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TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN,

AS LANDLORDS OF CAHIRCIVEEN.

STATEMENT

BY

THE PROVOST AND SENIOR FELLOWS,

IN REPLY TO THE LETTER OF

CHARLES RUSSELL, Q.C., M.P.,

IN THE "DAILY TELEGRAPH."



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# STATEMENT,

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DURING the present year so many false reports have been published of the conduct of Trinity College, Dublin, in relation to its property at Cahirciveen, that it is necessary to make a brief historical statement of the facts.

The village of Cahirciveen, containing about 2,000 inhabitants, is situated near the south-western extremity of Kerry, at a distance of thirty-six miles from Killarney, the nearest railway station. It is surrounded by a large district of mountain pasture, the chief industry of the people being the manufacture of butter for the Cork market.

This remote locality was but little known to strangers before the year 1845, when it was visited by "the *Times* Commissioner," Mr. T. C. Foster, who describes it in the following terms\* :—"The scenery around the coast of Cahirciveen is magnificent. Beautiful as are the Lakes of Killarney, they are eclipsed by Dingle Bay. Were there any

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\* "Letters on the Condition of the People of Ireland," by Thomas Campbell Foster, Esq. (the *Times* Commissioner), reprinted from the *Times* newspaper. London, 1846, p. 394.

means of comfortable travelling and accommodation, there can be no doubt that this coast would attract many visitors and much wealth."

This property was held for many years before the date of Mr. Foster's visit by the O'Connell family, under lease from Trinity College, the last renewal of which was for twenty-one years from November, 1844. The tenure was that which was usual before the extension of the leasing powers of the College in 1851. Mr. Foster proceeds as follows:—"The wretched-looking town of Cahir-civeen, with its dirty unpaved streets and old-hat-mended windows, reminds me of another subject. The property of the town is rented to Mr. Daniel O'Connell, who, as a middleman, sublets it to its present tenants and extracts a profit rent out of it. . . . His general character as a landlord or middleman is, that any tenant who applies to him may have leave to erect a cabin where he pleases. He permits subdivision to any extent. This wins a certain degree of popularity; but the land under lease by him is in consequence in the most frightful state of over-population. The competition for land is therefore intense, and they will offer almost any rent for the most miserable fragment of land. In this condition they are left in a total state of neglect. . . .\*

On the estate of Daniel O'Connell are to be found the most wretched tenants that are to be seen in all Ireland. . . . Though not the worst among

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\* *Ibid.*, 396.

middlemen, he lives by the system. . . . Adjoining the cottages on this property are neatly-thatched and roomy cottages on the Marquis of Lansdowne's estate, who takes some pains to encourage his tenantry. In fact, wherever there is ordinary attention paid by any landlord to his tenants there are signs of improvement and comfort. Wherever there is a middleman, and utter neglect of the people, and subdivision is allowed, there the misery which marks the Derrynane property is observed."\*

The state of things described by Mr. Foster was nearly unchanged when the lease expired in 1865, and it then became the duty of the College to attempt a complete reform. This, however, could only be done either by the eviction of nearly the entire population, or by an effort to induce an improvement in their condition and in their inveterate habits of indolence and improvidence.

The former course would, doubtless, have produced the most effectual improvement of the land, but would have involved the ruin of the existing inhabitants. The course actually adopted was, the recognition of all existing tenants at a moderate ground rent, with an offer of leases to all who would build respectable houses. In order to make this possible, the first step was the construction by the College of a complete system of sewers, with proper openings for connecting them with every house in the village.

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\* *Ibid.*, 397. A detailed description of the then state of parts of this property will be found at pp. 537-540.

Further than this the College could not interfere, except by the process of extermination; and in fact a majority of the tenants prefer their old habits of indolence and filth, and remain to this day in their original condition. Many, however, have availed themselves of the facilities offered to them; and the general appearance of the town is much improved: moreover, the staple industry of the country has been greatly assisted by the erection of a commodious butter-market, at a cost to the College of over £1000. Since 1865 the College has expended on the improvement of this property about £11,000, and in the present year a loan of £5000 has been obtained from the Government for the same purpose. During the years 1878 and 1879 the expenditure was exceptionally large, as is testified by one of the tenants, who wrote to the *Freeman's Journal* last August as follows:—

“LANDLORD LIBERALITY—THE BOARD OF TRINITY COLLEGE.

“*To the EDITOR of the ‘FREEMAN.’*

“CAHIRCIVEEN, *August 18.*

“SIR—To most of your readers the above heading will sound somewhat strange just now, since indulgence to their tenantry by the landlords of Kerry is the exception, not the rule. On Thursday last Captain Needham, agent to the large estate of Trinity College in the Union of Cahirciveen, announced to the agricultural portion of the tenantry that the Board would make a remission of 20 per cent. on the current year's rent—viz., the unpaid September gale of 1879, and the March gale, 1880—and give time for payment up to

November next, where necessary. Well, now, so soon after the rejection of the Compensation Bill in the House of Lords, I think this is not bad—nay, on the contrary, my brother tenant farmers and myself think that, coupled with other recent acts of Trinity College in dealing with the wants of their tenantry, it is very good now. Sir, I view this act of the Board of Trinity College as of the highest importance, not alone to my fellow-tenant farmers in this barony of Iveragh, but to the farmers in ‘distressed districts’ in general—perhaps to the tenant farmers of Ireland, and this, too, for many reasons; the first of which is that Trinity College has shown itself alive in a very practical way to the real wants of its tenants in this remote locality; and, secondly, emanating, as it does, from that great and learned body, cannot fail to bring many other landed proprietors to follow their good example. This order was decided upon by the Board of Trinity College, evidently a week before Mr. George Henry Moore’s (of Mayo) noteworthy letter appeared in the *Freeman’s Journal*, asking landlords and tenants alike to yield somewhat of their demands, and thereby avert that winter of misery and bloodshed predicted by that gentleman, who, although a landlord himself, is the son of that great father who was in all Sessions in, and out of Parliament, the staunch and eloquent friend of the farming classes of Ireland.

“Recurring now, however, to a few other facts respecting the treatment of their tenantry and management of their estate in this district, under the guidance and advice of their efficient and generous agent, Captain Needham, I may mention in the first instance, that during the very trying winter of 1878 and spring and summer of 1879, they were unceasing in their efforts to give useful and, it must be said, much-needed, employment to their tenantry, the works consisting mainly of drainage, the making of sand and fishing piers and private farm roads, as well as some public ones. During this time many hundreds of pounds were expended by the College in cash, and many hundreds more in sacks of Indian meal and flour supplied to the tenantry, the price of which has not since been demanded in any shape, and probably never will be. I have omitted to mention that when there was no work to be had by the labouring classes in the town of Cahirciveen, in 1878, and 1879, from twenty to fifty men were kept employed by the Board for from six to nine months. Again,

in the present year the Board borrowed £5000 for works of drainage and general employment on the estate. These works were carried on briskly, as many as one hundred men or more having been employed daily by the agent on one part of the estate, chiefly in the construction of large main drains or receivers, some of them two miles long. These works were suspended last week to give farmers an opportunity of going at their own harvest, but they will be again re-opened next week and vigorously continued, while many farmers are giving all their spare time and labour to their own private drainage.

“Many complaints have been made of the raising of rent on the estate some five years ago, and in many individual cases made justly too. This raising of the rent, however, was brought about in a way for which the College could neither be blamed or held responsible. It resulted from applications from a considerable section of the tenantry, pressed upon the Board, for a re-valuation or revision of this rent. This in the end was granted by the College, and resulted, contrary to expectation, in pleasing some of the tenants, while the great bulk of them were dissatisfied, as they have continued to be till now. There are to my knowledge two exceptional cases of arbitrary rent-raising prior to the valuation, but I am sure the time has now come when the Board will deem it a labour of pleasure to rectify those two mistakes.

“The house-owners of the town of Cahirciveen will ask the Board in course of next week for an extension to them of such abatement in their rent as has been accorded to the farmers. There is little doubt that this at least will be granted, since the house-owners and traders, after five years of bad business, are now no better off than their farming neighbours. Beside this, it may be sternly borne in mind that the College have, for the past fifteen years, been receiving from the town more than five times as much in ground rent as was being paid to the O’Connell family while they held from under the College. Another rule of the College in the town of Cahirciveen is one that should be set aside at once and for ever—viz., the imposition, some two years ago, by them of a street-frontage annual rent of 3s. per foot on all newly-built remodelled houses in the main street, while the rent on the rest of the same street is but 1s. 6d. per foot (more than twice enough). This late 3s. per foot rule applies to less than half a-dozen houses only in the whole town, and

should be abolished at once, if for no reason than this: that it has the effect of discouraging all improvement.

“Apologising for the unintentional length of this letter, I remain, sir, your obedient Servant.

“A TRINITY COLLEGE TENANT.”

The writer does not appear to have borne in mind that no material improvements had been made in Cahirciveen before the expiration of the lease; and that the College, after spending a large amount on its improvement, has merely adopted the usual practice of letting the land in building lots at a fair ground rent.

The *Freeman's Journal*, in a leading article of 22nd August, 1880, comments on the foregoing letter in the following terms:—

“Evil in this world so much preponderates over the good, and bad landlords in Ireland are so much more plentiful than good ones, that it is a relief to have to tell of kindly deeds and of humane Irish landlords. Such an occasion is supplied to us in the letter of the ‘Trinity College Tenant,’ which we publish in another column, and we embrace the occasion all the more willingly because complaints, whether well or ill-founded, against the landlordism of the College appeared in our pages and in other quarters. The College holds a large estate at Cahirciveen, under the agency of Captain Needham, and on yesterday week the agent announced to the tenant-farmers that the Board would make a remission of twenty per cent. on the current year's rent. The remission applies to the September gale of 1879, which is still unpaid, and to the gale due last March; and besides, the Board extends the time for payment to November next. Our correspondent, expressing the sentiment of his fellow-tenants, seems to think that this landlord liberality of the Board of Trinity College acquires an especial significance by the fact that it so quickly follows the Lords' rejection of the Disturbance Compensation Bill, and probably the tenants are not far astray in that calculation. The merciful dealing

of the Board will be set off as a practical rebuke to the selfishness of the Peers, and, to say the least, there is a marked contrast between the greedy mob of landlords making bad land laws, and the seven humane Fellows declining to avail themselves of the bad laws, and even going beyond what good laws could require as an obligation. The Peers grew furious at a Bill that was designed to restrict ejectments in certain places and conditions. The College Board says, here is one of the places; here are the non-solencies, and we will not do only what the Bill would have made us do, but we further grant a large abatement of what is due to us, as well as an enlargement of time for paying. The action of the Board at all events shows this, that no good landlord in Ireland would have been one whit affected by the passing of the Bill; for no good man will do at all what the Bill forbade to be done capriciously. The action of the Board may or may not have had reference to the proceeding of the Lords; but be that as it may, this speaking fact remains—that the Board has made unto itself a law which the Lords refused as a law for the protection of the country. This, moreover, as our correspondent reminds us, is not the only benevolence that the Board has been exercising in the present distress. During the trying seasons of 1878-9 the Board supplied constant employment in works of drainage, pier-building, and road-making. They spent many hundreds of pounds in advancing the means of obtaining food, and they have not demanded repayment in any shape for the advances made. They have borrowed £5000 for the carrying out of the drainage and other works. They have thus kept employed about one hundred men daily, and all this money they have disbursed directly as R. M. D. wages, and have stopped none of it for rent. They suspended the works last week so as to allow the men to go and work at their own little harvestings, and the works will be re-opened after another week, and vigorously prosecuted by a body of strong-armed and willing operatives, grateful for the consideration that has been so promptly and generously extended to them by the Board, and by the Board's indulgent, trustful, and most capable agent. The letter mentions some dissatisfaction that was entertained towards the Board in consequence of a rise in some of the rents a few years ago, and it explains, very satisfactorily, we think, how the rise was occasioned; it was occasioned by the tenants' own demand for a revaluation. O'Connell was a tenant

of the College for his Derrynane estate, and he used to say that he had the best landlords in Ireland. He more than once stood up for the College in consequence of his experience of their fair dealing, and there is not a liberal or a tenant-farmer in the country now that will not be ready to re-affirm the great Liberator's testimony. There are many good landlords still amongst us, and they will be cheered and strengthened by the action of the Board. There are evil, and designing, and unscrupulous landlords in abundance, and let us hope that the example of the most enlightened and most conservative body in the country will not be lost upon them."

The relief works thus spoken of by the *Freeman's Journal* have since been vigorously continued, and it was with considerable surprise that the College authorities saw the letter recently published by Charles Russell, Q.C., M.P., in the *Daily Telegraph*, entitled "New Views of Ireland," and containing charges against them to which they feel bound to give the following answer:—

Mr. Russell states—

[1] "The property of Trinity College in Kerry includes the town of Cahirciveen, some townlands lying to the south of Cahirciveen, and a portion of the island of Valentia. I was anxious to see how a corporation estate of this kind is managed. The knowledge I acquired is not reassuring. The town itself, comprising some 2000 inhabitants, and situate within a mile or so of the slate quarries of Valentia, is so badly paved and flagged that for safety, in the night at least, almost everyone walks in the middle of the streets instead of on the pathways."

The condition of the footpaths of Cahirciveen has, several times, been brought before the Road Sessions, and Grand Jury, but the proposal to repair the pavement has failed in consequence of the

fact, that no contractor would propose for the work at the price named in the presentment. The College was always ready to pay its fair proportion of the cost.

[2] "The sewerage arrangements are incomplete, and altogether the town shows less signs of intelligent supervision than any other town of similar size which I know of. Yet I am informed by Captain Needham, their agent, that the College have expended upon their estate some £11,000 since 1867."

It has been already shown how the College have done all that they had power to do in correcting these defects. The householders neglect to use the sewers which have been made for them.

[3] "Further, they have taken advantage of the easy terms upon which Parliament has recently advanced money to landlords in Ireland, by borrowing a sum of £5000."

More than one-half of this loan has been already spent, and the remainder will probably be laid out within a short time. The harvest being over, the drainage works are now being recommenced.

[4] "Of the £11,000, part seems to have gone in some town sewers, part in the erection of a market-house, of a fish-market, and of a small river-side quay. The three last are, no doubt, investments which may or may not have proved satisfactory."

These markets and quay, though made at serious loss to the landlord, are of immense benefit to the tenantry and inhabitants of the entire surrounding country. It has never before been suggested that they have not been satisfactory.

[5] "In a few instances there has been some outlay on the farms of the tenants, in the straightening of fences and boundaries, on which I believe no interest has been charged to the tenants."

About £1000 has been thus laid out.

[6] "But in other cases, where they have sought and obtained assistance to improve, they have had to pay, and pay dearly, for it.

The amount actually charged is 5 per cent. on the money advanced.

[7] "Speaking of the condition of things generally, a more squalid tenantry than that of this rich corporation it is hardly possible to conceive. As a rule, their dwellings are miserable; their food such as I previously described in the case of Lord Ventry's tenants; their clothes all too scant for comfort, sometimes even for decency."

The origin of this state of things has been already stated. The College had no power to interfere till 1865. Since that time, it must be admitted by all who are acquainted with the condition of the property both at that time and the present, that there has been a very considerable improvement; but it was impossible that the tenantry could in so short a time have been raised to the condition in which it is the earnest desire of the Governing Body of the College to see them.

[8] "Yet, although I shall show their rents are very high—far higher than they can pay after making a decent allowance for their own maintenance—they are, as a whole, uncomplaining; and certainly I did not find amongst them that bitterness towards the agent which I frequently encountered in other parts of my excursion. This seems to be

principally owing to the fact that, where satisfied of the inability of the tenant to pay, he does not harshly proceed to eject."

Only two tenants have been evicted within the last ten years—one owing five and the other three years' rent.

Mr. Russell then proceeds to compare the rents with the Government valuation, and gives a Table, the items in which are incapable of being verified by reference to the rental. Frequently the same tenant has two or more holdings; it is probable that Mr. Russell has compared the valuation of one holding with the rent of all. It is to be observed, however, that the Government valuation in this district is exceptionally low, it being notoriously not more than half the letting value; yet the rents of this property do not amount to double the valuation; the total valuation of the property, exclusive of the town of Cahirciveen, being £1963, and the rental of it £3529, in round numbers. The present rents are fixed upon a very detailed valuation by Messrs. Brassington and Gale. This valuation was made in the year 1869, at the particular request of the tenants, with the object of correcting gross inequalities in the previous rental. The effect was to leave the rental of the entire estate practically the same, the valuation being only £26 18s. 4d. more than the old rental.

[9] "In a good many instances I found that the tenants had reclaimed land from bog, and in some they had, in recent years, rebuilt their houses. One gentleman in the neighbourhood informed us he believed that within the last forty

years at least one-third of the land now in tillage had been reclaimed and made arable without allowance from the landlord. He added that the land was of such a nature that it would, if neglected, speedily relapse into wildness."

No addition to the rent has ever been made by Trinity College in consequence of reclamation of bog or building of houses by the tenants, consequently the tenants have the full benefit of any such outlay.

[10] "One tenant, some seven years ago, built his house, and got £40 7s. from the College towards it, of which, however, £35 only was given to him in cash, the difference being (£5 7s.) charged for a piece of timber. The tenant produced the stringent agreement under which this advance was made, of which I had a copy taken, by which he bound himself to repay the advance by forty half-yearly instalments of £1 12s. each, with the proviso that if he failed in payment of any one instalment the whole should forthwith be recoverable. This hardly sounds very liberal treatment on the part of a great corporation. The man assured me that his house had cost him £120, and he added, with some bitterness, 'I wish I had my money clear out of the place, and I would leave it to them altogether.' He complained that he had been promised the money as a gift towards building the house, but faith had not been kept with him. This was probably a misunderstanding."

This is an unfortunate case for Mr. Russell to have selected as an example. The tenant, John Shea of Killoe, received, in addition to the £35 in cash, £24 14s., also in cash, for which sum he is charged no interest. The piece of timber was only given to him after much entreaty, and the amount charged, £5 7s., was the sum paid for it by the College on the valuation of the Coastguard; on Shea complaining of the high price (years after making use of the timber) he was paid back in cash £2, leaving

the balk at his own valuation of £3 7s. John Shea appears to have quite forgotten the £24 14s. which he received for fences and drains, without any interest.

[11] "Another man who had been tenant for thirty years, and whose father-in-law, through whom he got the land, had been tenant for sixty years, told me that the rent had been raised in his time from £8 to £26 10s. One of these rises was in 1864, when some kind of general valuation was made by valuers from Dublin, Messrs. Brassington and Gale, who in some cases reduced, but in the greater number considerably increased, the rents. It is significant of the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland how these rises take place."

Messrs. Brassington and Gale made no such increase of rent as here stated on any part of the estate. The only valuation made by them was that made at the request of the tenants in 1869.

[12] "Indeed, instances were quoted to us in which the increase of rent was retrospective. So much for freedom of contract between the Irish landlord and his tenant."

No retrospective alteration of rent has ever occurred on the College property.

[13] "Another of the tenants of the College told me that, having laid out some money in drainage, and being minded to lay out more, he applied to Captain Needham, the agent, for an allowance, and finally, in October, 1879, memorialized the Board. The following is the answer of the Board:— 'The Bursar of Trinity College has received A—— B——'s memorial of the 23rd instant, respecting the advance from the Board of Trinity College for the improvements of his farm. If A—— B—— will place in Captain Needham's hands the written agreement consenting to pay the increased rent at the rate of 1s. 7d. in the pound for any advance of money which he may require, the Bursar will lay his application before the Board.' Thus, not only would the tenant have to pay nearly 8 per cent. yearly for the money expended in the improvement of landlord's property, but,

according to the existing law, expose himself to have his rent increased by his then or subsequent landlord, and upon the basis of the improvements which he himself had made, and for which he himself had dearly paid. This is no fancy sketch, for be it borne in mind, that when an increase of rent takes place—even where the form of a valuation is gone through—no account is taken how far the improved value may have been created by the labour and the capital of the tenant. It was so in the case of the valuation of Messrs. Brassington and Gale.”

The tenants themselves asked for advances of money on the condition that the principal should be repaid with interest at 5 per cent. in twenty-one years. This is done by an annual charge of 1s. 7d. in the pound. The College has never increased rent in consequence of money laid out by the tenant, nor is there any risk such as Mr. Russell imagines, “according to the existing law.”

[14] “I was anxious to have some authentic information as to the more remote portions of this property which I did not myself visit, including that at Portmagee; and a gentleman, a member of the English Bar, who knows the locality well, writing to me generally of the condition of the estate, uses this emphatic language:—‘As to the College estate, it is simply a disgrace to the country. It would be impossible to describe the filth or misery of the dwellings. I could not find out that the agent had ever taken any trouble about them. I was told everywhere that he had never been inside the houses.’”

The condition of Portmagee is not such as could be desired, but it is not true that the agent has taken no trouble with regard to it. Some improvements have been made, the most important of which is the establishment of male and female schools in this village, which are under first-class

teachers, and have been said to be among the best National schools in the south of Ireland. These schools were built, and are in great measure supported, by the College.

[15] "I wished also to learn something of the general habits of the neighbourhood—especially as to drink, for I was painfully struck with the fact that in the town of Cahirciveen itself there were thirty-four public-houses. How the magistrates have been parties to this state of things I know not. It is not merely the withdrawal of so many persons and the capital of so many peasants from other industries, but it is impossible that all these public-houses can pay, if honest drink were supplied to the people. The explanation given me was that the license was generally carried on in connexion with some other business, and that from Killorglin on the one side, to Waterville on the other, along the coast line, and for a great distance inland, there were no public-houses, and that they were supported in Cahirciveen by the trade done on fair and market days, when from 5000 to 10,000 people come in from the surrounding districts. But on these days that drink is taken to excess cannot be doubted, generally bad drink, and, taken by an underfed population, telling with all the greater mischief upon them; and that time and money are wasted thus, and wasted to a large extent, cannot be doubted; but I was assured that in the country districts anything like habitual drinking or tippling was unknown: and even in Cahirciveen itself, it is only right to say that, although I was there for three days, I did not see an intoxicated person during that time."

There are over fifty public-houses in Cahirciveen. The magistrates some years ago fixed the limit at thirty-four, and decided that that number was fully sufficient for the wants of the people; but the Chairman of the County thought differently, and hence the increase. The College agent, himself a magistrate, always resisted the granting of additional licenses,

but generally without effect. In some instances, licenses refused at Cahirciveen have been granted at Killarney and Kenmare, where no Cahirciveen magistrates were present.

[16] "Upon this estate of the College, as everywhere, large tracts of land, apparently reclaimable,\* were to be seen; certainly as reclaimable as many of the patches which the tenants had brought into some kind of cultivation, but tracts which to be profitably dealt with would require draining on a large scale, and such as could not be attempted by any individual tenants, however willing they might be to make the experiment."

The Board of Trinity College was anxious to effect "draining on a large scale;" but to do so it would have been necessary to get up possession of lands in the occupation of tenants, who had a customary right of grazing them as additions to their farms. To this it was found that the tenants would not assent, and as the possession could not be obtained except by ejectments on notices to quit, which would entail payment of compensation for

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\* "Sure," said Father Brosnan (the parish priest of Cahirciveen) to me, "by reclaiming the mountain side, or by taking in the alluvial soil covered by the sea there, and adding it to the small holdings, there would be no need of emigration." The mountain side referred to by the enthusiastic priest was a barren declivity, from which even the courageous and thrifty Swiss mountaineer would shrink in despair; the alluvial soil was an arm of the sea, which had none of the characteristics of reclaimable slob land.—Special Correspondent of the *Evening Standard*, Nov. 18, 1880.

disturbance, under the Land Act of 1870, the intention had to be abandoned. This is an instance of the many ways in which the tenantry of an estate can stand in the way of improvements which their landlord is able, willing, and anxious to effect.

[17] "Many of the tenants on this property received relief in meal and in seed potatoes from the charitable funds subscribed and distributed through the agency of the Duchess of Marlborough's Committee, the Mansion House Committee, and the Committee of the Land League in Dublin."

In the Spring of 1879 the College distributed among the tenants five hundred pounds' worth of meal, which was to have been repaid at cost price; but, in consequence of the failure of that year's harvest, no part of that outlay has been repaid. Last spring the College imported a large supply of Champion potatoes of the best quality into Cahirciveen, which were given to the tenants at half price, at a loss to the College of £260. The College subscribed £100 to the Duchess of Marlborough's Relief Fund.

[18] "The arrears of rent are considerable. As many as 200 processes were served upon the tenants of the College for the June Quarter Sessions at Killarney, but apparently the agent was satisfied that the people were not able to pay, and accordingly one decree only, as I am informed, was obtained. In connexion with this matter, I may add that the bailiff is paid 2s. 6d. for the service of each process, thus giving him a direct interest in making them as numerous as possible; and indeed the tenants whom I encountered seemed to regard him as a much more formidable person than the agent, Captain Needham. I was informed that the practice of the estate is to oblige the tenant to pay this 2s. 6d. charge over and above the legal costs endorsed on the writs. I could not ascertain that the College had subscribed to the charitable funds for the relief of the poor, but they have within the last

few weeks announced their intention of making an allowance of twenty per cent. of the rent to those who pay up to last March."

The number of processes was not *one-half* of that mentioned by Mr. Russell.

The legal cost of a process is 10s. when the debt is paid within ten days after service. When the tenant allows the ten days to expire he becomes legally liable to the full costs, which usually amount to more than double this sum, but the College agent never charges more than 2s. 6d. in addition to the 10s.

The local solicitor never issues a process without direct instructions from the agent himself.

[19] "One other matter I must mention. It is a subject of bitterness in Cahirciveen. The town has now a very defective water supply ; but, lying at the base of a range of hills, there is an ample water-shed easily available, and at the small cost of about £700, capable of supplying the town at a high pressure. The town was willing to bear one half the interest on this expenditure of capital, but the College would not bear the remainder. The total rental of the College from the Cahirciveen property is stated to be between £4000 and £5000 per annum.

At a meeting of the Board of Guardians on the 24th June, 1880, it was proposed to carry out a plan furnished by Mr. Stokes (the late County Surveyor) for a supply of pure water to the town at an estimated cost of £700. The Board of Guardians agreed to make an application to the Board of Works for the money, on condition that the landlord should pay half the yearly amount of instalments for the loan ; the remainder to be levied off

the town. A Committee was appointed to ascertain whether the towns-people would agree to this tax. Eighty of the principal householders were applied to, and seventy said "they would not pay anything." This result having been communicated to the Board of Trinity College, the Board felt that it could not join in a work to which seven-eighths of the principal householders of the town were opposed. The Board never refused to pay their half of the instalments, although the College only receives ground rents for the houses as stated previously.

It appears from Mr. Russell's letter that he spent less than three days in investigating the condition of the estate. The estate contains nearly 9,000 acres, with more than 450 tenants, exclusive of the town, in which there are 2,000 inhabitants. To ascertain the true state of such a property requires not only time, but a knowledge of the character of the people, which only time can give. How liable a visitor is to be deceived, taking his impressions from the statements made to him by interested parties, is shown by an incident narrated by the Reporter who accompanied "the *Times* Commissioner" of 1845:—

"While sitting in the hotel (Cahirciveen), Mr. Trant, a magistrate of the county, entering the room, informed me that Thomas Sullivan, of Oghermong (whose house I had visited on the preceding day, and whose testimony I have already given), was outside, and wished to make evidence on oath that he had quite misinformed me as to his condition. In other words, that he was desirous of swearing that he had been telling me lies. Sullivan was called in, and as it appeared that he was quite

ready to take an *affidavit*, I took from Mr. Trant, who acted as interpreter, the following explanation of Sullivan's previous statement.—He imagined that I and your Commissioner were coming from Government to inquire into the state of the potato crop, and he therefore exaggerated the badness of its condition and the poverty of his own as much as possible. He now wished to say that he was not nearly so badly off as he had stated ; that he had plenty of *potatoes* and milk, &c.”\*

Is it possible that Mr. Russell derived his information from witnesses of the above type?

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\* “Letters on the Condition of the People of Ireland,” by T. C. Foster, Esq., pp. 541-2.

