priestly dictation.

Another interpolation anent "the Castle job." I thought to corner a great Athlone politician by questions *re* the recent moonlighting, incendiarism, and attempted murders in Limerick and Clare. He said—

"All these things are concocted and paid for by the Tories of England. The reason Balfour seemed to be so successful was simple enough when you know the explanation. Balfour and his friends kept the moonlighters and such like people going. They paid regular gangs of marauders to disturb the country while the Liberals were in power. When the Tories get in, these same [211]
gangs are paid to be quiet. Then the Tories go about saying, 'Look at the order we can keep.' Every shot fired in County Clare is paid for by the English Tories. Sure, I have it from them that knows. Ye might talk for a month an' ye'd never change my opinion. There's betther heads than mine to undershtand these things, men that has the larnin', an' is the thrue frinds of Ireland. When I hear them spake from the altar 'tis enough for me. I lave it to them. Ye couldn't turn me in politics or religion, an' I wouldn't listen to anybody but my insthructors since I was twelve inches high." Well might Colonel Winter, who knows the speaker above-mentioned, say to me, "He has read a good deal, but his reading seems to have done him no good."

It is time I went back to Turlough's Tower and my phœnix priest who was riled to hear his Bishop speak of the Dublin explosion as a "Castle job." He claimed that "the clergy are unwilling instruments in the hands of the Irish people, who are unconquerable even after seven hundred years of English rule. The Irish priesthood is so powerful an element of Irish life, not because it leads, but because it follows. Powerful popular movements coerce the clergy, who are bound to join the stream, or be for ever left behind. No doubt at all that, being once in, they endeavour to direct the current of opinion in the course most favourable to the Catholic religion. To do otherwise would be to deny their profession, to be traitors to the Church. They did not commence the agitation. The Church instinctively sticks to what is established, and opposes violent revolutionary action. History will bear me out. The clergy stamped out the Smith-O'Brien insurrection. The Catholic clergy of the present day, mostly the sons of farmers, are perhaps more ardently political than the clergy of a former day, a little less broad in view, a little more hot-headed; yet in the main are subject to the invariable law I laid down at first—that is, they only follow and direct, they do not lead, or at any rate they only place themselves in the front when the safety of the Church demands it. The bulk of the clergy believe that the time to lead has now come. My own opinion, in which I am supported by a very few,—but I am happy to say a very distinguished few,—is this: The Roman Catholic Church is making immense progress in England; a closer and closer connection with England will ultimately do far more for the Church than can be hoped from revolutionary and republican Ireland. We should by a Home Rule Bill gain much ground at first, but we should as rapidly lose it, while our hold on England would be altogether gone. Many of the so-called Catholic Nationalists are atheists at heart, and the tendency of modern education is decidedly materialistic. So that instead of progressive conquest the Church would experience progressive decline, which would be all the more striking after the great but momentary accession of prestige conferred by the Home Rule Bill. My theory is—Let well alone. [212]
The popular idea is to achieve commanding and lasting success at a blow."

The Castlebar folks have diverse opinions, the decent minority, the intelligence of the place, being Unionist, as in every other Irish town. A steady, well-clad yeoman said:—"I've looked at the thing in a hundred ways, and although I confess that I voted for Home Rule, yet when we have time to consider it, and to watch the debate on every point, we may be excused if we become doubtful as to the good it will do. The people round here are so ignorant, that talking sense to them is waste of time. They will put their trust in coal mines and the like of that. Now, I have gone into the subject of Irish mines. I have read the subject up from beginning to end. Wicklow gold would cost us a pound for ten shillings' worth. The silver mines wouldn't pay, and the lead mines are a fraud; while the copper mines would ruin anybody who put their money into them. I know something about Irish coal. Lord Ranfurly did his best for Irish coal at Dungannon. Mines were sunk and coal was found, but it was worthless. Well, it fetched half a crown a ton, and people on the spot went on paying a guinea a ton for Newcastle coal because it was cheaper in the end. We may have iron, but what's the good when we have no coal to smelt it? The Irish forests which formerly were used for this purpose are all gone. Then the people put their trust in wool and cotton manufactures. They may do something with the wool, because England is waking up to the superior quality of Irish woollen productions; but in the cotton England is here, there and everywhere before us. 'Oh,' say some who should know better, 'put a duty on English goods, and make the Irish buy their own productions.' What rubbish! when England buys almost every yard of Irish woollen stuff, and could choke us off in a moment by counter-tariffs. Without English custom the Irish tweed mills would not run a single day.

"As an Irishman, I should like to have a Parliament of my own. I suppose that is a respectable ambition. At the same time, I cannot see where it would do us any substantial good. No, I do not think the present Nationalist members loyal to the English Crown. Nor are they traitors. A priest explained that very well. There's a distinction. 'A man may not be loyal and yet not be a traitor,

for how can a man be a traitor to a foreign government?' said he. That sounded like the truth. I thought that a reasonable statement. For, after all, we *are* under foreign rule, and we have a perfect right to revolt against it and throw off the English yoke if we could do it, and if it suited us to do it. How to do it has been the talk since my childhood, and many a year before. It is the leading idea of all secret societies, and hardly any young man in Kerry and Clare but belongs to one or other of them. The idea is to get rid of the landlords who hold the country for England. There it is, now. We'll never be a contented conquered province like Scotland. We'd be all right if we could only make ourselves content. But the Divil is in us. That's what ye'll say. The Divil [213] himself is in Irishmen."

The Mayo folks are great temporary migrants. From the County Mayo and its neighbour Roscommon come the bands of Irish harvesters which annually invade England. Latterly they are going more than ever, and the women also are joining in large numbers. The unsettled state of the country and the threat of a College Green Parliament have made work scarcer and scarcer, and the prevailing belief among the better classes that the bill is too absurd to become law, is not sufficient to counteract the chronic want of confidence inspired by the presence of Mr. Gladstone at the helm of state. Five hundred workers went from Westport Quay to Glasgow the other evening. More than two-thirds were women from Achil Island, sturdy and sun-burnt, quaintly dressed in short red kirtle, brilliant striped shawl, and enormous lace-up boots, of fearful crushing power. Though not forbidding, the women were very plain, ethnologically of low type, with small turn-up noses, small eyes, large jaws, and large flat cheekbones. The men were ugly as sin and coarse as young bulls, of which their movements were remindful. A piper struck up a jig and couples of men danced wildly about, the women looking on. Five shillings only for forty hours' sea-sickness, with permission to stand about the deck all the time. Berths were, of course, out of the question, and the boat moved slowly into the Atlantic with hundreds of bareheaded women leaning over the sides. Another boat-load will land at Liverpool, to return in September and October. The best-informed people of these parts think that under the proposed change the young female population of Mayo would be compelled to stay in England altogether, and that their competition in the English labour market would materially lower the rate of factory wage. "They live hard and work like slaves when away from Ireland," said an experienced sergeant of the Royal Irish Constabulary. "And yet they are lazy, for on their return they will live somehow on the money they bring back until the time comes to go again, and during the interval they will hardly wash themselves. They will not work in their own districts, nor for their friends, the small farmers. Partly pride, partly laziness; you cannot understand them. The man who attempts to explain the inconsistencies of the Irish character will have all his work before him. Make the country a peasant-proprietary to suit the small farmers, and the labouring class will go to England and Scotland to live. The abolition of the big farmers will cut the ground from under their feet. You will have Ireland bossing your elections, as in America, and cutting the legs from under your artisans. For let me tell you that once Paddy learns mechanical work he is a heap smarter than any Englishman."

If Home Rule should become law, and if England should be over-run by the charming people of Connaught, the brutal Saxon will be interested to observe some of the ancient customs to which they cling with a touching tenacity. Marriage with the Connaught folks is entirely a matter of [214] pecuniary bargain. The young folks have no act or part in the arrangements. The seniors meet and form a committee of ways and means. How much money has your son? How much has your daughter? The details once understood, the parties agree or disagree, or leave the matter pending while they respectively look about for a better bargain. And even if the bargain be ostensibly agreed to, either party is at liberty to at once break the match, on hearing of something better. The prospective bride and bridegroom have nothing to say in the negotiations, and may never have seen each other in their lives. Previous acquaintance is not considered necessary, and the high contracting parties are frequently married without having met before they meet at the altar. This was hard to believe, but careful inquiry established the fact. Never was a case of rebellion recorded. The lady takes the goods the gods provide her, and the gentleman believes that the custom yields all prizes and no blanks. Marriage is indeed a lottery in Connaught. The system works well, for unfaithfulness is said to be unknown. The Connaught funerals are impressive. One of these I have seen, and one contents me well. The coffin arrived on a country cart, the wife and family of the deceased sitting on the body, after the fashion attributed to English juries. To sit elsewhere than on the coffin would in Connaught be considered a mark of disrespect. The children sit on the head and feet, the wife jumps on the chest of the dear departed, and away goes the donkey. The party dismount at the churchyard gates, and as the coffin enters they raise the Irish cry, a blood-curdling wail that makes your muscles creep, while a cold chill runs down your spine, and you sternly make for home. You may as well see it out, for you can hear the "Keen" two miles away against the wind. The mourners clasp their hands and move them quickly up and down, recounting the deceased's good deeds, and exclaiming, in Irish and English, "Why did ye die? Ah, thin, why did ye die?" To which very reasonable query no satisfactory answer is obtainable. The widow is expected to tear her hair, if any, and to be perfectly inconsolable until the churchyard wall is cleared on leaving. Then, and not before, she may address herself to mundane things. Good "Keeners" are in much request, and a really efficient howler is sure of regular employment. The Connaught folks are somewhat rough-and-ready with their dead. Colonel Winter, of the Buffs, told me that he came across a donkey-cart in charge of two men, who were waiting at a cross-road. A coffin had been removed from the cart, and stood on its end hard by. "I thought it was an empty coffin," said the Colonel, "but it wasn't. The men were waiting, by appointment, for the mourners, and meanwhile the old lady in the coffin was standing on her head. Wonderful country is Ireland.

"An old woman died in the workhouse of typhus fever, or some other contagious disorder. The corpse was placed in a parish coffin, and was about to be buried, when a relative came forward [215] and offered to take charge of the funeral, declining to accept the workhouse coffin. The authorities consented, on condition that the proposed coffin should be large enough to enclose the first one, explaining that the body was dangerously contagious. The relative, a stout farmer, duly arrived at the workhouse with the new coffin, which was found to be too small to include the first one, and the authorities thereupon refused to have the coffins changed. So the mourner knocked down two men, and, making his way into the dead-room, burst open the receptacle containing his revered grandmother, whipped her out of the parochial box, planked her into the family coffin, and triumphantly walked her off on his shoulder. There was filial piety for you! They arrested that man, locked him up, and, for aught I know, left the old lady to bury herself, which must have been a great hardship. What Englishman would have done as much for his grandmother? And yet they say that Connaught men have no enterprise!"

A Protestant of Castlebar said:—"If the English people fail to correctly estimate the supreme importance of the present crisis it is all over with us, and, I think, with England. If the Unionist party persevere they must ultimately win. The facts are all with them. Enlightenment is spreading, and if time to spread the truth can be gained Home Rule will be as dead as a door-nail. If, on the other hand, the English people fail to see the true meaning of Home Rule, which is revolution and disintegration, England, from the moment an Irish Parliament is established, must be classed with those countries from which power has dwindled away; her glory will have commenced to wane, her enemies will rejoice, and she will present to the world the aspect of a nation in its decadence. The Irish leaders and the Irish people alike, who support Home Rule, are ninety-nine hundredths disloyal. Already the leaders are cursing England more deeply than before, this time for deceiving them about the Home Rule Bill. Their most respectable paper is already preparing the ground for further agitation. The *Irish Independent* says that the Irish people are being marched from one prison to another, and told that is their liberty. Such is the latest criticism of the Home Rule Bill, as pronounced by the Nationalist party. The same paper ordered the Lord Mayor of Dublin and the City Council to refuse an address of congratulation on the marriage of the Duke of York and Princess May, and they refused by more than four to one. They refused when it was the Duke of Clarence. We could understand that, but why refuse now, when Home Rule is adopted as the principal measure of the Government whose only aim is the Union of Hearts? The English people must indeed be fools if they cannot gauge the feeling that dictated a vote so mean as this. Surely the English will at the eleventh hour draw back and save us and our country, and themselves and their country from unknown disaster. If they allow this ruinous measure to become law I shall almost doubt the Bible where it says, 'Surely the net is set [216] in vain in the sight of any bird.'"

I met a very savage Separatist in Castlebar. They are numerous in Mayo and Galway. The more uncivilised the district, the more ignorant the people, the more decided the leaning to Home Rule. My friend was not of the peasant class, but rather of the small commercial traveller breed, such as, with the clerks and counterskippers of the country stores, make up the membership of the Gaelic clubs by which the expulsion of the Saxon is confidently expected. He said, "I am for complete Independence, and I do not believe in what is called constitutional agitation. Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow. Every country that has its freedom has fought for it. I would not waste a word with England, which has always deceived us and is about to deceive us once again. England has always wronged us, always robbed us. England has used her vast resources to ruin our trade that her own might flourish. The weakest must go to the wall—that is the doctrine of England—which thrives by our beggary and lives by our death. You have heaps of speakers in England who admit this. Gladstone knows it is true. The Irish people have let the English eat their bread for generations. The Irish people have seen the English spending their money for centuries. This must be stopped as soon as possible, and Ireland grows stronger every day. Every concession we have obtained has been the result of compulsion, and I am for armed combination. Every Irishman should be armed, and know the use of arms. The day will come when we shall dictate to England, and when we may, if we choose, retaliate on her. We shall have an army and navy of our own; all that will come with time. We must creep before we walk, and walk before we run. The clubs already know their comrades; each man knows his right and left shoulder man, and the man whose orders he is to obey. Merely a question of athletic sports, at present. But when we get Home Rule the enthusiasm of the people will be whetted to such an extent that we shall soon enroll the whole of the able-bodied population, and after then, when we get the Word, you will see what will happen. Where would be your isolated handfuls of soldiery and police, with roads torn up, bridges destroyed, and an entire population rising against them? Yes, you might put us down, but we'd first have some fun. In a week we'd not leave a red coat in the island."

The gratitude, the warm generosity of the Irish people is very beautiful. The Union of Hearts, however, as a paying investment seems to have fallen considerably below par.

Castlebar, June 8th.

No. 33.—TUAM'S INDIGNATION MEETING.

ToC

Here I am, after two hours' journey by the Midland and Great Western Railway, which leads to most of the good things in Ireland, and is uncommonly well managed, and with much enterprise. By the Midland and Great Western Railway you may cover the best tourist districts in quick time and with great comfort. By it you may tackle Connemara either from Galway or Westport, and the company, subsidised by Mr. Balfour, will shortly open fifty miles of line between Galway and Clifden. Then we want a thirty-mile continuation from Clifden by Letterfrack and Leenane to Westport, and the circle will be complete. For that, Paddy must wait until the Tories are again in office. As he will tell you, the Liberals spend their strength in sympathetic talk. Mr. Hastings, of Westport, said:—"I care not who hears me say that the Tories have instituted the public works which have so much benefited the country. The Liberals have always been illiberal in this respect. Mr. Balfour did Ireland more good than any Liberal Irish Secretary." Mr. Hastings is as good a Catholic Home Ruler as Father McPhilpin, who said substantially the same thing. Ballina is on the Moy—every self-respecting town in Ireland has a salmon river—and the Midland and Great Western Railway gives fishing tickets to tourists, who anywhere on this line should find themselves in Paradise. From the three lakes of Mullingar to the Shannon at Athlone, from the Moy at Ballina to the Corrib at Galway, the waters swarm with fish. The salmon weir at Galway is worth a long journey to see. The fish literally jostle each other in the water. They positively elbow each other about. Sometimes you may stand against the salmon ladder in the middle of the town, and although the water is clear as crystal you cannot see the bottom for fish—great, silvery salmon, upon whose backs you think you might walk across the river. The Moy at Ballina is perhaps fifty yards wide, and the town boasts two fine bridges, one of which is flanked by a big Catholic church. The streets are not handsome, nor yet mean. Whiskey shops abound, though they are not quite so numerous as in some parts of Ennis, where, in Mill Street, about three-fourths of the shops sell liquor. Castleisland in Kerry would also beat Ballina. Mr. Reid, of Aldershot, said:—"The population of Castleisland is only one thousand two hundred, but I counted forty-eight whiskey-shops on one side of the street." Of a row of eleven houses near the main bridge of Ballina I counted seven whiskey-shops, and one of the remaining four was void. There were several drink-shops opposite, so that the people are adequately supplied with the means of festivity. The place has no striking features, and seems to vegetate in the way common to Irish country towns. It probably lives on the markets, waking up once a week, and immediately going to sleep again. The Post Office counter had two bottles of ink and no pen, and the young man in [218] charge was whistling "The Minstrel Boy." The shop-keepers were mostly standing at their doors, congratulating each other on the fine weather. A long, long street leading uphill promised a view of the surrounding country, but the result was not worth the trouble. It led in the direction of Ardnaree, which my Irish scholarship translates "King's Hill," but I stopped short at the ruins of the old workhouse, and after a glance over the domain of Captain Jones went back through the double row of fairly good cottages, and the numerous clans of cocks and hens which scratched for a precarious living on the King's highway. The people turned out *en masse* to look at me, and to discuss my country, race, business, appearance, and probable income. The Connaught folks have so little change, are so wedded to one dull round, that when I observe the interest my passage evokes I feel like a public benefactor. A bell rings at the Catholic church. Three strokes and a pause. Then three more and another pause. A lounger on the bridge reverently raises his hat, and seeing himself observed starts like a guilty wretch upon a fearful summons. I ask him what the ringing means, and with a deprecatory wag of his head he says:—

"Deed an' deed thin, I couldn't tell ye."

The Town Crier unconsciously launched me into business, and soon I was floating on a high tide of political declamation. What the crier cried I could not at all make out, for the accent of the Ballina folks is exceedingly full-flavoured. When he stopped I turned to a well-dressed young man near me and said, "He does not finish, as in England, with God save the Queen."

"No," said my friend with a laugh, "he has too much regard for his skin."

"What would happen if he expressed his loyalty?"

"He would be instantly rolled in the gutter. The people would be on him in a moment. He'd be like a daisy in a bull's mouth. He might say "God save Ireland," just to round the thing off, but "God save the Queen"!

My friend was a Home Ruler, and yet unlike the rest. He said: "I am a Home Ruler because I think Home Rule inevitable now the English people have given way so far. Give Paddy an inch and you may trust him to take an ell. We must have something like Home Rule to put an end to the agitation which is destroying the country. It is now our only chance, and in my opinion a very poor chance, but we are reduced so low that we think the bottom is touched. The various political agencies which have frightened away capital and entirely abolished enterprise will continue their work until some measure of Home Rule is given to the country, and then things will come to a head at once. It is barely possible that good might ultimately result, but young men would be gray-headed before things would work smoothly. The posture of the poorer classes is simply absurd. They will have a dreadful awakening, and that will also do good. They are doing nothing [219] now except waiting for the wonderful things they have been told will take place when Irishmen get into power. You must have heard the extraordinary things they say about the mines and

factories that will be everywhere opened. Some of their popular orators tell them of the prosperity of Ireland before the Union. That is true enough, but the conditions are totally changed. We did something in the way of manufacturing, but we could not do it now. We had no Germany, no America to compete against. Those who tell us to revive that period of prosperity by the same means might just as well tell us to revive the system of tribal lands or the chieftainship of Brian Boru.

"The people need some tremendous shock to bring them to their senses. They used to work much better, to stand, as it were, on their own feet. Now they make little or no exertion. They know they will never be allowed to starve. They know that at the cry of their distress England and America will rush to their succour. And they have tasted the delights of not paying. First it was the rent, the impossible rent. In this they had a world-wide sympathy, and a very large number of undeserving persons well able to pay chummed in with the deserving people who were really unable to meet their engagements. And at the meetings of farmers to decide on united action, the men who could pay but would not were always the most resolute in their opposition to the landlord. This was natural enough, for they had most to gain by withholding payment. The landlords always knew which was which, and would issue ejectment processes against those able to pay, but what could be done against a whole county of No-rent folks? And never have these people been without aid and sympathy from English politicians. We have had them in Ireland by the dozen, going round the farmers and encouraging them to persevere.

"The great advantage of Home Rule in the eyes of the farmers is this and this only—that an Irish House would settle the land question for ever. The people would take a good bill from the House of Commons at Westminster if they could get it, but they can't. They believe that their only hope is with an Irish Parliament. The most intelligent are now somewhat doubtful as to the substantial benefits to come. They fear heavy taxation. They say that everything must come out of the land, and they wonder whether the change would pay them after all. On the whole, they will risk it, and under the advice of the clergy, who have their own little ideas, they will continue to vote for Home Rule. Throw out this bill, let Mr. Balfour settle the land question, and the agitators will not have a leg left to stand on."

All this I steadfastly believe. No farmer wants Home Rule for anything beyond his personal interests. Mr. Patrick Gibbons, of Carnalurgan, is one of the smartest small farmers I have met, and he confirms the statements of his fellows. "Give the farmers the land for a reasonable rent," said he, "and they would not care two straws for Home Rule." The small traders admit that they [220] would like it, as a mere matter of fancy, and because they have been from time to time assured that the English Parliament is the sole cause of Ireland's decadence. They are assured that an Irish Parliament by instituting immense public works would prevent emigration, and that the people staying at home and earning money would bring custom to their shops. Nearly everybody insists on an exclusive system of protective tariffs. England, they say, competes too strongly. Ireland cannot stand up to her. She must be kept out at any cost.

According to a Ballina Nationalist this is where the "shock" will come in. He said:—

"The bill is being whittled down to nothing. Gladstone is betraying us. It is doubtful if he ever was in earnest. 'Twould be no Home Rule Bill at all, if even it was passed. An' what d'ye mane by refusing us the right to put on whatever harbour dues we choose? An' what d'ye mane by sayin' we're not to impose protective tariffs to help Irish industries? Ye wish to say, 'Here's yer Parlimint. Ye're responsible for the government of the counthry, for the advancement of the counthry, for the prosperity of the counthry; but ye mustn't do what ye think best to bring about all this. When we have a Parlimint we'll do as *we* choose, an' not as *you* choose, Ye have no right to dictate what we shall do, nor what we shan't do. We'll do what we think proper, an' England must make the best of it. England has always considered herself: now we'll consider ourselves. If we're not to govern the counthry in every way that *we* think best, why on earth would we want a Parlimint at all? Tell me that, now. If Ireland is to be governed from England, if we are to have any interference, what betther off will we be? An' Protection is the very first cry we shall raise."

The good folks at Tuam have held an indignation meeting to protest against the statements contained in my Tuam letter, which they characterise as "vile slanders" which they wish to "hurl back in my teeth" (if any). The meeting took place in the Town Hall on Sunday, which day is usually selected by the Tuamites to protest against the brutal Saxon, and to hold meetings of the National League, a colourable successor to the Land League. All these meetings are convened by priests, addressed by priests, governed by priests. The Tuamites are among the most priest-ridden people in Ireland, and, after having seen Galway and Limerick, this is saying a good deal. The meeting was from beginning to end a screaming farce, wherein language was used fit only for an Irish House of Commons. The vocabulary of Irish Town Commissioners and Irish Poor Law Guardians was laid under heavy contribution. The speakers hurled at the *Gazette* the pet terms they usually and properly reserve for each other. The too flattering terms which in a moment of weakness I applied to Tuam and its people are described as "lying, hellish, mendacious misrepresentations." Misther MacCormack said the English people would know there was "not a [221] wurrud of thruth in these miserable lies." The report of the *Tuam Herald* reads like a faction fight in a whiskey-shop. You can hear the trailing of coats, the crack of shillelaghs on thick Irish skulls, the yells of hurroosh, whirroo, and O'Donnell aboo! Towards the end your high-wrought imagination can almost smell the sticking plaister, so vivid is the picture. "The bare-faced slanders of this hireling scribe from the slums of Birmingham" were hotly denounced, but nobody said what they were. The clergy and their serfs were equally silent on this point. I steadfastly adhere to every syllable of my Tuam letter. I challenge the clergy and laity combined to put their fingers on a single assertion which is untrue, or even overstated. Let them point out a single

inaccuracy, if they can. To make sweeping statements, to say that this "gutter-snipe," this "hireling calumniator," this "blackguard Birmingham man" has made a series of "reckless calumnies," "devoid of one particle of truth," is not sufficiently precise. I stand by every word I have uttered; I am prepared to hold my ground on every single point. Most of my information was obtained from Catholics who are heart-weary of priestly tyranny and priestly intimidation; who are sufficiently enlightened to see that priestly power is based on the ignorance of priestly dupes, that priestly influence is the real slavery of Ireland, the abject condition of the poor is its unmistakable result, and that where there are priests in Ireland there are ignorance and dirt in exact proportion. They have compared the clean cottages of the North with the filthy hovels of the South, and they have drawn their own conclusions. But to descend to detail. What do the Tuamites deny? "Not a particle of truth in the whole letter!" Father Humphreys said my Tipperary letter was "a pure invention," without a syllable of truth. Since then Father Humphreys has been compelled to admit, in writing, that all I said was true, and that he "could not have believed it possible." That was his apology.

Turning to the Tuam letter, I find these words—

"The educated Catholics are excellent people—none better anywhere, none more tolerant." This is construed into "a gross insult on our holy priests, and particularly on our Archbishop," who, by the way, was not mentioned or made the subject of any allusion, however remote. Do the Tuamites deny that "many of the streets are wretchedly built," and "the Galway road shows how easily the Catholic poor are satisfied?" Do they deny that the cabins in this district are "aboriginal in build, and also indescribably filthy," and that "the condition of the inmates is not one whit higher than that obtaining in the wigwams of the native Americans?" Do they deny that "the hooded women, barefooted, bronzed, and tanned by constant exposure, are wonderfully like the squaws brought from the Far West by Buffalo Bill?"

All this I reiterate and firmly maintain, with the addition of the statement that the squaws were in a condition of compulsory cleanliness the like of which seems never to be attained by the [222]
ladies of the Galway Road, Tuam. The meeting is called a "monster" meeting. How many people does the Tuam Town Hall hold? The fact is that the Town Hall of Tuam, with the entire population of Tuam thrown in, could be put into the Town Hall of Birmingham. Do the Tuamites deny that Mr. Strachan, one of their most worthy citizens, is unable to walk the streets of the town wherein live the people he has benefited, without a guard of policemen to protect him from the cut-throat emissaries of the Land League? So it was when I visited Tuam, Mr. Strachan's crimes being the purchase of a farm in the Land Court and his Protestant creed. Do they deny the scenes of persecution I described as having taken place in former days? All this I had from a source more reliable than the whole Papist hierarchy. The Tuamites can deny nothing of what I have written. The tumbledown town is there, the filthy cabins and degraded squaws of the Galway Road are still festering in their own putridity, and probably the police are still preserving Strachan from the fate of the poor fellow so brutally murdered near Tuam a few weeks ago. The priests called a town meeting to protest against insult to the Church. Great is Diana of the Ephesians! When the tenants refused to pay their lawful dues the priests called no meeting. When the country from end to end echoed with the lamentations of widows and the wailing of helpless children whose natural protectors had been murdered by the Land League, the Tuamites suppressed their indignation, the Tuam priests made no protest. When scores of men were butchered at their own firesides, shot in their beds, battered to pieces at their own thresholds, these virtuous sacerdotalists never said a word, called no town's meeting, used no bad language, spoke not of "hirelings," "calumniators," "blackguards," and "liars." Two of the speakers threatened personal injury should I again visit the town. That is their usual form,—kicking, bludgeoning, outraging, or shooting from behind a wall. When they do not shoot they come on in herds, like wild buffaloes, to trample on and mutilate their victim. From the strong or armed they run like hares. Their fleetness of foot is astonishing. The *Tuam News*, owned and edited by the brother of a priest, exhibits the intellectual status of the Tuam people. Let us quote it once again:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TUAM NEWS."

> Sir—Permit me a little space in the next issue of the *Tuam News*, relative to my father being killed by the fairies which appeared in the *Tuam News* of the 8th of April last. I beg to say that he was not killed by the fairies, but I say he was killed by some person or persons unknown as yet. Hoping very soon that the perpetrators of this dastardly outrage will be soon brought to light, I am, Mr. Editor, yours obediently,
>
> DAVID REDINGTON.
>
> Kilcreevanty, May 8th, '93.

After this I need add nothing to what I have said except a pronouncement of Father Curran, who said that "Tuam could boast as fine schools as Birmingham, and that he would then and there throw out a challenge that they boast more intelligence in Tuam than Birmingham could [223]
afford." Poor Father Curran! Poor Tuam! Poor Tuamites with their rags, pigs, filth, priests, fairies, and Intelligence! I shall visit them once more. A few photographs from the Galway Road would settle the dispute, and render null and void all future Town's meetings. They have sworn to slay me, but in visiting their town I fear nothing but vermin and typhoid fever. Their threats affect me not. As one of their own townsmen remarked,—

"You cannot believe a word they say. They never speak the truth except when they call each other liars. And when they are in fear, although too lazy to work, they are never too lazy to run.

They have no independence of thought or action. Their religion crushes all manhood out of them. They are the obedient servants of the priests, and no man dare say his soul's his own. Any one who did not attend that meeting would be a marked man, but if it had been limited to people who know the use of soap it would necessarily have been small, even for the Tuam Town Hall."

Everywhere in Connaught I hear the people saying, "When you want to roast an Irishman you can always find another Irishman to turn the spit."

Thrue for ye, ma bouchal!

Ballina, June 10th.

No. 34.—WHY IRELAND DOES NOT PROSPER.

ToC

A community of small farmers with a sprinkling of resident gentry. All sorts of land within a small compass, rock, bog, tillage, and excellent grazing. The churchyard is a striking feature. A ruined oratory covered with ivy is surrounded by tombstones and other mortuary memorials strange to the Saxon eye. The graves are dug east and west on a rugged mound hardly deserving to be called a hill, although here and there steep enough. Huge masses of sterile mountain form the background, and from the ruin the Atlantic is seen, gleaming in the sun. Patches of bog with diggers of turf, are close by the untouched portions covered with white bog-bean blooms, which at a short distance look like a snowfall. On a neighbouring hill is a fine old Danish earthwork, a fort, called by the natives "The Rath," fifty yards in diameter, the grassy walls, some ten feet high and four yards thick, reared in a perfect circle, on which grow gorse and brambles. The graveyard is sadly neglected. Costly Irish crosses with elaborate carving stand in a wilderness of nettles and long grass. Not a semblance of a path anywhere. To walk about is positively dangerous. Ruined tombstones, and broken slabs which appear to cover family vaults, trip you up at every step. Every yard of progress is made with difficulty, and you move nervously among the tall rank nettles in momentary fear of dislocating your ankle, or of being suddenly precipitated into the [224] reeking charnel house of some defunct Mayo family. The Connaught dead seem to be very exclusive. Most of the ground is enclosed in small squares, each having a low stone wall, half-a-yard thick, with what looks like the gable-end of a stone cottage at the west end. Seen from a distance the churchyard looks like a ruined village. At first sight you think the place a relic of some former age, tenanted by the long-forgotten dead, but a closer inspection proves interments almost up to date. Weird memorials of the olden time stand cheek by jowl with modern monuments of marble; and two of suspiciously Black Country physiognomy are of cast-iron, with I.H.S. and a crucifix all correctly moulded, the outlines painted vermilion, with an invitation to pray for the souls of the dead in the same effective colour. The graveyard shows no end of prayer, but absolutely no work. No tidiness, order, reverence, decency, or convenience. Nothing but ruin, neglect, disorder, untidiness, irreverence, and inconvenience. *Ora et labora* is an excellent proverb which the Irish people have not yet mastered in its entirety. To pray *and* work is as yet a little too much for them. They stop at the first word, look round, and think they have done all. This graveyard displays the national character. Heaps of piety, but no exertion. Any amount of talk, but no work. More than any people, the Irish affect respect for their dead. You leave the graveyard of Oughewall smarting with nettle stings, and thankful that you have not broken your neck. The place will doubtless be tidied, the nettles mowed down and pathways made, when the people get Home Rule. They are clearly waiting for something. They wish to be freed from the cruel English yoke. When this operation is happily effected, they will clean their houses, move the dunghills from their doors, wash themselves, and go to work in earnest. The Spanish Queen vowed she would never wash herself till Gibraltar was retaken from the English. Seven hundred years ago the Irish nation must have made a similar vow—and kept it.

A passing shower drove me to the shelter of a neighbouring farmhouse, where lived a farmer, his wife, and their son and daughter. The place was poor but tolerable, the wife being far above the Irish average. The living room, about ten feet square, was paved with irregularly-shaped stones of all sizes, not particularly flat, but in places decidedly humpy; the interstices were of earth, the whole swept fairly clean, but certainly not scrubbed. The rafters, of rough wood, were painted black, and a rough ladder-like stair, open at the sides, led to the upper regions. To have an upstairs is to be an aristocrat. The standard of luxury is much lower than in England, for almost any English agricultural labourer would have better furniture than that possessed by this well-to-do but discontented farmer. An oak cupboard like a wardrobe, a round deal table, and four rough rush-bottomed chairs of unstained wood comprised the paraphernalia. The kitchen dresser, that indispensable requisite of English farm kitchens, with its rows of plates and dishes, was nowhere to be seen. The turf fire on the hearth needed no stove nor grate, nor was there any [225] in the house. A second room on the ground floor, used as a bed room, had a boarded floor, and although to English notions bare and bald, having no carpet, pictures, dressing table, or

washstand, it was clean and inoffensive. The churning and dairy operations are carried on in the room first described, where also the ducks and hens do feed. The farmer holds fifty acres of good land, for which he pays fifty pounds a year. His father, who died thirty years ago, paid twenty-four pounds, which he thinks a fair rent to-day. Has not made application to the Court, although he *might* benefit by twenty-five to thirty-five per cent. Is aware that the Judicial Rent is sometimes fixed at a sum above what the tenant had been paying, and admits that this might happen to him. "Yes, the land round the house is very good, very good indeed, but what can be seen from here is by far the best of it. That is always the way in this world, the best at the front."

From this and other remarks of like tendency I gather that the noble landlord is in the habit of placing all the best land of his estate along the high read, concealing the boggy, rocky portions in the remote interior, fraudulently imposing on the public, and alienating sympathy from the tenant, thereby inflicting another injustice on Ireland.

"The English laws are right enough, as far as they go," said the farmer, "but the English will not do the right thing about the land. Now we know that an Irish Parliament will settle the matter forth-with. That's why we support Home Rule. We know the opinions of the men who now represent us, and we can trust them in this matter if in no other. The land is the whole of it. If that were once put on an unchangeable bottom I would rather be without Home Rule. Some say that even if our rents are reduced by one-half, the increased taxes we must pay would make us nearly as poor as ever, and that all this bother and disturbance would not really save us a penny piece. And I think this might be true. So that if something could be done by the English Parliament I should prefer it to come that way. And so would we all, a hundred times. For with the English Parliament we know where we are, and what we're doing. I'm not one to believe that the land will be handed over to us without payment. Plenty of them are ignorant enough to believe even that. My view is just this: If the English Parliament would settle the land question, I would prefer to do without an Irish Parliament. That's what all the best farmers say, and nothing else. No, I wouldn't invest money in Ireland. No, I wouldn't trust the bulk of the present members for Ireland. Yes, I would prefer a more respectable class of men who had a stake in the country. But we had to take what we could catch, for people who have a stake in the country are all against Home Rule. What could we do? We had no choice. We sent Home Rulers because an Irish Parliament is pledged to meet our views about the land. We know they will fulfil their pledges, [226] not because they have promised, nor because they wish to benefit us, but because they wish to abolish landlordism and landlords from the country. The landlord interest is English interest, and that they want to get rid of. Their reasons for settling the land question are not the farmers' reasons, but so long as it *is* settled the farmer will reap the benefit, and will not care *why* it was settled. Give us compulsory sale and compulsory purchase, at a fair price, and you will find the farmers nearly all voting against Home Rule. No, the priests would not be able to stir us once we were comfortably settled. Why, we'd all become Conservatives at once. Sure anybody with half-an-eye could see that in a pitch-dark night in a bog-hole."

My friend assured me that secret societies are unknown in Mayo, or at any rate, in the Westport district. The young men of Clare, he thought, were Fenians to a man. "They are queer, blood-thirsty folks, enemies to Ireland. Why, they object to other Irishmen. They will not allow a poor fellow from another county to work among them as a harvest-man. They would warn him off, and if he would not go, they'd beat him with sticks, and when once they begin, you never know where they'll stop. They should be put down with a strong hand."

But where is the strong hand? Mr. Morley, recently replying to Mr. Arnold Forster, said that "it was admitted that the police were working as faithfully and as energetically under the present as under the late Government, and added that the authorities concerned were taking all the steps which experience and responsibility suggested." Mr. Morley is right in attributing faithfulness to the police, and their energy is doubtless all that can be reasonably expected under very discouraging auspices. Mr. Morley speaks more highly of the police than the police speak of Mr. Morley. From Donegal to Bantry Bay, from Dublin to Galway and Westport, north, south, east, west, right, left, and centre, the police of Ireland condemn Mr. Morley's administration as feeble, vacillating, and as likely to encourage crime. They speak of their duties in despondent tones. I have from time to time given their sentiments, which are unvarying. They know not what to do, and complain that while they continue to be held responsible they dare not follow up their duties with the requisite energy. Only yesterday an experienced officer said:—"The men are disheartened because they do not know how their action will be taken, and because they feel that anything in the nature of enterprise is very likely to injure themselves individually. They feel that in the matter of arrests it is better to be on the safe side, and then they know how unavailing all their efforts must be in the disturbed districts of Kerry, Clare, and Limerick, where the arm of the law has been paralysed by Mr. Morley's rescision of the salutary provisions so necessary in those counties. Outrages and shooting are every-day occurrences, for many cases are never reported to the police at all. If the police caught the criminals in the act there would be no result, for the juries of those three counties would not convict, and the venue cannot now be changed to Cork. [227]

"Some of the Nationalist members were the other day asking in the House whether the Cork magistrates had not been presented with white gloves, and so on, to bring out the fact that there was no crime to punish on a recent occasion; but what does this prove? Merely that Mr. Balfour's action in changing the venue of three counties to the city of Cork, where moonlighters are tried by a jury of independent traders of Patrick Street was wise and sagacious. The white gloves of Cork were a tribute to Tory administration. The Cork juries convicted their men, and stood by the consequences. They have escaped so far, as all bold men escape. If the Limerick moonlighters must have been tried in Cork there would have been no moonlighting. The police can always

catch them, when there is any use in catching them. In country districts the movements of people are pretty well known, and these fellows are always ready to betray each other. Mr. Morley may talk fine, and may mean well, but the people who have been riddled with shot have Mr. Morley to thank. Of course he is under compulsion. He has to please the Irish Separatists. Old women and children are outraged and shot in the legs because of Mr. Morley's political necessities."

I think my friend was right as to the effect of boldness in action. There is too much truckling to the ruffian element, not only by Mr. Morley, but by most Unionists resident in Ireland. Opinions on this point vary with varying circumstances. Several shopkeepers in a Mayo town were utterly ruined for expressing their political opinions, or for being suspected of harbouring opinions contrary to the feeling of the majority. They were boycotted, and had to shut up shop. Others, older-established, or in possession of a monopoly, weathered the storm, but their opinions cost them something. These are the milder cases. Yet shooting or bludgeoning are likely enough to follow overt political action, such as refusing to join a procession or to illuminate.

It was hard to find a Protestant farmer in this district, but I succeeded at last. His notions were strange, very strange indeed. He thought his rent fair enough, and was of opinion that the tenant must be prepared to take the good years with the bad years. "These countrymen of mine, like somebody I've read of, never learn anything and never forget anything. They do not half farm the land. They don't understand any but the most elementary methods. They do not put the land to its best use. When they had prosperous years, and many a one they had, they put nothing by for a rainy day. They are very improvident. I have been in both England and Scotland, and I know the difference in the people. They have more self-reliance, and they are keen after improvements. They are not satisfied to have just enough, to live from hand to mouth. They must have comfort, and they like to be independent. Now, Paddy is content to just scrape along. If he can barely exist [228] he's quite satisfied. He's always on the edge of the nest, but he feels sure that when the worst comes to the worst, somebody or something will step in and save him from starvation.

"Nearly every man in this county has been in England, many of them twenty times or more, working for months and months in the best farmed districts. Have they got any wrinkles? Divil a one. They have not planted a gooseberry or currant tree, they have no pot-herbs, no carrots or parsnips—nothing at all but potatoes and turnips. The farmers have no system of winter feeding, and they won't learn one. There is a great and growing demand in England for Irish butter, which, properly put up in a tasty way, would fetch fine figures, but the lack of system in winter feeding and winter calving prevents the supply from being kept up. The farmers will make no change in their habits, and they don't work as if they meant it. They lounge about all day, waiting for the crops to grow and the cattle to get fat, and then they wonder they are so poor. The only hope of the Irish people is their absorption in America. They work well enough when surrounded by new influences. Once get them away from the priests, and away they go; you can't stop them. They have great natural abilities, but somehow they won't bloom in Ireland. If they put forth the same energy in Ireland as in America they would do well. But they never will. Their religion keeps them down, and they can't get out of their old habits."

I observed that the Earl of Sligo had obtained eighty-two decrees of possession against tenants for non-payment of rent, and that the *Mayo News*, while censuring his action, admitted that most of the tenants owed two years' rent at least. My Black Protestant friend might tell me whether the heading "Another Batch of Death Sentences" was a fair description of this legal action, and whether the tenants were, in his opinion, totally unable to pay the rent.

"To call them sentences of death is absurd, The people are not evicted and left homeless, but merely deprived of their rights as tenants. In England, if a man does not pay his rent, he is thrown out, and nobody says Nay. In Ireland a man may pay no rent for seven years, and yet, when he is evicted, the people cry Shame on the landlord, who, in most cases, has been patient to the limit of human endurance. The landlord has watched the tenant neglecting the land, and living more expensively on the money he ought to have paid as rent. Now, let me submit a point which never seems to strike the English Unionist speakers. And yet it is plain enough. The Separatists say evictions are cruel and tyrannical because the people cannot pay the awful, exorbitant rents. Now notice my point!

"A rent may be too high, but the land must be worth *something*. Now these people have paid *nothing at all for two years or more*.

"Talk to these defaulters, and they will usually say 'The land is worth just one-half.'

"Why don't they pay that half?

"Then they would be only one year behind, instead of two, and they would get no notice to quit. [229]

"But instead of paying the one-half which they themselves say the land is worth, they pay nothing at all. Does that look honest? Does it look genuine? Don't you think anybody could see that they are taking advantage of the unsettled state of things to avoid any payment whatever? They await Home Rule, which is to give them the land, and they are anticipating its advantages.

"They all know Hennessy's brandy, and can tell you the difference between the one-star and the three-star brands.

"In England everybody is at work. In Ireland most are at play. A man who has been taught to work in England feels inclined to follow them up here with a whip, they look so idle even when at work. They move about as if half-dead. They are as lazy as Lambert's dog, that leaned his head against the wall to bark. The young women won't work either. My sister in Athlone is obliged to give her servants three nights a week off from five to ten, or she could have nobody. Then they are always going to mass or keeping some festival of the Church. Speak a word of reproof and

away they go. They are as proud as Lambert's other dog, that took the wall of a muck-cart and got squelched for his pains.

"Home Rule would never do Ireland any good. Quite the contrary. What can do a man good who tries to get his dinner by standing about and saying how hungry he is?

"As to the agitators, they will always agitate. When one source is dried up they'll invent another. They have their living to get, and agitation is their trade. And a paying trade it is. Are they disloyal to England? I believe them Fenians at heart—that is, Fenians in the matter of loyalty. They would use any power they might get to damage England, and if England gives them power she'll bitterly rue the day. Paddy may be lazy, but put your finger in his mouth and he'll bite. The English Separatists don't see this, but when I see the fox in the hen-roost I can guess what brought him there. If I put the cat in the dairy I should expect her to taste the cream. Trust the Irish Nationalist members! I'd as soon trust a pack of wolves with my lambs."

My friend is a scientific gardener, and descanted on the wonderful climate of Ireland, where plants that will not grow in England nourish luxuriously. I told him I had seen bamboo growing in the open air at Dundalk, and asked him if the Bonds of Brotherhood (*Humbugis Morleyensis*) or the Union of Hearts (*Gladstonia gammonica gigantica*) would come to perfection in Hibernia. He thought the soil and climate unsuitable, and was sure they would never take root. The *gammonica* had been tried, but it withered and died. It could not be "budded" for want of an Irish "stock."

A scrap-book, fifty years old, revealed a condition of things so strangely like that of the present day that I obtained permission to copy the following skit, which, but for the mention of the old convict colony, might have been written last week. It is headed "Extract from the forthcoming history of the Irish Parliament." The Home Rule project is therefore ancient enough:— [230]

> One blow and Ireland sprang from the head of her Saxon enslaver like a new Minerva!
>
> Proudly and solemnly she then sat down to frame a Republic worthy of Plato and Pat. Her first
>
> President had been a workhouse porter, who was also a night watchman. He was, therefore, eminently fitted for both civil and military administration. The speech of President Pat on opening Congress developes his policy and his well-digested plans of legislative reform. Here are a few quotations:—
>
> The Key-stone of Government is the Blarney-stone.
>
> Political progress may always be accelerated by a bludgeon.
>
> Our institutions must be consolidated by soft-soap and whacks.
>
> The People's will is made known by manifesto, and by many fists too.
>
> Every man shall be qualified to sit in Congress that is a ten-pound pig-holder, provided that the pig and the member sleep under the same roof.
>
> Members of Congress will be paid for their services. Gentlemen wearing gloves only to have the privilege of shaking the President's hand. The unwashed members to be paid at the door.
>
> Pipes will not be allowed on the Opposition benches, nor may any member take whiskey until challenged by the President.
>
> Under no circumstances will a member be suffered to sit with his blunderbuss at full cock, nor pointed at the President's ear.
>
> Our Ambassadors will be chosen from our most meritorious postmen, so that they may have no difficulty in reading their letters.
>
> The Foreign Office will be presided over by a patriotic editor who has travelled in New South Wales and is thoroughly conversant with the language.
>
> Instead of bulwarks, the island will be fortified with Irish Bulls, our engineers being of opinion that no other horn-works are so efficient.
>
> To prevent heartburnings between Landlord and Tenant, a Government collector of rents shall be appointed, and Tenant-right shall include a power to shoot over the land and at anyone on it.
>
> And this was written half-a-century ago. It reads like yesterday!

Oughewall, June 10th.

No. 35.—IN A CONGESTED DISTRICT.

ToC

This is the first station on the Balfour line which is to run from Westport to Achil Sound—now in process of construction by Mr. Robert Worthington, the great Dublin contractor, who has built about a million pounds' worth of Irish railway, and who is of opinion that Home Rule means the bankruptcy of Ireland, and that the labouring population of the country would by it be compelled to emigrate to England, bringing their newly-acquired skill as railway workers into competition with the navvies and general working population. The seven miles of line between here and Westport are not yet packed and ballasted, and the ride hither on an engine kindly placed at the disposal of the *Gazette*, was not lacking in pleasurable excitement. The bogey engine kicked and winced and bucked and [231] cavorted in a fashion unique in my experience. She seemed to be exhilarated by the pure mountain air, charged with ozone from the Atlantic main. Watching her little eccentricities, it was hard to believe her not endued with animal vitality. She walked the railway like a thing of life. She ducked and dived and plunged and snorted and reared and jibbed like a veritable cocktailed nag of the true old Irish breed. Sometimes she seemed to go from under you as she suddenly dipped into a slight depression. Sometimes she rolled like a ship at sea, and you began to wonder if sea-sickness were possible on land. The scenery is not striking, and the surrounding country, though poor and desolate, is by no means sterile. No tracts of black bog, no impassable morasses, no miles of rocks and boulders, but a fairly good grazing country, with here and there, at long intervals, a white cottage. The engine slows at one point, where the rails are twisted into serpentine convolutions by yesterday's tropical heat. Both sides are considerably displaced, but they still bear the right relation to each other, and the faithful machine, sniffing and picking her way carefully, glides safely over the contorted path. A short tunnel, with sides of solid masonry and roof-arch of brick, again demands extra care, and it is well that the pace is slowed, for half-way through, a man becomes dimly visible running a trolley off the line. Mountains arise on the left and in front, and my old friend Croagh Patrick puts in his Nationalist appearance. Then Newport heaves in sight, a cemetery on high ground opposite the site of the station, and overhanging the line, kept in its place by an immense retaining wall, without which the "rude forefathers of the hamlet" would fall from their narrow cells and block the progress of the civilising train. A handsome viaduct ends the run, *finis coronat opus*, and I walk a hundred yards to see the awkward spot which at first seemed to have no bottom, but which energy and industry have conquered, as they conquer everything. The line was going on happily until this point was reached, when a soft bog was broached, which threatened to swallow everything, opening its cavernous jaws with appetite which long seemed insatiable. The engineer choked it off with a hundred thousand cubic yards of earth, a quantity which to the untechnical ear sounds like a little kingdom, or at least like a decent farm, and the bog cried, Hold! enough. The total length of the line will be twenty-six-and-a-half miles, the cost, exclusive of the permanent way, which is an extra of some £1,800 a mile, being £110,000, most of which is dispensed among the labourers of the district, who thank the Balfour Administration for a great work which would never have been undertaken as a merely commercial speculation. The congested areas here, as elsewhere, have been powerfully assisted and benefited by the sagacity which at once afforded relief, improved the country, and opened the way to great markets. Temporary assistance is succeeded by a solid and permanent benefaction.

And still the people are not happy. Most of them are rather below the Irish average. Their [232] isolated position in the extreme west, and their want of means of communication, may partly account for this. Few ever see a newspaper, and when they do they only read stuff concocted for them by unscrupulous people who write down to their level, and deliberately endeavour to keep them in total darkness. The men employed on the line work well, and Mr. William Ross, civil engineer, tells me they are even better workers than the Galway men, to whom I gave due credit for industry. The townsfolk are great politicians. That is, they echo the absurdities they hear, and are ready to believe anything, provided it is unlikely enough. The country papers of Ireland are poor and illiterate beyond belief, but their assumption of knowledge and superior information is amazing. One of the Galway rags recently treated its readers to a confidential communication having reference to the real sentiments of Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour as opposed to those ostensibly affected by those statesmen and to those with which they are popularly credited. Lord Salisbury is really dying for Home Rule, and Mr. Balfour would depart in peace if he could once behold a Dublin Parliament bossed by Tim Healy and William O'Brien. Lord Salisbury is not so bad as he seems, nor is Balfour altogether beyond hope of salvation. Both are under a kind of Tory terrorism which makes them say the thing that is not, compels them against their wishes to fight, forces them reluctantly to make a show of opposition. But both of them wink the other eye and have doubtless unbosomed themselves—in strict confidence—to the editor of the Galway paper. The poor folks of Ireland swallow this stuff, and will quote it gravely in argument. The *Irish Catholic* has a large circulation, and a glance over its columns, particularly its advertising columns, is highly suggestive at the present juncture. People offer to swop prayers, just as in *Exchange and Mart* people wish to barter a pet hedgehog for a lop-eared rabbit, or a cracked china cup for a gold watch and chain. Gentleman wishes someone to say fifteen Hail Marys every morning at eight o'clock for a week, while he, in return, will knock off a similar number of some other good things. The trade in masses is surprising. For a certain sum you get one mass a week for a year, for a higher figure you get two masses a week *and* an oleograph, for a trifle more you get mentioned in special prayers for benefactors, with a rosary that has touched the relics of Thomas-a-Becket or has been laid on the shrine of Blessed Thomas More. One advertisement sets forth the proviso that unless the payment is regular the supplications will be stopped. No pay, no prayer. *Point d'argent, point de prêtre.* Prayers and advice, political or otherwise, at lowest terms for cash. No discount allowed. A reduction on taking a quantity.

A very knowing Newport man explained the present political position. "'Tis as simple as Ah,

Bay, Say. Parnell wint over to France an' Amerikay, an' explained to thim how the English was oppressin' and ruinin' the poor Irish people; an' whin the Saxon seen he was found out, an' whin [233] the Americans sent thousands an' thousands of pounds to pay the cliverist men in Ireland to fight the English in Parlimint, thin the English begun to give us back part of what they robbed us of. Every bite ye get in England manes that much less in an Irish mouth, an' the counthry is all starvin' becase England is fattenin'. All the young folks is gone out of the counthry; an' why did they go? Becase England makes the laws, an' becase she makes the laws to suit herself, an' to ruin us. Sure nine-tenths of the land is owned by Englishmen, who make us pay twice, aye, an' four times the rint the land is worth; an' that's what England thinks us good for, an' nothin' else. We're just slaves to the Saxon, as many's the time I heard the priest sayin' it. An' it was thrue for him. Sure, the counthry is full of coal, an' if we wor allowed to get it we'd be as rich as England in five years. Sure, Lord Sligo's estate is made of coal, an' although he's a Conservative, an' a Unionist, an' a Protestant, the English Parlimint wouldn't allow him to get it because it was in Ireland, an' they wor afraid the Irish would get betther off. An' sure they want to keep us paupers, so that we'll be compelled to 'list for sojers, an' fight for England against Rooshia and Prooshia, an' Injy, an' foreign parts, that the English is afraid to do for themselves."

His opinions are not below the intellectual average of those held by the majority of the Irish electorate. The ignorance of the rank and file of the Irish voters is exasperating to Englishmen, who are quite unable to understand their credulity, to combat their bitter prejudices, or to make headway against their preconceived notions. English Gladstonians who believe that Home Rule ought to be a good thing will stagger with dismay when confronted with the people who will rule the roost. For the intelligent are nowhere in point of numbers. The thick-witted believers in charms, in fairies, in the curative and preservative virtues of holy water, will have the country in their hands. The poor benighted peasants, who firmly believe that Mr. Balfour has the moonlighters in his pay, and that the murders of the Land League were ordered by Lord Salisbury to cast discredit on the national cause—these are the people who, voting as they are told by the priests, would govern the action of the Irish Parliament. They believe that Home Rule by some magic process will supply the place of industry and enterprise, will open up innumerable sources of boundless wealth, and will bring about Mr. Gladstone's "chronic plethora" of money. But, above all, the people are to be for ever delivered from the "English yoke." What the phrase means they know not. They only repeat what they have heard. The dogs around Newport are muzzled. It would be well for the people if their advisers were muzzled too.

Public feeling is well organised in Ireland. Although the people are not readers of daily news, the kind of sentiment ordered at head-quarters is immediately entertained. How it spreads [234] nobody knows, unless it is spread from the altar. A change has come over the public sentiment. Among the more intelligent farmers there is a revolt against Home Rule. At a Unionist meeting held the other day at Athenry, all the speakers agreed on this point. One said that the change might be inoperative, because the farmers dare not avow their true opinions, because they have little or no faith in the secrecy of the ballot, and because they dread the unknown consequences of ruffian vengeance. The ignorant masses have also experienced a change. They have been undergoing a process of preparation for the next agitation. The poor folks at first believed that when they got Home Rule all would be well. That consummation devoutly to be wished, was to enrich them all. The agitators have to guard against the resentment of the disappointed people. They are hedging industriously. If Home Rule should come it will do no good, because it is not the right brand. John Bull has spoilt it all, as he spoils everything. Home Rule would have done all they promised, but this is not the Home Rule they meant! They took it at first as a small instalment of what they would afterwards kick out of the Saxon, but those outrageous Unionists have shaved it down to almost nothing. It is not worth having, and the only thing to do, say some Newport politicians, is for the Irish Nationalist party to rise in a body an' lave the House, an' not put a fut back into it till they get what they want. I wish my Newport friends could make their counsel prevail.

The latest phase of feeling, then, is an affected indignation at this supreme treachery of the English people. Over and over again I have quoted the opinions of people who said Mr. Gladstone meant to hoax Ireland again. This was when all seemed to be going quite smoothly. The Government concessions and the moderate use of the closure have convinced the doubters that they were right, and they breathe battle and slaughter. Irishmen like fighting debates, decided measures, tremendously hard hitting. As a people they do not believe in constitutional agitation. They would prefer sudden revolutions, cannons roaring, blood and thunder. They openly avow their preference, and say that this would have been their method, but that England has elaborately disarmed the country, which declaration clashes with the popular opinion, often exultantly expressed, that Ireland is full of arms. The truth is with the revolutionaries, who would certainly prefer battle but for its well-known danger. If Ireland could be freed by moonlighters firing at long ranges from behind stone walls, with an inaccessible retreat within easy reach, the English yoke would have but a short shrift.

A frantic Newporter said:—"We never got anything by love, but always by fear, and compulsion should be our motto. I've no patience wid thim that'll stand hat in hand, or be going down on their knees to England for every bit an' sup. John Mitchel an' James Stephens was the only men of modern times who properly understood how to manage the English. Of coorse, Parnell did something to advance the cause, an' 'tis thrue that he had no revolution nor insurrection of the [235] old sort. But the Land League was arranged to include all the secret associations and to make use of thim all. Ye had Whiteboys, an' Fenians an' Ribbonmen agin ye, an' ye can't say but what the secret societies did the business, an' not what they call the constitutional agitation. Ye might have talked to the English Parlimint till doomsday an' ye'd not make it move a hair's-breadth for

Ireland. But follow up yer talk wid a bit of shootin' an' then ye'll see what ye will see. 'Twas very bad, an' no man could agree wid it; but it did what no talkin' would ever have done. Compulsion is the right idea. An' what about dynamite? If ye look properly at the thing, why wouldn't we use dynamite? Haven't we a right to do as *we* choose in Ireland? Ought not the Irish people to be masters of Ireland? We say clear out—lave us to ourselves, take away yer landlords, yer sojers, yer police, an' *thin* we'll not have recoorse to dynamite. We have a right to free ourselves by any means that comes handy. All's fair in love an' war. No, I'm not sayin' that I'd do it meself personally. But whin ye come to look into it, why wouldn't we be justified in usin' dynamite? Ye pitched shells into Alexandria whin it suited ye. Why wouldn't we blow up London wid dynamite, if it suited us?"

The Newport people have not heard of the Union of Hearts. A decent old man who was trying to sell home-spun tweed of his own making, said:—"The English has been hittin' us for many a year, but whin we git Home Rule we'll be able to hit thim back. God spare me to see that day!" And he raised his hat, just as the people mentioned by Mr. A.M. Sullivan, M.P., "raised their hats reverentially" when they heard that a landlord or agent was shot. Whenever I hear a friendly sentiment, a friendly wish, a friendly aspiration in connection with England from the lips of any Nationalist I will gladly record it, if possible, in letters of gold. I do not expect this to happen. Speakers who attack England are most popular. The more unscrupulous and violent they are, the better their reception. Nationalist M.P.'s who in England have spoken well of Mr. Gladstone or of the English people are sharply hauled over the coals. The fighting men are the patriot's glory. The Irish people believe that the introduction of a Home Rule Bill is due to the action of their bullies, rather than to the persuasive argument of their civilised men. A very small minority desire to give John Bull some credit for fair play, an opinion hotly resented by the mob.

"Ah, now, listen to me, thin."

"Sure, I'm lookin' at ye."

"Don't I know we bate the Bill out of Bull."

"An' how would ye know, at all, at all?"

"How would I know, is it? D'ye take me for a fool?"

"Arrah, thin, sure I would not judge ye by yer looks!"

That is a model bar spar, the combatants drinking dog's-nose, sometimes called "powdher an' ball"—a drink of neat whiskey washed down by a pot of porter. The Connaught folk drink whiskey [236] neat, but usually follow the spirit with water. They take up both glasses at once, and after a loving sniff at the poteen they pour it slowly down, the shebeen stuff tasting like a torchlight procession. Then they hastily toss off the water, making a wry face, and mostly addressing to the despised fluid the remark—

"Ye'll find IT gone on before!"

The desperate appeal of the Parnellite party for funds has evoked much merriment among Irish Unionists, and much burning scorn from anti-Parnellites—who themselves have much need of the money. A young friend has sent me the following parody, adapted from an old and well-known, melody:—

The patriot came down like a wolf on the fold,
And all that he asked was their silver and gold;
And he pocketed all that he got, as his fee,
From the shores of the Liffey to rocky Tralee.
Tho' Pat looked as naked and bleak as his soil,
Yet there stood the patriot to sack up the spoil.
And from parish to parish the box went its
rounds—
If we give you our speeches you must give us
your pounds.

The coming golden time is neatly hinted at. Home Rule will pay for all:—

When it comes, you no longer shall lie in a ditch,
Every beggar among you at once shall be rich;
The hedger and ditcher shall have an estate,
And drive his four horses, and dine off his plate.
What! you won't? And your champion in want of
a meal,
With his coat out at elbows, his shoes down at
heel;
With his heart all as black as his speeches in
print!
Boys, I know what you'll do: you'll just keep back
the Rint.
Now down with your cash, never think of the
jail,
For Erin's true patriots the Virgin is bail;
She'll rain down bank notes till the bailiff is
blind—

Still you're slack! Then I'll tell you a piece of my
mind.

The priest is invoked to compel unwilling subscribers:—

Would you like to be sent, in the shape of a
ghost,
To be pokered by demons and browned like a
toast?
Or be hung in a blaze with a hook in your backs,
Till you all melt away like a cake of bees'-wax?
Would you like to be pitchforked down headlong
to Limbo,
With the Pope standing by with his two arms
akimbo?
No matter who starves, plank down on the spot,
Pounds, shillings, and pence; we'll take all that
you've got.

The poem breathes the true spirit of Separatism-cum-Sacerdotalism.

Newport (Co. Mayo), June 15th.

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[237]

No. 36.—IRISH IMPROVIDENCE THE STUMBLING BLOCK.

ToC

The further journey from Newport to Mulranney on the *Gazette* special engine was yesterday delayed for a few hours by the announcement that during the night part of the line had sunk into a bog—a circumstance which might have seemed unusual and ominous to English engineers, but which Mr. Lionel Vaughan Bennett regarded as a mere matter of daily routine, hardly worth more than a passing mention. There was nothing for it but to take another walk round Newport, and after further admiring the great wall holding up the embankment opposite the station—a colossal work executed under great difficulties—to look at the surrounding landscape. Those who are interested in engineering may like to know the dimensions of this wall, which is two hundred feet long, thirty-five feet high, and ten feet thick at the base, tapering off to a thickness of five feet at the top, and is built of a fine limestone quarried from the railway cutting a little further out. The view from either of the ridges between which the town is built, is magnificent, mountain, valley, sea, and river contributing to the effect. From one ridge you see Clew Bay and the Croagh Patrick range, with an immense tract of country of varied appearance. From the other, immediately above the station, an enormous valley stretches away to the Bogagh mountain in front and the peaked summit of Lettermoughra on the left. At the latter point of view are some wooden cabins which the Saxon might mistake for pigsties or small cowsheds until he discovered they were inhabited by patriots, keen on Home Rule and charitable coppers. Beware of civility in these parts. From casual passers-by it nearly always means an appeal for alms, and after a few days' experience you are apt to fall into misanthropy. Some of these beggars have a fine dramatic way of opening the conversation. A hale and seemingly able-bodied man of fifty or thereabouts came up carrying a wheel, which he dropped when about ten yards away with the fervently uttered exclamation—

"God help the poor—owld—man!"

This adjuration falling short of its aim, he came up and asked for "a few coppers," at the same time invoking about sixpennyworth of blessings in advance, a sort of sprat to catch a mackerel.

"Got no coppers," I said, rather impatiently.

"May ye never have one till the day of yer death," said the good old man, this time with an unmistakable accent of sincerity. He hobbled off with the wheel, muttering something which may have been blessings, and a fine healthy young fellow came up. "Good mornin', an' 'tis a foin bit of scenery, but we can't ate it, an' we'd die afore we'd go into the poorhouse, an' a thrifle of money for a dhraw at the pipe would be as welkim as the flowers of May, an' 'tis England is the grate counthry, and thim that was in it says that Englishmen is tin per cint. betther than Irishmen, aye, twinty per cint."—and so forth, and so forth. There were six more applications in a hundred [238] yards, one of them from a well-dressed boy of fourteen or fifteen, who gracefully reclined on a bank with his legs crossed, his arms under his head. Begging to the Irish race is as natural as breathing. They have an innate affinity for blessing and begging, and they beg without need. Anything to avoid work. They are for the most part entirely destitute of a spirit of independence. They will not dig, and to beg they are not ashamed. According to a Newport authority they are

growing worse than ever. While I awaited the fishing up of the line he said:—

"The conduct of the poorer classes is becoming more and more a disgrace to the country. There is poverty, of course, but not so much, nor in so great a proportion, as in England. This line has been in progress for two years and a half, and the people of this district have received many thousands of pounds without any perceptible improvement of position, either as to solvency or personal appearance. They are as ragged as ever, as dirty as ever, and decidedly more dishonest than ever. They are more extravagant in their eating and drinking, and the women spend more in ridiculous finery; but in spite of the wages they have earned, they have not paid their way one bit better than before. They usually sow the land and live on the crops, selling the surplus to pay the rent, which is usually very moderate, and well within what the land will pay. For thirty months many hundreds of them, thanks to Mr. Balfour, have enjoyed an additional income of fifteen shillings a week, but they have not paid their rents any better than before. They have so many people agitating for them, both here and in England, that whatever they do or fail to do, they know they are sure of substantial support. While Irishmen only were working for them, they felt less secure, but now Mr. Gladstone and his following have taken their cause in hand, they feel more sure of their ground, and accordingly they have lapsed into confirmed laziness and dishonesty. They have found out the strength of combination, and the possibility of withholding payment of rent, and year by year they are falling lower and lower. Their morality is sapped at the root. They have the utmost confidence in their clergy, and their conduct being supported, and even advised from the altar, they spend all their money quite comfortably, sure that in case of eviction the country will be up in arms for their assistance, and that weak but well-meaning English tourists, seeing their apparent condition, will help them liberally. The English tourist has much to answer for. He couples dirt and nakedness with misfortune and poverty, and nine times out of ten he is altogether wrong. People with five hundred pounds in the bank will go about barefoot, unwashed, and in rags. No Englishman can possibly know his way about until he has lived for some time in the country, remaining in one spot long enough to find out the real state of things. He runs about hurriedly from place to place, observing certain symptoms which in England mean undeserved poverty and suffering. His diagnosis would be right for England, but [239]
for Ireland it is hopelessly wrong. What he sees is not so often symptomatic of undeserved misfortune, as of laziness, improvidence, and rank dishonesty. The Irish are a complaining people. Self-help is practically unknown among them, at any rate, among the Catholic population. They have reduced complaining to a system, or, if you will, they have elevated it to the level of a fine art. The recent agitations have demolished any rudimentary backbone they ever had, and the No-rent Campaign, with its pleas of poverty and financial inability, has done more to pauperise the people than all the famines Ireland ever saw.

"You can do nothing for them. One great argument for Home Rule is the fact that the people are leaving the country. Best thing they can do. Let them get to some country where they must work or starve. Then they will do well enough. They work like horses in America, and their native cuteness conies out in trade with surprising results. The Irish race make a splendid mixture, but you must not take them neat. I am looked upon as a monster when I say, Let them go. I think it would be best. Let them clear out of the country, and leave it to people who can make it pay. Let Ireland be populated by Englishmen or Scotsmen, or both, and in twenty years the country would be one of the most prosperous in the world. Those are my opinions, and few Irishmen will gainsay them. They think them cruel, but their truth is generally admitted. Mr. Balfour has helped the people, and in a way which was best calculated to put them permanently on their feet. All to no purpose. You can't go on making lines that will not pay. You can't go on doling out charity for ever. Take the boats, nets, and so on, given to the congested districts. When those are gone you may give them more. The people will be exactly where they were. A few have been taught fishing, you say. But it will not spread. Those who have learned the art have been taught almost by compulsion, and at the first opportunity they will fall back into their own ways. The farmers will not change their methods. If one among them did so he would be a mark for derision. No Irish villager has the pluck to say, I will do this or that because it is the best thing to do. He must do as the others do, even to planting his farm, selling the produce, and also in disposing of the proceeds. Nowhere is public opinion so powerful, so tyrannical, or so injuriously conservative as in Ireland. I challenge contradiction. Any intelligent Irishman who has lived in an agricultural and Roman Catholic neighbourhood will admit every statement I have made."

Later in the day I laid these observations before three Irish gentlemen dining at the Mulranney Hotel. All three readily and fully concurred, and there can be no doubt that these sentiments will be unanimously confirmed by any competent tribunal in or out of Ireland, Such being the case, the absurdity of the Home Rule agitation becomes evident at once.

At last the sportive young engine whose playfulness and prankishness were mentioned in my [240]
last, came whinnying up, harnessed to an empty truck in which was a bench with a green cloth, emblematic of Ireland. This was better than convulsively clinging to the engine while she madly careered along narrow and dizzy precipices, every kick threatening to be your last, and emerging from the fiery ordeal, begrimed and swarthy, your knees half cooked by the engine fire. All this happened on my journey from Westport to Newport, but now the truck promised Sybaritic luxury, and if the rail should again give way, if the bog-hole, "still gaping to devour me, opened wide," I should at least disappear with dignity, should take my *holium cum dignitatis* in a truck, on a green-covered seat, and with the consciousness that I was doing something to fill up the gap, to solace the aching void in Ireland's bosom. Away we went, thundering along between the quivering bogs, as through a land of brown-black calves'-foot jelly. The line itself is sound, well-made and firm. I had this from Mr. Hare, engineer of the Board of Works, who said that Mr. Worthington's railways have an excellent name for solidity and thorough, conscientious work. Mr.

Hare was formally taking over the last bit of line, that between Mulranney and Achil Sound, with which the Midland and Great Western Company will at present have nought to do. The company will work from Westport to Mulranney, although some portions of the line have a gradient of one in sixty, and the directors are shy of anything steeper than one in a hundred by reason of the wear and tear involved to rolling stock and permanent way by gradients requiring so much brake power. But the last seven miles they decline to touch on the terms offered by the Government at present. No doubt the line will be worked, and by the company aforesaid, but the contracting parties are for the moment at a deadlock. No line between Mulranney and the Sound could possibly pay. England is building Irish railways to give the people a chance, as the splendid quays of Newport, Limerick, and Galway were built.

Nothing, or next to nothing, is done on these quays. The Channel, as it is called at Newport, is a fine expanse of water about one hundred and twenty yards wide, leading through Newport Bay directly into the Atlantic. Only one boat, I was told, comes into the port. I saw it there, unloading a hundred and eighty tons of Indian corn—a Glasgow vessel, the Harmony, a sailer, which had taken three weeks to the voyage, which a steamer easily runs in thirty six to forty hours. Galway was busier, but not by Irish enterprise, and Limerick was mostly fast asleep. The people cry aloud and shout for quays, harbours, piers, and railways; and when they are built they ask for something else. They are without the faculty of industrial enterprise. They are always waiting for weather, wind, and tide. They lack resourcefulness, energy, invention. When the flour mills ceased to pay they had no notion of using the buildings and water-power for some other purpose. When the Coventry ribbon trade went to the dogs the people found salvation in bicycles. If [241] Coventry had been in Ireland the people would have starved and murmured to the end of time.

Two miles out we came to Deradda, where eighty men were at work. Next came Shellogah and the squeamish bit of bog. A number of men were busy on the line, and right in front of us was a gap in the rails, the platelayers laying the steel for dear life while the engine came up. We slackened speed, but made no stop, and the last rail was finally bolted as we ran upon it. Carefully and gingerly we pushed along, my triumphal chariot in front of the engine, over the shivering embankment, on each side of which were deep-cut channels which seemed to have been hewn through acres of Day and Martin's blacking, so jetty and oily seemed this Irish bog. The subsidence of yesterday had forced the boundary walls of the line into wide semicircles, and it seemed likely to be touch-and-go with the engine, truck, and your humble commissioner. I took a last look at the landscape, and made a final note, but, while inly wondering whether I should be ultimately consumed in the form of peat or dug up and exhibited to future ages as a bog-preserved brutal Saxon, with a concluding squash we passed the rotten spot, and it was permissible to breathe again. "We prefer it to sink at once," said Mr. Bennett. "Then we know the 'hard' is not far off, and we can fill up till the line becomes solid as a rock. When it goes down by degrees, sinking a foot to-day and a foot to-morrow, we find our work more difficult. We never leave a bad bit till we are assured, by careful examination and severe and repeated tests, that all is solid and secure." He told me how much earth had been dumped on this spot, which, like the soft place mentioned in my last, has given Mr. Balfour's *protégés* a world of employment. I forget the quantity, but it sounded like an island or a small range of mountains. Soon on the left we saw the great expanse of Clew Bay, with its three hundred and sixty-five considerable islands, nearly all with cottages, cattle, and pasture, but without a tree. The Yankee breezes blew refreshingly, and the scenery around became of wildest grandeur. High mountains hemmed us in on every side, rising one over another, huge masses of rock impending over untrodden passes, unknown to any guide-book, and leading no man knows whither. Some mountain sheep on the line scaled the embankment and leaped the five-foot wall like squirrels. Then a group of obstinate black cattle, one of which narrowly escaped sudden transformation into beef. Then the station of Mulranney, or rather its site, for the foundations are not yet dug out. Some neat wooden cottages attested the contractor's care for his workmen, and the beautiful bay with its extensive sands and lovely surroundings came into view far below. A steep descent brought us to the hotel, an unlicensed house kept by a Northern Protestant. A quaint and charming place, known and prized by a select few. The Board of Works gave Mulrannoy a pier, but the whole bay boasted only a single boat. [242] The people make no use of their pier. It stretches into the sea in a lonely, melancholy way, and, so far as I could see, without a boat near it, without a soul upon it or within half-a-mile. The Mulranians cannot do anything with the pier until they get Home Rule. In Limerick one day I saw a dead cat before a cottage door, in a crowded part of Irishtown. A week later pussy was diffusing an aromatic fragrance from the self-same spot. The denizens of this locality are waiting for Home Rule. They cannot move their dead cats while smarting 'neath the cruel English yoke.

The Home Rulers of Mulranney are not original. They say the same things over and over again, merely echoing what they have been told by others. They believe that their country has unlimited good coal, and that the English Parliament prevents the mines being sunk for fear of losing Irish custom. "We wish it were trap," said Mr. Bennett. "We are always looking for it, but although we have made a million's worth of railway, we have never seen a vestige of coal. It is safe to say that there is no coal in Ireland, except in one or two well-known spots, where it exists, and is mined, in small quantities." Another enlightened Irishman, of wide experience in many lands, expressed the conviction of the majority of his countrymen that the proposed Parliamentary change will never take place.

"The thing is too ridiculous to be possible. The respectable portion of the community were alarmed at first, as well they might be, knowing as they do precisely what it means. But as time went on that alarm has to a great extent subsided, not, as some will say, because the people are in any degree reconciled to the idea, but purely and simply because they see that the bill must perish when exposed to the light of criticism. The people as a whole do not want the bill. The

poorer classes do not know in the least what it means, nor what all the bother is about. They are told that they will be hugely benefited, but nobody can tell them how. Of course they vote for Home Rule, because in these parts the priest stands at the door of the polling booth and tells them as they go in how they are to vote. He also questions them as they come out, and they know beforehand that he will do so, and act accordingly. They dare not tell him a lie, for fear of spiritual trouble. They believe that the priest has their eternal future in his hands, and this belief is encouraged by the well-known argument used by the Roman Catholic clergy, a very familiar phrase in Ireland, "You must do as I tell you, for *I* am responsible. God will require your soul of *me* at the day of judgement!" What can the poor folks do? Even the higher classes are not exempt from this superstitious fear. They may be more or less freethinkers—freethinking is common among educated Catholics who are yet compelled by custom to conform to the outward observances of their faith—but yet, when the pinch comes, they are influenced by the prepossessions of their childhood and environments, and they mostly vote as they are told. They [243] dread to offend the priest, though not to the same extent as the poor peasantry, who believe that confession of a wrong vote would entail the refusal of extreme unction, and that this would mean untold and endless torture in the world to come. And the priests preach politics every Sunday. The people like it better than the old style of Instruction. They call their sermons Instructions, you know, and they instruct the people to some tune. No doubt they have a right to persuade their flocks to follow a certain course. The temptation to preach something which at once catches the people's attention and furthers their own views is very great, and perhaps excusable. But is their teaching designed or calculated to suit England? The English may not understand the Irish question, but they may be sure that whatever suits the Papal power does not suit them. The modern Irish priest is a sworn foe to England. It cannot be otherwise. He springs from the small farmer class, which has sworn to extirpate landlordism, which, to their minds, is synonymous with British rule. The English Parliament, hoping to win over the farmers, who are the strength of Ireland, has made one concession after another, with what result? Absolutely none. The property of the landlord has been sacrificed bit by bit, in fruitless endeavour to please these people, who are more discontented than ever. And so they will continue to be as long as discontent pays. In Ireland the landlord is nothing, the tenant is everything. The policy of England with regard to Irish landlords reminds me of the man who, having to dock a dog's tail, cut off half-an-inch every day to gradually accustom him to the loss, and to minimise the 'suffering of the baste.'"

You can go nowhere in Ireland without meeting an Ulsterman. There was one at Mulranney. You may know them by their accent, by their size, by a general effect of weight, decision, and determination. They are mostly big men, large-boned and large-limbed, of ruthless energy, of inexhaustible vitality. They are demons in argument, tenacious and crushing. They bowl straight over-hand and dead on the middle stump. The lithe and sinuous Celt is no match for them. No matter how he twists and turns they grab him up, and, will he, nill he, fix him in front of the argument. They are adepts in cornering an opponent by keeping him to the point. You cannot catch them napping, and you cannot turn their flank. They are contented enough, except that they sigh for more worlds to conquer. They delight in difficulties, and demolish Home Rulers with a kind of contempt as if the work were only fit for children. They seem to be fighting with one hand, with great reserve of power, and, after doubling up an opponent, they chuck him over the ropes, and look around, as if, like Oliver, asking for "more." My Mulranney friend said:—

"Bull confessedly does not know what to do, and he calls in two sets of Irish experts (we'll say) and asks for their opinions. One set of Irishmen never quarrel with anybody and always pay their debts. The other set quarrel with everybody and don't pay what they owe. One set are successful [244] in everything, the other set are successful in nothing. One set have always been friendly and helpful to Bull, the other set have always been unfriendly and obstructive to him. He proposes to reject the advice of the successful, amicable, helpful men, who have always stuck up for him, and to follow the advice of the quarrelsome, unsuccessful, unfriendly men, who have always spoken ill of him and have spent their energies in trying to damage him. Bull must be a fool—or rather he would be if he meant to act in this foolish way. He will not do so; that can never be. But why waste so much time?"

I submitted that this waste was due to Mr. Gladstone, and not to England at all. He said—

"There is no England now. There's nothing left but Gladstone."

Of course he was wrong, but the mistake is one that under present circumstances any loyal Irishman might easily make.

Mulranney (Co. Mayo), June 17th.

No. 37.—ON ACHIL ISLAND.

ToC

The final spurt from Mulranney to Achil Sound was pleasant, but devoid of striking incident. This part of the line is packed and ballasted, and the *Gazette* engine sobered down to the merely commonplace, dropping her prancing and curveting, with other deplorable excesses of the first two runs, and pushing my comfortable truck with the steadiness of a well-broken steed. No holding on was required, as we ran between the two ranges of mountains which guard the Sound, and along the edge of a salt-water creek, which seemed to be pushing its investigations inland. Barring the scenery the ride became uninteresting by its very safety. The line for the most part is based upon the living rock, and there were no exciting skims over treacherous bogs, no reasonable chance of running off the line, no ups and downs such as on our first flight were remindful of the switchback railway, no hopping, jumping, or skipping. Anybody could have ridden from Mulranney to Achil. There was no merit in the achievement. All you had to do was to sit still and look about. You could no longer witch the world with noble truckmanship. We ran over a bridge built to replace one washed away by a mountain torrent. The engineer who constructed the first had failed to realise that the tinkling rivulet of summer became in winter a fiercely surging cataract. The Achil Mountains loomed in full view, Croaghaun to the left, Sliebhmor (pronounced Slievemore) the Great Mountain, in front, with many others stranger still of name. Then the Sound came in sight, with the iron viaduct-bridge which has turned the island into a peninsula. Then the final dismount, and a scramble among rusty rails, embankments, sleepers, and big boulders strewn about in hopeless chaos. Then the little inn, with a stuffed fox and a swan in the [245] porch. A glance at the day-before-yesterday's paper, which has just arrived, and is considered to serve up news red-hot; and then invasion of the island. A few hookers are anchored near the swivel-bridge of the viaduct, in readiness for their cargoes of harvesters for England and Scotland, and now and then big trout and salmon throw themselves in air to see what is going on in the world around them. A group of men who are busily engaged in doing nothing, with a grace and ease which tells of long experience, manifest great interest in the stranger, whom they greet civilly and with much politeness. Men, women, and children are digging turf in a bog beside the road. All suspend operations and look earnestly in my direction. This is one of the amenities of Irish life. Driving along a country road you see men at work in a field. They stop at the first rumble of the car, and leaning on their spades they watch you out of sight. Then they resume in leisurely style, for work they will tell you is scarce, and, to their credit be it observed, they show no disposition to make it scarcer still. They husband it, hoard it up, are not too greedy, leave some for another day. They dig easily, with a straight back, and take a long time to turn round. The savage energy of the Saxon is to them unknown. Why wear themselves out? "Sweet bad luck to the man that would bur-rst himself as if the wuruld wouldn't be afther him. Divil sweep the omadhaun that would make his two elbows into a windmill that niver shtops, but is always going. Fair an' aisy goes far in a day. Walkin' is betther than runnin', an' standin' is betther than walkin', an' sittin' is betther than standin', an' lyin' is betther than any o' thim. Twas me owld father said it, an' a thrue wurud he shpoke, rest his sowl in glory."

The Achil folks are ardent politicians. They have been visited by Michael Davitt, Dr. Tanner, and others, and most of the population, all the Catholics in fact, became members of the Land League. The area of the island is about forty thousand acres, a vast moorland, with miles of bog, and hills and mountains in every direction. There are also several large lakes, which abound with white trout. The cultivated portions of the land only seem to dot the great waste, which nevertheless supports a population of some five thousand persons. The houses are mostly filthy, the people having cattle which live with the family. I approached a house to make inquiries, and was driven from the open door by the smell issuing from the interior. The next was sweeter, having perhaps been more recently cleaned out. Only one room, with a big turf fire, creating an intolerable atmosphere. A bed filled one-third of the floor, most of the remainder being occupied by two cows. A rough deal table near the bed comprised the furniture, and visitors, therefore, must sit on the sleeping arrangement. A civilised Irishman said:—"Two cows, two clean cows only, and you're surprised at that! Where have you been? Where have you been brought up? Let me tell you something, and when you get to Dugort ask the doctor there whether I am correct. A [246] family not far away were stricken down with typhus fever. The people are mostly healthy and strong, although living under circumstances which would soon kill people not used to them, or not enjoying the same splendidly pure air. Well, the poor folks, eight of them, were all down at once, and no wonder, for when I visited them I never saw such a sight in my life. There were three in one bed in one corner, three in one bed in another corner, and two in shake-down beds on the floor. In the same room were a mare and foal, three cows, one pig under a bed, and a henroost above, on the ceiling. What would the sanitary authorities of Birmingham say to that menagerie in a sick room? Somebody wrote to the Local Government Board, and the Board referred the matter to the Poor Law Guardians. But the Guardians themselves kept cattle in their houses. It is the prevailing custom. Wherever you go in Achil, you will find cattle in the houses, along with the family, sharing the same room. The people cannot be moved from this custom. A large landowner built some good cottages for them, and offered them rent free, on condition that they would not live with the cattle. The people would not accept, so they got the houses at last on their own terms, and took the cows with them as before. They say that the cows enjoy the warmth and give better milk. They also say that the big turf fire stands them in lieu of feed to some extent. The Achil folks are hopeless in the direction of improvements. They have had the Protestant Colony at Dugort before them for more than sixty years—a well-housed, well-clad community, living clearly and respectably, paying their way, and keeping at peace with all men, but they have not moved an inch in the same direction. They bury their dead in the old savage way, without any funeral rites, except such as the relatives may have in their minds. The priest says no prayer, reads no service, does not attend in his official character, unless specially

engaged and paid. Usually he does not attend funerals at all, although he may sometimes join the procession as a mark of respect. And the weddings are arranged in a way you might think barbarous. A young man fancies a girl he sees at mass, or at a funeral. He gets a bottle of whiskey and goes to see the father, who nearly always wishes to get the daughter off his hands, without any regard whatever for the poor girl's feelings. I was present at one of these negotiations. 'What will you give with her?' said the young fellow, a boy of eighteen or so. 'Three cows and a calf,' said the father. 'So-and-so got three cows and a calf and a sheep.' said the suitor. The father pondered a bit, but eventually, not to be behind, conceded the sheep. The lover tried a bit further. Somebody else had three cows and a calf and a sheep and a lamb, but the old man stood firm, and the bargain was struck, with mutual esteem, after several hours' haggling and a second bottle of whiskey. I called in the evening to learn the girl's fate. She had been two years in service and had got unorthodox notions. She screamed with affright when the father [247] brought the fellow forward and told her what was arranged. She had seen him before, but had never spoken to him, and the sight of him had always been most repugnant to her. She ran away into the bogs, but the country was up, and she was soon found. Then after a sound beating she was handed over to the ardent swain along with the cows, and so forth, nominated in the bond.

"They marry early or go to America. The boy is usually seventeen or eighteen, the girl fifteen or sixteen. I have known girls marry at thirteen. Not long ago a boy I knew well, a mere weakling, unable to do even a boy's work, got married. He was seventeen, or nearly seventeen, but he didn't look it. They believe that their poverty, such as it is, is due to the predominance of England. Their hatred of the English is very pronounced, but a casual visitor will not see it. He has money to spend, and they flock round him in a friendly way. But let him live among them! They tried to boycott the Protestant settlement, and if their priests had ruled on that occasion they would have starved us out or would have made things so unpleasant that we must have left the field. That was during the Land League agitation. The Protestants declined to join and vengeance was declared, but Bonaventure, head of the monastery, forbade it. He is a splendid fellow, not like the ordinary priests at all. So they were saved. But let this change come about, once let that bill become law, and all Protestants must leave the island, must give up the land they have tilled and tended until it is like a garden, and seek their fortunes elsewhere. That is a certainty. Ask everyone you meet, and you will find that each will say just the same thing."

A smart car driver, named Matthew Henay, was dubious as to the benefits accruing from Home Rule. His driving was a study, and his conversations with Maggie, his little mare, were both varied and vigorous. "Now me little daughter, away ye go. That's the girl now. Me little duck, ye go sweetly. There's the beauty, now. Maggie me love, me darlint, me pride; ye know ivery word I spake. Yes, she does, Sorr. She ondhershtands both English an' Irish. I can dhrive her in both, but I have an owld woman o' me own that can only dhrive her in Irish. Home Rule will do no good at all. Twinty years I wint to England to harvest, an' eighteen iv it to the same masther an' on the same farm. An' ye don't get me to belave all I hear widout thinkin' a bit. An' I say, get out o' that wid yer talk o' mines an' factories, an' rubbish. Where's the money to come from? says I. That's what nobody knows. Sure, we'd be nothin' widout England. A thousand goes from this part every year, an' even the girls brings back ten to fifteen pounds each. That's all the circulation of money we have. An' as all we get's from England, I say, let us stick to England, but nobody agrees wid me. There's the girl, now. Away ye go, me little duck, me daughter, me beauty, me—bad luck to ye, *will* ye go? What are ye standin' there for? Will ye get out o' that, ye lazy brute? Take that, an' [248] that, an' *that*, ye idle, good-for-nothin', desavin', durty daughter of a pig. *Now* d'ye ondhershtand who's masther, ye idle, skulkin', schamin', disrespictable baste?"

Misther Henay was favourably disposed towards the Protestant settlers of Dugort, but another Sounder was very bitter indeed. "A set of Soupers an' Jumpers an' Double-Jumpers. What's the manin' iv it ye ask? Soupers is Catholics that's turned Protestants for the sake of small pickin's sich as soup. That's what they are at Dugort. An' Jumpers is worse than Soupers. For Soupers only changed once, but Jumpers is thim that turned once an' then turned back again, jumpin' about from one religion to another. Ye can have Jumpers in anythin'. Ye can have thim in politics. Owld Gladstone is a Jumper and a Double-Jumper an' a Double-Thribble Jumper. An' if we get a Parlimint for ourselves, 'tis because he daren't for the life of him say No—an' divil thank him. Yes, we'll take the bill; what else will we do? We can amend it whin once we get it. But afther so much jumpin', owld Gladstone's a man I wouldn't thrust. A man that would make so many changes isn't to be thrusted. I wouldn't be surprised if he wouldn't bring in a coercion bill at any minute. Ah, the thricks an' the dodges iv him! An' the silver tongue he has in his head! Begorra, I wouldn't lave him out o' me sight. 'Tis himself would stale the cross off a donkey's back."

The Achil ditches are full of ferns, and a hundred yards from the sea are clumps of *Osmunda regalis*—otherwise known as the Royal fern—spreading out palm-like fronds four feet long. Other ferns, usually regarded as rare, abound in every direction, and potatoes and cabbages grow at the very water's edge. The vast plains are treeless save for the plantations round the house of Major Pike, who has shown what can be done to reclaim the land, but his excellent example has attracted no imitators. Except in the Major's grounds there is not a tree on the island, unless we count the hedges of fuchsias, twelve to fifteen feet high, which fence in some of the gardens. The Post Office, engineered by Mr. Robins, of Devonshire, an old coastguardsman, is surrounded by fuchsia bloom, and every evidence of careful culture. Here I met some Achil folks who did not understand English, and a mainland man who does not believe in the future of the race. He said:—

"I think their civilisation has stood still for at least five centuries. They are so wedded to their ancient customs that nothing can be done for them. They are not so poor as they look, and the

starvation of which you hear in England is totally unknown. As an object of charity Achil is a gigantic swindle. When the seed potatoes were brought here in Her Majesty's gunboats the people were too lazy to fetch them ashore. I was there and heard an Irish bluejacket cursing them as a disgrace to his country. They do just what the priests tell them from week to week. Every Sunday they get their instructions. They keep up the cry of distress when there is no [249] distress, for fear of breaking through the custom. They have been helped on all sides, but they will not utilise their advantages. The sea is before them, swarming with fish, which they will not catch. They said, we have no pier, no quay. They were set up with these and everything they needed. What did they do with them? Nothing at all. The work is falling to pieces and they let it go. They sometimes go out in coraghs, and catch enough fish for the day's food, but that is all. They don't pay their rents, and their rents would amuse you. Twenty-five shillings a year for a decent house and a good piece of land is reckoned a heavy responsibility. One man I know named McGreal has twenty acres of good land and a house for seventeen shillings and sixpence a year. They will not sell you butter, they will not sell you milk. They say they want it for themselves. None of them has ever paid a cent for fuel. All have turf for the digging, and much of the Achil turf is equal to coal. The sea is in front of them, and all round them, and the lakes are full of fish. And yet the hat is sent round every other year.

"They used to pay their debts. Now they will pay nothing, and their audacity is something wonderful. A gentleman over there has bought some land, and the people turn their cattle on it to graze. He remonstrates, and they say, 'What business have you here? Keep in your own country.' He sued them for damages. They had nothing but the cattle aforesaid, and, as he could not find heart to seize, he had no remedy. They keep their cattle on his land, although he has, since then, processed them for trespass. They have already divided the spoils of the Protestants; that is, in theory. They are anticipating the Home Rule Bill in their disposal of the land. They have marked out the patches they will severally claim, and are already disputing the future possession of certain desirable fields.

"English Gladstonians ridicule the fears of Irish Protestants, who declare unanimously their conviction that Home Rule means oppression. This ridicule is absurd in face of the fact that every Protestant sect, without exception, has publicly and formally announced its adherence to this opinion. The Church of Ireland believes in Catholic intolerance; the Methodists believe it; the Baptists believe it; the Plymouth Brethren believe it; the Presbyterians believe it; the Unitarians, the most radical of all the sects, believe it; the Quakers, who never before made a public deliverance of opinion in any political matter, believe it; and all these have issued printed declarations of their belief. The Roman Catholic laity, the best of them, believe it; but the Catholic Bishops say No, they will not admit the soft impeachment. And Englishmen who are Gladstonians believe these Bishops in preference to all the sects I have enumerated. Could anything be more unreasonable? But it is of a piece with the whole conception of the bill, which seems to contain every possible absurdity, and is based on extravagant assumptions of amity on [250] the part of Irish Catholics, of which there is not one particle of evidence in existence. All the evidence points the other way, and Irish Protestants know that under Home Rule their fate is sealed. There would be no open persecution, but we should be gently elbowed out of the country. All who could leave Ireland would do so at once, and England would lose her most powerful allies in the enemy's camp. For it is the enemy's camp, and this fact should be borne in mind. Mr. Gladstone and his followers would be horrified to hear such a statement, which they would regard as rank blasphemy. But every Irishman knows it, and every Englishman knows it who lives here long enough to know anything. Irish Nationalists have two leading ideas—to get as much out of England as possible, and to damage her as much as possible by way of repayment. Mr. Gladstone wants to put England's head on the block, to hand an axe to her sworn enemy, and to say, 'I'm sure you won't chop.' People who have common sense stand amazed, dumbfounded at so much stupidity."

A pious Catholic bore out the statements of my first Achil friend with reference to the comparative comfort of the Islanders. He said:—"We live mostly on bread and tea. Of course we have plenty of butter and eggs, and now and then we go out and get some fish. I had a go at a five-pound white trout to-day, with plenty of butter and potatoes. At Dugort people who live in cabins have money in the bank, aye, some of them have several hundred pounds. And yet they took the seed potatoes sent by England. Well, they wanted a change of seed, and they must do the same as their neighbours. It would not do to pretend to be any better off than the rest. They are compelled to do as the majority do in everything, or they would be boycotted at once. They cease work when a death occurs in the parish. If an infant three days old should give up the ghost, every man shoulders his spade and leaves the field. And he does not return till after the funeral. If another death occurred on the funeral day, he would leave off again, and so on. No matter how urgent the state of the crop, he must leave it to its fate, or leave the country, for no one would know a person who would work while a corpse lay in the parish. They would look upon him as an infidel, and, if possible, worse than a Protestant. Luckily we don't often die hereabouts, or we'd never get the praties set or the turf cut. Sometimes they won't go to work because someone is expected to die, and they say it isn't worth while to begin. I have known a lingering case to throw the crops back a fortnight or more. Oh, they don't grumble; any excuse for laziness is warmly welcomed. They complain when people die at inconvenient times, and will say the act might have been delayed till a more convenient season, or might have been done a little earlier. The whole population turn out for the funeral, but they don't dig the grave until the procession reaches the graveyard. Then the mourners sit around smoking, both men and women, while a couple of young chaps make a shallow hole, and cover the coffin with four to six inches of earth. [251] No, it is not severely sanitary, but we are not too particular in Achil."

These unsophisticated islanders are decidedly interesting. Their customs, politics, manners, morals, odours seem to be strongly marked—to have character, originality, individuality. I fear they are mostly Home Rulers, for in Ireland Home Rule and strong smells nearly always go together.

Achil Sound, June 20th.

No. 38.—THE ACHIL ISLANDERS.

ToC

Dugort, the capital city of Achil, is twelve miles from the Sound, a terrible drive in winter, when the Atlantic storms blow with such violence as to stop a horse and cart, and to render pedestrianism well-nigh impossible; but pleasant enough in fine weather, notwithstanding the seemingly interminable wastes of bog and rocky mountain, dotted at infrequent intervals with white cottages, single or in small clusters of three or four. After Major Pike's plantations, near the Sound, not a tree is visible all the way to Dugort, although at some points you can see for ten miles or more. Here and there where the turf has been cut away for fuel, great gnarled roots of oak and fir trees are visible, bleached by exposure to a ghastly white, showing against the jetty soil like the bones of extinct giants, which indeed they are. The inhabitants say that the island was once covered by a great forest, which perished by fire, and Misther Patrick Toolis, with that love of fine words which marks the Irish peasant, said that the charred interior of the scattered remains proves that the trees were "desthroyed intirely by a grate confiscation." The heather, of two kinds, is brilliantly purple, and the Royal fern grows everywhere in profusion, its terra-cotta bloom often towering six feet high. The mountains are effectively arranged, and imposing by their massiveness, height, and rugged grandeur. Some of the roads are tolerable, those made by Mr. Balfour being by far the best. Others are execrable and dangerous in the extreme, and in winter must be almost impassable. Sometimes they run along a narrow ridge which in its normal condition was of barely sufficient width to carry the car, and it often happens that part of this has fallen away, so that the gap must be passed by leading the horse while the car scrapes along with one wheel on the top and one clinging to the side of the abyss. The natives make light of such small inconveniences, and for the most part ride on horseback with saddles and crupper-bands of plaited rye-straw. Every householder has a horse or an ass, mostly a horse, and young girls career adown the mountain sides in what seems the maddest, most reckless way, guiding their half-broken, mustard-coloured steeds with a single rein of plaited straw, adjusted in an artful way [252] which is beyond me to describe. Very quaint they look, on their yellow horses, which remind you of D'Artagnan's orange-coloured charger, immortalised by Dumas in the "Three Musketeers;" their red robes floating in the breeze, their bare feet hanging over the horse's right flank. When they fall off they simply get on again. They seldom or never are hurt. They are hard as nails and lissom as cats. Dr. Croly, of Dugort, saw a girl thrown heels over head, turning a complete somersault from the horse's back. She alighted on her feet, grabbed the rein, bounded up again, and gaily galloped away. During my hundred miles riding and walking over the island I saw many riderless horses, fully accoutred in the Achil style, plodding patiently along the moorland roads, climbing the steep mountain paths. At first I thought an accident had occurred, and spent some time in looking for the corpse. There was no occasion for fear. The Achil harvesters going to England and Scotland ride over to the Sound, where lie the fishing smacks which bear them to Westport, and then turn their horses loose. The faithful beasts go home, however long or devious the road, sometimes alone, sometimes in company, only staying a moment at the parting of the ways to bid each other good-bye, then going forward at a brisker pace to make up for lost time.

The hamlet of Cashel, not to be confused with Cashel of the Rock, is the first sign of life after leaving the Sound. A ravine, with white cabins, green crops, and huge boulders, on one of which seven small children were sitting in a row, unwashed, unkempt, with little calico and no leather. Bunnacurragh has a post-office run by a pensioner who grows roses, and keeps his place like a picture, the straw ropes which secure the thatch against the western gales taut and trig, each loose end terminated by a loop holding a large stone. The stones are used in place of pegs, and very queer they look dangling all round over the eaves. Not far from here is an immense basin-like depression of dry bog. Then a monastery, in the precincts of which the ground is reclaimed and admirably tilled, the drainage being carried over ingenious turf conduits, the soil lacking firmness to hold stone or brick. The vast bulk of Slievemore soon looms full in front, and after a long stretch of smooth Balfour road and a sharp turn on the edge of a deep ravine on the right with a high ridge beyond it, the Great mountain on the left, Dugort, with Blacksod Bay, heaves in sight. A final spurt up the hilly road and the weary, jolted traveller, or what is left of him, may (metaphorically) fall into the arms of Mr. Robert Sheridan, of the Sea View Hotel, or of Mrs. Sheridan, if he likes it better.

There are two Dugorts, or one Dugort divided against itself. The line of demarcation is sharp

and decided. The two sections stand but a short distance apart, each on an opposite horn of the little bay, but the moral distance is great enough for forty thousand leagues. The Dugort under Slievemore is Protestant, the Dugort of the opposite cliff is intensely Roman Catholic. The one is the perfection of neatness, sweetness, cleanliness, prettiness, and order. The other is dirty, [253] frowsy, disorderly, and of evil odour. The Papists deny the right of the Protestants to be in the island at all, speak of them with acerbity, call them the Colonists, the perverts, the Soupers, the Jumpers, the heretics; and look forward to the time when a Dublin Parliament will banish law and order, so that these interlopers may be for ever swept away, and their fields and houses become the property of the Faithful. They complain that the Protestants have all the best land, and that the Papist population were wrongfully driven from the ground now occupied by the colony. Like other Catholic poor all over Ireland they will tell you that they have been ground down, harried, oppressed, grievously ill-used, habitually ill-treated by the English Government, which has never given them a chance. They explain the prosperity of their Protestant neighbours by knowing winks and nods, and by plain intimations that all Irish Protestants are secretly subsidised by England, that they have privileges, that they are favoured, petted, kept in pocket money. To affect to doubt this is to prove yourself a dissembler, an impostor, a black-hearted enemy of the people. Your Achil friend will drop the conversation in disgust, and by round-about ways will call you a liar. He is sure of his facts, as sure as he is that a sprinkling of holy water will cure rheumatism, will keep away the fairies from the cow, will put a fine edge on his razor, will keep the donkey from being bewitched. He knows who has had money and how much, having reasoned out the matter by inference. He could sell himself to-morrow, but is incorruptible, and will remain a strong rock to the faith, will still buttress up the true hierarchy of heaven. He cannot be bought, and this is strange, for he never looks worth twopence.

It was during a famine that one Mr. Nangle, a Protestant parson from the North, went to Achil and found the people in deepest distress. They were dying of starvation, and their priests had all fled. Mr. Nangle had no money, but he was prompt in action. He sent a thousand pounds' worth of meal to the island on his own responsibility, and weighed down by a sense of the debt he had incurred, went to London to beg the money. He was successful, and afterwards founded the Achil mission at Dugort, now called the Colony. Needless to say that all the land belonging to the mission was duly bought and paid for, and that the Protestants have been the benefactors of Achil. The stories of wrong-doing, robbery, and spoliation, which the peasantry repeat, are of course totally untrue. The example of a decently-housed community has produced no perceptible effect on the habits of the Achilese. The villages of Cabawn, Avon (also known by its Anglicised name of River), Ballyknock, Slievemore, and Ducanella are dirty beyond description. Some of the houses I saw in a drive which included the coastguard station of Bull's Mouth were mere heaps of stones, with turf sods for tiles, whereon was growing long grass which looked like a small instalment of the three acres and a cow. Some had no windows and no chimney, the turf reek filling the hovel, but partly escaping by a hole in the roof. The people who live in this look as it [254] painted in umber by old Dutch masters. These huts are small, but there is always room for a pig or two, which stalk about or stretch themselves before the fire like privileged members of the family. This was very well for the Gintleman that paid the Rint. But he merits the title no longer. His occupation's gone.

A sturdy Protestant said:—"Suppose Home Rule became law, then we must go away. We are only here on sufferance, and every person in the Colony knows it and feels it only too well. Our lives would not be endangered: those times are over, but we could not possibly stay in the island. Remove the direct support of England, and we should be subject to insult and wrong, for which we should have no earthly remedy. What could they do? Why, to begin with, they could pasture their cattle on our fields. If we turned them out they could be turned in again; if we sue them we have a day's journey to take to get the cause heard, and if we get the verdict we can recover nothing. Shoot a cow or two! Then we should ourselves be shot, or our children. No, there has been no landlord-shooting on the island. This kind of large game has always been very scarce on Achil. Just over the Sound we had a little sport—a really merry little turn it was—but the wrong man was shot.

"A Mr. Smith came down to collect rents. The Land League was ruling the country, and its desperadoes were everywhere. It was decided to shoot Mr. Smith, after duly warning him to keep away. Smith was not to be deterred from what he thought his duty (he was a Black Protestant), and away he went, with his son, a neat strip of a lad about seventeen or so. When they got half-way to the house which Smith had appointed as a meeting-place a man in the bog which bordered the road called out, and waved a paper, which he then placed on a heap of turf. Young Smith went for it, and it read. YOU'LL NOT GO HOME ALIVE THIS NIGHT. 'Drive on, Tom,' said the father. 'We'll do our work, whether we go home alive or dead.' Coming back the same evening the father was driving, the son, this young lad, sitting at the side of the car, which was furnished with a couple of repeating rifles and a revolver. Suddenly three men spring up from behind a fence and fire a volley at the two Smiths, but as they rose the horse shied and plunged forward, and hang me! if they didn't all miss. The elder Smith still struggled with the frightened horse, which the shooting had made ungovernable, but the boy slipped off the car, and, seizing one of the rifles, looked out for a shot in return. It was growing dusk, and the bog was full of trenches and ups and downs, of which the three fugitives cleverly availed themselves. Besides, to be shot at from a point-blank range of three or four yards, scrambling down afterwards from behind a frantic horse, is not the best Wimbledon method of steadying the nerves. The boy put the rifle to his shoulder, and bided his time. Presently up came one of the running heroes, and young Smith shot him through the [255] heart, as neat a kill as ever you saw. The dead man was identified as a militiaman from Crossmolina, up Sligo way. The League always brought its marksmen from a distance, and it is

known that most of them were persons who had received some military training. Then the youngster covered another, but missed, and was about to fire again when his father shouted, 'Hold hard, Tom, that's enough sport for one day.'"

My friend was wrong. The second shot lacerated the man's shoulder, and laid him up for many a long week. I had the fact, which is now first recorded, on *undoubted authority*. Young Smith may be gratified to learn, for the first time, that his second bullet was not altogether thrown away. This may console him for the loss of the third reprobate, whom he had got "exactly between the shoulders," when the elder Smith ordered him to desist. The occurrence was such a lesson to the Land League assassins that they for ever after forswore Achil and its immediate surroundings. As Dennis Mulcahy remarked, "The ruffians only want shtandin' up to, an' they'll not come nixt or near ye." Mr. Morley would do well to apply this moral to the County Clare.

The best authority in Achil said:—"The hat is always going round for the islanders, who are much better off than the poor of great English cities. They have the reputation of being in a state of chronic famine. This has no foundation in fact. They all have land, one, two, or three cows, and the sea to draw upon. For their land and houses they pay nothing, or next to nothing; for good land in some cases is to be had for a shilling an acre. The lakes also abound with fish. They glory in their poverty, and hail a partial failure of crops with delight. They know they will be cared for, and that provisions will be showered upon them from all sides. They say, 'Please God, we'll have a famine this year,' and when the contributions pour in they laugh and sing, and say, 'The distress for ever! Long live the famine!' The word goes round at stated intervals that they are to 'have a famine.' They jump at the suggestion, act well together, and carry out the idea perfectly. The Protestants never have any distress which calls for charitable aid. They live on the same soil, under the same laws, but they never beg. They pay their rents, too, much more regularly than the others, who of late years can hardly be got to pay either rent or anything else. The Protestants are all strong Unionists. The Catholics are all strong Home Rulers. Their notions of Home Rule are as follows:—No rent, no police, a poteen still at every door, and possession of the land now held by Protestants, which is so much better than their own because so much more labour has been expended on it, and for no other reason. Who tells them to 'have a famine'? Why, the same people who arouse and keep alive their enmity to the Protestants; the same people who tell them lies about the early history of the Colony—lies which the tellers know to be lies, such as the stories of oppression, spoliation, and of how the mission took the property of the islanders with [256] the strong hand, aided by England, the home of robbery, tyranny, and heresy. The people would be friendly enough but for their priests. Yet they have marched in procession before our houses, blowing defiance by means of a drum and fife band, because we would not join one or other of their dishonest and illegal combinations. They opened a man's head with a stone, producing a dreadful scalp wound, and when Doctor Croly, the greatest favourite in the whole island, went to dress the wound, five or six of them stopped his horse, with the object of giving him a 'bating,' which would have ended nobody knows how. The doctor produced a revolver, and the heroes vanished like smoke."

The good doctor is himself a Unionist, but more of a philanthropist than a politician. He is the parish doctor, with eight thousand people to look after, the whole being scattered over an immense area. I accompanied him on a twenty-mile drive to see a girl down with influenza, much of the road being almost impracticable. Some of his experiences, coming out incidentally, were strange and startling. He told me of a night when the storm was so wild that a man seeking him approached the surgery on all-fours, and once housed, would not again stir out, though the patient was his own wife. The doctor went alone and in the storm and blackness narrowly escaped drowning, emerging from the Jawun, usually called the Jordan, after an hour's struggle with the flood, to sit up all night in his wet clothes, tending the patient. On another occasion a mountain sheep frightened his horse just as the doctor was filling his pipe. The next passer-by found him insensible. Nobody might have passed for a month. A similar misadventure resulted in a broken leg. Then on a pitchy night he walked over the cliffs, and was caught near the brink by two rocks which held him wedged tightly until someone found him and pulled him up, with the bag of instruments, which he thinks had saved him. And it was as well to pause in his flight, for the Menawn Cliffs, with their thousand feet of clean drop, might have given the doctor an ugly fall. Two girls, whose male relations had gone to England, had not been seen for three days. Nobody would go near the house. The doctor found them both on the floor insensible, down with typhus fever, shut up with the pigs and cows, the room and its odour defying description. The neighbours kept strictly aloof. Dr. Croly swept and garnished, made fires, and pulled the patients through. "Sure, you couldn't expect us to go near whin 'twas the faver," said the neighbourly Achilese. Mr. Salt, the Brum-born mission agent, was obliged to remain all night on one of the neighbouring islands—islands are a drug hereabouts—and next morning he found an egg in his hat. Fowls are in nearly all the houses. Sometimes they have a roost on the ceiling, but they mostly perch on the family bed, when that full-flavoured Elysium is not on the floor. I saw an interior which contained one black cow, one black calf, some hens, some ducks, two black-and-white pigs, a mother, and eleven children. Where they all slept was a puzzle, as only one bed was [257] visible. The hens went whir-r-r-up, and perched on the bedstead, when the lady smiled and wished me Good Evening. She looked strong and in good going order. The Achilese say Good Evening all day long. A young girl was grinning in the next doorway, a child of fourteen or fifteen she seemed. "Ye wouldn't think that was a married woman, would ye now," said a neighbour, with pardonable pride. "Aye, but she is, though, an' a foin lump iv a son ye have, haven't ye, Maureen." Mr. Peter Griffin, once a land commissioner, told me that a boy having applied for the fixing of a judicial rent, the commissioners expressed their surprise upon learning that he was married. "Arrah, now," said the applicant, "sure 'tis not for the sake of the bit that the crathur would ate

that a boy need be widout one o' thim!"

In Achil, as elsewhere, the better people are certain that the Home Rule Bill will never become law. From their point of view, the thing seems too absurd to be possible. They are face to face with a class of Irishmen, among whom civilisation seems to have made no perceptible progress for centuries, who scorn every improvement, and are so tied and bound down by aboriginal ignorance and superstition as to be insensible to everything but their ancient prejudices. It cannot be possible, they argue, that Ireland should be given over to the dominion of these people, who, after all, are in the matter of advancement and enlightenment fairly representative of the bulk of the voters for Home Rule all over the country. The civilised community of Achil are unable to realise the possibility of such a surrender. They do not discuss the measure, but rather laugh at it. An able business man said:—

"We get the daily papers a little old, no doubt, but we follow them very closely, and we concur in believing that Mr. Gladstone will in the long run drop the bill. We think he will turn round and say, 'There now. That's all I can do. Haven't I done my best? Haven't I kept my promise? Now, you can't blame me. The Irishmen see it coming, and they will get out of it as much dramatic effect as possible. The party organs are already urging them to open rupture with the Government. Compulsion is their game, and no doubt, with Gladstone, it is the most likely game to pay. But he might rebel. He might grow tired of eating Irish dirt; he might pluck up spirit enough to tell these bullies who are jockeying him, and through him the British Empire, to go to the Divil. Then we'd have a fine flare-up. Virtuous indignation and patriotic virtue to the fore! The Irish members will rush over to Ireland, and great demonstrations will be the order of the day. The Irish love demonstrations, or indeed anything else which gives a further excuse for laziness. The priests will orate, the members will prate, the ruffians elate will shoot or otherwise murder a few people, who will have Mr. Gladstone to thank for their death. For what we wanted was twenty years of resolute government, just as Lord Salisbury said, and if Mr. Balfour had been left to carry it out Ireland would have come her nearest possible to prosperity and contentment. But [258] with steady rule one day, and vacillation, wobbling, and surrender the next, what can you expect? The Irish are very smart, cute people, and they soon know where they can take advantage of weakness. The way these poor Achil folks, those who have been to England, can reckon up Mr. Gladstone! They call him a traitor now. And yet he promises to let the Irish members arrange their own finance! 'Here, my boys,' says he, 'take five millions and spend it your own way.' Will John Bull stand that? Will he pay for the rope that is to hang himself? Will he buy the razor to cut his own throat? Where are his wits? Why does he stand by to witness this unending farce, when he ought to be minding serious business? This Irish idiocy is stopping the progress of the Empire. Why does not Bull put his foot on it at once? He must do so in the end. Where are the working men of England? Surely they know enough to perceive that their own personal interests are involved.

"In Achil we have practically peasant proprietary and nothing else. Eleven hundred men and women are at this moment in England and Scotland from Achil alone. They will return in October, each bringing back ten, fifteen, or twenty pounds, on which they will live till next season. The Irish Legislature would begin by establishing peasant proprietary all over Ireland. The large farmers would disappear, and men without capital, unable to employ labour, would take their place. Instead of Mayo, you would have the unemployed of the whole thirty-two counties upon you. Ireland would be pauperised from end to end, for everybody who could leave it would do so —that is, every person of means—and as for capital and enterprise, what little we have would leave us. Which of the Irish Nationalist party would start factories, and what would they make? Can anybody tell me that?"

I submitted that Mr. William O'Brien, the member for Cork, might open a concern for the making of breeches, or that Mr. Timothy Healy, the member for Louth, who was reared in a tripe shop, might embark his untold gold in the cowheel and trotter business, or might even prove a keen competitor with Walsall in the manufacture of horsewhips, a product of industry of which he has had an altogether exceptional experience. "Is not this true?" I enquired.

My friend admitted the fact, but declined to believe in the factory.

Dugort (Achil Island), June 22nd.

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[259]

No. 39.—IRISH UNFITNESS FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT.

ToC

There stands a city neither large nor small, Its air and situation sweet and pretty. It matters very little if at all. Whether its denizens are dull or witty. Whether the ladies there are short or tall, Brunettes or blondes—only there stands a city. Perhaps 'tis also requisite to minute, That there's a castle and a cobbler in it. It is not big enough to boast a barber. These indispensable adjuncts of civilisation exist in Connaught, but only at rare intervals. Roughly speaking, there is a space of about a hundred miles between them. From Athlone to Dugort, a hundred and thirty miles, there is only one, both towns inclusive. Castlereagh is a deadly-lively place for business, but keenly awake to politics. The distressful science absorbs the faculties of the people, who care for little else. Like all the Keltic Irish, they are great talkers, and, surely, if talking were working the Irish would be the richest nation in the world. "Words, words, words," and no deeds. The Castlereagh folks are growing despondent. The Irish Parliament that was to remit taxation, present every able-bodied man with a farm, do away with landlords and police, and reduce the necessity for work to a minimum, seems to them further off than ever. They complain that once again the people of Ireland have been betrayed. Mr. Gladstone has done it all. To be sure they never trusted him, but they thought him an instrument in the hands of Fate and the Irish Parliamentary party. Spite of all he is supposed to have done for the Irish, Mr. Gladstone is not popular in Ireland, and, as I pointed out months ago, they from the first declined to believe in his sincerity. They rightly regarded his action anent Home Rule as the result of compulsion, and, rightly or wrongly, believed that he would take the first opportunity of throwing over the whole scheme. That he should act thus treacherously (they say) is precisely what might be expected from an impartial review of his whole career, which presents an unequalled record of in-and-out running—consistent only in its inconsistency. Having apparently ridden straight for awhile, it is now time to expect some "pulling." His shameful concessions to the Unionist party may be taken as a clear indication of his congenital crookedness, and the refusal of the Nationalists at Killybegs, on the visit of Lord Houghton, the other day, to give a single shout for the Grand Old Man, bears out my previous statement as to the popular feeling. Amid the carefully organised show of enthusiasm and mock loyalty which greeted the visit of the Viceroy, not a cheer could be raised for Mr. Gladstone. The local wirepullers did their best, but the priests who for weeks have been arranging their automata, at the last moment found that the dummies would not work. There were rounds of cheering for this, that, and the other, and when the mob were in full cry, someone shouted, "Three cheers for Mr. Gladstone." Dead silence. The Gladstonian Viceroy and his [260] following were left high and dry. The flood of enthusiasm instantly receded, and the beating of their own hearts was the only sound they heard. Mr. Morley's name would have obtained a like reception. The people were doubtless willing to obey their leaders, and to make some slight sacrifice to expediency, but every man left that particular cheer to his neighbour. Hence the fiasco for which the people have already been severely reprimanded. Someone should have called for cheers for Balfour. Anyone who knows the West of Ireland knows there would have been an outburst of hurrahs, hearty and spontaneous. The Irish are delightfully illogical.

A respectable old Fenian had a poor opinion of the present Home Rule agitation. He said:—"I am of the school of Stephens and Mitchel. When a people or nation is radically discontented with its rulers it should throw them off by force. If the Irish could hold together long enough to maintain an armed insurrection for two weeks only, help would be forthcoming from all quarters. When a young man I cherished the hope that this would be accomplished, but I have long abandoned the notion that anything of the kind will be possible in my time. For individual Englishmen I have as much friendship as anybody, not being himself an Englishman, can entertain. What I dislike is English rule, and the present movement does not interest me, because its leaders profess allegiance—for the present, anyhow. No doubt the general idea is to obtain as much advantage as possible, and to gradually increase the strength of Ireland; but, in my opinion, the Fenian movement was the true and legitimate method, and the one best suited to the genius of the Irish nation. Notwithstanding all that has been said and written by English speakers and writers, the movement was worthy of honour, and had it been successful, would have received high praise and commendation from every country except England. To be respectable, revolutions or insurrections must be successful, or at any rate, must have a certain amount of success to commence with. The English people never properly understood the Fenian movement. To begin with, the name of Fenians was not assumed by the Irish body of conspirators. The Fenians proper were entirely confined to America, where they acted under the instructions of John O'Mahony, with Michael and Colonel Corcoran as lieutenants. The Colonel commanded the Irish brigade of the American army, and was pledged to bring over a strong contingent at the right moment. The Irish party in Ireland under Stephens was called the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, to which I am proud to say I belonged. That is all over now, and I am content to be loyal, under compulsion. There is nothing else for it. The young men are all gone to America, and the failure of the enterprise has damaged the prestige of the cause. The organisation was very good, and you might say that the able-bodied population belonged to it, almost to a man. England never knew, does not know even now, how universal was the movement. The escape of James Stephens, the great Number One, from Richmond Bridewell, was something of an eye-opener, but [261] not half so astonishing as some things that would have happened if the general movement had been successful. It was Daniel Byrne and James Breslin, who let him out. Byrne was a turnkey, Breslin was hospital superintendent, and both held their posts on account of their well-known loyalty. Byrne was found out, or rather it was discovered that he was a Fenian, but they could not prove his guilt in the Stephens affair, and he never rounded on Breslin, who went on drawing his screw from the British Government for many a long day, until he took a trip to America, where his services to the cause landed him in a good situation. So he stayed there, and told everything, and that was the first the British Government knew about it, beyond suspicion of Byrne.

"If Stephens had made up his mind for an outbreak the funeral of MacManus was the right occasion. He missed his tip then, and no mistake. There never was another chance like that. He said the arrangements were not complete, and from that moment the thing dwindled away, and we who were working it up in the rural districts began to think he did not really mean business. We were short of arms, but a small success would have improved our condition in that respect. Lots of the country organisers went to Dublin to see his funeral, and when we saw the crowds and the enthusiasm we all agreed that such a chance was not likely to occur again. MacManus had been a chief of the insurrectionary movement of 1848, and had been transported for life to Botany Bay, I think. He escaped to America, and died there in 1861. Mahony, the Fenian commander-in-chief, proposed to spend some of the revolutionary funds in bringing the body to Ireland, there to give it a public funeral. This was a great idea, and as the Government did not interfere, it turned out a greater success than anyone had anticipated. There were delegates from every city in America, and from every town in Ireland. It took about a month to lug MacManus from the Far West to Dublin, and the excitement increased every day. In my little place we collared all the timid fellows who had been holding back before, until there was not a single man of the peasant class outside the circle. MacManus was worth more dead than alive.

"A hundred thousand men followed the hearse through the streets of Dublin. At the critical moment Number One held back. If the streets had been barricaded on the evening of the funeral the country would have stood an excellent chance of obtaining its independence. The moment was missed, and such chances never come twice. The French would have made a big thing of that affair. Stephens was great at organisation, but he had not the pluck to carry out the enterprise. He had not the military training required, nor the decision to act at the right moment. So here we are and here we shall remain, and I am your humble, obedient, loyal servant to command.

"No, I do *not* believe in the present leaders at all. I think they want to be paid big salaries as [262]
Irish statesmen, and that they are unfit to clean the boots of the men with whom I acted thirty years ago. The Fenians, or rather the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, had no wish to make money by their patriotism, and what is more, they were ready to risk their skins, whenever called upon to do so. They were willing to fight. These chaps do nothing but spout. The I.R.B. agreed among themselves, and obeyed orders. These fellows can't agree for five minutes together, and their principal subject of quarrel is—Who shall be master? Gladstone is fooling them now, and good enough for them. A pretty set of men to attempt to govern a country! They don't know what they want. We did. We swore every man to obedience to the Irish Republic. That was straightforward enough. The young 'uns round here have the same aspirations, but they dislike the idea of fighting. They expect to get round it some other way.

"John Kennedy, of Westport, damaged the cause in Mayo more than any man in Ireland. He was a young fellow of about five-and-twenty, only a few years in the constabulary, but somehow he got into sworn meetings in disguise, and burst the whole thing up. The queerest feature about this business is the fact that although everybody knew the man not a shot was ever fired at him. That shows the fairness of the Fenians. A member of the Brotherhood would have been promptly dealt with, you bet. But Kennedy was an open enemy, and had a right to circumvent us if he could. Give us credit for some chivalrous feeling. We certainly deserved it, as this case amply proves.

"The Land League? The Ruffian League, the Burglar League, the Pickpocket League, the Murder League—that's what I always called it. A hole-and-corner way of carrying on the fight, which had been begun by MEN, but which the latest fashion of Irishmen have not the courage to canduct as men. The Fenian conception was high-souled, and had some romance about it. We had a green flag with a rising sun on it, along with the harp of Erin. Our idea was an open fight against the British Empire. There's as much difference between the Fenians and their successors as between the ancient Romans and the Italian organ-grinders with monkeys. Good morning, Sir, and—God save the Queen."

This was a jocosity if not a mockery, but it was the first time I had heard the words in Ireland. The tune is almost unknown, and the current issue of *United Ireland* ridicules the notion that the Irish are going to learn it. The band of the Royal Irish Constabulary, playing in front of their barracks in the Phœnix Park, Dublin, on Friday evenings, sometimes include the tune in their programme, but when I heard them it was led up to and preceded by "St. Patrick's Day in the Mornin'," to which it was conjoined by one intervening chord. A Castlereagh Protestant said:—

"The children here are taught to curse the Queen in their cradles. Don't know how it is, but hatred to England seems bred in the bone of the Catholic Irish. They make no secret of their [263]
hopes of vengeance. The Protestants will have to levant in double-quick time. The people here hate Protestants, whether English or Irish, likewise anybody who holds a Government appointment. Some few days ago I was at Westport, and while in the post office there, a beggar asked Mr. Hildebrand for alms. You know that every western town swarms with beggars. He said No, and this tramp immediately turned round and said:—

"'We'll very soon have ye out o' that, *now*.'

"A relative of mine, who holds a sub-office, has been told the same thing fifty times. There you have the spirit of the poorer people. And don't forget that the illiterates have the power in their hands. Just think what this means.

"In England, with all your agricultural districts, with all your back slums of cities, there was only one person in each hundred and seventy who could not write his name, or at all events, one in a hundred and seventy who was unable to manage his voting paper.

"In Ireland the figures were one in every five, and of the remainder two at least were barely able to perform so simple an operation as making a cross against the right name. Are these people fit to govern themselves?

"There were two polling booths in Westport. There were three priests at each door. Tell the English people that, and see what they think of it.

"A Scotch gentleman staying in Westport during the late 'mission' was stopped at the door of the Roman Catholic Church. He was not permitted to enter, because the priests are ashamed to show civilised people the credulity and crass ignorance of their congregation. At one of these services everybody held a lighted candle, and at a given signal, Puff! out went out the lights, and with them away went the sins of the people.

"A priest was sent for in Achil. The case was urgent. A man was dying, and without Extreme Unction his chances in the next world were reckoned shady. The priest was enjoying himself in some festivity, and the man died before his salvation arrived. A relative declared he would tell the bishop. The priest reassured him with a scrap of paper, whereon were written these words, signed by himself, 'Saint Peter. Admit bearer.' 'Stick that in the dead man's fist,' said he. The man went away delighted. These are the intelligent voters whose influence is now paramount in the Parliament of England. It is by these poor untutored savages, manipulated by their priests, that the British Empire is now worked. The semi-civilised peasants of Connaught, with the ignorant herds of Leinster and Munster, at the bidding of their clergy have completely stopped the course of legislation, and left the long-suffering and industrious working men of England and Scotland to wait indefinitely for all the good things they want. The cry is, Ireland stops the way. Why doesn't England kick it out of the way?

"Turn about is fair play. Let England have a turn now. Fair play is a jewel, and Ireland has fair [264]
play. Ireland has privileges of which neither England nor Scotland can boast. The Protestants of Ireland are everywhere prosperous and content. The Catholics of Ireland are everywhere impoverished and discontented. Wherever you go you find this an invariable rule. The two sects may hold their farms from the same landlord, on precisely similar terms, and you will find that the Protestants pay their rent, and get on, while the Catholics don't pay, and go from bad to worse."

"Is this extraordinary difference the result of British rule?"

Many a time I have asked Catholics this question. They cannot explain the marked difference on the ground of alien government, as both are subject to the same. They will say, 'Oh, Protestants are always well off,' as if the thing were a matter of course, and must be looked upon as inevitable. But why? I ask. That they can never tell.

Stand on a big hill near Tipperary and you will see four Roman Catholic churches of modern build, costing nearly a hundred thousand pounds. Father Humphreys will tell you how the money was raised, will show you over Tipperary Cathedral, and will let you see the pig-styes in which the people are housed. That is the man of God who wrote to the papers and complained that it had been reported that the Catholic clergy of Tipperary had done all they could to stop boycotting. Father Humphreys said:—"I protest against this libel on me. *I am doing nothing to stop boycotting*."

A neighbour of my friend spoke of many changes he had witnessed in the political opinions of people who had become resident in Ireland, having previously been Gladstonians in England. He said:—"When the Achil Sound viaduct was opened, chiefly by the efforts of a Northern Protestant who gave £1,500 towards the cost, a Scotchman named Cowan was chief engineer. He came over a rabid Home Ruler, and such a worshipper of Mr. Gladstone as cannot be found out of Scotland. In six months he was Unionist to the backbone, and not only Unionist but Conservative. The Achil folks, when once the bridge was built and given to them, decided to call it Michael Davitt Bridge. It had not cost them a penny, nor had they any part in it. At the priest's orders they rushed forward to christen it; it was all they were good for. They put up a big board with the name. Cowan went down alone, he could not get a soul with pluck to go with him, and chopped the thing down, the Achil Nationalists looking on. In the night they put up another board, a big affair on the trunk of a tree, all well secured. Cowan went down and felled it as before, watching it drift away with tide. Then they gave it up. They wouldn't go Three! Carnegie, the Customs man, came here a strong Home Ruler. Looking back, he says he cannot conceive how he could be such an ass. A very cute Scotchman, too. Some of the Gladstonians mean well. I don't condemn them wholesale, like father does. You should hear him drop on English Home Rulers. He understands [265]
the Irish agitator, but the English Separatist beats him. I have been in England, and several times in Birmingham, and I have heard them talk. Father is very peppery, but I moderate his transports. Speaking of the English Home Rulers he'll say—

"'Pack o' rogues.'

"'No, no,' says I, 'only fools.'

"'Infernal idiots,' says he.

"'No, no,' says I, 'only ignorant.'

"As I said, I have been in England, and have heard them talk, so I know."

He asked me if I had noticed the external difference between Irish communities which support Home Rule and those which support the Union. I said that a contrast so striking must impress the most casual observer, for that, on the one hand, Unionism is always coupled with cleanliness and decency, while on the other the intimate relationship apparently existing between Home Rule and

dunghills is most suggestive and surprising.

Unionism and order: Separatism and ordure—that is about the sum.

Castlereagh, June 24th.

No. 40.—OBJECT LESSONS IN IRISH SELF-GOVERNMENT.

ToC

A small town with a great name, about one hundred miles west of Dublin. There is a ruined castle, and one or two ruined abbeys, but nothing else of interest, unless it be the herons which stalk about the streams in its environs, and the Royston crows with white or gray breast and back, which seem to be fairly numerous in these parts. Ireland is a wonderful country for crows and ravens, which hop about the village streets as tame as barndoor fowls. A King of Connaught is buried in Saint Coenan's Abbey, but dead kings are almost as common as crows, and Phelim O'Connor seems to have done nothing worthy of mention beyond dying in 1265. I had hardly landed when I met a very pronounced anti-Home Ruler, a grazier, apparently a smart business man, and seemingly well up in the controversy. He said:—"I have argued the question all over Ireland, and believe I have made as many converts as anybody. Many of my countrymen have been carried away by the popular cry, but when once they have the thing put to them from the other side, and have time to think, they begin to have their doubts. Naturally they first lean to the idea of an Irish Parliament. It flatters Irish feeling, and when men look around and see the country so poor and so backward they want to try some change or other. The agitators see their opportunity, and say, 'All this results from English interference. If we managed our own affairs we should be better off all round.' This sounds plausible, and agrees with the traditional distrust of England which the [266] people have inherited from past ages. Men who are fairly intelligent, and fairly reasonable, will say, 'We can't be worse off than we are at present.' That is a stock argument all over the country. The people who use it think it settles the business. The general poverty of the people is the strength of the Home Rule position. The priests tell them that a Government composed of Irishmen would see them right, and would devote itself to looking after their interests; and really the people have nobody to tell them anything else. Nor are they likely to hear the other side, for they are only allowed to read certain papers, and if Englishmen of character and ability were to attempt to stump the country they would not get a hearing. The clergy would make it warm for anybody who dared to attend a Unionist meeting. So *that* process is altogether out of the question. Isolated Roman Catholic Unionists like myself need to be in a very strong and independent position before they dare to express their views. Roman Catholics of position are nearly all Unionists at heart, but comparatively few of them dare avow their real convictions. To do so is to couple yourself with the obnoxious land question. The people, as a whole, detest landlords and England, and they think that an opponent of Home Rule is necessarily a sympathiser with British rule and landlordism, and therefore a foe to his country and a traitor to his countrymen. Few men have the moral courage to face this indictment. That is why the educated Catholic party, as a whole, hang back. And then, they dislike to put themselves in direct opposition to their clergy. Englishmen do not care one jot what the parson thinks of their political opinions, but in Ireland things are very different. I am against Home Rule because I am sure it would be bad for Ireland. The prosperity of the country is of some importance to me, and for my own sake and apart from sentimental considerations, and for the credit of Ireland, I am against Home Rule. We should be poorer than ever. I would not trust the present Irish party to manage anything that required management. They have not the training, nor the business capacity, nor sufficient consistency to work together for a single week. They cannot agree even at this critical moment, when by their own showing, the greatest harmony of action is required in the interests of Ireland. I say nothing about their honesty, for the most scrupulously honest men could not succeed without business ability and united action. They are a set of talkers, good for quibbling and squabbling and nothing more.

"They are M.P.'s because they can talk. Paddy loves a glib talker, and a fellow with a good jaw on him would always beat the best business man, even if Paddy were allowed his own choice. Of course he has no choice—he votes as the priest tells him; but then the selected men were all good rattling talkers, not in the House, perhaps, but in their own country district in Ireland. Paddy thinks talking means ability, and when a fellow rattles off plenty of crack-jaw words and red-hot [267] abuse of England, Paddy believes him able to regenerate the world. These men are not allowed to speak in the House. They only vote. But let me tell you they are kings in their own country.

"Since Parnell ordered his followers to contest all the elective Boards in Ireland, the Nationalist party have almost monopolised the Poor Law Boards, with the result that nearly every one has been openly bankrupt, or else is in a state of present insolvency. Mr. Morley has been asked for particulars but has declined to give them. He knows that the list of insolvent Poor Law Boards in Ireland, if once given with particulars, to the British public, would show up the prospects of

Home Rule in such a damaging way that 'the cause' would never survive the shock. Why does not the Unionist party bring about this exposure? Surely the information is obtainable, if not from Mr. Morley, then from some other source.

"Why are they bankrupt? you ask. Partly through incompetence; partly through corruption. In every case of declared bankruptcy Government has sent down vice-Guardians receiving three hundred pounds to five hundred pounds a year, and notwithstanding this additional burden to the rates the vice-Guardians in every case have paid off all debts and left a balance in hand inside of two years. Then they retire, and the honorary Guardians come back to scuttle the ship again. Tell the English people that. Mr. Morley cannot deny it. You have told them? Then tell them again, and again.

"In the Killarney Union the Nationalists ran up the rates from one thousand seven hundred pounds to three thousand six hundred pounds. More distress? Not a bit of it. But even admitting this, how would you account for the fact that the cost ran up from sixteen shillings a head to twenty-five shillings a head for every person relieved?

"The Listowel Union was perhaps the biggest scandal in the country. The Unionist Guardians relieved the people at a cost of five shillings a head. The Nationalists got in and relieved them at a cost of fifteen shillings a head. And there wasn't a reduction on taking a quantity, for the Unionists only had two hundred on the books, while the Nationalists had two thousand or more.

"At the same period exactly those Unions which remained under the old rule showed little or no increase in the rates. Kenmare remained Unionist, and when the great rise in poor-law expenses followed the election of Nationalist Guardians Kenmare spent less money than ever.

"The Nationalist Guardians have been vising the poor rates to reward their friends and to punish the landlords. They have been fighting the landlords with money raised from the landlords by means of poor rates. Evicted tenants generally received a pound or twenty-five shillings a week out-door relief. This punishes the landlords, and saves the funds of the Land League, now called the National League. Ingenious, isn't it? These are the men who form the class furnishing [268] the Irish Parliamentary party. These bankrupt, incompetent, and fraudulent Guardians are the men with whom English Gladstonians are closely allied. The Board meetings are usually blackguardly beyond description. You have no idea to what extremes they go. No Irishman who loves his country would trust her to the tender mercies of these fellows."

I have not yet been present at any meeting of an Irish Poor Law Board, and probably, as my friend remarked, I "do not know to what extremes they go." The *Mayo News* of a week or two ago reported an ordinary meeting of the Westport Board, and I noticed that one Guardian accused his colleagues of stealing the potatoes provided out of the rates for the paupers. This was reported in a Nationalist print edited by a gentleman who has had the honour of being imprisoned for Land League business. The report was evidently verbatim, and has not been contradicted. The Westport folks took no notice of the affair, which may therefore be assumed as representing the dead level of an Irish Poor Law debate. To what sublime altitudes they may occasionally rise, to "what extremes" they sometimes go, I know not. The College Green Parliament, manned by such members, would have a peculiar interest. The Speaker might be expected to complain that his umbrella (recently re-covered) had mysteriously disappeared. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might accuse the President of the Board of Trade of having appropriated the National stationery, and the Master of the Rolls might rise to declare that a sanguinary ruffian from Ulster had "pinched his wipe." The sane inhabitants of the Emerald Isle affirm that Home Rule would be ruinous to trade, but the vendors of shillelaghs and sticking-plaster would certainly have a high old time.

An Englishman who has had exceptional opportunities of examining the matter said:—"I don't care so much for Irish interests as for English interests, and I am of opinion that no Englishman in a position to form a correct judgment would for one moment support the bill. The tension is off us now, because we feel that the danger to a great extent is over. The bill could not be expected to survive a public examination. The Gladstonians themselves must now see that the scheme was not only absurd and impossible, but iniquitous. Under a Home Rule Bill their native land would cut a sorry figure, such as would almost shame the milk-sop Radical party, 'friends of every country but their own.' A Government with a sufficient majority to carry a British measure might at any time be turned out of office by the eighty Irish members, who could at any time make their votes the price of some further concession. And you know the character of the men, how thoroughly unscrupulous they are. All are enemies of England, and yet we who know them and the feeling of their constituencies are asked to believe that they would never abuse their powers. Why give them the temptation? Then, whatever debts Ireland might incur England would have to pay, should Ireland repudiate them? The bill provides that England shall be ultimately [269] responsible for three-quarters of a million annually for the servants of the Crown in Ireland, such servants being at the orders of the Irish Legislature. It is a divorce case, wherein the husband is to be responsible for the wife's debts incurred after separation. This is Mr. Gladstone's fine proposition. And then England will have no police under her control to make defaulters pay up. You can't make the people pay rent and taxes with all your present force. How are you going to collect the two or three millions of Ireland's share in Imperial expenditure without any force at all? The police will be at the orders of the Irish Parliament, which will be returned by the very men who will owe the money. 'Oh yes!' say Dillon, Healy, O'Brien, and all the rest of the No Rent and Land League men. 'We'll see that the money is paid.' The previous history of these men ought to be enough for Englishmen. But if Tim Healy and Co. wished the money to be paid, they would have no power. They must take their orders from the people. How would you collect the interest on the eighteen or twenty millions Ireland now owes? The police and civil officers would, under a

Home Rule Bill, be the servants of the Irish Government, and would have no sympathy with England. A hitch would very soon arise between the two Parliaments either on the interpretation of this or that clause, or else because the Irish Parliament fell short of its duty in collecting the tribute. The Irish Government would stand firm, and would be supported by priests and people. The British Grenadiers would then come in, and where would be the Union of Hearts? Irishmen are fond of a catch-word. Like the French, they will go to death for a phrase. But the Union of Hearts never tickled them. The words never fell from Irish lips except in mockery.

"Protection would be the great rallying cry of a Home Rule Government. The bill refuses power to impose protective duties, but Ireland would commence by conceding bounties to Irish manufacturers, who would there and then be able to undersell English traders. No use going further into the thing, there is not a good point in it for either country. No use flogging a dead horse. There never will be any Home Rule, and there's no use in discussing it. A liberal measure of Local Self-Government will be the upshot of this agitation, nothing more. And that will come from the Tory party, the only friends of poor Ireland."

The Parnellites are strong in Roscommon, and to hear them revile the priests is both strange and sad. These are the only Catholics who resent clerical dictation. They seem in a quandary. Their action seems inconsistent with their expressed sentiments. They plainly see that Home Rule means Rome Rule, and, while deprecating priestly influence, they do their best to put the country into priestly hands. They speak of the Anti-Parnellites with contempt and aversion, calling them rogues and vagabonds, liars and traitors, outside the pale of civilisation, and yet they work for Home Rule, which would put their beloved Ireland in the power of the very men whose baseness [270] and crass incompetence they cannot characterise in terms sufficiently strong. For the Anti-Parnellites outnumber the Parnellites by eight to one; so that the smaller party, although monopolising all virtue, grace and intellect, would have no show at all, unless, indeed, the Nationalists were further subdivided, on which contingency the Parnellites probably count with certainty. I interviewed a champagny little man whose views were very decided. He said:—

"I think the seventy-three Federationists, as they want to be called, are not only traitors to the greatest Irishmen of the age, but also mean-spirited tools of the Catholic bishops. A man may have proper respect for his faith, and may yet resent the dictation of his family priest. I admit his superior knowledge of spiritual matters, but I think I know what politics suit me best, and I send him to the rightabout. Let him look after the world to come. That's his business. I'm going to look after this world for myself. The main difference between the Parnellites and the Anti-Parnellites is just this—the Parnellites keep themselves independent of any English party; the Anti-Parnellites have identified themselves with the English Liberals, and bargain with them. My view is this, that the English Radicals will use the Irish party for their own ends, that they want to utilise them in carrying out the Newcastle programme, and that having so used them the Irishmen may go and hang themselves. 'We give you Home Rule and you give us the Newcastle budget'—that's the present arrangement. But after that? What then? Ireland will want the Home Rule Bill amended. The first bill (if ever we get it) must be very imperfect, and will want no end of improvement. It is bound to be a small, mean affair, and will want expansion and breadth. Then the Radicals will chuck over the Anti-Parnellites, who will be equally shunted by the Tories, and we shall be left hanging in the air. The Parnellites aim at getting everything on its merits, and decline to identify themselves with any party. They wish to be called Independents. And they one and all decline to be managed by the priests. The seventy-three Anti-Parnellites are entirely managed by the Clerical party. They have no will of their own any more than the pasteboard men you see in the shop windows, whose legs and arms fly up and down, when you pull a string. They are just like Gladstonians in that respect."

The Parnellites are hard up, and their organ asks America for cash. The dauntless nine want six thousand pounds for pocket-money and hotel expenses. The cause of Ireland demands this sacrifice. After so many contributions, surely America will not hold back at the supreme moment. The Anti-Parnellites are bitterly incensed. To act independently of their faction was of itself most damnable, but still it could be borne. To ask for money from America, to put in a claim for coppers which might have flowed into Anti-Parnellite pockets, shows a degradation, an [271] unspeakable impudence for which the *Freeman* cannot find adequate adjectives. The priest-ridden journal speaks of its fellow patriots as caluminators and liars, tries to describe their "baseness," their "inconceivable insolence and inconceivable stupidity," and breaks down in the effort. A column and a half of space is devoted to calling the Parnellites ill names such as were formerly applied by Irish patriots to Mr. Gladstone. And all because they compete for the cents of Irish-American slaveys and bootblacks. The Parnellites are not to be deterred by mere idle clamour. Both parties are accustomed to be called liars and rogues, and both parties accept the appellations as a matter of course. Nothing can stop them when on the trail of cash. Is Irish sentiment to be again disappointed for a paltry six thousand pounds? Is the Sisyphean stone of Home Rule, so laboriously rolled uphill, to again roll down, crushing in its fall the faithful rollers? Will not some American millionaire come forward with noble philanthropy *and* six thousand pounds to rescue and to save the most beautiful, the most unfortunate country in the world from further disappointment? Only six thousand pounds now required for the great ultimate, or penultimate, or antepenultimate effort. Another twopence and up goes the donkey!

Roscommon, June 27th.

No. 41.—THE CHANGED SPIRIT OF THE CAPITAL.

ToC

The Dubliners have quite given up the bill. The Unionist party have regained their calm, and the Nationalists are resigned to the position. Nobody, of whatever political colour, or however sanguine, now expects the measure to become law. The Separatist rank and file never hoped for so much luck, and their disappointment is therefore anything but unbearable. My first letter indicated this lack of faith and also its cause. The Dublin folks never really believed a British Parliament would so stultify itself. The old lady who, on my arrival, said "We'll get Home Rule when a pair of white wings grows out o' me shoulders, an' I fly away like a big blackburd," finds her pendant in the jarvey, who this morning said, "If we'd got the bill I would have been as much surprised as if one o' me childhren got the moon by roarin' for it." Distrust of Mr. Gladstone is more prevalent than ever, and the prophets who all along credited that pious statesman with rank insincerity are now saying "I towld ye so." The Lord-Lieutenant is making his Viceregal progress in an ominous silence. The Limerick people let him go without a cheer. At Foynes something like a procession was formed, with the parish priest at its head; but the address read by his Rivirince reads very like a scolding. [272] It points out that "our rivers are at present without shipping, our mills and factories are idle, and it is a sad sight to see our beautiful Shannon, where all her Majesty's fleet could safely ride on the estuary of its waters, without almost a ship of merchandise on its surface on account of the general decay of our trade and commerce." The address further shows that "we enjoy a combination of natural advantages in the shape of a secure, sheltered anchorage, together with railway and telegraph in immediate proximity to the harbour and the pier, and postal service twice daily, both inwards and outwards, and a first-class quality of pure water laid on to the pier. The facility for landing or embarking troops, or for discharging or loading goods or stores is as near perfection as possible, and having a range of depth of water of twenty-five feet at low-water spring tide, the harbour can accommodate ships of deep draught at any state of the tide." These advantages, mostly owing to British rule, with others, such as the "unique combination of mountain and river scenery," were not enumerated as subjects for thankfulness, but rather by way of reproach, the effect of the whole address being a veiled indictment of British rule. No doubt Lord Houghton's first impulse would be to exclaim, "Then why on earth don't you use your advantages? With good quays, piers, storehouses, and a broad deep river, opening on the Atlantic, why don't you do some business?" But he promised to do his best to send them a guard-ship, in order that the crew might spend some money in the district. The Galway folks asked him to do something for them. My previous letters have shown the incapacity of the Galwegians to do anything for themselves, and how, being left to their own devices—having, in fact, a full enjoyment of local Home Rule—their incompetence has saddled the city with a debt of fifty thousand pounds for which they have practically nothing to show, except an additional debt of one thousand pounds decreed against them for knocking the bottom out of a coaling vessel during their "improving" operations, which sum they never expect to pay, as the harbour tolls are collected by the Board of Works, which thus endeavours to indemnify itself for having lent them the "improvement" funds. The Killybegs folks showed the poor Viceroy their bay and told him what wonderful things they could do if they only had a pier, or a quay, or something. The Achil folks formerly said the same thing. Two piers were built but no man ever goes near them. The Mulranney folks pointed out that while Clew Bay, and particularly the nook of it called Mulranney Bay, was literally alive with fish, the starving peasants of the neighbourhood could do nothing for want of a pier. The brutal Saxon built one at once—a fine handsome structure, at once a pier, a breakwater, and a harbour, with boat-slips and three stages with steps, so that boats could be used at any tide. I stepped this massive and costly piece of masonry, and judged it to be a hundred yards long. There were six great mooring posts, but not a boat in sight, nor any trace of [273] fishing operations. A broad new road to the pier was cut and metalled, but no one uses it. The fishing village of Mulranney, with its perfect appointments, would not in twelve months furnish you with one poor herring. The pier of Killybegs would probably be just as useful to the neighbourhood.

The Dublin Nationalist prints make some show of fight, but the people heed them not. They know too well that their inward conviction that Home Rule is for the present defunct is founded on rock. In vain the party writers use the whip. Your Irishman is cute enough to know when he is beaten. The new-born regard of the Irish press for Parliamentary purity is comical enough. Obstruction is the thing they hate. Ungentlemanly conduct in the House stinks in their nostrils. Fair play is their delight, and underhand dealing they particularly abhor. Mr. Gladstone is too lenient, and although his failings lean to virtue's side, his action is too oily altogether. He is old and weak, and lubricates too much. They in effect accuse him of fatty degeneration of the brain. Something heroic must be done. Those low-bred ruffians, the Unionists, must be swept from the path of Erin, while her eloquent sons, actuated by patriotism and six pounds a week, and spurred on by the hope of even a larger salary, obtain after seven centuries some show of justice to Ireland. The Irish wire-pullers demand decisive action. They declare that they will no longer submit to the "happy-go-lucky policy of the gentlemen who survey life from the Ministerial benches." They must "put themselves in fighting form and show their supporters that they mean business." "Unless the Ministry mean to throw up the sponge they had better begin the fighting

at once." The Irish party "are looking for the action of the Government which is to make it evident to the Opposition that the majority mean to rule in the House of Commons, for unless this be done Parliamentary government becomes a farce." If Mr. Gladstone continues the policy of hesitation and waiting on Providence, the fate of Home Rule, and with it the fate of the Liberal party, are sealed. "Obstruction" (says the Parnellite paper) cannot be permitted!" It is the revelation of the impotency of Parliament, and Parliamentary procedure must be replaced by some quicker means of effecting reform. Mr. Gladstone's feebleness is an incitement to revolution. The Dublin press would manage these things better. An autumn session must not be adventured. If the House should rise before the bill has passed the Commons such a confession of weakness would fatally damage the Government prestige. The House must "be kept in permanent session, and not kept too long," which sounds like a bull, but the next sentence is plain enough.

"The obvious policy is to at once take the Opposition by the throat. That will excite enthusiasm, and convince the people that a Liberal Government is good for something."

The Nationalist prints are assuming the office of candid friend, a part which suits them admirably, and in the performance of which they make wonderful guesses at truth. The [274] Gladstonian Ministry "are helpless and impotent in the hands of their opponents. The reforms so ardently desired by the people are seen to be mere mirages, called up to win the votes of the people for men who, once in office, make no real effort to enforce the mandate given to them by the country." The Liberal Ministry will be "swept out of existence because the people will come to recognise that their promises and programmes are so many hollow phrases, incapable of ministering to the needs or satisfying the aspirations of the multitude." "The real tug of war," says this Home Rule sheet, "will come in the next election." If Irish Separatists talk like this, what do Irish Unionists say?

Very little, indeed. They are disposed to rest and be thankful. They only want to be let alone. They are quiet and reserved, and thank their stars that the worst is over. The nervousness, the high-strung tension of three months ago, is conspicuous by its absence. They feared that the thing would be rushed, and that Mr. Bull would stamp the measure without looking at it, would be glad to get rid of it at any price, would say to Ireland, "Take it, get out of my sight, and be hanged to ye!" Thanks to the Unionist leaders, whose ability and devotion are here warmly recognised, the Dubliners know no fear. The ridiculous abortion has been dragged into the sunlight, and ruthlessly dissected. John's commonsense can be trusted, once he examines for himself, and worthy Irishmen lie down in peace. The graver Dubliners prefer to speak of something else. The young bloods still make fun of the "patriots," and conjure up illimitable vistas of absurd possibilities under an Irish Government. They invariably place the hypothetic Cabinet under the direct orders of Archbishop Walsh, and continue to make fun of that great hierarch's famous malediction on Freemasonry. The good Archbishop, they say, takes a large size in curses. They declare that his curse on the Masonic bazaar for orphans was a marvel of comprehensive detail; that it cursed the stall-holders, the purchasers, the tea-pot cosies and fender-stools, the five-o'clock tea-tables and antimacassars, the china ornaments, and embroidered slippers, with every individual bead; the dolls, both large and small; the bran that stuffed the dolls, and the very squeaks which resulted from a squeeze on the doll's ribs. Never was heard such a terrible curse. But what gave rise to no little surprise, nobody seemed one penny the worse. These scoffers propose to discontinue the habit of swearing. When the Archbishop produces no effect, what's the good of a plain layman's cursing? They declare that the dentists of Dublin are all Home Rulers, and that the selfishness of their political faith is disgustingly obvious. These mocking Unionists discuss probable points of etiquette likely to arise in the Legislature of College Green, and dispute as to whether members will be allowed to attend with decidedly black eyes, or whether they will be excluded until the skin around their orbs has arrived at the pale yellow stage. Some are of opinion that no Cabinet Minister should be allowed to sit while wearing raw [275] beefsteak, and a story is going the rounds to the effect that some of the Irish members recently wished to cross the Channel for half-a-crown each, and to that end called on a boat agent, a Tory, who knew them, when the following conversation took place:—

"Can we go across for half-a-crown each?"

"No, ye can't, thin."

"An' why not?"

"Because 'tis a cattle boat."

"Never mind that, sure we're not particular."

"No, but the cattle are."

There was a great rush for Dynamitard Daly's letter, and some of his sentences were made subjects of leading articles in the Nationalist press. One paragraph seems to have been neglected. He writes—"Friend Jack, you amazed me when you mentioned the names of ex-felons now honourable members of the Imperial Parliament. And so they seem to forget the days when *they* were felons? Ah, well, thank God, the people did not forget them in their hour of need, and though some of them may try to palm off their own selfish ambitions on the people to whom they owe everything as genuine patriotism—oh, it won't do!" John Daly holds the same opinion of his fellow patriots as is expressed in a remarkable letter to the Separatist *Dublin Evening Herald*, wherein the writer says that his party is "disgusted with the duplicity of Mr. Gladstone," and goes on to say that "No one now believes that the bill will pass, and almost everyone believes it was never intended to pass. I have not yet met anybody who expressed themselves as even remotely satisfied with it. Peace to its ashes." I quote this as proving two points I have always endeavoured

to urge—first, that the Irish distrust Mr. Gladstone, and are not grateful to him or his party; and, second, that no bill short of complete independence will ever satisfy the Irish people. It is what they expect and look forward to as the direct outcome of Home Rule, which they only want as a stepping-stone. This cannot fail to impress itself on any unbiassed person who rubs against them for long. The teaching of the priests is eminently disloyal, and although the utmost care is taken to prevent their disloyalty becoming public, instances are not lacking to show the general trend. Father Sheehy, an especial friend of the Archbishop Walsh aforesaid, thus delivered himself anent a proposed visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Ireland:—"There is no need for a foreign prince to come to Ireland. The Irish people have nothing to say to the Prince of Wales. He has no connection with Ireland except that link of the Crown that has been formed for the country, which is the symbol of Ireland's slavery." This priest said he hated landgrabbers; all except one. "There is but one landgrabber I like, and that is the Tsar of Russia, who threatens to take territory on the Afghan border from England." Father Arthur Ryan, of Thurles, the seat of Archbishop Croke, has printed a manifesto, in which he says:—"Ever since the Union the best and [276] most honourable of Irishmen have looked on rebellion as a sacred duty, provided there were a reasonable chance of success. It has never occurred to me to consider acquiescence to the Government of England as a moral obligation or as other than a dire necessity. We have never, thank God, lied to our oppressors by saying we were loyal to them. And when we have condemned the rebels whose heroism and self-sacrifice we have loved and wept over, we condemned not their want of loyalty, but their want of prudence. We thought it wrong to plunge the land into the horrors of war with no hope of success."

So much for our trusty and well-beloved fellow-subjects of this realm of England. Father Ryan is candid, truthful, and outspoken, and commands respect. Better an open enemy than a false friend. His summing-up of Irish feeling to England is both concise and accurate, but one of his sentences is hardly up to date. He thanks God that the Irish have never lied by saying they were loyal. How many Irish members can make this their boast? Compared with them, the Ribbonmen were heroes. The glorious prototypes of the modern member murdered their foes themselves, did their slaughtering in person, and took the risk like men. They hated Englishmen, *qua* Englishmen, and made no secret of it. The modern method is easier and more convenient. To murder by proxy, to have your hints carried out without danger to yourself, and to draw pay for your hinting, is a triumph of nineteenth-century ingenuity. To pose as loyal subjects and to disarm suspicion by protestations of friendship and brotherly love may be a more effective means of attaining your end, but it smacks too much of the serpent. The Ribbonmen were rough and rugged, but comparatively respectable. The Irish Separatists are just as disloyal, and infinitely more treacherous. The parchment "loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen," which Lord Houghton is in some places receiving, is revolting to all who know the truth. The snake has succeeded the tiger, and most people hate sliminess. Nationalist Ireland is intensely disloyal from side to side, and from end to end. Disloyal and inimical she has been from the first, and disloyal and inimical she remains, and no concessions can change her character. She is religious with a mediæval faith, and she follows her spiritual guides, whose sole aim is religious ascendancy. So long as the Roman Catholic Church is not predominant so long the Irish people will complain. You may give them the land for nothing; you may stock their farms—they will expect it; you may indemnify them for the seven hundred years of robbery by the English people—they say they ought to be indemnified; you may furnish every yeoman with a gun and ammunition, with *carte blanche* as to their use with litigious neighbours; you may lay on whiskey in pipes, like gas and water, but without any whiskey rate; you may compel the Queen to do Archbishop Walsh's washing, and the Prince of Wales to black his sacred boots, while the English nobility look after [277] the pigs of the foinest pisintry in the wuruld, and still the Irish would be malcontents. The Church wants absolute predominance, and she won't be happy till she gets it. Parnell was Protestant and something of a Pope. Tim Healy tried to wear the leader's boots, but Bishop Walsh reduced him to a pulp. This good man rules Dublin, and through Dublin, Ireland. You cannot walk far without running against his consecrated name. At present the city is labelled as follows:—

"By direction of his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, the annual collections for our Holy Father the Pope will take place on July the second." The National League and Our Holy Father the Pope between them cut very close. No wonder that poor Paddy has hardly a feather left to fly with.

"An ardent Nationalist" thus expresses himself in the Separatist *Herald*:—"I fear we must reluctantly abandon hope of a Home Parliament for a few more years. For the present we will have to content ourselves with Local Government, an ample measure of which will be given by the *Conservatives*. On the whole, ardent Nationalist as I am, I do not look on this as an unmixed evil. What kind of Government would be possible under six or seven factions?" This should be a staggerer for the English Home Rule party. The italics are in the original, and the writer goes on to say, "It is open to doubt that we should be able to at once manage our own affairs without some preliminary training." The whole letter is a substantial repetition of the sentiments emanating from a Home Ruler of Tralee, recounted in my letter from that town of Kerry.

Parnell is still worshipped in Dublin. He looks big beside his successors. His grave in the splendid cemetery of Glasnevin is well worth a visit, although there is no monument beyond a cast-iron Irish cross painted green, which serves to hang flowers upon. The grave is in a rope-enclosed circle, some twenty yards in diameter, and most of the space is occupied by big glass shades, with flowers and other tributes of respect and affection. I counted more than a hundred, many of them elaborate. The Corkmen send the biggest, a small greenhouse with two brown Irish harps and the legend Done To Death. An Irish harp worked in embroidery lies sodden on the earth. Green shamrock leaves of tin, with the names of all the donors—this is important—obtrude themselves here and there. A six-foot cross of white flowers, like a badge of purity, lies on the

grave, labelled Katherine Parnell, in a lady's hand. The place is swamped with Irish harps, and it occurs to me that the badge would not be so popular if the patriots knew that the harp was imposed as an emblem of Ireland by English Henry the Second. The name PARNELL in iron letters is on the turf, flowers growing through them, a poetical idea. As I walk past they vibrate with a metallic jingle, which reminds me of the shirt of mail the living man wore to preserve himself from his fellow-patriots. Tay Pay's life of the dead leader proves that his sole secret of success [278] was inflexible purpose, and that his notion of party management was to treat the patriot members as dirt. Parnell was an authority in Irish matters, and his example should be useful to Messrs. Gladstone, Morley, and Co. An eminent Irishmen to-day said:—"With your wibble-wobble and your shilly-shally, your pooh-pooh and your pah-pah, you are ruining the country. Put down your foot and tell the Irish people that they will not now nor at any future time get Home Rule, and not a word will come out of them." A word (to the wise) is enough.

Dublin, June 29th.

No. 42.—AT A NATIONALIST MEETING.

ToC

The most remarkable feature of Dundalk life is the fact that the people are doing something. Not much, perhaps, but still something. The port is handy for Liverpool and Glasgow, and a steam packet company gives a little life to the quays. The barracks, not far from the shore, indicate one large source of custom, for wherever you find a British regiment you find the people better off. The Athlone folks say that but for the soldiers the place would be dead and buried, and the Galway people are complaining that the garrison, the hated English garrison, has been withdrawn. This inconsistency at first surprises you, but you soon grow familiarised with the strange inconsistencies of this wonderful island. Dundalk has vastly improved during the three dozen years which have elapsed since first I visited the town. There is a Catholic church for every hundred yards of street, and on Thursday last one of them at least was full to overflowing. It was the festival of Saints Peter and Paul, and England was being solemnly dedicated to Rome. There was no getting inside to witness the operation, for the kneeling crowds extended into the street and flopped down on their marrow-bones on the side walks. The men with the collection plates could hardly hold their ground in the portals, and many worshippers were sent empty away, raising their hats as they reluctantly turned from the sacred precincts. This was between eleven and twelve in the forenoon, so that the day's work was hopelessly broken. Ireland has endless customs demanding cessation of labour, but none demanding the pious to go to work. The Methodist and Presbyterian churches were closed, and possibly their adherents were stealing a march on the Catholics in the matter of business. The Church of Ireland has a bright green spire, which at first puzzles the unlearned. Its hoisting of the national colour is due to the fact that the whole structure is covered with copper, which in its turn is covered with verdigris. The surroundings of the town are pleasant, and, although thatched cottages abound, they are very superior to the dirty dens of Tipperary. Nearly all have the half-doors so convenient for gossiping, and the female population of these cabins spend much of their time in leaning over the lower half. The superiority of [279] Dundalk is by most people attributed to the strong mixture of Northerners there resident, and the favourable position of the port. Earnest Unionists are by no means scarce, and, as usual, they are the pick of the population. The Parnellites are also present in strong force, and this may account for the fact that Mr. Timothy Healy, the respected member for North Louth, is unable to visit the chief town of his constituency without a guard of two hundred policemen, paid and commanded by his life-long foe—the base and brutal Saxon. A prominent citizen said:—

"We have a number of Englishmen coming over here, and most of them are Unionists. But a few birds of passage I have seen have vexed me with their confident ignorance, and caused me to believe that English Gladstonians are the densest donkeys under the sun. They are so self-opiniated, and so full of self-satisfaction, that it is hard to be patient with them. Not a few say simply that they are content to leave the matter in the hands of Mr. Gladstone, and that as they followed him so far, they will follow him to the end. They decline to examine for themselves, although facilities are offered on the spot. This must be the ruling temper of the English Home Rule party, for if they stopped to examine for themselves, or even to hear the evidence submitted by men of position and integrity they could never tolerate the insane proposition of an Irish Parliament for a day. They sometimes say that Irishmen should govern their own land, and that no one could venture to dispute this proposition. This is their principal argument, and some are led away by its show of reason. But what is the truth?

"Irishmen *do* govern Ireland. Listen. Is England governed by Englishmen? Now Ireland has a far greater number of members in proportion to her population than England has. These men have far more power in the English Parliament than England herself, for they hold the balance of parties. In every question, Irish or English, they have the casting vote. So that they can almost

always decide what is to become law.

"Dundalk is at this moment placarded with a request that all men should join in the glorious struggle for freedom. Unless the Irish people were constantly told they were slaves, they would never know it. They are fed on lies from their infancy. The current issue of *United Ireland* states in a leader that the prison authorities have three times tried to get rid of John Daly, the dynamitard, by poisoning him in prison. As if they could not do it if they liked! And a few weeks ago, at an amnesty meeting at Drumicondra, a speaker stated, in the presence of two or three members of Parliament, that five of the thirteen political prisoners still locked up had been driven mad by horrible tortures. What freedom do the Irish want? Have they not precisely the same freedom as that enjoyed by England, the freest country in the world? Have they not the same laws, except where those laws have been relaxed in favour of Ireland? Have they not religious [280] equality, free trade, a free press, and vote by ballot? And with all this they are told at every turn that they are the most down-trodden nation of slaves on earth. Supposed they groaned under conscription like France and Germany, what then?

"The English people have seen the results of the influence exercised by the present Irish leaders. One would think that sensible Britons would decline to entrust such men with power. Did they not bring about the rule of the Land League, with its stories of foul murder which sound like a horrible dream of the tyranny of the Middle Ages? Are these men not hand and glove with the clerical party, which hates England as heretic and excommunicate? It is not proposed by Home Rule to put in office men who are the mere tools of the Catholic church, the most unyielding and intolerant system in the world!"

I remembered the leader in the *Irish Catholic*, which sings a pæan of triumph over alleged successes against the Freemasons of Italy. British Masons may be interested to learn that this authority couples them with Atheists, Fenians, and Ribbonmen, and holds up the craft to contumely and scorn. The acceptance by Mr. Gladstone of the principle of Home Rule seems to rejoice the Papist heart. "Never was it more clear than it now is that the indestructible Papacy exercises an authority over the hearts and minds of humanity which nothing, neither fraud, nor oppression, nor misrepresentation, can weaken or destroy. How near may be the day of its inevitable triumph no man can say, while that its coming is as certain as the rising of the morning sun ... none will doubt or deny. That in the moment when the Vicar of Christ is vindicated before the nations, and the reign of right and truth and justice re-established throughout Christendom, Ireland can claim to have been faithful when others were untrue, will be the proudest trophy of an affection which no temptation and no tyranny was ever able to weaken or destroy." The Freemasons are expressly stated to lie under "the terrible penalty of excommunication," but they are afterwards lightly dealt with. They are regarded with an amused tolerance by Irish Catholics, who only laugh to see them "hung with a number of trumpery glass and Brummagem metal trinkets about their persons, and generally indulging in an amount of fantastic and childish adornment which would turn the King of the Cannibal Islands green with envy." Their profanation of God's holy name and their sacrilegious oaths are regretted, but they will never do much harm in Ireland, where the people laugh at their "fantastic tomfoolery." A parallel column advises the public to join in the present pilgrimage to Saint Patrick's Purgatory, where the saint saw, by special favour of God, the purgatorial fires. Another column advertises prayers at fixed prices—a reduction on taking a quantity. The men who hold these beliefs and opinions are the sole governors of Irish action, the sole creators of Irish opinion. For the lay agitators who from time to time have dared to oppose the clerics have been mostly suppressed, and the few still in [281] existence will probably disappear before long. Colonel Nolan must hold this opinion, for when canvassing in Headford, the parish priest came up and cut his head open with a bludgeon. The gallant militarian submitted to this, and would fain have passed the affair in silence. How many Englishmen would have stood it? This incident, properly considered, should enlighten Britons on the dominant influences of Irish Parliamentary action.

On the way to Dundalk I met Major Studdert, of Corofin, County Clare. He spoke of the disturbed state of the district, and thought the present condition of things scandalous and intolerable. He mentioned the case of Mr. J. Blood, who has been four times fired at for dismissing a herdsman. He said:—"Mr. Blood is universally admitted to be one of the most amiable and benevolent of men. His herdsman had a son who would not work, and who was reckoned one of the greatest blackguards in the county, which is saying a good deal in County Clare. Mr. Blood told him to send away this son, or he himself must leave his situation. He refused, and Mr. Blood discharged his herdsman, but with an extraordinary liberality gave him one hundred pounds as consolation money. Since then Mr. Blood is everywhere protected by four policemen. One of the bullets aimed at him passed between his back and the back of the chair he was sitting in."

"I have only one argument for the country folks who talk of Home Rule. I challenge them to show me a single industrious man in the whole country who is not well off. They can't do it. What Ireland wants is not Home Rule but industry. When they are at work they do not go at it like Englishmen. I go over to Cheshire every year for the hunting season, and it is a treat to see the English grooms looking after the horses. They pull off their coats and roll up their sleeves in a way that would astonish Irishmen. It is worth all they get to see them at work. They get twice as much as Irish grooms, and they are worth the difference. The people around me, the working people, do not perform five months' work in a year."

And these are the people who are surprised at their own poverty, and who monopolise the attention of the British Parliament, which toils in vain to give them an Act which will improve their worldly position. The Irish farmer is petted and spoiled, and a victim of over-legislation. Do

what you will you can never please him. Mr. Walter Gibbons, of South Mall, Westport, told me of a case which came under his own observation, as follows:—Rent, five pounds a year. *None* paid for seven years. Tenant refused possession. Landlord paid tenant twenty pounds in cash, and formally remitted all the rent, thirty-five pounds to wit.

"I saw the money paid," said Mr. Gibbons, a fine specimen of the British sailor, present in the Cornwallis at the bombardment of Sebastopol.

"And was the landlord shot?" I inquired.

"Not that I know of," said the old sailor. [282]

Most people will agree that if ever a landlord deserved shooting this was the very man.

The walls of Dundalk were placarded with a flaming incitement to Irishmen to meet in the Labourers' Hall at eight o'clock, to "join in the onward march to freedom." The meeting was to be held under the auspices of the Irish National Federation—Featheration, as the Parnellites call it and most of its members pronounce it—and therefore it was likely to be a big thing, especially considering the Parliamentary tension existing at the present moment. I determined to be present, To beard the lion in his den, The Douglas in his hall; to see the labouring Irish in their thousands marching onward to Freedom. A friend attempted to dissuade me from the project. "You'll be spotted in a moment, and as you are very obnoxious to the priests, to be recognised at such a meeting might be unpleasant." A public official who pointed out the place followed me up with advice. "Unless you are connected with the party, it would be better to keep away. These people are very suspicious." These were fine preliminaries of a public meeting. The building is poor, but not squalid, and seems to have been built within the last few years. A gateway leads to the yard and the Hall blocks the way. All the rooms are small, and I looked in vain for anything like an assembly chamber. Two roughish-looking men, who nevertheless had about them a refreshing air of real work, stood at the gateway, and from them I learned that the meeting would take place upstairs. Twenty-four steps outside the building almost gave me pause. At the top was an open landing, whence the Saxon intruder might be projected with painful results. Trusting in my luck, I entered a narrow corridor, some fifteen feet long, with doors on each side, and one at the opposite end. That must open on the assembly room. No, it only led to another flight of outside steps, and here it was comforting to observe that the drop might be into the soft soil of a garden, instead of a bricked yard. But where was the great meeting?

Once more I left the Hall and spoke my rugged friends. Yes, it was after eight, but the people wanted a bit of margin. Half-past eight was the time intended. Half-an-hour's march around, and back again. The crowd was swelled from two to three persons. Fifteen minutes more, and further inquiry.

"When will the meeting begin."

"When the people comes."

"But they're an hour late already."

"Sure ye can't hurry thim."

At 9.15 I went again.

"Meeting begun yet?" I asked.

"Just startin' now. The praste's afther goin' in."

"You're rather unpunctual."

"Arrah, how would we begin widout his Rivirince!" This was unanswerable. Once more into the breach, up the lonely shivery steps. This time I heard voices, and opening a door found a narrow [283] room with about twenty people therein. The show was just agoing to begin, for, as I entered, somebody proposed that the Priest should take the chair. A short, stout, red faced man, with black coat and white choker, seemed to expect no less, and moved into the one-and-ninepenny Windsor with alacrity. He spoke with the vilest, boggiest kind of brogue, and the hideous accent of vulgar Ulster; calling who "hu" with a French u, should "shoed," and pronouncing every word beginning with un as if beginning with on—ontil, onless, ondhersthand, ondhertake. "Ye'll excuse me makin' a spache, fur av I did I'd make a varry bad one," said the holy man, and the audience seemed to believe him. Enrolment was the order of the day, and the thousands were requested to come forward. A man next me went to the front and paid a shilling, receiving in return a green ticket, with Ireland a Nation printed at the top. He twirled it round and round, and seemed disappointed to find there was nothing on the other side. The secretary encouraged the meeting by the official statement that the local Featheration now numbered nearly sixty members, whereat there was great rejoicing, the masses (to the number of twenty) working off their emotion by thumping their heels on the floor. The meeting, after this exultant outburst, got slower and slower, and threatened to expire of inanition. Divil a mother's son could be got to shpake a single wurud. Some malevolent influence overhung the masses. His Rivirince sent down a messenger to me with the request that I would say a few wuruds. Declined, with thanks, as being no speaker. Uncertainty as to my colour and object still prevailed; and silence, not loud, but deep, succeeded this artful feeler. Father O'Murtagh (or words to that effect) to the rescue! The Rivirind Gintleman arose and delivered a bitter attack on Parnell, whom he characterised as mean, base, untruthful, treacherous, and contemptible. The foinest pisintry in the wuruld could not be soiled by contact with anybody like Parnell, and therefore the Catholic bishops had been compelled to give him up, and to say, Get thee behind me, Satanas. The dear Father did not tell the meeting why the bishops waited sixteen days after the verdict of the Court, and until Mr.

Gladstone had delivered judgment, before deciding to cut Parnell adrift. Father O'Murtagh (I think that was the name) made some allusion to the present crisis of public affairs—(he called it cresses)—and assured his masses that the Tories were about to be for ever plucked from the pedestal on which they had long been planted by ascendency and greed! This was not so racy as the mixed metaphor of a Galway paper, which assures its readers that "the Unionist party will soon be compelled to disgorge the favouritism which for so long has been centred in their hands;" but it might pass. His Rivirince made some feeble jokes, and the audience tried to laugh, but failed. "They say that whin we luck at ourselves in the lucking lass, we see nothin' but Whigs," said the funny Father, and the audience sniggered. This was his masterpiece. He finished with [284]
"It's wondherful what a spache ye can make whin ye have nothin' to say;" and the masses sniggered again. Ten minutes more of silence broken only by whispered confabulations of the secretary and chairman, and I grew tired of obstructing the march to Freedom. I left the chair, the only one at my end of the room, with considerable regret. Part of the back, one upright, was still remaining, and although the thing had evidently been used in argument at some previous meeting, it hung together, and good work might still have been done with the legs. A gentleman with a complexion like a blast furnace, and a facial expression which looked like a wholesale infraction of the Ten Commandments, was smoking moodily on the steps.

"Did ye injy the matein?" he inquired.

"Thought it rather dead," I replied.

"Faix, 'twas yerself that kilt it."

I feared as much. What happened after I left no man will tell, though doubtless the resolutions adopted by the twenty men sitting on the forrums of ellum would vibrate through the Empire, and shake the British monarchy to its iniquitous base. Irish meetings must be taken with a grain of salt. A Westport man long drew fees for reports of mass meetings which never took place. Three or four Nationalists met in a back parlour, and their speeches, reported verbatim, rang through Ireland. Gallant Mayo was praised as heading the charge of Connaught, and Westport was lauded for its public spirit. And all the while the Westport folks knew nothing about it. The Dundalk folks will doubtless be equally astonished to learn that the cause is advancing so powerfully in their midst. This hole-and-corner meeting, waiting for the priest, addressed by the priest, bossed by the priest, is a fair sample of the humbug which seems inseparable from the Irish question. A very short acquaintance with the country and its people is sufficient to convince any reasonable person that the whole movement is based on humbug, sustained by humbug, and is itself a humbug from beginning to end. To see the English Parliament managed and exploited by these groups of low-bred and ignorant peasants, nose-led by ignorant and illiterate priests, is enough to make you ashamed of being an Englishman. The country has come to something when Britons can be worked like puppets by mean-looking animals such as I saw in the Dundalk Labourers' Hall, where the only respectable thing was an iron safe bearing the stamp of Turner, of Dudley. And this meeting, in status, numbers, and enthusiasm, was quite representative of Nationalist meetings all over Ireland. The English people are waiting for their turn while Papal behests are executed. John Bull stands hat in hand, taking his orders from Father O'Baithershin. The Irish say that England is in the first stage of her decadence, and they say it with some reason. England, the land of heroes, sages, statesmen, is the mere registrar of the parish priest and his poor, benighted dupes. Raleigh, Cromwell, Burleigh, Pitt, Palmerston, are succeeded by Healy, Morley, Sexton, Harcourt, Gladstone. England is Ireland's lackey, and must wait till her [285]
betters are served, must toil and moil in her service, receiving in return more kicks than halfpence. Britannia is the humble, obedient servant of Papal Hibernia. To what base uses we may return!

Dundalk, July 1st.

No. 43.—IN THE PROSPEROUS NORTH.

ToC

This is a blessed change from dirt and poverty to tidiness and comfort. After the West of Ireland the North looks like another world. After the bareheaded, barelegged, and barefooted women and children of Mayo and Galway, the smartly-dressed people of Newry come as a surprise. You can hardly realise that they belong to the same country. There are no mud cabins here, no pigs under the bed, no cows tethered in the living room, no hens roosting on the family bedstead. The people do not follow the inquiring stranger about, as in Ennis or Tuam, where they seem to have nothing better to do. The Newry folks are minding their own business, and they have some business to mind. Three extensive flax spinning mills, two linen weaving factories, and an apron factory, give large employment to girls. There are several flour mills, some of them possessing immense power, and having the most modern machinery. Two iron foundries of long-established reputation, two

mineral water factories, salt works, stone polishing mills, seven tanneries, cabinet furniture manufactories, and coachbuilding works cater for the town and surrounding district. Granite quarries of high repute, such as the Rostrevor green granite, exist in the vicinity, and are worked energetically, the products forming a valuable addition to the exports. The town is beautifully situated on a continuation of Carlingford Lough, the choicest bit of sea around Great Britain. Thackeray says that if England possessed this beautiful inlet it would be reckoned a world's wonder. Twenty miles of winding sea running inland like a league-wide river, mountains on both sides, many of them wooded to the furthest height. Rostrevor is a bijou watering place such as only France here and there can boast. You walk on the cliff side, steep verdurous heights above and below, looking through tree-tops on the shimmering sea and the purple mountains beyond, for ten miles at a stretch, wondering why nobody else is there. Newry is encompassed by mountains, one range above another. Even as the hills stand round about Jerusalem, so stand the hills about Newry. A big trade is done with Liverpool and Glasgow by means of the Dundalk and Newry Packet Company's fine service of boats. For this inland place has been made into a thriving seaport, and these Northerners make the water hum. At low tide the artificial cutting of the navigation works looks unpromising enough, but the people of these parts would be doing [286] business if they had to float the boats on mud. The hills are cultivated to the topmost peak, or planted with trees where tillage is impossible. The people seem to have made the most of everything. They are digging, hammering, chopping, excavating, building, mining, and generally bustling around. They break up the mountains piece-meal, and sell the fragments in other lands. To make you buy they show you how it looks when polished, and they are ready to earn an extra profit by polishing all you want by steam power. The streets are clean, well-paved, kept in perfect order. The houses are well-built and far superior to the English average. A little cockney from 'Ackney, who has sailed the six hundred and seventeen miles between London and Cork and has explored most of the South and West, is quite knocked over by Newry. Leaning on the "halpenstock" with which he was about to tackle Cloughmore, he confessed that Newry hupset his hideas of Hireland and the Hirish. "The folks round 'ere," he said, "are hexactly like hus." He would have accorded higher praise, had he known any.

Why this great difference? Look around the shop-keepers' signs in Tipperary or Tuam and note the names. Ruane, Magrath, Maguire, O'Doherty, O'Brien, O'Flanagan, O'Shaughnessy, and so *in sæcula sæculorum*. In Newry you see a striking change. Duncan, Boyd, Wylie, MacAlister, Campbell, McClelland, McAteer, and so on, greet you in all directions. You are in one of the colonies. The breed is different. You are among the men who make railways, construct bridges, invent engines, bore tunnels, make canals, build ships, and sail them over unknown seas. You are among a people who have the instincts of achievement, of enterprise, of invention, of command, who depend upon themselves, who shift for themselves, and believe in self-help rather than in querulous complaint. The Newry folk belong to Ulster, where as a whole the people can take care of themselves. A careful perusal of the addresses presented to Lord Houghton on his current Viceregal tour accentuates the difference in the Irish breeds. The aborigines all want to know what is going to be done for them. We want a pier, we want a quay, we want a garrison or a gunboat to spend some money in the district. Will your Excellency use your influence with the powers that be to get us something for nothing? And let it be something to enrich us, or at least to keep us alive without work. We can't be expected to do anything while groaning 'neath the cruel English yoke. The Newry folks, and all of their breed, abstain from whining and cadging. The Westport people have endless quarries of hard blue marble, which they are too lazy, or too ignorant, or both, to cut. The Ulster breed would have quarried, polished, exported a mountain or two long since. The universal verdict of employers of labour proves that a northern Irishman is worth two from any other point of the compass, will actually perform double the amount of work, and is, besides, incomparably superior in brains and general reliability. The worthless hordes who approach the Viceroy with snuffling petitions are invariably headed by Father Somebody, [287] without whose permission they would not be there, and without whose leave they dare not raise the feeble and intermittent cheers which here and there have greeted the Queen's representative. The lying expressions of loyalty referred to in a previous letter are severely censured by the Nationalist papers. One of the leading lights says: "Judging from a sentence in the address presented by the Mullingar Town Commissioners to the Lord-Lieutenant on Thursday last, it would appear that these gentlemen are looking forward eagerly to the day when they can write themselves down West Britons. This is what they said: 'In your presence as the representative in this island of her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, we wish to give expression to our fealty to the throne, convinced as we are that the day will soon be at hand when we can with less restraint, and in a more marked manner, testify our admiration for the Sovereignty of the British Isles.'" The more sincere newspaper which falls foul of these expressions goes on to say:—

"It is true that Ireland is described in the map made by Englishmen as one of the British Isles, but it is not so written in the true Irishman's heart, *and never will be*, in spite of the toadyism of gentlemen like the Town Commissioners of Mullingar."

This pronouncement embodies the sentiments of every Nationalist Irishman. The Union of Hearts is not expected to succeed the Home Rule, or any other bill, and to do Irishmen justice, they never use the phrase, neither do they profess to look forward to friendliness with England. I have conversed with hundreds of Home Rulers, and all looked upon the bill as a means of paying off old scores. The tone of the Nationalist press should be enough for sensible Englishmen. Nobody who regularly reads the leading Irish Separatist papers can ever believe in the friendship supposed to be the inevitable result of the proposed concession. Once the present agitation is crowned with success, a tenfold more powerful agitation will at once arise. The Irish people will

have more grievances than ever. Already they are complaining of insult and betrayal. And their reproaches are directed against the G.O.M. and his accomplices, or rather against Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Morley, for they know as well as Englishmen know that the rest count for nothing; that, in fact, they resemble the faithful and unsophisticated baa-baa of whom we heard in our early infancy. "Mary had a little lamb, Whose fleece was white as snow, And everywhere that Mary went, The lamb was sure to go." This is the attitude of the English Gladstonian party, and the Irish people know it. A Home Ruler I met to-day disavowed loyalty except to Ireland, and asked what was the Queen and the rest of the British Royal pauper party to him or to Ireland that he should be loyal? He said:—

"All interest is over here, whether among Nationalists or Unionist. The fate of the bill affects us no longer. The new financial proposals are the last straw that breaks the camel's back. Where is [288] the managing of our own affairs? Where does the Nationalism come in? And Gladstone, in allowing himself to make in the first proposal a mistake of one thousand pounds a day, damaged his prestige as the framer of the bill, and fatally damaged the bill itself. Anybody can now say that if he was so grossly mistaken in an ascertainable matter like revenue and figures he stands to be equally wrong (at least) in matters which are not demonstrable, but which are at present only matters of opinion and argument. I am not sure that he ever intended to give us any Home Rule at all. We are being fooled because we have no leader. The bill, as it stood at first, would never have been prepared for a man like Parnell. Gladstone dare not have done it. The whole bill is a series of insults. As a reasonable, fair-minded man you will not deny that. It purports to come from friends who confide in us, and yet every line bristles with distrust and suspicion. There is not one spark of generosity in the whole thing from beginning to end. Better have no bill at all. For as a business man, I foresee that the passing of any such bill would lead to a complete upset of trade. We should have a most tremendous row. The safeguards would only invite to rebellion. Tell a man he must not have something, must not do something, and that is the very thing he wants to do. He might not have thought of it if you had not mentioned it; but the moment you point it out, and particularise the forbidden fruit, from that very moment he is inspired with a very particular wish for that above all things. So with a nation. We want our independence. We want to do as we like. Otherwise, why ask for a Parliament? Gladstone says, Yes, my pretty dear, it shall have its ickety-pickety Parliament; it shall have its plaything. And it shall ridy-pidy in the coachy-poachy too; all round the parky-warky with the cock-a-doodle-doo. But it mustn't touch! Or if it touches it mustn't be rough, for its plaything will break so easily. We don't want this tomfoolery, nor to be treated like children. We want a real Parliament, and not one that can be pulled up every five minutes by London. For if the English Parliament have the power to veto our wishes, where's the difference? We might have just as well stayed as we were. That's perfectly clear.

"So that I for one will be glad when the farce is over. The present bill at best was but a fraud, a tampering with the national sentiment. And I am beginning to think that we have no chance of a National Legislature until the coming of the next great Irishman. I am not so disappointed or broken-hearted as you might suppose. For the prospect of an Irish Parliament under present auspices is not very enticing. The country might be made to look ridiculous, and the thing, by bursting up in some absurd way, might make a repetition of the attempt impossible for a century. I would rather wait for a better bill, and also for better men to work it. We are not proud of the Irish members. But we didn't want Tories, and all the propertied men are Tories. What were we to do? We know the want of standing and breeding which marks most of our men, but we did the [289] best we could, and came within an ace of succeeding. Let me tell you the exact feeling of the respectable Home Rule party of Ireland at this moment.

"Having exerted ourselves with enthusiasm, and having undergone considerable pecuniary sacrifice with good chances of success, we now see clearly that all our efforts are for the present thrown away. It is the fortune of war. The fates were against us, and we rest content with the hope that we have furthered the ultimate success of the movement. For the moment, we make our bow, and hope to call on Mr. Bull at a more propitious season. Of course we expect to win in the end."

The next politician whose opinions I noted was a horse of quite a different colour. He bore a Scottish name, and had the incisive, argumentative style of the typical Ulsterman, who unites the cold common-sense and calculating power of the Scot with the warmth and impulse of the Irish nature. He said:—

"The bare existence of Belfast is, or should be, enough to negative all arguments in favour of Home Rule. The agitators say that Ireland is decaying from political causes, while all the while this Ulster town is getting richer and more powerful and influential. While the people of Cork are begging the Viceroy to please to do something for their port, to please to be so kind as to ask Mr. Bull to favour the city with his patronage, the Belfast people, with a far inferior harbour, an inferior climate, an incomparably inferior position, surrounded by far worse land, are knocking out the Clyde for shipbuilding, and running the Continent very close in linen-weaving. Belfast is actually the third in order of the Customs ports in the United Kingdom. The Belfast people flourish without Home Rule, and what is more, they know their neighbours. They've reckoned these gentry up.

"How is it that the Catholic population, as a rule, are merely the hewers of wood and drawers of water? They have precisely the same opportunities as their Protestant countrymen. Wherever you go you will find the Protestants coming to the top. Cork is a very bigoted Catholic city, and the huge majority of the population are Catholics. How is it that most of the leading merchants are Protestants? Why do heretics flourish where the faithful starve? Transfer the

populations of Cork to Belfast and *vice versâ*, and, as everybody knows perfectly well, Belfast would at once begin to decay, while Cork would at once begin to prosper. Therefore it is absurd to say that Home Rule would cure the poverty existing in Catholic districts. Yes, there is a party of ascendency. The Protestants are distinctly the party of ascendency. They have the ascendency which ability and education and industry will always have over incapacity and ignorance and laziness. Now, I know something about the linen trade, and also something about the growth and preparation of flax.

"Linen has made the North, and flax is grown in the North. But it would grow much better in [290] the South. If they would grow it we would be very glad to buy it. But they won't. And why not? Because it needs care and skill, and a lot of watching and management. The beggars are too lazy to grow anything that wants tending from day to day. It would pay them splendidly, and the advantages of flax growing and dressing have over and over again been drummed into them without effect. The climate and soil of Southern Ireland are far more suitable for flax growing than the North, and as about three-quarters of all the flax woven in Belfast is grown on the Continent, it is clear that the market is waiting for the stuff. The Belfast merchants have done all that in them lay to bring about flax cultivation in the South. They have sent out lecturers and instructors, they have planted patches and grown the stuff, and shown the pecuniary results, and with what effect? Absolutely none. The people won't do anything their grandfathers didn't do. They won't be bothered with flax, which wants no end of attention. Why, if they grew flax, they'd have to work almost every day! And nobody who knows Irishmen, real Keltic Irishmen, ever expects them to do that, or anything like it. I've been in India, and I deliberately say that I prefer the Hindoo to the Southern Irishman for industry and reliability.

"These people, who are too lazy to wash themselves, expect their condition to be improved by a Home Rule Parliament. Can anything be more unreasonable or more unlikely? And because there are more of them, their wishes are to be taken into account, and the opinions and wishes of men of whom each one is worth a hundred are to be disregarded. Where is the English sense of the eternal fitness of things?

"What the Irish really seek is some effective substitute for work. They have no idea of developing the resources which lie nearest to them. Carlyle says a country belongs to the people who can make the best use of it, and not the people who happen to be found there. Ireland for the Irish is a favourite cry. Why? Is not England for the Irish, America, Australia, New Zealand? My ancestors came here in the time of Henry the Second, and I am told that I have no business in the country. Wherever English and Scots settlers have been located, there the country is well worked and the people are thriving. If we can thrive, why can't they thrive? If we can get on without Home Rule, why can't they get on without Home Rule? If it were going to be a good thing for the country we'd all be on it like a shot. If it were good for them, it ought to be good for us. We have shown by our success that our judgment is sound. Their failure in everything they undertake, their dirt, their general habits and character, should cause their statements and opinions to be looked upon with very great suspicion. Does it stand to reason that merely by Home Rule, by the exercise of the privilege of making Irish laws by Irishmen in Dublin, that these people would gain all we have attained by hard and honest labour? That is what they expect up here.

"The Catholics are our servants, and in selecting them we seldom ask their religion. Our [291] employés in most cases expect by the bill to take the place of their masters. That is their conception of Home Rule. They have been told from infancy that the British Government keeps them down because of their religion. They know that the British Government is Protestant, and they believe that in some occult way the superior position held by the Protestants in Ireland is due to favouritism. Under a Home Rule Parliament, that is, a Catholic Parliament, this condition of things will be reversed, and they will at once, and by their own innate force, as faithful believers, spring to the top of the tree, and exchange positions with their former masters and mistresses."

The general effect of my friend's discourse was well summed up by Mr. James Mack, of Galway, who said:—

"When I see that the Belfast men who would make fortunes out of river mud, and who would skin a flea for his hide and tallow, turn their backs on Home Rule, and declare they will have nothing to do with it, I feel sure it can be no good. Then my own experience and observation assure me that, instead of a settlement, it will only be the beginning of trouble for both countries. Firmness is wanted, and equal laws for all. At present everything is in favour of Ireland." *United Ireland* says:—"It would be better to go on for twenty years in the old miserable mill-horse round of futile and feverish and wasting agitation than to accept this bill as a settlement of national claims. And if the bill passes now it cannot deflect the national agitation by a hair's breadth, or cause its intermission for a day."

Nobody who knows the Irish people ever expected anything else. Agitators who live by agitation will always agitate, and only a few namby-pamby Radicals ever thought otherwise. Those who would fain have sold their souls for the Newcastle Programme also stand to be taken in. This Home Rule Bill will not do. Another must be brought forward immediately. Where is this dreary business going to end? When will Mr. Gladstone consider that England has eaten dirt enough?

Newry, July 4th

No. 44.—THE PROSPEROUS NORTH.

ToC

This famous historical city must be eminently offensive to Irish Nationalists. It is so clean and sweet and neat and tidy that you can at once see the hopelessness of expecting Home Rule patriotism from the place. There are no dunghills for it to grow in, and my somewhat extensive experiences have long ago taught me that Home Rule and Nationalist patriotism will not flourish in Ireland without manure, and plenty of it. Anyhow, it is mostly associated with heaps of refuse and pungent odours arising from decomposing matter, and in the south and west is scarcely ever found flourishing side [292] by side with modern sanitation. Home Rule not only, like pumpkins and vegetable marrows, requires a feculent soil, but like them, and indeed like all watery and vaporous vegetables, it needs the forcing-frame. Left to its own devices the movement would die at once. There is nothing spontaneous about it. It is a weedy sort of exotic, thriving only by filth and forcing. It cannot live an hour in the climate of Armagh. The cold, keen air of these regions nips it in the bud. The peculative patriots who are now monopolising Westminster have from time to time made descents on the district, to sow the good seed, as it were, by the wayside. But next day came a frost, a killing frost. The Northerners are too mathematical. They have taken Lord Bacon's advice. They "weigh and consider." They want logic, and will not be content with mere rhetoric. They require demonstrations, and have opinions of their own. Before accepting a theory they turn it round and round, and test it with the square, the level, and the line. They care nothing for oratory unless there is sense at the back of it. They know that fine words butter no parsnips, and they know the antecedents of the patriotic orators. They do not believe that a paid Parliament-man is necessarily a self-sacrificing patriot, and they note that Nationalist members are making their patriotism much more profitable than their original and legitimate pursuits, if any. The Armagh folks believe in work, and in keeping things in order. The Scots element is dominant. Not so much in numbers, as in influence. The Kelts are easily traceable, but the races are partly amalgamated, and the genuine Irish are greatly improved. I paraded the streets for many hours, but I saw no dirt, rags, wretchedness. It was market day, and the country people came streaming in from all sides, everyone well dressed and respectable, and in every way equal to the farmers and their wives who on market days drive into Lichfield or Worcester. It was a pleasure to see them, and my Cockney friend, quoted in the Newry letter, might have been tempted to discard his affected superiority, and drawing himself proudly up, to smite himself on the chest, and to say "And hi, too, ham a Hirishman."

The country between Newry and Armagh is very beautiful from a pastoral point of view. After the savage deserts of the West it "Comes o'er my soul like the sweet south That breathes upon a bank of violets." Every yard of ground is going at its best pace. The valleys stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing. Immense vistas of highly cultivated country unroll themselves in every direction. The land is richly timbered, and tall green hedges spring up everywhere. You are reminded of Dorsetshire, of Cheshire, of Normandy, of Rhineland. The people at the wayside stations are all well-dressed and well-shod. Achil Island seems to be at an immeasurable distance. The semi-savages who in Mayo demand autonomy have no supporters here. The Ulster folks [293] eschew them and all their works, and would no more associate with them than with Hottentots. I use the term because the Irish people have ten thousand times been told, and told untruthfully, that Lord Salisbury had applied the term to the nation at large. The people of Mayo and some other parts of Connaught are for the most part worthy of the name, if, indeed, it be not a libel on the Africans. The disgusting savagery of their funeral customs is of itself sufficient to stamp them as lowest barbarians. I am prepared to prove this to the hilt. Let their defenders come forward if they dare.

And so it happens that the inhabitants of Armagh city are mostly Conservatives. They ought to be religious, too, for they have not only two cathedrals and an archbishop, but also a cardinal archbishop, Dr. Logue, to wit. I saw this distinguished ecclesiastic at Newry. He wore the scarlet robe, the extraordinary hat, the immensely thick gold ring of the cardinalate, in a railway carriage. An ordinary sort of man, with the round face and mean features of the typical Keltic farmer. He holds that the people should take their political faith from their priests, but the Northerners hardly agree, and are not so proud of their cardinal as they should be, seeing that he has been raised from the ranks, his father (so they say) having been Lord Leitrim's coachman, and the coachman who was driving when Lord Leitrim was shot. The Roman Catholic Cathedral of Armagh has an imposing position on the summit of a steep hill. The portal is approached by sixty or seventy steps in flights of five and ten with steep terraces between, extending over a great space, so that the flights of steps, seen from the bottom of the hill, seem continuous, and have a fine Gustave Doré effect of vastness and majesty. On a neighbouring steep stands the Protestant Cathedral, with its sturdy square tower, memorial of remote antiquity. The city is piled up between the two cathedrals, but mostly around the heretic structure, and away from the Papist pile, which stands among the fields. The Presbyterians have a very beautiful church, apparently of the Armagh marble of which the city is built, the perennial whiteness of the stone making the old place appear eternally young. The market-place, behind the market-hall, and on

the steep slope to the Protestant Cathedral, was very busy indeed. Market gardeners were there with young plants, useful and ornamental, for sale. Home-made chairs with rushen seats were offered by their rural makers. Wooden churns, troughs for cattle, and agricultural implements were there galore. Crockery was artfully disposed in strategetical corners, and gooseberry stalls were likewise to the fore. None of these features are visible in the Western markets. A vendor of second-hand clothing stood on a cart well loaded with unconsidered trifles, and this gentleman was especially interesting. A number of poor women stood around while the salesman, who knew his clientèle to their smallest tricks, displayed his wares and recklessly endeavoured to ruin himself for the good of the country. Holding up an article, he would turn it round and round, [294] expatiating on its excellent qualities, and then, after naming the very lowest price consistent with common business principles, would run down the figure to one-tenth or less, with a pause or two here and there for critical comment on his audience, of which he professed to entertain the most unfavourable opinion. Then with a final thump, punching the article contemptuously, he would offer it, regardless of consequences, for half his previous offer. Sometimes he refused to accept the money because the customer was not quick enough. Neither might the people examine his goods. He was master, and more, and found his account in it. He took up a frowsy old gown. "There ye are. Ten shillin's worth of stuff in that. An' ten for the makin'. An' that's twinty. I'll take ten, an' I couldn't afford to take a penny less. Will ye have it? Don't all spake at once. Ye won't. But I'll make ye. I'll take five shillin', four, three, two, one, I'll take sixpence. (Thump.) Take it away. Here! Have it for thruppence. Ye won't? Sweet bad luck to the one of ye is worth thruppence. Ye wouldn't raise tuppence in the crowd of ye. Ye want me to clothe ye for nothin'. An' thin ye'd want me to give ye lodgin' and washin'. 'Twas a black day on me whin I come among such a ruinatin' lot. Here now, sure this ought to timpt ye. A lady's jacket, an' a large, big, roomy jacket at that—fit for a lady that can ate a stone of praties at a male. Thurty shillin's ye'll be offerin' me, but I won't take it. Ye can give me ten, av ye're only quick enough. Nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two shillin's. Eighteenpence. (Thump.) Take it for a shillin'! Ye won't? Ye didn't sell yer ducks well. Ye didn't get the money for yer eggs. Will I lind ye a trifle? What d'ye take me for? Am I to stand rammin' me bargains down yer throats like wagon wheels? Do yez iver buy any clothes at all, or do yez beg them? Me heart's bruk to pieces wid blayguardin' and bullyraggin. Luk at this. A boy's coat. An it's lined wid woollen linin'; that's the only fault wid it. An' here's a bonnet. A fortin to any young woman. Will ye be plazed to take what ye want for nothin'? Tis charity ye want, ye poor misguided crathurs. 'Tis a pack of paupers I'm discoorsin', God help me."

The Armagh shopkeepers are prosperous and content. "No Home Rule," they say. They are no longer angry with the Nationalists. The snake is scotched, if not killed outright, they think. The whole absurdity has received such a damning exposure that it cannot be revived for another generation. The Separatist party will be perforce compelled to wait until the people have forgotten what Home Rule really means. Therefore, to work again! Useless to waste more time. Ulster will sleep with one eye open, bearing in mind the favourite Northern saying which advises men to put their trust in Providence, but to keep their powder dry. For, like the Achilese, they believe that prayer is effective in shaving, only the Ulstermen prefer to pray over a keen razor. A genial citizen of Armagh said:—

"We would be as ready for Home Rule as any other Irishmen if it meant what we are asked to [295] believe it means. But we know better. We are convinced that it will bring, not prosperity and peace, but bankruptcy and war, intolerance and social retrogression, robbery and spoliation, not only of the landlord but also of everybody else who has anything. The propertied Roman Catholics are just as dead against Home Rule as any Protestants. Only they dare not say so.

"England ought to have sense enough to see that instead of freedom from Irish difficulties, the old grievances will be intensified, and any bill whatever will at once generate a fresh series of complications, so that the English Parliament will be crippled in perpetuity, to the detriment of British interests. The Empire, as a whole, must be weakened, because the Irish masses are most unfriendly, and the more England concedes the more unfriendly Ireland becomes. For Ireland regards all concessions as being wrung from England by superior force and skill, and as being, in short, the fruits of compulsion. Therefore, the more Ireland gets the more exacting she will always become. Ask any Englishman or Scotsman resident in Ireland if the Irish masses are friendly, and everyone will laugh at you. The English Home Rule party say, 'Just so. Let us cure this. This is the principal argument for Home Rule.' They think this sounds very fine. Just as if in private life, a man to whom you have given his due, and more than his due, should continue to abuse you, while you strain every nerve to satisfy him, and go out of your way to obtain peace and quietness, he all the time becoming more and more exacting and more and more discontented. And then as if you were to say, 'I must continue my concessions, my efforts, my sacrifices. I *must* contrive to satisfy this amiable person.' What a fool any man would be to adopt such a course. A sensible man would say 'You have your due, and you'll get no more.' Treat Ireland so, and all will be well. Be firm and the trouble will amount to nothing. Paddy will soon drop shouting when he sees it has no effect. The agitators will soon dry up, or waste their sweetness on the desert air. But so long as there is a prospect of success, so long as you have a weak-kneed old lunatic in power, so long as Paddy sees a prospect of obtaining substantial advantages, such as reduction of rent or rent-free farms, so long the row will be kept up. If Englishmen could only realize that, the whole movement would cease. For Gladstonian Englishmen mistakenly think that they can settle the thing by further concession and get to their own business. Few of them care for Home Rule on its own merits. They want Ireland out of the way. They are going the wrong way about it. To give this is to give everything. And let me tell you something new. Once the bill becomes law, and the exactions of a Home Rule Government were

enforced by England a great part of Ulster would in pure self-protection, being no longer bound to England by the ties of loyalty, sympathy, and mutual dependence—a great part, practically the [296] whole of Ulster, would box the compass and go in for complete independence, as the best thing possible under the circumstances. England would then feel something in her vitals, something serious and something astonishing. The only rebellion that ever gave England any trouble was worked by Ulstermen. The most effective agitators have nearly always been renegade Protestants. Let England think what she is about before she, at the bidding of a foolish old man, turns her back on her faithful friends to throw herself into the arms of her sworn enemies."

Another Conservative, for I met none other in Armagh, said:—"Surely the minority are worth some consideration. There are one million two hundred thousand loyal Protestants, and certainly many thousand Roman Catholics, who are against the Bill. As Sir George Trevelyan said, 'We must never forget that there are two Irelands,' and as John Bright said, 'There are more loyal men and women in Ireland than the whole population of men and women in Wales.' Yet Mr. Gladstone is so very considerate of Wales. Ireland can point to fully one-third of the entire population, who view with abhorrence the very name of Home Rule, and are pledged to resist it to the last. These people have been and are the friends of England, and England can be proud of them as having flourished under her rule. They have been and are the English garrison in Ireland, and England sorely needs a garrison here. Mr. Gladstone cares nothing for their opinions. On the other hand, he spends his life in pandering to disloyal Ireland, led by men who have openly avowed and gloried in their hatred of England, and who have hundreds of times publicly declared their determination to secure complete independence; men who have broken the law of the land, and have incited others to break it; men who turned a peaceful country into a perfect hell, and have for ever upset the people's notions of honesty. Parnellites and anti-Parnellites have only one end and aim, and only one sentiment. They hate British rule and British loyalists, and aim at the ultimate repeal of the Union, and the absolute separation of the two countries. And they would always be unfriendly. The party of lawlessness, outrage, and rebellion would never hold amicable relations with a law-abiding and peaceful commercial country. There would be no peace for Ireland either. The factions of the Irish party are yearly becoming more and more numerous. In all except hatred to England they are bitterly opposed. All very well to set up Ulster as being the ugly duckling, as being the one dissentient particle of a united Ireland. If every Protestant left the country Ireland would still be divided, and hopelessly divided. Personal reviling, riot, and blackguardism are already common between the factions, united though they try to appear, so far as is necessary to deceive the stupid Saxon. And if the Saxon cannot see the result of trusting the low blackguards who form the working plant of the Nationalist party he is stupid indeed, and deserves all that will happen to him.

"Have you noticed how the Irish people are gulled?" [297]

Yes, I have noticed it. The *Freeman's Journal*, as the representative paper of the party and the chosen organ of the Church, is run on a pabulum of falsehood. Englishmen would hardly believe such lying possible, but the *Freeman*, as a liar, has, by constant practice, attained virtuosity. What Rubinstein is on the piano, what Blondin was on the tight-rope, what the Bohee Brothers are on the banjo, what Sims Reeves was in the ballad world, what Irving is in histrionic art, what Spurgeon was as a preacher, what Patti is in opera, what Gladstone is as a word-spinner, what Tim Healy is as a whipping-post, what the Irish peasant is as a lazybones, what Harcourt is as a humbug, what the member for Kilanyplace is as a blackguard, so is the *Freeman's Journal* as a liar. When quoting great masters examples of their work are always interesting.

The late Chamberlain-Dillon episode is fresh in the minds of all newspaper readers. Dillon wanted the date. The date was given him. He promised to answer the charge, but anybody can see that no answer was possible. He failed to come up to time. Being lugged to the front by the scurf of the neck, he explained that he *had* used the words, namely, that when the Irish party got power they would remember their enemies, but—much virtue in But—he used the words under the influence of exasperation arising from the Mitchelstown affair—which took place a year later!

Mr. Chamberlain pointed this out, and referring to this incident the *Freeman* says:—

"Mr. Chamberlain literally grew pale under the succession of exposures, and wriggled in his seat, while he attempted to meet them, now by wriggling equivocations, now by reckless denial." "Mr. Goschen, prompted by Mr. Bolton," horrified the *Freeman's* delicate taste by "jocose allusions to watertight compartments and to the vessel's toppling over, which grated horribly on the members of the House, with the memory of the recent terrible calamity fresh in their minds." I was in Dublin when the news of the Victoria disaster arrived, and I heard a typical Nationalist express a wish that the whole fleet had perished. Such sentiments are the natural result of the lying literature provided by the "patriot" press of Dublin and the provinces. Well may Home Rule opinion in Ireland be rotten through and through! Mirabeau said of a very fat man that his only use was to show how far the skin would stretch without bursting. The *Freeman* exists to show to what lengths human fatuity can go. Lying and slander and all uncleanness, envy and hatred and malice and all uncharitableness, are its daily bread. With Home Rule in Ireland, this sheet would be the ruling power. To support Home Rule is for the *Freeman* to breathe its native air. Under an Irish Parliament, nutriment "thick and slab" would abound, and the patriot print would wax in strength and stature day by day. Enlighten the popular mind, and the *Freeman's* hours are numbered. It would vanish as a dream, forgotten by all except some old diver into the history of [298] the past, who having read its pages, will shake his head sadly when he hears of Liars, and remembering its Parliamentary notes will say—

"There were Giants in those days."

No. 45.—A PICTURE OF ROMISH "TOLERATION."

ToC

The country from Armagh to Monaghan is a very garden of Eden, undulating, well wooded, well watered, and in a high state of cultivation. The intervening towns and villages are neat and sweet, and the people seem to be hard workers. Monaghan itself, during the last generation, has wonderfully improved. It suffers by reason of its position on an almost inaccessible branch line, and the complete absence of manufactories, but it has no appearance of poverty. The Diamond is a well-built square, and the whole town, mostly built of stone, some of the streets on terraces, many of them thickly planted with trees, has a shady and sylvan look. The gaol, an enormous building crowning a steep hill, looks like the capitol of a fortress, and appears to have exercised a salutary effect on the neighbourhood, for it has long been disused. The district did not furnish malefactors enough to make the establishment pay. The gaol officials stood about with folded hands wishing for something to do, and probably locked up each other in turn by way of keeping up a pretence of work. The governor had nothing to govern, and the turnkeys sighed as they thought of old times. The thing was growing scandalous, and the ever-diminishing output of convicts marked the decadence of the country. Day by day the officials climbed to the topmost battlement in the hope that rural crime-hunters might be descried bringing in some turnip-stealer, some poacher, some blacker of his neighbour's eye, and day by day these faithful prison-keepers sadly descended to renew the weary round of mutual incarceration, so necessary if they wished to keep their hands in, and to apply somebody's patent rust-preventer to the darling locks, which formerly in better times they had snapped with honest pride. At last the authorities intervened, discharged the turnkeys, and locked up the place. It was a case of *Ichabod*. The fine gold had become dim and the weapons of war had perished. The officials departed in peace, each vowing that the country was going to the Divil, and each convinced that such a state of things would never come to pass under Home Rule. All became earnest Nationalists in the sure and certain hope that under an Irish Parliament business would revive, that the old place would be re-opened, that its venerable walls would again re-echo the songs of happy criminals, that the oakum-picking industry would revive and flourish, and that the treadwheel (which they identify with the weal of the country) would continuously revolve. Meanwhile, Armagh extends hospitality to stray wrong-doers and [299] Monaghan boards them out to the manifest injury of the local turnkey industry.

The new Roman Catholic Cathedral is said to be the finest in Ireland. It was over thirty years in building, and although the stone of the main fabric cost nothing, the structure cost more than a hundred thousand pounds. The interior is more gorgeous than beautiful, and the money seems to have been expended with execrable taste. The marble mosaic of the chancel floor is beautifully done, the work having been entrusted to Italian workmen, who were engaged on it for several years. The numerous statues of Carrara marble are well executed, and other items are also of the best. But the effect of the whole is inharmonious, and the great lines are obscured by over-ornamentation. You are reminded of an over-dressed woman. The pulpit, surmounted by a lofty conical canopy richly gilt, is supported on four lofty pillars of coffee-coloured marble highly polished. The baldacchino is a glittering affair, forty or fifty feet high, and big enough for a mission church. This also rests on marble columns. The sacristy, chapter-house and other offices are splendidly furnished, and the furniture of the doors, brass branches spreading all over them, massive as mediæval work, were remindful of Birmingham. The oak drawers of the robing room contain sacerdotal raiment to the tune of two thousand pounds, and the banners, many in number, and of richest work, must also represent a small fortune. Beautiful oil paintings from Italy hang around, and the bishop's throne is a marvel of gold lace and luxury. A queer-looking utensil, like a low seat, but with round brass bosses at each corner, proved to be merely a sort of crinoline whereon the bishop might extend his robes, so as to look inflated and imposing. So does the noble turkey-cock extend himself when bent on conquest of his trustful mate, gobbling the while strange-sounding incantations. To describe in detail would require a book. The confessionals are snug, with rich external carving. Plenty of accommodation for penitents here. Amid such surroundings to be a miserable sinner must be indeed a pleasure. The spire is two hundred and fifty feet high. I mounted and saw the great bell, over three tons in weight. I also saw the bishop's robes of wondrous richness and penetrative virtue, the consecrated slippers which the acolytes wear, with their scarlet robes, remindful of Egyptian flamens and African flamingoes; the blessed candle-box and the seven-times blessed candles, which at once drop tallow on the holder's clothes and benison on his sin-struck soul. All this expense in poor Ireland, all these advantages for poor Ireland. And still the Irish are not happy. With Roman Catholic cathedrals on every hand, with monasteries, nunneries, seminaries, confraternities, colleges, convents, Carmelites, Christian brothers, and collections whichever way they turn, the Irish people should be content. What could they wish for more?

The principal shopkeepers of Monaghan have unpatriotic names. Crawford, Jenkins, Henry, Campbell, Kerr, McEntee, Macdonald, and their like must in some way be accountable for the smartness of the town and for the emptiness of the prison on the hill. And you soon see that the Cathedral was needed, for besides the Protestant church, the town is polluted by two Presbyterian churches, to say nothing of a schism-shop used by the Wesleyan Methodists. A Monaghan man said:— [300]

"The respectable people are nearly all Protestants, and all the Protestants, and most of the respectable Catholics, if not all, are Unionists. In point of numbers the Catholics have the pull, and in the event of a Home Rule Parliament, which, God forbid, our position as Protestants would be no longer tenable. We should have to knock under, and to become persons of no consideration. The small farmers among the Protestant population would have an especially hard time of it. They mostly held aloof from the Land League and such-like associations; and when the other party get the upper hand they will have to smart for it. What Mr. Dillon said about remembering in the day of their power who had been their enemies, is always present to the minds of the lower classes of the Irish people. It is that they may have the power of punishing all sympathisers with England that some of them say they want Home Rule. No doubt they have other temptations, but certainly that is one great incentive. So keenly are they bent on getting power that they in some cases quite disregard any possible disadvantages accruing from the success of the movement. 'Let us get the power,' they say, 'never mind the money.' I have heard the remark made more than once, and it represents the dominant feeling in the minds of many. Rubbish about struggling for equal rights. Where are the disabilities of Irish Catholics?

"Ascendency is their game. Would they be tolerant? Why ask such a question? When was Roman Catholicism tolerant, and where? Is not the whole system of Popery based on intolerance, on infallibility, on strict exclusiveness? Let me give you a few local facts to show their 'tolerance.'

"In the old times the Monaghan Town Commissioners were a mixed body. Catholics and Protestants met together in friendly converse, and the voting went anyhow, both religions on both sides, according to each man's opinion of the business. Nowadays, wherever in Ireland the two sects are represented the thing is worked differently, and you may know the voting beforehand by reference to the members' religion. We are not troubled with this in Monaghan, and for the very best of reasons—all the members but one are Roman Catholics, and the solitary Protestant is a lawyer who has always been identified with them, and has always managed their legal business. He is practically one of themselves, having always acted with them.

"When the modern political agitation became rife, the Romans of Monaghan, under the orders of their priests, at once ousted all Protestants, except the one I have mentioned, who does not count, and monopolised the Town Council ever since. They forgot something—Lord Rossmore has [301] a claim on the market-tolls and other similar payments which amount to about three hundred pounds a year, but so long as the Town Council was worked by a mixed body of Catholics and Protestants he consented to forego this claim, and made the town a present of the money, which was expended in various improvements. Three hundred a year is a large sum in a small country town where labour is cheap, and in fifty years this sum, carefully laid out in ornamental and sanitary arrangements, quite changed the aspect of the place. When, however, the priests came on the scene and determined to have things exclusively in their own hands, Lord Rossmore did not quite see why he should any longer give the money to the town. And let it be understood that his agent had always been a prominent figure on the Monaghan Town Council, which was very right, having regard to the three hundred pounds given by Lord Rossmore, and to the agent's superior knowledge and business experience. He had been kicked out with the rest, and so it was made known that in future my lord would keep the money in his own pocket. They were astonished and suddenly cast down. 'Fear came upon them, and sorrow even as upon a woman,' &c.—you know the text. They said the money belonged to them, and really they had had it so long that they might be excused for believing this. Lord Rossmore was firm. They fought the thing out; but where was the good? They were beaten at every point. They had no case. So the town is three hundred pounds a year worse off, and Lord Rossmore three hundred pounds better. And still they will not allow a Protestant on the Council, although nearly all the best business men are of that persuasion. How's that for tolerance? And if such a thing be done in the green tree what will be done in the dry? If they flog us now with whips, won't they flog us then with scorpions?"

Another thraitor to his counthry's cause, said:—"A great idea with the priests is this—to get hold of the education of the country. They do not like the present system of National education. They do not approve of their youthful adherents growing up side by side with Protestant children. At first the Catholic bishops welcomed the scheme of National education, but now they are averse to it. They have seen how it works. It goes against them. It has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. The Catholic children grew up in amity with their neighbours, and got dangerously liberal ideas on the subject of religion. They were getting to believe that it mattered little whether Catholic or Protestant so long as a man's life was right. I went to school with Catholics, grew up with them, was always friendly with them, and we keep up the friendship to this day. The Catholic bishops disapprove of this. They want the line of cleavage sharp and distinct. Fifty years ago mixed marriages were common enough. Such a thing never happens now-a-days. It is most stringently forbidden by the Catholic Church. A priest told me that [302] emigrants to America, such as had been educated in Irish National schools, along with Protestant children, were very apt to drop their Romanism when once separated from their native parish, and to become Protestants. I suppose he meant to say that long familiarity with the unclean thing had undermined the wholesome dislike of heresy which every Catholic should feel, and that therefore such familiarity should be, if possible, avoided. Years ago the priest would be friendly

with his Protestant neighbours. We all lived together pretty comfortably. Of late a great change has taken place. The clergy as far as possible leave us, and cause us to be left, out in the cold. The question of Home Rule is entirely a religious question. Parnell was actuated by what might fairly be called patriotism; that is, comparatively speaking. The clergy saw in his fall a grand opportunity to use the movement he had created for the furtherance of their own ends. Home Rule is a purely Roman Catholic movement, and has had the most regrettable results on the amity of neighbours everywhere. Formerly the question of religion never arose. Now nothing else is considered. The Papists are almost unbearable, while they as yet have only the hope of power. What they would become if once they grasped the reality God only knows. I am not prepared to stand it, whatever it be. My arrangements to leave the country have long been made. At my age it will be a great grief, but I have always lived in a free country, and I will die in a free country. I was born in the town, and hoped to end my days at my birthplace. But I shall go, if it almost broke my heart, rather than see myself and the worthy men who have made the place domineered over and patronised by Maynooth priests. *Ubi bene, ibi patria.* Where I'm most happy, that will be my country."

The road to Kilmore is through a beautiful park-like country heavily timbered with oak, ash, beech, chestnut, and fir. Tall hedgerows twenty feet high line most of the way, which in many parts is completely overhung with trees in green arches impervious to rain. The country is undulating, with sharp descents and long clumps of beeches and imposing pine woods, bosky entrances to country seats and grassy hills, covered with thriving kine. From the church itself an extensive landscape is seen on every side. A deep valley intervenes between the church and a pretty farmhouse. I find a narrow lane with high hedges, covered with honeysuckles, which seems to lead thitherward. A man is toiling in a field hard by, digging for dear life, bare-armed and swarthy. I mount the gate and make for him. He remains unconscious, and goes on digging like mad. His brow is wet with honest sweat, and he seems bent on earning whate'er he can. Perhaps he wishes to look the whole world in the face, having an ambition to owe no rent to any man. I woke him and asked why the flags were flying on Kilmore steeple.

"To the pious, glorious, and immortal memory of William of Orange, who gave us an open Bible, and delivered us from Popery brass money, and wooden shoes. We put them up on the first of [303] July and fly them till the twelfth, when we walk in procession through Monaghan."

"An Orangeman, and a black Protestant, I fear?"

He laughed merrily, and said he was proud and thankful to be both. "If we didn't hold together, and associate in some way, we might quit the country at once. By banding together we hold our ground, and we will do so until Home Rule comes on us. Then we'll have to give in, about here. We're in a minority."

"Don't you think the Papists would be tolerant?"

"Aye, aye! Toleration indeed. As tolerant as a cat to a mouse. As tolerant as I am to this thistle, bad scran to it," said my friend, fetching up the obnoxious weed with a vigorous stroke, and chopping it to pieces with the spade, after which he shovelled it to the bottom of the trench. "Why, sir, the Papists are beginning to assume mastership already. Before this Government had been a fortnight in office the dirty scum began to give themselves airs. I mean, of course, the lowest of them. They were not so civil as before. Tolerant, ye say! Sure anybody that heard ye say the like of that would know ye were a stranger in the counthry."

The farm house was a model of cleanliness and neatness, James Hanna a model of a hard-working, debt-paying, honourable farmer. The living rooms had every accommodation required for the decent bringing-up of a family; and the parlour, with its carpets, knick-knacks, and highly-polished solid furniture, showed both taste and luxury. Mrs. Hanna, a buxom lady of middle age, was hard at work, but for all that, the picture of comeliness and neatness. The children were just coming in from school, well clad and good-looking, the boys ruddy and strong, the girls modest and lady-like. Mr. Hanna was hard at it in some contiguous field, but he came round and told me that he held twenty acres of land, that the rent was £24 10s., that his father had the farm for more than fifty years, that he was a Protestant, a Unionist, and a strong opponent of Home Rule. I have visited two other farms of the same size in Mayo and Achil, both held by Catholic Home Rulers. The rent of the Achil farm described by its holder, Mr. McGreal, as "very good land," was seventeen-and-sixpence for the whole twenty acres. McGreal was very poor, and looked it. His house was of the type described in my previous letters. Mr. James Hanna pays more for each acre than McGreal for his whole farm, and yet the Kilmore man is prosperous, his house, his family, all his belongings suggestive of the most enviable lot. A gun was hanging over the fire-place, which was a grate, not a turf-stone. I asked him if he used the shooting-iron to keep his landlord in order. He said No, he was no hunter of big game. I may be accused of too favourable an account of this farmhouse and its inmates, but I have (perhaps somewhat indiscreetly) given the name and address, and Monaghan people will agree with me. A more delightful picture of Arcadia I certainly never saw. Cannot Englishmen reckon up the Home Rule agitation from such facts as [304] these, the accuracy of which is easily ascertainable by anybody? Everywhere the same thing in endless repetition. Everywhere laziness, ignorance, uncleanliness, dishonesty, disloyalty, ask for Home Rule. Everywhere industry, intelligence, cleanliness, honesty, loyalty, declare that to sanction Home Rule is to open the floodgates to an inrush of barbarism, to put back the clock for centuries, to put a premium on fetichism, superstition, crime of all kinds, to say nothing of roguery and rank laziness. What are Englishmen going to do? Which party will they prefer to believe? When will John Bull put on his biggest boots and kick the rascal faction to the moon?

Monaghan, July 8th.

No. 46.—A BIT OF FOREIGN OPINION.

ToC

The military call and spell the name Inniskilling, which corruption is probably due to the proverbial stupidity of the brutal Saxon, and is undoubtedly another injustice to Ireland. The Inniskilling Dragoons have won their fame on many a stricken field, and to them the town owes any celebrity it may possess. From a tourist's point of view it deserves to be better known. It is a veritable town amidst the waters, and almost encircled by the meandering channels that connect Upper and Lower Lough Erne. It consists almost entirely of one long, irregular, but tolerably-built street, at both ends of which you cross the river Erne. A wooded knoll, crowned by a monument to Sir Lowry Cole, who did good service under Wellington, is a conspicuous object, and through openings purposely cut through the trees, affords some very pleasing views. A hundred steps lead to the top, and the ascent repays the climb. The Cuilgach range, source of the Shannon, the Blue Stack mountains of Donegal, the ancient church and round tower of Devenish, an island in the Great Lough Erne, and due west the Benbulben hills, are easily visible. Devenish island is about two miles away, and, although without a tree, is very interesting. Some of the Priory still remains, and I have found a Latin inscription in Lombardic characters which, being interpreted, reads Mathew O'Dughagan built this, Bartholomew O'Flauragan being Prior, A.D. 1449. There is a graveyard next the ruins, and a restored Round Tower, eighty-five feet high, not far away, the door of which is ten feet from the ground. These towers are sprinkled all over the country, and in nearly all the door is eight feet to twenty feet from the ground. The process of eviction seems to have been present to the minds of the builders. The sheriffs' officers of a thousand years ago must have been absolutely powerless in presence of a No Rent manifesto. Steamers are running on the Lower Lough from Enniskillen to Belleek, about twenty-two miles. You can sail there and back for eighteen-pence. The Upper Lough is said to be still more beautiful, the tourist agents have [305] recently been trying to open up this lovely island-studded lake. The beauties of Ireland are as unspeakable as they are unknown. The strip of sea holds some tourists back, and others seek the prestige of holiday on the Continong. A German traveller, hight Bröcker, declares that Ireland beats his previous record, and that the awful grandeur of the Antrim coast has not its equal in Europe, while the wild west with its heavy Atlantic seas, is finer far than Switzerland. Germans are everywhere. The Westenra Arms of Monaghan boasted a waiter from the Lake of Constanz, and I met a German philologist at Enniskillen who had his own notions about Irish politics. He ridiculed the attitude of England, or rather of Gladstonian England, and rated Home Rulers generally in good set terms.

"The business of England is to rule Ireland. Justly, of course, but to rule. That is if England has any regard for her own reputation. A colonel must rule his regiment, a teacher must rule his class, the captain must rule his crew, or disorder and damage to all parties will be the inevitable result. England stands to her acquisitions, whether conquered or peacefully colonised, in the relationship of head of the family. She has one member who is troublesome. There is always one black sheep in the flock. There was a Judas among the twelve. England has one, only one, at present, of her numerous family who gives extraordinary anxiety. And why?

"Difference of race and difference of religion. The double difference is too much. The races would amalgamate but for the religious difference. They would intermarry, and in time a sufficient mixture would take place; would have taken place long since but for the action of Rome. Rome keeps open the old wound, Rome irritates the old sores. Rome holds the two nations apart. We in Germany see all this quite plainly. We have no interests at stake, and then, you know, lookers-on see better than players. Rome keeps Ireland in hand as a drag on the most influential disseminator of Protestantism in the world. Ireland suits her purpose as a backward nation. We have quite snuffed out the Pope in Germany. Education is fatal to the political power of Rome. Ireland is not educated, and suits her purpose admirably. You will not succeed in satisfying Ireland, because Rome will not allow the Irish to remain quiescent. Rome will not permit Ireland to rest and be thankful, to fraternise with England, to take the hand of friendship, and to work together for good. This would not do for the Church. Any Romish priest will tell you that his Church is destined to overspread and conquer every country in the world, and that of all possible events that is a thousand times the most desirable. An independent Ireland, whose resources would be in the hands of the Romish Clergy, and whose strategetical position would be the means of aiding some Catholic power to crush the prestige of England—that is not a possibility too remote for the imagination of Romish wirepullers. Are Englishmen acquainted with [306] the history of Papal Rome? Have they adequate knowledge of the subtlety, the craft, the dissimulation, the foresight of this most wonderful religious system? I think not, or they would be more on their guard against her Jesuitical advances. The idea of your Gladstone going to your Parliament to hand over this country to Rome under the specious pretence of remedying Irish grievances, is too ridiculous. I ask myself where is the English commonsense of which we have

heard so much in Germany?

"England must be master. Not with tyranny; of that there is no danger, but with a judicial firmness. Your system of party government has good points, but it has weak points, and the Irish make you feel them. You pay too much attention to Irish clamour. I have been partly living in England for twenty-two years, and I have seen your Gladstone 'finally' contenting the Irish three or four times. Now, if he understood the subject at all, he ought to know that for the reason I have stated satisfaction is impossible. No use healing and dressing a wound which is constantly re-opened. No use in dressing a sore which is deliberately irritated. Rome will keep England going. With your Home Rule Bills, your Irish Church Bills, your successive Land Bills, how much have you done? How far have you succeeded in pacifying Ireland? Are you any nearer success now than ever you were? On the other hand, does not appetite grow with what it feeds on? The more you give, the more they want. They are far more discontented than they were before the passage of the three Land Bills, by each of which your Gladstone, your amusing Gladstone, declared he would pacify and content the Irish. And now your Gladstone is at it again. Funny fellow! He is like the Auctioneer with his Last time, for the Last time, for the very Last time, for the very *very* Last time. And the grave English nation allows itself to be made a sport. It is mocked, derided, by a number of lawyers' clerks and nonentities from third-rate Irish towns. It is bullied by a handful of professional politicians, paid by your American enemies, and governed by the flabby-looking priests you see skulking about the Irish railway stations and parks and pleasure resorts. As I said before, England must be master, as the captain is of his crew, as the tutor of his class, as the colonel of his regiment; or she will go down, and down, and down, until she has no place nor influence among the nations. And she will deserve none, for she knew not how to rule.

"England is at present like a ship's captain, who in his futile endeavours to please one of his crew first neglects the management of the ship, and, then (if she grants Home Rule) allows the discontented person to steer the course. And all to please one silly old man, who should long ago have retired from public life. What man at eighty-four would be reckoned competent to manage a complicated business enterprise such as a bank, or an insurance business, or a big manufacturing affair, or a newspaper office? Yet you allow Gladstone to manage an Empire! Where, I ask is the English sense, of which we hear so much in Germany? You want a Bismarck to [307] make short work of these Popish preachers of sedition. You want a Bismarck to rid your country of the Irish vermin that torment her. The best Irishmen are the most brilliant, polite, scholarly men I ever met. None of them are Home Rulers. That should be enough for England without further argument. Your House of Lords has sense. That will be your salvation against Gladstone and Rome."

At the *Imperial* was a warm discussion anent the propriety of keeping alive the memory of the Battle of the Boyne, which the Orangemen celebrate with great pomp on July 12. "The counthry's heart-sick of Orange William an' his black-mouths," said a dark-visaged farmer. By black-mouths he meant Protestants.

"The blayguards are not allowed to shout To Hell wid the Pope now-a-days. In Belfast they'd be fined forty shillin's. An' they know that, and they daren't shout To Hell wid the Pope, so they roar To Hell wid the Forty Shillin's. That's what I call a colourable evasion. But the law favours them."

A man of mighty beard looked on the speaker with contempt. "Sure, 'tis as raisonable to celebrate King William, who *did* live as a Saint like Patrick, Phadrig as ye call him, who never existed at all. At laste, that's what some of them say. Ye mix the life an' work of half-a-dozen men, an' ye say 'twas all Saint Patrick. Sure, most of him is a myth, a sort of a fog, jist. Ye can't agree among yerselves as to whin he was born." Turning to me, the bearded man said, "Did ye ever hear the pome about Saint Patrick's birthday?"

I regretfully admitted that the masterpiece in question had escaped my research, but pleaded in extenuation that I came from England, where the rudiments of polite larnin' and the iliments of Oirish litherature have not yet permeated the barbarian population. Barbatus then recited as follows:—

"On the eighth day iv March, as sum people say,
St. Patrick at midnight he furst saw the day.
While others declare on the ninth he was born,
Sure, 'tis all a mistake between midnight and morn!
Now, the furst faction fight in Oireland, they say,
Was all on account of St. Patrick's birthday.
Some fought for the eighth, for the ninth more would die—
Who didn't say right, they would blacken his eye.
At length both the parties so positive grew,
They each kept a birthday, so Patrick got two.
Till Father Mulcahy (who showed them their sins)
Said, No man can have two birthdays (barrin' he was twins).
An' boys, don't be fightin' for eight or for nine;
Don't be always disputin', but sumtimes combine.
Combine eight wid nine, seventeen is the mark,
Let that be his birthday." "Amen," said the clerk.
"Tho' he wasn't a twin, as history does show—
Yet he's worth any other two saints that we know.
So they all got blind drunk, which complated their bliss,
An' they kept up the custom from that day to this."

"An' why wouldn't we remimber King William? An' why wouldn't we remimber that the Enniskillen Protestants went out an' smashed up the Papists under Lord Mountcashel, at [308] Newtownbutler, on August 1, 1689? The very day of the relief of Derry—so it was. An' more than ever now we need to keep our heads above wather. Ye've an old fule over there that's thryin' to upset the counthry wid his fulery an' his Home Rule. But we'll not have it! Never will we bow the neck to Rome. In the name of God, we'll resist to the last moment. Every man will stand to his arms. Leave us to settle with the Papists, and we'd hunt them like flies. Thim an' their Army of Independence! 'Twas an' Army of Independence they levied to help the French invasion. The poor parleyvoos landed at Killala (ye can see where they entrenched their camp), and marched with the Irish Army of Independence to Castlebar, where the English smashed them up, the Irish Catholic levies bolting at first fire or before it." Four or five nameless stones mark the graves of French officers killed in this engagement. I saw them on my way from Castlebar to Turlough's Tower. My Orange friend went on:—"We'll send a hundred Orangemen to fight their Army of Independence. They shall be armed with dog-whips, to bring the brutes to heel. No, we'll not send a hundred, either. We'll send thirty-two, one for each county of Ireland. 'Twould be a trate to see the Army of Independence hidin' thimsilves in the bogs, an' callin' on the rocks an' hills to fall down an' cover thim, an' the airth to swallow them up."

A political tradesman recommended to me as a perfect encyclopædia of argument on the Home Rule question, said:—"The great difficulty is to get the English people to understand the duplicity of this sacerdotal movement. Of course, you understand that the agitation is really religious, and not, strictly speaking, political at all. In England the Romish priests are a better class of men, and no doubt they are loyal enough for practical purposes. And then they have neither numbers nor influence. You look upon the Catholic laity of England very much as we look upon the Plymouth Brethren of Ireland—that is, as a well-meaning, well-conducted body of people with whom you don't agree. The Catholic laity of Ireland would be all right if they were left alone, if they were allowed to follow the dictates of their natural humanity. My Catholic neighbours were very good, none better, until this accursed agitation began. Left to themselves the Irish people would agree better and better every year. But that would not suit Rome. The Church, which is very astute, too much so for England, sees in agrarian agitation a means of influence and the acquisition of power; and once an Irish Parliament became dominant, intolerance would make itself felt. Not as of old by the fires and tortures of the Inquisition, for nineteenth-century public opinion would not stand that; and not by manifestly illegal means either, but by boycotting, by every species of rascality. How can you expect tolerance from a church the very essence of whose doctrine is intolerance? When everybody outside the pale of that Church is outside the pale of salvation, condemned beforehand to eternal damnation, anything and everything is permissible to compel [309] them to come in. That is their doctrine, and they, of course, call it benevolence.

"Mr. Gladstone has said,—'My firm belief is that the influence of Great Britain in every Irish difficulty is not a domineering and tyrannising, but a softening and mitigating influence, and that were Ireland detached from her political connection with this country and left to her own unaided agencies, it might be that the strife of parties would then burst forth in a form calculated to strike horror through the land.' There is the passage, in my scrap-book. The speech was made in the House. The English Home Rulers believe that their troubles will be over when once Irishmen rule from College Green, and they trust the Irish Catholic members, who from childhood have been taught that it is not necessary to keep faith with heretics. That is a fundamental tenet of the Church of Rome. Still, England will have no excuse for being so grossly deceived, for these men have at one time or other been pretty candid. William O'Brien said that the country would in the end 'own no flag but the Green Flag of an independent Irish nation,' and J.E. Redmond in March last said that it was the utmost folly to talk of finality in connection with the Home Rule Bill. Then you must remember what Parnell said about taking off his coat. He would not have done it for anything short of independence. Mr. Gladstone himself saw through this, and with all other Liberals consistently and determinedly opposed every demand for Home Rule until his desire for power compelled him to surrender unconditionally to Parnell. At Aberdeen the G.O.M. said,—'Can any sensible man, can any rational man, suppose that at this time of day we are going to disintegrate the great capital institutions of the country for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the eyes of all mankind?' No sane man ever supposed it, no honest man ever believed that Mr. Gladstone would ever sell himself to Irish traitors for a short period of power. The thing was incredible. In another speech Mr. Gladstone said he would never consent to give Ireland any principle which could not be given on equal terms to Scotland or any other part of the Kingdom. So we may expect Scotch and Welsh Home Rule bills after this, and then a separate Parliament for every country that wants it. There's the speech, you can copy the reference.

"England is like an old-established business with a shop over the way which only just pays, and is an awful lot of trouble; in fact, more trouble than it's worth. You might say, let it go then. But if you let it go somebody else will take it, and run in opposition. Home Rule means the immediate return of the Irish-American ruffians who were here during the Fenian agitation, or their successors. Home Rule means that armed rebellion can be organised with much more reasonable chances of success. The police will be under the control of traitors, and it took you all your time to keep the country in order when the police were in your own hands. Whatever happens to John [310] Bull will be the proper reward of his asinine stupidity. He'll have his hands full, with an Irish Parliament against him. And if he gets a big quarrel on his hands with Russia or France, or any other powerful military nation, that is the time he'll feel it. Are you going to put into the hands of your enemies the power to ruin you merely by biding their time?"

I saw several other Enniskilleners, but they added nothing to the disquisitions of those already quoted. A feeling of deep disgust was the prevailing sentiment. Encamped in the enemy's

country, from childhood conversant with the tortuous windings of Papal policy, and the windy hollowness of the popular cries, they stand amazed that Englishmen can be deceived by such obvious imposture, that they will listen to such self-convicted charlatans, that they will repose confidence in such ten-times-exposed deceivers. The history of the Home Rule movement will in future ages be quoted as the most extraordinary combination of knavery, slavery, and credulity the world has ever seen. And yet some Englishmen believe in it. After all, this is not so wonderful. There were people who believed in Cagliostro, Mormon Smith, Joanna Southcote of Exeter, Mrs. Girling, the Tichborne Claimant, General Boulanger, electric sugar, the South Sea Bubble, and a thousand other exploded humbugs. No doctrine could be invented too absurd for human belief. No impostor would fail to attract adherents, except through lack of audacity. Thousands of people believe in the winking virgin of Loretto, and tens of thousands, a few months ago, went to worship the holy coat of Tièves. So people are found who vote for Home Rule as a means of settling the Irish Question, and rendering justice to Ireland. *Populus decipi vult.* Doubtless the pleasure is as great, In being cheated as to cheat.

Enniskillen, July 11th.

No. 47.—THE LOYALISTS AND THE LAWLESS.

ToC

Clones, which must be pronounced as a dissyllable, is a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid. Viewed from the railway the clustered houses surround the church spire like an enormous beehive. Like other ancient Irish towns, it possesses the ancient cross, the ancient round tower, and the ancient abbey, without which none is genuine. It has not the sylvan, terraced, Cheltenham-cum-Bath appearance of its neighbour Monaghan, though it somewhat resembles Bath in its general outline. The ruins want tidying up, and no doubt they will be looked after when the demand is greater. Ruins are a drug in Ireland, and as Mark Twain would say—most of them are dreadfully out of repair. The Irish have no notion of making them attractive, of exploiting them, of turning an honest penny by their exhibition. The inhabitants of any given neighbourhood can never give information as to [311] their date, use, decay, general history, beyond the stereotyped "They were built by the owld ancient folks long ago." The Clones people are no exception to the general rule. The town is on the main line from Dublin to Londonderry, but is little troubled by tourists. The place is quiet and tidy enough, and like many other Irish country towns seems to live on the surrounding country, which sends in a strong contingent on market days. The people are also quiet, civil, and decent, and the land in the neighbourhood seems fertile and well cultivated. Industry is evident on every side. Everybody has something to do. A farmer living just outside the town said he experienced the greatest difficulty in getting extra hands for harvest time. In his opinion the people were incomparably better off than in the days of his youth, some thirty years ago. He said "The labouring classes are far better housed, better clothed, and better fed, than in old times. They live far better than the well-to-do farmers of a generation ago. And the queerest thing about it is the fact that the better off they are, the more discontented they seem; and during the last few months they are becoming unbearable. They are giving themselves airs in advance. And no wonder, when they see the British Parliament entirely occupied with their affairs, to the exclusion of all English business. They may well feel important. They boast that they have compelled this attention, and that they shortly will have their own way in everything. Last Sunday a drunken fellow was making a row near my house. I told him to go away, and he said, 'Before long you'll have to go away and every Blackface in the country. We'll be masters in another month.' He was alluding to Mr. Gladstone's gagging motion, which the poor folks here in their ignorance believe to mean that Home Rule will set in about the beginning of August. They are acting accordingly, and they expect to have the land which the Protestant farmers now hold—at once. It is to be divided amongst them by ballot. We feel very anxious about here, for we feel that we are only staying on sufferance, and we have no confidence in the support of the present Government. We have expended our labour and our substance on the land, and if we lose these we lose all. You may say there is no fear of that, as such a piece of iniquity would never be tolerated by the English people. But when I see them tolerating so much, I think we have good reason to feel uneasy and unsettled. For my part, I have no heart for hard work, when I feel that somebody else may reap the reward. And with a Catholic Parliament in Dublin we should very soon have to give up. They can get at the farming class in so many ways. We Protestants are pretty strong about here, and all the way to Monaghan, but still we are in a considerable minority. The mountain folks are Catholics, every one, and that is where we are outnumbered. We could hold our own if the country were like the town. We should be bound under Home Rule to suffer a large increase of taxation, because all grants from Imperial sources are to cease upon [312] the passing of the bill. Then the country will be more disturbed than over, because the bill is only valued as a stepping-stone to an Irish Republic, and the success of the agitators in obtaining the bill will encourage them and their supporters to persevere. Instead of the end of the trouble it

would only be the beginning. It is a black look-out for both Ireland and England.

"Most of the Protestant farmers think that land purchase would be stopped. If that could go steadily on, there would be in time prosperity and contentment. The people would like this well enough, and would be quiet enough, if they were let alone. But where is the money to come from to purchase land? Who would lend money on Irish securities? Who would trust an Irish Parliament with millions? Then the better classes, who have money to spend, would leave the country, and we should be poorer all round.

"The loyal party in an Irish Parliament would always be in a minority, and for any good they could do, might as well stay away. For no matter how the Nationalist factions might quarrel among themselves, the priestly party would always have the pull. The English Protestants ought to believe that we know the reality of the danger that threatens us better than they can possibly do. There are nearly three thousand Protestant ministers in Ireland, and only six or seven are in favour of Home Rule. Are these men all infatuated? Are they all liars? Are they in a position to know the facts? Of course they are truthful men, and they understand if anybody does. Then why not take their advice? The Meath election petitions ought to have settled Home Rule. Englishmen cannot have read the reports of these trials. Mr. Gladstone is fooling the people on both sides the water. He is satisfying nobody, whether Home Rulers or not. The Nationalists round here say the bill is an insult, but that they will take it as an instalment. The end will be that both loyalists and traitors will be more discontented than ever—a poor result after so much fuss and waste of precious time."

If my friend had known of it he might have quoted Mr. William Heath, an Englishman resident for six months in Tyrone. He arrived in Ireland a bigoted Home Ruler, but six months in the country knocked his nonsense out of him. He said:—"I have seen enough of Romanism to convince me that Protestantism would be crushed if Home Rule became law. I have seen the men who demand it, and I have seen the men who are determined to oppose Home Rule—the one set idle, dissolute, poverty-stricken, disloyal, and priest-ridden; the other industrious, thrifty, comfortable, and loyal to England. I go back to England a Unionist, and will do all I can to spread the light on the true state of affairs in this unhappy country. If the people of England and Scotland saw Nationalists as I have seen them they would not force Home Rule on the Loyalists of Ulster so as to leave them at the mercy of such a party." A Primitive Methodist Minister, the Rev. J. Angliss, who came to Ireland a faithful follower of Mr. Gladstone, changed his mind when [313] acquainted with the facts, and confessed himself a convert to Unionism. He said that he had used his influence against the return of Sir Richard Webster, the late Attorney-General, but since his visit to Ireland he had come to the conclusion that the Bill would be a tremendous evil. He was "prepared to go back to the very platform in the Isle of Wight from which he had supported Home Rule and to tell the people he was converted. English people who come here to investigate for themselves must be forced to the conclusion that the Bill means confiscation and robbery."

A thriving tradesman of Clones said:—"I am surprised that any Englishmen can be found to pin their faith to Mr. Gladstone, or to any man with such an extraordinary record of change. Mr. Bright used to say he could not turn his back on himself, but Mr. Gladstone spins round and round like a teetotum. I should think that such an instance has never been known since that good old parson who sung, 'Whatsoever king may reign, Still I'll be Vicar of Bray, Sir.' Downing Street is the Grand Old Man's vicarage, and he endeavours to cling to it at all costs. In 1886 he said, 'I will not be a party to giving Ireland a legislative body to manage Irish concerns and at the same time have Irish members in London acting and voting on English and Scottish concerns.' In seven years and one month he insists on that very thing, and votes for it, with his crowd of noughts behind him. For I reckon all his Parliamentary supporters as noughts, to which a value is given by the figure 1 at their head. Isn't that true? What would the rest be without him? The bulk of his adherents are precisely the kind of men nobody ever pays any attention to. There's Morley, a good writer, but not a man of business. Then there's Harcourt. How can Englishmen stand such a hollow humbug? He'll say anything, any blessed thing. I prefer Tim Healy, even, to Harcourt. Tim was roughly brought up, and, as he gets his living by politics, he is to some extent excusable. The way that Harcourt attacked the Irish party, so long as Mr. Gladstone attacked them! The things he said, the strong language he used so long as that course pleased Mr. Gladstone! Now he turns round and calls them beauties; and for that matter so they are. It's what I mostly call them myself. Beauties.

"The arrangement to keep the Irish Nationalists at Westminster is something for Englishmen to consider. If they can swallow that they can swallow anything. They can have no pride about them, or else they are taking no further interest in their own affairs. To give the Irish members power to vote on all questions coming before the Imperial Parliament, while conceding to them the privilege of managing their own affairs without interference, is indeed an eye-opener. The British Parliament had sunk low enough when it began to heed the clamour of a set of American-paid blackguards such as the bulk of the Irish members are, by their own supporters, admitted to be. [314] But how much lower has England sunk when she accepts the dictation of these men, and says, 'You can manage your own affairs and direct my business too.' These fellows are to be masters of Ireland *and* masters of England. For of course, they can always exert a preponderating influence in British affairs, holding as they do the balance of voting power. And Englishmen will submit to this; and will let their members be gagged and the clauses shoved through the House by hydraulic power. Englishmen are so fond of boasting of their Freedom and Independence. Why, they are being treated like fools and slaves. And by such a low set of fellows. Some of the Nationalist members wipe their noses on the tails of their coats, and when those are worn out they use their coat-sleeves. One of them was staying in an hotel where I was, and I saw him eat

eggs. He cut off the top, and worked up the yolk with the handle of his spoon, mixing pepper and mustard. Then he cut his bacon into dice, and dipped each square in the egg before stoking himself. That is a sample of the class now working the British Parliament. There was an Irish patriot M.P.

"Dillon is comparatively respectable, and if you knew Dillon you wouldn't think that meant much. Chamberlain showed him up, but why stop at one quotation? I see the judge is now in Tipperary. That was the place Dillon, along with O'Brien, got to conspire against the law with such frightful results. You remember they were sentenced to six months' imprisonment, but breaking their bail they both ran away, while the poor men who had got into trouble, without funds to bolt with, went to hard labour. Dillon once said that if certain people had cattle on land '*the cattle wouldn't prosper very much*,' and sure enough a number of cattle near Tipperary have had their tails cut off. Dillon, I say, is reckoned one of the most respectable. That does not say much for the others. You are giving these men power. Will they use that power to wring further concessions? They have often declared that they will. The English Home Rulers say that they won't, that Irishmen will be too grateful. They know not what they say. You'll have a hostile Government at your very doors. What did Parnell say? 'When England is at war and beaten to her knees, the idea of the Irish Nationalists may be realised.' And Sexton, this very Sexton who is now so much to the front, said that the 'one prevailing and unchangeable passion between Ireland and England is the passion of hate.' Then what hope is there of friendship in a Home Rule Bill which will infinitely increase the number of points of dispute? And these men don't mean to be pleased, either. They don't mean to try to be content. It wouldn't pay them. They have their living to get. Well, they have shown themselves clever. They can work England."

A friend has furnished me with a few gems from the orations of the Dillon aforesaid, whose threat of what would be done to loyalists under an Irish Parliament has recently attracted so much notice. He tried to show that this was said in a moment of warmth, in a fit of exasperation [315] at the "Mitchelstown massacre," which took place a year afterwards. What had annoyed him when at Limerick he said that any man who stood aside from the national movement was "a dastard and a coward, and he and his children after him would be remembered in the days that are near at hand, when Ireland was a free nation?"—Date September 20th, 1887. Dillon delights in dates. Again, what had ruffled the patriot soul, when at Maryborough he spoke of dissentients in the following terms:—"When the struggle is ended and the people of this country have obtained that control over their own affairs which must come very soon, he will be pointed out to his neighbours as a coward and a traitor?"—January 15th, 1889. It was on November 1st, 1887, at Limerick, that the same friend of England said "let the people of Ireland get arms in their hands," and promised to "manage Ulster." It was at Dublin on August 23rd, 1887, that Mr. Dillon said:—"If there is a man in Ireland base enough to back down, to turn his back on the fight, I will denounce him from public platforms *by name*, and I pledge myself to the Government that, let that man be who he may, his life will not be a happy one, either in Ireland or across the seas." All this, be it observed, was after the promulgation of the Union of Hearts. Well might Mr. Gladstone, speaking of Mr. Dillon, who is now one of his closest allies, say in the House of Commons:—

"The honourable gentleman comes here as the apostle of a creed which is a creed of force, which is a creed of oppression, which is a creed of the destruction of all liberty, and of the erection of a despotism against it, and on its ruins, different from every other despotism only in this,—that it is more absolutely detached from all law, from all tradition, and from all restraint." Sir William Harcourt also referring to Mr. Dillon in the House once said, "The doctrine of the Land League, expounded by the man who has authority to explain it, is the doctrine of treason and assassination;" and in addition to this strong pronouncement Sir William called it "a vile conspiracy." Both Mr. Gladstone and Sir William Harcourt are now hand-and-glove with the men of whom Mr. Gladstone said at Leeds:—"They are not ashamed to point out in the press which they maintain how the ships of her majesty's navy ought to be blown into the air, and how gentlemen they are pleased to select ought to be the object of the knife of the assassin and deprived of life because they do not conform to the new Irish Gospel." Mr. Chamberlain's exposure of Dillon has brought down the thunders of the Nationalist press. Did he ever say anything stronger than this? One Nationalist paper, speaking of the member for West Birmingham, says:—"There was something devilish in the exultation of the strident voice and pale malignant face." The Home Rule penmen are always describing him as "livid with impotent rage," "trembling with ill-concealed vindictive passion," "hurrying from the House to escape the mocking laughter of the amused Senate." The member for Bordesley is dealt with more lightly. [316] "Mr. Jesse Collings occupied some minutes with his usual amusing inanity" and so forth. According to these writers the House rapidly empties when Mr. Balfour or Mr. Chamberlain would fain hold forth, and fills to suffocation to hear the noble periods of Dillon, Sexton, and Healy. Mr. Deasy, M.P. for West Mayo, has recently been before the public rather prominently, and his opinion of the Irish question may be interesting at the present juncture. I heard much of this gentleman at Westport, where he is well known. He is disgusted with the show of loyalty to which his colleagues have treated Mr. Gladstone, who boasts of their "satisfactory assurances." He knew that the Nationalist members, speaking in England, made use of amicable expressions which no Irish Nationalist audience would tolerate, and speaking of this he said:—"I have never said on an English platform what I would not say here this night. I have not been saying that we all want to be part and parcel of the British Empire—with the lie on the top of my tongue, I am not going to disgrace my constituency by going over to England and uttering falsehoods there, and coming back and saying that I was deceiving England at the time." This speech was made in 1891, only two years ago. Is not this big print enough? Surely no reasonable person will any

longer believe in the loyal friendship of Nationalist Ireland. To do so is to violate common sense. Only the fatuous Gladstonians, Whose eyes will scarcely serve at most To guard their wearers 'gainst a post, can be expected to take it in.

It is hard to find a decent person in favour of the bill. Its supporters are eminently unsatisfactory, inasmuch as they furnish no readable matter, and content themselves with saying that Ireland will have her freedom, and that prosperity will follow, as the night the day, in the wake of the bill. But they can never indicate wherein is their want of freedom, nor can they ever say *how* the bill will bring about prosperity. Then, as a rule, the voters for the bill are persons whose opinion no sane person would act upon in the most unimportant matter. They never know the population of their own town, nor the distance to the next. They are mostly sunk fathoms deep in blackest ignorance, and characterised by most cantankerous perversity, now rapidly merging, as the bill proceeds, into insolent bumptiousness. The Lord-Lieutenant has returned to Dublin after having endured such snubs and slights as Mr. Balfour never encountered. And yet Lord Houghton waved the olive-branch. Everybody seems to have asked him for a pier. I have given many instances of useless piers on the Western Irish Coast. The parish priests who met the Viceroy asked for more, and again more. Mr. Morley has been asked in the House what is going to be done about the piers the priests have asked for. Let him appoint a Commission to inquire into the history of Western Irish piers. The report will be startling, and also instructive. A Glengariff man admitted to me that the people of that famous town would make no use of the pier if they had it. "But," said he, "the building of it would bring a thousand pounds into the village." [317] The English people are said to dearly love a lord. The Irish people dearly love a pier.

Clones, July 13th.

No. 48.—A SEARCH FOR "ORANGE ROWDYISM."

ToC

Belfast is still of the same mind. Its citizens will not have Home Rule. They are more than ever determined that the fruits of their industry shall not be placed at the mercy of men who have consistently advocated the doctrine of plunder. The law-abiding men of Belfast will never submit to the rule of law-breakers, many of whom have expiated their offences in the convict's cell. This debt-paying community will not consent to be under the thumb of men whose most successful doctrine has been the repudiation of legal contracts. The famous merchants and manufacturers of the true capital of Ireland decline to place their future fortunes in the hands of the unscrupulous and beggarly adventurers who would form the bulk of a College Green Parliament. The hard-working artizans of Belfast are firm in their determination to resist the imposition of a legislature which will drive capital from the country, diminish the sources of employment, strangle all beneficial enterprise, and by destroying security undermine and wreck all Irish industry. They know how the agitation originates, and by whom it is directed. They have the results of Papal influence before their eyes. While Belfast as a whole is clean, open, airy, with splendid streets and magnificent buildings, the Catholic portions of the city are as much like the pestilent dens of Tuam and Tipperary as the authorities will permit. The uninstructed stranger can pick out the Home Rule streets. In Belfast as elsewhere, sweetness, light, and loyalty are inseparably conjoined, while evil smells and dinginess are the invariable concomitants of disloyalty and separatism. Fortunately for the Ulster city, the loyalists number three to one, which fact accounts for its general cleanliness, the thriving aspect of its commercial concerns, the decency and order of its well-kept thoroughfares. And whatever Belfasters want they pay for themselves. Belfast receives no Government grants for any municipal purpose, while disloyal Dublin, screaming for equality of treatment, is largely subsidised from Imperial sources. The Belfast people entirely support their hospitals. The Dublin hospitals are largely supported out of the public revenues. The Belfast Botanic Gardens are kept going by Belfast. The Dublin Botanical Gardens are wholly supported by Government. Further examples are needless, the facts being simple as they are undeniable. Dublin gets everything. Belfast gets absolutely nothing. Disloyalty is at a premium. Motley's the only wear. The screamers are always getting something to stop their mouths, a sop, not a gag. Steady, quiet, [318] hard-working folks are of no account. The Belfast men ask for nothing, and get it. They want no pecuniary aid, being used to self-help, and liking it best. Stiff in opinion, they know their own minds, and are accustomed to victory. They do not in turn threaten and complain and cringe and curse and fawn. They keep a level course and run on an even keel. They are bad to beat, and can do with much letting alone. They are pious in their way, and talk like Cromwell's Puritans. They abhor Popery, judging the tree by its fruits, a test recommended by their chiefest classic. They believe that Protestantism is daylight, that Popery is darkness, and that the sun is rising. They believe with Carlyle that "Popery cannot come back any more than paganism, which also lingers in some countries." They also believe with the sage that "there is a perennial nobleness and even sacredness in Work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man who actually and earnestly works; in Idleness alone is there perpetual despair." So

they work every day and all the day, save on rare occasions, and for these holidays they make up by overtime. They think Home Rule is useless at best, and not only useless, but dangerous. They declare it would affect their liberties, and this notion is ineradicable. Touch them in their freedom and the secold Northerners become aflame. And while the Irish Kelts burn like straw—a flame and a puff of smoke, and there an end—these Scots settlers are like oaken logs, slow to take fire, but hard to extinguish. They prosper under the Union, and therefore, say they, the Union is good. What the poor Irish need is industry, not Acts of Parliament. The land is rich, the laws are just, the judges are honest, and industry is encouraged. The fault is in the people themselves, and in their pastors and masters. The convergence of Ulster opinion reminds me of an old line, which fitly illustrates the position of the Irish malcontent party—

Heu mihi! quam pingui macer est mihi taurus in arvo. Quaint old Thomas Fuller (as I remember) has rendered this—

My starveling bull,
  Ah, woe is me,
In pasture full
  How lean is he!

I am almost disposed to believe that Horace anticipated the case; or that, like Mr. John Dillon, he had the gift of remembering occurrences before they took place.

Much has been spoken and written in England concerning "Orange rowdyism." I saw the twenty thousand Orangemen who walked through Belfast to Knocknagoney on Wednesday last. They had nearly five miles to march on a hot day before they reached the meeting-place, some hours to stand there listening to speeches, and then the long march back again. Large numbers went to the Orange Halls, there to conclude the day. I followed them thither, heard their speeches, noted their modes of enjoyment, watched them unnoticed and unknown, save in one [319] instance, until they finally dispersed. Next day I went to Scarva, forty miles away, to see the great sham fight which annually takes place there between representatives of King James and King William of Orange. There were sixty-four special trains, at cheap fares, running to Scarva, besides the ordinary service, and let it be remembered that Scarva is on the main line from Dublin to Belfast. Now let me state precisely what I saw.

The Belfast procession was very like the tail of the Belfast Balfour demonstration, and with good reason, for both consisted of twenty thousand Orangemen. But on Wednesday the Orangemen, instead of being preceded by a hundred thousand citizens of Ulster, had it all to themselves. The authorities know the character of Orangemen. They know that scorching weather and long dusty marches are apt to lead to copious libations, especially in holiday time. They know that political feeling runs high, and that the present moment is one of undue excitement. They know that the Papist party have taunted Orangemen with the supposed progress of the bill, and that the same people say daily that Orangeism will be at once abolished, and that this year sees the last Orange procession in Belfast. "This is yer last kick before we kick ye to hell," said a broken-nosed gentleman at the corner of Carrick Hill. The authorities knew all these things, and taking into account the known character of Orangeism, with the special exasperation of the moment, and remembering their own responsibility in the matter of order, how many extra policemen were drafted into the city?

Not one. The men who really know Orangemen knew that no precautions were needed.

There were brass bands, drum and fife bands, and bands of bagpipes. The drums were something tremendous. The Belfast drumming is a thing apart, like a Plymouth Brother. We have nothing like it in England. The big drums run in couples, borne by stout fellows of infinite muscle, and tireless energy. The kettle-drums hunt in packs, like beagles. The big drums are the biggest the climate will grow, and the drummers lash them into fury with thin canes, having no knob, no wrapper of felt, no softening or mitigating influence whatever. The bands played "God save the Queen," "Rule Britannia," "The Boyne Water," and "The Death of Nelson." The fifes screamed shrilly, the brass tubes blared, and every drummer drummed as if he had the Pope himself under his especial care. The vigour and verve of these marching musicians is very surprising. You cannot tire them out. The tenth mile ended as fresh as the first, though every performer had worked like a horse. There is a reason for this. Their hearts are in the work. To them it means something. The scarves and busbies and uniforms and desperate paroxysms of drumming are somewhat comical to strangers, but the people looked earnest, and as if engaged in serious business. Thousands of well-dressed people walked with the procession, or looked gravely on. There was no horse-play, and no noise other than the music. No bare feet, no bare heads, no [320] rags, no dirt, no disorder. A Papist sprang from his lair in a side street and tried to snatch the scarf from a young man, who promptly drove him back to his den. Nothing else happened. At midnight there were for the whole city twenty police cases against thirty-nine for last year's twelfth. So much for Orange rowdies in the streets. Let us look upon their private orgies.

At seven o'clock I went to the Orange Hall, Clifton Street, the headquarters of the body. The various lodges were dispersed in several rooms, where they seemed to be taking tea with their sisters and their cousins and their aunts. A turn outside landed me opposite Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, and here was a strong guard of police. The neighbouring streets of Carrick Hill, North Street, and another, literally swarmed with filthy, bare-footed women, wearing the hooded shawl of Limerick, of Tuam, of Tipperary. The men had a dangerous look. Many were drunk, and some had bandaged heads. More policemen half-way down Carrick Hill, and more still at the end. The people who pay no taxes cost most to keep in order. I have

somewhere seen a body of returns showing that while the Unionist population requires only ten or twelve policemen to every ten thousand people, the Home Rule provinces take from forty-eight to fifty-two to manage the same number. Returning to the Orange Hall a number of dirty, bare-footed children walked in procession past the door singing vociferously. They sung with great spirit to the tune of "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching," and seemed to enjoy it amazingly. I did not catch the words. They stopped as I came up, but a young fellow on guard at the hall said, "They grind up the children in songs of a party nature, and send them here to annoy us. Of course, we can't notice little children."

This time I dropped in the thick of the entertainment. A mild, mild man occupied the chair, young men and maidens, old men and children sitting around. They were inebriating on ginger beer and biscuits, and their wildest revelry was the singing of "The Old Folks at Home" by a young lady in white. Mr. E.J. Fullwood, of Birmingham, who was there as a visitor, made a rattling speech, and received a great ovation. A quiet gentleman, by special request, made a few remarks on the political situation. He said:—"We will resist a Home Rule Parliament at any cost and at every cost. We will not have it. Our faith is plighted, and we are not the men to go back of our word." His manner was very subdued, and the audience also kept very quiet. What these men say they say in their sober senses, and not by reason of excitement. Another room was livelier. An English gentleman was holding forth. Then the band played "No surrender," after which a lady sang "Killarney's hills and vales." In a third room a brother was calling on the brethren to give three cheers for "our beloved Queen," under whose benignant reign blessings had been shed upon the British Empire, "to which we belong, and to which we still belong, so long as they will [321] have us." In a fourth room the listening Orangemen sat under a discourse on the efficacy of prayer, which they were urged to make a living part of their everyday life. All this was very disappointing, and when in Royal Avenue the helmeted watchman of the night assured me that nothing had happened, and that nothing was likely to happen, I abandoned all hope of Orange rowdyism.

Next day at ten, I went to Scarva, or, as the natives spell it, Scarvagh. A neat little place full of Black Protestants. The houses are clean and tidy, and the people have a well-to-do look. There was a great crowd at the station, and a band of drummers were laying on with such thundering effect that my very coat sleeves vibrated with the concussion. A big arch of orange lilies bore the one word Welcome, and the roadside was lined with stalls selling provisions and ginger beer. The church on the hill flew the Orange flag with the Union Jack. The Presbyterian meeting-house and a Methodist Chapel complete the tale of worship-houses. The place is without rags, dirt, beggars, or any other symptoms of Home Rule patriotism. Neither is there a Roman Catholic Chapel. The signboards bore Scots and English names. Mr. J. Hawthorne stood at his door, big-boned and burly, with a handsome good-humoured face. "Ye'll gang up the brae, till ye see an avenue with lots of folk intil it," said this "Irishman," whose ancestors have lived at Scarva from time immemorial.

"Yes, we pit up the airch o' lilies to welcome our friends. They come every year, and a gude mony o' them too, so we pit up that bit thing oot o' friendship like."

I told him this was to be the last occasion, as Mr. Dillon was determined to manage Ulster. He laughed good-naturedly.

"Mon alive, d'ye tell me that any mon said sic a fuleish speech? Mon, its borne in on me that we'll tak a dooms lot of managin'. These chaps dinna ken ower weel what they're talkin' aboot. An' they maun say somethin' to please the fellows that keep them in siller. These things hae gane on in Scarva sin' auld lang syne, an' nothin' e'er stappit them. They went on when the Party Processions Act was law, an' tho' the sojers ance cam frae Dublin to stop the demonstration, the Orangemen mustered in sic force that they never interfered aifter all. An' in Ulster we'll hauld our own, d'ye mind that? We've tauld them oor mind, an' that we wunna hae Home Rule. We've tauld them that, an' we'll stand by it. They've gotten oor ultimatum, an' they can mak a kirk or a mill o' it."

I gangit up the brae through dense crowds constantly increasing as the sixty-four specials gradually came in. The way was sylvan and pretty, big beech trees and elms meeting overhead, the road running along the side of a steep hill sloping down to a small river, the slope carefully tilled, and showing good husbandry. Then a beautifully wooded and extensive demesne, and a mile of avenue, with many thousands of well-dressed orderly people, the ladies forming about [322] half the company. Then a large low, brown mansion with a gravelled quadrangle, around which marched fife and drum bands playing "No Surrender" and "The Boyne Water." And everywhere incessant drumming and drinking of ginger beer. Banners were there of every size, shape, and colour, many with painted devices, more or less well done. The Lurgan Temperance Lodge exhibited Moses in the wilderness, holding up the brazen serpent. "Three-fourths of the Orange Lodges are based on temperance principles," said an Orange authority standing by, "and what is more, they don't allow smoking. We Orange rowdies are to a great extent temperance men." I remembered that the three meetings of the night before were smokeless concerts, and that the fourth resembled a Methodist love-feast, with an old brother telling his experiences. Also that Captain Milligen, a leading Plymouth Brother of Warrenpoint, had told me that he had been present at a Scarva meeting, and that from beginning to end he never heard a bad word, nor saw anything objectionable. The sham fight took place on a hill hard by. Two fine young fellows fenced with old cavalry swords, and King James, with green coat and plumes, succumbed to King William with orange coat and plumes, while their respective armies to the number of about thirty, fifteen on each side, fired in the air. I noticed that while a few had ancient brass-bound muskets, which looked as if converted from flint locks, most were armed with Snider rifles of army pattern.

The drums excelled themselves, and the fifers shrieked martial airs. The people waved their hats and cheered, and that was the whole of it. Returning to the station, a good young man gave me a tract, wherein I found myself addressed as a Dear Unsaved Reader, and later as a Hell-deserving Sinner. Then a Salvation Army man telling a crowd to Escape for their lives, which I was just doing, and that once he had loved pleasure, which seemed likely enough. Then a big banner whereon was depicted David in the act of beheading Goliath with a yeomanry sword, the Wicklow mountains in the distance. Then an old man on the bridge declaring to the multitude that he would not be a Papist for all that earth could give, and that nothing could induce his fellow-citizens to submit to Home Rule for one second of time. "No, never, never, never. Rather than accept of Popish rule, we'll take arms in our hands as our fathers did, and like them we will conquer. Have we not their example before us? Are we such dastards as to give up that for which they shed their blood? Shall the sons be unworthy of the sires? Never shall it be said that the children were unworthy their inheritance of Freedom. Old as I am, I would take a musket, and go forth in the name of the Lord. Shame on the Scots and English if they desert us in our hour of need. Are they not our own kith and kin? But whether they aid us, or whether they desert us, we will stand firm, and be true to ourselves. Our cause is good, and we are bound to win, as we won before. Only stand firm, shoulder to shoulder. Shall we bow down to Popery? No, by the God that [323] made us, No. Shall we truckle to Rome, shall we become slaves to Popish knaves, shall we become subservient to priestcraft and lying and roguery and trickery? Never shall it be said of us. We claim to be part and parcel of the glorious British Empire. We have helped to upbuild that Empire, and we claim our inheritance. We will NOT sell our birthright, we will NOT connive at the destruction of Britain's greatness, we will NOT have Home Rule. 'Shall we from the Union sever? By the God that made us, never!'"

The people listened silently, with grave, earnest faces. They mean business. During my first visit to Belfast I interviewed the leading citizens, the clergy, nobility, and gentry. This time I spoke with artisans and craftsmen, and I found the same feeling, a deep and immovable resolve to fight till the last extremity. It should be remembered that all Ulstermen are not Orangemen. But the religious bodies which have held aloof from Orangeism are just as determined. On the Irish Church question the Orange body stood alone. The dissenting sects were against them everywhere. All are united now, and the attempt to force Home Rule on these resolute men would be attended by the most awful consequences. They are not of a breed that easily knocks under. They remind you of the Scottish Covenanters. They are men with whom you would rather dine than fight. In Belfast, besides Mr. Fullwood, of Birmingham, previously mentioned, I met with Mr. Lyons, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, who in his walks abroad in the city had put down in his pocket-book the names of all streets he judged to be exclusively Catholic. He was right save in three cases, where the people were mixed. He also observed that in the poorer quarters the windows of all Protestant places of worship were protected by wire netting, but that the Catholic chapels were not so protected. As the Protestants are three to one, he thought this a curious commentary on the statements anent Orange rowdyism. Mr. Deacon, of Manchester, and the Englishmen hereinbefore mentioned were present at the Orange Hall, and all saw what I have related. Mr. Henry Charlton, J.P., of Gateshead-on-Tyne, agrees with them that the religious question is the secret of the whole agitation, and that the sooner a leading statesman meets the Home Rule movement on this, the true ground, the better for the country. "We are too squeamish in England. We fear to offend our Catholic friends, with whom there is no fault to be found. But we want an influential speaker to say at once that the conflict is reality between Protestantism and Popery. The best plan would be to state things as they are, and to meet the enemy directly." So spoke one of these visitors, a gentleman of great political experience. Is this opinion not well worth consideration? Is not the time for soft speaking nearly over?

Mr. Dillon says he will manage Ulster. He will need the British Army at his back. His Army of Independence will not avail him much. The position of the Nationalist members towards Ulster is [324] not unlike that of the Chinaman who wanted an English sailor punished. "There he stands," said the skipper, "go and punch his head." "No, no," said the Celestial complainant, "me no likee-pikee that way. But spose three, five, 'leven big sailors tie him up, hold him fast, then very much me bamboo he." And that is how the Dillonites would hope to manage Ulster.

Belfast, July 15th.

No. 49.—THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ORANGE LODGES.

ToC

Portadown is another of the clean, well-built towns of Ulster dependent for its prosperity on the linen trade. The River Bann flows through it, a fine stone bridge spanning its waters in the principal street. Everybody seems comfortably off, and dirty slums are nowhere to be found. Some of the shops are very much larger than the size of the town would seem to warrant, and one ironmonger's store is far larger than any similar shop in Birmingham. The Presbyterian meeting-house, on the right as you enter, and the Protestant Church, which occupies a conspicuous position at the meeting of two main thoroughfares, are plain, substantial buildings without any striking architectural pretensions, and the Orange Hall, which seems an indispensable adjunct of all "settler" towns, is also modest and unassuming. The meadows bordering the Bann are spread with miles of bleaching linen, for which the river is especially famous, its waters having a very superior reputation for the production of dazzling whiteness. The town is half-a-mile from the station, which is an important junction, and the number of cars in waiting show that the people expect the coming of business men. When first I visited the town, placards announcing drill meetings at the Orange Hall were everywhere stuck up, but I saw none during my last march round. Perhaps the Orangemen have completed their arrangements. The Portadown people have no intention of accepting Home Rule. On the contrary they are determined to have none of it. At present they are quiet enough, because they are confident that the bill can never pass, and they do not wish to meet trouble halfway. The House of Lords is their best bower anchor, and for the present they leave the matter with the peers. So they mind their work, and spend their time in making linen. When they demonstrate they do it with a will, but they cannot live by demonstrations, and they are used to paying their way. They see what happens in so-called "patriotic" districts, how neglect of duty accompanies eternal agitation, and how the result is poverty and failure to meet the ordinary obligations of social life. The artisans of Portadown go to work every day, and the farmers do their level best with the land, which all about this region is highly cultivated. They [325] claim to belong to the party of law and order, and they agree with the great orator who once said:—"The party of law and order includes every farmer who does not want to rob the landlord of his due and who does not want to be forced to pay blackmail to agitation—every poor fellow who desires to be at liberty to earn a day's wages by whomsoever they are offered him, without being shunned, insulted, beaten, or too probably murdered." The orator in question bears the well-known name of William Ewart Gladstone, now intimately associated with the names of Dillon, O'Brien, Sexton, O'Connor, Tim Healy, and the rest of the agitators to whom he was referring in the above-quoted speech, delivered at Hawick just ten years ago.

A Portadown Orangeman complained bitterly of the attitude of the English Gladstonian party with reference to his order. He said:—"We have been denounced as rowdies and Orange blackguards until the English people seem to believe it. They never think of comparing our record with the record of the party denouncing us, nor do they know anything of the history and constitution of the order. We have always been loyal, always friends of England, and that is why the Nationalist party so strongly disapprove of us. We have never occupied the time of the English Parliament, nor have we leagued ourselves with the enemies of England. We have maintained order, and taken care of English interests in Ireland, besides looking after our own personal affairs. We have not stood everlastingly hat in hand, crying, like the daughter of the horse-leech, Give, give. And great is our reward. We are to be handed over to a pack of Papist traitors and robbers, who for years have made the country a perfect Hell. Mr. Gladstone would fain give rich, industrious Ulster into the hands of lazy, improvident Connaught. Let them try it on. Let them impose their taxes, and let them try to collect them. They'll find in Ulster something to run up against. We prefer business to fighting and disturbance, but when once we make up our minds for a row we shall go in for a big thing. Most of our people have a deep sense of religion, and they will look upon it as a religious war. It will be the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. We never will bow down to Popery. And that is what Home Rule means. We see the abject condition of the Papists, and we know their slavish superstitions. The bulk of them are body and soul in the hands of the priests, and that is the secret of their non-success in life. The poorest among them are taxed to death by the Church. A fee must be paid for christening, and unless you pay a stiff figure you won't have a priest at your funeral. The poor Catholics are buried without any religious service whatever. They are taken to the churchyard by their friends and put in a hole, like a dog. Pay, pay, pay, from the cradle to the grave. And when the priests wish to raise money, they dictate how much each person is to give. They do not believe in free-will offerings, otherwise their receipts would be very small indeed. There you have one explanation of Papist poverty. Are we to put our necks under the heels of a Parliament worked by Bishop Walsh of Dublin? Never, as [326] long as we can strike a blow for freedom. We look to England at present. If England fails us, we shall look to ourselves. Our fathers died to preserve us from King James and Popery, and we are not going back to it at this time of day.

"English Home Rulers have actually taken up the cry of Equality, and down with Protestant ascendency. Such foolish ignorance almost amounts to crime. Where are the Roman Catholic disabilities? For two generations the Papists have had absolute equality. Every office is open to them on the judicial bench. There have been Roman Catholic Lord Chancellors, and Lord Chief Justices. O'Laughlin, O'Hagan, Naish, Pallas, Barry, O'Brien, Keogh, and many others are all Roman Catholic judges. The Papists have an overwhelming preponderance in Parliamentary representation. They are looked after in the matter of education, whether elementary, intermediate, or University. The system of the National Board was introduced to meet the objections of the Roman Catholics. They objected to the use of the Bible. As you know the Papists object very strongly to the Bible, and as it came out some time since, before the Commissioners of Education, of four hundred Maynooth students only one in forty had a Bible at all. Theological students without a Bible! But each was compelled to have a copy of some Jesuit writer.

"Where is the inequality? The Romanists have their own college, this very Maynooth, entirely under the control of their own bishops, where they educate the sons of small farmers and peasants and whiskey-shop keepers by means of funds very largely taken from the Protestant Church of Ireland. They do not desire equality, they are resolved on ascendency. We who live in Ireland know and feel the spirit of intolerance which marks the Romanist body. It is proposed to make of Ireland a sort of Papal state. We have the declarations of Cardinal Logue, of Archbishop Walsh, of Archbishop Croke before us. We need to know no more. The English people pay no attention to them, or have forgotten them. We bear them in mind, and we shall act accordingly."

My friend's statements anent the raising of money by the Roman Catholic clergy and the alleged poverty of Ireland reminded me that a year ago at the opening of the Redemptorist Church of Dundalk the collections of one day realised twelve hundred pounds, and that in the same town a priest refused to baptise the child of a poor woman for less than five shillings. She tendered four shillings and sixpence, but the man of God sent her home for the odd sixpence. She then went to the Protestant minister, who baptised the child for nothing. In Warrenpoint the priest decided what subscriptions each and every person should pay to the funds of the new Catholic Church, and in Monaghan three well-to-do Papists had their cheques returned, as being insufficient. The Romanist Cathedral of that poor little town is currently reported to have cost half a million, but that it cost at least a hundred thousand pounds, exclusive of the stone, which [327] was given by the Protestant landowner, Lord Rossmore, is admitted by the most reliable authorities. The landlord agreed to give the stone on condition that the quarry should be filled up and the land levelled as it was found at first. Stone for the cathedral, a convent, and many other buildings was taken, but the conditions were not fulfilled, and a hole with forty feet of water was left, so that the field was dangerous for cattle. The Catholic party refused to level, and a lawsuit was the result. My Monaghan letter related the total exclusion of Protestants, including Lord Rossmore's agent, from the Town Council. So much for Papal tolerance and gratitude.

The English prejudice against Orangemen is ill-founded. Their sheet-anchor is an open Bible, and their principles, as expressed by their constitution, are such as ought to ensure the approval and support of Englishmen. They read as follows:—"The institution is composed of Protestants resolved to the utmost of their power to support and defend the rightful Sovereign, the Protestant religion, the laws of the country, the Legislative Union, and the succession to the Throne being Protestant, and united further for the defence of their own persons and properties and the maintenance of the public peace. It is exclusively an association of those who are attached to the religion of the Reformation, and *will not admit into the brotherhood persons whom an intolerant spirit leads to persecute, injure, or upbraid any man on account of his religious opinions*. They associate also in honour of King William the Third, Prince of Orange, whose name they bear, as supporters of his glorious memory." I have italicised a few words which clear the association from the charge of organised intolerance, which is made alike by English and Irish Home Rulers. The Portadown folks are especially well-versed in the history of the movement, and in the perils which impelled their forefathers to band themselves together. According to Froude, it was on the 18th September, 1795, that a peace was formally signed at Portadown between the Peep-o'-Day Boys and the Defenders, and the hatchet was apparently buried. But the incongruous elements were drawn together only for a more violent recoil. The very same day Mr. Atkinson, a Protestant, one of the Defender subscribers, was shot at. The following day a party of Protestants were waylaid and beaten. On the 21st both parties collected in force, and at a village in Tyrone, from which the event took the name by which it is known, was fought the battle of the Diamond. The Protestants won the day, though outnumbered. Eight and forty Defenders were left dead on the field, and the same evening was established the first lodge of an institution which was to gather into it all that was best and noblest in Ireland. The name of Orangemen had long existed. It had been used by loyal Protestants to designate those of themselves who adhered most faithfully to the principles of 1688. Threatened now with a general Roman Catholic insurrection, with the Executive authority powerless, and determined at all events not to offer the throats of themselves and their families to the Roman Catholic knife, they [328] organised themselves into a volunteer police to prevent murder, and to awe into submission the roving bands of assassins who were scaring sleep from the bedside of every Protestant household. They became the abhorrence of traitors whose crimes they thwarted. The Government looked askance at a body of men who interfered with the time-honoured policy of overcoming sedition by tenderness and softness of speech. But the lodges grew and multiplied. Honest men of all ranks sought admission into them as into spontaneous Vigilance Committees to supply the place of the constabulary which ought to have been, but was not, established; and if they did their work with some roughness and irregularity, the work nevertheless was done. By the spring of 1797 they could place twenty thousand men at the disposition of the authorities. In 1798 they filled the ranks of the Yeomanry, and beyond all other influences the Orange organisation counteracted and thwarted the progress of the United Irishmen in Ulster, and when the moment of danger arrived, had broken the right arm of the insurrection. After this brief sketch of the origin of the movement it would not be surprising if the constitutions of the body inculcated intolerance, or even revenge. On the contrary, both these things are sternly prohibited, and their contraries expressly insisted on. A pious Brother of Portadown said:—"As Protestants we endeavour to make the Bible our rule and guide. We endeavour to love our neighbour as ourselves, we obey the constituted authorities, we maintain and uphold the law, we fear God and honour the Queen. We are firmly resolved to maintain our present position to the British Crown, and we deny the right of Mr. Gladstone to give us away, or to barter us for power. By the confession of his own followers, all his previous legislation for Ireland has been a failure, for if it be not so, why the present measure? We claim no ascendency, and we will submit to none. It was from our ancestors that ascendency received its death-blow. Ever since 1681 our leading doctrine

has been equality for all, without distinction of class or creed. By thrift and industry we have created a state of commercial prosperity which is a credit and an honour to the empire, while the Nationalist party under precisely similar conditions have discredited the empire, and by perpetual agitation, and not sticking to business, have brought every part of the country under their influence to degradation and poverty; besides which they have, by their repudiation of contracts, undermined the morality of their supporters all over Ireland. The Nationalist farmers prefer to have twenty-five per cent. off their rent by agitation or intimidation rather than to double or treble the productiveness of their land by hard work and the application of modern principles of farming. We have seen from the first that the whole movement was originated in roguery and sustained by roguery, and we see that it is carried on by roguery. We not only know the men who keep up the agitation, but we know the influences at work behind them. All their [329] talk is of Protestant ascendency. Can they point out a single instance in which we have the upper hand, or state anything in which we as Protestants have any advantage whatever? Mr. Gladstone himself cannot do it. He has said so in as plain terms as he can be got to use. But the time for talking is over. We have said our say, and we are prepared to do our do. The Papists round here are very confident that before long they will have a marked ascendency. They expect no less. Let them attempt it. We shall be ready to stand our ground. As the poet says, Now the field is not far off When we must give the world a proof Of deeds, not words, and such as suit Another manner of dispute."

A Home Ruler encountered casually showed some temper. He said:—"All the prosperity of which the Protestants boast is due to the fact that for centuries they have been the favoured party. England has petted them, and helped them, and encouraged them in every way. We were a conquered people, and these settlements of Methodists, and Presbyterians, and Quakers, and all the tag-rag-and-bob-tail of dissent, were thrown into the country to hold it for England, and to act as spies on the real possessors of the land, in the interests of England. They were, and are, the English garrison. They have no part with the natives, the original sons of the soil. What right, moral or legal, have these Colquhouns, these Galbraiths, these Andersons, to Irish soil? None but the right of the sword, the right of superior force. Other nations have succumbed to the yoke of England, the greatest tyrant with which the earth was ever cursed. The Scots and Welsh lick the boots of the English because it pays them to do so. The Irish have never given in, and they never will. For seven hundred years we have rebelled, and as an Irishman I am proud of it. It shows a spirit that no tyranny can break. What tyranny do we now undergo? The tyranny of a master we do not like, and in whom we have no confidence. We never agreed to accept the yoke of England. Now all we ask is to be allowed to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas, and after promising that we shall do so a bill is brought in which is a perfect farce, and which puts us in a far worse condition than ever. Some say that when once we get an Irish Parliament we can arrange these small details. And mind this, we shall exact considerably more because of English distrust and English meanness."

I note in Saturday's issue of the party sheets a quotation from an Irish-American paper, the *Saint Louis Republic*, which thus opines as to the policy of the Irish leaders:—

"They would better hold off until they have the bill out of the woods before they start a scrimmage over small details. Ireland and America will think any bill which establishes local government a progressive step of glory enough for one year. If Ireland cannot improve the law after it gets a Legislature it needs a few American politicians, more than an extra fund." How does this promise for the peace that is to follow this great measure of "Justice" to Ireland? With [330] the improved methods of the Irish-American politicians, who, on the establishment of an Irish Parliament, would inundate the country, finding in its chaotic and helpless state a fit subject for plunder, the meek-and-mild Radicals of the bread-and-butter type, who trollop through the lobbies after the Grand Old Bell-wether, would be highly delighted. How did the Items get into Parliament at all? Why did they desert the mothers' meetings, the Band-of-Hope committees, the five o'clock tea parties at which they made their reputations? There, indeed, they found congenial society, there they were listened to with rapt attention, there they could coruscate like Tritons among minnows. Among the blind a one-eyed man is King. The English Home Rule members are a collection of intellectual Cyclops. They can vote, though. They can walk about, and that suffices their leader. If weak in the head, they are strong in the legs. Legislation must in future be pronounced with a hard g, or to avoid confusion of terms, and to preserve a pure etymology, a new term is needed to describe the law-making of the Home Rule members. Pedislation might serve at a pinch. I humbly commend the term to the attention of my countrymen.

Judged by classification of its friends and enemies, Home Rule comes out badly indeed. The capitalists, manufacturers, merchants, industrial community, professional men are against it. Six hundred thousand Irish Churchmen are against it. Five hundred thousand Methodists and Presbyterians are against it. Sixty thousand members of smaller denominations are against it. A hundred and seventy-four thousand Protestants in Leinster, and a hundred and six thousand in Munster and Connaught are against it. The educated and loyal Roman Catholic laity are against it. All who care for England and are willing to join in singing "God save the Queen" are against it. On the other hand amongst those who are for it, and allied with them, we find the dynamiters of America, the Fenians and Invincibles, the illiterate voters of Ireland, the idlers, the disloyal, the mutilators of cattle, the boycotters, the moonlighters and outragemongers, the murderers, the village ruffians, the city corner boys, and all the rest of the blackguards who have flourished and been secure under the Land League's fostering wing. Are we to stand quietly aside and see the destinies of decent people entrusted to the leaders of a movement which owes its success to such supporters? Are Englishmen willing to be longer fooled by a Government of nincompoops?

Those who have studied the thing on the spot will excuse a little warmth. And then, I am subject to a kind of Dillonism. I am exasperated at the recollection of what may possibly take place next year.

Portadown, July 18th.

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[331]

No. 50.—THE HOLLOWNESS OF HOME RULE.

ToC

This beautiful watering place cannot be compared with the celebrated holiday resorts of England, Wales, Scotland, or France without doing it injustice. It is unique in its characteristics, and globe-trotters aver that earth does not show a spot with an outlook more beautiful. From the beach the view of the mountain-bordered Lough extends for many miles seaward. On the opposite slopes to the right are the fresh green pastures and woods of Omeath, backed by the Carlingford mountains. On the left are wooded hills a thousand feet high which lead the eye to the Mourne Mountains at Rostrevor, where is the famous Cloughmore (Big stone), a granite block nine feet high by fifteen feet long, poised on the very apex of the mountain in the most remarkable way. How it got there is indeed a puzzle, as it stands on a bed of limestone nine hundred and fifty-seven feet above sea level. You can see it from the square of Warrenpoint, four miles away, and no doubt good eyes would make it out at a much greater distance. Geologists talk about the glacial age, and say that the boulder was left there by an iceberg from the north; but the mountain peasants know better. They know that Fin McCoul heaved it at Brian Boru, jerking it across the Lough from the opposite mountain five or six miles away, as an indication that he didn't care a button for his rival. These modern mountaineers are almost as easily gulled as their ancestors. They believe in Home Rule because they will, under an Irish Legislature, "get all they want." They have votes, and they use them under clerical advice. "I don't know anything about Home Rule except that we are to get all we want." Those are the very words of an enlightened and independent elector resident near Cloughmore. Never was there more simple faith, or more concise *credenda*. The Newcastle programme is comparatively unpromising. The wildest Radical, the most advanced Socialist, never came up to this. The Grand Old Man himself in his most desperate struggles for place and power, never exactly promised everything that everybody wished. To get all you want is, indeed, the *summum bonum*, the Ultima Thule, the *ne plus ultra* of political management. After this the old cries of peace, retrenchment, and reform sound beggarly indeed. Never was there such a succinct and complete compendium of political belief. Nobody can outbid the man who offers "all you want." For compactness and simplicity and general satisfactoriness this phase of Home Rule diplomacy takes the cake. Failure to fulfil the promise is of course to be charged to the brutal Saxon. Meanwhile the promise costs nothing, and like sheep's-head broth is very filling at the price.

Not long ago the point in the Lough was a rabbit warren, whence the name. Before that the situation was too exposed to the incursions of rovers to tempt settlers, and Narrow-water Castle, built to defend the pass, was (and is) between the town and Newry. But times have changed. [332] Settlers flocked across from Ayr, from Troon, from Ardrossan, and other Scots ports lying handy. A smart, attractive town has sprung up, starting with a square a hundred yards across. Big ships which cannot get up to Newry discharge in the Lough by means of lighters. An eight-hundred-ton barque from Italy is unloading before my window. There is a first-rate quay, with moorings for many vessels. The harbour is connected by rail with all parts of Ireland, and in it seven hundred to eight hundred ships yearly discharge cargoes. The grassy beach-promenade is half-a-mile long, and an open tramcar runs along the shore for three miles. The residents are alive to the importance of catering for visitors, and the Town Commissioners, a mixed body, have provided bathing accommodation for both sexes. Galway, with thrice the population, a fine promenade, good sands, and a grand bay, has no such arrangements; and Westport has very little accommodation for tourists. The contrast between the North of Ireland and the South and West comes out in everything.

The Methodists and Presbyterians are strong in the town, to say nothing of the two Protestant Churches, one in Warrenpoint and another in the Clonallon suburb. The Catholic Chapel is counterbalanced by the Masonic Hall. Wherefore it is not surprising to learn that the bulk of the townsmen are staunch Unionists. The Nationalist papers have little sale hereabouts, the *Belfast News Letter* and the *Irish Times* having the pull. A business man, who has lived here for forty years, said:—

"We are fairly matched in numbers but the Conservatives have the wealth and respectability. The fishermen and labourers are nearly all Home Rulers, simply because they are Catholics. They are quite incapable of saying *why* they are Home Rulers, and some of them even profess to regard the proposed change with alarm, and say they prefer that things should remain as they are. But although they speak so fairly, yet when the time comes to vote, they vote as the priest

tells them. They have no option, with their belief. I don't blame the poor fellows one bit. I followed the report of the South Meath election petition very closely, and I know that the same kind of pressure was exerted here. At Castlejordan Chapel Father O'Connell commanded the people, in a sermon, to go to a Nationalist meeting, and said he would be there, and that their parish priest expected them to go. He said that if any were absent he would expect them to give a good and sufficient reason for their absence. On another occasion a priest met a number of men who were going to an opposition meeting, and turned them back with threats. These priests not only threatened to refuse extreme unction to persons who voted against the clerical party, but they also threatened personal violence, and then said, 'Don't hit back, for I have the holy sacrament on me.' Father John Fay, parish priest of Summerhill, County Meath, told his people that they must not look on him as a mere man; if they did they might have some prejudice against [333]
him, for all had their shortcomings. 'The priest is the ambassador of Jesus Christ, and not like other ambassadors. He carries his Lord and Master about with him, and when the priest is with the people Almighty God is with them.' That is what Father Fay reckoned himself. Almighty God, no less. He alluded to the consecrated wafers he had in his pocket. The doctrine of transubstantiation is here invoked to assist in carrying a Home Rule candidate of the right clerical shade. And all the awful language used from the altar, in the confessional, all the threats of eternal damnation, and burning in the fires of hell, all the refusals of mass, and to hear dying confessions, were directed against another section of the Home Rule party, and not against a Unionist at all. How does this promise for the working of an Irish Parliament?

"I note that the English Home Rule papers say nothing good of the bill. They are always praising the management of the Old Parliamentary Hand. They beslaver him with fulsome adoration. They cannot point out anything good in the provisions of the bill, nor in the central idea of the bill, but they must fill up somehow, and they praise his artfulness, how he dodged this, and dexterously managed that. They have nothing but admiration for his jugglery and House-of-Commons tricks. They bring him down to the level of a practised conjuror or a thimblerigger. But, with all his wonderful cleverness, he is not admired or supported by any intelligent body of public men. The gag-trick ought to settle him. We in Ulster feel sure that a general election to-morrow would for ever deprive him of power. Of course the Old Hand knows that, and will not give the country an opportunity of pronouncing judgment. He and his flock of baa-lambs will put off the day of reckoning as long as ever they can. Either on the present or next year's register he is bound to be badly beaten. His course is clear. He used to have three courses open to him, but now he has only one. He must try to weather the storm until he has a chance of faking the voters' lists so as to improve his own chances. It is said that Mr. Henry Fowler is already preparing such a scheme. Like enough. If tricks will win, I back the G.O.M. There are more tricks in him than in a waggon-load of monkeys. The strangest thing I ever saw or ever heard of is the calmness with which the English people take the proposition that Ireland shall manage English affairs, while Ireland is to manage her own without any interference. I should have expected the British workman to processionise about this. I should have thought the British middle-classes would have been up in arms at the bare thought of so monstrous a proposition. And so they would if they thought it would become law. But, like us, they know there will never be any Home Rule. Then, they are not so nervous as we in Ireland are, because they don't know as we do what Home Rule really means.

"No earthly power can assist the Irish peasantry so long as they remain under the dominion of [334]
the priests. Popery is the vampire that is sucking the life-blood of the country. It is fashionable nowadays to abstain from denouncing other religious systems, on the plea of toleration. I agree with perfect toleration, and I am not desirous of making reference to Romanism. But they force it upon us. The Papist clergy say that the poverty of the country is due to English rule. We who live here know that it is due to Romish rule. How is it that all Protestants are well off, and make no complaint? How is it that their children never run barefoot? How is it that their families are well educated, that their dwellings are clean, and that they pay their way? Home Rule may impoverish those whom the teachings and habits of Protestantism have enriched, but neither Home Rule nor anything else will enrich those whom Popery has impoverished. England should turn a deaf ear to the cry for Home Rule, which means the ruin of her only friends in Ireland, and unknown damage to herself. To give her enemies the means wherewithal to damage her is very midsummer madness."

The difference between Protestant and Roman Catholic farmers was shown in striking contrast on the Marquess of Lansdowne's estate in Queen's County. Most of the tenants were non-judicial, and the total rents amounted to £7,000, of which the Marquess allowed £1,100 to be annually expended on the estate. In 1886 the tenants demanded thirty-five per cent. reduction on non-judicial and twenty-five per cent. on judicial rents, threatening as an alternative to adopt the Plan of Campaign. The Marquess refused to comply with this exorbitant demand, but offered reductions of fifteen to twenty-five per cent. on non judicial rents. The tenants declined to pay anything, and the landlord enforced his rights, Mr. Denis Kilbride, M.P., declaring that "these evictions differed from most of the other evictions to this extent,—that they were able to pay the rent. It was a fight of intelligence against intelligence, a case of diamond cut diamond." Mr. Kilbride, who held a large farm at a rental of seven hundred and sixty pounds was one of the evicted. Another of these poor destitute, homeless tenants, brutally turned out on the roadside to starve, or die like a dog from exposure, was no sooner evicted than he entered a racehorse for the great contest of the Curragh. This victim of Saxon tyranny was named John Dunne, and his holding comprised more than thirteen hundred acres. Let us hope the colt did him credit. Let us trust that the evicted quadruped carried off the blue ribbon of Kildare. For under the Lansdowne "Rack-rents" the struggling farmer could barely keep one racehorse, which, like the fabled ewe-

lamb of ancient story, was his little all. Perhaps Mr. Dunne's colt was related to that well-bred travelling horse, of which the picture adorned the walls of Limerick and its vicinity, and which gloried in the name of Justice to Ireland. There were no evicted Protestants on the Lansdowne estate. Every Protestant farmer paid his rent and steadfastly refused to join the Plan of Campaign.

The injustice of an Irish rent largely depends on the question, To whom is it due? A good [335] Nationalist may draw a higher rent than a Loyalist. A sound Home Ruler may ask for and insist on an exorbitant rent, but he is never denounced by the Nationalist press. The Corporation of Dublin is red-hot in the matter of patriotism. Its Parnellite members have from time to time comprised the pick of the Nationalist agitators. The Dublin "patriot" press has ever been foremost in denouncing Rack-rents. But the city of Dublin is a landlord. It has agricultural tenants who are never allowed under pain of eviction to get into arrears. The members of the Corporation fixed the rents, and, strange to say, the tenants at the first opportunity appealed to the Land Commissioners. Six of them holding four hundred and twenty-seven acres of land, were paying £883 16s. 4d. The rent was therefore over £2 an acre, which is perhaps double the average. The Government valuation was £625 10s. The new rent was finally settled at £683, being an all-round reduction of twenty-three per cent. Lord Clanricarde is frequently denounced by Nationalists for excessive rents, lack of conscience, and non-residence. The Land Commissioners were unable to deduct anything like twenty-three per cent. from the Clanricarde rent-roll. The Councillors of Dublin were never upbraided, nor put in danger of their lives. The Loughrea people shot Lord Clanricarde's agent, his driver, his wife, and several other people, in protest against the Clanricarde rents and to encourage the landlord to live on the estate. About a dozen were murdered altogether. Surely these parallel cases should demonstrate the utter hollowness of the Home Rule agitation.

The Protestants of Warrenpoint, like those of Newry and Belfast, are confident of their ability to hold their own. Their attitude is very different from that of the trembling heretics of Tuam or Tipperary. They are strong in numbers, discipline, and resolution, and in addition to upholding their own personal cause they declare that their isolated co-religionists in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught shall not be forsaken nor left to their own shifts. A rough and ready farmer thus spoke forth his mind:—"England may give the Papists a Parliament to manage Papists, but not to manage Protestants. We should never begin to consider the advisability of submitting to it. The thing's clean impossible. What! Let Papists tax us! Pay for the spread of Popery! Did you ever hear anything so absurd? Not one farthing would *I* ever pay. I'd leave the country first. So would all the decent, industrious folks. We know what happens in every country where Popery gets the mastery. Look at Spain, Italy, and the Catholic parts of Ireland. If England sends an army of redcoats to punish us for our loyalty, we shall give way at once. We've sense enough to know that we could do nothing against the Queen's troops, even if we wished to fight them. But to take arms against the soldiers of England would be quite against our principles. What we should ultimately do, under military compulsion, we have not yet decided, but we should never under [336] any circumstances show fight against the Queen. We don't think the day will ever come when England would send the military to shoot us for sticking to England. As for the police of the Irish Parliament, that's another thing. They would have no assistance in Ulster. The sheriff's officers, when engaged in the compulsory raising of taxes, would have a lively time, and I am sure they would never get any money. We don't take it seriously yet. If the bill were actually on the statute book and an Irish House of Commons doing the Finnigan's wake business with the furniture legs of the College Green Lunatic Asylum, even then we would not take it seriously. We shall never think it worth while to be serious until we see the British army firing on us. It's too ridiculous. We pay no attention to the Irish Nationalist members, whom we regard as a bankrupt lot of bursted windbags. Why, hardly one of them could be trusted with the till of a totty-wallop shop. To how many of them would Gladstone lend a sovereign? How many of them could get tick in London for a new rig-out? Dublin is out of the question, of course, because in Dublin these statesmen are known. Would Englishmen let such men govern their country? Not likely. Nor will we."

I submitted that, so far as at present enacted, these very heroes were really going to govern both England and Ireland. The great organ of English Roman Catholicism objecting to this has given great offence to the Irish Papists, and the Nationalist press is shrieking with futile rage. English Catholicism and Irish Catholicism seem to be entirely different politically. Englishmen are Englishmen first, and Catholics next. Irishmen look first to Rome, and cordially hate England, —there is the difference. The Conservative Catholic organ says, referring to the retention of members at Westminster:—

"With just as much reason might we import a band of eighty South Africans, and whether they were eighty Zulus or eighty Archangels in disguise, their presence in the British House of Commons would be a gross violation of the principles of representative government. At present, as members of the common Parliament of an United Kingdom, English and Irish members have correlative rights, but when Irish affairs are withdrawn from the Parliament at Westminster, on that day must the Irish members cease to take part in purely British legislation. We are asked to grant Home Rule to Ireland in deference to the wishes of the local majority, and then we are told we must let the local majority in Great Britain be dictated to by eighty men who have neither stake in the country nor business in her Parliament, and who do not represent so much as even a rotten borough between them."

My Warrenpoint friend may well say that he cannot take it seriously. The dignity of the English Parliament is, however, a matter of great concern to Englishmen, and that for the present seems consigned to the charge of Dillon, Healy, and Co. And all to further the Union of Hearts. Yet [337]

Misther Tay Day Sullivan, not content with the management of both England and Ireland, proposes to oust us from India! The Irish faction will boss the wuruld from ind to ind. Begorra, they will. Tay Day says:—

England fears for India,
For there her cruel work
Was just as foul and hateful
As any of the Turk.
But when God sends us thither
Her rule to overthrow,
With fearless hearts rejoicing
To work His will we'll go.
Stupid little England
Thinks to say us nay,
But paltry little England
Shall never stop our way.

There is a tribute of affection! There is an outpouring of loyalty! There is an anthem to celebrate the Union of Hearts! It should be sung round a table, Gladstonians and Irish Home Rulers hand in hand, as in "Auld Lang Syne," and given out by Pastor W.E. Gladstone, as short metre, two lines at a time. Why not? Stranger things are happening every day.

Warrenpoint, July 20th.

No. 51.—THE IRISH PRESS ON "FINALITY."

ToC

Englishmen who have any doubt remaining anent Home Rule should read the Irish Nationalist press. Those who propose to concede the measure for the sake of peace and finality should read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the *United Ireland* leader, which commences: "Let it be pretended no more that the fate of the present Home Rule Bill is henceforth a matter of vital interest to us," and afterwards says, "We shall have to go on fighting—to go on fighting—without even a temporary intermission, and whether this bill pass or not, this year or next, or the year after, no matter what becomes of it." "Mr. Gladstone's bill in its present form is exactly such a Central Council as Mr. Chamberlain would have agreed to at the time of the Round Table Conference. If it pass it can be no more than a milestone on our march. To talk of finality any more would be simply grotesque, and yet the Gladstonians have urged, in season and out of season, that the bill would be nothing if not 'final, reasonably final.'" The English Home Rulers are dealt with as severely as the most hardened Unionist could wish. The writer speaks of their "disastrous fatuity in consuming the whole of this session of the Imperial Parliament, and the greater part of one or two more, over a Home Rule Bill which will settle nothing, no, not even for three years." Disastrous fatuity is a good phrase, an excellent good phrase, in sooth. I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word. Those who believe [338] in the security of the Gladstonian safeguards, and the pacific disposition of the Nationalist party, will perhaps be able to put a friendly construction on the passage which begins:—"And it is already settled that no man in Ireland is to bear a rifle unless he be a soldier of the army of occupation, which will still be encamped on our soil 'to mak siccare.' This hateful and degrading prohibition is what no Parnellite can pretend to consent to for any reasonable or unreasonable fraction of a period of reasonable finality." Those who believe in the severe commercial morality and rigid honesty of the authors of the Plan of Campaign will doubtless find their favourable opinion confirmed by the succeeding remarkable complaint. "And the Irish Legislature—would it not be better policy now to refuse to regard it as a Parliament and to refuse to call it so?—is forbidden to take away any person's property except by process of law, in accordance with settled principles and precedents. There's trouble here." There is indeed trouble here. An Irish Parliament which could not "take away any person's property except by process of law" would be shorn of its principal functions, would fail to justify its existence, would fall immeasurably short of the popular expectation, would have, in fact, no earthly *raison d' être*. An Irish Parliament without power to take from him that hath, and give unto him that hath not, would be without functions, and the foinest pisintry in the wuruld would instantly rebel against such a nonentity. The farmers remember the oft-repeated statements of Mr. Timothy Healy to the effect that "landlordism is the prop of the British Government, and it is that we want to kick away." And the benefit accruing from this vigorous action was by the same eloquent patriot very plainly stated. "The people of this country ought never to be satisfied so long as a single penny of rent is paid for a sod of land in the whole of Ireland." And they never will be satisfied, with or without rent. Their dissatisfaction has enabled Mr. Healy to put money in his purse. The wail of a great people whose Parliament will not be allowed to rob from all and sundry is accounted for towards the close of

the article. There will be trouble "as soon as the Dublin Legislature becomes hard pushed for money, which will be desperately often from the beginning, as is now plain."

These considerations are closely observed by the people of Strabane, the best of whom are steady loyalists. The town is bright, brisk, thriving, and Scotch. Or rather the Scottish element is conspicuous in the main street, with its McCollum and Mackey, its Crawford and Aikin, its Colhoun and Finlay, its Lowry and McAnaw. There are several shirt factories, of which the biggest is run by Stewart and Macdonald. A number of names which may be either English or Scotch are equally to the front, Taylor, White, and Simms, cheek by jowl with doubtful cases like McCosker and McElhinney, which, however, smack somewhat of the tartan. Macfarlane issues a notice, which is printed by Blair, and besides White I notice Black and Gray. The establishment of [339] Mr. Snodgrass, near the Scotch Boot Stores, was remindful of Charles Dickens, and the small flautist piping "Annie Laurie," put me in mind of Robert Burns, the hairdresser of Warrenpoint. It became difficult to realise that this was Ireland. Not far away are two mountains, named respectively Mary Gray and Bessie Bell. The hills round Strabane retain their Irish names, but the genius of the place is distinctly Scottish. There are Irish parts of Strabane, but they are unpleasant and unimportant. The Unionists pay three-fourths of the rates, but there is only one Loyalist on the Town Council, which has nine members, of which number three retire annually in rotation. The Town Commissioners, as a whole, are not highly esteemed by the people of Strabane. One of them, the leading light of the local Nationalist party, is rated at £8. Another, a working plasterer, is the accredited agent of the Home Rule party in this division of Tyrone, and is playfully called the Objector-General, on account of his characteristic method of working in the Registry Court. The Chairman, who occupies the position of Mayor, but without the title, is rated at £13. Two small publicans are rated at £12 and £27 respectively. The remainder, including the Conservative member, are rated sufficiently high to be regarded as having some stake in the country, and no objection is taken on this score. But the Strabane Town Commissioners are intolerant. Apart from the fact that they admit only one Unionist to a body which derives three-fourths of its funds from Unionists, they are distinctly intolerant in the matter of employment. They employ no Protestants. Their solicitor, Mr. William Wilson, is indeed of the proscribed faith, but he seems to have inherited the office from his father. No Protestants need apply for any situation, however small, under the Strabane Town Council, which pays its servants with the money of Protestants. This is the party which clamours for equality of treatment, and eternally complains of the exclusiveness of Protestantism. A well-known Strabaner said:—

"If we are shut out from the Town Council, it is, to some extent, our own fault. Two causes mainly contributed to this result—the apathy of the Unionist voters, and the unwillingness of our best men to rub up against some of the men put forward by the other party. I say some only, not all. We did not care to be mixed up with fellows of low class, especially when they are as ignorant as possible. Then again, we are well represented on the Poor Law Board, which really has all the power, attending as it does to sanitation and so forth. The Nationalists greedily snap at every shred and semblance of power, and leave no stone unturned to get the mastery. There has come a sad change over the poor folks, that is, the Roman Catholics. Formerly they were civil and kind, and we all got on famously together. If a Protestant was out in the country a mile or two away, and rain came on, they were hospitable with that beautiful old courtesy which was one of the best things the nation possessed. It was something to boast of. It was unique, and could not be found [340] in such perfection out of Ireland. It's all over now. Since Mr. Gladstone commenced to destroy the country the poor folks hereabouts have changed very much for the worse, and if you now got caught in a shower while out in the country you might be drowned before they would ask you to take shelter. They expect to be enjoying our property very shortly. They fully believe that they will soon have the land and goods that we have worked for and earned by the sweat of our brows, while they have stood by complaining, instead of doing their best to get on. What shall I do if Home Rule becomes law? Just this—I shall get out of the country in double-quick time. There will be no security for life or property. The country will be a perfect Hell upon Earth."

There are three rivers at Strabane, which, notwithstanding the neglect of the guide-books, is well worth the tourist's attention. The Mourne, a really beautiful river, runs beside the town, washing the very houses of a long street, and meeting the Finn, another fine river, in the meadows near Lifford, which is in Donegal, but for all that only ten minutes' walk from Strabane. From the confluence the river is called the Foyle, so that from the splendid bridge leading into Lifford may be seen the rare spectacle of three considerable rivers in one meadow. Lifford is very clean and very pretty. The gaol is the most striking building, and I wandered through its deserted corridors, desolate as those of Monaghan. There were some strange marks in the principal square; a number of parallel lines which puzzled me. I turned to the gaoler who had just liberated me for some explanation.

"Faith, thin, it's the militia officers that made them."

"Studying fortification?"

"Divil a fortification, thin. 'Tis lawn tennis it is, jist."

And so it was. Two courts of lawn tennis in the square of the county town of Donegal! That will give some idea of the business traffic.

An experienced electioneerer said:—"We had an awful fight before we could return Lord Frederick Hamilton for North Tyrone. We had all our work cut out, for although we have on paper a majority of about one hundred, many of our people are non-resident landlords, or army and navy men, and they are not here to vote for us. So that our majority of forty-nine was a close thing, though not so close as we expected. The other side do not fight fair. Their tricks in the

Registry Court are most discreditable. Both parties fight the register, the Nationalists expending any amount of time and money, and showing such enthusiasm as our people never show. And this is the reason. Our Scots farmers—for they are as Scottish as their ancestors of two hundred years ago—*will* stick to their work, and persist in making their work the paramount concern of their lives. They cannot believe that objections will be made to their names on the register, and when such objections have been raised they must appear in person, and there comes the difficulty. For [341] if it's harvest time, or if engaged on any necessary work, you cannot get them to the Court. At Newtonstewart where the bulk of the voters are Protestant, no less than five substantial farmers were objected to successively. The inspector, that is, the Nationalist agent who is supposed to look into the claims of the Unionist party, said that one had assigned the farm to his son, or that another was not the real tenant, or that something else was wrong, and as this statement established a *primâ-facie* case, it became necessary for the persons whose votes were questioned to come into Court. Now, there is the rub. The objector calculates that some will not come, for he knows how hard it is to get them to come. Then they stuff the register with bogus names. They put down dozens of people who don't exist, with the object of polling somebody for them—if any of them should escape the scrutiny of the opposite party—and with the further object of causing the Unionist party expense and loss of time. For there is a stamp duty of threepence to be paid for every objection, and then the Loyalist lawyer and his staff are kept at work for six weeks, instead of a fortnight or three weeks, which should be the outside time taken. Then the annoyance and loss of time to the industrious Unionist voters, who have to leave their work. This does not hurt the opposite party, who have nothing else to do, and who in these wrangling affairs are in their native element, thoroughly enjoying themselves. What makes the work so hard for the Loyalist lawyer is the fact that our folks are all for business and look upon politics as a nuisance, while the other side make politics the principal business of their lives. They are tremendously energetic in this, but wonderfully supine in everything else. In politics they spare neither time nor money, nor (for the matter of that) swearing. The lying that goes on in the Registry Court would astonish Englishmen. The Papist party themselves admit that they are awful liars, but they laugh it off, and plead that all is fair in love and war.

"The priest sits in the Revision Court all day long. In these Revision Courts every priest is an agent of the Separatist party. They watch the inspectors and witnesses, keeping a keen eye on those who do not swear hard enough, ready to reward or censure, as the case may be. Every Sunday the people are instructed from the altar as to their political action. This eternal elbowing-on keeps them up to their work, as well as the promises of the good things to come. Our folks are never worked up. That makes it very hard for us. They came up pretty well last time, though. But when one side is all for business, and the other side all for politics, the business folks are handicapped.

"The Nationalists ran John Dillon on one occasion. We smashed him up. No respectable constituency would ever return any of his class, and we resented the attempt to couple us with a man of that stamp. He was beaten by several hundreds. Then they ran a Mr. Wylie, who had been a Land Commissioner for this district. We thought that positively indecent, and we wondered that [342] any gentleman would put himself in such a position. He had been round here reducing rents, and then he came forward as a candidate. We accuse him of bad taste, nothing worse. He only made one speech, though, and that was to thank the people for placing him at the bottom of the poll. He confined himself to canvassing. If he had once mounted the hustings we would have heckled him about the Land Commission business. He knew that and never gave us a chance. It was a cute stroke of policy to bring him forward. He was a Presbyterian, and might be Land Commissioner again. At least the people thought so. Then they tried a Professor Dougherty, of Londonderry, another Home Rule Presbyterian; for there are a few, though you could count them off on your fingers, and they are a hundred times outnumbered by the Conservative Catholics. He belonged to Magee College, and we trotted out the whole of his co-professors against him. We never had a meeting without one or other of his colleagues pitching into him—a great joke it was.

"Over the water Mr. E.T. Herdman tried to get in for East Donegal, a very popular man who pays thirty or forty thousand pounds a year in wages. The people promised to support him. The priests promised to support him. They asked what would they do else, and what did he take them for? They are so anxious about employment, these good men. All they want is the good of the people. You saw how they ran after the Lord Lieutenant saying: Only find us work! You see how they run after the Countess of Aberdeen, who is encouraging industry (and about whom there are some pickings). What did the people of East Donegal do, under the guidance of their clergy? They returned Arthur O'Connor, who never did anything for them, who never darkens their doors, and who is utterly unknown to them. What can you say for them after that?"

The politician who was preferred to Mr. Herdman probably promised to give the people "all they want," while the Unionist was only paying them wages for working all the year round. And besides this, Mr. O'Connor's speeches were probably more full-flavoured, more soul-satisfying, than those of Mr. Herdman, who, being a practical man of business, and having a sense of responsibility, would only talk common-sense, and would promise no more than he could hope to perform. Mr. O'Connor speaks in the epic style. He reminds you of Bombastes Furioso, or Ancient Pistol, with a subtle admixture of Falstaff and Parolles. He belongs to the lime-light and blue fire school of oratory, and backs up a vivid imagination with a virulent hatred of England. The raging sea of sedition which surged around us is now silent enough. It Now hath quite forgot to rave While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave. The reason why is plain or should be plain to anything above the level of a Gladstonian intellect. It cannot be amiss, though, to recall a specimen of Mr. Arthur O'Connor's style, that so we may judge of his superior acceptability to the [343] people of East Donegal. Speaking after the Union of Hearts had been invented and patented

(provisionally), Mr. O'Connor said:—

"I know it to be a fact that in whatever war Great Britain may be involved, whatever Power she may have to struggle with, that Power can count on a hundred thousand Irish arms to fight under her flag against Great Britain—(great cheering). Does not the Government of the United States know perfectly well that at three days' notice it could have a force, of which one hundred thousand would only be a fraction, a force willing to serve against Great Britain for the love of the thing, without any pay?—(renewed applause). And it is not amiss that the Government of England should know it also"—(continued applause). The M.P. who made this speech is one of the politicians now dominating the English Parliament at Westminster. It is in response to the clamour of him and his sort that the gag is put on men like Balfour, Goschen, Chamberlain. This little gem set in the silver sea, this isle, this realm, this England, is becoming a paltry concern, is fast being Gladstoned into drivelling imbecility. What does O'Connor mean by the 100,000 Irish arms? Does he mean 50,000 Irishmen? The point is obscure, as will be seen from the oratory of another distinguished patriot, who said, "Ten millions of Irish hearts are beating with high anticipation, ten millions of eyes are looking forward to the passing of the bill." A very large number of one-eyed Irishry.

The *Irish Catholic* makes a slip. The journal approves of Mr. Gladstone's closure, but with reference to the refusal of a newspaper to print a Dr. Laggan's letter about, something delivers itself thus:—

> The application of the gag in polities has always been the resort of the stupid, incapable, and tyrannical politician. Whether tried in Russia, in France, or in England of old, it has invariably failed in its purpose. The stifling of the individual voice becomes of small advantage when the object-lesson of its possessor with a bandage across his mouth, and his hands tied behind his back, is presented to the populace. Just as the gag has failed elsewhere it is, we are glad to think, destined to fail in Ireland also, and, indeed, if it were not so destined, Ireland would be precisely the best country to live out of.

So much for absent-mindedness. It is pleasant to be able to agree with the *Irish Catholic* for once.

On the whole, the confusion is deepening. The Grand Juries of Ireland are passing unanimous resolutions condemning the bill. The Nationalist party condemns the bill. The Scottish Covenanters, who have not delivered a political pronouncement for more than two hundred years, and who never vote either way, have risen in their might and cursed the bill, smiting the Papists hip and thigh with great slaughter, and denouncing the movement as purely in the interests of Romanist ascendency. Be it understood that these religionists live in Ireland and date their malediction from Coleraine. But nothing will stop the G.O.M.'s gallop over the precipice. Let him go, but let him not drag the country after him. And in after years his Administration will be [344] described in words like those of Burke, who, speaking of the Gladstone of his day, said, "He made an Administration so checked and speckled, he put together a piece of joinery so crossly indented and whimsically dovetailed, a cabinet so variously inlaid, such a piece of diversified mosaic, such a tesselated pavement without cement, that it was indeed a curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch and unsure to stand upon. The colleagues whom he had assorted at the same boards, stared at each other, and were obliged to ask, 'Sir, your name?' 'Sir, you have the advantage of me. Mr. Such-a-one, I beg a thousand pardons.' I venture to say that persons were there who had never spoken to each other in their lives until they found themselves together they knew not how, pigging together heads and points in the same truckle bed." This is prophecy.

Have you heard that Mr. Balfour, who went through Ireland without an escort, is unable to move about England without the protection of a hundred and fifty mounted police to save him from English Home Rulers who are burning to avenge the wrongs of Ireland? No? England is badly served in the matter of news. They manage these things better in Ireland. A leading Dublin Nationalist print has a number of prominent headlines referring to the "facts." "The Arch-Coercionist Protected by Police. Caught in His Own Trap." The writer even goes into particulars and tells how "effusively" the ex-Secretary thanked the police for protecting his "frail personality." The Irish moonlight patriots are gratified. Balfour was their aversion. During his reign it could no longer be said that the safest place in Ireland, the one spot where no harm could befall you, was the criminal dock. Balfour stamped out midnight villainy, and helped the industrious poor. Wherefore he is honoured by honest Irishmen and hated by all rascalry. Ireland needs him again with his *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*; his fairness and firmness, his hatred of tyranny, his determination to do right though the heavens should fall. With Balfour in office the Irish agitators have hard work to keep the broil agoing. They hate him because of the integrity which won the confidence of the Irish people, and because of the substantial benefit arising from his rule, a benefit there was no denying because it was seen and known of all men. The return of Balfour to power threatens to cut the ground from under the feet of those who live by agitation. They dread him above everything. They are horror-stricken at the prospect of a return to his light railways and heavy sentences. Hence this attempt to damage his prestige. Unhappy Mr. Balfour! To be protected by one hundred and fifty mounted police, and not to know of it! And the venal English press which conceals the fact, what shall be said of it? Where would England be but for Irish newspaper enterprise?

Strabane, July 22nd.

No. 52.—HOW THE PRIESTS CONTROL THE PEOPLE.

ToC

This is a terribly Protestant place. The people are unpatriotic and do not want Home Rule. They speak of the Nationalist members with contempt, and say they would rather be represented by gentlemen. They are very incredulous, and refuse to believe in the honesty of "honest" John Dillon. They say that Davitt is a humbug and Healy a blackguard. They speak of O'Brien's breeches without weeping, and opine that Davitt's imprisonments and Healy's horse-whipping served them both right. These misguided Irishmen affect to believe that the English laws are good, that Ireland is a splendid country, and that things would be far better as they are. Raphoe is on the road to nowhere, and yet it runs a rattling tweed mill—the proprietor is a Unionist, of course. Queer it is to see this flourishing affair in the wilds of Donegal. Blankets, travelling rugs, and tweed for both sexes, of excellent quality and pretty patterns. Raphoe has a cathedral, but without features of note. The bishop's palace is in ruins. In 1835 the bishopric was annexed to Derry. The police of this district are sad at heart. There are but few of them, very few indeed, and they have no work to do. These Protestant districts afford no pleasurable excitement. Work, work, work, without any intervals of moonlighting and landlord shooting. These Saxon settlers have no imagination. Like mill horses, they move in one everlasting round, unvaried even by a modicum of brigandage. An occasional murder, a small suspicion of arson, might relieve the wearisome monotony of their prosaic existence, but they lack the poetic instinct. They have not the sporting tastes of their Keltic countrymen. They are not ashamed of this, but even glory in it. An Orangeman asked me to quote a case of shooting from behind a wall by any of his order. He says no such thing ever took place, and actually boasted of it! He declared that if the body had in future any shooting to do they would do it in the open. The Nationalist patriots are more advanced. They know a trick worth two of that. The Protestant party have no experience in premeditated murder, and must take a back seat as authorities in the matter. They have not yet discovered that shooting from behind a wall is comparatively safe, and safety is a paramount consideration. Landlords and agents carry rifles, and should they be missed unpleasant results might ensue. The case of Smith, quoted in a Mayo letter, shows the danger of missing. It is not well to place the lives of experienced and valuable murderers at the mercy of a worthless agent. The Nationalist party cannot afford to expose to danger the priceless ruffians whose efforts have converted Mr. Gladstone and his Tail. The patriots need every man who can shoot, and the stone walls of Ireland are a clear dispensation of Providence. To shoot in the open is a flying in the face of natural laws. The patriots are wedded to the walls, or, as they call them in Ireland, ditches. The "back iv a [346] ditch" is a proverbial expression for the coign of vantage assumed for the slaying of your enemy. Like General Jackson, the Irish are Stone-wallers, but in another sense. They have brought the Art of Murder with Safety to its highest pitch of perfection. They are the leading exponents of mural musketry.

A moderate Unionist said:—"To speak of tolerance in the same breath with Irish Roman Catholicism is simply nonsense. You will not find any believers in this theory among the Protestants of this district, although being more numerous they are not so much alarmed as the unfortunate residents in Romanist centres. We cannot believe anything so entirely opposed to the evidence of our senses. A Protestant farmer of my acquaintance, the only Protestant on a certain estate, has confided to me his intention of leaving the district should the bill pass, because he thinks he could not afterwards live comfortably among his old neighbours. A woman who had occupied the position of servant in a Protestant family for forty years, recently went to her mistress with tears in her eyes, and said her clergy had ordered her to leave, as further continuance in the situation would be dangerous to her eternal interests. A girl who had been four years in another situation has also left on the same plea. The progress of Romanism is distinctly towards intolerance. It becomes narrower and narrower as time goes on. This is proved by the fact that formerly dispensations were granted for mixed marriages—that is, Catholic and Protestant—on the understanding that the children should be brought up, the boys in the father's faith, the girls in the mother's. All that is now changed, and dispensations are only granted on condition that all the children shall be Roman Catholics. The absolute despotism of the Catholic clergy is every year becoming more marked. They rule with a rod of iron. A bailiff of my acquaintance who had paid all his clerical dues, was very badly treated because he was a bailiff and for no other earthly reason. No priest in Ireland would perform the marriage ceremony for his daughter, who actually went to America to be married. She was compelled to this, the bridegroom going out in another boat. The ceremony being performed, they returned to Ireland, and the girl's father assures me that the affair cost him fifty pounds. The case of Mrs. Taylor, of Ballinamore, was a very cruel one, which a word from the priest of the district would have altogether prevented. But that word was not spoken, for she was a Protestant. Her brother had discharged a cotter, I do not know whether justly or unjustly, but although Mrs. Taylor had nothing whatever to do with the affair—and it was not asserted that she had—she was severely boycotted. The brother, who was the guilty party, if anybody was guilty, was rather out of the way, and being a substantial farmer, quite able to hold his own, could not be got at. But Mrs. Taylor was a widow, and lived by running a corn mill. Nobody went near it, nobody would have anything to do with the widow, who, however, struggled on, until the mill was burnt to the [347] ground. She was compensated by the County, and rebuilt the mill. This spring it was again burnt down, and she is ruined. Her property is now in the Receiver's hands, and she is going through

the Bankruptcy Court.

"The Home Rule Bill has produced, with much that is tragic, some comical effects. Since the passing of the Second Reading our servant has become unmanageable. She is evidently affected in the same way as many of the most ignorant Papists, believing that the time will soon come when, by the operation of the new Act, she will so far rise in the social scale as to be quite independent of her situation. This kind of thing is visible all around. There is work for everyone about here, but the farmers cannot get labourers. In many parts of Ireland the cry is 'There is no employment,' but here it is not so. There is plenty of work at good wages, waiting to be done, but men cannot be got to do it. The Sion Mills, which employ twelve hundred people, eight hundred Catholics and four hundred Protestants, would employ many more if they could be had. The labourers of this district are Catholic, and they prefer to stand loafing about to the performance of regular work. They believe that a perpetual holiday is coming, and that they may as well have a foretaste of the ease which is to come. Up to the times of the Home Rule Bill they were industrious enough. The Catholics of Tyrone and Donegal are not like those of the South and West. They are very superior, both in cleanliness and industry. Having for so long mingled with the Saxon settlers of the North, they have imbibed some of their industrial spirit, and until lately there was no reasonable ground of complaint. Their morale is unhappily now sadly shaken, and whether the bill passes or not it will be long, very long, before they resume their industrial pursuits with the energy and regularity of men who have nothing on which to depend but their own exertions. And whatever happens to the bill, the country will be the poorer for its introduction. Ireland is now an excellent country to live out of, and those who can leave it have the most enviable lot."

A man of few words said:—"Under Home Rule the landlords may take their hook at once. Their property will disappear instanter. The tenant has already more lien on the land than the fee-simple *in toto* is worth, and with a Nationalist Parliament he would pay no rent at all. The judges would not grant processes, and if they did their warrants could not be enforced. The destruction of the landlord class means the destruction of English influence in Ireland. A short time ago two men were talking together. One was doubtful, and said, 'Michael Davitt says we must have only five acres of land. Now you have twenty-five acres, you'll lose twenty.' 'Ye didn't read it right,' said the other. ''Tis the landlords and them that holds a thousand and two thousand acres that'll be dispossessed, and their land divided among the people. In six years we'll have the counthry independent, and then we'll do as we like. Every Saxon will be cleared out of the counthry. Only [348] keep yer tongue between yer teeth. Be quiet and wait a bit till ye see what happens.'

"'But,' said the objector, 'them Ulster fellows'll give us no peace. They have arms, and I'm towld they have a lot of sojers among them, and that they're drilled, and have officers, regular military officers. Sure, how would we do as we liked, wid an army of them fellows agin us? And they're devils to fight, they say.'

"'Arrah now, sure, ye're mighty ignorant, thin. Sure, they say they'll not pay taxes. Thin the sojers comes in and shoots them down, and you and I stands by wid our tongues in our cheeks. 'Tis no consarn of ours. We have nothin' to say to it, one way or another. The Orangemen can shoot the troops, and the troops can shoot the Orangemen, and they can murdher each other to their heart's contint, and fight like Kilkenny cats, till there's nothin' left but the tail. And good enough for the likes of them. Sure, twill be great divarshun for them that looks on. And that's the way of it, d'ye mind me?'"

This worthy politician must have been a perfect Machiavelli. His favourite saying was doubtless 'A plague on both your houses,' and with equal certainty his favourite quotation the bardic 'Whether Roderigo kill Cassio, or Cassio kill Roderigo, or each kill the other, every way makes my gain.' His theory of Nationalist progress was four-square and complete, and showed a neat dovetailing of means with the end. There is some justification for his simple faith. He has seen Mr. Gladstone and his supporters, converted *en bloc*, including the great Sir William Harcourt, styled by the Parnellite sheet "the new-born, emancipator of Ireland," the unambitious and retiring Labouchere, the potent Cunninghame Graham, the profound Conybeare, and the pertinacious Cobb—he has seen these great luminaries throwing in their lot with the sworn enemies of England, and doing all that in them lies to disintegrate and destroy the Empire, and the rude peasant may be pardoned for expecting that the British army will, at his call, complete what these worthies have so well begun. To narrow loyalist liberties, to tax loyalist industry, to create a loyalist rebellion, and to have the loyalists shot by other loyalists is an excellent all-round scheme. This is indeed a high-souled patriotism.

Continuing, my friend said:—"A Romanist neighbour of mine had promised to vote for Lord Frederick Hamilton, for, as he said, he had no confidence in any Irish Parliament. Just before the battle he called and said he must vote the other way, for Father Somebody had called on him and said, 'I hear you are going to vote for Lord Frederick Hamilton.' Admitted. 'Then you may call in Lord Frederick Hamilton to visit you on your death-bed. You can get him to administer the Sacraments of the Church.' 'What could I do?' said the farmer. 'I couldn't go against the priest. I could not incur the anger of my clergy without imperilling my immortal soul. Besides that, I'd be made a mark and a mock of. Perhaps I'd be refused admission to Mass, like the men in South [349] Meath who voted contrary to the orders of the priest. So to save my soul I'll have to vote against my conscience. No use in telling me we will vote by ballot. Them priests knows everything. They fix themselves in the polling booths, and they can read what way ye went in your face. Sure, they know us all inside and out, since we were So high. We couldn't desave them.' Then they always act as personation agents, and they order people who can read and write to say they can't do either. So they have to declare aloud whom they will vote for, and the priest hears for himself.

This is the true explanation of the fearful illiteracy of Donegal, as revealed by the voting papers. Is it likely that in one quarter of Donegal—that is, in one-fourth part of one county—there should be more illiterates than in the whole of Scotland? Yet according to the election returns, it was even so. The fact that the people declared themselves illiterate at the orders of the priest, when they were not illiterate, shows how degraded are the people, and how completely they are under the thumb of the priests."

A Protestant clergyman on his holidays, and not belonging to these parts, was very eloquent on the subject of political popery. In all my journeyings I have never interviewed a Protestant parson, save and except Dr. Kane, whom I met in the Royal Avenue, Belfast, along with the Marquess of Londonderry and Colonel Saunderson, as recorded in an early letter. I was disposed to believe that the English public might regard their evidence as being prejudiced, and therefore of little value. But my Raphoe acquaintance was a singularly modest and moderate man, upon whose opinion you at once felt you could rely. He said:—"My Catholic neighbours were friends until lately. Nobody could have been more kind and obliging. There was no sensible difference between us, except that they did not come to church. They would do anything for me and my family; we would do anything for them. Lately they have changed their manner. They have grown cold. Their children playing with mine have let out the secret. Through them we learn that the days of the Protestants are numbered. Father says this, and mother says that. My land is disposed of among my Papist neighbours. All my congregation have similar experiences. This makes things very unpleasant, and nothing can ever bring back the kind, neighbourly feeling of old. The Papist clergy are the cause of it all. Their church is nothing if not absolute, and dominancy is their aim. The Protestant party will get no quarter. I do not say we shall be murdered, or even personally maltreated. But when the large majority of a district want to see the back of you, with the idea of dividing your farm or your Church lands, they have many ways of making things so unpleasant that you would soon be glad to go. For my own part, I should endeavour to leave the country at the earliest possible moment. And that is what 999 Protestants out of 1,000 would tell you. The clergy are inimical to England. Here and there you find a Conservative, and, strange to say, the scholarly men, what you might call the gentlemanly party, [350] are against Home Rule. These, unhappily, are very few. The Maynooth men are violently against England." This cleric called attention to the opinion of Dr. Wylie, of Edinburgh, who has made a special study of the matter. The learned professor says the more palpable decadence of Ireland dates from the erection of Maynooth. Before the institution of this school the Irish priests were educated in France, then the least ultramontane country in popish Europe. They could not be there without imbibing a certain portion of the spirit of "Gallican liberties." It was argued that by educating them at home, we should have a class of priests more national and more attached to British rule; at least we would have gentlemen and scholars, who would humanise their flocks. These have since been shown to be miserable sophisms. "Maynooth is a thoroughly ultramontane school. We have exchanged the French-bred priest, illread in Dens, with low notions of the supremacy, and proportionally high notions of the British Crown, for a race of crafty, Jesuitical, intriguing, thorough-trained priests of the ultramontane school, who recognise but one power in the world—the Pontifical—and who are incurably alienated from British interests and rule. The loud and fearful curses fulminated from the altar, which come rolling across the Channel, mingled with the wrathful howls of a priest-ridden and maddened people, proclaim the result. These are your Maynooth scholars and gentlemen! These are your pious flocks, tended and fed by the lettered priests of Maynooth! Better had we flung our money into the sea, than sent it across the Channel, to be a curse in the first place to Ireland, and a curse in the second place to ourselves, by the demoralising and anti-national sentiments it has been employed to propagate. The better a priest, the worse a citizen. And whom have Government found their bitterest enemies? Who are the parties who have invariably withstood all their plans for civilising Ireland? Why, those very priests whom they have clothed, and educated, and fed."

Such, according to an expert, are the men who now manipulate the voting powers of the Irish people. The priests do not deny that they have this full control; they merely say they have a right to it. Bishop Walsh, of Dublin, says that as priests, and independent of all human organisations, they have an inalienable and indisputable right to guide the people in this momentous proceeding, as in every other proceeding where the interests of Catholicity as well as the interests of Irish nationality are involved. He suggested, and the suggestion was adopted, that at all the political conventions held in the various Irish counties an ex-officio vote should be given to the priests! This embodied the principle that if Home Rule became law the Irish priesthood would have privileges which would make them absolute rulers of Ireland. Cardinal Logue says:—"We are face to face at the present moment with a great disobedience to ecclesiastical authority." This was in view of the Parnellite rebellion against priestly dictation. "The doctrines of the present [351] day," said the good Cardinal, "are calculated (horror!) to wean the people from the priests' advice, to separate the priests from the people, and (here the Cardinal must have shivered with unspeakable disgust) TO LET THE PEOPLE USE THEIR OWN JUDGMENT." These are Cardinal's words, not mine. To make any comment would be to gild refined gold, to paint the lily, to throw a perfume o'er the violet. Well might Mr. Gladstone say nineteen years ago:—"It is the peculiarity of Roman theology, that by thrusting itself into the temporal domain, it naturally, and even necessarily, comes to be a frequent theme of political discussion." Archbishop Croke was the inspirer of the Tipperary troubles, worked out by his tools, Dillon, O'Brien, and Humphreys. Dr. Croke helped to found the Gaelic Athletic Association, which is well-known to be the nucleus of a rebel army. Dr. Croke gave £5 to the Manchester Murderers' Memorial Fund, and accompanied the gift with a letter stating that the men who murdered Police-sergeant Brett were "wrongfully arrested, unfairly tried, barbarously executed, and went like heroes to their doom." It was Dr. Croke who supported a movement to raise a pension for James Stephens, the Fenian Head-

centre, the famous Number One, the general of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood. We are asked to believe that this gentleman and his crew of subordinate clergy are eminently loyal, and that the moment a Home Rule Bill puts it into their power to injure England, from that very moment they will become friendly indeed, will cease to do evil and learn to do well, and that the altars from which England is now every Sunday hotly denounced will in future vibrate with the resonant expression of sacerdotal affection.

These gentlemen must have a wonderful opinion of the gullibility of the great Saxon race. But as they see a certain portion believe in Mr. Gladstone they may expect them to believe in anything. To swallow the G.O.M. plus Harcourt, Healy, Conybeare, Cobb, O'Brien, and the Home Rule Bill is indeed a wonderful feat of deglutition.

Raphoe, (Co. Donegal), July 25th.

No. 53.—WHAT THEY THINK IN COUNTY DONEGAL.

ToC

The Stranorlar people can be excessively funny. In a well-known public resort yesterday I witnessed a specimen of their sportive style. A young fellow was complaining that the examining doctor of some recruiting station had refused him "by raison of my feet."

"I heerd tell they wouldn't take men wid more than fifteen inches of foot on thim," remarked a bystander. "The Queen couldn't shtand the expinse at all at all in leather."

"Arrah, now, will ye be aisy," said another. "Sure, Micky isn't all out so bad as Tim Gallagher over there beyant, that has to get up an' go downstairs afore he can tur-rn round in bed. An' all on account iv the size iv his feet. 'Tis thrue what I spake, divil a lie I tell ye. The boy has to get up and go down shtairs, an' go into the sthreet, an' come up the other way afore he can tur-rn round, the crathur." [352]

"Hould yer whist, now, till I tell ye," said another. "Ye know Kerrigan's whiskey-shop. Well, one day Kerrigan was standin' chattin' wid his wife, when the shop-windy all at once wint dark, an' Kerrigan roars out, 'What for are ye puttin' up the shutters so airly?' says he. An' faix, 'twas no wondher ye'd think it, for ould Hennessy of Ballybofey had fallen down in the street, an' it was the two good-lookin' feet of him stickin' up that was darkenin' the shop. Ax Kerrigan himself av it wasn't."

A roar of laughter followed this sally, and the rejected recruit was comforted.

Stranorlar is pleasantly situated on the river Finn, in a fertile valley surrounded by an amphitheatre of green hills, beyond which may in some direction be seen the more imposing summits of the Donegal highlands. The walk to Meenglas, Lord Lifford's Irish residence, would be considered of wonderful beauty if its extensive views were visible anywhere near Birmingham; but in Ireland, where lovely scenery is so uncommonly common, you hardly give it a second glance. The tenantry are mostly Nationalist, if they can be said to be anything at all. They one and all speak highly of Lord Lifford, whose kindness and long-suffering are administered *con amore* by genial Captain Baillie. They have no opinions on Home Rule or, indeed, on any other political subject, and will agree with anything the stranger may wish. Whatever you profess as your own opinion is certain to be theirs, and like Artemus Ward they might conclude their letters with "I don't know what your politics are, but I agree with them." Every man Jack of the Catholic peasantry votes as he is told by his priest, and no amount of argument, no amount of most convincing logic, no earthly power could make him do otherwise. He will agree with you, will swear all you say, will go further than you go yourself, will clinch every argument you offer in the most enthusiastic way. Then he will vote in the opposite direction. He thinks that in voting against the priest he would be voting against God, and his religion compels him to conscientiously vote against his conscience, if any. A burning and shining light among the Home Rulers of Stranorlar having been indicated, I contrived to meet him accidentally as it were, and after some preliminary remarks of a casual nature my friend informed me that he was agin Home Rule, as, in his opinion, it would desthroy the counthry; that the farmers believed they would get the land for nothing, and that they were told this by "priests and lawyers;" that he believed this to be a delusion from which the people would have a dreadful awakening; that Protestants were better off, cleaner, honester than Catholics; that they were much more industrious and far better farmers, and so forth, and so forth. This man is a red hot Nationalist, and was under the impression he was "having his leg pulled," hence his accommodating speech. When taxed with flagrant insincerity he only smiled, and tacitly admitted the soft impeachment. Farmers you meet in rural lanes will profess earnest Unionism, but—find out their religion—you need ask no more. Whatever they may say, whatever their alleged opinions may be, matters not a straw. They must and will vote as the priest tells them. So that the last franchise Act endows every priest with a thousand votes or so. Will anybody attempt to disprove this? Will any living Irishman venture to contradict this statement? The fact being admitted, Englishmen may be trusted to see its effect. [353]

Is there any class or trading interest which would be by working men entrusted with such enormous power? And these thousand-vote priests are unfriendly to England, as is proved by their own utterances and by innumerable overt acts. All of which merits consideration.

The Stranorlar folks are warm politicians. At the present moment feeling runs particularly high, on account of the riot on King William's Day, to wit, July twelfth. Two Orangemen were returning from Castlefinn, a few miles away, where a demonstration had taken place, and passing through Stranorlar, accompanied by their sisters, they were set upon by the populace, and brutally maltreated. Several shots were fired, and some of the rioters were slightly wounded or rather grazed by snipe shot, but not so seriously as to stop their daily avocations. The Catholic party allege that the Orangemen assaulted the village in general, firing without provocation. The Protestant party say that this is absurd, and that it is not yet known who fired the shots. A second case, less serious, is also on the carpet. A solitary Orangeman returning from the same celebration is said to have been waylaid, beaten, and robbed by a number of men who went two miles to meet with him. This also is claimed as Orange rowdyism.

A Protestant handicraftsman said:—"If we had a Catholic Parliament in Dublin we should not be able to put our head out of doors. Those who in England say otherwise are very ignorant. I have no patience with them. Only the other day I heard an Englishman who had been in the country six hours, all of which he had spent in a railway train, arguing against an Irish gentleman who has spent all his life in the country. 'Give 'em their civil rights,' says this English fellow. He could say nothing else. Give 'em their civil rights,' says he. 'What civil rights are they deprived of?' says the other. 'Give 'em their civil rights,' says he. That was all he could say. He was for all the world like a poll-parrot. He was one of these well-fed fellows, with about three inches of fat on his ribs and three inches of bone in his skull, and a power of sinse *outside* his head. He turned round on me and asked me to agree with him. When I didn't he insulted me. 'I see by your hands,' says he, [354] 'that you've been working with them, and not with your brains,' says he. Well, he was a man with a gray beard, but not a sign of gray hair on his head, so says I, 'Your beard,' says I, 'is twenty-five years younger than the rest of your hair, and it looks twenty-five years older.' I see,' says I, 'that *you* have been working with your jaws and not with your brains.' That made him vexed. He didn't know what to say next, and 'twas well for him. He was too ignorant for this counthry, though he might do very well for them places where they vote for such men as Harcourt or the like of him.

"The people of these parts are skinned alive by their religion. Not a hand's turn can be done without money. Money for christening, for confession, for everything from the cradle to the grave. And when they're dead the poor folks are still ruining the counthry, for their relatives run up and down begging money to get their souls out of purgatory. I have no objection to that; let them do it if they like, but let them not say they are poor because of England. The more money they pay the sooner their father's or mother's soul is out of torment. Of course they spend all they have. I was speaking with a priest lately, and I said, 'Suppose I fell into Finn-water, and a man who saw me drowning said, "I'll pull ye out for half-a-crown or a sovereign," what would ye think of him?' Says the priest, 'I'd think him a brute and a heathen.' 'But suppose, instead of Finn-water it was purgatory I was in, and the priest said, "I'll pull ye out for five pounds," what about him?' 'Good morning to ye,' says the sogarth aroon (dear priest). There was no answer for me."

Another Stranorlar man said:—"When the bill passed the second reading, there was not a hill round about, for many a mile, without a blazing tar-barrel on it, and the houses were lit up till ye'd think the places were on fire. The people were rejoicing for they knew not what. Says one to me, 'Ye can pack up yer clothes,' says he. They think they will now get rid of the English, and have things all their own way. That's their general idea. All their rejoicing passed off without a word of dissent from any Unionist. But if we rejoiced—! Suppose the bill were thrown out, and we lit a tar-barrel. We'd be stoned, and, if possible, swept off the very face of the earth. On St. Patrick's Day, March 17, they march over the place, flags flying, drums beating, bands playing, and nobody says a word against it. But if we started an Orange procession on July 12 in Stranorlar, we'd be knocked into smithereens. And yet in the town we are about half-and-half. Of course, when you get out into the wild districts the Romanists greatly outnumber us. The plea of reduction of rent being required is very absurd when you come to examine the matter. Many of them pay three or four pounds a year only. What reduction on that sum would do them any real good?"

A land agent of Donegal showed me one page of a rent book, that I might bear witness to indisputable facts. There were twenty-one annual rents on the page, and eleven of them were [355] under two pounds—most of them, in fact, were under thirty shillings. One man held thirty-three acres for thirty-three shillings per annum. He had paid no rent for two years. Another estate in Donegal has two thousand tenants for a total rent of £2,800. The agent has to look after all these "farmers"—to conciliate, threaten, soother, bully, beg, pray, promise, cajole, hunt, treat, fight, curse, and comether the whole two thousand a whole year for, and in consideration of, the princely sum of a hundred and forty pounds. Many of the farmers have the privilege of selling turf enough to clear the rent several times over, and of course every man can shoot at the agent as much as he chooses, his sport in this direction being only limited by his supply of ammunition. Of late their powder has given out. Could not something be done for these deserving men?

A superior Home Ruler, one of those honest visionaries sometimes met in Ireland, said:—"For my own part, I confess that I aspire to complete independence. Then, and not till then, would the two countries be friendly. We in Ulster are ten times more patriotic than Irishmen elsewhere, for it is in Ulster that we have been most deeply wronged. The Hamiltons of Abercorn planted the country round here with Scotch settlers, and various agencies between 1688 and 1715 are said to have brought over more than fifty thousand Scottish families to Ulster, which was already

populated to its utmost extent. The Irish were dispossessed, kicked out, and they have been out ever since. The Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel took flight to save their heads, and six counties were declared confiscated—Londonderry, Donegal, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Cavan, and Armagh. These were all 'planted' with English and Scotch colonists. The land was given to certain favourites by the English Government, which at that time was the stronger, and has remained so ever since When we ask for our own again you cry out 'Robbery, robbery!' *We* are the people to say 'Stop thief!' You say the owners of the land rebelled, and their property was rightly confiscated. We say they had a right to rebel, and that rebellion was an honourable action. You took the country at first by force and fraud. We have, and always had, a right to regain what belongs to us, by any means in our power. We have never expressed affection for the English Crown. We have never affected loyalty. We have been open, honourable enemies, and have always said we were biding our time. We are accused of fraud, of duplicity. Never was any accusation so ill-founded. I can refer to a hundred, aye, to a thousand utterances of my countrymen which clearly set forth the sentiments which animate every single individual Irishman. These settlers are not Irishmen. Their best friends would never claim for them Irish nationality. Most of them came from the South-west of Scotland, where the most rigid and bigoted Presbyterianism flourished. Their creed, as well as ours, forbade any intermarrying. Separate they were, and separate they remain. You might as well try to mix dogs and cats. And the attitude of the two races is mutually antagonistic—exactly like dogs and cats. They have led a [356] dog and cat life from the first, and if the Scots have thriven while the Kelts have made little progress, it is because the Scots have been favoured by the English Government, which is composed of Teutons like themselves. Let the Scots stick to England. It suits them, it does not suit us. The Welsh don't like you either, but they have not the pluck to spit it out. They will tell Irishmen what they think, and it is not flattering to England. They are quite as bitter as Irishmen, and, like them, look on England as the biggest humbug, hypocrite, and robber in the world. I never heard a Welshman speak well of England, and I have spoken with scores of them. Now, we have a religious difference with England, which Taffy has not.

"We claim that our nation is more talented than stupid England, more sparkling, more brilliant. But we also say that as we are more sentimental, and as sentiment is to us a matter of life and death, we cannot develop our industries, we cannot do ourselves justice, while subjugated by England. Freedom is our watchword. We want an army, a navy, a diplomacy of our own. We do not admit that England has any right to control our action, and we defy any man to prove that any country has a right to dictate our laws. Independence must come in the long run. Everything is tending in that direction. We may not get Home Rule at present, but we *shall* get it. Then we shall be able to report progress. I believe that the material prosperity of this country will increase by leaps and bounds in exact proportion to the loosening of Saxon restraint, and freedom from selfish English interference. Our trade has been deliberately strangled, our manufactures deliberately ruined, by English influence on behalf of English interests. Then you ask us to believe that we have benefited by our union with England! We do not believe it. England has been the greatest modern curse, spreading her octopus arms over every weak country in the world. She goes to make money, and says she only wishes to push forward civilisation. Read Labouchere's opinion of England, and you will see what she is—a greedy, whining hypocrite. She holds India by fear, at the point of the bayonet—all for greed. Then her speakers get up on their philanthropic platforms, and after shooting a few thousand niggers and poisoning off the rest with rum, they say that such and such a country is now under the blessed rule of England, which is established merely for the propagation of the truth as it is in Jesus. You make out that your rum, rifles, and missionaries are only instruments in the hands of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Away with such hypocrisy! England is a big bully, crushing the weak and truckling to the strong—truckling to the weak, even, when fairly taken to. Look at the Transvaal. When I see what a handful of Dutch farmers did with your grand army—when I see how a country with less than a quarter of the population of Ireland freed itself and knocked your bold army into a cocked hat, I am ashamed to be an Irishman submitting to foreign rule. You will [357] at any rate see why we Irishmen in Ulster are even more rebellious than our southern countrymen. It is because these devilish plantations were in the North, and because we are outnumbered in the North by men who are really foreigners. Let them be loyal. No doubt it suits them best. But we will only be loyal to our country, which is Ireland, not England. And if these Scots, wrongly called Ulstermen, don't like the new arrangement, they can leave the country. No obstacle will be placed in the way of their departure. That I can promise you. They will leave the land, I suppose? That being so, we can spare the settlers. And as they got the land for nothing, they must be content to part with it on the same terms. Now you understand the No Rent cry. Now you understand the No Landlord cry. The land was stolen from the people, and the people carefully remember the fact. You hear Nationalists speaking ill of the Irish members. The members have done well for us. They have done grandly. Fourscore Irishmen have conquered the British Empire, and without firing a shot. That after all beats the record of the Boers, but they got complete independence. We are not yet there; but it will come, it will come."

An equally intelligent Unionist, who bore a Scottish name, said:—"Does it suit England to throw us overboard? Because that means the giving up of the country. You can't hold Ireland without a friend in it. Twice the Protestant population have saved it for you. Its geographical position forbids you to give it up. That would ruin you at once. And yet immediate separation would be far better than a wasting agitation. Better plunge over a precipice than be bled to death. Better blow out your brains than be roasted at a slow fire. England is being kicked to death by spiders. And all in the interests of Rome. If the people here had any opinions I would not say a word against anything they might do, but they have none at all. They show their teeth because they are told to do so. All the disturbances which disgrace the country are excited by the priests, who pretend to

disapprove of them, but who secretly approve. For the priests have the people thoroughly in hand, and whatever they really disapprove they can stop in one moment.

"There is an organised clerical conspiracy to resist the law and to keep the agitation on foot, with the object of obtaining a complete Catholic ascendency. They bleed the poor people to death with their exactions, and the number of new buildings they have lately erected in Ireland almost exceeds belief. We have a splendid new Romanist Church in this little place. Well may the people say they can't pay rent. When Cardinal Logue's father died there was a collection for the general Church which realised more than eight hundred pounds. When a priest dies or when a priest's relative dies there is always a collection for the cause. Eight hundred pounds out of the starving peasantry of Donegal, for whose relief the English are always collecting money! Cardinal Logue's father was Lord Leitrim's coachman, and was on the spot when my lord was shot. The horse fell [358] lame at the right moment. Curious coincidence—very. This Home Rule farce is growing rather stale. Cannot the English see that it is urged by a set of thieves and traitors? Cannot they see that brains and property are everywhere against it? And Gladstone's speeches show such ignorance of the subject that no Irishman can read or listen with common patience. To judge from his Irish orations I should say that he is not fit to be Prime Minister to a Parliament of idiots. What do you think?"

I was sorry to dissent, but I said that to the best of my knowledge and belief Mr. Gladstone was of all men best fitted for such a post.

Stranorlar (Co. Donegal), July 27th.

No. 54.—A SAMPLE OF IRISH "LOYALTY."

ToC

The country round here seems especially rich in minerals of all sorts. Bog-ore, to be spoken of as bog ore, is abundant, and manganese is known to exist in large quantities. Soapstone of excellent quality is also plentiful, and the peasantry will tell you that on the passing of the Home Rule Bill they will at once proceed to dig out the inexhaustible stores of gold, silver, lead, iron, tin, and coal, with which the district abounds. Ireland is a perfect El Dorado, and when the brutal Saxon shall have taken his foot off her throat, when Parlimint and the sojers allow the quarries to be worked, the mines to be sunk, the diamonds under Belfast to be dug up, the country will once more be prosperous, as in the owld ancient times, when the O'Briens and O'Connells cut each other's throats in peace, and harried their respective neighbourhoods without interference. Captain Ricky, of Mount Hall, is exploiting the bog-ore, and sending it to England by thousands of tons. The stuff is an oxide of iron and is used for purifying gas. The queerest feature of the use of bog-ore is the fact that when used up it is worth twenty-five per cent. more than before. Delivered to the gas companies at thirty shillings a ton, it fetches forty shillings when the gas-men have done with it. It seems to be composed of peat which by a few millions of years of saturation in water containing iron has become like iron-rust. The soapstone of Killygordon is used instead of fire-clay, and is also made into French chalk. Or rather it might be, but that the Captain declines to proceed with its extraction pending the Home Rule scare. There is much alder on the estate, which is watered by the river Finn. This is the right wood for the manufacture of clogs for the people of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Captain Ricky sends tons of these interesting articles to the sister isle. Men are turning out these favourite instruments of feminine correction, in a rough state, by boat loads. When the coster's done a-jumping on his mother, he should thank Ireland for his clogs. When the [359] festive miner rejoices, his dancing would lack the distinguishing clatter which is its richest charm, without alder grown on the banks of the Donegal Finn. The countries were made to run in harness. One is the complement of the other. The brainy dwellers of Hibernia know this, and stick like limpets to England. Only the visionary, the lazy, the ne'er-do weels, the incompetent, the disorderly, the ignorant, the ambitious, want Home Rule. The contemners of law and order want to flourish and grow fat. The Healys and Sextons and all of that ilk know that while under an Irish Parliament their country would be ruined, yet that they themselves would pick up something in the general confusion, while Dillon, like Mrs. Gargery, could be ever on the rampage, carrying out his promises of dire revenge, and flourishing like a young bay tree. Nobody here rejoiced when the bill was reported amended. They are losing faith in its merits. Their simple faith received a severe shock after the return to power of the Three-acres-and-a-Cow Government. Then the Labourers' Dwellings Act proved a fraud. The peasantry asked the neighbouring landowners for an acre of ground and a new cottage. A neighbouring J.P. to-day told me that he had more than twenty applications from people who are now awaiting the gold mines, the great factories which the new Irish Government are about to open. If you would remain poor, vote for the Unionist candidate. If you would become rich beyond the dreams of avarice, if you would occupy the place of the Protestant landlords, if you would preserve your immortal soul from eternal flames, vote as instructed by Father Gilhooly. A patriot priest yesterday said that the Day

of Independence would be the "Day of Ireland." He should have called it the *Dies Iræ*.

A Scottish Covenanter, not of the straitest sect, has no faith in the Home Rule Bill. He said:—"The people up in the mountains, those who want Home Rule, or rather those who have voted for it and expect to benefit by it, are all of the class no Act of Parliament would ever help. They don't farm their land, and they don't want to farm it. Half of it lies to waste every year, and they cut turf which they get for nothing, and sell it in the small towns about for three or four shillings a load, instead of making the land produce all it will. Go to their houses at ten in the morning, and you will find them smoking over the fire. My people are up and at work by six o'clock every morning in the week. The Scots farmers round Strabane are that keen on getting on that you can't get them away from their work, which is their pleasure. They are so keen on making the most of the ground that they are doing away with the hedges, and substituting barbed wire, merely to gain the difference in area of ground to till. Look at yon brae-face. Every yard tilled right up to the top. The Papist peasantry would never do that. You want to know what's the reason? Goodness knows. All the Protestants round here have got on till they have farms. There are no Protestant labourers. If English working men, agricultural fellows, would settle in Ireland, [360] they would soon get their Three acres and a cow. The people who can and will do the best with the land ought to have it, that's my theory. Ireland everywhere illustrates the principle of the survival of the fittest. The only way to succeed is by work. The Catholic Irish are so accustomed to leave everything to the priest that they have no self-reliance, and in worldly matters they always ask, who will help us? They are all beggars by nature. The Duchess of Marlborough and other kind but mistaken ladies have pauperised some districts of Donegal. The people have a natural indisposition to work, and a natural disposition to beg. As for loyalty and tolerance, they have none of either. You never saw industry without other virtues, you never saw laziness without other vices. These everlasting grumblers are a generation of vipers. They are a peevish and perverse set of lazy, skulking swindlers. They can pay. Every man could pay his rent and be comfortably off if he liked. The Protestant farmers pay and get along. And we agree that the landlords favour the other sect. They know that we will do the right thing, and they let us do it, but the Papists may do less—for less than the right thing is what the landlord expects from them. He thinks himself lucky if his Papist tenants come anyway near the mark. Therefore I say, and any Protestant will say, the Papists are favoured by the landlords."

A staunch Conservative, though not a land-owner, said:—"We want amendment of the Parliamentary voting regulations. No clergyman should be allowed to sit in the Revision Court. Scandals without end could be cited to show the necessity of this. I would, of course, exclude all sects, though no Protestant preacher ever takes part directly or indirectly in any of our political meetings. When a man has to make oath as to the validity of his claim to the suffrage he will often look at the priest who sits watching him. He gets a nod, and he goes on with his swearing. The perjury of the Irish Revision Courts is something fearful, and no one pays any attention to it. The Papists swear just anything. They get absolved, but a Protestant has not this great advantage and that holds him back. That is the Papist explanation. In my presence the Home Rule inspector of this district—we call the people who watch and work the registers the inspectors—swore that James Kelly, of Cross Roads, Killygordon, was the present tenant, the holder of the license, and the freeholder of a public-house at the spot mentioned. Besides this he swore that the name James Kelly was on the signboard. He therefore proposed to poll a James Kelly. Now the person in question went to America in 1888, and never returned. His name was not on the signboard, and the license was for another person. The Judge declined to hear any further evidence from Inspector Francis McLaughlin. That was the only penalty enforced. Such things happen every day in Irish Revision Courts.

"A man named James Burns put in a claim for a vote on behalf of land held at Stroangebbah. He had none there. What he had was at Aughkeely, and this was not sufficient to entitle him to vote. [361] Yes, his name should be spelt Byrnes, but the Irish often prefer the Protestant form of the name. Well, nobody believed that he was the tenant of Stroangebbah; he was said to be a lodger only. The Judge asked him for proof. He presented a paper purporting to be a receipt for rent for Stroangebbah, but in reality the receipt was for the ground at Aughkeely, which did not qualify. He curled up the paper so as to show that his name was on it, and the Judge instantly passed his claim, and placed him on the roll. A young fellow named Robert Ewing at once exposed the trick, but the Judge declared that having placed Burns on the roll, he must remain there until next revision. Judge Keogh was his name. Yes, you would think an Irishman and a good Catholic would have seen through such a trumpery trick.

"When an illiterate declares for whom he will vote, we sometimes have from twenty to thirty outsiders in the polling-booth. In England the Court is cleared, and even the policeman has to go outside. But in this favoured country any blackguard who likes to fill up a declaration of secrecy, and go before a magistrate, can be present at the whole of the proceedings. There is no secrecy for the illiterates. Any corner-boy, any ruffian, any blackguard in the district can come in and hear for whom men vote. These corner boys all get declarations in their fists, and they march in gangs from one booth to another. It's intimidation, no less. Get some M.P. to mention this as having taken place at Stranorlar. The people of whom I complain were not even voters. Anybody could be present. Ridiculous to talk of the ballot-box in Ireland.

"The Morley magistrates are in many cases a disgrace to the country. We used to have an idea in these parts that a small publican could not legally sit on the Bench. James McGlinchy, J.P., is a small publican of Brockagh. Barring his trade, he's not so bad, as he can read and write. But if you saw the lists, and if you knew the men recommended——! Englishmen have no idea what low scoundrels have been placed on the Bench in this country. Imperfect education we do not so

much mind when conjoined with character. O'Donnell is not a bad sort, but he couldn't write 'adjourned.' Two magistrates were needed, and nobody else arrived. Therefore the difficult word was necessary, and O'Donnell felt it was beyond him. He called up a policeman, and ordered him to do it. Whereat the county makes merry. There should be an education test. Can all the English magistrates spell 'adjourned'? You think so? That's very good. Not right that a man who can't spell 'adjourned' should give another man a spell of imprisonment."

A Roman Catholic gentleman thus summed up the character of his particular neighbourhood:—"The upper classes of both sects are in every way equal. Among the lower classes I observe that the Protestants do as much work as they can, while the Papists do as little as they can. This accounts for the difference in their appearance and position. Then the Protestants are far better [362] educated, and have arrived at the knowledge that everything that is good must be gained by exertion, and that there is for them at least no substitute. The others talk as if after the establishment of an Irish Parliament money would be found growing on the bushes. No one need try to change their opinion. When the time comes to vote they will vote as their priest tells them. Someone has said that the British Government might subsidise the Church, and so buy her off. It could not be done. The bishops want power. I do not agree with them, and I do not support or admit their claim to direct their flocks in political matters."

The Marquess of Conyngham, whom I met at Strabane, said:—"The people of Donegal are pleasant, kind, and civil. Taking them all round, they are much more energetic than the Southerners, and we were making fair progress until these Home Rule Bills were brought in. The country was being opened up, and things were beginning to improve, when the bill came and blighted everything. Now the people are growing idle and discontented. They are all right when left alone. Everybody likes the Donegal peasants, and they deserve to be liked. Only leave them alone; that's what they want; and not Home Rule nor any other quackery."

Strange things continue to happen in Ireland. This does not refer to the continuous cutting-off of cows' tails, the slitting of horses' tongues, and other similar expressions of impatience for the good time coming, but to some strange things that have happened in connection with agricultural affairs. Sir Samuel Hayes decided to abandon a farm which would not pay, although he had no rent to meet. He was his own landlord, but he did not work the farm. That was done by a bailiff, who, curiously enough, was the highest bidder for the land. He of all men should have known that if the farm would not pay expenses when there was no rent, it would not reward the man who had rent to pay. This reasoning proved fallacious. The farm which without rent proved a loss, in the same hands turned out when rent was charged a perfect gold-mine. In another case, a bailiff on leaving his employ expended on land the accumulated savings of his thrifty years, and—strange to say—his savings amounted to about three times the sum of his wages during his life's service. A man who, having a pound a week, can save three pounds, would in England be regarded as a prodigy. In Ireland such things happen every day. Particulars as to the cases hereinbefore-mentioned can be obtained from anybody in Killygordon, which is altogether a remarkable place—to say nothing of its name, which for obvious reasons has the misfortune to be unpleasant to the Grand Old Man. *Nomen, Omen?*

An octogenarian J.P. said:—"They talk of gold and silver mines, and lead and copper mines, and iron and quicksilver mines, but mining in Ireland cannot, as a rule, be made to pay. Everything exists in Ireland, but in such small quantities. The seams and veins are so small. Mr. Ritchie, of Belfast, spent several fortunes in mining for coal, iron, and other things. There was iron at [363] Ballyshannon, but what was the good? It cost less to bring iron to England from Algiers. We had no railway to Donegal, fifteen miles away, and cartage was too expensive. So far from Home Rule doing us any good, it would be a cruel blow to the country, and especially to the poor. Employment would become very scarce, as everybody who had money invested in Ireland would be in haste to realise and get it away. There would be no new enterprises, although the poor folk say, "We'll get employment in big factories and mines." Where's the money to come from? From the Irish Parliament, they say. And where will they get it from? Oh, a Parliament always has money. All the money comes from Parliament, which, in fact, actually makes money. The English Parliament makes all the goold sovereigns, and when the Irish Parliament commences to manufacture goold sovereigns at Dublin, then Ireland must be rich. Did not Mr. Gladstone say there would be too much money? Did not he say that in Parliament? That's what the poorest and most ignorant people of Donegal say. The English Home Rulers, by their support of the movement are inflicting injury on the Irish poor. We want the country opening up with railways. The tourist district is unequalled in Europe. Good hotels now, but you reach them mostly by cars. Balfour was giving us rails. That one man in five years did more good to Ireland than all other agencies operating for the previous forty years. I have thought the thing out, and I can speak for that period with certainty. Why could not they let him alone? The blackguards of these parts still shout 'Hell to Balfour.'

"Home Rule means to England a weakening, a loss of prestige, a new and a terrible danger. The *Independent* says, 'When Ireland next fights England she will not fight alone?' Very true. There is a strong anti-English feeling among the lower American classes, who are largely Irish, who have votes, and by their votes can influence American policy. Let me point out the opinion of Lieutenant-Colonel Butler as recorded in 'The Great Lone Land.' Here it is:—

"You will be told that the hostility of the inhabitants of the United States is confined to one class, and that class, though numerically large, is politically insignificant. Do not believe it for one instant; the hostility to England is universal, it is more deep-rooted than any other feeling, it is an instinct and not a reason, and consequently possesses the dogged strength of unreasoning antipathy. I tell you, Mr. Bull, that were you pitted to-morrow against a race that had not one

idea in kindred with your own, were you fighting a deadly struggle against a despotism the most galling on earth, were you engaged with an enemy whose grip was around your neck and whose foot was on your chest, that English-speaking cousin of yours over the Atlantic, whose language is your language, whose literature is your literature, whose civil code is begotten from your digests of law, would stir no hand, no foot, to save you, would gloat over your agony, would keep [364] the ring while you were being knocked out of all semblance of motion and power, and would not be very far distant when the moment came to hold a feast of eagles over your vast, disjointed limbs. Make no mistake about it, and be not blinded by ties of kindred or belief." And, further, "You will find them the firm friend of the Russian, because that Russian is likely to become your enemy in Herat, in Cabul, in Kashgar, in Constantinople. Nay, even should any woman-killing Sepoy put you to sore strait by indiscriminate and ruthless slaughter, he will be your cousin's friend for the simple reason that he is your enemy." Without accepting the gallant Colonel's dictum, it is as well to bear it in mind.

A pensive youth in Ballybofey was deeply engaged with a scrap of ballad literature, not by any means without literary merit. For and in consideration of a Saxon sixpence I became the proprietor of the lay, which is being circulated by thousands throughout Ireland. Those who uphold the reputation of their Irish allies for loyalty to the Queen, and friendship to the English nation, will, doubtless, find their convictions deepened and strengthened by the following sample verses addressed to intending recruits:—

Ye whose spirits will not bow
  In peace to parish tyrants longer,
Ye who wear the villain brow,
  And ye who pine in hopeless hunger,
Fools, without the brave man's faith,
  All slaves and starvelings who are willing
To sell yourselves to shame and death,
  Accept the fatal Saxon shilling.
Ere you from your mountains go
  To feel the scourge of foreign fever,
Swear to serve the faithless foe
  Who lures you from your land for ever,
Swear henceforth its tools to be
  To slaughter trained by ceaseless drilling,
Honour, home, and liberty
  Abandoned for a Saxon shilling.
Go—to find 'mid crime and toil
  The doom to which such guilt is hurried,
Go—to leave on Indian soil
  Your bones to bleach, accursed, unburied,
Go—to crush the just and brave
  Whose wrongs with wrath the world are
      filling,
Go—to slay each brother slave,
  Or spurn the blood-stained Saxon Shilling.
Irish hearts! why should you bleed,
  To swell the tide of English glory?
Aiding despots in their need,
  Who've changed our green so oft to gory?
None save those who wish to see
  The noblest killed, the meanest killing,
And true hearts severed from the free,
  Will take again the Saxon Shilling.

The British soldier is the meanest killing the noblest. The poet's name is Buggy. All this is very surprising. Painted by Paddy Mr. John Bull, J.P., will hardly recognise himself. Throughout the [365] Nationalist literature he is represented as a liar, a coward, a bully, a hypocrite, a tyrant, and a robber. If he now consented to be made the instrument of persons whose ascertained opinions exactly harmonise with those enunciated above, the epithets of Fool and Idiot will doubtless be added to the list. And in this instance the evil speakers would be quite right. *Quod demonstrandum est.*

Killygordon, July 29th.

No. 55.—A TRULY PATRIOTIC PRIEST.

ToC

The rhythmical rocking of the little engine of the West Donegal line running across from Killygordon seemed to say ceaselessly—

Here's a health to ye, Father O'Flynn,
Slainthe (health), and slainthe, and slainthe agin
—
Powerfullest pracher, an' tinderest tacher,
An' kindliest crature in ould Donegal!

Father O'Flynn must have been like a priest I met on Sunday, a Loyalist and a Conservative. Priests of the old school are becoming scarcer and scarcer every year, but one or two still exist. They do not "get on." It is understood that their political attitude forbids promotion. A priest who confesses to a respect for the Queen is not likely to be acceptable to the multitude. A priest who believes that the British laws are just and equitable, and that things would be better remaining as they are, is looked upon as a *lusus naturæ*. He said:—"I am a South of Ireland man, and was educated at Douai. I have no sympathy with the great bulk of the Maynooth men, who are mostly peasants and the sons of peasants. I do not think that the Maynooth course is sufficient in one generation to lift the sons to any great intellectual height above the besotted ignorance of the parents. I believe in heredity, and I say that most of my colleagues are only shaved labourers, stall-fed for three years. The low-bred men are now the dominant power. Instead of tranquillising the people, which I hold to be the duty of the clergy, they have done all they could to awaken and keep alive their most dangerous passions. And to rouse the Irish, especially the Southern Irish, is a matter of the greatest facility. I hold that the clergy by degenerating into mere political agents are strangely short-sighted. Their spiritual influence will in time be dangerously undermined, and in the long run they will take nothing by their motion. The Parnellite party will grow stronger and stronger, and the extreme party, the party of Revolution, which now lacks a leader, would on the passing of a Home Rule bill become the dominant power. That is a great and salient factor of which up to the present English politicians have taken no account. The party of Revolution is the party which under an Irish Parliament would be master of the situation. Leaders will not be [366] lacking. But at present the party must from the necessity of the case be amorphous, and therefore, politically and as a power, practically non-existent. Pass the bill, and then you will see something. A new party, the party of Independence, or, as they will call it, of Freedom, will take shape and formidably influence events. The temptation to take the lead will be great. Independence and Separation will be a most popular cry. The present men must either join the swim or be denounced as traitors, and as Healy cannot now visit Dundalk without two hundred policemen to protect him, while William O'Brien was nearly torn to pieces at Cork—would, in fact, have been murdered but for the police—you may conceive what would be the state of things when we have a Revolutionary party and when the police were no longer under the fair and judicial control of the British Government. Pass the bill and look out for the Revolutionary party. They will have an immense backing in point of numbers. And numbers rule in Ireland, not intelligence. The bill will, of course, give nothing that the peasants expect. The fault will assuredly lie with John Bull. The expectations of the ignorant, that is, the great mass of the people, will be woefully disappointed. Who is to blame? they will ask. Numbers of politicians are waiting to tell them. Who but the brutal, greedy, selfish, perfidious Saxon? An agitation will succeed, compared with which the worst times of the Land League were preferable. I shudder to think of the chaos, the seething and weltering confusion of the time to come. The Irish people, the poor ignorants, will suffer most. And yet they are innocent in this matter. They have, indeed, been blamed with the excesses of a few of their number, but they are, if left to themselves, a most kindly and law-abiding people. The Donegal peasants are the best in the country. You will see poverty, but the degradation of filthiness and laziness is not nearly so marked as in the South and West, where the climate is warm, moist, enervating.

"What, then, are my opinions, expressed in a concise form? I will tell you. They are what *you* would call sound. They are the opinions of Balfour, of Lord Salisbury. I hold Mr. Balfour in profound esteem as a wise and sagacious administrator, a terror to evil-doers, and an encourager of those who do well. I have a real affection for Mr. Balfour, as for a great benefactor of my beloved country. For I love my country so well that I feel the keenest personal interest in her welfare. Perhaps I have a deeper affection for Ireland than even Tim Healy or Sexton or Harcourt or O'Brien. What do I think of Gladstone? I think him a scourge of Ireland, a curse, a destroyer far worse than Oliver Cromwell. A heaven-born statesman? Do his followers call him that? Well, I can only say that I hope and trust that heaven will not be blessed with any further family."

A military officer resident in this region, an Irishman bred and born, said, "It's all a matter of [367] religion. I was the other day reading Maxwell's account of the Irish rebellion of 1798, and I observed that although the Northern rebellion, which was the most dangerous, as being the best organised, was mainly led by Protestants, yet in other parts of Ireland, when a suspected person was captured by the rebels, the first question was, not are you in favour of the Irish Republic, but what is your religion? And the Protestants generally had their throats cut. The same thing would occur again, under similar circumstances. Religion would be the test. If a general state of lawlessness should at any time arise, the Protestants in lonely districts would not be safe from murder. Yes, I *do* say it, and I stick to it. A very large number of outrages have been committed which would not have taken place but for the religion of the offending party. It is a virtue to lie to a heretic, to cheat him, to damage him, to keep him out of heaven if possible. Anybody who knows Catholic Ireland would agree with this most heartily. They believe that whosoever killeth heretics doeth God service.

"Irish folks are better than the people of other nations, and also much worse. When they are good they are very good, and when they are bad they are very bad. They run to extremes in a way which cool-headed Britons do not understand. They are impulsive, and they jump to conclusions. Their great disadvantage is a crushing clerical influence. What's the use of thinking about anything when Father Pat does it for them? What's the use of listening to argument when you must in the end vote as Father Pat orders?

"Englishmen have no idea what a splendid fellow the Irish peasant really is when his mind is not poisoned and his unfortunate ignorance exploited. I could give you instances of fidelity, affectionate self-sacrifice and devotion which would astonish you. Not isolated or sporadic cases, but arising from the average level of the Irish character. After considerable travel, and a painstaking study of the characteristics of various nations, I have come to the conclusion that, taking one consideration with another, I prefer Paddy, ignorant as he is. For after all his ignorance is not his own fault. He sees no newspapers except an occasional local sheet, which is almost certain to be a wretched, lying, priest-inspired rag. If he were seen looking at any other it would be bad for him. But newspapers are practically unknown in the agricultural districts. And men do not meet in crowds as in England. They have not the attrition which wears away the angularities. They live solitary among the mountains, or away in the fields, and they never hear lectures, have no Institutes, get no chance of improvement. The priest is their Clan Chieftain, their spiritual adviser, their temporal adviser, their newspaper, their only channel of superior information." At this point a tall, red-bearded man who was passing touched his hat to the Colonel, who said, "My gamekeeper. A fine, rough-coated Scotsman. Came over here a mad [368] Gladstonian. Pinned his faith to the G.O.M. Followed him blindly, and owned he was content to do it. Get into conversation with him. Observe the change, the decided change in his opinions."

Soon I had Velveteens in full cry. His opinions were indeed decided. Having admitted that they had boxed the compass during a six months' residence in this down-trodden country, he went on to say, "The only way ye could cure the discontent is to make no attempt at it. Then the agitation would stop. The people are the biggest fules I ever saw. Instead of returning a sound, advanced Radical like Emerson T. Herdman, a man who pays them thirty or forty thousand a year, and who spends all his money in their midst, the fules go and vote for a thing like Arthur O'Connor, who never was here but once, and who never did them the compliment of issuing an address. When Mr. Herdman came to Stranorlar the people stoned him and his friends. And yet nobody ever said, or could say, a word against the Herdmans, who are among the most popular people in Ireland, and who deserve the best that can be said of them. O'Connor costs these poor folks two hundred pounds a year. They raise it in the constituency. Mr. Herdman would have cost them nothing, and might have spent even more than he does at present. He has opened up the greatest industry in the North-west of Ireland, keeps a whole country-side going, and is an out-and-out Liberal. The greatest exertions were made to secure his return, and the Catholics promised to vote for him. He stumped the country, and left no stone unturned. The Nationalist candidate never came here till the last moment, and, as I said, issued no address. The people knew nothing of him, and had never heard of him. But they voted as the priests told them, and they would have voted for a stick. Ought such people to have the franchise?

"What would I do to settle the Irish question? I've heard that somebody proposed sinking the country for twenty-four hours. That might do. Or you could withdraw the police and military, and in every market town open a depôt for the gratuitous distribution of arms and ammunition. In ten days there would only be a very small population, and you could then plant the country with people who would make the best of it, and mind their work, instead of spending their time standing about waiting for Home Rule to make them rich without work. Or you could make a law which required every priest in the country to clear out in twenty-four hours, on penalty of death. That is as impossible as sinking the island, but it would be quite as sure a cure. Those are my opinions, and those must be the opinions of every man who has lived here and looked about him for a reasonable length of time. The Scots Gladstonians are very decent folk. They mean well, and they are friendly to Ireland. Their only fault lies in following their hero, and in thinking that he cannot do wrong. If they knew what I know, they would be of my mind. For I was as great a Gladstonian as any of them."

A Presbyterian farmer said:—"On this estate the whole of the tenants are Presbyterians. The [369] agent told me that early in June the whole of the rents up to May were paid, and that he would think that there was not such another case in Ireland. How is that? Well, if the tenants had been Romanists they would have so many things to pay. The priests live like fighting cocks. Father McFadden, of Gweedore, makes from a thousand to fifteen hundred a year. That is the man on whose door-step Inspector Martin was murdered. The crowd beat out his brains with palings, and when he tried to get into the priest's house, the door was shut in his face. The clergy live well, and drink like troopers. The easiest job in Ireland, and—if your conscience would allow it—the best in every way. You are treated with great respect, you have great influence, you have nothing to do, and you are extremely well paid for it. Sometimes I think that humbug pays better than hard work. The priests do *not* look after the poor. They do *not* work among the destitute and ignorant after the fashion of the English clergy. They are always extracting, extracting, extracting. The poor are ground down by their exactions till they can't pay their rent. And that is why the agent said that probably no other estate in Ireland could show such a record as ours.

"Home Rule will not satisfy the people. An Irish Parliament will do them no good, no, nor fifty Irish Parliaments. They are unfriendly to England because she is Protestant. People of the only true faith cannot bear to be governed by a heretic nation. The laws are all right, and they know it, but their animosity is excited by stories of wrong-doing in their forefathers' days, and while on

the one hand they feel that they might easily be better off, on the other they are told that the brutal Saxon keeps them poor. All this is done by the priests. They actually admit that the English laws are excellent, but then they fall back on the allegation that their administration is corrupt. In vain you point to the Roman Catholic judges. In vain you go over England's successive attempts to pacify Ireland by conciliatory measures. The priest ruins all, for while your friend seems to agree with you—they are so easily led—yet the priest will secure his vote to a certainty. So long as a heretic power is at the head, so long Ireland will be discontented. If the country were under the rule of a Roman Catholic power, the people of Ireland would be satisfied with any laws whatever. They would not grumble at anything. The only alternative is the spread of education, and that goes on very slowly in Ireland. We are very, very backward in Donegal, but not nearly so bad as in the south and west. We have a bad name for poverty and ignorance, but we do not deserve it in the same degree as the Munster and Connaught folks. We dislike the Connaught people just as much as you do in England. We hate dirt, and lawlessness and disorder, and therefore we claim to be superior to the rest of the poor counties. This is, of course, the civilised part of Donegal. But wherever you go, you see nothing like the dirt of counties Galway and Mayo.

"We want railways to open up the country. Balfour was building them for us, and his institution [370] of the Congested Districts Board did wonderful things for us. Why, if he had done nothing but improve the breed of fowls he would still have been worthy of remembrance as a benefactor of this country. Before the Congested Board Committee introduced superior breeds of fowls, the chickens were like blackbirds. You could sit down and eat half-a-dozen of them. They were no bigger than your thumb. But now we can get fowls equal to anything you have in England. The same may be said of the horses, the pigs, the cows, and all kinds of domestic animals and poultry. The fishing industry has saved whole districts from starvation, and has done good all round. When we get an Irish Parliament the grants for all these purposes will be discontinued, and the tide of progress will be checked. The poor folks are quite unable to see that by sticking to England we have a wealthy neighbour to borrow from, and that this is an inestimable advantage to a poor country like Ireland. Not long ago I mentioned this to a priest, but he said, 'When we have a Parliament of our own we'll not need to borrow money, for we'll have more than we know what to do with. Did not Mr. Gladstone say we should have a chronic plethora of money? John Bull certainly sends some money over here, but he had it from here to begin with. He stole it from Ireland, and he is only like a thief whose conscience urges him to restore a portion, a very small portion, of the stolen goods. When we get Independence—he used the word Independence —we shall be in a position to lend money instead of needing to borrow!' The person who said all this is the most influential politician of this district. His word to his flock is law. Not one of them dare for his life vote otherwise than as he tells them. They do not think this a hardship. They have no political convictions, and would just as soon vote any one way as any other."

A Donegal Home Ruler said that the poor folks were quite right in following the priests, and wanted to know if they would be right in following the Tories. He said:—"They are no more ignorant than the British working men, and not less independent. Don't the working classes follow their leaders, voting in heaps, just as they are told, without any notion of the Empire's greatness, and entirely with a view to their own interests? Could anybody be more stupid, more totally incapable of giving a valid reason for his action than your vaunted British workman? Why, if the specimens we get over here are any guide, if the samples are anything like the bulk, you might as well poll a flock of sheep as a crowd of British working men. I say the Irish peasantry are superior in intellect, conduct, and chayracther, and that in following the priest they are acting as reasonable as your British working-man, who follows his strike leaders and trade agitators, and is perpetually cutting off his nose to spite his face. No, we shall not get Home Rule now, but we must have it later on. Then we shall demand more. Every time we have to ask we [371] shall want more and more. We shall wring it from England, and we shall make her pay for the trouble she gives. She must be charged a sort of war indemnity."

The Dundalk press is on my track. I heard of this in Newry, but the Dundalk papers do not reach the next town to Dundalk, and not a sheet could be had for love or money. A friend having told me that the *Gazette* was reviled, great efforts were made to obtain the reviling print, but in vain. At last I saw the *Dundalk Democrat*, which in a two-column comment on its colleague's maledictions of your humble commissioner cleared me of the charges brought by the original thunderer, which I have not yet been able to see. One of the said charges is based on the statement that I asked to be allowed to be present at the meeting, which permission was readily accorded. The meeting was public and was placarded from one end of Dundalk to the other. The public were invited to assemble in their thousands, and to join in the onward march to freedom. Not more than twenty people answered to the call, and the meeting was therefore a dead failure. The idea of asking leave to be present at a public meeting is absurd. The vituperative print says that I was *not* asked to deliver an address, but was told that I could "do so if I liked." The truth is manifest by the admitted fact that I declined, as being no speaker. Such is the minute hair-splitting of Irish argumentation. The quips and cranks of Tipperary Humphreys will be remembered, the paltry quibbles by which he sought to establish a case, and his final retreat under cover of the statement that he could not have believed that "such a state of things was possible." The Dundalk marchers to freedom (to the number of twenty) were not precisely the pick of the local respectability, and my escape must be regarded as providential. As to their outpourings of abuse, my philosophy resembles that of the old whipper-in of the Meynell-Ingram Hounds:—"I bain't a cruel chap, I bain't. But when I puts the lash among the hounds I *dew* like to hear 'em yowl; I *dew* like to see 'em skip, and writhe, and look mad. For if ye don't make 'em feel, and if ye can't hear 'em yowl, there's railly no pleasure in thrashin' of 'em."

No. 56.—DO-NOTHING DONEGAL.

ToC

Donegal improves on acquaintance. At first dull, dreary, and disappointing, a more extended examination reveals much that is interesting. The river Eske runs through the town, rippling over a rocky bed of limestone like the Dee at Llangollen. Mountains arise on every hand, some in the foreground, green and pleasant, backed by sterile ranges having serrated summits, dark and frowning. The harbour has an old-world look, with its quaint fishing boats and groves of trees running down to the water's edge. The land is decidedly humpy, and the sea meanders among the meadows in long fillets like trout [372] brooks, sometimes tapering off to narrow ditches over which you can easily step at highest tide. The land is fertile, mostly grazing, and the cattle are of large and superior breed. The country is well wooded, and the hedgerows are tall and well-kept. The ancient abbey, like Mr. Gladstone's reputation, is in ruins. There is a ruined castle on the river bank, and on the other side, exactly opposite, a Methodist church, bearing the legend, ALL ARE WELCOME. The principal "square" is triangular, and has some good shops, which do most of their business on market-days. An enormous anchor, half embedded in the mud of the harbour, was left there by the French fleet during "the throubles of the ruction." It is rather in the way, but three generations of Irishmen have not found time to remove it. "Like ourselves and our counthry it will stick in the mud until the end of time," said a native. There is much lounging at corners by men who are probably waiting for the Home Rule Bill, but the people compare favourably with those of the South and West. They have more grit, more industry, more perseverance. They are simple, civil, and obliging. They are also cleaner and more tidy than the Southerners, though decidedly poorer. "They get no price for their produce, no reasonable wages for their industry. Their patience and contentment are surprising, considering their circumstances. You can get work done for twopence a day. The Southerners get thrice the money for their farm produce. We have no ready means of getting things on the market. I have thirty tons of hay to sell, and nobody in the district would give me a pound for it." Thus spake one of the leading citizens, a Roman Catholic, dead against Home Rule. "The resident gentry are all we have to depend upon. Once plant a Parliament in Dublin, and there will be a general exodus of the moneyed classes. Then the poor folks will have nobody to look to, and they must follow them to England—which will certainly be overrun with destitute Irish. Things have grown worse and worse during the last ten years. Under a steady Government the country would gradually improve until the comfort of the people would give the agitators nothing to work upon. But with change upon change, with one final settlement upon another final settlement, we don't know where we are, nor what is going to happen next. How can we settle down to work? How can we launch out into industrial enterprises? Every man who has anything holds his hand for fear of loss. An Irish Parliament would be a Parliament of confiscation, and nobody knows where they would draw the line. Mr. Gladstone's land legislation has been a succession of swindles. The principle of judicial rents is an atrocious violation of the principles of business, one of which lays down the dictum that a thing is worth as much as it will fetch. Surely the landlord ought to be allowed to accept the offer of the highest bidder. And if you take from him that right, and say to him you shall only accept such a price, then you should at least guarantee the payment. But no, Mr. Gladstone says you shall only have a certain price, and you must recover the money as best you can. The judicial rent [373] law, so much vaunted, is not so good as it looks. It is often a premium on indolence and a punishment of industry, and therefore grossly unjust. Let me tell you how it works in Donegal.

"Thirty years ago two men took contiguous farms of exactly the same extent, at the same rent. There was not a pin to choose in the land, either. One of them worked continuously, improving the farm until he almost wrought himself to pieces. He and his children were at it night and day, and their industry did wonders, as it always does. The other was a lazy fellow, who lay in bed till mid-day and spent half his waking hours at fairs and dances. The land in his occupation deteriorated until it seemed to want reclaiming. The rent of both farms was ten pounds a year. The Land Commission had both cases before them, and, of course, based their estimate on the present value of the land, without reference to any other considerations. Now mark what happened—

"The industrious man, who should have received a premium as a benefactor of his country, had his rent raised from ten pounds to eighteen.

"The lazy man, who should have been kicked out of the country as worthless, and an enemy to progress, had his rent reduced from ten pounds to two pounds fifteen shillings.

"The judicial reductions have hardly ever been of real benefit. The average Irish peasant is so constituted that when he has less to pay he simply makes less effort, or spends the difference, and more than the difference, in extra whiskey.

"The Donegal peasantry derive much benefit from the Irish practice of con-acre. Con-acre means that the land is rented for one crop. It pays the landowner well, and he always gets his money. The man who has no land hires a piece for his potatoes, or for his oats, takes possession when he puts in his seed, and delivers up possession when he gets his crop off the ground. They pay, I think, because they have not the land long enough to long for it altogether."

I climbed the hill behind the Arran Hotel in company with the proprietor, Mr. Timony, who also runs several large shops in Donegal. The view is magnificent, extending in one direction to Carnowee and the Blue Stack mountains, in another far over the wood-fringed bay, and southward to the Benbulben range, terminated by a steep descent like the end of a house. Mr. Timony is a Romanist, but is strongly opposed to Home Rule, which in his opinion would lead to endless trouble and confusion, and would, bring distress on the district, and not prosperity. The hill was covered with mushrooms, which were rotting unregarded. Mine host confessed that he did not know the edible from the poisonous fungi, and said that the peasants of Donegal were in the same case. "There are tons of these things on the mountains, but no one gathers them. They would be afraid to go near them for fear they would drop down dead on the spot." He showed me [374] a large stock of hand-woven cloth made by the peasantry, who, to their credit, have mastered the process from beginning to end, and with their rude appliances produce a good-looking article, of which the only fault is that it can never be worn out. Irishmen will not buy it, but England is an excellent customer, and the trade, already large, is rapidly increasing. Good tweed, twenty-seven inches wide, may be bought in Donegal for a shilling a yard, and stout twills for one-and-sixpence. The people shear the wool, card it, spin it, dye the yarn made from herbs growing on the sea-shore, on the rocks, in the meadows, and weave it into cloth, which is much in vogue for shooting suits and ladies' dresses. The pieces run from twenty to seventy yards long, and whole families are engaged on the work, which commands a ready sale at the wholesale depôts, the price being regulated by the fineness, evenness of texture, and equality of tint throughout. The Nationalist advice to burn everything English except English coals, is as hollow as other patriotic utterances. But for England the Donegal peasantry would have no market for their goods. "It isn't fine enough for Irishmen," said Mr. Timony. "They prefer English shoddy. They like the smooth-looking cloth such as I have seen made in Yorkshire, manufactured out of rags. There's not ten pounds of wool in a thousand yards of it. It looks more eyeable, but there is no length nor toughness in the thread, which is made out of old worn-out cloth. Our folks couldn't spin it. They must use good new yarn, or they couldn't work at all. The Yorkshire folks have machinery, and you can do anything with machinery."

A good old Methodist said:—"The English people ought now to realise the pass their Grand Old Gagger has brought them to. The finest assembly of gentlemen in the world are bandying evil names and punching each other's heads. Just what you might expect when the Prime Minister has allied himself with blackguards and law-breakers. I used to be one of his staunchest supporters, but I draw the line at lunacy. When I saw him truckling to low-bred adventurers who are not worth sixpence beyond what they can wring from their dupes, I thought it time to change my course. When I saw the class of men with whom he acts and under whose orders he works, I changed my opinion of the man. For evil communications corrupt good manners, and a man is known by the company he keeps. The whole session has been a degradation of the British Parliament. Things have been going from bad to worse until we have reached the climax. If Mr. Gladstone remains in power we must change the qualifications of our members, and send the best fighting men and the hardest hitters. We must heckle candidates as to their 'science,' and ascertain if their wind is good, and whether they are active on their pins. And in course of time, if the G.O.M. still presides, we shall have the Speaker acting as referee, and calling out 'Time, gentlemen, Time!' Some Gladstonian or other will doubtless accept the post, and in that case we may expect him to sport a long churchwarden and a glass of beer. That is what Mr. Gladstone is [375] bringing on the House, and the tendency has been visible for a long time. When you hear of people continually shouting 'Judas, Judas,' without a word of protest from the Prime Minister, you must admit that the dignity of the House is a thing of the past. When you see the general trend, you can judge what will be the result. When you see in which direction a man is going, you can judge where he will arrive at last.

"For my part, and I can speak for all my friends, we have the greatest confidence in the English people's commonsense, and in the long run we know it will not fail. The Scotsmen, who are honest politicians and keen, are throwing over Mr. Gladstone and all his works, although he was for so long their greatest pride. And we are sure that the few Englishmen who at the last election followed in his wake will see their error, and that they will joyfully seize the first opportunity of repairing their mistake. What would happen if the bill became law? Nothing but evil. The Methodists would leave these parts in a body. We could not remain with a Catholic Parliament in Dublin. We should not be safe but for the English shield that covers us. The people, as a whole, are quiet enough—when left alone. But they are very excitable. Kind and civil as they may seem, they turn round in a moment. They will believe anything they are told, their credulity is wonderful, and their clergy have them entirely in their hands. The people might be tolerant, but the clergy never. And Irish priests are very bitter and very prejudiced. They say that we have bartered eternity for time, and that, although we all thrive and do well, we have sold our souls for earthly prosperity. My mind is made up. Once that bill becomes law you must find room for me in England. We shall be able to live in peace on the other side of the Channel."

Another Methodist believed that the poverty of the people was somehow due to their religion. He knew not precisely why this was the case, but his observations left him no other conclusion. He instanced Strabane, the Scots settlement over the border, and although in Tyrone, yet only divided from Donegal by the river Mourne. "They have at Strabane an annual agricultural and

horticultural exhibition, which does a great amount of good in educating the people. Last week they distributed eight hundred pounds in prizes, and there were two thousand two hundred entries. We have talked about a similar show in Donegal, but we never do more than talk. We shall never have a show until we get a sufficient number of Scotsmen to organise it and work it up. The necessary energy for such a big affair seems to be the private property of people holding the Protestant faith, for when we see an energetic Romanist we look upon it as something so remarkable as to merit investigation, and in nearly every case we find the person in question is, although Catholic, either Saxon or half-breed. Nearly all the Papists are Kelts. Is their want of energy due to breed, to religion, or to both? We hardly know. But I know a man's religion a mile [376] off, so to speak. Only let me see him at work in a field. His religion comes out in his action. A Papist never works hard. He seems to be always doing as little as ever he can. Then he's very much surprised to find himself so poor, when the hard-working Protestant is getting on. Presently the Black-mouth gets a farm, while the other remains a labourer. Then the agitator comes round and says, 'Look how heretic England favours Protestants. *You* are the children of the soil, but who has the farms?' 'Begorra,' says Michael, 'an' that's thrue, bedad it is now,' and thenceforward he cherishes a secret animosity against the successful man, instead of blaming his own want of industry. That's human nature. So he votes for Home Rule, for anything that promises the land to himself, as the son of the soil. He looks on the other man as an interloper, and his priest encourages that view. That is their feeling, as they themselves express it every day, and are we to believe against the evidence of our senses that when they have the power to injure us, to drive us out of the country, by making it too hot to hold us—are we to believe that they will not exert their power, but on the contrary, will treat us considerably better than before? That is what English Home Rulers ask us to believe. That is what Irish Nationalist speakers say in England: they would be laughed at here. Do not trust these men. They are what the Scripture calls 'movers of sedition'—and nothing better."

After some search I found a fine young Parnellite, who roundly denounced the clergy of his own faith as enemies of their country. He said:—"I *was* a Home Ruler, but although I hold the same opinion in theory, I would not at this juncture put it into practice. I am convinced that it would be bad for us. We are not ripe for self-government. We want years of training before we could govern ourselves with advantage. The South Meath election petition finally convinced me. When I saw how ignorance was used by the clergy for the furtherance of their own ends, I decided that we were not yet sufficiently educated to be entrusted with power; and if Home Rule were now offered to us, and the Home Rule that we ourselves have advocated, I for one would dread to accept it. We must serve an apprenticeship to the art of self-government. We must have a Local Government Bill, and see how we get on. Then it can from time to time be made larger and more liberal, entrusting us as we grow stronger with heavier tasks. Give us Home Rule at this moment and you ruin us. We should have several factions, more intent on getting power and in damaging each other, than on solving all or any of the very complicated and difficult questions which would come before them. There would be no spirit of mutual accommodation such as prevails in English assemblies. And our troubles would be your troubles. Keep it back for a few years, and lead us up to Home Rule by easy gradations.

"My anti-Parnellite friends say they will not return the members now representing them. I believe they will. And if not, then they will send others of no better social standing, and with no [377] Parliamentary training at all. They will send worse men, extreme men, men who have not pledged themselves to the British Government. The pledges of Dillon and Davitt—what are they worth? Surely nobody is so foolish as to rely on such 'safeguards' as these.

"I am sure that three-fourths of the educated Catholics of Ireland are at this moment opposed to Home Rule in any shape or form, but—they dare not say so. Ireland is a land of tyranny, clerical tyranny. Ireland will not be free until the clergy withdraw their influence from politics. If they continue in their present course, there will be a reaction as education advances, and their last state will be worse than the first. I know that some of them would gladly drop politics, but they have to look to their bishops."

A Nationalist tradesman said:—"The Protestants are favoured in every way. Statistics recently given in the *Freeman* show that the money annually paid to the favoured few, who hold appointments which ought to be open to all, amount to five pounds a head for every Protestant man, woman, and child in the country. The same favouritism runs through everything. If a Catholic bids for a field of grass a Protestant bid is taken, even if lower. I saw it done yesterday."

My friend lost his temper when I asked him to say why the heretic farmers were thriving while those of the true faith were starving, why the heretics were clean while the others were dirty. He at last said that the British Government subsidised all Soupers out of the secret service money, and making a contemptuous grimace, to express his opinion of such miscreants, curled up his hand and passed it behind his back, thus dramatically indicating the underhand way in which the money is conveyed to the favoured recipients.

These people *will* believe anything. But who tells them this? And why do not the clergy undeceive them?

A final Black-mouth must be quoted. He said that the seller of the standing grass preferred the heretical bid, although lower, "because he felt more sure of the money," and pointing across the triangular square, yclept the Diamond, said:—"All those corner-men are Home Rulers. You never see a Unionist idling the day away at street-corners. We have no Protestant corner-boys in Donegal, nor anywhere else, so far as I know." The townsfolk are fairly industrious, that is, when compared with the people of Southern Irish towns, but there is a residuum—a Home Rule residuum. It sometimes happens that jaded men, worn out with overwork, are recommended to

go to some quiet place and to do absolutely nothing. They can't do nothing, they don't know how to begin. They should go to Donegal. The place is silent as the tomb, and if they would learn to do nothing they will there find many eminent professors of the science, who, having devoted to it the study of a lifetime, have attained a virtuoso proficiency.

Donegal, August 3rd.

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[378]

No. 57.—BAREFOOTED AND DILATORY.

ToC

he Ballyshannon foundered on the coast of Cariboo, And down in fathoms many went the captain and his crew. Down went the owners, greedy men whom hope of gain allured. O, dry the starting tear, for they were heavily insured."

And thereby hangs a tale.

Professor Crawford, of Trinity College, Dublin, says that when walking down Regent Street, London, with William Allingham, then editor of *Fraser's Magazine*, and a native of this Donegal town, the pair met Charles Dickens, who advanced with beaming countenance, and taking both Allingham's hands in his own, said in a hearty voice:

"Well done, Ballyshannon!"

This was in allusion to a recent article written by the *Fraser* editor, who among his intimate friends and brother litterateurs was playfully named after his birthplace. W.S. Gilbert was especially fond of the sonorous appellation, and in the above-quoted Bab Ballad, his gem of gems, named the ship Ballyshannon in remembrance of Allingham.

The Ballyshannon folks are "going to" erect a memorial to Allingham, of whose poems they have often heard. They are "going to" advertise their town, and make its beauties known to the world—some day. They are "going to" charter a steam dredger, and so improve the harbour, which is dangerous. They are "going to" utilise the enormous water-power of the River Erne, which runs to waste from Lough Erne to the sea. They are "going to" run a few tweed and blanket factories when they see their way quite clearly. They are "going to" start a fishery fleet and a number of fish-curing sheds, to give employment to the poor folks of the district. They need almost everything that man *can* need, and they have especial facilities for supplying needs, but as yet they have lacked time and opportunity. The town is only a thousand years old, and its inhabitants have not yet had time to look about them. A number of English anglers stroll about with long salmon rods, or float their little barks on the broad bosom of the Erne, the population looking dreamily on from the long bridge over the river, which, like the Shannon at Athlone, flows through the heart of the town. Nobody seems to be doing anything, except a few old beggar woman squalid and frowsy as the mendicant hordes of Tuam, Tipperary, Limerick, and Galway. The beggars are pertinacious enough for anything, but theirs is the only enterprise the stranger sees. Compared with that of Donegal the salmon-fishing seems expensive. The landlord of the Arran Hotel in that town offers the Eske at half-a-crown a day, but in Ballyshannon you must pay four pounds a week and give up all the take except two. Salmon are scarce all over Ireland this year. Three English fishers on the Erne shared the universal bad luck, for in three days they had [379] only captured one five-pounder. The unusual drought has made the water low. The weather of the past five months has been finer and dryer than any season for sixty years. Ballyshannon looks dirty and dingy in any weather. It lacks the smartness, the cleanliness, the width of thoroughfare, which mark the heretic towns. It lacks the factories, the large shops, the shipping which would infallibly be to the fore if its inhabitants were mainly of Teuton origin. On the other hand, the Ballyshannon folks are religious. They go to mass regularly, and confess themselves at frequent intervals. The confessional box is their only place to spend a happy day, and the act of confession, with the following penance, their pleasantest mode of passing away the time. They are mostly Home Rulers, and are deferring special effort to better themselves until the Irish Parliament does away with the necessity. That blessed institution once fairly settled at College Green will spare them the pains of enterprise, and will show how large industries can be created and sustained without capital, without business knowledge, without technical skill, and for the sole purpose of affording the shiftless population of Ballyshannon regular wages at the week's end. The gentlemen who lean over the quaint bridge, with its twelve arches and sharply-pointed buttresses, are merely waiting for the factories, which are to spring from the earth fully-equipped at a wave of the enchanter's hand, to be a blessing to the whole world while fulfilling their chief mission of finding employment for the people of Ireland. Meantime the Ballyshannoners are bitterly wroth with England because she has not hurried up with the desired factories long ages ago. They smoke thick twist and expectorate into the river, talking moodily of the selfish Saxon, who instead of looking after them looks after himself, and praising Tim Healy, whose spare cash is invested in a factory in Scotland. Tim knows his countrymen; but, although his cleverness is by them much admired, they do not know how really clever he is. If they could realise the fact that

Tim declines to invest in Ireland they might admire him still more. The great drawback to Irish enterprise lies in the fact that Irishmen who have brains enough to make money have brains enough to invest it out of Ireland. They will not trust Irishmen, nor will they rely on Irish industry. Ballyshannon is waiting for the impersonal Somebody or the shadowy Something that is to come forward and put everything right. Galway is so waiting, Limerick is so waiting, Cork is so waiting, Westport, Newport, Donegal are so waiting. It never occurs to them to do something for themselves. When the suggestion is made they become irate, and excitedly ask, What could we do? How are we to begin? Where are we to find the money? Who is to take the first step? They fail to see that the settlement towns have long since answered these queries, and that the capacity to do so marks the difference in the breeds. These hopeless, helpless, Keltic Irishmen are unfit for self-government. They require the india-rubber tube and the feeding-bottle. They [380] want to be spoon-fed and patted on the back when they choke. To instance the Scots settlements is to madden them. These thriving communities are a standing reproach, and cannot be explained away. Saxon Strabane flourishes, while Keltic Donegal declines, the latter having all the advantages of the former with the addition of a harbour and good fishing grounds. "Look at the condition of the country," say the Home Rulers. "Behold the poverty of the peasantry," they continually do cry. The visible nakedness of the land is their chief and most effective argument. The Unionist answer is conclusive, and of itself should be enough to demolish the Nationalists. See the Protestant communities of Ireland,—all, without exception, advancing in prosperity. They have no advantages which are denied to the Nationalists. On the contrary, they live in the comparatively bleak and unfertile North, which by their unceasing industry they have developed to its fullest extent. They have tilled the ground until it resembles a garden, they have deepened the rivers, built harbours, created industries, been in every way successful. And all under precisely the same laws, the same government. The richest spots of Ireland, if inhabited by Keltic Irish, are steeped in poverty. The poorest spots, if inhabited by men of Saxon blood, become fat and well-liking. The fate of men lies mostly in themselves. This comes out forcibly in Ireland. Race, breed, heredity, call it what you will, in Ireland thrusts its influence on you, whether you will or no. Neighbouring towns, neighbouring farms, neighbouring cottages, present a series of striking contrasts, ever in favour of the Saxon, ever against the Kelt. The latter has not yet discovered that the secret word, the open sesame of the difficulty, the charm which only can give permanent comfort, is—Work. Nor has his race the spirit of mechanical invention or industrial enterprise, without which College Green Parliaments may sit in vain. The pure-blooded Kelt is easily discouraged, and no man sooner knows when he is beaten. More than this, he always expects to be beaten, so that he is beaten before he begins. As a talker he is unequalled, and in this long-eared age, when the glibbest gabbler is reckoned the greatest man, his agitators have floated to the front. The Ballyshannon people can talk with the volubility of a Hebrew cheap Jack, but their jaw-power, like their water-power, mostly runs to waste. They have the silly suspicion and the childish credulity of the Donegal rural districts. A fluent politician said, "Why are all the Protestants Unionists? Perfectly simple, that. Because they are all well off. There you are. And being well off, they want no change. That's their selfishness. Now we, who are not Protestants (thank God), are for the most part poor. Our living is precarious. We don't know where to look, nor what to do, to improve our worldly position. We think it likely that an Irish Parliament would do something for us. In what way? Why, in the direction of public works and in the building of factories. Also in the protection of Irish industries. Where would the money come from? Why, [381] from England, to be sure. And if England wouldn't lend it, plenty of other nations would; America, for instance. We shall have heaps of money. Mr. Gladstone has said it, and he is famous as a financier. There you have the reason why we want Home Rule, while the Protestants don't. They are well enough off already.

"*Why* are they well off, you ask? Also easy to answer. They have been the spoiled children of fortune. They have been petted and pampered by England for more than two hundred years. And although you will not of course admit it, yet we know, everybody here knows, that they have been secretly subsidised by every Tory Government. If they pay their rents, where do they get the money? From the Tory party. And Tory landlords give the best farms to Protestants, who having the pick of the land, ought to be well off. Wherever you go you will find the Protestants living on good land."

I submitted that authentic records show that Ulster was formerly the most sterile, barren, unpromising part of Ireland, and that the change was entirely due to the two centuries of unremitting labour which the Scots settlers and their descendants had bestowed on the land; but, waiving this point, I asked him why the Unionist, that is, the Protestant, party were so much better educated, and why the heretics were so much cleaner. He had stated that the Black-mouths were subsidised by the Tory Party. Did the British Government also supply them with soap?

At this point my friend's explanations became unintelligible, but his general drift seemed to indicate that the people were too downtrodden, too much oppressed, were groaning too painfully under the cruel British yoke, to have the spirit to look after the duties of the toilet. In other words, the Irish people will wash themselves when they get Home Rule. At the next election Mr. Gladstone will doubtless bring forward this aspect of the case as a sop to the soap-making interest.

Another Ballyshannoner was of a diametrically opposite opinion. "We are poor because we have no notion of making money by modern methods. We have always lived on the land, selling our superfluity to pay the rent, and now that our arrangements are disturbed, we don't know which way to turn. The blame rests with America, whose competition has so lowered the price of produce that the farmer's superfluity, that is, what he does not consume himself, will no longer

suffice to pay the rent. That is a general statement only. Landlords are generally reasonable, and meet their tenants fairly enough when the tenants are well-disposed and honest. The tenant-farmers of Ireland have no more to complain of than the tenant-farmers of England—much less in fact—but they have an army of agitators, an ignorant English press, and the G.O.M. on their side. That makes all the difference. We have occasional cases of unfair landlordism, but they are so rare as to be the talk of a county or two.

"A Mrs. Hazlitt holds, with her farm, about twenty or thirty acres of slobland reclaimed from [382] the Atlantic. Slobland is land reclaimed from the sea. This piece is on Donegal Bay. It was protected by a great dyke after the Dutch style. But the Atlantic is sometimes angry, and then he becomes unmanageable. He was ill-tempered one night (being troubled with wind), and he just washed down the dyke and inundated the reclaimed meadows, upon, which I have seen the most beautiful crops. The landlord, the Reverend James Hamilton, a Protestant rector, insists on rent being paid for this washed-away land. He does not rebuild the dyke, and the land lies waste—the widow paying rent for acres of useless salt marsh. That is pointed to by all the malcontents in Donegal as a specimen of landlordism, and Protestant landlordism, and more especially reverend Protestant landlordism. Nobody but a parson would exact the rent. These isolated examples are cited to bring discredit on Protestant landlords in general.

"This town is asleep, and it will not awake till the last Judgment. In 1885 we had a manufacturer from Belfast looking about for the best place for a big cloth mill on the river. The town was in a ferment of excitement, and everybody began to wonder what he would do with his additional income. The shop-keepers expected that their customers would have twice the money to spend in future, and the working folks began to be cocky with their employers, saying that they would get much better wages at the great factory. Then Mr. Gladstone brought out his '86 bill, and the Belfast man drew in his horns. He told me that he would not risk a farthing in any speculative venture while the threat of Home Rule was held over us. He was quite right. The Ballyshannon men were relieved from the trouble of deciding how they would spend their surplus money, and they ranged themselves on the bridge or at their usual corners, where you may now see them, propping up the old houses with their lazy backs, and discussing the wrongs of Ireland. What they would do without their supposed, wrongs nobody knows. In English hands this would be a money-making place. We have enormous advantages of situation, and the water power is almost unequalled in Ireland. Yet from here to Belleek, a distance of four miles, there is nothing whatever being done with it.

"The backwardness of the Irish and their poverty are, in my opinion, due to their inferiority as a race of men. Wherever there is a factory, you will find all the foremen Protestants—that is, Saxons. And Irishmen expect it. They will not work under Irish foremen, if they can help it. The Catholic labourer will work for the Protestant farmer, for choice, every time. The Catholic housekeeper goes to the Protestant shop, by preference. Where their own personal and earthly interests are concerned, the Papist population always prefer the guidance of the cursed heretic. And yet they express for the Black-mouths the greatest contempt and aversion, and would willingly put them out of the country to-morrow. That is because they wish to possess our goods. [383] They vote for Home Rule in the belief that they are paving the way for a dismissal of Protestants, and the division of their property. They do not know the name of the man who represents them, the title of the Parliamentary division for which he sits, or even, in many cases, the name of the county in which they themselves reside. To talk reason to such people would be absurd. Trained from their infancy to regard England as an enemy, they would not listen to anyone speaking on her behalf. They declare that they are barefoot because England wears their shoes, that they are starving that England may be over-fed. The how, the why, the wherefore are not within their ken, but they are sure of the facts. They had them from Father Dick, Tom, or Harry, and the holy man would not tell a lie. Stupid people over the Channel, listening to this iterated complaint, are acting as though it were true. Gladstone took it up, and his followers followed. No doubt it was all that most of them could do. Result,—tumult, disturbance, confusion worse confounded. Home Rule means that the country will be deluged with blood, that civilisation will receive a shock which will send back the island for a century. The causes of Ireland's poverty are laziness and lack of enterprise, the latter accentuated by everlasting disturbance. Before the Nationalists we had the Fenians, the Whiteboys, the Ribbon-men, the United Irishmen, the Defenders, the goodness-knows-what, running back in continuous line up to the dawn of history. No wonder we are poor. Cannot Gladstonians read the records? If they did so, and if they were acquainted with the character of the Irish when in their native land, they would agree with my cook, herself a Kelt of Kelts, who says that Irishmen are leather, good leather, but fit only for the sole, and not for the uppers.

"I used to regard Mr. Gladstone as an honest man. Now I think otherwise. As for the ruck that follow him—well, if they were intelligent when honest, or honest when intelligent, nobody could understand their deviation from the path of reason and rectitude. But the rogues will of course do anything they think will suit them best, no matter what befalls their country; and as for the rest, why of course no reasonable man would blame people for not thinking, when Providence has not provided them with the requisite machinery."

Ballyshannon, August 5th.

No. 58.—THE TRUTH ABOUT BUNDORAN.

ToC

There is no railway between Donegal and Ballyshannon, fifteen miles away. The largest town in the county is not connected with the principal port. But you can steam from Ballyshannon to Bundoran, the favourite watering-place of Donegal, quaint and romantic, with a deep bay and grassy cliffs. The bathing-grounds have a smooth floor of [384] limestone, and the Atlantic rolls in majestically, sending aloft columns of white spray as its waters strike the outlying islands of rock, each with a green crown of vegetation. The bare-headed and bare-legged natives walk side by side with the fashionably-dressed citizens of Dublin, Belfast, and Londonderry. The poorest folks are tolerably clean, and, unlike the Southerners, occasionally wash their feet. The town is small, but there is plenty of good accommodation for holiday makers. Bundoran is Catholic and intolerant. Although depending on their Protestant countrymen for nine-tenths of their livelihood, the people of Bundoran object to Protestantism, and the intensity of their antipathy to the Black-mouths has impelled them to quarrel with their bread-and-butter. Of late the question of tolerance has been much discussed. Sapient persons whose assumption is equal to their ignorance of the subject, affect to despise the fears of the scattered Protestant population whose alarm is based on the experience of a lifetime. English Home Rulers who wish to create effect unblushingly affirm that the Protestants are the only intolerants, and that the Papists are as distinguished for affectionate toleration as for industry and honesty. In direct opposition to daily experience and the evidence of history, they assert that the Papists are the persecuted party, and that they only practise their religion with fear and trembling. Notwithstanding the well-known doctrine of the Roman Church, which preserves heaven exclusively for those within its own pale, these eccentric politicians aver that under a Roman Catholic Parliament, elected by the clergy alone, the isolated Protestants of Catholic Ireland, known in the Papist vernacular as Black-faces, Black-mouths, Heretics, Soupers, and Jumpers, would be treated with perfect consideration, would enjoy the fullest freedom, the most indulgent toleration, would, in short, be placed in a position of equality with the predestined inhabitants of Paradise, or, to quote Catechism, the inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. The persons most nearly concerned know better. The shrewd farmers of Ulster, like the Puritan brethren of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, are entirely devoid of faith in the promised Papist toleration. Protestant equality under a Home Rule Parliament! You might as well tell them to plant potatoes and expect therefrom a crop of oats. Men do not gather grapes off thorns nor figs off thistles.

The Bundoran Protestants have evidence to offer. The date is recent. Not two hundred years ago, but in the year of grace eighteen-hundred-and-ninety-three. Seeing that the little seaside resort was full of holiday-makers from the Protestant counties of Fermanagh and Tyrone, two young Protestant clergymen determined to hold Gospel services in a tent which was pitched in a field the property of Mr. James A. Hamilton, J.P. For about a week beforehand handbills announcing the services for July 21 had been distributed in the town and suburbs, but no controversial topic was mentioned, nor was it intended that the services should be other than [385] strictly evangelical. The tent was erected solely to accommodate the great influx of visitors, after the manner so familiar in England. Here was a test of Papal toleration. The tent was on private ground, and if Papists did not like it they could easily keep away, making a wry face and spitting out the abomination as they passed, after their liberal custom. This, however, was not enough. No sooner had the handbills been issued, than a most scurrilous placard appeared, calculated to inflame the passions of the ignorant, and to make them act after their kind. The Gospellers were accused of an attempt to poach on the Papal preserves, and it was mockingly stated that they had at last come to Christianise the benighted Papists. The effect of this placard was soon evident. It became known that the Roman Catholics of the district had determined that they would allow no Gospel services in Bundoran. The police authorities, who know all about Papist "tolerance," increased the small village force to twenty-five men, but, as the result proved, these were absolutely useless. A mob of more than a thousand pious ruffians gathered early in the evening, and attacked in a brutal and merciless manner every person they suspected of being on the way to the meeting. The two Evangelists went to the tent under the escort of the twenty-five policemen, but before they could commence the service the apostles of toleration made a desperate rush on the congregation, most of whom were struck with bludgeons and stones, knocked down, kicked, and otherwise maltreated. The constabulary with great determination, but with much difficulty, protected the two young clergymen, upon whom a most venomous attack was made. The Protestants defended themselves with umbrellas, walking-sticks, and the like, but being strongly charged these proved of little avail against the wild onslaught of the party of toleration. Well may the local paper say that "a regular panic pervades the resident and visiting Protestant families."

Mr. Morley, replying to a question in the House, said the reports were exaggerated. The hapless Irish Secretary, unable to meet this and similar charges with denial, always relies on the plea of "exaggeration." The statement given above is derived from eye-witnesses of both creeds, and from an official source. One word as to the plea of exaggeration.

When I had investigated the fifteen moonlighting atrocities of four weeks in County Limerick, the County Inspector, who had just returned from a conference with Mr. Morley, said to me:—

"Everything is ve-ry quiet. We're going on very nicely now." But the *Gazette* gave particulars of the shooting in the legs of the four members of the Quirke family, and Mr. Morley was obliged to admit the fifteen outrages which constituted County Inspector Moriarty's idea of "quiet." Subordinates will say there is peace when there is no peace, if the master requires it. The Bundoran outrage is not susceptible of exaggeration. Call another witness.

The *Sligo Independent*, which being published on the spot can speak with authority, says that [386] "the intolerant and bigoted Roman Catholics of Bundoran and surrounding districts look upon Protestantism as a kind of leprosy which ought at all hazards to be stamped out," and further states that "even the ladies did not escape their fanatical hatred and fury. Several people were severely injured, and a clergyman who was coming to the meeting with his Bible in his hand, was thrown down and badly beaten, the Book being torn from him and destroyed. What may Protestants expect should the Home Rule Bill ever become law, when such disgraceful outbursts of religious bigotry are quite common under the existing *régime*? The natural conclusion is that all such Gospel meetings would be put down with a strong hand, and Protestant religious liberty trampled under foot by their unscrupulous Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen. And yet Loyalists are told to trust in them and all will be well!" Thus the Sligo journal; and its editor may perhaps, under the circumstances, be pardoned for suggesting that "it were better for Loyalists not to put themselves in the power of men who have proved themselves unfit even to associate with civilised beings. Bundoran will feel the evil effects of these insane attacks upon defenceless people next season when tourists and pleasure-seekers will avoid this seat of stupid bigotry, and visit some other summer resort where they will at least be allowed to worship their Maker according to their own desires." Exactly. Many visitors left at once, and will never return. During my six hours' stay I heard complaints of the falling-off of business. If the place be empty next summer the people will attribute the loss to the British Government, and especially to the machinations of the Tory party. An old fisherman said the fish had left the bay. I assured him they would return under a Dublin Parliament. He refused to be comforted, because they were not.

There is no railway from Bundoran to Sligo, that is, no direct railway. The great lines mostly run from east to west, but the west lacks connecting links. Look at the map of Ireland. Cast your eye on the west coast. If you would go by rail from Westport to Sligo, you must first go east to Mullingar. If you would go by rail from Sligo to Bundoran, you must first go east to Enniskillen. If from Bundoran to Donegal, less than twenty miles, you must again go to Enniskillen, thence to Strabane, where you arrive after the best part of a day's journey, ten miles further away than when you started, thence to Stranorlar, changing there to the narrow-gauge railway for your final trip. Travelling on the west coast is tedious and expensive, whether you go round by rail or drive direct. Many of the most attractive tourist districts are almost inaccessible. To open them up is to enrich the neighbourhood. Few Englishmen know what the Balfour railways really mean. The following statement gives particulars respecting the Light Railways authorised by the Salisbury Government, and constructed either wholly or in part by the nation. These railways introduce [387] tourists to those parts of Ireland which are best worth visiting, and the economy of time, money, and muscular tissue effected by them would be hard to overestimate. But this is not all, nor was this their primary purpose. They gave and still give employment to the people of the district, and besides bringing the money of the tourists into the country, enable the natives to send their produce out of it, to place it on the market, to turn it into gold. There is no railway from Dugort, in Achil, to any market. Fish caught in Blacksod Bay are therefore worth nothing except as food for the fisherman's family. Large crabs were offered to me for one halfpenny each. Does this fact impress the usefulness of Balfour's railways? Here they are complete:—

Name.	Length in miles.	Balfour's contribution.
Donegal and Killybegs	17¾	£115,000
Stranorlar and Glenties	24½	116,000

On this line you run for twelve miles from Stranorlar without seeing a single cottage. There are none within sight on either side.

Downpatrick and Ardglass	7¼	£30,000
Galway and Clifden	50	264,000

This will run in connection with the splendid system of the Midland and Western Railway, opening up the grand scenery of Connemara, which to the average Britisher is like a new world. No end of fishing here among virgin shoals of trout and salmon, and nearly always for nothing. It was along the first sixteen miles of this line, still unopened, that I ran on the engine to Oughterard.

Westport to Mulranney	18¼	£131,400
To which is added the		
Achil Island extension	8¼	65,000

This will enable travellers to steam from Dublin to Achil Island viâ Midland and Western, instead of the ten hours on an open car, which on their arrival at Westport now awaits visitors to Dugort. It was on this line that I had the startling adventures on a fiery untamed bogey engine, lent to the *Gazette* by Mr. Robert Worthington, of Dublin. But I must condense.

Claremorris and Collooney	47	£150,000
Ballina and Killala	6½	44,000
Bantry extension	2	15,000

Baltimore extension	8		56,700
West Kerry and Valentia	27		85,000
Headford and Kenmare	20		50,000
Milltown, Malbay, Kilkee, and Kilrush	26	2% on	120,000
Tuam and Claremorris	17	2% on	97,000
Ballinrobe and Claremorris	12	2% on	71,664

Besides these, similar lines have been constructed, and are now working between Tralee, Dingle, and Castlegregory; Skibbereen and Skull; Ballinscarty, Timoleague, and Courtmacsherry. The Cork and Muskerry Railway, which runs through the groves of Blarney, owes its completion and success to Mr. Balfour's administration.

Driving from Bray to the Dargle, my jarvey pointed to the ruins of a light railway undertaken [388] without the aid of the British intellect. "'Tis a nice mess they made iv it, the quarrelin' pack o' consated eejits! They must run a chape little thing to the Dargle, about two miles away, along the roadside, just as Balfour showed them the way. What have they done? Desthroyed the road. Lost all the money they could raise. Got the maker to take back the rails (for they bought thim afore they wanted thim), an' the only thing they now have in the shape of shareholders' property is a lawsuit wid the Wicklow folks about desthroyin' the road. Faix, an iligant dividend is that same. An' them's the chaps that's to rule the counthry. That's the sort of thim, I mane. Many's the time I seen the Irish mimbers. Sorra a thing can they do, barrin' dhrink an' talk. I wouldn't thrust one of thim to rub down a horse, nor wid a bottle of poteen. Divil a one of thim but would dhrink as much whiskey as would wash down a car, an' if they could run as fast as they can talk, begorra, ye might hunt hares wid thim. Rule the counthry, would ye. Whe-w-w-w!" He whistled with a "dying fall," like the strain in *Twelfth Night*.

I drove from Bundoran to Sligo, the sea on the right, the Benbulben mountains on the left, singularly shaped but splendid. The round towers and ancient Irish crosses, the lakes and rivers of Sligo, are full of interest and beauty. The Abbey ruins are exceptionally fine. The town is fairly well built, but it is easy to realise that once more it is Connaught. During a turn round Bridge Street, a country cart heaves alongside, steered by a stalwart man in hodden gray. He notes the stranger, and politely says,

"Can I be of any use? I see you are a visitor."

We fell into conversation. Presently I said, "Everything will be well when you get Home Rule."

He stopped the cart and protested against this statement. Unknowingly I had tapped a celebrity. My hodden-gray friend was none other than the famous Detective James Magee, who arrested James Stephens, the Number One, the Head Centre of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood; also John O'Leary, editor of the Fenian *Irish People*, of which O'Donovan Rossa was business manager. O'Leary was a doctor hailing from Tipperary. He asked Magee if he might have his "night-cap," and his captor allowed him to call for the whiskey at a well-known Dublin resort, on parole of honour. Later, as a crowded street was reached, O'Leary said, "There are three thousand of my friends there. If you go that way I cannot save you. Better try a back street." "That was handsome," said Mr. Magee. "O'Leary was a gentleman. Stephens was only a 'blower.'" My friend was unalterably set against Home Rule, which he regards as an empty, foolish cry. Being a pensioner he wishes to be reticent, but his opinion is pronounced, and the Sligo people know it. He has a high opinion of the law-abiding instincts of his compatriots, and believes that "if they were left to themselves" the district would need no police. "A better- [389] hearted, kinder, more obliging people never lived," said this excellent judge, who after twenty-seven years of police service, returned to end his days among them. And my short experience of the Sligo folks confirms this statement. They were not all so reserved as Detective-sergeant Magee. A thriving shopkeeper said:—"The majority, if you count noses, are for Home Rule, but if you count only brains and intelligence you would find an overwhelming majority against it. Mr. Gladstone and his set of blockheads seem quite impervious to reason, and even the constituencies of England seem to lack information. The reason is plain. While we have been minding our work the Nationalists have been agitating. For thirteen years they have been on the stump, and have stolen a march on us and they take a lot of catching up. We allowed them to empty their wind-bags, forgetting that the English people were not so conversant with the facts or with the character of the orators as we are. We thought that no precautions were required, and that their preposterous statements would be received in England as intelligent, enlightened people would receive them here. Their strength in Ireland is almost entirely among the illiterates, who in the polling booths are coerced by their priests. I have seen a man crying because he had not been allowed to vote for the candidate supported by his employer. Such a ridiculous thing could not happen in England, and Englishmen who do not know Ireland and the Irish will scarcely credit it. This shows how unable most Saxons are to understand Irish character and motive.

"All our civilisation is from England, all our progress, all our enlightenment, and nearly all our money. As a poor, helpless, semi-barbaric country, we ought to cleave to England with all our might and main. A more and more complete and perfect unity is our best hope. To ask for separation is the wildest absurdity. And just as we were beginning to go along smoothly! That was entirely due to the just but firm administration of the Balfour period.

"Among Irishmen justice with firmness is always appreciated in the long run. An Irish Secretary needs the hand of iron in the velvet glove. Paddy spots the philanthropic fumbler in a moment, and uses him, laughing the while at what he rightly calls his 'philandering.' Morley means well, but nobody here respects him. He knows no more of Irish character than a blind bull-pup. His

master in my opinion is worse, if possible. He is deaf to all the arguments of Irish sense and Irish culture, and proposes to finally resolve the unresolvable, to settle the Irish difficulty by a Catholic Parliament. As well go out with a net to catch the wind. He listens to the representatives of ruffianism, counting them first. We kept silent too long. We thought the donkeys might bray for ever without shaking down the stars. We were wrong. Now we are almost powerless. For what are a handful of reasonable men against a crowd of blackguards with big sticks?"

While conversing with Detective Magee, that astute gentleman pointed out The O'Connor, [390] lineal King of Connaught, and a staunch Unionist! A devout Catholic and intensely Irish, yet the uncrowned King is a loyalist. But The O'Connor is a man of superior understanding. After this I saw three Home Rulers—yea, I conversed with four, one a positive person whom I mistook for a farm labourer, but who proved to be a National schoolmaster who absorbed whiskey like the desert sands. A decent farmer who thought the Land League the finest thing in the wuruld, complained that while the British Government have contracted for hay at £8 15s., yet he and his friends could only get £3 for "best saved." His idea of Home Rule was—No Rent to pay. A ferocious commercial traveller, whose jaw and cheekbones were as much too large as his eyes and forehead were too small, wanted to know "what right had England to rule Ireland? Ye have no more right to rule Ireland than to rule France." This was his only idea. He was a patriot of the sentimental type, and wished that Ireland might take her place as an independent nation with Belgium, Switzerland, Holland. His hero was Paddy O'Donnell, of Bedlam—*clarum et venerabile nomen*—who for five days held his house, since called the Fort, against a strong force of police. "If all was like O'Donnell, we'd soon have the counthry to ourselves," said my commercial friend. "An' if ye don't let us go, we'll make ye wish ye did. Wait till ye get into throuble with France. The Siam business may yet turn up thrumps." He was very voluble, very loud, very illiterate, and I declined to discuss the question except in Irish, which he did not speak. Like most of the patriot orators of Ireland, he was as ignorant of his native language as of his native literature, and every other. This is the class from whom the political speakers who infest country places are drawn. At first sight they seem unworthy of notice, but contempt may be pushed too far. Even wasps become dangerous when in swarms. And Hatred is like fire: it makes even light rubbish deadly.

Sligo, August 8th.

No. 59.—IRISH NATIONALISM IS NOT PATRIOTISM.

ToC

My tour through Ireland having now come to an end, I propose to sum up the conclusions I have formed in this and the three following articles. In connection with the Home Rule Bill, we have heard much of the "aspirations of a people." Mr. Gladstone has taken up the cry, and his subservient followers at once brought their speeches and facial expressions into harmony with the selected sentiment. These anti-English Englishmen would fain pose as persons in advance of their time, determined to do justice though the heavens should fall. They agree with Mr. Labouchere that John Bull is a tyrant, a robber, and a hypocrite, and that it is high [391] time justice should be done to Ireland. As no substantial injustice exists, it is necessary to fall back on sentiment, and to quote the "aspirations of a people." The desire for a system of Irish autonomy is praised as a manifestation of patriotism which in all ages of the world has been honoured by worthy men. The English supporters of Mr. Gladstone, with their assumption of superior virtue, their Pharasaic We are not as other men, nor even as these Tories, would have us believe that with the granting of self-rule Ireland will be satisfied, that the gratification of a laudable sentiment is all that is now required to bind together the peoples in an infrangible Union of Hearts, and that peace and prosperity will at once follow in the wake of this merely sentimental concession.

The great mass of the Irish electorate know nothing of all this. Tap them wherever you will, north, south, east, or west, and you find one dominant thought—that of pecuniary gain. They know nothing of the proposed bill, and are totally incapable of comprehending its scope and effect. The peasantry of Ireland are actuated by motives entirely different from those affecting the rural constituencies of England. The Briton is proud of his country, believes in its might, justice, supremacy; and despite occasional grumbling is satisfied that the powers that be will do him right in the long run. The Irish peasant is essentially inimical to England. He is always "agin the Government"—that is, the rule of England. He regards the landlord as trebly an enemy—firstly as a heretic, secondly as the representative of British rule, and last, but by no means least, as the person to whom rent is due. He desires to abolish the landlord, not in the interests of religion—I speak now of the peasantry, and not the clergy—and not in the interests of patriotism, for if a Dublin Parliament were to cost him sixpence, the priests themselves could hardly drag him to the poll; but purely and simply to avoid any further payment of what he regards as the accursed impost on the land. Phillip Fahy, the leading light of Carnaun, near Athenry, is exactly

typical of rural Irish Patriotism. "Did ye hear of the Home Rule Bill? What does it mane, at all, at all? Not one o' us knows more than that lump o' stone ye sit on. Will it give us the land for nothin', for that's all we hear? We'll be obliged av ye could explain it a thrifle, for sorra one but's bad off, an' Father O'Baithershin says 'Howld yer whist,' says he 'till ye see what'll happen,' says he. Will we get the bit o' ground widout rint, yer honner's glory?" Mr. Tynan, of Monivea, said that his landlord was liberal and good, and admitted that his land was not too highly rented, but, said he, "We have no objection to do better still." The run on the Irish Post Office Savings Banks at once illustrates the patriotism of the people and their confidence in the proposed Dublin Parliament. It was well known and understood, so far as the poorer classes are capable of understanding anything, that the floating balance of the Post Office Banks would constitute the only working capital of the Irish Legislature. Here was an opportunity for self-sacrifice. Here was [392]
a chance of manifesting the faith animating the lovers of their country. But at the same time it was made known that the Post Office would pass from the British control to that of the Irish people's chosen representatives. It might have been supposed that the electors would rejoice thereat with exceeding great joy, and that in order to show their trust in an Irish Parliament they would increase their deposits, and at considerable personal inconvenience refrain from withdrawals. Nothing of the kind. The "aspirations of a people" were at once strongly defined, but this time not in the direction of patriotism. It availed not to urge upon them the argument that the four millions of the Post Office Savings Banks were absolutely necessary to the successful administration of an Irish Parliament. In patriotic Dublin the run on the Post Office was tremendous. The master of a small sub-office told me that the withdrawals over his counter had for some time amounted to £200 per week, and that they were increasing to £70 per day. There was not enough gold in Dublin to meet the demands, and cash was being forwarded from London. The patriots who had no money deposited in the Post Office made no secret of their indignation, stigmatising their fellow-countrymen as recreants and traitors, but without perceptible effect. The Dublin Savings Bank became the trusted depositary of the money. This institution is managed by an association of Dublin merchants, not for profit, but for the encouragement of thrift, and the confidence reposed in them was doubtless due to the fact that the directors, on the introduction of the Home Rule Bill, had publicly announced their intention, on the bill becoming law, to pay twenty shillings in the pound and at once to close the bank. The patriot depositors were not deterred by this announcement, nor by the directors' letter to Mr. Gladstone, in which they declared that their determination to wind up the affairs of the bank was due to the fact that in the interest of their depositors they felt themselves unable to accept the security of an Irish Legislature. Patriotism would surely have resented this imputation. But Nationalism in its present phase is nothing more than selfish cupidity and lust of gain. This is made abundantly manifest by the freely-uttered sentiments of all classes of the Nationalist party. The first answer I received to an inquiry as to what advantages would be derived from a patriot Parliament was elicited from an ancient Dubliner, whose extraordinary credulity was equal to anything afterwards met with in the rural districts:—"The millions an' millions that John Bull dhrags out iv us, to kape up his grandeur, an' to pay sojers to grind us down, we'll put into our own pockets, av you plaze." The complaint about the British Government veto on Irish mining, which I fondly believed to be sporadic, proved to be chronic, universal. Here again the notion of easily acquired wealth was the impulse, and not the pure and self-denying influence of patriotism. "The British Government won't allow us to work the gold mines in the Wicklow mountains. Whin we get the bill every man [393]
can take a shpade, an', begorra! can dig what he wants. The Phaynix Park is all cram-full o' coal that the Castle folks won't allow us to dig, bad scran to them! Whin we get the bill we'll sink them mines an' send the Castle to blazes." The coal under the Phœnix Park is a matter of pious belief with every back-slum Dubliner. The gold of the Wicklow mountains is proverbial all over Ireland. There is not a nobleman's demesne that does not cover untold wealth in some shape or form. It may be gold, silver, copper, lead, or only coal or iron. But it is there, and the people of the neighbourhood want an Irish Parliament in order that the treasures may be turned into money. The more intelligent Nationalists foster these beliefs, although they know them to be without foundation. They know that the treasures do not exist in paying quantities, and also that if they did exist their fellow-countrymen are too lazy to dig them up. The Nationalist orators never rely on patriotic sentiment. They promise the land for nothing. Mr. William O'Brien has unceasingly offered as a bribe the promise of prairie rents for the farmers, but Tim Healy went one better when at Limerick he said that "The people of this country never ought to be satisfied so long as a single penny of rent is paid for a sod of land in the whole of Ireland." Well might Sir George Trevelyan say that Irish agitators have done much to demoralise the country, and that in many parts of Ireland they gained their livelihood by criminal agitation. The same authority tells us that "an Irish Parliament will be independent of the Parliament of this country, but will be dependent on the votes of the small farmers, who have been taught that rent is robbery." That is a precise statement of the position so far as the agricultural voters are concerned. Their patriotism is nothing more nor less than a sure and certain hope of pecuniary advantage. The green flag of Ireland has no charms for them. The ancient glories of Hibernia are sung to them in vain. They care not for the Onward march to Freedom. They will make no sacrifices on the shrine of their country. The subscriptions furnished by the Irish peasantry for the furtherance of the cause amount to almost nothing, although extorted partly by compulsion and partly by the hope of future profit. The following facts will show how spontaneous is their patriotism. At a Sunday meeting at Gurteen in 1887, the Very Reverend Canon O'Donohoe in the chair, it was resolved, "That a collection for the defence of Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien be made during the ensuing week in this locality, and that not less than sixpence be accepted from any person. *Anyone not subscribing will be considered not in sympathy with the Branch.*" Those only who know Ireland well will be able to appreciate the terrible significance of the last sentence of this resolution, which for the information of the peasantry was made public in the Nationalist *Sligo Champion*. A

similar incentive to patriotism seems to have been required by the Kilshelan Branch, for at another Sunday Meeting, the Reverend Father Dunphy in the chair, it was unanimously resolved, "That all members who do not pay in subscriptions on or before the next meeting, which will be held on the last Sunday of this month, shall have their names published and posted on the chapel gate for two consecutive Sundays." This quotation is from the *Munster Express*, published in Limerick. At a meeting reported by the *Kerry Sentinel* "the conduct of several members, who had not renewed their subscriptions, was strongly condemned, the reverend president, Father T. Enright, giving orders to have a list, with their names, sent to him before the next meeting." The chapel doors are used as instruments of boycotting. The priest sits in judgment on all who are not sufficiently patriotic. The people are compelled to subscribe to the cause, whether they like it or not. These cases could be multiplied to infinity. They not only give an excellent illustration of the conduct of the Irish clergy in political affairs, but they also furnish a curious commentary on the enthusiasm which is supposed to mark the Aspirations of a People, who, as Mr. Gladstone might say are "rightly struggling to be free." I have conversed with hundreds of Irish farmers and I never yet met one who was willing to sacrifice a sixpence on "the altar of his country," or to trust an Irish Parliament with his own property, or to invest a penny on purely Irish security. He loves his ease, no man likes it better, and No Rent means less exertion. Mr. O'Doherty, of County Donegal, a Catholic Home Ruler, said the landlords were all right now under compulsion, but what the tenantry demanded was to be released entirely from the landlords' yoke. The farmers, he said, cared nothing for Home Rule, but the Nationalists had preached prairie value, and the people expected to drive out the landowners and Protestants. Mr. John Cook, of Londonderry, a Protestant Home Ruler and a man of culture, did not claim patriotism for the Nationalists, and unconsciously put his finger on the real incentive when he said:—"The landlords will be wronged under the present bill. It is a bad bill, an unjust bill, and will do more harm than good. England should have a voice in fixing the price of the land, for if the matter be left to the Irish Parliament gross injustice will be done. The tenants were buying their land, aided by the English loans, for they found that their two-and-three-quarter per cent. interest came lower than their rent. But they have quite ceased to buy, because they expect the Irish Legislature to give them even better terms—or even to get the land for nothing." Patriotism had meanwhile received another sop. Mr. Healy advised the farmers to think twice before they bought their land, and hinted that their patience was likely to be well rewarded. Father J. Corcoran at Mullahoran, when consulted by a body of tenant farmers whose landlord offered to sell, distinctly advised them not to purchase, and gave a practical instruction on the subject, in which he endeavoured to prove that seventeen or eighteen years' purchase was at present unworthy of consideration, and advising the greatest caution in buying at all under present circumstances. The farmers' conception of Nationalism is plunder and confiscation. They vote for Home Rule because they thereby expect to make money, to become freeholders, landlords themselves, in short. They are taught that they have an inherent right to the land, and that an Irish Parliament will restore them their own. Father B. O'Hagan, addressing a meeting in company with William O'Brien, said:—"We have two classes of landlords, in brief. We have the royal scoundrels who took the land of our forefathers. I ask any of those noble ruffians to show me the title by which they lay claim to the soil of my ancestors. Then we have the landlords who have purchased their estates in the Land Courts. But they bought stolen goods, and they knew that the land was stolen. We must get rid of the landlords." Paddy is perfectly safe. The landlords who claim in descent and those who buy in the open market are equally denounced. Let him support the Nationalist party, and the land becomes his own. He does so, and his motive is by the unthinking called patriotism and by Mr. Gladstone the Aspirations of a People.

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There are of course other classes of Nationalists, but in comparison with the immense preponderance of rural voters they do not count for much. Mr. McGregor, of Anglesea Street, Dublin, once an earnest Gladstonian, said:—"The corner-men are Home Rulers because they want to spend what they never earned, and the farmers because they hope to get the land for nothing." The Dublin hotel-keepers are mostly Home Rulers, and the proprietor of Jury's, next door to the proposed House in College Green, is supposed to be consumed with patriotic fire. The hotel has recently been refitted. The Dublin shopkeepers, "those of the largest size," are strangely lacking in patriotism, and mostly support the Union. Patriotism is claimed for the Nationalist members, who, according to Nationalist sheets, were lifted from bog-holes, tripe shops, and small whiskey shops to decide the destinies of empires, to revel in comparative luxury, to enjoy a certain social distinction, to exchange their native bogs for the British metropolis, and to draw a salary beyond their wildest dreams. These questionable gentlemen, with the horse's tongue and cow's tail cutters, the firebrand priests and landlord-shooters, the moonlight marauders who shoot old women and children in the legs, burn the haystacks of their neighbours, refuse coffins and decent burial for the dead, apply the fiendish tortures of boycotting to innocent women and children, refusing them the means of subsistence, and poisoning their water supply with human filth—these *are* patriots. Only their patriotism must cost them nothing, It must be cultivated at the expense of others. The patriots subscribe only under compulsion, and yet hope to make a profit by the transaction. As of a certain party of old, it may be said of them, "License they mean when they cry Liberty." Plunder they mean when they cry Patriotism. The sober and industrious portion of the Irish people, the pick of every part of Ireland, being opposed to Nationalism, are denied the virtue of patriotism. The merchants and manufacturers of Dublin and Belfast, the leading professional men of Ireland, the most learned scholars of her great University, her great soldiers, White, Wolseley, Roberts, her greatest living authors, the whole of her Protestant clergy of whatever sect, with their congregations, the pith and marrow of everything that is strong, stable, cultured, enlightened, prescient, must be pronounced unpatriotic—if Nationalism is Patriotism. Contrary to all human experience and to the course and constitution of nature, the people of

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England are asked to believe that love of their native land and desire to do the best for the commonweal, are the sole possession of the ignorant and rowdy classes of Irishmen, and notwithstanding the undeniable fact that Nationalist Irishmen of every colour accuse the Nationalist members of self-seeking, and of absolute indifference to everything: outside their own interests, we are asked to give to them exclusively the honour due to men who sacrifice all for their country and care for nothing but her welfare. Gladstonians themselves, in the deepest depths of their credulity, cannot in their hearts believe in Nationalist patriotism, except, perhaps, such as that of Mr. Kelly, of Athenry, who said, "I'm a Home Ruler out and out. The counthry's within a stone-throw of hell, and we may as well be in it altogether."

Birmingham, August 11th.

No. 60.—LAND HUNGER: ITS CAUSE, EFFECT, AND REMEDY.

ToC

That Irish Nationalism is not Patriotism has been demonstrated by an appeal to admitted facts. The farmers hope to be relieved from payment of rent, the labourers hope to be employed in the mining of treasure at remunerative wages, the agitators hope for place and power, and everyone who has nothing hopes in the general confusion to make off with something. There is, in short, a shrewd popular notion that the foundering of the British ship of state would yield good wreckage. The false lights have done excellent service. Dillon, Davitt, O'Brien. Healy, and the rest of the would-be wreckers are shivering with excitement at the prospect of the crash which they fondly believe to be imminent. The helmsman is under their orders—will he be heaved overboard before he has done his work? If so, farewell to hope of plunder, farewell to hope of religions domination, to freehold farms for nothing, to gold mines, to every hope that made life pleasant, to all the fatuous beliefs that are the basis of Irish Nationalism. It has been shown that "patriotic" subscriptions could only be raised by threats, that the names of non-subscribers were posted on chapel gates, that resolutions fixing the minimum were passed, with a rider to the effect that persons not [397] subscribing would be considered "out of sympathy," and that this fund was for the defence of the patriots Dillon and O'Brien, who afterwards ran away. The rush of the "patriot" depositors on the Post Office Savings Banks so soon as it was known that in the event of Home Rule the floating balance would constitute the working capital of the new Parliament, and would therefore be in the hands of brother "patriots," has been adduced as a fair measure of patriotic sincerity, and endless minor examples might have been given. We might have mentioned Delany, the principal clothier and outfitter of intensely patriotic Limerick, who had not a yard of Irish tweed in his stores; or the Dungannon folks, who think foul scorn of their own coal, and persist in buying the English product at double the cost; or Mr. Timony, of "patriotic Donegal," might have been quoted. "Irishmen," said the great draper, "will not wear Donegal tweed. But for England we should have no market at all." The patriots will not "part." "I'm sorry for you," said the kind old lady. "*How much* are you sorry?" said the tramp. Tried by this test, Irish patriotism comes out very small. If "patriot" members had to live on the voluntary offerings of their constituencies, the trade would expire of inanition. The members would return to their bogs, their tripe shops, their shebeens, and patriotism would become a lost art. Irishmen will applaud with enthusiasm. They like a red-hot patriotic speech. But, like the crowd listening to the harp and fiddle at the street corner, they begin to shuffle off when the bag comes round.

Irish land hunger is easy to understand and simple to define. The bulk of the population are agricultural, and closely wedded to custom. Their fathers lived on the land and by the land, and they expect to do likewise. *Sæva paupertas, et avitus apto cum lare fundus.* Their ideas of existence are inseparably connected with the land. Whatever knowledge they have relates to the land. Their farming skill is very limited; indeed, it may almost be said that they have none beyond that possessed by savages—but it is their only possession. They have no turn for mechanics. The rural Irishman is uneducated, and knows little beyond what he sees around him. So far as his experience goes, to be without land is to be without the one means of livelihood. The English small farmer is differently situated. If farming will not pay he has other resources. He can migrate to fifty towns having factories or great public works. And besides this, the Saxon is not crippled by an ignorant conservatism and a congenital inability to adapt himself to changed circumstances. Paddy is content with little, if he have his ease. He loves to put in the seed and then to sit down and wait for the crop, varying the proceedings with fairs and festive gatherings. Such is his conception of life. The ding-dong regularity of factory work does not suit him, so he clings to the land, which provides him with a bare subsistence, and that is all he wants. No [398] ambition to be more luxurious than his father troubles him at all. Short spells of work, and long spells of play, are ensured to the fortunate holder of land. This is Paddy's conception of Paradise. Suppose the land held were at first sufficient to maintain his family. The boys grow up, and, according to custom, the paternal farm is divided, in the next generation again subdivided, until at last the amount of land remaining to each family is insufficient for its maintenance. Then the

district becomes congested. The poverty of the people is attributed to the landlords, who are denounced as non-resident, notwithstanding the demonstrations of an affectionate tenantry, who now and then shoot one or two, *pour encourarger les autres*. If the people have food they have little or no money. The agitator comes and promises No Rent, the opening of gold mines and mighty factories, paying liberal wages, under the fostering wing of an Irish Parliament. The people are ignorant and credulous. They are, however, certain as to their own poverty, and they desire a change. The Roman Catholics regard themselves as the chosen people, the true sons of the soil, but they see that most of the great landowners are Protestant, that the Protestant farmers often hold uncommonly good land, and that if these were once dispossessed the righteous might again flourish as green bay trees. For while Papal Ireland is largely rock and bog, the heretical portion is reclaimed and tilled, the bogs drained, the primeval boulders rolled away, broken up, and made into fences. All this is tempting. Irish land hunger is foreshadowed in the story of Naboth and his vineyard.

And Irish land hunger is largely responsible for Irish rents. Friends and neighbours—aye, even relatives near as brothers and sisters, compete against each other, and eagerly force up the price. Every Irish land agent will tell you of underhand intrigue in connection with land. Not only do brothers secretly strive to obtain advantage over each other by means of higher bidding, but bribery is tried. Mr. Robert Hare, of the Dublin Board of Works, said:—"My father was an agent, and on one occasion he was weighing the respective claims of two brothers to a piece of land which was about to become vacant and perhaps considering their respective offers, when one sent him a ten-pound note. He cut it in two and returned one-half, with an intimation that on receiving a receipt he would forward the other." I never met anyone in Ireland who would not readily admit that high rents were mainly due to the action of the tenants themselves, who, being actuated by what is called land-hunger, which is nothing more in the majority of cases than the necessity to live, had in their desperation bid more than the land was worth. Mr. Thomas Manley, of Trim, County Meath, said:—"The tenant farmer has cried himself up, and the Nationalists have cried him up as the finest, most industrious, most self-sacrificing fellow in the world. But he isn't. Not a bit of it. The landlords and their agents have over and over again been shot for rack-renting when the rents had been forced up by secret competition among neighbours and even relations. [399] Ask any living Irish farmer if I am right, and he will say, Yes, ten times yes." As an Irish farmer and the son of an Irish farmer, living for sixty years on Irish farms, and from his occupation as a horse-dealer, claiming to have an intimate acquaintance with the whole of Ireland, and with almost every farmer who can breed and rear a horse, Mr. Manley is worth a hearing. Continuing, in the presence of several intelligent Irishmen, some of them Home Rulers, but all agreeing with the speaker, Mr. Manley said:—"Rents have been forced up by people going behind each other's backs and offering more and more, in their eagerness to acquire the holding outbidding each other. Landlords are human; agents, if possible, still more human. They handed over the land to the highest bidder. What more natural? The farmers offered more than the land could pay. But why curse the landlords for what was their own deliberate act?" Mr. Manley's knowledge of England enabled him to say that "the Irish farmer is much better off than the English, Scotch, or Welsh farmer, not only in the matter of law, but also in the matter of soil." The legal point is demonstrable. Let us see how the Irish tenant stands. The disinclination of the Irish for factory work, as exemplified in the closing of the Galway jute factory, because of irregularity of attendance, and the refusal of the starving peasantry of congested Donegal and Connemara to accept regular employment in the thread factory of Dunbar, MacMaster and Co., notwithstanding the most tempting inducements, as set forth in my letters from Ireland, has strangled enterprise, except in the North. The ceaseless agitation of the revolutionary party has given rise to a feeling of insecurity which deters capitalists from investing money in Ireland. And it is only fair to say that a large majority of the most intelligent men of every political colour concur in attributing much of the poverty of Ireland to unrestricted Free Trade. Thus a variety of causes have created land hunger, with its resulting land clamour, which has brought about extraordinary legislation—extraordinary because going far beyond the principles recognised by Republican America, which in the first article of its Constitution draws the line thus:—"*No State shall pass any law impairing the obligation of contracts*." Well might Lord Salisbury, in extending the Land Purchase Act, carefully dissociate the Conservative party from the principle of interference with free contract in the open market. In England a thing is worth what it will fetch. It is not so in Ireland.

A tenant can never be evicted unless a whole year's rent is due. The landlord might want the land for himself or for his son, but he cannot have it. The tenant must have six months' notice of eviction, and when actually evicted can recover possession by paying what he owes, and in that case the landlord becomes liable to the tenant for the crops on the land, and for the profits he (the landlord) *might* have made. In America the length of notice preceding eviction varies from three days to thirty, the latter only in the State of Maine. Yet in Ireland, where we hear so much of brutal evictions, six months' notice is required, a year's rent being due, this boon having been [400] conferred by a "Coercion" Government. An Irish tenant even when voluntarily leaving his farm must be compensated by the landlord for all improvements made by himself or his predecessors, or must be permitted to sell his improvements to the incoming tenant. The tenant-right of a small farm is sometimes a surprising sum. The moonlighting case I investigated at Newcastlewest, Co. Limerick, arose from a tenant-right transaction, William Quirke having bid £590 for the tenant-right of forty-nine acres formerly held by J. Dore who was selling, as against £400 bid by Dore's cousin. Quirke and three of his family were therefore shot in the legs, by way of impressing the advisability of joining in the Onward march to Freedom. But although the tenant is settled on the land for ever, and, so long as he owes less than a year's rent, cannot be molested, it must not be supposed that the rent he agreed to is unchangeable. Suppose the tenant to be paying a judicial rent, which is decided by three persons, one of them a lawyer, the other two acting respectively

in the interests of landlord and tenant, having examined and valued the farm. Assume that the tenant gets more than a year behindhand. The landlord desires to evict. Even then the tenant, by applying for another "Fair Rent," can stay eviction. But while the rent may be lowered, the landlord can never raise it under any circumstances. The law is decidely one-sided. Leases may be broken. All leaseholders whose leases would expire within ninety-nine years after the passing of the Land Act of 1887 may go to Court, have their contracts broken, and a judicial rent fixed. No countervailing advantage is given to the landlords. When a tenant's valuation does not exceed £50, the Court before which proceedings are being taken for the recovery of any debt, whether for beef, bread, groceries, clothes, or whiskey, is empowered to stay eviction, can allow the debtor to pay by instalments, and can extend the time for such payment without limit. To the average British mind this will smack of over-legislation, and serious Irishmen make the same complaint. And still, to quote Father Mahony, of Cork, "still the Irish peasant mourns, still groans beneath the cruel English yoke." The fact is, he is almost killed with kindness. He is weighed down by the multitude of benefactions. He reminds you of the tame sparrow you once suffocated by overfeeding. So much has been done for him that he naturally expects more, and instead of being grateful he grumbles more than ever. He regards Mr. Gladstone as having acted under compulsion, and as being an opportunist. The peasantry of Ireland have no respect for the Grand Old Man. "Shure, we bate the bills out iv him. Shure, he never gave us anythin' till we kicked it out iv his skin. Divil thank him for doin' what we ordhered him to do."

But perhaps the Tory Land Purchase Acts are most promising in, the direction of finality. Lord Ashbourne's Act, as it was called (1885), conferred on Irish tenants opportunities of purchasing their holdings of quite an exceptional kind, and its scope and advantages were enormously [401] increased under the Land Purchase Act passed in 1891. If a tenant wishes to buy his holding and arranges with his landlord as to terms, he can change his position from an ordinary rentpayer into that of a payer of an annuity, terminable in forty-nine years, and actually less in amount than the rent! Most Irish landlords are willing to take less than twenty years' purchase, but the tenants are by their leaders advised not to buy. Otherwise the Government is prepared to advance the necessary purchase money, to be repaid at the rate of four per cent. per annum, which covers both principal and interest. Suppose the tenant's rent to be £50, and that he agreed to buy at the seventeen years' purchase so strongly discountenanced by the priest quoted in my last. His rent or rather the annual payment substituted for rent, would amount to £34, being a reduction of thirty-two per cent. If he bought at fifteen years' purchase, rent £50, he would only pay £30 a year, a reduction of forty per cent. If he bought at twenty years, rent £50, he would have £40 a year to pay, being a reduction of twenty per cent. In forty-nine years the holding would belong to him, or to his children. In any case he must largely benefit. His rent is lower, his share in the ownership is always becoming larger, and, if he chooses, he can at any time sell his interest in the concern. Mr. Palmer, of Tuam, said that those who had purchased under this Act were happy and prosperous. Lord Shannon's tenants bought at twelve years' purchase. In other words they exchanged their rent for one-half the amount, payable to Government, the land to be their own in forty-nine years. Lord Lansdowne's tenants agreed to buy at eighteen years' purchase, all arrears to be forgiven on payment of half a year's rent. These buyers are quiet and apparently contented. Their payments are regular, and if they were left alone they would doubtless continue in the path of rectitude. But the agitators, who find nick-names for everything, have already begun to call this repayment of purchase-money a Tribute to England; and the past history of Irish leaders leads honest Irishmen, as well as Englishmen, to the conviction that, once an Irish Parliament were established, with an Irish constabulary under its rule, a No Tribute campaign would ensue, which would lead to deplorable results. The privileges of Irish tenants are far more numerous than I have space to indicate, but perhaps enough has been said to give a clear idea of the chief causes and effects of land hunger in Ireland.

The remedy, in the opinion of many advanced and enlightened Home Rulers, must come from a Tory Government. From the multitude of counsellors I met in the thirty-two counties of Ireland, I will select two who represent the vast majority of able men of every political party. Mr. Thomas Manley said:—"Settle the land question, reform the Poor Laws and the Grand Jury laws, and reclaim the land, which would pay ten per cent." Mr. Mason, of Mullingar, said:—"The whole agitation would be knocked on the head by the introduction of a severe land measure. Previous [402] legislation has been very severe, and I do not say that a further measure would be just and equitable. I merely say that the people do not want Home Rule, but that they want the advantages which they are told will accrue from Home Rule." And so said everyone.

To settle the land question is to settle everything. Religious animosity would be silenced by self-interest. The operation of the Land Purchase Act has undoubtedly done much to turn the people using its provisions into good Conservatives—law-abiding and law-supporting, as having a stake in the country. The people have not the land for nothing but they look forward to its becoming honestly their own, and meanwhile they enjoy the security insured by the Government of England. In any attempt to settle this great problem, a Conservative Government would probably be largely supported by the landlords themselves, while the rank and file of Ireland would look with respect and confidence on any bill bearing the honoured name of Balfour. But how shall we decide the scope and character of such a final Land Bill? I do not hesitate to say that it must contain a very strong infusion of the compulsory element. The great measure of 1891 is generous to a fault, but it is voluntary, and the result is that the tenants who give greatest trouble—the poor, idle, ignorant dupes of a scheming priesthood and a corrupt political conspiracy—never come under its benefits, because they unquestioningly accept the advice given them to wait until an Irish Parliament lets them have the land for nothing.

Compulsion is not required for the landlords half so much as it is for the tenants. The

conclusion arrived at may be stated in a few words. Perhaps it may be worthy the consideration of our brilliant and far-seeing Unionist leaders:—

> The Land Purchase Act, 1891, should be amended by a Bill providing (1) That the existing Land Commission shall be strengthened in order to form a Court to which either Landlords or Tenants shall have the right to apply for an order of the Court placing them under the provisions of the Act of 1891, or such extension of that Act as may hereafter be made. (2) It should be the duty of the Court to inquire into the relations of landlord and tenant, the condition of the estate and of the tenants, and such other circumstances as may in the wisdom of the Court seem necessary. (3) If the Court decides to issue an order, the parties shall at once be placed in the same position as if they had entered into a mutual agreement under the Land Purchase Act, 1891; but it shall be the duty of the Court to fix the number of years' purchase; and it shall have power either to restrict or to enlarge the number of holdings over which its order shall take effect.

This is offered as the mere germ of a suggestion. I am familiar with the arguments that may be brought against it. For the most part they can be urged with equal effect against the whole system of interference with that freedom of contract which prevails in England and Scotland, but which, as I have pointed out, has already been destroyed in Ireland. What I claim is that there *must* be a means of defeating such a conspiracy to make the law inoperative as that practised—to the grave detriment of Irish tenants' interests—by the omnipresent agencies of the National League, ever since the Unionist party set itself to solve the agrarian sources of Irish discontent. [403]

Birmingham, August 14th.

No. 61.—CLERICAL DOMINATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

ToC

Those who play at bowls must expect rubbers. The Roman priesthood of Ireland having assumed the manipulation of Irish politics, have laid themselves open to mundane criticism. Said Mr. Gladstone:—"It is the peculiarity of Roman theology that by thrusting itself into the temporal domain, it naturally, and even necessarily, comes to be a frequent theme of political discussion." Priestly pretensions to authority are without limit. The Catholic clergy of Ireland claim the right to coerce the laity in political matters, themselves remaining exempt from public criticism. They also claim to be exempt from civil jurisdiction, and to have the right of overruling the law of the land, with every moral obligation, when clashing with the interests of the Church. They distinctly teach that every political question is a question of morals, and that to vote against the priest's instructions is a deadly sin. Such being a few of the claims advanced by the Irish priesthood, let us see on what rests the hope of these extraordinary demands being recognised. A.M. Sullivan, a Roman Catholic Nationalist M.P., says:—"Of all Catholic nations or countries in the world—the Tyrol alone excepted—Ireland is perhaps the most Papal, the most ultramontane. In Ireland religious conviction—what may be called active Catholicism—marks the population, enters into their daily life and thought and action. The churches are crowded as well by men as by women, and in every sacrament and ceremony of their religion participation is extensive and earnest. Reverence for the sacerdotal character is so deep and strong as to be called superstition by observers who belong to a different faith; and devotion to the Pope, attachment to the Roman See, is probably more intense in Ireland than in any other part of the habitable globe, the Leonine city itself not excluded." In other words, the Irish are more Roman than the Romans themselves. Here we have on the one hand the claims of the Romish priesthood, and on the other the disposition of the Irish people. But as the alleged claims will to the majority of Englishmen appear monstrous and incredible, it becomes necessary to prove that these claims are actually made.

The fall of Parnell brought the clergy into striking prominence. The powerful personality of the Irish leader, his great popularity, and his determination to rule alone, had to some extent forced the Church into the background. Parnell once removed, the Church at once aimed at undivided rule, directing all her energies to this end mercilessly and without scruple. Her instruments were worthy of the work. The modern Irish priest is usually low-bred, vulgar, and ignorant. The priest of Lever's novels, brimming over with animal spirits, full of *bonhomie*, sparkling with wit and abounding with jovial good-nature, is nowhere to be found. The men of the olden time were educated in France, and by rubbing against the cultured professors of Douai or Saint Omer, had acquired a polish, a breadth of view, a *savoir faire*, denied to the illiterate hordes of Maynooth. The olden priest was loyal, just as cultured Irishmen who have travelled, whether in America, England, or elsewhere, are loyal and averse to Home Rule. The modern priest, usually the son of an Irishman such as visits England at harvest time, brought up amidst squalor and filth, is in full sympathy with the limited ideas of the peasantry among whom he was reared. The conversation of his parents and associates would relate to the burden of the Saxon yoke, and his surroundings [404]

would perpetually re-echo the stories of Ireland's wrongs and woes. Any literature he might absorb would be a priest-written history of Ireland, with the rebel doggerel of 1798 and the more seductive sedition of later years. At Maynooth he meets a crowd of students like himself, crammed to the throat with his own prejudices, viewing everything from the same standpoint. He returns to the people a full blown ecclesiastic, saturated with a sense of his own importance and the absolute supremacy of the Church he represents; knowing nothing of mankind outside his own narrow sphere, profoundly ignorant of the world's political systems, and intensely inimical to England. Average Keltic priests fully bear out the description furnished by a loyal priest of Donegal, who, on alluding to their social status and Maynooth course, said:—"They are merely shaved labourers, stall-fed for three years."

As to their exceptional claims. The attitude of omniscience and omnipotence has often been crudely stated by the Catholic hierarchy. Archbishop Walsh, of Dublin, has declared that there is no dividing line between religion and politics. Dr. Walsh has also laid down the dictum that, "As priests and independent of all human organisations, we have an inalienable and indisputable right to guide our people in every proceeding where the interests of Catholics as well as the interests of Irish nationality are involved." This prelate rescinded the wholesome rule enforced by his predecessors, forbidding the clergy to take part in political demonstrations. He went further. He ordered that at all political conventions an *ex-officio* vote should be given to the priests. It is in view of this fact that the Unionists of Ireland not unreasonably declare that under a Home Rule Bill the Roman Catholic clergy would become endowed with civil privileges which would make [405] them absolute rulers of Ireland. It may be urged that Bishop Walsh is discredited at Rome, and that therefore his utterances may be somewhat discounted. But what of the new Irish Cardinal, Archbishop Logue, of Armagh? He agrees with Dr. Walsh, and with reference to the Parnellite split, thus delivers himself:—"We are face to face with a grave disobedience to ecclesiastical authority! The doctrines of the present day are calculated to wean the people from the priests' advice, to separate the priests from the people, and *to let the people use their own judgment*!" Surely nothing could be clearer or more uncompromising than this. Bishop Nulty, alluding to the refusal of Mr. Redmond's political party to accept without question the political commands of the Church, thus hinted at the consequences to recalcitrant Papists:—"It is exclusively through us that the clean and holy oblation of the mass is offered daily for the living and the dead on the thousands of altars throughout our country. It is through our ministry that the poor penitent gets forgiveness of his sins in the Sacrament of Penance. The dying Parnellite will hardly dare to face the justice of his creator till he has been prepared and anointed by us for the last awful struggle and for the terrible judgment that will immediately follow it." This threat of eternal damnation was eagerly taken up and re-echoed by the inferior clergy. Father Patrick O'Connell speaking from the altar at Ballinabrackey said that no Parnellite could receive the sacrament worthily, and warned all parents against allowing their sons or daughters to attend a Parnellite meeting, as it was not a merely political matter, but a matter of their holy religion. In his sermon he referred to a meeting of the political party favoured by the Church, and said that every man, woman, and child must be present. All must assemble at the chapel, and all must be in time to walk in procession to the place of meeting. He would be there with Father McLoughlin, and the pair would go round to see who was absent. All absentees must let him know the reason why, and if the reason did not satisfy him he would meet them in the highways and in the byways, at the Communion rails, and would "set fire to their heels and toes." He would make it hot for them. There would be no compromise. All voters against clerical instruction he denounced as "infidels and heretics." Mr. Edward Weir, who was suspected of having opinions of his own, was denounced in Castlejordan Chapel as a 'Pigotted Guardian.' He was a member of the Poor Law Board. He was threatened to be 'met at the communion rails,' by which he understood that the sacrament would be refused to him. Two nights afterwards the hedge around his house was set on fire, and fire was placed on the gate in front of it. This was a gentle hint that the people were backing the priest, and that unless he complied his house might be next destroyed. When Mr. Michael Saurin, J.P., a member of the Ballinabrackey congregation, went to vote, the door of the booth was crammed to keep him out. The crowd booed and shouted at him, and he was spat upon. The priests were present in force. Nicholas Cooney was also spat upon, and so was his [406] brother, both on their clothes and in their faces. Father Woods was looking on. Matthew Brogan, who was also thought to be against clerical dictation, was refused admission to mass; and not only poor Matthew himself, but his son, daughter-in-law, her children, and two friends who were suspected of sympathy. The woman insisted on entering the chapel, when one of the crowd of true believers "near cut the hand off her." Michael Kenny and Peter Fagan were served with the same sauce by these enthusiastic preachers of the Onward March to Freedom, poor Fagan exhibiting the touching devotion of the Irish peasantry by kneeling outside during the whole of the service. Englishmen do not realise what these refusals mean to Irish Catholics. They constitute the cruellest and most effective coercion possible. To be refused the sacraments, to be turned away from the door of his chapel, is to the Irish peasant a turning away from the gates of Paradise, a denial of the Kingdom of Heaven, a condemnation to everlasting torment, to say nothing of the accompanying odium in which he is held by his neighbours and associates, and the ever present dread of boycotting. Thomas Brogan dare not leave the polling-booth for his life, until Mr. Carew took him on his car. He had been threatened by the priest, who drew a circle round him with a walking stick, to show that he was cut off from his fellows, and that contamination must be feared. Patrick Hogan, whose views were not in accordance with those of the priest, was afraid to vote. He went to the booth, but feared to proceed. Thomas Dunn was more plucky, but his temerity resulted in a cut face and a black eye for his wife at the hands of a patriot named James Mitchell. Father McEntee tore down a party flag belonging to the station-master of Drumree, a Parnellite, and jumped on it, in a towering rage, saying that the owner

must follow the instructions of the Bishop. He then threw the flag into a field. Father Crinnion, of Batterstown, standing in his vestments at the altar, called out the names of all persons supposed to be disaffected to the clerical cause, and ordered them to meet him in the vestry after mass. He asked for their votes, and showed a ballot paper. He had previously read in chapel the opinion of Bishop Nulty, quoted above. Father Tynan told Patrick King that unless he voted "straight" he would not receive the sacraments on his deathbed. The same priest told John Cowley, of Kilcavan, that unless he voted for the right candidate he would be expelled from the Church, and would be deprived of Christian burial when he died. Cases of this kind might be multiplied *ad infinitum*. Father Shaw, of Longwood, accentuated the horrible condition of the party who refused to vote under his orders by asking his congregation to pray for them. Father Cassidy sailed on the same tack, and besides thanked God that the "wrong 'uns" were so few. Father Fay, of Cool, said (between the Gospels) that his political opponents should be "treated like wild beasts," and that he would never forget the men who voted against his orders. Thomas Darby was canvassed by his priest, who, on finding that his parishioner was pledged the other way, curtly said, "Then you'll [407] go to hell," to which Darby replied that he would at any rate have a few companions. James Guerin has no confidence in the secrecy of illiterate voting, for after voting in the presence of a priest he had to jump a wall and hide in a wood to escape the vengeance of the people. When he came out, at ten o'clock at night, he was stoned. Father O'Donnell, presumably in the interests of peace, advised his congregation to take their sticks to a certain meeting, and promised to be there with his own faithful blackthorn. The peasant Fagan, who said his prayers outside the chapel, was burned in effigy, but priestly displeasure was not satisfied until his cowshed, with a cart and harness were also destroyed by fire. To have independent opinions costs something substantial in Ireland. The aspirations of a People and the Onward March to Freedom are not kept up for nothing. The patriots are not afraid of their trouble. They will not spoil the Union of Hearts for want of a little incendiarism. Now and then, but very seldom, the priests meet their match. They presume on their spiritual immunity. The priest who refused to leave a house into which he had intruded was threatened by Colonel Dopping with expulsion. "Dare to touch my consecrated body," said the "shaved labourer." "Your consecrated body be hanged!" said the Colonel, and out went Father McFadden. Father Fay, of Summerhill, said in a sermon delivered at Dangan:—"You must not look upon me as a mere man! The priest is the ambassador of Jesus Christ, and not like other ambassadors either. He carries his Lord and master about with him, and when the priest is with the people, Almighty God is with them!" Father Fagan, of Kildalkey, was so vexed with the refusal of John Murtagh to vote according to clerical instructions that he said:—"May the landlords come and hunt the whole of ye to hell's blazes." Murtagh said, "Ye wish yer neighbour well, Sorr!" The man of God threatened to kick poor Murtagh into the ditch, to which the erring parishioner replied that in that case he would kick the good shepherd like a puppy. "Ah," said Father Fagan, "you ruffian, you'll want me at the Last Day," and refused to hear his wife's confession. The woman was dying, the husband had been for the priest, and on the way to what proved a death-bed, Father Fagan improved the shining hour by trying to nobble a straying vote. The clergy make the most of their opportunities. At Boardmills Father Skelly spread out a ballot paper on the altar at Sunday service. Having described the situation of the names, he pointed out where they were to make the cross. He then went on with the mass. He thought of something else! Some of them, he hinted, were pledged to the other side. They could shout for this candidate, but when they went to vote they must "wink the other eye," as advised by the music-hall song. Colonel Nolan, M.P., when canvasing at Headford, was violently assaulted by a priest, who cut open the Parnellite head with a stout blackthorn. Like a good Catholic, the Colonel would fain have endured this clerical argument; but the police authorities insisted on the [408] matter seeing the light.

Clerical domination and the means by which it is attained are therefore proven by undeniable evidence. The Papal hierarchy and their subordinates are resolved to be supreme. *Aut Cæsar, aut nullus.* And it is a striking fact that by none is this doctrine so strongly deprecated, so bitterly resented, as by the educated and enlightened portion of Roman Catholic Ireland. *Their* aspirations are all on the side of toleration, harmony and peaceful progress. *They* are not only law-abiding, but loyal, and unlike the ignorant clergy and their still more ignorant dupes, are ever ready to join in singing "God Save the Queen." From an English, even a Conservative point of view, the educated Catholics of Ireland, like all classes of English Catholics, are everything that can be desired. But what are they among so many?

The consequences of clerical domination, obtained by spiritual and physical intimidation, are obvious enough. I have not space to show how the system has been carried into the confessional, but numerous examples are on record. Neither was it within the scope of this article to prove, as could easily be done, that the clergy of Rome claim to be above and outside the action of the statute law, and that their action is calculated to make the position of Protestants untenable. The moral degradation of the people, as exemplified by their dread of the priest, who escorts them in hundreds to the polling-booth, and by his persistent action and untiring vigilance exploits their electoral power for his own aggrandisement, and for the acquisition of Papal supremacy in Ireland, is to Englishmen of all considerations the most important. Recent events have demonstrated the fact that the politics of Ireland—and therefore the politics of England—can be almost completely controlled for any purpose by the thirty prelates who practically command the votes of an entire people. A Roman Catholic barrister said to me:—"I do not blame the priests for doing the best they can for themselves. They have the power, and they use it for their own purposes. I say they use it unfairly, and the Meath election petition has proved that they use it illegally. They think otherwise, but without arguing this point, I say that clerical domination will ruin the country. Irish election returns are for the most part worthless as an expression of public opinion." Another talented Irishman said:—"The glorious British Empire is now bossed by a party

of priests." And that this is unhappily true must be conceded by every observant and impartial Englishman.

Yet some there are, blind followers of the blind, obtuse to every argument, impregnable to incontrovertible facts, who have cast in their lot with the avowed enemies of England. They have their day—every dog has it—but their day is far spent, and their night is at hand. For England will never again submit to Romish rule. Nor will Ireland when her eyes are opened.

Birmingham, August 16th.

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No. 62.—CIVIL WAR A CERTAINTY OF HOME RULE.

ToC

English supporters of Mr. Gladstone affect to ridicule the fears of armed and organised conflict between the rival races and religions of Ireland. Their attitude in this respect is doubtless due to a slavish following of their master. They keep their eye upon their figure-head. When it frowns they become serious. When it smiles they try to be funny. When it assumes an aspect of virtuous indignation, the tears immediately spring to their eyes, and they go about saying what a shame it is. They remind you of Professor Anderson and his Inexhaustible Bottle. Like Paddy Byrne's barometer, they are "stuck fast at Changeable." They are always on the move. Like Virgil's lady, they are *varium et mutabile*. Like Shakespeare's gentlemen, they are Deceivers ever, One foot on shore and one foot on sea, To one thing constant never. Every morning they nervously scan the journals to see what change of sentiment is required. Without this precaution they would run the risk of meeting their political friends with the wrong facial expression. The reason for all this is well known. Their motto is *ad exemplum regis*. To-day Mr. Gladstone believes (or says he believes) that if Ireland were left to herself, and the disturbing, domineering, tyrannising influence of England were removed, the rival races and religions would live together in perfect harmony and brotherly love. His followers eagerly adopt this belief. But yesterday Mr. Gladstone believed (or said he believed) "That the influence of Great Britain in every Irish difficulty is not a domineering and tyrannising, but a softening and mitigating influence, and that were Ireland left to her own unaided agencies, it might be that the strife of parties would then burst forth in a form calculated to strike horror through the land." His followers believed that too, and they would believe it again to-morrow if their leader harked back. The quotation is from Hansard, and commences, "It is my firm belief." What do Mr. Gladstone's infirm beliefs resemble?

Putting aside the changeable Premier, gyrating like a dancing dervish, and his Penny-in-the-slot party, let us call respectable evidence; let us hear the opinion of competent and trustworthy witnesses; let us examine the character of the forces which will be brought into antagonism; let us observe what steps have been taken in view of possibilities more or less remote; and then let us form our own conclusions. And first as to opinions and evidence, let us hear Mr. J.A. Froude, of all English historians the most famous expert on Irish subjects. "The effect of Grattan's Constitution was to stimulate political agitation and the conflict of the two races." That was a Home Rule Parliament. And again Mr. Froude says:—"Ireland is geographically and politically attached to this country, and cannot be allowed to leave us if she wishes. In passing over the executive power to an Irish Parliament we only increase the difficulty of retaining Ireland. We [410] shall alienate the loyal part of the population, who will regard themselves as betrayed. The necessity of reconquest will remain, but the evils of it and the bloodshed to be occasioned by it will be infinitely enhanced. Such respect for law and order as exists in Ireland is entirely due to English authority. Remove it, and the old anarchy will and must return. If the Home Rule Bill is passed there will be a dangerous and desperate war, in which other countries may take part who would gladly see our power broken." In Mr. Froude's opinion, there would be war between England and Ireland, as well as between Ulster and the South. His last sentence is curiously confirmed by the *Irish Daily Independent*, which says:—"What England forgets is the fact that when next Ireland fights she will not fight alone." This is not a warning, like the prophecy of Mr. Froude, it is a threat, for the *Independent* is not only a Nationalist, but an intensely anti-English paper. Another great historian, Mr. Lecky, thus expresses himself:—"The Parliament Mr. Gladstone proposes to set up would be in violent hostility to the richest and most industrious portion of the community. It is regarded with horror by nearly every man who is a leader of industry in Ireland. All the great names in Irish finance, manufacture, and trade are against it, and the men who would undoubtedly lead it are men whom Mr. Gladstone not long ago described with great justice as preaching the doctrine of public plunder." The state of feeling here indicated could have but one result; but Mr. Lecky is still more precise. "The assertion that Irish Catholics have never shown any jealousy of Irish Protestants is of a kind which I find it difficult to characterise with proper moderation. Jealousy, unhappily, is far too feeble a word to describe adequately the fierce reciprocal animosity which has dislocated Ireland for centuries. It blazed into a furious flame in the religious wars of Elizabeth, in the great rebellion of 1642, in the

Jacobite struggle of 1689, in the religious war into which the rebellion of 1798 speedily degenerated. These facts are about as conspicuous in the history of Ireland as Magna Charta and the Commonwealth in the history of England. No one who knows Ireland will deny that the policy of Mr. Gladstone has contributed more than any other single cause to revive and deepen the divisions which every good Irishman deplores." Mr. Lecky believes that history repeats itself, and that the establishment of an Irish Parliament would lead to a great Irish convulsion, similar to those which he refers. My experience among Irish Churchmen convinces me that their feeling is understated in the petition signed by nearly fifteen thousand select vestrymen, and adopted by the general Synod, "That we regard the measure as fraught with peril to our civil and religious liberties, which are our prized inheritance; that conflicts of interest and collisions of authority would create a condition of frequent irritation and intolerable strain." The Methodists in full Conference gave it as their opinion "That in the judgment of this committee the bill, if it were to [411] become law, so far from being a message of peace to Ireland, would be a most fruitful occasion of distressing discord and strife; that class would be arrayed against class and party against party with a virulence now rare and unknown; and that the inevitable result would be the overturning of all order and good government." What does this mean if not civil war? Be it understood that the existing feeling is now being demonstrated by appeal to the most reliable authorities, all speaking under a due sense of responsibility, and therefore with a studied moderation. The Presbyterians, a numerous and powerful body, speaking in the General Assembly, after declaring that the proposed measure imperils their civil and religious liberties, and expressing their determined opposition to an Irish Legislature and Executive, controlled by men "marching through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire," whom a Special Commission found to be guilty of a criminal Conspiracy, and who invented, supported, and tried to justify the Land League, the Plan of Campaign, and boycotting—after this preamble, the Presbyterians declare that the bill is "calculated to embitter the hostility of conflicting creeds and parties in Ireland." The United Presbyterian Church of Scotland resolved at a meeting of its Irish Presbytery "that Home Rule would greatly intensify the antagonism now existing between the two peoples inhabiting Ireland." The Quakers come out pretty strong. They first ask to be believed. They hope that Englishmen will give credence to the sincerity of their convictions and the disinterestedness of their motives, and then they say that Home Rule "cannot fail to be disastrous to Ireland, and must tend to perpetuate and intensify the strife and discord which we have so long lamented and which we earnestly desire, so far as in us lies, to mitigate and allay." These protests are not all from Ulster. Every Grand Jury in Ireland has expressed itself in similar terms. The leading mercantile men of the three southern provinces of Ireland have declared in writing that "the Bill of the Government throws amongst us a new apple of discord, and plunges Ireland again into a state of political and party ferment." Pages of quotation might be added. But if those already adduced are not sufficient to satisfy my readers as to the feeling of the Irish Unionist party, they would hardly be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

The feeling of the other party is still stronger, and has been so often and openly expressed as to stand in no need of proof. Mr. Dillon has threatened to "manage Ulster;" and others have over and over again declared that the Protestant settlers are not Irishmen, and therefore have no right in the country. The lower classes of Irish Nationalists regard an Irish Legislature as an instrument to secure ascendency and plunder. The ruling idea is loot. The Unionists are determined at all costs to maintain religious equality and to hold their own. In Ulster masters and men, landlords and tenants, are of one mind. They do not bluster and brag. Those who represent them as rowdies do them grievous wrong. They are sober, thrifty, industrious, pious. In character [412] they resemble Cromwell's Puritans, or the Scottish Covenanters of old, and no wonder, for they are of the same stock. They are by nature kindly and peaceful, but they become dangerous indeed on the points of liberty, religion, and property. We can partly judge their future by their past. In the dark and troublous days of rebellion they held the country for England, established a police, did for Ireland all that Government neglected to do, and then, having restored order, the small but mighty minority threw aside their arms and went back to their work. They are before everything industrial. Wars and rumours of wars they detest, as injurious to trade, as well as to higher interests. But when they take off their coats they always win. They put into their efforts, whether in war or peace, such a strenuous determination, such an unwavering resolution to succeed, that they become invincible. They have the confidence inspired by invariable success. Their opponents have the flabbiness and the lack of self-reliance resulting from seven hundred years of whining and querulous complaint. If Mr. Gladstone were to offer complete separation to-morrow the Irish leaders dare not take it. They know what would happen if Ulster took the field. Spite of their boasting, Dillon & Co. know full well that their vaunted numbers would avail them naught.

The venerable William Arthur, a Nonconformist minister, says:—"We will not be put under a Parliament in Dublin. The Imperial franchise and all which that guarantees is our birthright. No man shall take it from us. We will never sell it. If Englishmen and Scotchmen will not let us live and die in the freedom we were born to, they will have to come and kill us. On that ground stands the strongest party in Ireland. For as sure as the Home Rule party is the larger, so surely is the Unionist party the stronger. Ask any military man who has spent a few years in the country. Settle the Irish question by putting the stronger party under the weaker! You would only change a count of heads into a trial of strength. Instead of the polling-booth, where nothing counts but heads, you would set for the two parties another trysting place. There brains count, education counts, purses count, habits of hard work count, habits of command and habits of obedience count, habits of success count, delight in overcoming difficulties count, northern tenacity counts, and there are other things which I do not mention that would count. Let not the two parties be summoned to that trysting place!"

During my visit to Belfast I had exceptional opportunities of ascertaining the probabilities of armed resistance to the authority of a Dublin Parliament. I visited what might fairly be called the Ulster War Department, and there saw regular preparation for an open campaign, the arrangements being under the most able and expert superintendence. The tables were covered with documents connected with the sale and purchase of rifles and munitions of war. One of them [413] set forth the particulars of a German offer of two hundred and forty-five thousand Mauser rifles, the arm lately discarded by the Prussian Government, with fifty million cartridges. As I had frequent opportunities of observing the manufacture of a hundred and fifty thousand of these weapons by the National Arms and Ammunition Company of Sparkbrook, I noted the present quotation, which was 16s. each, the cartridges to be thrown in for nothing. Another offer referred to a hundred and forty-nine thousand stand of arms with thirty million cartridges. There were numerous offers from Birmingham, and a large consignment of rifles and bayonets were about to be delivered in Ireland, the entire freight of a small steamer, at a place which I was then forbidden to mention, but which I may now say was Portaferry. An enormous correspondence was submitted to me in confidence, and I was surprised to see how deep and sincere was the sympathy of the working men of England, who with gentlemen of position and influence, and rifle volunteers by thousands were offering their aid in the field should the bill become law. I saw a letter from a distinguished English soldier with an offer of five hundred pounds and two hundred men. Money was coming in plentifully, and all the correspondence was unsought. The office had over fifty thousand pounds in hand, and promises for more than half a million. The forces at that moment, organised and drilled, numbered 164,614, all duly enrolled and pledged to act together anywhere and at any time, many of them already well armed, and the remainder about to be furnished with modern weapons. The Government was becoming nervous. An order from headquarters required a complete survey of the three barracks of Belfast, with an exhaustive report as to their defensive capabilities. Plans of existing musketry loopholes were to be made, and commanding officers were to state if it would be advisable to add to them. Suggestions were invited, and Mr. Morley, who at that very moment was telling Parliament that no precautions were being taken, wanted to know if the said barracks could be held against an organised force of civilians, arriving unexpectedly, and when Tommy Atkins was taking his walks abroad. At the same time, military officers were being secretly sworn in as magistrates. Does this look like the fear of civil war? These statements, made in the *Gazette* five months ago, have not been contradicted. The rank and file of the English Home Rule party know nothing of this—and by what their priestly allies would call "invincible ignorance" they may be excused their inability to believe in stern resistance to anything. The party of surrender are totally incapable of understanding that men exist who would lay down their lives for a principle. Mr. Gladstone and his Items, like the Irish leaders and their dupes, are easily overmastered. You have only to stand up to them, and they curl up like mongrel curs. But for this fact were would be no Home Rule Bill. Of the two parties the Irish were the stoutest, and the weakest went to the wall. The English Home Rulers cannot conceive that their conquerors could be easily beaten, or even that men can [414] be found to meet them on the field. On the contrary, the men of Ulster who know these heroes hold them in deepest contempt, and in the event of an appeal to arms would treat them as so many mice. Spite of their Army of Independence, the Nationalists tacitly admit this, and would defer separation until they have first by legislative enactments driven away "the English garrison," or compelled Ulster in self-defence to declare against English rule. And, strange to say, they propose to use to this end the force of English arms. They calculate on the resistance of Ulster as a measure of assistance to their own ultimate purposes. "All we have to do is to stand by while British soldiers shoot them down like dogs." That is their expectation, as expressed by one of themselves. Their plans are well hid. But "The best-laid schemes o' mice and men Gang aft agley," as the priest-governed schemers may find to their cost.

A second and more recent sojourn in Ulster deepened the impression given by my first visit. Throughout the province the feeling is still the same—an immovable determination to resist at all hazards the imposts of a Dublin Parliament. They will have no acts or part in it. They will send no members, they will pay no taxes, they will not accord to it one jot or tittle of authority. They will offer armed resistance to any force of police or Sheriff's officers acting under warrants issued by the College Green legislators. Resistance to the Queen's authority they regard as altogether out of the question. But it remains to be seen whether British troops will "shoot them down like dogs." The Ulstermen think not, and they have good reasons for this opinion. The mere threat of Home Rule in 1886 cost forty lives in the streets of Belfast alone. Who can say what would be the results of the bill becoming law? Surely every reliable test points in one direction. The Gladstonian party, without a shadow of reason, have affected to doubt the courage and resolution of the Northerners, but the breed of the men and their long history are a sufficient answer to these cavillers. True it is that their courage has not been demonstrated by murder, by shooting from behind a wall, or the battering out of a policeman's brains, a hundred against one, or the discharging of snipe-shot into the legs of old women and young children, after the fashion so popular with the party with whom Mr. Gladstone and his heterogeneous crew are now acting. But for all that, the pluck and tenacity of Ulstermen are undeniable. Their cause is good, and left to themselves they would win hands down.

It is therefore demonstrated by a consensus of the weightiest authorities and by the results of personal investigation that not only would civil war between Irish parties be the inevitable result of Home Rule, but that there would also be war between Ireland and England; that Irish Unionists are determined to resist to the last, and that they possess the means of resistance. They are touched on the subjects they hold most sacred—religion, freedom, property; and despite [415] the assurances of Mr. Gladstone, who desires to judge the Nationalist party by their future, the keen Ulstermen prefer to judge them by their past. And bearing these things in mind, it is not

unreasonable to say that Englishmen who support the present policy of the Separatist party are at once enemies of Ireland and traitors to their native land.

And now my task as your Special Commissioner in Ireland is at an end. Without fear or favour I have described the country as I found it, and have exposed the character and the motives of the men to whom Mr. Gladstone would entrust its future government. I was no bigoted partisan when my task began, but in a period of six months I have traversed the country from end to end, and at every step my first impressions have been deepened. It would be a folly—yea, it would be a crime—to withdraw from Ireland that mitigating influence of British rule which alone prevents a lovely island becoming the foul and blood-stained arena of remorseless sectarian strife.

Birmingham, August 18th.

FINIS.

GENERAL INDEX

Typographical errors corrected in text:

Page 33: Ballymera replaced with Ballymena
Page 37: neighboughhood replaced with neighbourhood
Page 103: McAdam replaced with MacAdam
Page 107: indentification replaced with identification
Page 109: thelr replaced with their
Page 110: Goverment replaced with Government
Page 163: "villager iu Ireland" replaced with "villager in Ireland"
Page 211: estabblished replaced with established
Page 232: "People offer to to swop" replaced with "People offer to swop"
Page 259: enthusiam replaced with enthusiasm
Page 260: fiasca replaced with fiasco
Page 270: indentify replaced with identify
Page 270: indentified replaced with identified
Page 297: "the rulings power" replaced with "the ruling power"
Page 315: waa replaced with was
Page 320: againt replaced with against
Page 323: Rome Rule replaced with Home Rule
Page 353: innnumerable replaced with innumerable
Page 362: obained replaced with obtained
Page 370: "we should should have" replaced with "we should have"
Page 378: Linerick replaced with Limerick
Page 378: "Tha beggars" replaced with "The beggars"
Page 380: politican replaced with politician
Page 381: "had stated that the the Black-mouths" replaced with "had stated that the Black-mouths"
Index: McAdam was replaced with MacAdam

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