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MR. BALFOUR'S

RULE IN IRELAND.



BY

M. J. F. M'CARTHY, B.A., T.C.D.,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

"THIS is true; that the wisdom of all these latter times in princes' affairs, is rather fine deliveries and shiftings of dangers and mischiefs when they are near, than solid and grounded courses to keep them aloof."—BACON'S ESSAYS.

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# MR. BALFOUR'S RULE IN IRELAND.



## CHAPTER I.

### **A Dangerous Post—A List of Dead and Wounded.**

WHEN Mr. Balfour assumed the reins of Government at Dublin, the post of Chief Secretary had gained notoriety as the ruin of many promising reputations, and a post of considerable danger.

To go no farther back than the defeat of Lord Beaconsfield at the polls in 1880, one may recall the confusion and retirement of Mr. Forster, the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish, the harrowing of Sir George Trevelyan and Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, the brief rule of Sir William Hart-Dyke, and the sudden appearance and disappearance of Mr. W. H. Smith. Then, from February to July, 1886, while the Home Rule Bill was dangling in the air, came the five months' rule of Mr. Morley, signalized by the Belfast riots on the one hand, and the patronage extended to the Chief Secretary by the Nationalists on the other. "We may safely receive him with no unfriendly greeting. He is not coming to govern Ireland," said Archbishop Walsh, speaking of Mr. Morley,

“he is coming to lend his help in the carrying out of the noble scheme of his great political leader . . . as probably the last English Chief Secretary of Ireland.”

Each of those Chief Secretaries had fought the Irish Party in his own way, except Mr. Morley, who surrendered to them, and not one of them had left the ground with honour to himself or advantage to his party.

The body of politicians known as the “Irish Party,” and the common enemy of all these Chief Secretaries, had been beneath notice before 1880, except when Ministers urgently needed a dozen votes or so.

From 1880 to 1885, during its combats with Forster, Cavendish, Trevelyan, Bannerman, and Dyke, the Irish Party used to muster an effective strength of about thirty members; but the general election of 1885 increased the strength of that party to the unprecedented number of eighty-six representatives, all directed as one man by the skill and power of Mr. Parnell. The new party acted with the regularity of a machine. Its members had no option but to attend or resign. Most of them were paid. All of them submitted to their able leader with unquestioning obedience.

Three Chief Secretaries have had to do with this formidable Irish Party of eighty-six. Mr. Morley acted the part of their obedient servant for five months. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach faced them for six months, and retired from the position without adding to his reputation. Mr. Balfour has been fighting the party in Parliament, and in Ireland, for over four years and a half now, and it is his policy and its effects that we propose to review briefly in the following pages.

The appearance of this new Irish force in Parliament supplied Mr. Gladstone with the strongest argument for his Home Rule Bill. Mr. Gladstone had, in fact, like Frankenstein, created a monster by his Reform Act of 1884, and when he found what he had done, he instantaneously made up his mind on the Home Rule question. He became a convert in despair, and sent Chief Secretary Morley to Ireland as Mr. Parnell's most obedient servant. Mr. Gladstone then unfolded his plan for dealing with this new Irish monster. It was to wipe it off at one grand stroke from the face of British politics; in other words, to give Home Rule to Ireland and dismiss her eighty-five troublesome members from Westminster. His idea appeared magnificent to many at the time, but the five years that have since passed have established its utter unworkableness. The subsequent defeat of the Home Rule Bill, which drove Mr. Gladstone's government and Chief Secretary Morley from the field, left the Irish Nationalists seething with anger and disappointment. A vision of salaries and positions had been conjured up by the bill and, with native improvidence, the Nationalists had been counting their chickens before they were hatched. But the dissolution, after the defeat of Home Rule in 1886, which proved so disastrous to Mr. Gladstone's party in England, sent the Irish Party back to Parliament in undiminished numbers and improved discipline.

The Unionist triumph made them as desperate then as they had been sanguine a month before, and, when Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was appointed to govern Ireland, the furious storm of thwarted ambition and consequent

rage gathered round him. He was harassed in Parliament and out of it, in print, in speech, and caricature. Overtly his assailants sat below the gangway, under the eagle eye of "that institution" known as Mr. Parnell. But covertly the ex-Premier and his colleagues lent their support to every onslaught made upon the Chief Secretary. After holding the position six months, Sir Michael Beach retired, and the event, coming close as it did upon the desertion of Lord Randolph Churchill, and the death of Lord Iddesleigh, seemed to threaten the existence of the Government.

When the resignation was announced, the Irish Party gained fresh confidence and enthusiasm from the Secretary's fall, glorying in it as the result of their own pertinacity and prowess. "Another English statesman," said *United Ireland*, "broken upon the wheel of Irish misgovernment: another career ruined, perhaps a life sacrificed. Once during the fierce attack under which he winced and writhed, he actually wept. It was impossible not to feel pity for him, poor Mickey the Botch. It did not take long to break him up. Old Buckshot's heart may have been softer and warmer, as they say, but it was of tougher stuff."

The Irish Party had then reached the pinnacle of its power. Subscriptions from America were flowing into the treasury of the National League, together with unceasing grants from the Irish branches to head-quarters. Special funds were started besides, to meet every special emergency, and were bounteously subscribed to. In half of Ulster and the entire of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught there was not a town, village, or parish without

its branch or branches of the League. Boycotting had taken an apparently permanent place amongst the institutions of the country. Honest public opinion found no expression amongst professing Nationalists, but resolutions of the League, and inspired articles in a subservient press, did duty in its place. Mr. Parnell's word was in many senses sovereign, from Lough Swilly to Cork Harbour.

When Sir Michael Beach retired, it may be said, metaphorically, that Mr. Parnell attached the ex-Chief Secretary's scalp to his belt with those of Forster, Cavendish, Trevelyan, Bannerman, Dyke, Smith, and Morley; and began whetting his tomahawk for the unfortunate man whose lot should be cast to succeed him. The Irish Party cared little who the new Chief Secretary would be, and the people of Nationalist Ireland cared less. They firmly believed he would succumb to their own violent attacks as they claimed his predecessors had done.

There may have been a little transient curiosity to know who the foredoomed individual would turn out to be, but of anxiety, as there used to be early in the "eighties," there was none. The Chief Secretary had by that time ceased to be feared, had ceased to be even a personage for the vast masses of the population. He had come to be regarded as an official to be patronised like Mr. Morley, or bullied like Sir Michael Beach.

## CHAPTER II.

**Mr. Balfour Received with Derision—His First Encounter with a Parnellite.**

WHEN Mr. Balfour's appointment was declared, the Irish Nationalist papers indulged in hysterics of derision and delight. Derision at the ascertained culture, delicacy of taste, and personal appearance of the new Chief Secretary; delight at the easiness with which so much sensibility was bound to fall before their valour. "The new Chief Secretary," said *United Ireland*, "who is a man of languor and culture, and a person of exceedingly long, loose, and almost disjointed frame, reminds one of nothing more, when he throws himself horizontally back on the bench with his feet on the floor, than that species of spider known as Daddy Longlegs."

"We believe," said the *Freeman*, "he has undertaken a task beyond the range of his genius. . . . It is true the task is Herculean. . . . But we are as convinced of his inevitable failure as we are of our own existence." The *Annual Register* for 1887, a compilation which professes to be a colourless record of public events, stated that "the selection of Mr. Arthur Balfour was interpreted as an act of despair done by ruined politicians."

The Irish members openly expressed disappointment

that a foeman more worthy of their steel had not been appointed to the office. Although Mr. Balfour had been a member of the House of Commons for thirteen years prior to his appointment as Chief Secretary, he had not as yet gained notoriety in that assemblage. During that period when the noise and fury of a coeval parliamentarian seemed likely to be permanently mistaken for greatness by the outside world, Mr. Balfour was quietly garnering his store of parliamentary experience. He had served as secretary to his uncle, Lord Salisbury, during the Berlin conference in 1878, and after 1885 had held the positions of President of the Local Government Board and Secretary for Scotland. He entered upon the duties of his office as Chief Secretary for Ireland on the 8th March, 1887. Both the Prime Minister and Mr. Balfour at once announced their determination that the rule of the National League should give way to the rule of the law in Ireland. The authority of the law should be restored before any remedial legislation would be passed. "Legislative relief," said Lord Salisbury, "instead of tending to quiet, will only aggravate the disorder so long as it is believed that more agitation can wring more measures of the same kind out of the Legislature." The Cabinet forthwith set itself to the task of preparing the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill, better known as Mr. Balfour's Crimes Act. In the interval during the preparation of the Crimes Bill, Mr. Balfour was not left without opportunities of trying his strength with the members of the Irish Party. One of the first, if not the very first, of his encounters with a Parnellite is worth relating. We take the account *verbatim* from *United Ireland* of March 12th, 1887. "When

Mr. P. J. O'Brien, calling attention to the fact that Baron Dowse at Nenagh had declared the North Riding of Tipperary to be singularly free from crime, asked that the extra police for that district should be removed, Mr. Balfour replied that he was glad to have such testimony from the learned Judge as to the efficiency with which the extra police discharged their duties, and that just in consequence he should not think of removing officers whose presence had brought about such a happy state of things. It was flippancy like this that the lamented Jemmy Lowther came his cropper at. Yet Jemmy was a full-blooded, rough-riding, pachydermatous, devil-may-care official, not at all a silk-skinned Sybarite whose rest a crumpled rose-leaf would disturb. It will be an interesting if somewhat ghastly experience, to watch the wilting of this delicate lily in the fiery furnace into which it has so boldly ventured. Mickey the Botch will enjoy the sight, if his eyesight lets him."

As time wore on, and the Nationalist members discovered Mr. Balfour's intellectual strength, debating skill, humour, resource, and powers of repartee, they dropped this derisive and sarcastic mode of attack, and assailed the Chief Secretary in terms of brutal violence. But Mr. Balfour held steadily on his course unawed, and apparently even undisturbed, by the threats and denunciations of that trained band of able men, all of whom were experts in the parliamentary art of baiting a Chief Secretary.



## CHAPTER III.

### **The Crimes Bill—Mr. Balfour's Style and Policy.**

MR. BALFOUR'S first pitched battle with the Irish Party began on the 21st March, when he gave notice in the House of Commons that he would introduce his Crimes Bill on the following day. Mr. W. H. Smith immediately followed him with notice that he would move for precedence for the Bill, both at its introduction and all subsequent stages. The House then went into Committee of Supply, and the Irish Party obstructed every vote to such vindictive length that the House did not conclude its sitting until half-past one p.m. on the following day, having sat for twenty hours and a-half. In a couple of hours after, that is to say, at four o'clock p.m. on the 22nd March, the House met again to discuss Mr. Smith's motion for precedence for the Crimes Bill. Mr. Morley moved the Opposition amendment, and Mr. Balfour replied in defence of the motion for precedence. This was his first important speech as Chief Secretary for Ireland. He craved the indulgence of the House. It was only twenty-four hours ago since Mr. Morley had given notice of his amendment, an amendment that amounted to a vote of want of confidence. "I make no complaint," added Mr. Balfour, "I merely state the fact. Since that time I was in the

House till a quarter to four this morning, and had to return at 10.30 and make two speeches before breakfast. The House did not rise till 1.30 p.m., and at 1 p.m. there was a Cabinet meeting." Few Chief Secretaries have made a first speech in defence of their policy under circumstances of greater difficulty. He had been taunted with not having introduced a Land Bill before going on with the Crimes Bill. His reply sums up the motive of the Government's policy in a most trenchant style:—"If the effect of passing our Land Bill, or any Land Bill would lead to such a change that juries would cease to be intimidated, and that witnesses would come forward and give their evidence, then every one of my colleagues would hasten to bring forward such a measure. But what chance is there that if we put off this Criminal Bill, when Ireland is weekly going to the worse, when society is crumbling to its original atoms, what chance is there that we shall restore the sanctity of contract and respect for law by introducing any Land Bill?" Mr. Gladstone spoke vigorously against Mr. Smith's motion, and the *Freeman* proudly announced that "Mr. Gladstone had formally taken command of the forces opposed to coercion, and last night he plunged into the thick of the fray."

The Crimes Bill was introduced by Mr. Balfour on March 28th, in a speech packed full of instances of the cruel boycotting and social tyranny which was then rampant in Ireland. The Chief Secretary concluded by saying:—"For the first time in the history of this country, the victims of oppression, of outrage, and of murder, have called upon the Government to protect them, and the Government has not been supported by the English

minority. Many of those who are most devoted to the cause of liberty pay but a cold and frigid respect to the cause of order. I will not ask whether, under some circumstances, these two great principles are or are not ever opposed; but I will say, and say boldly, that in this case they are united, and that if I appeal to one rather than to the other, it is in the cause of liberty that I ask this House to support us in breaking the yoke under which so large a part of Ireland is now groaning."

Mr. Parnell moved an amendment to the effect that a further investigation into the state of Ireland should be made before proceeding with the Crimes Bill. Mr. Balfour, in reply, said:—"I am afraid that the House is already but too well acquainted with the state of Ireland, and if anybody entertains doubts as to the condition of the country, surely it is not the honourable member for Cork and his friends. They, at all events, if no other members of this House, should know to what an unhappy state the country is reduced. They should know the condition of Ireland, as an artificer recognizes his own handiwork."

Mr. Balfour stuck tenaciously to his post in the House, and carried the Crimes Bill through successfully within the session. His duel with the Irish party during the long debates on the Bill was one prolonged contest between intellect and sheer animal strength. He invariably had the best of the argument, but over and over again he had to invoke the aid of the Unionist majority to stop the ceaseless stream of Irish talk. His sense of humour, and a subtle sarcasm, of which he showed himself possessed, enabled him to cope triumphantly with the leading spirits of the Irish Party.

In the days of Bannerman, Trevelyan, Beach, and the others, the *Freeman* and *United Ireland* used to tell proudly how "the scintillating wit" of Mr. Healy, Mr. Sexton, or Mr. O'Brien, used "to set the House in roars of laughter" against "the thick-headed Saxon" who happened to be Chief Secretary. Nothing could surpass the glorious victories then won by Irish talent over Saxon stupidity. But all that was now changed. Mr. Balfour was never put out by Mr. Healy's, Mr. Sexton's, or Mr. O'Brien's wit, no matter how scintillating. His utter disregard of self made him see things in a light which no previous Chief Secretary had viewed them in. He appeared to regard all the foul and false rhetoric, all the "scintillating wit," as levelled against the office he held and not against him personally. He carried this abstraction of self so far that he laughed as heartily as the Gladstonians themselves at the perfervid utterances of a Healy, an O'Brien, a Sexton, or an O'Connor, even when he himself, as happened in most cases, was the supposed victim of the speeches. He never lost his temper at the overwrought abuse poured out upon him. And what is most admirable, he never abused the Irish members. He gave them back argument attempered by the amount of sarcasm necessary to show clearly that he saw through the rhodomontade which was continually launched upon the House, and, through it, upon the country.

The Irish "wits" could not cope with such an opponent. Mr. Balfour was a "Saxon" who was not stupid, and a man of humour who was not Irish. There never has been a Chief Secretary who understood the Irish character better than Mr. Balfour; few, extremely few, have

understood it as thoroughly, or known as accurately where lie the strength and weakness of Irish orators like Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. T. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. Dillon, Mr. W. O'Brien, and others. Of these men their bitterest enemies cannot say they lacked daring, ability, or skill in the parliamentary arena. As a combination of politicians they possessed unparalleled fertility of resource, unexampled cheek, and a persistency heretofore unequalled. They infused into their leading parliamentary performances an attractiveness that was theatrical, and divided amongst themselves nearly all the powers of elocution, exaggeration, rhetoric, and invective which the House possessed. Therein lay their strength; and therein Mr. Balfour did not seek to share their glory. But in matters of argument, of fact, of detail, and of business, lay their weakness, and in that province Mr. Balfour fought and vanquished them. In the profession of an earnest desire to serve Ireland, Mr. Balfour entered into the lists with them, and became their most formidable rival. But whenever verbal desires for Ireland's welfare had to be converted into deeds for Ireland's benefit, Mr. Balfour's power and sincerity enabled him to out-distance all his foes.

## CHAPTER IV.

**Death to Agitation—The Irish Reign of Terror.**

THE Irish Party were right in fighting tooth and nail against the Crimes Bill; right from their own point of view. That Act struck a death-blow at the game of political agitation in Ireland. Various means of repressing the professional political agitator had previously been tried, but they all failed, and the threatened species grew and thrived.

In 1881 Mr. Forster arrested over a thousand of them without trial under his Crimes Act, and, when he had done so, he fondly believed he had all the disturbing elements of Ireland under lock and key, much as Æolus of old is said to have confined the winds at his pleasure. But the Land League and the Ladies' Land League hastened to supply Mr. Forster's prisoners with the best food, and, in case of poor people, with good clothes in addition. The men who were arrested felt themselves raised to the dignity of untried State prisoners, in clean quarters, getting far better nourishment in most cases than they were accustomed to at home, and undergoing no punishment beyond a longer daily solitude than usual. Numbers took refuge in the prison infirmaries, and came out of prison in better health than when they went in. It

is nevertheless true that many respectable men were arrested as “suspects” who were in no sense professional agitators or “village tyrants,” and upon most of these the enforced absence from their families and business told grievously and injured their health. But on the whole the penalty of imprisonment under Forster’s Act was looked upon as a farce; and in many cases it secured for the “suspect” a pecuniary testimonial on his release, and gave him henceforth a higher standing amongst the Nationalists of his parish.

Irish Members of Parliament, and aspirants to that position, courted arrest under the Act as a certain avenue to preferment. Mr. Forster could not inflict greater punishment on such men than by declining to arrest them. Consequently, when the Forster *régime* abruptly came to an end, and the “suspects” were released in 1882, there was no feeling of relief or gratitude as for the repeal of a penal law.

The almost immediate murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, and the contempt in which the Gladstone administration continued to be held in Ireland down to its fall in 1885, prove that no gratitude was felt for the liberation of the suspects, but, on the contrary, the concession was interpreted as an act of cowardice and as a consciousness of defeat on the part of the Gladstone Government.

The National League held its reign of terror in Ireland from the release of the suspects in 1882 down to the passage of the Balfour Crimes Act in 1887. Outside the North-east counties and the few large cities there was no freedom, no independent public opinion in Ireland. Juries,

through fear of personal violence or injury to their business, refused to convict in cases connected with the agitation.

That dreadful year of 1882, when Mr. Gladstone beat his retreat before the Nationalists and released the suspects, will be one of the reddest in the gory annals of Irish agrarian agitation.

In January the public were horrified by the sinking of Lord Ardilaun's two bailiffs in the waters of Lough Mask. The wretched men were tied up in sacks weighted with heavy stones, and then cast into the lake. In February a labourer named Bailey was shot dead one Saturday evening in Skipper's-alley, Dublin, at an hour when the streets were full of people, the shops all open, and the lamps all lighting. The assassins escaped. In April a Westmeath landlord named Smythe was returning from church on Sunday, his sister-in-law, Mrs. Henry Smythe, with another lady, accompanying him in the carriage. When nearing his gate lodge the carriage was attacked by a fusilade of bullets from behind a hedge, and Mrs. Henry Smythe was shot dead. It was under circumstances of such terrible gravity that Mr. Parnell was released from Kilmainham on parole "to attend the funeral of a friend in Paris." And it was under such circumstances that Mr. Forster was driven from office and all the suspects released from prison on May 2nd. But Mr. Gladstone's cowardice was destined, not to pacify the country, but to drench it in more blood and sink it in deeper infamy. On the 6th May, Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke were murdered in open daylight on the main road of the Phoenix Park,



in sight of the Viceregal Lodge. On the 8th June Mr. Walter Bourke and his police escort were shot at through a loop-holed wall at Gort, and both killed. On the 29th June Mr. Blake, agent to Lord Clanricarde, and his steward, Mr. Keene, were shot at through a loop-holed wall and both killed. On August 17th a farmer named Joyce, of Maamtrasna, in Co. Galway, his wife, his aged mother, his son and his daughter were all butchered in their bedroom at dead of night by a band of masked men. The only member of the family who escaped the massacre was a little boy who crept out into the bushes in the darkness while the slaughter was being carried out.

At this crisis the Constabulary, having demanded an increase of pay, took umbrage at a supposed insult offered to them by their Inspector-General, an insult which the Government had not the skill to alleviate. A partial strike ensued, and for several months the whole force was demoralised. The Dublin Metropolitan Police also struck, and soldiers were picketed in the city. In November came the attempt to take Judge Lawson's life by Delaney, who was in the act of cocking a seven-chambered revolver within a few paces of the judge in broad daylight in Merrion-square, when he was seized by two detectives who happened to be guarding the judge. On November 25th a band of armed men attacked a group of detectives in Abbey-street, Dublin, and, after a free fight in which revolvers and knives were used, succeeded in absconding, leaving one of the detectives dead on the ground. On the following day happened the attack on Mr. Field, who had incurred hostility as a Dublin juror. He was set upon near his own door, when returning from business in the

evening, by a band of armed men, who stabbed him in the back, breast, and sides, and left him for dead at his threshold.

After the Phoenix Park assassinations Mr. Gladstone was reduced to such an extremity that he brought in his Prevention of Crimes Bill, empowering the Lord Lieutenant, in cases where juries seemed to him unlikely to fulfil the obligations imposed by their oath, to appoint a Special Commission of three Judges of the High Court of Justice, without a jury, with power to try and convict persons accused of treason, murder, intimidation, and other crimes. The Irish Judges protested against any such duty being imposed on them. They declined to be parties to a second "Bloody Assize." Times had changed, even in Ireland, since the days of Jeffreys. They declared that in a year or two, at most, the status of the Bench in Ireland would be irretrievably lost if the Bill became law. But Mr. Gladstone persisted, and the Royal Assent was given to the Act in July, 1882. Baron Fitzgerald forthwith resigned his seat on the Bench. But the Act which was demanded so impetuously remained a dead letter, and has never been acted upon to this day.

The State Trial, in which nearly all the talent of the Irish Bar appeared on both sides, was another device resorted to from time to time for the purpose of suppressing Mr. Parnell and his camp followers, the professional agitators. But these trials only served as huge advertisements, flattered the vanity of the defendants, and made splendid "copy" for the editors of the Nationalist sheets. They were the very things the professional agitators liked. They felt themselves great men while the trial lasted.

“with the eyes of the civilized world fixed upon them,” and the whole thing invariably wound up with a fund, after a disagreement of the jury or an acquittal. The last of these State Trials was held in February, 1887, one month before Mr. Balfour came into power. Here is the account of the opening of that trial, taken from *United Ireland* of February 19th, 1887:—“On Monday the trials of Messrs. Dillon, O’Brien, Sheehy, Crilly, and W. Redmond commenced in Green-street Courthouse. The Crown was represented by the Solicitor-General (Mr. Gibson, M.P.), Serjeant O’Brien, Q.C., J. N. Gerrard, Q.C., and G. V. Hart (instructed by Mr. P. C. Coll, Chief Crown Solicitor). The traversers were represented by the Right Hon. Samuel Walker, Q.C. (ex-Attorney-General), Daniel O’Riordan, Q.C., D. B. Sullivan, Richard Adams, E. Leamy, M.P., and T. Harrington, M.P. (instructed by Alderman V. B. Dillon, and Mr. P. Chance, M.P.).” For Nationalist members and patriotic editors such facts were both glorious and profitable to record. Such an army of Solicitor-Generals, Serjeants-at-Law, Queen’s Counsels, and barristers set out in leaded type, made as brilliant a spectacle for the devourers of *United Ireland* as a Field Day in the Fifteen Acres does for lads who wish to join the army. “Mr. Fottrell, Clerk of the Crown,” continues *United Ireland*, “read over the thirty-six yards of an indictment which charged the five defendants, with Matthew Harris and other evil-disposed persons, with having incited and procured large numbers of tenants to refuse to pay and not to pay to the owners of lands the rents they had contracted to pay. The defendants were charged under other counts with various other offences in connexion with the

Plan of Campaign, such as conspiring to prevent persons from taking farms from which others had been evicted."

Thirty-six yards of an indictment read over by the Clerk of the Crown! How stupid the readers of *United Ireland* must have thought those Saxons who could thus think of capturing high-flying Celtic patriots with three dozen yards of parchment!

"It is one of the many comic aspects of the Greenstreet farce," continued *United Ireland*, "that the traversers take an occasional look in to see how far the play has advanced towards the last act, and having lent an indifferent attention for an hour or two they go about their business. The Crown seemed at last to think that the traversers were treating the majesty of the Law with too much contempt when they walked on Saturday last out of the Courthouse to certain railway stations, and booked for scenes of action in accordance with the Plan of Campaign. Mr. Dillon steamed down to Coolgreany to fire an oratorical shot at the obdurate Brooke. Mr. O'Brien turned up at Mitchelstown to pay his respects to the Countess of Kingston, and to recommend her ladyship to be wise in time and adopt the Plan." Mr. Sheehy is reported to have gone somewhere else on the same business.

Such was the open contempt in which the administration of justice was held in Ireland one month before Mr. Balfour assumed the reins of power. Men charged with criminal conspiracy left the Court, and, going out, committed the flagrant contempt of doing the very acts for which they were being tried by judge and jury at the prosecution of the Government of the country. And these

men who were then leaders of "public opinion" in Ireland—for they had nobbled every non-conservative paper in the country—publicly boasted of their contemptuous conduct in their own journal, which then had a large circulation amongst the farming population; boasted of it and revelled in it while the trials were yet proceeding. Mr. Balfour did not exaggerate when he said, in introducing his Crimes Act, that Ireland was weekly going to the worse, and society resolving itself into its original atoms. The inhabitants of Nationalist Ireland, during the years preceding Mr. Balfour, were virtually hypnotized. During those years of Mr. Gladstone's rule the country might be compared to an amphitheatre in which the entire Nationalist population sat staring like mooncalves at the daring theatrical feats of Mr. Parnell and his trained band of agitators. All industry was at a standstill, the land, in many cases, being barely tilled for a sustenance.

## CHAPTER V.

**The Crimes Act—Mr. Balfour's Great Invention.**

BUT all this defiant contempt for the law was soon destined to be put a stop to by that great measure with which Mr. Balfour's name will be for ever associated. Unlike Mr. Gladstone's Prevention of Crimes Bill, Mr. Balfour's Crimes Act did not aim at anything heroic. It left the Irish Judiciary intact. The Judges were too august a body, too valuable to the State to be risked in such employment as the stamping out of professional agitators who were the root of all disorder in the island. Public confidence in the Judges, Mr. Balfour saw, should be maintained at any hazard.

But in the stipendiary magistrates Mr. Balfour found ready at his hand a body of State servants whom he determined to utilise. Previous to Mr. Balfour's Act the duties of the stipendiaries had been of a light but by no means of an unimportant description. They had to attend Petty Sessions and assist the unpaid magistrates with their legal advice and experience, and on occasions of public disorder they commanded the military and police. But now, Mr. Balfour's Crimes Act entrusted the hearing of all trials for offences under its provisions exclusively to the stipendiaries. The unpaid magistrates, much to their gratification,

were debarred from taking any part in the hearing of such cases. When a person was to be tried for an offence under the Act, such as boycotting, intimidation, an incendiary speech or so-forth, two stipendiaries were appointed by the Lord Lieutenant to try the case, and constituted the Court. The longest sentence they could inflict was six months' imprisonment with or without hard labour. Such a Court was independent of local Nationalist violence. Its sentences could be appealed against to the County Court Judge of the district, whose decision was final. Under the Crimes Act the accused could never attain the honour and glory of a trial before a Judge of the High Court of Justice. The whole proceeding was most prosaic, and altogether a humble, business-like affair, resembling a police-magistrate's court in Dublin or London. There was no incentive to vanity in being tried before such a tribunal; no cheap fame to be gained from imprisonment under its decree. For the imprisonment, unlike that under Forster's Act, was real. No exception was made in favour of offenders under the Act; they were treated as ordinary misdemeanants in the class to which they belonged.

High politicians were not attracted to the combat, as in the case of Forster's Act. As a rule the field was left to the "village tyrant," and lesser members of Parliament. But when Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Dillon committed offences under the Act, the same real but unheroic punishment was dealt out to them as to the lowliest of their admirers. Mr. O'Brien endeavoured to infuse some romance into the business. He sought the notoriety of a hand-to-hand fight with the Act, but, when worsted, became "lily-

livered," as *United Ireland* would say, at having to bear the consequences.

The "wilting of that delicate lily (Mr. O'Brien) in the fiery furnace into which it had so boldly ventured" was a sight which afforded innocent amusement to thousands. Mr. Balfour, true to his character for impartiality, gave no signs that he enjoyed the sight. On the contrary, he had solicitously watched over the hon. member while in prison, and sent him out of gaol weighing two pounds more than when he went in. Mr. O'Brien tried hard to get imprisonment converted into the farce it had been under Forster's Act, but he failed, and ended by greatly lowering if not by entirely losing whatever character for manliness and integrity he bore amongst the Nationalists of Ireland. Nor could the Englishmen who committed offences within the Act alter the rigid impartiality of Mr. Balfour's administration. Mr. Wilfred Blunt, it was thought, would kill the Crimes Act. The *Freeman* and the Irish Party dared Mr. Balfour to inflict "the outrage," the "debasing indignity" of imprisonment in "a coercion dungeon" on a "cultured English gentleman." In anticipation the Irish people were assured that Mr. Blunt would be acquitted, for "Bloody Balfour" was "too 'cute" to put it in the power of "a refined and highly-cultured Englishman" to narrate to the world on unimpeachable testimony the horrors of an Irish prison. Mr. Balfour was now designated "Bloody Balfour"; he was no longer "a silk-skinned Sybarite whose rest a crumpled roseleaf would disturb."

The Nationalist papers were circulating a horrible tale, on the authority of Mr. Blunt, to the effect that Mr. Bal-



four had told a friend in conversation at an English country house, that he intended to make imprisonment under his Crimes Act so severe that it would infallibly kill men of such delicate constitutions as the leaders of the Plan of Campaign.

But Mr. Blunt's trial came on like that of the humblest boycotter, and he was sent to gaol like an Irishman, no exception being made in his favour. When Mr. Conybeare, M.P., committed an offence against the Act, he was similarly imprisoned. Priests—a class that expected immunity from punishment, though many of them were the most violent of agitators—received no better treatment than laymen under the Act. The same consideration was meted out to all convicted persons, “English gentlemen,” English members of Parliament, Irish agitators, high and low, clerical and lay. A more useful instrument for preserving the peace and re-establishing confidence in the administration of justice in Ireland was never devised than Mr. Balfour's Crimes Act. And never was a good instrument more impartially and effectively employed. Of the martyrs under the Crimes Act few were clerical, and none were distinguished politicians, unless Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien may lay claim to that designation. Mr. Parnell and those members of his party who had a reputation for possessing a glimmering of commonsense showed their appreciation of the Chief Secretary's strength by holding rigidly aloof from any encounter with Mr. Balfour's Crimes Act.

## CHAPTER VI.

**A Loyal Chief and Loyal Comrades—The Plan of Campaign and Shadowing.**

MEANWHILE in the House of Commons, neither strategy nor violence could conquer the Chief Secretary. His great ability, humour, and force of character repelled every attack. His colleagues became infused with the same spirit as their chief. The law officers who worked with him, viz. Mr. Holmes (now Justice Holmes); Mr. Gibson (now Justice Gibson); Mr. O'Brien (now Chief Justice Sir Peter O'Brien, Bart.); and Mr. Madden, have never been excelled by any set of Irish law officers. Confidence in the Chief Secretary led to uniformity of action and evenness of administration in every department. Mr. Balfour's answers to embittered attacks made by the Irish members on the Constabulary, stipendiaries, and the judiciary were well calculated to inspire these bodies with the highest confidence in their spokesman. The magistrates and constables learned the faculty of humorous disdain from Mr. Balfour. Fussy individuals, who considered themselves personages, and often courted a collision with the authorities for fame's sake, were ignored with a quiet humour.

One colleague of Mr. Balfour deserves especial mention.

Colonel King-Harman, during the time he held the office of Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Ireland, had to bear the brunt of an attack second only in virulence to that made upon his Chief. Seeing the gravity of his position at the outset, Mr. Balfour had departed from precedent by requiring the assistance of an Under-Secretary in Parliament. The vexatious Irish questions which appeared in thousands on the papers of the House, touching the most contemptibly trivial matters, could no longer be answered by a Cabinet Minister having responsible executive duties, and who had, besides, the charge of passing a Coercion Bill into law. Colonel King-Harman's appointment was announced on April 9th, 1887. The announcement infuriated the Irish Party, and, owing to their obstruction a year elapsed from the date of his appointment, before the Government were able to get a bill read a second time legalizing the payment of Colonel King-Harman's salary. During the whole preceding year from April, 1887, to April, 1888, the Under Secretary had borne, with extraordinary good temper, the derision and abuse heaped upon him. He was a hospitable Irish gentleman, a landlord in receipt of one of the finest rent rolls in Ireland, one who had honourably filled the highest positions in his native county of Roscommon, who had been accustomed to every luxury and the best society from his birth. Yet a pack of hounds never tore a fox to shreds with more ferocity and joy than the Irish members evinced in attacking Colonel King-Harman. The King-Harman Bill was read a second time on the 30th of April, and, in his speech, Mr. Balfour defended the appointment. He contrasted his own duties as Chief Secretary with those

of his predecessors, contending that "as he had to prepare his own measures and conduct them through the House, he was entitled to the same assistance as was given to the other leading members of the Government." The King-Harman Salary Bill was bitterly obstructed, so bitterly that it never became law. On the 10th of June the Under Secretary died of heart-disease at his residence, Rockingham, Boyle, his friends attributing his death to the treatment he received at the hands of his Parliamentary foes. The Irish Party were indignant at Colonel King-Harman's intervention between them and Mr. Balfour, whom they regarded as their prey. The death of Colonel King-Harman was claimed as a fresh victory for the Irish Party, and when it was announced that henceforth Mr. Balfour would do the Parliamentary duties of his office unassisted, his speedy downfall was no longer doubted in Ireland. The author of *Philosophic Doubt*, it was asserted, would now go down dishonoured as "the nephew of Macaulay and biographer of Fox" had done before him, in a less unequal combat.

The loyalty of Mr. Balfour's colleagues has excited many a derisive comment from the Nationalist descriptive writers, and his private secretaries, Mr. George Wyndham, M.P., and Mr. Hayes Fisher, M.P., have not escaped. These two officials have served Mr. Balfour in their sphere, not less effectively and loyally than all his other comrades in his prolonged and bitterly contested battle with the Irish Party. They have been described as "jackals" bringing the Chief Secretary his glass of water, the volumes of Hansard, the blue books and documents of reference during the delivery of one of his great speeches. Since

Colonel King-Harman's death they have especially been sneered at and denounced in Nationalist prints for the performance of their duties in the House. Mr. Wyndham was singled out for especial attack because the constituency of Dover honoured him by returning him to Parliament unopposed in 1889.

Nor should it be omitted that in Sir West Ridgeway and Sir William Kaye, Mr. Balfour possessed an Under-Secretary and Assistant Under-Secretary, who performed their duties with great firmness and tact. In Sir Andrew Reed, Inspector-General of Constabulary, and in Mr. Harrel, Commissioner of Dublin Police, Mr. Balfour possessed two executive chiefs who kept their personality completely out of sight, while directing the two forces under their command with the highest energy and skill.

During the stress of the conflict with the Plan of Campaign, boycotting and shadowing, all the permanent officials under Mr. Balfour did their duty fearlessly. Of the Plan of Campaign it is unnecessary to write at length; but it would be hardly possible to exaggerate the mischief which it worked in Nationalist Ireland. Let us take a concrete case to illustrate its viciousness. On an estate of 100 tenants, 40 are industrious, quiet men, who till their land well, pay their debts, and provide for their families: the remaining 60 are men who are addicted to talk, tobacco, idleness, and drink. The 40 read little or no papers and pay scant attention to the goings on in Parliament. The 60 are readers of *United Ireland*, and believers in the gospel according to Mr. William O'Brien. The 60 have bad crops, and cannot pay their rent. The 40 can well afford to pay, and are willing to do so. But the 60 invite

a politician down from Dublin, and put their case in his hands. He calls a meeting of the 100 tenants, and advises them to adopt the Plan. His advice is carried by the votes of the 60. Then every man who has his gale's rent is called upon to deliver it up to the Dublin politician, who puts the whole sum into the war chest. Then it is decided that the minority will be bound in all things by the decision of the majority. The terms to be demanded from the landlord are then carried by the votes of the 60, and it is agreed that the entire 100 thereby bind themselves to suffer eviction unless these terms are granted. Eviction for the 40 means the loss of their improvements and the breaking up of happy homes. For the 60 it means political excitement, puffs in Parliament and in the papers, and money grants from the public funds. The landlord again and again demands his rent. He offers what he thinks is a reasonable abatement, say 20 per cent. But the Dublin politician, backed up by the 60, refuses anything less than his pound of flesh. The 40 remonstrate, but are outvoted. By-and-by the landlord increases his offer to 25, and later on to 30 per cent. abatement. Again the 40 remonstrate, and advise a settlement. But the Dublin politician and the 60 will not have it. Then the landlord proceeds to eviction, and the 100 are put out of their holdings. 40 industrious men are thrown out of their land; 40 thriving establishments are broken up; 40 happy hearths are rendered desolate. 60 incapables are in high glee, leading a Bohemian existence, for which they are eminently qualified, camping out upon a liberal allowance from Nationalist head-quarters. The 40 get no allowance, for they are well-to-do men, and are told

they must suffer for the cause. Weeks grow into months, and months into years. The landlord has grown dogged and desperate under the torture of the picadors and tor-readers of the parliamentary arena. The estate is a forest of weeds; the fences are in ruins. The 40 get into bad health, or, what is worse, into bad habits; while the 60 lord it at the fair, the forge, the meeting, and the public-house. 40 honest men and their families have been sacrificed on the altar of fraud, dissipation, and idleness. Why did they allow themselves to be sacrificed? Because they feared being boycotted. Why did they not turn to something else? Because in Nationalist Ireland there was nothing else for them to turn to, and they were hoping against hope.

The split in the Nationalist ranks has hastened many a settlement, but it will take a decade before the industrious men recover from the effects of the disturbance, and it leaves the incapables no better than they were. The Plan of Campaign was the chief source of disorder for the first four years of Mr. Balfour's rule, and though the Chief Secretary joined issue with it wherever the conspiracy raised its head, yet, to some extent, he seems to have been in favour of giving the folly rope enough to hang itself, as it has now done. The collapse of the twin authors of that fatal folly, and the ignominious weakness displayed by them ever since the Divorce Court disclosures in November, 1890, were results to have been expected by anyone who had attentively regarded their career. The Plan of Campaign, which culminated in the ruinous folly of New Tipperary, stands universally condemned in Ireland to-day, and by none so earnestly as by those who were forced to join it.

But if the death of the Plan of Campaign was only due in part to the Crimes Act, and in part to its inherent viciousness, the death of "shadowing" is wholly due to Mr. Balfour's determined administration of the Crimes Act. "Shadowing" was the means by which boycotting was carried out in its entire rigour and cruelty. The practice, which was fatal to the existence of liberty, had been brought to the perfection of a fine art when Mr. Balfour grappled with it. This was the custom: When a man was boycotted by the League, a number of members, generally evicted tenants, were told off to dog his footsteps, and watch the movements of his household, or, as it was called, to "shadow" them. If the wife or child went into a shop for food, the "shadow" on duty would warn the shopkeeper, and the food would not be forthcoming when asked for. Or, if the shopkeeper gave it, the "shadow" would report him to the League, and a caution would be administered to him never to do it again under penalty of being boycotted himself. If the boycotted man or his son went to the fair with a beast, the "shadows" tracked him, and warned all dealers against buying from him. If he went to a distance to get his horse shod or his plough mended, he was likewise tracked, and the smith warned against working for him. Mr. Balfour stamped out this execrable system, by having the "shadows" themselves "shadowed" by policemen in plain clothes. After a conflict of several years, and a number of very prosaic trials and smart little sentences under the Crimes Act, the Chief Secretary's "shadows" proved the better men, and "shadowing" in Ireland has ceased to be an effective weapon in the hands of the boycotters.



## CHAPTER VII.

### **A Truce to the Land War—The Great Land Act.**

So far we have dealt with that side of Mr. Balfour's policy which was directed to the rehabilitation of the law in Ireland. Let us now examine his remedial and constructive policy. His policy, both repressive and remedial, is chiefly remarkable for the lack of that grandeur which Mr. Gladstone sought to infuse into all his Irish schemes. Without disparaging Mr. Gladstone's great public career, it must yet be conceded that one of his great uses in British politics has been to teach others how not to do things. In this trait, no less than in his style of oratory, he resembles the Circumlocution Office as exactly as it is possible for a corporation sole to resemble a corporation aggregate. Mr. Gladstone would grandly sweep the Irish members and Ireland itself away from Westminster rather than have his way blocked by the Irish Party. Mr. Gladstone would sweep the Irish landlords and tenants from the face of creation with £160,000,000 of money rather than have his way blocked by an Irish Land Question. Mr. Gladstone would ram a thousand men into gaol, untried, in hopes that when the sun rose next morning it could be said that no political agitator was at large in Ireland to disturb the peace of the Liberal Party.

Mr. Balfour, on the contrary, has never been guilty of anything like a *coup* during his tenure of office in Ireland. Things have been taken bit by bit as the opportunities came. He stated at the outset, immediately after his appointment, that he believed in no Land Bill but a Purchase Bill; that his only hope of settling the land question was by making the occupier the owner in fee. The Ashbourne Land Purchase Act—so called after its able and sensible promoter in the House of Lords—had already taken a nip at the land difficulty. That Act was passed in 1885, when Lord Salisbury's Government held power on sufferance for 227 days. Despite all the efforts of the National League to deter tenants from purchasing, the £5,000,000 advanced by the Act was applied for as fast as the Commissioners could allot the loans. Twenty years' purchase of the existing rent would be much higher than the average of the transactions under the Act, yet the tenant who bought under the Ashbourne Act at that price now finds that the interest and sinking fund on the money advanced by the Treasury is 20 per cent. less annually than his old rent. After paying this decreased sum for 49 years, the tenant will become owner in fee simple, and possess the holding free of all rent. In 1888 the Chief Secretary passed an Amending Act by which a second sum of £5,000,000 was advanced on the same terms. Mr. Balfour only succeeded in passing this Act after Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell, with their respective parties, had resorted to the most open obstruction for the purpose of defeating the measure. The success of the Ashbourne Act and the amending Act of 1888 may be judged from the fact that the total amount of advances applied for

under these Acts up to 21st August, 1890, was £9,217,388 by 23,348 tenants. For the year ending 21st August, 1886, the purchase money actually issued was 18·3 years' purchase on the rental. For the year ending the same date, 1887, it stood at only 17·5 years' purchase: in 1888 it was 17·4; in 1889, 17·2; and for the year ending 21st August, 1890, it was 17·2 years' purchase on the rental. A tenant whose rental was £100 a-year, and who purchased at 17 years' purchase on the rental, has only to pay £68 a-year for 49 years in order to become owner in fee. Emboldened by the success of these cautious measures, Mr. Balfour has now passed an Act advancing a further sum of £33,000,000 upon still easier terms. Mr. Parnell, speaking of this Balfour Land Act of 1891 at Limerick, on the 24th of May, said:—"What will this measure do? It will do two things. It will enormously benefit the Irish tenant-farmers and it will greatly benefit the Irish labourers. . . . How will it benefit the Irish farmers? It will enable about 200,000 of the 520,000 Irish tenant-farmers to become the owners of their holdings at a reduction of about 40 per cent. That is to say, the man who now pays £50 a-year will get his holding for considerably under £30 a-year, and the others in like proportion, and at the end of 49 years he will have his holding for nothing. . . . Let me now explain what it will do for the labourer. It will give to the Irish labourer, for the purpose of building houses and fencing in small plots of land, the sum of £115,000 a-year in perpetuity—that is to say, the £115,000 a-year will every year be spent under the provisions of this measure for the building of cottages for Irish labourers." A Congested Districts

Board is also appointed under the Act to which a capital sum of £1,500,000 from the Irish Church Surplus, and the growing produce thereof, is granted. The board will have power to spend this money annually in the poorest districts of Ireland, fostering native industry, assisting migration from over-populated baronies to less thickly inhabited parts of the country, and in doing all other acts which in their opinion are necessary for the well-being of the congested districts.

The Balfour Land Act, with its two pioneers, the Ashbourne Acts, will in all human probability settle the Irish agrarian difficulty. The experience gained from the working of the Ashbourne Act has been most valuable. Guided and encouraged by that experience, the landlord's desire for ready money and fixity of income, as well as the tenant's anxiety for ownership, gives a guarantee that the entire sum granted under the Act of 1891 will be applied for. This is one of the most important points, as the Act, like its predecessors, is not compulsory. The Act will create a revolution in Ireland, inasmuch as it will give the general community a direct interest in seeing that the tenant pays his annual instalments punctually. The advances made under the Act are secured on the rates. Defaults in payment will therefore increase the rates, and excite public indignation against the defaulters. The British Exchequer could not issue better security than Irish Land Stock. When the Irish tenant once fully realizes that in a generation his land will be his own, rent free, and that whining for reductions is useless, he will become one of the best pays on earth. His passionate affection for his farm has been proved, and in that

love for his holding lies the best security of the British Government. When there is no longer a landlord or landlady to be wheedled or threatened, and when local sympathy is withdrawn from the defaulter, the tenant will have every inducement to pay his instalments punctually. We have it on record from Mr. Gladstone that the Irish tenant "is the best rent-payer in the world," and Mr. Parnell has asserted more than once that "if you once make the Irish tenant owner of his holding he will turn the sands into gold." In every case of purchase under the Balfour Land Act and its pioneer measures the eldest son can look forward without presumption to the day when he will be owner in fee. The holdings will be all real property descending in tail, unless otherwise expressly devised. Such an operation of law cannot fail, in time, to give the Irish tenant an ancestry, and make him a personage in the community. Critics have censured the measure because it does not propose to buy out all the landlords in Ireland at one stroke, as Mr. Gladstone proposed to do in 1886. Referring to these strictures, Mr. Balfour, speaking on the 4th of June, said:—"I have heard many gentlemen representing Nationalist opinion in Ireland state, within the last few days, that the present measure of Land Purchase, large and generous as it is, will not ultimately prove adequate to the interests of Ireland: and they have been bold enough to prophesy that when the money has been exhausted, new money will not be forthcoming to accomplish the task of converting the Irish occupier into an owner. Well, my business has been to frame a bill of which it can be truly said that it does not endanger, by the fraction of a penny, the pockets

of the taxpayers of this country, and I have framed such a bill. Therefore, when the £30,000,000 advanced under the bill are exhausted, if it is found that the loss to the locality is so insignificant that it may be ignored, I, for my part, if Ireland still forms an integral portion of the United Kingdom, will not be averse to seeing some increase. . . . The experiment will by that time be conclusively proved to have been successful or unsuccessful." A more cautious, a more modest reply to his critics could not have been made by Mr. Balfour. He might have pointed to the experience of the Ashbourne Acts, where the loss did actually turn out to be so insignificant that it might be ignored, and he might have argued that the loss under his own Act was likely to be still less, inasmuch as the advances were made on the collateral security of the rates, which is not the case under the Ashbourne Acts.

Another considerable grievance was removed by the Unionist Government during the rule of Mr. Balfour in Ireland. The leaseholders whom Mr. Gladstone had excluded from the benefit of his Land Act of 1881 were admitted to all the privileges of that measure by the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, and middlemen whose subtenants had got reductions in the Land Courts were allowed also to break their leases.

## CHAPTER VIII.

**Mr. Parnell's Fall—Mr. Balfour's Modesty and Knowledge of Ireland.**

ONE adventitious circumstance notoriously hastened the realization of Mr. Balfour's wishes, and helped to ripen the good fruits of his wise and firm policy in Ireland. But important political facts as were the disclosures made in the Divorce Court in November, 1890, and the consequent rupture in the Irish Party, they only hastened the crowning triumph of Mr. Balfour's Rule in Ireland. Even if Mr. Parnell had not at that moment got into trouble, the seeming unity in Nationalist Ireland could not have been long maintained. The truly Celtic elements of the middle and lower classes, the most unanglicized of the population, ever inconstant, had followed Mr. Parnell like dumb dogs for years chiefly because they feared him. He persistently treated the most exalted of his followers with a not undeserved contempt. Witness his refusing to grant Archbishop Croke an interview, and his not acknowledging the receipt of the Catholic Primate's ambiguous letter asking him to restrain the Plan of Campaign. Witness again his not uttering a word of thanks when handed the cheque for £40,000 as a personal testimonial for his political services, though he must have known how eager the Irish are

for thanks, preferring lip-thanks to deeds of kindness and gratitude.

The priests never loved Mr. Parnell's rule, nor is it to be wondered at, for no political change could improve the condition of the priests, who are the most affluent body in Ireland. The rigid impartiality and determination with which the Crimes Act was administered and the defections caused by the operation of the Land Purchase Acts were fast beating all life and energy out of Mr. Parnell's political machine in Ireland. The shrewd though timid priests and laymen, who had been bending the knee to him since 1880, were fast gaining confidence in a higher power than Mr. Parnell. Mr. Balfour and Mr. Parnell in their respective careers have acted and re-acted upon each other like planets in their orbits. Mr. Balfour's policy prepared the way for Mr. Parnell's dethronement, and Mr. Parnell's private sins against morality hastened the triumph of Mr. Balfour's policy. When national gratitude began to be expressed for Mr. Balfour's great services to Ireland and the empire, he still continued to evince that forgetfulness of self which was his earliest and best characteristic as Chief Secretary. At the public banquets at which he was entertained at Dublin, Edinburgh, and elsewhere, his speeches betray that modesty and belittlement of his own services so singularly rare nowadays in public men. At Edinburgh, in December, 1889, he said, "I am aware—and I am glad to think—that this great manifestation of National opinion is due to the fact that you regard me as the holder for the time being of the office of Chief Secretary, as being the embodiment of that respect for law, of that determination that the laws of the country shall be obeyed,



which I believe, in spite of all that party feeling can do, lies deep down in the heart of every British subject." Replying to an address of congratulation on the beneficial results of his work in Ireland, he thanked the deputation "on behalf of the Government" for their approval of the Government's Irish policy, and added:—"As representing that policy by the accident of my official position I thank you for the support which you have thus given to the cause of law and order." Mr. Balfour understands the Irish character better than any other public man who has had to do with Ireland, except possibly Mr. Parnell. He justly appraises the inglorious historical record of the Irish nation as contrasted with the undoubted genius of individual Irishmen. A false pride in the inglorious past of his country is the characteristic of every ignorant or semi-educated Irishman, and Mr. Balfour has never been guilty of pampering that pride. Speaking once as a Scotchman to a Scottish audience, Mr. Balfour said:—"We are a nation, ladies and gentlemen, in a sense in which Ireland never has been, and is not a nation. Before the union with England we had a long, an independent, and a glorious history. We had a constitution the fruits of our own labours. We had a foreign policy carried on by our own statesmen. We had a religious and political evolution, the result of our own activity. Ireland has never in that sense been a nation. There was a time when it was independent of England many centuries ago; but at that time it was not united under a single political organization. There was a period when it was so united, but then it was not independent, and through the whole period of its history, down even to the present day, I do

not think it would be accurate to say that the inhabitants of Ireland constitute a single nationality at all in the same sense in which the inhabitants of Scotland constitute a single nationality."

Again :—" I have never hated any nation," said Mr. Balfour, replying to Sir W. Harcourt's accusation that he never spoke of Ireland except with contempt, " and I am certain that, if I did hate any nation, that nation would not be the Irish nation. And as for contempt, I reserve that for politicians who use Ireland as a stalking-horse for an English ambition, whose loud-voiced gaiety is equally at the service of coercion or separation ; who are equally ready to stimulate crime or to repress crime, and who, as occasion may serve, have at their command either invective for the Irish leaders which I might describe as coarse, or flattery, which I might describe as fulsome. But for Ireland I, in common, I believe, with every man and woman who hears me in this hall, have no desire except to see her, under circumstances of increasing well-being, adding a lustre to a united empire which her genius is so well capable of adorning."

Mr. Balfour frequently expresses his pity for Ireland, a prey as she is to agitators on the one hand, whose aim it is to draw her people from the paths of homely honesty, industry, punctuality, and self-reliance, and to unscrupulous English politicians on the other hand, whose only consideration has ever been to achieve power for themselves by means of Irish votes.

## CHAPTER IX.

**Mr. Balfour's Triumph—The Burial of Home Rule.**

THIS is the fifth year of Mr. Balfour's combat with disorder in Ireland, and cautious a politician as he is, the Chief Secretary is at last convinced of the success of his own policy. He enjoys the satisfaction of seeing the light railways, subsidized by his Act of last year, progressing to completion, to the great benefit of the poorest localities in Ireland. Although the distress was not at all so severe during the winter and spring of 1890-91 as the speeches of the Irish members, previous to the Divorce Case in November, had led people to believe it would be, yet the Relief Fund started by Lord Zetland and Mr. Balfour has alleviated much suffering in the poorest districts of the country. That fund was the only practical effort made to cope with the much-talked-of distress. It has been distributed through the hands of the stipendiaries upon whose shoulders fell the brunt of the work of repressing agrarian crime under the Crimes Act. The stipendiaries or removables, as they were called, have now leisure time to spend in philanthropical avocations. The Viceroy has made several tours through the island, and has been respectfully received everywhere, while in many localities his reception was enthusiastic, an unprecedented occurrence

since the beginning of the agitation. The Chief Secretary's tour last autumn through the west and north proved to him that the most uninformed classes in the country were beginning to appreciate his firm, wise, and generous policy; and were not afraid to express their gratitude. He is now convinced that Ireland may be relieved from the Crimes Act, and he made the important announcement casually on the 4th of June. "Certain portions of the Crimes Act," said Mr. Balfour, "had been loudly proclaimed by Mr. Gladstone as being in themselves not coercive but beneficial, and as being of such a character that they might properly be embodied in the general legislation, not of Ireland only, but of England. In the law of Scotland they were already to be found. These provisions he thought might properly be extended to the whole of Ireland, and might be made part of the general system of legal administration; but those parts of the Crimes Act which specially dealt with criminal conspiracy, and which had been absolutely necessary in order to deal with the social disorders of the last five years, had now, in his judgment, so effectually done their work that they might be, by proclamation, removed from the whole of Ireland, except only possibly one county and a few baronies here and there where perfect order had not yet been restored. It might be of interest to know that, while at present there were some 3,019 persons in prison in Ireland under the ordinary law, there were 21 persons only imprisoned under the Crimes Act."

This announcement was made less than a fortnight after the following attack on Mr. Balfour had appeared in the leader columns of the *Freeman*:—"So far as the memory of living men reaches, he is the meanest mortal

who has ever directed the policy of the English Government in Ireland. To steal the clothes of one political opponent, to do another to death, and to make merry over the achievement in after-dinner speeches, to confine political prisoners in a fever den, . . . such are the methods of his statesmanship. A notable Frenchman once described his countrymen as half-monkey, half-tiger. Mr. Balfour, though a Scotchman, might have been the subject of the acrid saying." The immediate reason for this attack on the Chief Secretary in the leading Irish daily paper was that Mr. Balfour did not force the authorities to stay all proceedings for the estreatment of Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien's sureties. Those two politicians having been arrested for offences against the Crimes Act were liberated on giving bail to appear at their trial. The bail was £500 a-piece for the defendants, and each defendant had in addition to get two sureties of £250 each. The sureties were readily got amongst the townspeople of Tipperary. The two principals, instead of abiding by their bond and waiting the conclusion of their trial, left the country surreptitiously in a trawler, and landed in France, whence they proceeded to America on a political mission. The sureties got alarmed, and one of them cabled to Mr. Dillon, asking what they were to do, as they feared a seizure of their goods. Instead of the expected reply telling the sureties that they would not be suffered to lose their property by reason of his breach of faith, Mr. Dillon cabled across the Atlantic a reply to the following effect. He told the sureties that the bails would not be estreated, because the Superior Courts would decide that the original charge had been varied after the trial had commenced ;

in other words, after the defendants had fulfilled their obligation by appearing. When a man has done all that in him lay to discredit the administration of justice, his opinion as to what the High Court will decide in his own case is generally worthless. In no case could such an opinion be worth being cabled across the Atlantic at so much per word to a poor man in daily fear of a seizure of his goods.

Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien fled from justice in the most contemptuous way, and then sought to have themselves released from their bond on the pettifogging point mentioned above, which was scouted out of the Exchequer Division as soon as it was mentioned. Not content with their defeat in the endeavour to get imprisonment converted into a farce, as in Foster's time, they now whined to have bail-bonds pronounced a farce by the Government and the Courts. But the Government of Mr. Balfour, true to its impartial policy, declined to stay the process of law in order that Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien might play at contempt of Court "on the cheap." Their advocates in the press set up a whine which was at once piteous and impertinent for a special exemption in their case from the ordinary law of the land, and the Chief Secretary was called a "half-monkey, half-tiger," because he did not grant the begging petition.

Mr. Balfour, as we have seen, came forward to govern Ireland at a crisis when that country had been almost driven to distraction by the production and defeat of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule and Land Purchase bills. He manfully expounded his alternative policy, and as manfully has carried it through to the successful termination

which we have heard described by himself in words of studious moderation. It remains for us now to show that, in the opinion of the most sanguine Home Rulers, the success of Mr. Balfour's policy means the death of Mr. Gladstone's. The generosity of Mr. Balfour's great Land Act has been proved out of the mouth of his chief antagonist, Mr. Parnell. Let us now hear the death-knell of Mr. Gladstone's grand scheme of Home Rule tolled by that intense Gladstonian, Dr. Croke, the Catholic Archbishop of Cashel. Having declared in a previous speech that Home Rule would never come in his day, Dr. Croke said, speaking at Galbally on the 4th of June:—"And now I am done with Mr. Parnell, and probably, so far as controversy is concerned, done with him for ever. He is a fallen man. Should his name survive for any time in Irish history, it will be only as that of a traitor to the National cause and of a mischief-maker. Having deliberately placed himself outside the pale of Christian civilization, his future mission appears to be to create as much confusion as possible and to make his followers as dead to every moral feeling as he himself has proved to be. He has killed Home Rule and buried it with his own reputation in the London Divorce Court."

Though the supporters of Mr. Balfour's policy will differ from Dr. Croke as to the identity of the person who actually killed Home Rule, they will not be the less pleased to have it on his authority that the grand scheme is dead and buried.

## CHAPTER X.

**Parnellites and Anti-Parnellites—New Terrors  
of Home Rule—The Priests.**

ONE thing remains to be done for Ireland by the Unionist Government, and it is to be hoped that well-intentioned timidity will not obstruct Mr. Balfour in getting it done before the dissolution, unless, indeed, the Unionist party are confident of returning to power. Ireland requires a Local Government Bill similar to the Acts already in force in Great Britain, with reasonable facilities for promoting private bills in Dublin, and until she gets it, those who constitute themselves her champions will not be deprived of their best remaining argument for Home Rule. The National League is no longer a great political power in Ireland, and the Federation has no future before it. Discussion between Nationalists is no longer stifled, and the establishment of County Councils should precipitate the effacement of both political machines, by diverting the energy of local politicians into a channel where ability can produce results at once novel, useful, and legitimate.

Mr. Balfour, speaking at Plymouth on the 10th August last, said that his Local Government Bill would have a general similarity to the English and Scotch measures already passed. But he hastened to add that a system of minority representation would be adopted, and that the



Irish Police would continue to remain a centralized force as at present.

“I believe,” said the Chief Secretary, “that a centralized force of that kind is absolutely necessary in Ireland. I believe it is necessary not merely for the protection of the loyalists in the south, but also for the protection of the disloyalists in the north.”

If the Constabulary were disbanded now or in the near future, and County Police under the control of County Councils substituted for the central force, no man could follow his daily avocation or hold his property in safety.

Not alone is the security of a centralized police necessary for the reasons adduced by Mr. Balfour, but also for the protection of the devoted followers of Mr. Parnell from the violence of the anti-Parnellites.

The unknown men brought into Irish politics by Mr. Parnell now seek to rule Nationalist Ireland. These men, mostly drawn by Mr. Parnell from the lower strata of society, are now fighting under the leadership and pay of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland as they formerly fought under Mr. Parnell. Home Rule, with an executive under these men, would be as intolerable for the Parnellites as for the loyalists. And if it were ever possible that Irishmen would resort to steel and shot in defence of their liberties, those who placed their faith in Mr. Parnell would be, in their own way, as much justified in armed rebellion against Gladstonian Home Rule as was the Ulster loyalist who urged his compatriots to “line the ditches.”

One of those members of Parliament above referred to, one whose action has been described as that of a wild man

of the woods, since his escape from the control of Mr. Parnell, spoke of the Parnellites at a Federation meeting on August 12th, as follows:—"What hope have we now for the return of these men? If they are right we must be wrong, and if we are right in our position towards the Irish movement the others must be traitors to the movement, not, I grant, with the guilt of intentional perfidy; but what matters it to us whether the cause of Ireland be lost by knave or fool? . . . Argue we cannot when men's passions and their jealousies get entangled with their reason. Statesmen differed as to the construction of the American constitution. But what did Ralph Waldo Emerson say about it when North and South wrangled for a long time on the question of slavery? 'This,' said Emerson, 'is a question for the gun.' And I say of the present situation, in regard to Mr. Parnell's immediate followers, this is a case for the sweeping-brush."

In a land of settled civilization the utterances of an enraged demagogue excite nothing but ridicule, and in the appearance of such a termagant, sweeping-brush in hand, there would be nothing inappropriate. But in Ireland such words have more than a metaphorical application. Commenting upon them, the *Evening Telegraph*, then the most consistent and energetic of the Parnellite newspapers, wrote as follows on August 13th:—"This talk about the 'sweeping-brush' is a timely exposure of the real spirit of malignancy which lurked behind the seductive phrases at Mallow, about forgiveness and brotherly hand-shaking, and unity. Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien hang out all their most alluring phrases at Mallow to seduce the Parnellites, and then Mr. Tim

Healy, thinking of the arbitrament of the gun, comes along with his 'sweeping-brush.' The game of Messieurs the Timhealyites is transparent. It may be the true policy from the M'Carthyite standpoint, but it is tyranny. The Rev. W. C. M'Gill, C.C., president of the Trinity Ward branch of the Federation, whose speech at Tuesday's meeting of that body has been partly suppressed by all the morning newspapers, gave us a further glimpse of the 'sweeping-brush' plot, *alias* the 'true policy.' He declared that the henchmen of Mr. Parnell 'must be fired out of Irish life': that they must be treated as persons affected with small-pox, and must not be touched 'until the scabs had been sloughed off them': and then the rev. gentleman went on to excuse the Timhealyites who had been using 'strong language' towards the Parnellites, on the plea that they are 'humble imitators of the great Founder of Christianity, who had been obliged to use strong language in expounding the Decalogue.' That is the 'sweeping-brush' method."

A Kildare priest was fined 20s. by the local magistrates quite recently for having assaulted several of his own parishioners on the public highway on the 23rd July. The men were returning from the Parnellite convention held in Dublin that day, when the priest met them, obstructed the passage of their cart by several times drawing his horse across the road, took down their names, threatened them in violent terms, and finally struck one of them with his umbrella. In Ulster, some of the Roman Catholic bishops have instructed their clergy to refuse the sacraments to followers of Mr. Parnell. The *Freeman's Journal* was denounced by Archbishop Walsh, on the 6th August, as

“an apostate journal,” because it continued to support Mr. Parnell for the leadership, after the Catholic bishops had condemned him by resolution. On March 2nd the *Freeman* had explained its own position in these words:—  
 “The attitude of the bishops appears to us to be impolitic, and with all possible respect we claim we have a right to say so, and that Catholicity does not imply a blind attachment to the teachings of individual ecclesiastics in matters political.”

But on the 7th August that newspaper, the most widely-read and wealthiest journal in Ireland, which had until then accorded a spirited and thoroughgoing support to Mr. Parnell, even after its chief proprietors, Mrs. E. D. Gray and her son, had declared for the anti-Parnellites, lost courage, and reeled before this epithet given to it by Dr. Walsh. “Before we write another word,” said the *Freeman*, on the 7th August, “we deem it due to the Archbishop and to ourselves as Catholics, to proclaim our complete and unreserved obedience to the doctrines of the Catholic Church on the subject. . . . We respectfully claim from our Archbishop a direct and impartial hearing. . . . This is not the place to discuss theology: nor would it, if there were any difference between the Archbishop and ourselves on any Catholic doctrine—the thought is so presumptuous, the idea so absolutely foreign to every fibre in us that we shrink from the mere mention of it—be decent to devote a secular journal to such a discussion.” The *Freeman* staggered in pitiable indecision for three weeks after this, and then an extraordinary meeting of the shareholders was held, at which the then existing directors, including the Lord Mayor of Dublin, were all dismissed,

and the control of the paper entrusted to a board who entertained the same opinions as Dr. Walsh on the leadership question. But the *National Press*, the organ of the Federation, established during the "apostacy" of the *Freeman*, refused to yield its place in the affections of the clergy to its repentant rival, and then it came to pass that the two representative journals of Nationalist Ireland openly and abjectly scrambled for the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. In Belfast, the Catholic bishop, for the same reason, has started a daily paper called the *Irish News*, in opposition to the *Morning News*, which was until then the only Catholic paper in the northern city. In Cork, both the daily Nationalist sheets are with the priests. Thus, the press in Nationalist Ireland, which from time immemorial has been the most powerful defender of the liberty of the subject, is completely under the influence of that Church, which, according to Mr. John Morley, "has broken with knowledge, has taken her stand upon ignorance, and is striving might and main, even in countries where she has no chance, to use the machinery of popular government to keep back education." Without expressing any opinion on the Church's attitude towards education—a subject outside the scope of this work—it will be conceded that no condemnation can be too severe for the ex-Chief Secretary of five months' standing, who would hand Ireland over to the control of a body to which he has given such an evil character.

## CHAPTER XI.

**Mr. Dillon's "Great Expectations"—Jarndyce and Jarndyce.**

THE anti-Parnellite members of Parliament, who lately constituted Mr. Parnell's trained band, now look forward to the incoming of Mr. Gladstone next year with the same sanguine expectancy that they brought to bear on the passage of the Home Rule Bill in 1886. Mr. Dillon, speaking at Mallow on the 9th August, with the assumed authority of a leader, in so far as men like his associates can be said to have a leader, predicted the immediate downfall of Mr. Balfour. "Until that hour comes which, please God, in spite of the speeches of Mr. Parnell, is now at hand," said Mr. Dillon, as reported in the *National Press*, "when the Tory, the Coercion Government, shall be hurled from office, and when, believe me, the landlords will come round hat in hand, requesting every evicted tenant to come back to take possession of his farm very much on his own terms—you will see what an astonishing difference, the moment the election is declared, you will see what an extraordinary change will come over the demeanour of these gentlemen. Every resident magistrate, every policeman, every landlord in the country will be all servility, as they once were for a short time before

the Home Rule Bill was about to pass. Why, they were coming to us with their hats in their hands, assuring us that they would serve us as faithfully as ever they had served the Castle. I am afraid there are some of them we would not have at any price." Incoherency of language becomes intelligible when addressed to a sympathetic crowd, and the reader may be left to realize the effect of such words on an audience more ignorant than, and just as sanguine as, the orator himself. Continuing, Mr. Dillon said, "we have only one short year, according to Mr. Balfour, and I think I notice a change even in Mr. Balfour's tone. He has got quite civil already. They say that coming events cast their shadows before. I think the shadow of the election has fallen upon Arthur James Balfour. We have only one short year to continue the struggle." The following and final extract from the same speaker, though to educated men such bathos may seem unworthy of quotation, gives us a glimpse of Ireland under Gladstonian Home Rule:—"I am prepared not only to trust the people of Ireland but the priesthood of Ireland, and I say that we—the priests and people of Ireland—are prepared to manage our own affairs, and I believe that we will show to the world when we do get, as we shall get, in spite of this unfortunate struggle, as we shall get the right to manage our own affairs, we will show to the world the attempt to represent the present struggle as sectarian is one of the basest calumnies that was ever uttered. We will show that the priesthood, the bishops, and Catholic people of Ireland, are the most tolerant body of people in the world. We will question no man as to his religion, but we will question him as to his public

character, and on the great uprising of the people of Ireland which we have recently witnessed." It will be observed that the priests are spoken of as a body separate from, and of equal authority with, the people of Ireland. Amongst the civilized nations of the earth one never hears of "the priests and people" of any other country. Such phrases as "the ministers and people of Scotland," "the parsons and people of England," "the priests and people of France," would excite indignation or ridicule if used by public men in those countries. But in Nationalist Ireland the claim of the priests to take precedence of the people has been long asserted and never disputed.

Those whose political views have differed, and still differ, from Mr. Dillon and the priests, will shudder at the prospect of being put to the question "as to their public character and on the great uprising of the people of Ireland which we have recently witnessed." It would be better for such men to be told that they were to be put to the question as to their religion. For while a religious persecution within the British empire is impossible, a persecution for political opinions has been proved to be not only feasible but popular in Ireland. Under Mr. Balfour's administration in Ireland "the priests and people" are powerless to put such words into practice. But when the millennium pictured by Mr. Dillon arrives, and when Mr. Gladstone is entirely advised by the revolted Parnellites in his government of Ireland, the case will be different.

In weighing the statements of Mr. Dillon it should be borne in mind as characteristic of his public career that he has denied most reported utterances of his whenever they have been definitely laid to his charge. Instances of this



trait could be multiplied, but the importance of the matter is not sufficient to justify us in burthening these pages with any more quotations from so incoherent an orator.

Mr. Gladstone should dread Mr. Dillon's "great expectations," for they constitute a very ancient and disagreeable trait of Irish politics. "In May, 1880, Mr. Gladstone's Ministry was constituted," wrote Mr. A. M. Sullivan in his *New Ireland*; "never before did the good wishes, the sympathies, and the hopes of Ireland more earnestly attend the advent of a British Minister to power. The Prime Minister was the first English Premier since Lord Melbourne who could be called really popular with Irishmen." Mr. Sullivan claimed that "in England alone some thirty or forty seats were carried by the Irish vote" in favour of Mr. Gladstone at the election of 1880.

Yet, in less than eighteen months after, Mr. Gladstone's name was execrated by every Nationalist in the country, and his Chief Secretary, Mr. Forster, was lassoing Mr. Sullivan's friends with the energy of a Mexican *vaquero*, and driving herds of them into prison without trial. Yes, execrated. Though in the interval he had passed his Land Act of 1881, of which Mr. A. M. Sullivan eloquently says:—"It abolished for ever the landlordism that had been a curse to Ireland; namely, the landlordism of avarice, the landlordism of dominion, the landlordism of caprice. The long scourged tenantry of Ireland might now sing aloud with the freed bondsmen of Port Royal—

' We, last night slaves,  
To-day, the Lord's free men.'

As I sat there and listened to the words of the Premier,

I felt as if I had, after the cruel toils and privations of the desert, been at length vouchsafed a glimpse of the promised land. . . . Seldom in the history of the world had the course of human legislation witnessed a more wise and elevated purpose than that proclaimed in every page of this scheme."

Under Mr. Gladstone's influence the proceedings of the Imperial Parliament have long been regarded as a great Chancery suit from which every Irish Nationalist has expectations, and thousands of Richard Carstones pay their Messieurs Vholes or Messieurs Kenge for working up their interests in that great cause the Irish JARNDYCE AND JARNDYCE. "Jarndyce and Jarndyce drones on. This scarecrow of a suit has, in course of time, become so complicated that no man alive knows what it means. The parties to it understand it least: but it has been observed that no two Chancery lawyers can talk about it for five minutes without coming to a total disagreement as to all the premises. Innumerable children have been born into the cause; innumerable young people have married into it; innumerable old people have died out of it. Scores of persons have deliriously found themselves made parties in Jarndyce and Jarndyce, without knowing how or why: whole families have inherited legendary hatreds with the suit. The little plaintiff or defendant who was promised a new rocking-horse when Jarndyce and Jarndyce should be settled, has grown up, possessed himself of a real horse, and trotted away into the other world. Fair wards of Court have faded into mothers and grandmothers; a long procession of Chancellors has come in and gone out. . . . but Jarndyce and Jarndyce still drags its dreary length

before the Court, perennially hopeless." So the Nationalist Irish cause, as it is called, has droned on. "Be this struggle long or short, be it easy or hard, on the cause must go!" said Mr. O'Brien at Mallow on the 9th of August. Funds without number have been started, subscribed to, and squandered. Generation after generation of Irish agitators and English legislators have passed away. But yet the Nationalist portion of the country does not thrive. To look for alms to America, and for eleemosynary Acts of Parliament to England is still the highest ideal of duty known to what is called an Irish patriot. The manlier inhabitants of Nationalist Ireland have been driven yearly to the shores of the New World in disgust at the endless proceedings of that great cause which has been a curse to them and their progenitors, and the arena in Ireland has been left to "the man from Shropshire," the Miss Flites, and the Richard Carstones. Such is the case in Nationalist Ireland; but in the North it is quite different. There Jarndyce and Jarndyce, "the grand old cause," is treated with contempt, and regarded as the curse that it is. There honest toil and enterprise have routed idle expectancy. There the hammers ring all day and the looms are buzzing through the land. There wealth accumulates and men multiply. These men of the North have as much claim on Jarndyce and Jarndyce as the men of the South and West, but they have foregone their claims on that "scarecrow of a suit" which has blighted the hopes of every one who has depended upon it except the Messieurs Vholes and the Messieurs Kenge.

## CHAPTER XII.

**The Tyrant Parnell.**

It often appears to readers of the American cablegrams in the press, as if blizzards, railway catastrophes, and dynamite explosions were the main business of life in the United States of America, and to those who only know Ireland through the energetic daily press, it must seem as if making political speeches, collecting political funds, marching and counter-marching the constabulary, issuing proclamations, and passing resolutions were the sole business of life in this country. As there are many blizzards in America, so there is much politics in Ireland, but it is not all blizzards in the one country nor all politics in the other. Where there is much politics, there is much neglect of business, and consequent poverty, from which come discontent, and trouble, and crime. Such has been the condition of Ireland from 1878, until the present year, to a greater extent than at any period of equal length in her history. The present trouble had its origin on the 19th of May, 1870, in the foundation of the Home Rule League, or, as it was formally styled, the National Home Government Association, at the Bilton Hotel in Dublin, by a few scores of people, many of them Dublin Protestants, irritated at the then recent disestablishment of their Church. The

concession of disestablishment, fairly as it may have been effected, gave the present Home Rule movement its first impetus, and a Protestant clergyman's son struck the first blow at the unity of the three kindoms. When the Protestants recovered from their alarm and chagrin, caused by disestablishment, and when they had in a most self-helpful manner reconstituted their Church upon a sound financial basis, they quickly dropped away from the Home Rule movement led by their co-religionist, Mr. Isaac Butt. But Mr. Butt continued to lead the movement in a Platonic spirit from 1874, until his death in 1878. He was succeeded by Mr. William Shaw, who followed his late leader's policy until 1880, when he was dismissed to make way for Mr. Parnell. Butt and Shaw and their followers, like the great O'Connell, were amateur politicians. Butt was a distinguished and able lawyer; Shaw was a banker, and, up to that time, a successful speculator. Their followers were citizens of Ireland or England, who worked in the ordinary way for their living, or who had amassed a competence in the ordinary walks of life. But Mr. Parnell straightway set himself to politics as to a profession or trade. He searched the country for unknown men whom he forced upon the Irish constituencies, and whom he paid for their services. He drove every man out of Irish politics who did not surrender unconditionally to his own rule. During the ten years that elapsed from 1880 to 1890, the noisy elements of Ireland gathered themselves around Mr. Parnell, and the history of their doings at home, as well as of their encounters with the Imperial Legislature at Westminster, and the results flowing therefrom constitute the greater part of the history of

the country for that period. In discontented countries, the noisy element possesses political power, and in thriftless countries a political despot generally seizes that power.

In Mr. Parnell, Ireland found such a political despot as few countries have been subject to in modern times. Mr. Parnell trained his band of professional politicians, and showed them that agitation was their bread of life. The large masses of timid, indifferent, thriftless people who fill the south, west, and central districts of Ireland, soon joined with the noisy element and swelled Mr. Parnell's following. A few consecutive bad harvests and a fall in prices of agricultural produce worked in Mr. Parnell's favour. He and his trained band collected subscriptions from the farming and labouring classes, for which they promised in return to wring Land Bills from the English Government. But when the Land Bills came they implored the farmers not to avail themselves of their provisions, lest the country should settle down, and thereby deprive them of their occupation. The farmers paid scant heed to their entreaties. They got all they could out of every Land Act as it came, but continued to pay in their subscriptions, hoping for more. A spirit of gambling was infused into the country, the farmers looked to legislation to do everything for them, and they neglected to till their land. Every new concession increased the thriftlessness and recklessness of those who believed in Mr. Parnell's omnipotence.

Meanwhile Mr. Parnell ruled over all these elements of the Irish population with all the attributes of sovereignty. He indifferently used the Land question or the Home Rule question, as occasion served, for maintaining and

increasing his power. As the typical constitutional sovereign is defined to be a monarch who reigns but does not govern, so Mr. Parnell's position may be defined as that of a sovereign who governed but did not reign. Like a small Augustus, declining the title of king, he gave to his followers a semblance of liberty of opinion and yearly sought the suffrages of the members of the Irish Party for his election to the chair.

From 1880 till 1890, assisted by his trained band and a large permanent staff of servants, he levied taxes, decided causes, punished offenders, held the sole prerogative of nominating persons to seats in Parliament, and entered into treaties on behalf of his subjects with Viceroy and Prime Ministers. He more than once despatched his deputies to the limits of the earth, to Australia, South Africa, Canada, and the United States to levy grants in aid of his policy from the resident Irish populations. He himself was received by the American Congress in the Capitol, at Washington, as Leader of the Irish Race, and was afterwards voted £100,000 by popular subscription in the United States, to be spent in furtherance of his policy. The immense sums collected everywhere were entrusted to him and his trained band with absolute discretion to use as he thought fit. Augustus has been called a "crafty tyrant" by the historian of the "Decline and Fall," though his name is associated with a long period of peace and prosperity within the boundaries of the Roman Empire. The appellation would not be inappropriate to Mr. Parnell. His empire was governed without an armed force, but at one time, in 1886, it seemed as if the British Legislature were about to confer upon him the power of the sword,

and thus complete his assumption of despotic sway. It does not follow from anything we have said that Mr. Parnell would have used that new power to the disadvantage of Ireland. Every capable tyrant from the mild Pisistratus to Napoleon Buonaparte had good intentions. What Mr. Parnell would have done for Ireland, had Mr. Gladstone then conferred on him the control of her destinies, must now remain a matter for conjecture. His ultimate aims were never known to anybody. But we may infer from such indications as we can get what use he would have made of his power with regard to England. During the election of 1880, Mr. Parnell was absent in America, collecting subscriptions for his movement, which was newly started, and then called the Land League. Meanwhile his colleagues at home aided the Liberal party in the English contested elections, and claimed that they had thereby turned the scale in favour of Mr. Gladstone in from thirty to forty constituencies. When Mr. Parnell returned, he was jubilantly informed of what had been done. But, so far from being delighted at the Liberal victory, he told Mr. A. M. Sullivan, who was his informant, that "it would have been infinitely better for Ireland to keep the Conservatives in power, as Lord Beaconsfield would infallibly bring England into some disastrous European complication, the occurrence of which would be the signal for concessions to Ireland, far far beyond anything Gladstone would ever conceive."

Such was the political despot who went so near wresting the government of Ireland from the English Crown. Jingoism expired with Lord Beaconsfield, and Lord Salisbury and his colleagues are admitted to be as free from the



faintest tinge of that once fashionable craze as Mr. Gladstone himself. But a nation with such vast and varied interests as England can never be absolutely certain that she will not one day, however reluctantly, find herself involved in a European complication. Had Home Rule been given in 1886, the first European embarrassment in which England was involved would have found Ireland under Mr. Parnell demanding concessions far far beyond anything Gladstone would ever conceive. If it be given in 1893, it is to the creatures of Mr. Parnell's despotism the country will be handed over. Will Ireland prosper under those men whose lives have been devoted to fomenting all those forces of discontent, which will be numerous in Nationalist Ireland till crack of doom, unless the character of its people be radically improved? It is not from a political despotism like Mr. Parnell's, or from a priestly despotism such as we are now threatened with, that national prosperity can come. True national improvement can only be achieved by each man acting for himself upon the principles of self-help and self-reliance. "I have heard a great deal," said Mr. Dargan, "about the independence that we were to get from this, that, and the other source; yet I have always been deeply impressed with the conviction that our industrial independence depends upon ourselves. Simple industry and careful exactness would be the making of Ireland." As long as Nationalists are so wanting in self-respect as to trot in herds before the whipcrack of the politician or ecclesiastic, they can enjoy no lasting prosperity.

Now that Mr. Parnell is dead, it will be conceded that, besides being a daring and capable tyrant, he was one of

the most powerful and remarkable men of the nineteenth century. His end was in keeping with his life and character. Deserted, reviled, and anathematized by the majority of his ungrateful and inconstant countrymen, who owed every concession wrung from England in recent years to his genius and courage, his business on earth was finished. Such a man could not survive in a subordinate position. He was the greatest parliamentary leader Ireland ever had, and his death has deprived Mr. Gladstone of that most plausible, but most cowardly, pretext for the concession of Home Rule, viz. the fear of Irish obstruction of English business in the House of Commons.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### **Mr. Balfour's Distinction as Chief Secretary.**

THE following are the names of the Chief Secretaries since the Union, with the periods for which they have held office :—

1801	Right Hon.	Charles Abbott.
1802-1804	„	William Wickham.
1804	„	Sir Evan Nepean.
1804-1805	„	N. Vansittart.
1805-1806	„	Charles Long.
1806-1807	„	William Elliott.
1807-1809	„	Sir Arthur Wellesley.
1809	„	Robert Dundas.
1809-1813	„	W. W. Pole.
1813-1818	„	Robert Peel.
1818-1821	„	Charles Grant.
1821-1827	„	Henry Goulburn.
1827-1828	„	William Lamb.
1828-1830	„	Lord F. Leveson-Gower.
1830-1831	„	Sir Henry Hardinge.
1831-1833	„	E. G. S. Stanley.
1833	„	Sir John Hobhouse.
1833-1835	„	E. J. Littleton.
1835	„	Sir Henry Hardinge.
1835-1841	„	Viscount Morpeth.

1841-1845	Right Hon.	Lord Eliot.
1845-1846	„	Sir Thomas Freemantle.
1846	„	Earl of Lincoln.
1846-1847	„	Henry Labouchere.
1847-1852	„	Sir William Somerville.
1852-1853	„	Lord Naas.
1853-1855	„	Sir John Young.
1855-1857	„	Edward Horsman.
1857-1858	„	H. A. Herbert.
1858-1859	„	Lord Naas.
1859-1861	„	Edward Cardwell.
1861-1865	„	Sir Robert Peel.
1865-1866	„	C. S. P. Fortescue.
1866-1868	„	Lord Naas.
1868	„	Wilson Patten.
1868-1871	„	C. S. P. Fortescue.
1871-1874	„	Lord Hartington.
1874-1878	„	Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.
1878-1880	„	James Lowther.
1880-1882	„	W. E. Forster.
1882	„	Lord Frederick Cavendish.
1882-1884	„	Sir George Trevelyan.
1884-1885	„	H. Campbell-Bannerman.
1885-1886	„	Sir W. Hart-Dyke.
1886	„	W. H. Smith.
1886	„	John Morley.
1886	„	Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.
1887-	„	ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

From the beginning of the Land agitation in 1879, down to Mr. Balfour's appointment in 1887, that is to say in eight years, nine different Chief Secretaries succeeded each other in quick succession. During no period of the

same length since the Union were there so many changes in the office. Mr. Balfour has now held office longer than any Chief Secretary since the Land agitation commenced in 1879, and of all the Chief Secretaries since the Act of Union was passed in 1800, only two have held the position as long as Mr. Balfour will have held it at the end of the coming session, viz. Mr. Henry Goulburn and Viscount Morpeth, each of whom held it for about six years. It will be observed from a perusal of the above list, that many Chief Secretaries rose to eminence afterwards in other and, perhaps, higher spheres, but it remained for Mr. Balfour to be the first Chief Secretary to attain the highest political eminence by reason of ability displayed during his actual tenure of that office. More than one politician who served as Chief Secretary in his salad days, afterwards became Prime Minister of the Crown. But Mr. Balfour has been the first to display, during his administration of Ireland, such powers of statesmanship as entitle him, by general consent, to serve the Crown in the highest capacity, should the occasion arise.

The finest trait of Mr. Balfour's rule in Ireland has been that stern impartiality of administration which gives general security. "In my judgment," said Mr. Balfour at Plymouth, on the 10th August, "administration is the first duty of the Government, and legislation only the second duty." The record of Liberal rule in Ireland, on the other hand, shows legislation in unlimited quantities, but no steadiness or thoroughness of administration. Had Mr. Balfour's policy of administration first, and legislation after, been adopted and honourably adhered to a quarter of a century back, as he has adhered to it since

his accession to power, Nationalist Ireland would not now be crowded with idle expectants. If previous Governments had united Mr. Balfour's stern impartiality of administration with his modest and moderate language when speaking of his Irish measures, great expectations would not have given birth to the anguish of disappointment. "It does not rest with one individual—with one Government," said Mr. Balfour at Plymouth, on August 10th, "it does not rest, I had almost said, with one generation, completely to solve so ancient a controversy, so old an historic difficulty as that presented by what is known as the Irish question. All we can claim to have done—certainly the most I can ever claim to have done—is to be in process of solving it, and that claim we may put forward with something like moderation and justice."

Mr. Balfour has done much more than he admits to solve the Irish question. He has fought and conquered the professional agitator. He has passed a great Land Bill which will convert tens of thousands of occupiers into owners. He has made the first practical attempt to deal with those plague spots known as the congested districts. He has improved the means of communication in the most inaccessible parts of the country. He has extended the uniform protection of the Crown to Loyalist and Nationalist, to Parnellite and anti-Parnellite. He has revived the drooping spirits of the permanent servants of the Crown in Ireland, who were beginning to lose all confidence in English Ministers. He has brought local self-government to our doors. What more could a Cabinet Minister do, except to change the nature of Nationalist Ireland by infusing into it some of the energy and self-

reliance of the Northerners? Nationalist Ireland is said to consist of the priests and the people. The people have yet to learn self-reliance. But the priests—to deal with them an entire treatise would hardly suffice.

We have seen that when Mr. Balfour assumed the government of Ireland in 1887, Mr. Parnell was at the pinnacle of his power. In proportion as Mr. Balfour's firm administration pacified the country, so Mr. Parnell's trained band of professional politicians found their occupation going from them, and their future prospects becoming gloomier. In this frame of mind they leaned towards the Liberal party, secretly at first, but afterwards, when openly put to the test of choosing between Mr. Parnell and Mr. Gladstone, they deserted the Irishman whose policy was ceasing to be lucrative, in favour of the Englishman whom they thought soon likely to have the spoils of office in his gift.

The fight between Mr. Parnell and the deserters does not come within the scope of this work, but it is worthy of note that proportionately as the trained band of agitators and their allies drove Mr. Parnell to bay, so did Mr. Parnell the more energetically adopt towards them the policy of Mr. Balfour, which he found so fatal to himself. Mr. Parnell then called upon the farmers to adopt the Balfour Land Act, and advised the evicted tenants on the Plan of Campaign estates to come to settlements. He had seen how the Balfour policy of Purchase Acts, coupled with the firmest Irish administration of modern times, pacified the country, and weakened his own position. Experience had taught him that the complete triumph of the Balfour policy means the death of agitation and

unrest, and the consequent downfall of the professional agitators who had rebelled from his authority. To such a happy pass did Mr. Balfour bring affairs in Ireland. Will the electors of England support the Chief Secretary in his successful policy, or will they abandon Ireland again to Mr. Gladstone, and his allies the professional agitators?

The fifth year of Mr. Balfour's rule has been signalized by a tranquillity to which Ireland had been long a stranger. We have already mentioned Lord Zetland's progresses through the country as evidencing the goodwill which is beginning to prevail. It is not unreasonable to state, in addition, that never was there such a concourse of visitors from all parts of Ireland and from Great Britain at the Royal Dublin Society's Horse Show as there was this year. The Horse Show has long established its claim to be called the Carnival of Ireland, and this year the Viceroy and Prince Albert Victor were the central figures of the assemblage. As His Excellency and His Royal Highness passed in their unguarded carriages to and from the Show they were enthusiastically cheered by the tens of thousands of people assembled at Ball's Bridge and along the route on the public thoroughfares.

Another incident worth mentioning was the conference of the Royal Institute of Journalists. This powerful body, representing the journalists of the three kingdoms, selected Dublin as the site of its annual reunion this year, and its members spent a week of combined business and pleasure in the Irish metropolis. The Associated Chambers of Commerce, representing the mercantile interests of Great Britain and Ireland, also held their annual conference in



Dublin this year, for the first time in the history of the Institution. They were entertained by the Lord Mayor, Lord Ardilaun, Lord Iveagh, and by the Dublin Chamber. Amidst these scenes of peace and pleasure the nightmare so long brooding over the country seemed to have passed away. Not a word was spoken of the land agitation, or of Home Rule. The Queen's health was toasted everywhere and in all companies with as much enthusiasm as the city of London itself could have evinced.

But with the cessation of festivities, apprehensions naturally revive lest Mr. Gladstone, and his ex-Chief Secretary of five months' standing, should be empowered to cast the country back again into the grip of the paid agitators, who are at present relegated, if not to obscurity, at least to impotence, under Mr. Balfour's rule in Ireland. Of these men it may be truly said that but for the countenance and pecuniary support now given to them by the Catholic Church in Ireland, they would die a natural death, as public characters, in six months. They and their organization represent nothing now but the truly formidable power of the Catholic Church—a power with which no fault can be found, so long as it is confined to ministering to the religious wants of the people and guiding them in the paths of morality, but which deserves nothing but condemnation when employed as a lever to direct the political actions of Irishmen.

## CHAPTER XIV.

**Personal—The Policy of Beggar's Pride.**

THE writer of the foregoing pages has no inherited sympathy with the cause of landlordism or conservatism in Ireland. Having all his relatives amongst the farming classes, and being the son of one who for many years presided over a branch of the Land League, and who was imprisoned under the Forster Crimes Act, his sympathies naturally lie with the tenants. In the early days of the Land League the writer took part in the movement, and youthful enthusiasm brought him into hostile contact with the police authorities once at a public meeting, and once at a seizure of his father's cattle, for wilful non-payment of rent, in obedience to the League. He may lay claim, without arrogance, to a knowledge of how the defunct Land League, and the moribund National League worked in practice in the country districts.

For the past ten years he has attentively observed the policy pursued by the wirepullers of those political machines. While admitting that both those organizations procured reductions of rent, he denies that they benefited the country. He denies—and his denial is borne out by the facts—that Nationalist Ireland has improved either in wealth, or intelligence, or population, or enterprise since

the death of Mr. Butt in 1878. While admiring the firmness of will, shrewd sense, tactical ability, and the absence of lying sentimentality which have marked Mr. Parnell's character in the main, he cannot blind himself to the fact that the late Irish leader, and more especially his agents, preached a gospel of greed, selfishness, and dishonour to the Irish farmers.

He is convinced that idleness, constantly deteriorating husbandry, political gossiping, and undue expectations from Parliament have marked the progress of Mr. Parnell's movement in Ireland amongst the farming classes, with a recrudescence of which "on the old lines" we are now threatened by Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien.

The writer fearlessly asserts that the integrity of Nationalist Ireland has been sapped, and that the fundamental distinctions between right and wrong, *meum* and *tuum*, have been wilfully confounded during the last eleven years by Mr. Parnell and his trained band of agitators and their abettors, clerical as well as lay. Demoralizing as were the effects of the real agitation, he is convinced that the pretence of agitation kept up on paper to-day is still more disgraceful to the nation which tolerates it. The writer is convinced that although the decades from the passage of Baron Deasy's Act in 1860, to the general election of 1880, were characterized by high rents and humility on the part of tenants to their landlords, yet the country was more prosperous as a whole than it has been since the advent of Mr. Parnell. There was more money in circulation and a greater spirit of enterprise amongst the farmers.

The land-grabber, who has been so mercilessly denounced,

was generally the most prudent and energetic man in his vicinity, and, as a general rule, had a large family of sons amongst whom he divided his holdings at his death. The sons of the land-grabber were a vast improvement on the ne'er-do-wells whom they supplanted; they were better citizens, better ratepayers, and altogether the fittest men of the community. The writer has seen the spirit of enterprise and all free trading in land crushed under the rule of Mr. Parnell; he has seen the ne'er-do-wells fostered and supported by funds collected, under duress, from their industrious neighbours.

The decade from 1880 to 1890 has seen the wealth of the agitators and of the priesthood accumulating, while the men and women who subscribed it were decaying in numbers and in moral fibre from day to day. That decade has witnessed the humiliating spectacle of Irish politicians begging funds for their own support in distant lands, and accepting large donations by way of alms from men who owned no kith and kin to Ireland. The writer has been struck with the fact that emigration has received no check during these years of agitation, despite all the so-called advantages claimed to have been won by the agitators for the farmers and the labourers. And he points to that important fact in support of his contention that these advantages were only seeming and bore no practical fruit.

While he admits that the Irish landlords, especially the smaller ones, and their blood relatives, oftentimes abused the privileges bestowed upon them by their social position, wealth, and culture, in times gone by, he denies that the spirit of swaggering rudeness and ignorant self-conceit

disseminated amongst the farmers and labourers during the agitation has left them better men. Bearing in mind the geographical isolation of Ireland, and the fact that the priesthood of Ireland is a peasant priesthood, he believes that the wholesale flight of the landlords, and other gentry, would cause Ireland to relapse towards barbarism for a considerable time.

As the last decade opened most ominously for the landlords, so the beginning of the present decade discovers the camp of the agitators rent with discord, and their army in all the confusion of defeat. It is to be hoped that at length the system of paid agitation has had its day, and must cede place to the spirit of self-help and individualism. Whatever may have been the secret end and ultimate aim of the agitators—and far be it from the writer to impugn their motives—no censure can be too severe for the means they adopted, means which have temporarily ruined the national character.

For the disasters wrought by the agitation, the writer believes in no remedy but the self-help and individualism which seem likely to result from the Ashbourne and Balfour Land Acts. The concession of Parliamentary self-government proposed by Mr. Gladstone, instead of undoing the mischief, will intensify it. It will, if granted, at once revivify the system of paid agitation which rose to such surpassing power under Mr. Gladstone's rule in Ireland, and which Mr. Balfour fought and conquered. As part of the British Empire, having one hundred and three representatives in the House of Commons, Ireland at present enjoys sufficient Parliamentary self-government for every practical purpose. If Irish constituencies will

only learn how to make up their minds individually as to what they require, and return efficient representatives, definitely pledged to obtain what is required, the Parliament of the United Kingdom will not be found wanting. The obstruction of Irish business of late years has been deliberately caused by the Irish members.

The writer is convinced that it is not real necessity, but national vanity, which is at the bottom of this cry for Home Rule. He points to Belfast and the North as a proof that where this spirit of national vanity is trodden under foot, and where men march under the banner of self-help and proper pride, the present Constitution enables Irishmen to compete successfully with England and Scotland. He conscientiously believes this spirit of national vanity to be a foolish spirit, out of which no good can come. He believes that if its clamourous cries are yielded to by British statesmen, the government of the country will be thereby handed over to incompetent men, who will assuredly plunge Ireland into a sea of turmoil and debt, from which it can only be rescued by a revolution.

Such will, in the writer's opinion, be the effect of Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy upon Ireland, with which he is chiefly concerned. As for its effect upon England, which is more a matter for Englishmen, he fails to see how England can maintain her position as a Great Power, if the legislatures of the two countries are once separated. The writer cares not how circumscribed may be the powers granted to a Dublin Parliament at first, for experience teaches that there is no such word as finality in dealing with the question of English concessions and Irish demands.

Such being the writer's conviction, he believes that the policy of true Irish patriotism should be to draw the bonds of union with England still closer than at present, to learn of Englishmen in all that is useful, to copy those excellences which have contributed to their national prosperity, in a word to meet England with her own weapons in the fair competition of every-day life. Like the Saxons of old, after the defeat at Hastings, let us at length coalesce with our conquerors and become part and parcel of themselves. They have proved themselves to the world better men than we have been ; let us now imitate them and strive to put our children on an equal footing with theirs.

This noble end cannot be achieved by isolating ourselves in the Atlantic Ocean, or by any longer pursuing a policy of beggar's pride. Nor could it be achieved by all the paper Acts which a Parliament in Dublin could pass in fifty years.

History teaches us that Ireland, separated as she was from England by a sea treble the breadth of that which rolls between England and France, was conquered by a small irregular body of English adventurers seven centuries ago. Since then she has never regained her liberty for a moment, notwithstanding all the troubles through which England subsequently had to pass. Seeing the enormous disproportion between the resources of the two countries at present, the consideration of that historical fact alone should convince the high-minded Irishmen of 1867 of the utter hopelessness of now attaining anything worthy the name of national freedom.

Whatever concessions may come from vote-huckstering between Irish Nationalists and English Liberals, they

will only result in Ireland's slinking further to heel in sullen isolation injurious to herself and dangerous to Great Britain.

When Irishmen further consider that Scotland, a smaller and less fertile country than Ireland, and joined to England by land, was never permanently conquered despite the many pitched battles and massacres which drenched the border counties in blood for centuries, it should remind them that it was not merely circumstances but a serious defect in the national character that really kept Ireland in bondage. Our ancestors have left us centuries in arrear of Great Britain, and when we gratefully acknowledge the kindness of an English statesman in having removed an Irish grievance, we generally bear witness to the helplessness of our own ancestors, who should have long before settled the question for themselves.

It is not by harking back to their ways now that we can make up for lost time. Old times are changed. The present is pre-eminently a day of big things, and it is fortunate for Irishmen that they find themselves members of the biggest and wealthiest empire on earth—an empire whose language they speak and whose citizenship they possess.

It is Mr. Balfour's policy to maintain Ireland's power in the very heart and life-seat of that empire, while conceding to her all necessary powers of local government, and in that policy he should have the support of every Irishman who truly loves his country.





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